



MEDITATIONES
IN DIEBUS DOMINICIS
DE VITA FUTURA, 1628.

[By Bolton]

Meditations of the life to come.



Ord, when thou created'st Man as
the last of thy noblest works, that
thou mightest crown him as the
end and perfection of thy work-
manship, Thou madest him a King at first,
gavest him rule and dominion over all the
Creatures of the Earth, Thou entertained'st
him like a *Prince* by bringing him into a most
stately Pallace, covered over with a glorious
Arch, embossed with infinite studs and span-
gles of gold. Thou madest him a royall feast
with all the varieties and dainties that were
on earth. Thou placed'st him in thy own Gar-
den where all his senses were satisfied with
unutterable delights, there thou guardest
him with innumerable Angells and permit-

I.
*Creation &
fall of Man.*

A

ted'st

red'st him to walke in thy owne *Walk* as a companion for thy selfe. But that man might be taught an eternall lesson of humility, The commission of that one sinne in eating the forbidden fruit, cost him his life and the losse of all his happinesse together, and derived an everlasting curse and corruption upon all his posterity. But yet such was thy exceeding goodnesse, O GOD, that rather then thou would'st loose the company of so noble a creature, thou devised'st a means to redeem him, and thereby to joyne him nearer to thy selfe in more glorious mansions and farre greater pleasures, both for duration of time and extention of delight.

2.
The hea-
venly Ieru-
salem.
Heb. 12. 22.

Glorious things are spoken of thee thou *City of God*, thou *Mount Sion*, thou *Heavenly Ierusalem*, thou *City of the great King*, for by divers such names art thou called. This is the place wherein the *Ancient* of daies hath chosen to dwell, whose most glorious presence so illightneth that *Imperiall* seate, that the darkest corner of *Heaven* (if I may so speake of such infinite brightnesse) is farre lighter then the greatest splendour of the

Sunne shining in his full strength, There are the innumerable company of Angels, those celestially quires with most melodious * ayres continually lauding and praising him that sitteth upon the Throne. There are those numberles numbers of the spirits of just and perfect men, out of all Nations, kindreds and people, standing before the Throne clothed with white robes, and palmes in their hands, giving glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power and might to GOD for ever and ever. When we but consider what company we shall meet with in Heaven, we neede not be curious to search after the exceeding joyes which GOD hath there provided for their entertainment: onely let us content our selves with what we read in generall and be ravisht in the reading of it, *that eye hath not seene, care hath not heard, neither is the heart of man able to conceive the things which God hath prepared for those that love him.* If the onely delight we have here be in the communion with the Saints on Earth, how shall our delight exceed in Heaven, where we shall meet with innumerable Saints that

* *Quae cantica?
que organa?
que cantilena?
que melodie?
sine fine decan-
tabuntur! So-
nant ibi semper
melliflua hym-
norum organa,
suavissima An-
gelorum melo-
dia Aug. Man.
Revel. 7. 9, &c.*

1 Cor. 2. 9.

there shall beare us company for ever.

3.

Beatificall
Vision.

* *Ubi species
& visio faciei
ad faciem, ubi
p'ena scientia
in omnibus &
per omnia, ubi
Summa Dei bo-
nitas cernitur
& lumen illu-
minans a Sa-
ctis glorificatur.
Aug. Man. c. 7.
Omnes dele-
stantur de Deo,
cujus aspectus
pulcher, facies
decora, eloquiū
dulce: delecta-
bilis est ad vi-
dendum, dulcis
ad presfruendum
&c. O beata
visio videre
Deum in seipso,
videre in nobis
& nos in co-
Bern.*

