

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO ECCLESIASTES 11

This chapter begins with an exhortation to liberality to the poor, enforced by several reasons and arguments, and the objections to it removed; and the whole illustrated by various similes, (²¹¹⁰Ecclesiastes 11:1-6); and then it is observed, that a life attended with outward prosperity and inward peace, and spent in doing good, is very delightful, and very desirable it is to have it continued; yet it should be remembered this will not be always, that many days of darkness in the grave will come; and after all the whole of a man's life is vanity, as is often inculcated, (²¹¹¹Ecclesiastes 11:7,8); and the chapter is closed with an ironic address to young men, designed to show them the folly and danger of sinful courses, to reform them from them, and to put them in mind of a future judgment, (²¹¹²Ecclesiastes 11:9,10).

Ver. 1. *Cast thy bread upon the waters*, etc.] As the wise man had often suggested that nothing was better for a man than to enjoy the good of his labour himself, he here advises to let others, the poor, have a share with him; and as he had directed in the preceding chapter how men should behave towards their superiors, he here instructs them what notice they should take of their inferiors; and as he had cautioned against luxury and intemperance, he here guards against tenacity and covetousness, and exhorts to beneficence and liberality: that which is to be given is “bread”, which is put for all the necessaries of life, food and raiment; or money that answers all things, what may be a supply of wants, a support of persons in distress; what is useful, profitable, and beneficial; not stones or scorpions, or what will be useless or harmful: and it must be “thy” bread, a man's own; not independent of God who gives it him; but not another's, what he owes another, or has fraudulently obtained; but what he has got by his own labour, or he is through divine Providence in lawful possession of; hence alms in the Hebrew language is called “righteousness”: and it must be such bread as is convenient and fit for a man himself, such as he himself and his family eat of, and this he must cast, it must be a man's own act, and a voluntary one; his bread must not be taken and forced from him; it must be given freely, and in such a manner as not to be expected again; and

bountifully and plentifully, as a man casts seed into the earth; but here it is said to be “upon the waters”; bread is to be given to such as are in distress and affliction, that have waters of a full cup wrung out unto them, whose faces are watered with tears, and foul with weeping, from whom nothing is to be expected again, who can make no returns; so that what is given thorn seems to be cast away and lost, like what is thrown into a river, or into the midst of the sea; and even it is to be given to such who prove ungrateful and unthankful, and on whom no mark or impression of the kindness is made and left, no more than upon water; yea, it is to be given to strangers never seen before nor after, like gliding water; so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “passing waters”: or else to such who may be compared to well watered ground, or “moist ground”, as Mr. Broughton renders it; where the seed cast will grow up again, and bring forth fruit, and redound to the advantage of the sower, as what is given to the poor does; they are a good soil to sow upon, especially Christ’s poor, who are partakers of his living water, grace; (see ^{2:320}Isaiah 32:20); though it may be the multitude of persons to whom alms is to be given are here intended, which are sometimes signified by waters, (^{46:715}Revelation 17:15); as (^{2:1102}Ecclesiastes 11:2) seems to explain it. The Targum is,

“reach out the bread of thy sustenance to the poor that go in ships upon the thee of the water;”

and some think the speech is borrowed from navigation, and is an allusion to merchants who send their goods beyond sea, and have a large return for them;

for thou shalt find it after many days; not the identical bread itself, but the fruit and reward of such beneficence; which they shall have unexpectedly, or after long waiting, as the husbandman for his seed; it suggests that such persons should live long, as liberal persons oftentimes do, and increase in their worldly substance; and if they should not live to reap the advantage of their liberality, yet their posterity will, as the seed of Jonathan did for the kindness he showed to David: or, however, if they find it not again in temporal things, yet in spirituals; and shall be recompensed in the resurrection of the just, and to all eternity. So the Targum,

“for after the time of many days, then thou shall find the reward of it in this world (so it is in the king’s Bible), and in the world to come;”

(see ^{<412D>}Luke 12:12-14). Jarchi instances in Jethro. Noldius^{f259} renders it “within many days”, even before many days are at an end; for seed sown by waters in hot climates soon sprung up, and produced fruit; see (^{<271D>}Daniel 11:20).

