

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

1

¹ Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth,

Think ye of the Lord * with a good mind,
And in singleness of heart seek ye him;

² Because he is found of them that tempt him not,
And is manifested to them that do not distrust him.

³ For crooked thoughts separate from God;
And the *supreme* Power, when it is brought to the proof, † putteth to confusion the foolish:

⁴ Because wisdom will not enter into a soul that deviseth evil,

Nor dwell in a body that is held in pledge by sin.

⁵ For a holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit.

And will start away from thoughts that are without understanding,

And will be ‡ put to confusion when unrighteousness hath come in.

⁶ For § wisdom is a spirit that loveth man,

And she will not hold a ** blasphemer guiltless for his lips;

Because God beareth witness of his reins,

And is a true overseer of his heart,

And a hearer of his tongue:

* **1:1** Gr. in goodness. † **1:3** Gr. convicteth. ‡ **1:5** Gr. convicted. § **1:6** Some authorities read the spirit of wisdom is loving to man. ** **1:6** Or, reviler

7 Because the spirit of the Lord hath filled †† the world,
And that which holdeth all things together hath knowledge of *every* voice.

8 Therefore no man that uttereth unrighteous things shall be unseen;

‡‡ Neither shall Justice, when it convicteth, pass him by.

9 For in *the midst of* his counsels the ungodly shall be searched out;

And the sound of his words shall come unto the Lord

To bring to conviction his lawless deeds:

10 Because *there is* an ear of jealousy *that* listeneth to all things,

And the noise of murmurings is not hid.

11 Beware then of unprofitable murmuring,

And refrain your tongue from backbiting;

Because no secret utterance shall go on its way void,

And a mouth that belieth destroyeth a soul.

12 Court not death in the error of your life;

Neither draw upon yourselves destruction by the works of your hands:

13 Because God made not death;

Neither delighteth he when the living perish:

14 For he created all things that they might have being:

And§§ the generative powers of the world *are* healthsome,

†† 1:7 Gr. the inhabited earth. ‡‡ 1:8 Some authorities read Nor indeed. §§ 1:14 Or, all the races of creatures in the world

And there is no poison of destruction in them:
 Nor hath Hades ^{***} royal dominion upon earth,
 15 For righteousness is immortal:
 16 But ungodly men by their hands and their
 words called ††† death unto them:
 Deeming him a friend they ††† consumed away,
 And they made a covenant with him,
 Because they are worthy to be of his portion.

2

1 For they said * within themselves, reasoning not
 aright,
 Short and sorrowful is our life;
 And there is no healing when a man cometh to his
 end,
 And none was ever known that † gave release
 from Hades.
 2 Because by mere chance were we born,
 And hereafter we shall be as though we had never
 been:
 Because the breath in our nostrils is smoke,
 And ‡ while our heart beateth reason is a spark,
 3 Which being extinguished, the body shall be
 turned into ashes,
 And the spirit shall be dispersed as thin air;
 4 And our name shall be forgotten in time,
 And no man shall remember our works;
 And our life shall pass away as the traces of a
 cloud,

*** 1:14 Or, a royal house ††† 1:16 Or, Hades Gr. him.

††† 1:16 Or, were consumed with love of him * 2:1 Or, among
 † 2:1 Or, returned out of Hades ‡ 2:2 Or, reason is a spark
 kindled by the beating of our heart

And shall be scattered as is a mist,
 When it is chased by the beams of the sun,
 And § overcome by the heat thereof.
 5 For our allotted time is the passing of a shadow,
 And ** our end retreateth not;
 Because it is fast sealed, and none †† turneth it
 back.
 6 Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things
 †† that *now* are;
 And let us use the creation §§ with all our soul ***
 as youth's *possession*.
 7 Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and per-
 fumes;
 And let no flower of ††† spring pass us by:
 8 Let us crown ourselves with rosebuds, before
 they be withered:
 9 Let none of us go without his share in our proud
 revelry:
 Everywhere let us leave tokens of *our* mirth:
 Because this is our portion, and our lot is this.
 10 Let us oppress the righteous poor;
 Let us not spare the widow,
 Nor reverence the hairs of the old man gray for
 length of years.
 11 But let our strength be *to us* a law of righteous-
 ness;
 For that which is weak is ††† found to be of no
 service.
 12 But let us lie in wait for the righteous man,

§ 2:4 Gr. weighed down. ** 2:5 Or, there is no putting back of
 our end †† 2:5 Or, cometh again †† 2:6 Or, that are §§ 2:6
 Gr. earnestly. *** 2:6 Some authorities read even as our youth.
 ††† 2:7 Some authorities read air. ††† 2:11 Gr. convicted.

Because he is of disservice to us,
 And is contrary to our works,
 And upbraideth us with sins against §§§ the law,
 And layeth to our charge sins against our discipline.

13 He professeth to have knowledge of God,
 And nameth himself * servant of the Lord.

14 He became to us a reproof of our thoughts.

15 He is grievous unto us even to behold,
 Because his life is unlike other men's,
 And his paths are of strange fashion.

16 We were accounted of him as base metal,
 And he abstaineth from our ways as from uncleannesses.

The latter end of the righteous he calleth happy;
 And he vaunteth that God is his father.

17 Let us see if his words be true,
 And let us try what shall befall in the ending of his *life*.

18 For if the righteous man is God's son, he will uphold him,
 And he will deliver him out of the hand of his adversaries.

19 With outrage and torture let us put him to the test,

That we may learn his gentleness,
 And may prove his patience under wrong.

20 Let us condemn him to a shameful death;
 For † he shall be visited according to his words.

21 Thus reasoned they, and they were led astray;

§§§ 2:12 Or, law * 2:13 Or, child † 2:20 Gr. there shall be a visitation of him out of his words.

For their † wickedness blinded them,
²² And they knew not the mysteries of God,
 Neither hoped they for wages of holiness,
 Nor did they judge *that there is* a prize for blame-
 less souls.
²³ Because God created man for incorruption,
 And made him an image of his own § proper
 being;
²⁴ But by the envy of the devil death entered into
 the world,
 And they that are of his portion make trial thereof.