Medit. cap. 7.
• αυθρανοπι-
δης

But this is not all, for that which shall there most of all delight us, shall be the sight of God, that beatificall vision which the **Ancient's* so much speake of, to wit, the beholding of God face to face. That is to say, a plaine, full and familiar revelation of himselfe to us, so much as our natures are capable of, a figurative kinde of speech taken from the direct beholding of one man by another, whereby the beauty of the face is the better discovered, and it is called the Face of God by a **phrase* taken from men, because the perfection of beauty in man or woman is in the *Face*, which chiefly delighteth the eyes, and therefore God in discovering his beauty to us tearmes it by his *Face*. Hence are those sweet descriptions by the *Bride*, or her heavenly *Bridegroom* throughout the *Canticles* by his *Eyes*, his *Lippes*, his *Mouth*, his *Haire*, his *Teeth*, &c which all concurre to beautifie the face of man, but yet all so farre short to represent unto us that which is signified by the Face of God, that if all the excellency of beauty in the faces of all the men and wo-

men

men in the world were united into one singular perfection: yet it would not so much as decipher unto us one ray of GODS glorious countenance that shall shine upon us in Heaven. *In his presence* (saith the *Psalmist*) *is fullnesse of joy*; and it is the fullnesse that makes up the joy. Hence it is that in the earth the soule can have no true joy, because it can have no fulnesse, nothing in earth can fill the desires of it, for when we have heaped up never so many pleasures, never so many delights we still desire more. The reason is, the soule hath not yet attained those delights that will fill it, nor ever will, till it meet with him that fills heaven and earth, and then will it everlastingly fill it selfe. For beyond fulnes there is no appetite.

But this is not all, our delight in Heaven that we shall behold, the inexpressible beauties of God issuing from his glorious countenance; but herein is the singularity of our joy, that we shall be wonderfully taken with his beauty, and our soules inwardly ravished with the things that we shall behold. Let us resume that former instance, which is the

4.
*The delight
of the soule
in Heaven.*

oftnest used in Scripture to expresse the joyes of Heaven, viz. of the *Bridegroom* and the *Bride*. If the *Bridegroom* appeare never so lovely in comelinesse of body and condition; never so amiable in the endowments of minde; yet if the affections of the *Bride* be not inflamed with a love of them, if she prize them not above all, if her heart be not thereby tied to him with a constant and perpetuall tye; by how much she is deprived of these, by so much is shee dispoyled of her chiefest comfort. But here is the excellency of our state in Heaven, that we shall behold from the face of GOD most singular beauties beyond what we are able to speake or think. And which is more, our soules shall be continually ravisht with a delight of them; nothing shall bee able to make our joyes either to faint or to faile, for that nothing can separate betwixt GOD and the glorified soule, either to darken those beames of glory shining upon it, or to diminish its joyes in the fruition of them. For *sinne* which made all the bate betweene GOD and us we left behind us with our flesh, for it could not follow us
into

into heaven, and together with sinne wee parted with all our miseries, all our griefes and feares, and other calamities the wretched fruits and effects therof, which the Scripture tels us shall be there abolished, when it tells us *that all teares shall be wiped from our eyes.* There shall be no matter nor cause of griefe in Heaven, but only of joyes unspeakable and glorious.

Revel. 7. 17. &
21. 4.

And how can those joyes bee otherwise, when God from whom they flow is infinite in power to make them so, and everlasting in goodnesse and love to them who shall be made partakers of them. When Christ who hath purchased this glory for them, contracts with his Father that his children shall enjoy it, *Iohn 17. 24. Father I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.* As we received from his fullnesse a measure of grace on earth, so shall we an exceeding measure of glory in heaven. We see when the Sunne shineth how it illightneth all parts of the world on which it shineth; how light then is heaven when every part

5.
Causes of
this joy.

part of it is in it selfe farre brighter then the Sun; and when God whose eyes are ten thousand times brighter then the Sun there shines in perfect glory. And therefore excellently doth that beloved Disciple describe that place, *Revel. 21. Ver. 23.* *The City, saith he, hath no need of the Sunne* (admitting it to be meant of Heaven) *neither of the Moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth brighten it, and the Lambe is the light thereof.* Every Saint shall shine there like a Starre, and shall contribute their light for the beautifying of that most glorious place. O, what light will there be in Heaven when we shall see so many Suns, Nay, God would loose of the end of his creation of heaven, if the Saints did not there behold and enjoy infinite glory and delight. For he made it not for himselfe, (sith all places are alike to him who fills heaven and earth;) but therefore did hee make it with such infinite variety and perfection of beauty, that there his Saints might sit with him and sing his praises for evermore. When the soule of Saint *Austin* was carried up into the third heaven, in those his divine Meditations