Ver. 2. *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight*, etc.] Or, a “part”^{f260}; not the whole of a man’s substance, for he must have to support himself and his family; he that does not take care of that is worse than an infidel; a man may bestow all his goods on the poor, and not have charity; though no doubt there was true charity, or love, in the poor widow that threw in all her substance into the treasury, which was an extraordinary case, (^{<508B>}1 Timothy 5:8 ^{<461D>}1 Corinthians 13:2 ^{<41244>}Mark 12:44); but a man is to give of such things that he has, ordinarily, and not all that he has, (^{<2144>}Luke 11:41); he is to give according to his ability, and what he can spare from the service of himself and family; and this is to be distributed, and given in parts to the poor, according to their necessities; not all to one, but something to everyone, “to seven, and also to eight”: if seven persons apply, give them everyone a part; and, if an eighth person comes, send him not away empty; give to every one that asketh, (^{<461D>}Luke 6:30); compare with this phrase (^{<308B>}Micah 5:5); Some think this respects time, so Aben Ezra; that a man should give constantly and continually, should be daily giving, all the seven days of the week, and when the eighth day comes, or the week begins again, go on in the same course. The Targum is,

“put a good part of seed in thy field in Tisri (the seventh month), and do not cease from sowing even in Casleu,”

the eighth month;

for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth; what calamities shall come upon it, which may sweep away all a man’s substance; it may be destroyed by fire, or washed away by a deluge of water, or plundered by an enemy; or, however, the day of death may quickly come, as it certainly shall, and then it will be no longer in a man’s power to do good with what he has. Moreover, the arguments which covetous men use against liberality, the wise man uses for it; they argue that bad times may come, and they may sustain great losses; or have a greater charge upon them, a growing family; or they may live to old age, and want it themselves: be it no, these are reasons why they should give liberally while they can; that when these things they fear shall come upon them, they may be relieved and supplied by others; for those that show mercy shall find mercy; and this

is the way to make themselves friends in a time of need, and against it; (see ^{<219>}Luke 16:9).

Ver. 3. *If the clouds be full of rain, they empty [themselves] upon the earth*, etc.] They do not retain it; sad would it be for the earth if they did; but they let it down softly and gently, in plentiful showers upon each of the parts of the earth without distinction, by which it is refreshed, and made fruitful; nor are they losers by it, for they draw up great quantities again out of the ocean, and so constantly answer the ends for which they are appointed. And so rich men, who are full of the good things of this world, should not keep them to themselves, and for their own use only; but should consider they are stewards under God, and for others, and should be like the full clouds, empty themselves; and give to those who want of what God has given them, freely and cheerfully, bountifully and plentifully, and that without respect of persons, imitating their God and Creator, who sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust, (^{<155>}Matthew 5:45); and such in the issue are no losers, but gainers; they fill again as fast as they empty;

and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be; where the seed falls, and it grows up into a plant, and to a tree, there it continues, whether to the north or to the south; and so accordingly brings forth fruit, and such as it is men partake of it; to which purpose Jarchi, and who applies it to the disciple of a wise man, who is profitable in the place where he is, not only in life, but after death: or where the fruit of a tree fall, “there they are”, so Aben Ezra reads the last clause in the plural number; that is, there are persons enough to gather the fruit; and so where a rich man is, there are poor enough about him to partake of his bounty: or as when a tree is cut down, let it fall where it will, there it abides, and is no more fruitful; so when a man is cut off by death, as he was then, so he remains; if a gracious and good man, and has done good, he is like a tree that falls to the south, he enters into the paradise of God, the joys of heaven; and if not a good man, and has not done good, he is like a tree that falls to the north, he goes into a state of darkness, misery, and distress; (see ^{<621>}Revelation 22:11,14,15); or however, be this as it will, he is no more useful in this world; and therefore it becomes men to do all the good they can in health and life, for there is none to be done in the grave where they are going: or else the sense is, that as when a tree falls, whether it be to the south or to the north, it matters not to the owner, there it lies, and is of the same advantage to him; so an act of beneficence, let it be done to what object soever, a worthy or an

unworthy one, yet being done with a view to the glory of God and the good of men, it shall not lose its reward: and so this is an answer to the objection of some against giving, because they do not know whether the object proposed is deserving: though some think the same thing is intended by these metaphorical expressions, as is suggested in the latter part of (²¹¹¹⁰Ecclesiastes 11:2), that evils or calamities may come upon men like heavy showers of rain, which wash away things; or like storms and tempests of rain, thunder and lightning, which break down trees, and cause them to fall to the north or to the south; and thus in like manner by one judgment or another men may be stripped of all their substance, and therefore it is right to make use of it while they have it.