3

¹ But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of
 God,
 And no torment shall touch them.
² In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have
 died;
 And their departure was accounted *to be their*
 hurt,
³ And their journeying away from us *to be their*
 ruin:
 But they are in peace.
⁴ For even if in the sight of men they be punished,
 Their hope is full of immortality;
⁵ And having borne a little chastening, they shall
 receive great good;
 Because God made trial of them, and found them
 worthy of himself.
⁶ As gold in the furnace he proved them,
 And as a whole burnt offering he accepted them.

† 2:21 Or, malice § 2:23 Some authorities read everlastingness.

7 And in the time of their visitation they shall shine
forth,
And as sparks among stubble they shall run to and
fro.

8 They shall judge nations, and have dominion
over peoples;
And the Lord shall reign over them for evermore.
9 They that trust on him shall understand truth,
And * the faithful shall abide with him in love;
Because grace and mercy are to his chosen.

10 But the ungodly shall be requited even as they
reasoned,
They which lightly regarded † the righteous *man*,
and revolted from the Lord;

11 (For he that setteth at nought wisdom and disci-
pline is miserable;)
And void is their hope and their toils unprofitable,
And useless are their works:

12 Their wives are foolish, and wicked are their
children;

13 Accursed is their begetting.

Because happy is the barren that is undefiled,
She who hath not conceived in transgression;
She shall have fruit when *God* visiteth souls.

14 And *happy is* the eunuch which hath wrought
no lawless deed with his hands,
Nor imagined wicked things against the Lord;
For there shall be given him for his faithfulness ‡
a peculiar favour,

* 3:9 Or, they that are faithful through love shall abide with him

† 3:10 Or, that which is righteous ‡ 3:14 Or, the grace of God's
chosen Gr. a chosen grace.

And a lot in the sanctuary of the Lord more delightful *than wife or children*.

15 For good labours have fruit of great renown;
And the root of understanding cannot fail.

16 But children of adulterers shall not come to maturity,
And the seed of an unlawful bed shall vanish away.

17 For if they live long, they shall be held in no account,
And at the last their old age shall be without honour.

18 And if they die quickly, they § shall have no hope,
Nor in the day of decision *shall they have* consolation.

19 For ** the end of an unrighteous generation is always grievous.

4

1 Better *than this* is childishness with virtue;
For in the memory * of virtue is immortality:
Because it is recognised both before God and before men.

2 When it is present, *men* imitate it;
And they long after it when it is departed:
And † throughout all time it marcheth crowned in triumph,
Victorious in the strife for the prizes that are undefiled.

§ 3:18 Some authorities read have ** 3:19 Gr. the ends...are grievous. * 4:1 Gr. of it. † 4:2 Gr. in the age.

3 But the multiplying brood of the ungodly shall be
of no profit,

And † with bastard § slips they shall not strike deep
root,

Nor shall they establish a sure hold.

4 For even if these ** put forth boughs and flourish
for a season,

Yet, standing unsure, they shall be shaken by the
wind,

And by the violence of winds they shall be rooted
out.

5 *Their* branches shall be broken off before they
come to maturity,

and their fruit *shall be* useless,

Never ripe to eat, and fit for nothing.

6 For children unlawfully begotten are witnesses
of wickedness

Against parents when *God* searcheth them out.

7 But a righteous man, though he die before his
time, shall be at rest.

8 (For honourable old age is not that which
standeth in length of time,

Nor is its measure given by number of years:

9 But understanding is gray hairs unto men,

And an unspotted life is ripe old age.)

10 Being found well-pleasing unto God he was
beloved *of him*,

And while living among sinners he was trans-
lated:

† 4:3 Gr. from § 4:3 Or, offshoots ** 4:4 Gr. in boughs
flourish.

11 He was caught away, lest †† wickedness should
change his understanding,
Or guile deceive his soul.

12 (For the bewitching of naughtiness bedimmeth
the things which are good,
And the giddy whirl of desire perverteth an inno-
cent mind.)

13 Being made perfect in a little while, he fulfilled
long †† years;

14 For his soul was pleasing unto the Lord:
Therefore §§ hastened he out of the midst of wicked-
ness.

15 But as for the peoples, seeing and understand-
ing not,

Neither laying *** this to heart,
That grace and mercy are with his chosen,
And that ††† he visiteth his holy ones:-

16 But a righteous man that is dead shall condemn
the ungodly that are living,
And youth that is quickly perfected the many
years of an unrighteous man's old age;

17 For *the ungodly* shall see a wise man's end,
And shall not understand what the Lord purposed
concerning him,
And for what he safely kept him:-

18 They shall see, and they shall despise;
But them the Lord shall laugh to scorn.
And after this they shall become a dishonoured
carcase,

And ††† a reproach among the dead for ever:

†† 4:11 Or, malice †† 4:13 Gr. times. §§ 4:14 Or, he hastened
him away *** 4:15 Gr. such a thing as this. ††† 4:15 Gr. his
visitation is with. ††† 4:18 Or, be for outrage

19 Because he shall dash them speechless to the
ground,
And shall shake them from the foundations,
And they shall §§§ lie utterly waste, and they shall
be in anguish,
And their memory shall perish.

20 They shall come, * when their sins are reckoned
up, with coward fear;
And their lawless deeds shall convict them to their
face.

5

1 Then shall the righteous man stand in great
boldness
Before the face of them that afflicted him,
And them that make his labours of no account.

2 When they see * it, they shall be troubled with
terrible fear,
And shall be amazed at the marvel of *God's* salva-
tion.

3 They shall say † within themselves repenting,
And for distress of spirit shall they groan,
This was he whom aforesaid we had in derision,
And *made* a parable of ‡ reproach:

4 We fools accounted his life madness,
And his end without honour:

5 How was he numbered among sons of God?
And *how* is his lot among saints?

6 Verily we went astray from the way of truth,
And the light of righteousness shined not for us,

§§§ 4:19 Or, be a perpetual desolation * 4:20 Or, when they
reckon up their sins * 5:2 Or, him † 5:3 Or, among ‡ 5:3
Or, reproach, we fools: we accounted

And the sun rose not for us.