O Civitas celestis, mansio securae, patria serena, et ampla, totum continens quod delectat.
Bern. Med.

ditations of the joyes thereof, considering the unmixed pleasures of that place; that rest was there without labour, dignity without feare, riches without losse, health without sicknesse, aboundance without want, life without death, felicity without calamity, and eternity without vanity. But when he had further brought into his ravished mind those most melodious Ditties of the Angels, and delicious Songs of the Saints, and such other delicate Musicke that was in heaven, he breakes forth into this celestiall rapture, *O how happy should I be, if I might but heare some of those sweete Songs that are there sung in honour of the blessed Trinity, but if I might be vouchsafed to be one of those heavenly Quiristers that might sing but one song to the Lord Iesus Christ of the sweet Songs of Sion, it would be a felicity too high for me.*

*Sed et nimirum
felix si ego ipse
meruero cantare
canticū Do-
mino Iesu Chri-
sto de dulcibus
canticis Sion.
Aug. Man. c. 6.*

Oh who would then fasten his delights on any pleasure that can here be offered unto us, when as the greatest felicitie in this world, if we should compasse Sea and Land for the obtaining of it, is but like that of the grasse, which in the morning flourisheth and

6.

*The vanity
of the plea-
sures of this
life.*

B

groweth

Vanity of life.
Job. 2. 4.

**Vita (inquam)
mea, vita fragi-
lis, vita caelica,
vita que quan-
to magis crescit
tanto magis de-
crescit, quanto
magis procedit,
tanto magis ad
mortem accedit.*

*Vita saxatilis &
umbraticaplenz
laqueis mortis.
Nunc gaudeo,
statim tristior:
nunc vigeo, jam
infirmior, nunc
vivo, statim mo-
rior, nunc felix
appareo, statim
miser, nunc ri-
dico, jam fleo; sic
q̄ omnia muta-
bilitati subja-
cent, ut nihil u-
na hora in uno
statu perman-
eat Aug. Soli-
loq. c. 2.*

**Iob 7. 9, 10.*

Vanity of
health.

** Non est vi-
vere sed valere
vita.*

groweth up, but in the evening is cut downe
and withered. Take a short survey of the
glory of all the earth, and beginne with life
it selfe the best of humane things, *Skinne for
skinne and all that a man hath (saith Iob) will
be give for his life, and yet what more * fraile
and brittle! what tongue wanteth not words
to expresse the vanity of it? A dreame; a
shadow, a blast, a bubble, a wind, a vapour,
a tale, a post, a cloud (all of them phrases
and similitudes of holy writ) yet cannot
sufficiently expresse the vanity of mans life.
a As the cloud is consumed (saith Iob) and va-
nisheth away, so he that goeth downe to the grave
shall come up no more. He shall returne no more
to his house, neither shall his place know him any
more.*

What is said of *Life* may bee said of
**Health*, the very perfection of life, how
vaine and fickle that is, one example in holy
writ will serve for a lively expression of the
vanity of both, in that excellent story in the
2. Booke of Kings, Cap. 4. set out on purpose
as it seemes to discover the vanity of all
temporall happinesse. A great noble wo-
man

man of *Shunem*, who abounding (I conceive) in many outward felicities, yet wanting a child which shee esteemed above all, refused the Kings favour in respect of this blessing. It is likely the Prophet for the kindnesse she shewed him would have satisfied her desire in any thing, yet neither honour, nor riches, nor preferment, nor the favour of a King (which many thousands would have coveted) could content her, but shee secretly asked that question that *Abraham* asked of God, O LORD *what wilt thou give mee* *sith I goe childlesse*. The Prophet granted her a sonne, never woman bare him with more joy, vvhhen this sonne vvas growne up, and her joy encreased vwith his years; how quickly vvas this incomparable *Jewell* snatcht from her, *on morning he fell sicke in his head and dyed ere noone*. All that pretinesse and beauty that was in the childe is now vanished, and all that wonderfull joy of the mother that was bound up in the life of her son, vvas novv dissolved into more sadnesse and heartsgriefe, then if she never had enjoyed the benefit.

Gen. 18.2.