Ver. 4. *He that observeth the wind shall not sow*, etc.] Who before he sows his seed is careful to observe where the wind is, from what corner it blows, and forbears sowing until it is down or changes, lest it should be troublesome unto him in sowing, or blow away his seed, and waits for a better season; such a man may lose his seedtime and never sow at all, and his grain in his barn may be devoured by vermin, or be destroyed by one accident or another, and so he may lose both his seed and his crop;

and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap; which are uncertain signs of weather; and if a man gives heed to them, and puts off his sowing from time to time, for the sake of better weather, as he may never sow, so it is impossible that he should reap; and if he sows, and when his grain is ripe and forbears to reap because of the clouds, lest his grain should be wet, may never reap at all: and so it is with respect to liberality; if a man will raise difficulties, and make objections, and attend unto them; if he puts off giving till such an affliction is removed from him and his family, or that is grown up; or such an estate is obtained, or he has got to such an amount of riches, or till more proper and deserving objects present, with twenty things more of the like kind; if he defers giving on such accounts, or through fear of want, which may possess his mind for various reasons, he may never give nor get, yea, never do any good work; for, if nothing is done till all difficulties are removed, no good thing will ever be done.

Ver. 5. *As thou knowest not what [is] the way of the spirit*, etc.] If indeed a man could foresee and be assured of seasonable weather for sowing and reaping, or a proper opportunity for doing good, all circumstances agreeing, it would be right to wait for it, and take it; but as these things are not in our power, nor within the compass of our knowledge, we should

take the first opportunity of doing good, and leave the issue to divine Providence: as in many things in nature we are and should be content to be ignorant of them, and leave them with God, who brings them about by his secret power and providence: as, for instance, we know not “the way of the spirit”, or “of the wind”^{f261}, as some render it; from whence it comes and whither it goes, where and when it will subside, or what wind will blow next; or of the spirit or soul of man, how it enters into the body. So the Targum,

“how the spirit of the breath of life goes into the body of an infant:”

whether it is by traduction, as some, which is not likely; or by transfusion, or by creation out of nothing, or by formation out of something pre-existent, and by an immediate infusion of it: or, “what is the way of the breath”; of the breath of a child in the womb, whether it breathes or not; if it does, how? if not, how does it live? or what is the way of the soul out of the body, how it goes out of it when the body dies;

[nor] how the bones [do grow] in the womb of her that is with child; or is “full”, pregnant, big with child: or “in the womb that is full”^{f262}; full of liquids, and yet bones are separated from them, grow out of them, and in them, and are hardened; all which how it should be is unknown: “bones” are mentioned because they are the more solid and substantial parts of the body, the basis and strength of it; and because it may seem more difficult how any part of the seed should harden into them, while other parts are converted into skin and flesh;

even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all; the Targum adds, in wisdom; as men are ignorant of many of the works of nature, so of those of Providence, especially which are future; as whether men shall be rich or poor, have days of prosperity or adversity; what their latter end will be, whether they shall not stand in need of the assistance of others, it may be of them or theirs to whom they now give; or what will be the issue of present acts of beneficence and liberality; these, with many other things of the like kind, should be left with God. Some understand this of the work of grace and conversion, which is a secret and difficult work, only wrought by the power and grace of God; and may be begun, or shortly will, in a poor person, judged an unworthy object of charity for supposed want of it, a thing unknown.

Ver. 6. *In the morning sow thy seed*, etc.] Do all good works early and diligently, which is expressed by sowing in righteousness, (^{<28012>}Hosea 10:12); particularly alms deeds, often signified by sowing seed, (^{<18113>}Psalm 112:9) (^{<47016>}2 Corinthians 9:6-10); this should be in the morning of youth, that persons may be inured to it betimes as Obadiah was; and in the morning of prosperity, as soon as ever Providence smiles on men, and puts it into the power of their hands, who should honour the Lord with the firstfruits of their increase;