⁷We § took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and
destruction,

And we journeyed through trackless deserts,
But the way of the Lord we knew not.

⁸What did our arrogance profit us?

And what good have riches ** and vaunting
brought us?

⁹Those things all passed away as a shadow,
And as a message that runneth by:

¹⁰As a ship passing through the billowy water,
Whereof, when it is gone by, there is no trace to be
found,

Neither pathway of its keel in the billows:

¹¹Or as when a bird flieth through the air,

No token of *her* passage is found,

But the light wind, lashed with the stroke of her
pinions,

And rent asunder †† with the violent rush of the
moving wings, is passed through,

And afterwards no sign of *her* coming is found
therein:

¹²Or as when an arrow is shot at a mark,
The air departed closeth up again immediately,
So that men know not where it passed through:

¹³So we also, as soon as we were born, ‡‡ ceased to
be;

And of virtue we had no sign to shew,

But in our wickedness we were utterly consumed.

§ 5:7 See Prov. xiv. 14. ** 5:8 Gr. with †† 5:11 Or,
with the violent rush, is passed through by the motion of her wings

‡‡ 5:13 Gr. failed.

14 Because the hope of the ungodly man is as chaff
carried by the wind,

And §§ as *** foam vanishing before a tempest;
And is scattered as smoke *is scattered* by the wind,
And passeth by as the remembrance of a guest that
tarrieth but a day.

15 But the righteous live for ever,
And in the Lord is their reward,
And the care for them with the Most High.

16 Therefore shall they receive the crown of royal
dignity

And the diadem of beauty from the Lord's hand;
Because with his right hand shall he cover them,
And with his arm shall he shield them.

17 He shall take his jealousy as complete armour,
And shall make the *whole* creation his weapons
††† for vengeance on *his* enemies:

18 He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate,
And shall array himself with judgement un-
feigned as with a helmet;

19 He shall take holiness as an invincible shield,

20 And he shall sharpen stern wrath for a sword:
And the world shall go forth with him to fight
against *his* insensate *foes*.

21 Shafts of lightning shall fly with true aim,
And from the clouds, as from a well drawn bow,
shall they leap to the mark.

§§ 5:14 Gr. as foam chased to thinness: or, as thin foam chased.
*** 5:14 Most Greek authorities read hoar frost: some
authorities, perhaps rightly, a spider's web. ††† 5:17 Or, to repel
his enemies

22 And *as* from an engine of war shall be hurled
hailstones full of wrath;
The water of the sea shall be angered against
them,
And rivers shall sternly overwhelm them;
23 A mighty blast shall encounter them,
And as a tempest shall it winnow them away:
And *so* shall lawlessness make all the land deso-
late,
And their evil-doing shall overturn the thrones of
princes.

6

1 Hear therefore, ye kings, and understand;
Learn, ye judges of the ends of the earth:
2 Give ear, ye that have dominion over much
people,
And make your boast * in multitudes of nations.
3 Because your dominion was given you from the
Lord,
And your sovereignty from the Most High;
Who shall search out your works,
And shall make inquisition of your counsels:
4 Because being officers of his kingdom ye did not
judge aright,
Neither kept ye † law, nor walked after the counsel
of God.
5 Awfully and swiftly shall he come upon you;
Because a stern judgement befalleth them that be
in high place:

* 6:2 Or, in the multitudes of your nations † 6:4 Or, the law

6 For the man of low estate may be pardoned in mercy,

But mighty men shall be ‡ searched out mightily.

7 For the Sovereign Lord of all will not refrain himself for any *man's* person,

Neither will he reverence greatness;

Because it is he that made *both* small and great,

And alike he taketh thought for all;

8 But § strict is the scrutiny that cometh upon the powerful.

9 Unto you therefore, O princes, are my words,

That ye may learn wisdom and ** fall not from the right way.

10 For they that have kept holily the things that are holy shall *themselves* be †† hallowed;

And they that have been taught them shall find what to answer;

11 Set your desire therefore on my words;

Long for *them*, and ye shall be †† trained by *their* discipline.

12 Wisdom is radiant and fadeth not away;

And easily is she beheld of them that love her,

And found of them that seek her.

13 She forestalleth them that desire *to know her*, making herself first known. 14 He that

riseth up early to *seek* her shall have no toil,

For he shall find her sitting at his gates.

15 For to think upon her is perfectness of understanding,

‡ 6:6 Gr. put to the test. § 6:8 Gr. strong. ** 6:9 Gr. fall not aside. †† 6:10 Or; accounted holy †† 6:11 Gr. disciplined.

And he that watcheth for her sake shall quickly be free from care.

16 Because she goeth about, herself seeking them that are worthy of her,

And in their paths she appeareth unto them graciously,

And in every purpose she meeteth them.

17 For §§ her *** true beginning is desire of discipline;

And the care for discipline is love *of her*;

18 And love *of her* is observance of her laws;

And to give heed to *her* laws confirmeth incorruption;

19 And incorruption ††† bringeth near unto God;

20 So then desire of wisdom promoteth to a kingdom.

21 If therefore ye delight in thrones and sceptres, ye princes of peoples,

Honour wisdom, that ye may reign for ever.

22 But what wisdom is, and how she came into being, I will declare,

And I will not hide mysteries from you;

But I will trace *her* out ††† from the beginning of creation,

And bring the knowledge of her into clear light,

And I will not pass by the truth;

23 Neither indeed will I take §§§ pining envy for my companion in the way,

§§ 6:17 Or, her beginning is the true desire *** 6:17 Gr. truest.

††† 6:19 Gr. maketh to be near. ††† 6:22 Or, from her first

beginning §§§ 6:23 Gr. wasted.

Because * envy shall have no fellowship with wisdom.