7.
*Vanity of
 the whole
 world.*

What is said of life and health may be said of all things in the world besides. *Love not the world* (saith the Apostle) *1. John 2. v. 16, 17. nor the things in the world.* And he gives the reason by summing up the things of the world, and dividing them into 3. parts, *For all that is in the world* (saith he) *is either the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or pride of life,* and then in the next words he sheweth the vanity of them. *But the world passeth away and the lust thereof, &c.* But these generals will be better discerned by discovering the vanity of these 3. particulars, *Beauty, Riches, Honour,* being the lively characters and exact expressions of the *lusts of the flesh, of the eye, and pride of life,* and which are indeed the grand impostors, and bewitchers of the whole world, and oftentimes steale away the hearts of Gods owne people.

Beauty.

For *Beauty,* we may at once see both the power and the vanity of it, in that it insnared and beguiled the *boliest,* the wisest, and the strongest of men: *David, Salomon and Sampson,* how deare did those delights cost them: with how many afflictions were those bitter pleasures

pleasures attended, inſomuch as it coſt the laſt his life, the other his Kingdome, and the firſt his contentment. For from that time to the houre of his death *David* was not quiet from vvarre, from rebellions, from treaſons, from troubles brought upon him by his owne bowels. Nay, let a man behold the greateſt beauty that can poſſibly bee in the perſon of any, let the face be never ſo amiable for colour and favour, let the body bee never ſo comely for feature and ſhape, let the ſkinne be as white as the Lilly, and *embrodered over with purple veines*; adde to this, the moſt gracefull motion that ever was in any creature, yet were the mind of man by exemption of unruly affections, but permitted to be wiſe, and to pauſe upon this pleaſant vanity, and but conſider that if this faire body was ſmitten from *GOD* with the boyles and botches of *Iob*, what an ugly ſpectacle it would be, or what by addition of ſome little more time it will be, when it ſhall be withered and rivelled together with age, or if that be not, when it ſhall be turned into a rotten carcaſſe. Certainly the

soule of man would never rest till it had sought out a farre more glorious delight both for the excellency of being and lastingnesse of continuance, and therefore most true is that which the wisdome of truth hath uttered, *Favour is deceitfull, beauty is vanity*, so vaine, that the least ague doth change it, a small sicknes doth wast it, a little time doth fade it, a little sorrow doth melt and consume it. *When thou with rebukes (saith David) dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume like a moth.*

Prov. 31. 30.

Pfal. 39. 11.

Riches.

For *Riches*, if in the obtainement of them wee doe but looke upon the ends of *Judas* and the *Rich Glutton*, it might make us very slow to covet them, much more to affect them. For besides their vanity, that they take to themselves wings and flie away, how many are the miseries that attend upon them, in the getting, keeping and parting with them? But if to these, they be gotten with an ill conscience, and enjoyed without godlinesse, they are snares and thornes, nay very plagues and Scorpions unto us; fuell to our lusts, lets to our prayers, and blocks

in our waies of piety and devotion. No sin is such a canker to grace and holinesse, as is the sinne of covetousnesse, *πλεονεξία* (an extraordinary desire of heaping up riches.) *Πλεονεξία.* The Apostle Paul maketh it cleare by telling us, *Tim. Cap 6. v. 10.* That *the love of money is the root of all evill, which while some lusted after erred from the Faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrowes.* No tongue can expresse a worse effect, and from that effect greater misery then Apostacy from God, which is usually accompanied with fearefull sorrowes if not dispaire; witnesse that lamentable story of *Francis Spira*, who from this roote of covetousnesse to continue his Offices and meanes of getting, denied the true profession of the Gospell, wherein he had greatly profited, and subscribed to Popery which formerly hee had renounced and so fell into that intolerable misery of dispaire of his owne salvation.