and in the evening withhold not thine hand; from sowing seed, from doing good, particularly acts of charity, in the evening of old age, as Jarchi, like old Barzillai; an age in which men are apt to be more tenacious and covetous, and withhold more than is meet; yea, in the evening of adversity do not leave off doing good as much as can be; but do as the Macedonian churches, whose deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality in a great trial of affliction, (^{<48012>}2 Corinthians 8:2); in short, good is to be done at all times, as opportunity offers, throughout the whole of life, and in all conditions and circumstances;

for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that; the seed sown in the morning or in the evening, which good work shall best succeed; therefore do both, try all ways, make use of all opportunities;

or whether they both [shall be] alike good; acceptable to God, and useful to men; and if so, a man will have no occasion to repent of what he has done both in youth and old age.

Ver. 7. *Truly the light [is] sweet*, etc.] Here begins a new subject, as most think; and some here begin the twelfth and last chapter, and not improperly. This is true of natural light, which is exceeding pleasant, useful, and beneficial; by which men discern objects, behold the things of nature with pleasure, walk in the way without stumbling, and do the work and business of life: and also of civil light or prosperity; for, as afflictions are expressed by darkness, and adversity by night; so the comforts and good things of life by light and day, which are very desirable and delectable: and here "life" itself may be meant, for light is sometimes put for life, which is the light of the living; and what sweeter and more desirable than that, especially a life attended with prosperity and peace? (see ^{<18338>}Job 33:28,30 3:20 2:4 ^{<48012>}Psalm 34:12). The Targum and Jarchi interpret it of the light of the law; and which is indeed a light, and so is the whole word of God, (^{<21023>}Proverbs 6:23 ^{<18305>}Psalm 119:105) (^{<30019>}2 Peter

1:19); but may be better applied unto the Gospel, which is a great and glorious light, (²³⁰²Isaiah 9:2 ~~404~~ 2 Corinthians 4:4); and a means of enlightening dark minds; not only of showing men their sinfulness, as the law does; but the insufficiency of their righteousness, of all their own goodness and good works to justify; it reveals Christ, and the glories of his person; it sets him forth evidently, as crucified and slain, for the worst of sinners; it makes manifest his fulness, ability, and willingness, as a Saviour; righteousness, peace, pardon, and salvation by him; it makes known things not to be discerned by the light of nature, even things wonderful and marvellous, as well as what is the way a man should walk in: and this light is sweet and pleasant, not to a blind and carnal man, who despises it, and reckons it foolishness, but to those who are enlightened by the Spirit of God; and to these it is very delightful, even to all their senses; it is sweet to their taste, a joyful sound to their ears, and beautiful to their sight are the feet of them that bring its good tidings. The light of grace, which appears in first conversion, and comes from God suddenly, which at first is small, but increases, is exceeding pleasant, strikes the soul with delight and wonder; it is marvellous light, (~~4119~~ 1 Peter 2:9); and so is the light of joy and gladness to believers, when it arises to them after a time of darkness, or the light of God's countenance, (³⁹⁴⁶Psalm 4:6,7); and such will be the light of the latter day glory, and more especially the light of the heavenly state;

and a pleasant [thing it is] for the eyes to behold the sun; the natural sun, shining at noon day, which is a luminous and glorious body, communicating light and heat to all the world: which is so glorious and so pleasant to behold, that Anaxagoras, the philosopher, being asked what he was born for, answered,

“to see the heavens, the sun, and the moon^{f263};”

and Eudoxus, another philosopher, said,

“he could be content to perish, could he get so near to the sun as to learn the nature of it^{f264}.”

To “see the sun”, in the language of this book, is to live in this world, and to enjoy the light of the sun, and the comforts of life; see (²⁰⁷¹Ecclesiastes 7:11); and now a life, attended with outward prosperity and inward peace, that is spent in doing and enjoying good, is a very desirable and delightful one; though such a man should not think of living always, but of death, and

the days of darkness, as in (²¹¹⁰⁸Ecclesiastes 11:8). This may he applied to Christ, the sun of righteousness, (^{4841E}Psalm 84:11 ^{3042E}Malachi 4:2); the fountain of all spiritual light and heat; the brightness of his Father's glory; and who is superior to angels and men; and is to be beheld by faith, and in his own light, as the sun is; and whom to look upon with an eye of faith is exceeding pleasant and delightful, and fills with joy unspeakable and full of glory, (^{6108E}1 Peter 1:8).