24 But a multitude of wise men is salvation to the world,

And an understanding king is tranquillity to *his* people.

25 Wherefore be disciplined by my words, and *thereby* shall ye profit.

7

1 I myself also am * mortal, like to all,
And am sprung from one born of the earth, *the man* first formed,

2 And in the womb of a mother was I moulded into flesh in the time of ten months,
Being compacted in blood of the seed of man and pleasure that came with sleep.

3 And I also, when I was born, drew in the common air,
And fell upon the † kindred earth,
Uttering, like all, for my first voice, the selfsame wail:

4 In swaddling clothes was I nursed, and ‡ with *watchful* cares.

5 For no king had any other first beginning;

6 But all men have one entrance into life, and a like departure.

7 For this cause I prayed, and understanding was given me:

I called upon *God*, and there came to me a spirit of wisdom.

* 6:23 Gr. this * 7:1 Many authorities read a mortal man.

† 7:3 Gr. of like qualities. ‡ 7:4 Gr. in.

8 I preferred her before sceptres and thrones,
And riches I esteemed nothing in comparison of
her.

9 Neither did I liken to her any priceless gem,
Because all the gold *of the earth* in her presence is
a little sand,

And silver shall be accounted as clay before her.

10 Above health and comeliness I loved her,
And I chose to have her rather than light,
Because her bright shining is never laid to sleep.

11 But with her there came to me all good things
together,

And in her hands innumerable riches:

12 And I rejoiced over *them* all because wisdom
leadeth them;

Though I knew not that she was the § mother of
them.

13 As I learned without guile, I impart without
grudging;

I do not hide her riches.

14 For she is unto men a treasure that faileth not,
And they that use it ** obtain friendship with God,
Commended *to him* †† by the gifts which they
through discipline present *to him*.

15 But to me may God give to speak †† with judge-
ment,

And to conceive thoughts worthy of what §§ hath
been given *me*;

§ 7:12 Some authorities read first origin. ** 7:14 Gr. prepare
for themselves. †† 7:14 Gr. for the sake of the presents that come
of discipline. †† 7:15 Or, according to his mind Or, according to
my mind §§ 7:15 Some authorities read is said.

Because himself is one that guideth even wisdom
and that correcteth the wise.

16 For in his hand are both we and our words;
All understanding, and *all* acquaintance with
divers crafts.

17 For himself gave me an unerring knowledge of
the things that are,

To know the constitution of the world, and the
operation of the elements;

18 The beginning and end and middle of times,
The alternations of the solstices and the changes
of seasons,

19 The circuits of years and the *** positions of
stars;

20 The natures of living creatures and the ragings
of wild beasts,

The violences of ††† winds and the thoughts of
men,

The diversities of plants and the virtues of roots:

21 All things that are either secret or manifest I
learned,

22 For she that is the artificer of all things taught
me, *even* wisdom.

For there is in her a spirit quick of understanding,
holy,

‡‡‡ Alone in kind, manifold,

Subtil, freely moving,

Clear in utterance, unpolluted,

Distinct, unharmed,

Loving what is good, keen, unhindered,

23 Beneficent, loving toward man,

*** 7:19 Or, constellations ††† 7:20 Or, spirits ‡‡‡ 7:22 Gr.
Sole-born.

Stedfast, sure, free from care,
 All-powerful, all-surveying,
 And penetrating through all spirits
 That are quick of understanding, pure, most sub-
 til:

24 For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;
 Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by
 reason of her pureness.

25 For she is a §§§ breath of the power of God,
 And a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty;
 Therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into
 her.

26 For she is an effulgence from everlasting light,
 And an unspotted mirror of the working of God,
 And an image of his goodness.

27 And she, being one, hath power to do all things;
 And remaining in herself, reneweth all things:
 And from generation to generation passing into
 holy souls

She maketh *men* friends of God and prophets.

28 For nothing doth God love save him that
 dwelleth with wisdom.

29 For she is fairer than the sun,
 And above * all the constellations of the stars:
 Being compared with light, she is found *to be*
 before it;

30 For † to the light *of day* succeedeth night,
 But against wisdom evil doth not prevail;

8

1 But she * reacheth from one end *of the world* to

§§§ 7:25 Gr. vapour. * 7:29 Gr. every arrangement of stars.

† 7:30 Gr. to this. * 8:1 Or, reacheth from end onward unto
 end mightily

the other with full strength,
And ordereth all things † graciously.

² Her I loved and sought out from my youth,
And I sought to take her for my bride,
And I became enamoured of her beauty.

³ She glorifieth *her* noble birth in that it is given
her to live with God,
And the Sovereign Lord of all loved her.

⁴ For she is initiated into the knowledge of God,
And she ‡ chooseth out *for him* his works.

⁵ But if riches are a desired possession in life,
What is richer than wisdom, which worketh all
things?

⁶ § And if understanding worketh,
Who more than ** wisdom is an artificer of the
things that are?

⁷ And if a man loveth righteousness,
†† The fruits of wisdom's labour are virtues,
For she teacheth soberness and understanding,
righteousness and courage;
And there is nothing in life for men more prof-
itable than these.

⁸ And if a man longeth even for much experience,
She knoweth ‡‡ the things of old, and §§ divineth
the things to come:

She understandeth subtilties of speeches and in-
terpretations of dark sayings:

† 8:1 Or, unto good use ‡ 8:4 Some authorities read deviseth
for him. § 8:6 The Greek text of this clause is perhaps corrupt.

** 8:6 Gr. she. †† 8:7 Gr. Her labours are. ‡‡ 8:8 Some
authorities read how to divine the things of old and the things to
come. §§ 8:8 Gr. conjectureth.

She foreseeth signs and wonders, and the issues of seasons and times.

⁹ I determined therefore to take her unto me to live with me,

Knowing that she is one who would *** give me good *thoughts* for counsel,

And ††† encourage me in cares and grief.

¹⁰ Because of her I shall have glory among multitudes,

And honour in the sight of elders, though I be young.