For *Honour and Ambition*, if examples doe give instructions, as they then doe, when judgements are declared upon them, wee need goe no further for search of this vanity
Honour.
 then

then in *Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Alexander, Caesar, &c.* what vast desires were in them all for enlarging their Kingdomes, even to the clouds, what infinite care and painestooke they for the compassing of those desires to the hastning of their ends, and vvaisting out their lamps of life, and yet all their glorious Raignes are now shut up in vanity, their remembrance is as if they had never beene, nay let the desires of man be filled vvith all the earthly glory that is to be found in the vvhole vvorld, and let his heart cheare in it as much as may bee, yet that it might appeare to fraile man, that the highest vvorldly happinesse is not exempted from that condition of vanity, vvhich God and nature hath inseperably tyed to it, some crosse or misery that the vvifest man could never fore-see, shall ever attend high place to make it irksome and uncomfortable, if not to overthrow the horse and the rider, and cast downe the *Ambitious* man lower then the dust. Innumerable examples might be produced to prove this out of Histories in all kinds: I vvill take but one for

Sammiſq; nega-
rum stare diu:
nimioque gra-
ues sub pondere
lapsas Lucan.

Βάβατον ἔδ' ἐν
ἔστυ ἐν ἄνι τῷ
βίῳ Stob.

all out of the best of them, *The Booke of*
G O D, *Haman* (wee know) wanted not for
as much honour as could be heaped upon a
man; Prince and people were all but as in-
struments to contribute to his happinesse:
and yet a (wonderfull thing) the want of a
cappe from poore *Mordecay*, whose head he
might have taken off at his pleasure marred
all his mirth; a silly crosse one would thinke
to vex a wise man, yet G O D put such a
sling into it, that it did not onely quite be-
reave this proud man of all his joy, but ne-
ver left him til it cast him down from the top
of all his honour so low, as that his place
could no more be found. To proceed high-
er, and as farre as earthly felicitie can stretch
unto, let honour and high place, and all the
outward pompe of this world bee conferred
upon a *godly man*, and let this man have abi-
litie from G O D to beare it, so that no whit of
G O D S glorie bee lost, nor any of G O D S gra-
ces in him diminished, (which rarely hap-
pens to high place) yet that the most glo-
rious state of man might still bee subject to
that vanity, which is over all created felicity,

*Ad summum
quicquid venit
ad exitium pro-
pe est. Senec.*

some Envy, suspition, jealousy, disdain, &c. or other accident shall alwaies attend earthly glory, to make it miserable. A better instance cannot be given then in holy Daniel, whom when that great Darius had advanced (meerely for his virtues without any suing or seeking of his owne) above all the Presidents and Princes in his Kingdome; this very thing wrought such envie and disdain in the hearts of the Princes against him, that although, as the Text saith, *There was neither error nor fault found in Daniel*, yet they never rested till they had cast him from the height of his happinesse to the lowest pit, even a Denne of Lions. To summe up all in this one period, Give me a man endowed with all the excellencies that have beene in any since the Creation, let him attaine to the *Learning, Wisedome, Riches and Glory*, of King Salomon, let him be as vvise for counsell as *Abitophel*, let him have the meeknesse of *Moses*, the courage of *David*, the strength of *Sampson*, the patience of *Iob*, the innocency of *Isaack*, the eloquence of *Paul*. the beauty of *Abfolon*, that from top to toe had no blemish

Dan. 6. 4, 5.

*Nunquam emi-
nentia invidia
carent, & diffi-
cilis in perfecto
mora est. Patere.*

2 Sam. 14. 25.

in

in him, yet what is all this but *admired vanity*? All this pompe shall not follow him to the grave, the wormes and dust shall devoure both it and him: The Prophet *David* Pfal 46. 4. makes this *Epitaph* for him, *His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that every day his thoughts perish.*

How incomparably excellent then is the glorie of Heaven, where none of these changes shall be, where shall be wonderfull advancement, but without Injustice, abundance of glorie, but without Envie, infinite wealth, but without woe, admirable beautie and felicitie, but without vanity or infirmity. Here shall the patient sufferings of the Saints be amply rewarded, and all the rage and spite of their enemies on earth, shall instead of doing them hurt, adde much to their crowne of glorie, here shall all those scoffes, those bitter gybes and jests against the puritie of Gods children, be turned with horrible amazements and terrour into the bosomes of wicked men, when they shall behold with anguish of spirit what they here jested at. 8. Excellency of Heaven.

That onely the pure in Math 5. 8.

spirit shall see GOD and behold his glory.

9.