Ver. 8. *But if a man live many years*, etc.] Enjoying light and life, and beholding the sun with much delight and pleasure. The days of men on earth, or under the sun, are but few at most; but some live many days, in comparison of others; they come to a good old age, as Abraham did; and to their graves like a shock of corn fully ripe; and arrive to, or beyond, the common term of human life;

[and] rejoice in them all; in and throughout the many years he lives, even all his days; that is, is blessed with a plentiful portion of the good things of life, and enjoys them in a free and comfortable manner, with moderation and thankfulness; partakes of the good of his labour, and rejoices in his works, in the fruit and effects of them, through the blessing of divine Providence; not only is blessed with many days, but those days good ones, days of prosperity: such a man is in a happy case; and especially if he is possessed of spiritual joy, of joy in the Holy Ghost; if he rejoices in Christ, and in what he is to him, and has done for him; and having professed him, and submitted to his ordinances, goes on his way, rejoicing. Some render it, "let him rejoice in them all"^{f265}; a good man has reason to rejoice always, throughout the whole course of his life; because of the goodness of divine Providence to him; because of the blessings of grace bestowed on him; and because of his good hope of eternal glory and happiness. The Targum is,

"in all these it becomes him to rejoice, and to study in the law of the Lord;"

yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many; or, "they may be"^{f266}; meaning either, that though persons may live long, and enjoy much health and prosperity; yet, in the midst of all, they should consider, that it is possible that days of adversity and distress may come upon them, and continue; and therefore should not please themselves, as Job did, that they shall die in their nest in the height their prosperity, since they know not what days of evil may come, and how long they will last; or, however, they should remember the night of death, that is hastening, the

land of darkness, and the shadow of death, they are going to; the dark grave, they will soon be laid in, where they will remain many days; many more than those in which they have lived, enjoying the light of the sun, even till the heavens shall be no more; though these days will not be infinite, they will have an end, and there will be a resurrection from the dead: and particularly if a man is a wicked man, that has lived a long and prosperous life, he should not only remember the above things; but also that outer darkness, that blackness of darkness reserved for him, the darkness of eternal death, which will be his portion for evermore. The Targum is,

“he shall remember the days of the darkness of death, and shall not sin; for many are the days that he shall lie dead in the house of the grave.”

All that cometh [is] vanity; Aben Ezra interprets this of every man that comes into the world, as in (²¹⁰⁰Ecclesiastes 1:2,4); whether high or low, rich or poor, in prosperity or adversity; man, at his best estate, is vanity: let a man therefore be in what circumstances he will, he should not take up his rest here; all that comes to him, everything that befalls him, is vanity. The wise man keeps in view the main thing he proposed, to prove that is vanity, all in this life; for what is to come hereafter, in a future state of happiness, cannot come under this name and character.

Ver. 9. *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth*, etc.] This advice may be considered as serious; and either as relating to natural, corporeal, and temporal delight and pleasure, under due limitations; that as mirth and cheerfulness, or a free use of the creatures of God, with moderation and temperance, is allowable to all men in common, and is spoken of throughout this book as commendable, and is healthful and profitable to men; so it is particularly suitable to the youthful age, whose natural desires may be enjoyed, and their outward senses may be gratified, in a lawful way, so far as is consistent with the fear of God, and the expectation of a future judgment: or it may be considered with respect to religious and spiritual exercises; as young men should remember their Creator in the days of their youth, as it follows; so they should rejoice in God their Maker, (²¹¹⁰Psalm 149:2); they should rejoice not to do evil, to which human nature is inclined, especially in youth, but to do good; should rejoice, not in the ways of sin, but in the ways of wisdom; not in any outward attainment of beauty, wit, strength, or riches, but in the grace of God; not in themselves,

or their boastings, but in Christ, his person, righteousness, and salvation; not in the things of time and sense, but in hope of the glory of God;

and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; here is a different word for youth than the former, which Alshech distinguishes thus; the first designs the time to the age of thirteen, and this from thence to twenty. Or, “let thine heart do thee good”, so the Septuagint. The Targum is,

“and let thine heart be good in thee.”