¹¹ I shall be found of a quick conceit when I give judgement,

And in the presence of ††† princes I shall be admired.

¹² When I am silent, they shall wait for me;

And when I open my lips, they shall give heed unto me;

And if I continue speaking, they shall lay their hand upon their mouth.

¹³ Because of her I shall have immortality,

And leave behind an eternal memory to them that come after me.

¹⁴ I shall govern peoples,

And nations shall be subjected to me.

¹⁵ Dread princes shall fear me when they hear of *me*:

Among *my* §§§ people I shall shew myself a good *ruler*; and in war courageous.

¹⁶ When I am come into my house, I shall find rest with her;

*** **8:9** Or, hold counsel with me for good things, and...against cares and grief ††† **8:9** Or, exhort Or, advise ††† **8:11** Or,

mighty men §§§ **8:15** Gr. multitude.

For converse with her hath no bitterness,
And to live with her hath no pain, but gladness
and joy.

17 When I considered these things in myself,
And took thought in my heart how that in kinship
unto wisdom is immortality,

18 And in her friendship is good delight,
And in the labours of her hands is wealth that
faileth not,

And in * assiduous communing with her is under-
standing,
And great renown in having fellowship with her
words,

I went about seeking how to take her unto myself.

19 Now I was † a child of parts, and a good soul fell
to my lot;

20 Nay rather, being good, I came into a body
undefiled.

21 But perceiving that I could not otherwise ‡ pos-
sess *wisdom* except God gave *her* me

(Yea and to know § by whom the grace is given,
this *too* came of understanding),

I pleaded with the Lord and besought him, and
with my whole heart I said,

9

1 O God of the fathers, and * Lord who keepest thy
mercy,

* **8:18** Gr. practice of communion. † **8:19** Or, a goodly child
‡ **8:21** This is the probable sense: the Greek text is perhaps
defective. § **8:21** Gr. of whom is the grace. * **9:1** Gr. Lord
of thy mercy. Compare 2 Sam. vii. 15; Ps. lxxxix. 49.

Who madest all things † by thy word;
 2 And by thy wisdom thou formedst man,
 That he should have dominion over the creatures
 that were made by thee,
 3 And rule the world in holiness and righteous-
 ness,
 And execute judgement in uprightness of soul;
 4 Give me wisdom, her that sitteth by thee on thy ‡
 throne;
 And reject me not from among thy § servants:
 5 Because I am thy bondman and the son of thy
 handmaid,
 A man weak and short-lived,
 And of small power to understand judgement and
 laws.
 6 For even if a man be perfect among the sons of
 men,
 Yet if the wisdom that cometh from thee be not
 with him, he shall be held in no account.
 7 Thou didst choose me before *my brethren* to be
 king of thy people,
 And to do judgement for thy sons and daughters.
 8 Thou gavest command to build a sanctuary in thy
 holy mountain,
 And ** an altar in the city of thy †† habitation,
 A copy of the holy tabernacle which thou pre-
 paredst aforehand from the beginning.
 9 And with thee is wisdom, which knoweth thy
 works,
 And was present when thou wast making the
 world,

† 9:1 Gr. in. ‡ 9:4 Gr. thrones. § 9:4 Or, children ** 9:8
 Or, a place of sacrifice †† 9:8 Gr. tabernacling.

And which understandeth what is pleasing in
thine eyes,

And what is right †† according to thy command-
ments.

10 Send her forth out of the holy heavens,

And from the throne of thy glory bid her come,

That being present with me she may toil *with me*,

And *that* I may learn what is well-pleasing before
thee.

11 For she knoweth all things and hath under-
standing *thereof*,

And in my doings she shall guide me in *ways of*
soberness,

And she shall guard me in her glory.

12 And so shall my works be acceptable,

And I shall judge thy people righteously,

And I shall be worthy of my father's §§ throne.

13 For what man shall know the counsel of God?

Or who shall conceive what the Lord willeth?

14 For the thoughts of mortals are *** timorous,

And our devices are prone to fail.

15 For a corruptible body weigheth down the soul,

And the earthy frame lieth heavy on a mind that
††† is full of cares.

16 And hardly do we ††† divine the things that are
on earth,

And the things that are close at hand we find with
labour;

But the things that are in the heavens who *ever yet*
traced out?

†† 9:9 Gr. in. §§ 9:12 Gr. thrones. *** 9:14 The Greek
text here is perhaps corrupt. ††† 9:15 Or, museth upon many
things ††† 9:16 Gr. conjecture.

17 And who *ever* gained knowledge of thy counsel,
 except thou §§§ gavest wisdom,
 And sentest thy holy spirit * from on high?
 18 And it was thus that the ways of them which are
 on earth were corrected,
 And men were taught the things that are pleasing
 unto thee;
 And through wisdom were they saved.

10

1 * Wisdom guarded to the end the first formed
 father of the world, that was created alone,
 And delivered him out of his own transgression,
 2 And gave him strength to get dominion over all
 things.
 3 But when an unrighteous man fell away from
 her in his anger,
 He perished himself in the rage wherewith he
 slew his brother.
 4 And when for his cause the earth was drowning
 with a flood,
 Wisdom again saved it,
 Guiding the righteous man's course by a poor
 piece of wood.

§§§ 9:17 Or, hadst given...and sent * 9:17 Gr. from the highest.

* 10:1 Gr. She.

5 Moreover, when nations consenting together in wickedness had been confounded,

† Wisdom knew the righteous man, and preserved him blameless unto God,

And kept him strong when his heart yearned toward his child.

6 While the ungodly were perishing, ‡ wisdom delivered a righteous man,

When he fled from the fire that descended out of heaven on § Pentapolis.

7 To whose wickedness a smoking waste still witnesseth,

And plants bearing fair fruit that cometh not to ripeness;

Yea and a ** disbelieving soul hath a memorial *there*, a pillar of salt *still* standing.