*Application
to the soule.
Ibi est summa
felicitas, sum-
ma jucunditas,
vera libertas,
perfecta chari-
tas, eterna se-
cura eternitas.
Bern. Medit.*

O then my soule, sith by these few instances thou maist take a scantling of the vanitie and miserie of all worldly happinesse, raise up thy desires to that *blessed place where is fullnesse of joy and pleasures for evermore, To him in whom is no variety nor shadow of change; to that companie which everlastingly sing and are never sad.* Think with thy selfe when thou seest and delightest in the beautie of any creature, bee it wife, children, houses, lands, &c. that these are but vanities under the Sunne; to put thee in minde, that true felicities reach as high as Heaven, and were they as glorious as the Sunn it selfe, yet they are not freed from clouds and darkenesse and many eclipses, which shew their emptinesse and infelicitie. Nay, wee know not when we behold them in their highest perfection, whether they will not turne to bitterness at the last. *Hazael* looked amiably upon *Elizeus*, yet that good Prophet wept when hee saw him, as beholding the abundance of evill which that goodly person should afterwards execute. *The eye is not satisfied*

fied with seeing, nor the eare filled with hearing, Eccle. 1. 8.
 faith the wise man. The more a man covets
 and hunts after the things of this life, his de-
 sires are hereby more enlarged, but not his
 contentment; for the mind is not pleased in
 that it is not satisfied.

Get thee gone then, O my soule, and flie
 hence to those celestiall mansions where on-
 ly thou shalt finde rest, there, there shall all
 thy desires be filled, there shall the presence
 of God replenish thee with unutterable de-
 lights, there onely shalt thou heare *the voice*
of joy and gladnesse, and sorrow and mourning
shall flee away, divorce thy affections from sin
 and from all the pleasures of the world
 though never so deare to thee, and marry
 them to CHRIST, thy gaine shall bee great,
 thy glory greater, even life and happinesse
 for evermore. Why should'st thou stay and
 abide any longer here amongst the enemies
 of thy peace, amid'st so many sorrowes and
 afflictions pursuing thee for thy sins? Who
 would not forgoe a cottage to gaine a King-
 dome? who would not exchange a few fraile
 comforts of this life, for those permanent

10.
Conclusion.

*In torrente il-
 lius voluptatis
 nil ultra appe-
 tet cumulata
 satietas tanta
 erit felicitas.
 Bern ibid.*

*Delicatus es. si
 & hic vis gau-
 dere cum saeculo
 & postea reg-
 nare cum Chri-
 sto. Hieron. Epi-
 a l Heliodor.*

joyes of blisse? why vvilt thou any longer settle thy heart upon that vvhich is nothing? what are the choifest delights here below being rightly ballanced, other then *vanity and vexation of spirit*. Cease then to admire any outward excellencies and be vvholly taken vvith those resplendent beauties that are in the face of thy Saviour, to vvhom ere long thou shalt be married, and partake of that great feast vvith vvhich hee vvill entertaine thee at that vvedding day. Carke and care onely for those durable riches that shall then abide vvith thee vvhen thou shalt be here no more. Hasten and hunt after the honour and happinesse of the Saints; there is no preferment like being in heaven, possess thy selfe of him vvho hath beene thy GOD from thy youth, vvho hath many a time raised thee up vvith his comforts, vvhen thou hast beene in the *Valley of the shadow of death,* *who hath beene the portion of thine inheritance* and *hath maintain'd thy lot*: forsake him not and he vvill bring thee to *honour* at the last, to such honours as all the glory of this vvorld cannot reach unto. He that made heaven

for

for his owne Children, can onely declare
the joyes of that place: *Returne then into thy
rest O my soule,* from which thou hast long
wandered, Be content to part with any
thing on earth which thou canst not keepe,
to gaine every thing in Heaven, which thou
canst never loose: drowne all thy delights in
those sweete contemplations of heavenly
blisse, presse hard to this marke, strive for
this victorie, fight for this Crowne, *lay
bold on eternall life,* and let nothing
in this world take away
thy Crowne.

* *
*

FINIS.

*Sittat caro me-
a, desideret illud
tota substantia
mea, donec intrē
in gaudium
Domini mei, ibi
permansurus
per secula,
Amen. Aug.
Man. cap. 36.*