Symmachus renders it, “and let thine heart be in good”; the thoughts of thine heart be employed about that which is good, spiritual, heavenly, and divine; the affections of thine heart set thereon; and the will and desires of thine heart be drawn out after such things: let thine heart prompt and put thee on doing that which is good, with delight and pleasure; but, in order, to all this, the heart must be made good by the spirit and grace of God;

and walk in the ways of thy heart; being created a clean one, sprinkled, purged, and purified by the blood of Christ; in which the fear of God is put; the laws of God are written; where Christ is formed, and his word dwells richly, and he himself by faith, where the Spirit of God and his graces are: and then to walk in the ways of such a heart is to walk in the fear of God, according to his word, as Christ is an example; and to walk after the spirit, and not after the flesh. The Septuagint and Arabic versions are, “and walk in the ways of thine heart unblamable”: the Targum,

“and walk in humility in the ways of thine heart:”

which all agree with the sense given: so Alshech interprets the ways of the heart; of the ways of the good imagination of good men;

and in the sight of thine eyes; as enlightened by the Spirit of God, directing and guiding in the way in which a man should walk; looking unto Jesus, all the while he is walking or running his Christian race; and walking in him, as he has received him; pressing towards him, the mark, for the prize of the high calling. The Targum is,

“and be cautious of the sight of thine eyes, and look not upon evil.”

The Septuagint and Arabic versions insert the negative; “and not in the sight of thine eyes”. Most interpreters understand all this its an ironic concession to young men, to indulge themselves in carnal mirth, to take their swing of sinful pleasures, to do all their corrupt hearts incline them to;

and to gratify their outward senses and carnal lusts to the uttermost; even the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, which young men are most addicted to: do all this, as if it was said, and see what will be the issue of it; or, do all this if you can, with this one thing bore in mind, a future judgment; like those expressions in (^{<11215>}1 Kings 22:15 ^{<4185>}Matthew 26:45 ^{<2181>}Lamentations 3:21); and to this sense the following clause is thought most to incline: and the rather, as the above phrases are generally used in a bad sense;

but know thou, that for all these [things] God will bring thee into judgment; not temporal, but eternal; not in this present life, but in the world to come; the judgment that will be after death, the last and awful judgment; and which is certain, may be known; of which a man may be assured from the light of nature, and from divine revelation; (see Gill on “^{<21087>}Ecclesiastes 3:17”); into which all men will be brought, even whether they will or not; and every work shall be brought into it, good or bad, open or secret, (^{<2124>}Ecclesiastes 12:14). Wherefore “these things” may respect either; and the consideration of a future judgment should influence the lives of men, and engage them both to perform acts of piety and religion in youth, and throughout the whole of life, and to shun and avoid everything that is evil. Herodotus^{f267} speaks of a custom among the Egyptians, at their feasts; that, just at the close of them, one carries about in a coffin the image of a dead man, exactly like one, made of wood, the length of a cubit or two, showing it to all the guests; saying, look upon it, drink, and take pleasure, for such shalt thou be when dead.

Ver. 10. *Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart,* etc.] Worldly sorrow, as opposed to lawful mirth and cheerfulness, and especially to spiritual joy: or “anger”,^{f268} as the word may be rendered, and often is; either at the providence of God, or at the correction of friends; all perturbations of the mind; all fierceness of spirit, and fiery passions, to which youthful age is subject: or all those things, as Jarchi observes, that provoke God to anger; sinful lusts and pleasures, the end and issue of which also is sorrow to men; and which agrees with our version;

and put away evil from thy flesh; or body; such as intemperance and uncleanness, to which young men are addicted: the advice is much the same, in both clauses, with that of the apostle’s, “flee youthful lusts”, (^{<5122>}2 Timothy 2:22). Jarchi interprets this of the evil concupiscence;

for childhood and youth [are] vanity; which quickly pass away; come into manhood, and soon slide into old age, and are gone presently, and all things within that compass: all actions done in that age are for the most part vain and foolish; and all the delights, joys, and pleasures thereof, vanishing and transitory. The last word^{f269}, used to express the juvenile age, either is akin to a word which signifies the “morning”; youth being the morning and dawn of man’s age, and increases as that; and as soon as it is peep of day with him, or he enters into life, he possesses vanity: or as having the signification of “blackness”; because, as Jarchi observes, the head of a young man is black: and so the Targum,

“childhood, and the days of blackness of hair, are vanity;”

whereas the hair of an aged man is gray.