8 For having passed wisdom by,

Not only were they disabled from recognising the things which are good,

But they also left behind them †† for *human* life a monument of their folly;

To the end that ‡‡ where they §§ went astray they might fail even to be unseen:

9 But wisdom delivered out of troubles those that waited on her.

† 10:5 Gr. She ‡ 10:6 Gr. she § 10:6 That is, the region of the five cities. ** 10:7 Or, distrustful †† 10:8 Or, by their life

‡‡ 10:8 Gr. wherein. §§ 10:8 Gr. stumbled.

10 When a righteous man was a fugitive from a brother's wrath, *** wisdom guided him in straight paths;

She shewed him God's kingdom, and gave him knowledge of holy things;

She prospered him in his toils, and multiplied the fruits of his labour;

11 When in their covetousness *men* dealt hardly with him,

She stood by him and made him rich;

12 She guarded him from enemies,

And from those that lay in wait she kept him safe,

And over his sore conflict she watched as judge,

That he might know that godliness is more powerful than ††† all.

13 When a righteous man was sold, ‡‡‡ wisdom forsook him not,

But §§§ from sin she delivered him;

She went down with him into a dungeon,

14 And in bonds she left him not,

Till she brought him the sceptre of a kingdom,

And authority over those that dealt tyrannously with him;

She shewed them also to be false that had mockingly accused him,

And gave him eternal glory.

15 * Wisdom delivered a holy people and a blameless seed from a nation of oppressors.

*** 10:10 Gr. she. ††† 10:12 Gr. every one. ‡‡‡ 10:13

Gr. she. §§§ 10:13 Or, from the sin of his brethren...into a pit

* 10:15 Gr. she.

16 She entered into the soul of a servant of the Lord,
And withstood terrible kings in wonders and signs.

17 She rendered unto holy men a reward of their toils;

She guided them along a marvellous way,
And became unto them a covering in the day-time,
And a flame of stars through the night.

18 She brought them over the Red sea,
And led them through much water;

19 But their enemies she drowned,
And out of the bottom of the deep she cast them up.

20 Therefore the righteous spoiled the ungodly;
And they sang praise to thy holy name, O Lord,
And extolled with one accord thy hand that fought for them:

21 Because wisdom opened the mouth of the dumb,
And made the tongues of babes to speak clearly.

11

1 She prospered their works in the hand of a holy prophet.

2 They journeyed through a desert without inhabitant,
And in trackless regions they pitched their tents.

3 They withstood enemies, and * repelled foes.

4 They thirsted, and they called upon thee,

* 11:3 Or, took vengeance on foes

And there was given them water out of † the ‡ flinty
rock,

And healing of their thirst out of the hard stone.

⁵ For by what things their foes were punished,
By these they in their need were benefited.

⁶ § When *the enemy* were troubled with clotted
blood instead of a river's ever-flowing foun-
tain,

⁷ To rebuke the decree for the slaying of babes,
Thou gavest them abundant water beyond all
hope,

⁸ Having shewn *them* by ** the thirst which they
had suffered how thou didst punish the
adversaries.

⁹ For when they were tried, albeit but in mercy
chastened,
They learned how the ungodly were tormented,
being judged with wrath:

¹⁰ For these, as a father, admonishing them, thou
didst prove;

But those, as a stern king, condemning them, thou
didst search out.

¹¹ Yea and whether they were far off *from the
righteous* or near *them*, they were alike
distressed;

¹² For a double grief took hold on them,
And a groaning at the remembrance of things
past.

¹³ For when they heard that through their own
punishments the others †† had been bene-

† **11:4** Or, the steep rock ‡ **11:4** See Deut. viii. 15; Ps. cxiv. 8.

§ **11:6** The text of this verse is perhaps corrupt. ** **11:8** Gr.
the then thirst. †† **11:13** Some authorities read were being.

fited,
 They felt *the presence of* the Lord;
 14 For him who long before was ‡ cast forth and
 exposed they left off mocking:
 In the last issue of what came to pass §§ they
 marvelled,
 Having thirsted in another manner than the righ-
 teous.
 15 But in requital of the senseless imaginings of
 their unrighteousness,
 Wherein they were led astray to worship irra-
 tional reptiles and wretched vermin,
 Thou didst send upon them a multitude of irra-
 tional creatures for vengeance;
 16 That they might learn, that by what things a man
 sinneth, by these he is punished.
 17 For thine all-powerful hand,
 That created the world out of formless matter,
 Lacked not means to send upon them a multitude
 of bears, or fierce lions,
 18 Or *** new-created wild beasts, full of rage, *of*
 unknown *kind*,
 Either breathing out a blast of fiery breath,
 Or blowing forth *from their nostrils* noisome
 smoke,
 Or flashing dreadful sparkles from their eyes;
 19 Which had power not only to consume them by
 their ††† violence,

‡ 11:14 Some authorities read cast forth in hatred they.

§§ 11:14 Or, they marvelled at him *** 11:18 Some authorities read unknown wild beasts, full of new-created rage.

††† 11:19 Gr. harmfulness.

But to destroy them even by the terror of their sight.

20 Yea and without these might they have fallen by a single breath,

Being pursued by Justice, and scattered abroad by the breath of thy power.

But by measure and number and weight thou didst order all things.

21 For to be greatly strong is thine at all times;
And the might of thine arm who shall withstand?

22 Because the whole world before thee is as ††† a grain §§§ in a balance,

And as a drop of dew that at morning cometh down upon the earth.

23 But thou hast mercy on all men, because thou hast power to do all things,

And thou overlookest the sins of men to the end they may repent.

24 For thou lovest all things that are,
And abhorrest none of the things which thou didst make;

For never wouldest thou have formed anything if thou didst hate it.

25 And how would anything have endured, except thou hadst willed it?

Or that which was not called by thee, *how would* it have been preserved?

26 But thou sparest all things, because they are thine,

††† 11:22 Gr. that which just turneth. §§§ 11:22 Gr. from.

O Sovereign Lord, thou lover of *men's* * lives;

12

¹ For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things.

² Wherefore thou convictest by little and little them that * fall from the right way,

And, putting them in remembrance by the *very* things wherein they sin, dost thou admonish them,

That escaping from their wickedness they may believe on thee, O Lord.

³ For verily the old inhabitants of thy holy land,

⁴ Hating *them* because they practised detestable works of enchantments and unholy rites

⁵ † (Merciless slaughters of children,

And sacrificial banquets of men's flesh and of blood),

⁶ Confederates in an impious fellowship,

And murderers of their own helpless babes,

It was thy counsel to destroy by the hands of our fathers;

⁷ That the land which in thy sight is most precious of all *lands*

Might receive a worthy colony of God's ‡ servants.

⁸ Nevertheless even these thou didst spare as *being* men,

* **11:26** Or, souls * **12:2** Gr. fall aside. † **12:5** The words rendered slaughters and impious in verses 5 and 6 differ but slightly from the readings of the Greek text, which here yield no sense. ‡ **12:7** Or, children

And thou sentest § hornets as forerunners of thy host,

To cause them to perish by little and little;

⁹ Not that thou wast unable to subdue the ungodly under the hand of the righteous in battle, Or by terrible beasts or by *one* stern word to make away with them at once;

¹⁰ But judging them by little and little thou gavest them a place of repentance,

Not being ignorant that their nature by birth was evil, and their wickedness inborn, And that their manner of thought would in no wise ever be changed,

¹¹ For they were a seed accursed from the beginning:

Neither was it through fear of any that thou didst leave them *then* unpunished for their sins.

¹² For who shall say, What hast thou done?

Or who shall withstand thy judgement?

And who shall accuse thee for the perishing of nations which thou didst make?

Or who shall come and stand before thee as an avenger for unrighteous men?

¹³ For neither is there any God beside thee that careth for all,

That thou mightest shew *unto him* that thou didst not judge unrighteously:

¹⁴ Neither shall king or prince be able to look thee in the face *to plead* for those whom thou hast punished.

§ 12:8 Or, wasps

15 But being righteous thou rulest all things righteously,
Deeming it a thing alien from thy power
To condemn one that doth not himself deserve to be punished.

16 For thy strength is the beginning of righteousness,
And thy sovereignty over all maketh thee to forbear all.

17 For when men believe not that thou art perfect in power, thou shewest thy strength,

** And †† in dealing with them that know *it* thou puttest their boldness to confusion.

18 But thou, being sovereign over *thy* strength, judgest in gentleness,
And with great forbearance dost thou govern us;
For the power is thine whensoever thou hast the will.

19 But thou didst teach thy people by such works as these,
How that the righteous must be a lover of men;
And thou didst make thy sons to be of good hope,
Because thou givest repentance when men have sinned.

20 For if on them that were enemies of thy †† servants and due to death
Thou didst take vengeance with so great heedfulness and indulgence,
Giving them times and place whereby they might escape from their wickedness;

** 12:17 The Greek text here is perhaps corrupt. †† 12:17 Or, in them †† 12:20 Or, children

21 With how great carefulness didst thou judge thy sons,
To whose fathers thou gavest oaths and covenants
of good promises!

22 While therefore thou dost chasten us, thou scourgest our enemies ten thousand times more,

To the intent that we may ponder thy goodness when we judge,

And when we are judged may look for mercy.

23 Wherefore also the unrighteous that lived in folly of life

Thou didst torment through their own abominations.

24 For verily they went astray very far §§ in the ways of error,

Taking as gods those *** animals which even among their enemies were held in dishonour,

Deceived like foolish babes.

25 Therefore, as unto unreasoning children, thou didst send thy judgement to mock them.

26 But they that would not be admonished ††† by a mocking correction as of children

Shall have experience of a judgement worthy of God.

27 For through the sufferings whereat they were indignant,

Being punished in these creatures which they supposed to be gods,

§§ 12:24 Or, even beyond *** 12:24 Gr. living creatures: and so elsewhere in this book. ††† 12:26 Or, by a correction, which was as children's play Gr. by child-play of correction.

They saw, and recognised as the true God him
whom before they ††† refused to know:
Wherefore also the last end of condemnation
came upon them.

13

¹ For verily all men by nature * *were but* vain who
had no perception of God,
And from the good things that are seen they
gained not power to know him that is,
Neither by giving heed to the works did they
recognise the artificer;

² But either fire, or wind, or swift air,
Or † circling stars, or raging water, or ‡ luminaries
of heaven,
They thought to be gods that rule the world.

³ And if it was through delight in their beauty that
they took them to be gods,
Let them know how much better than these is
their Sovereign Lord;
For the first author of beauty created them:

⁴ But if it was through astonishment at their power
and § influence,
Let them understand from them how much more
powerful is he that formed them;

⁵ For from the ** greatness of the beauty †† even of
created things

††† 12:27 Or, denied that they knew * 13:1 Or, are † 13:2
Gr. circle of stars. ‡ 13:2 Or, luminaries of heaven, rulers of the
world, they thought to be gods § 13:4 Gr. efficacy. ** 13:5
Some authorities read greatness and beauty of. †† 13:5 Some
authorities omit even.

‡‡ In like proportion §§ does man form the image
of their first maker.

6 But yet for these *** men there is but small
blame,

For they too peradventure do *but* go astray
While they are seeking God and desiring to find
him.

7 For ††† living among his works they make diligent
search,

And they ‡‡‡ yield themselves up to sight, because
the things that they look upon are beautiful.

8 But again even they are not to be excused.

9 For if they had power to know so much,
That they should be able to explore §§§ the course
of things,

How is it that they did not sooner find the
Sovereign Lord of these *his works*?

10 But miserable * *were* they, and † in dead things
‡ *were* their hopes,

Who called them gods which are works of men's
hands,

Gold and silver, wrought with careful art, and
likenesses of animals,

Or a useless stone, the work of an ancient hand.

‡‡ 13:5 Or, Correspondently §§ 13:5 Gr. is the first maker of
them beheld. *** 13:6 Or, things ††† 13:7 Or, being occupied
with ‡‡‡ 13:7 Or, trust their sight that the things §§§ 13:9
Or, life Or, the world Gr. the age. * 13:10 Or, are † 13:10 Or,
amongst ‡ 13:10 Or, are

11 Yea and if some § woodcutter, having sawn
down a ** tree that is easily moved,
Skilfully strippeth away all its bark,
And fashioning it in comely form maketh a vessel
useful for the service of life;
12 And burning the refuse of his handywork to
dress his food, eateth his fill;
13 And taking the very refuse thereof which served
to no use,
A crooked piece of wood and full of knots,
Carveth it with the diligence of his idleness,
And shapeth it by the skill of his †† indolence;
‡‡ *Then* he giveth it the semblance of the image of
a man,
14 Or maketh it like some paltry animal,
Smearing it with vermilion, and with §§ paint
colouring it red,
And smearing over every stain that is therein;
15 And having made for it a chamber worthy of it,
He setteth it in a wall, making it fast with iron.
16 While then he taketh thought for it that it may
not fall down,
Knowing that it is unable to help itself;
(For verily it is an image, and hath need of help;)
17 When he maketh his prayer concerning goods
and his marriage and children,
He is not ashamed to speak to that which hath no
life;

§ 13:11 Gr. carpenter who is a woodcutter. ** 13:11 Gr. plant.
The Greek word, slightly changed, would mean trunk †† 13:13
Or, leisure ‡‡ 13:13 Or, And §§ 13:14 Gr. rouge.

18 Yea for health he calleth upon that which is weak,
 And for life he beseecheth that which is dead,
 And for aid he supplicateth that which hath least experience.

And for a *good* journey that which cannot so much as move a step,

19 And for gaining and *** getting and good success of his hands
 He asketh ability of that which with its hands is most unable.

14

1 Again, one preparing to sail, and about to journey over raging waves,
 Calleth upon a piece of wood more rotten than the vessel that carrieth him;

2 For that *vessel* the hunger for gains devised,
 And an artificer, *even* wisdom, built it;

3 And thy providence, O Father, guideth it along,
 Because even in the sea thou gavest a way,
 And in the waves a sure path,

4 Shewing that thou canst save out of every *danger*,
 That so even without art a man may put to sea;

5 And it is thy will that the works of thy wisdom should be not idle;

Therefore also do men intrust their lives to a little piece of wood,,

And passing through the surge * on a raft are brought safe *to land*.

*** 13:19 Or, handywork * 14:5 Gr. by.

6 For † in the old time also, when proud giants were perishing,

The hope of the world, taking refuge on a raft,
Left to ‡ the race of men a seed of generations to
come,

Thy hand guiding the helm.

7 For blessed § hath been wood through which
cometh righteousness:

8 But the *idol* made with hands is accursed, itself
and he that made it;

Because his was the working, and the corruptible
thing was named a god:

9 For both the ungodly doer and his ungodliness
are alike hateful to God;

10 For verily the deed shall be punished together
with him that committed it.

11 Therefore also ** among the idols of the nations
shall there be a visitation,

Because, though formed of things which God cre-
ated, they were made an abomination,

And stumblingblocks to the souls of men,
And a snare to the feet of the foolish.

12 For the devising of idols was the beginning of
fornication,

And the invention of them the corruption of life:

13 For neither were they from the beginning, nei-
ther shall they be for ever;

14 For by the vaingloriousness of men they entered
into the world,

And therefore was a speedy end devised for them.

† 14:6 The Greek text here is perhaps corrupt. ‡ 14:6 Or, future
time Gr. age. § 14:7 Or, is ** 14:11 Or, upon Gr. in.

- 15 For a father worn with untimely grief,
Making an image of the child quickly taken away,
Now honoured him as a god which was then a
dead man,
And delivered to those that were under him mys-
teries and solemn rites.
- 16 Afterward the ungodly custom, in process of
time grown strong, was kept as a law,
And by the commandments of princes the graven
images received worship.
- 17 And when men could not honour them in pres-
ence because they dwelt far off,
Imagining the likeness from afar,
They made a visible image of the king whom they
honoured,
That by their zeal they might flatter the absent as
if present.
- 18 But unto a yet higher pitch was worship raised
even by them that knew *him* not,
Urged forward by the ambition of the artificer:
- 19 For he, wishing peradventure to please one in
authority,
Used his art to force the likeness toward a greater
beauty;
- 20 And the multitude, allured by reason of the
grace of his handywork,
Now accounted as an object of devotion him that
a little before was honoured as a man.
- 21 And this became †† a hidden danger unto life,
Because men, in bondage either to calamity or to
tyranny,

†† 14:21 Gr. an ambush.

Invested stones and stocks with the incommunicable Name.

22 Afterward it was not enough for them to go astray as touching the knowledge of God; But also, while they live †† in §§ sore conflict through ignorance *of him*.

That multitude of evils they call peace.

23 For either slaughtering children in solemn rites, or celebrating secret mysteries, Or holding frantic revels of strange ordinances,

24 No longer do they *** guard either life or purity of marriage,

But one brings upon another either death by treachery, or anguish by adulterate offspring.

25 And all things confusedly are filled with blood and murder, theft and deceit,

Corruption, faithlessness, tumult, perjury,

26 ††† turmoil,

Ingratitude for benefits *received*,

Defiling of souls, confusion of ††† sex,

Disorder in marriage, adultery and wantonness.

27 For the worship of §§§ those * nameless idols

Is a beginning and cause and end of every evil.

28 For *their worshippers* either make merry unto madness, or prophesy lies,

†† 14:22 Or, for §§ 14:22 Gr. a great war of ignorance.

*** 14:24 Or, keep unstained either life or marriage ††† 14:26

Or, troubling of the good, forgetfulness of favours ††† 14:26 Or,

kind §§§ 14:27 Or, idols that may not be named See Ex. xxiii.

13; Ps. xvi. 4; Hos. ii. 17. * 14:27 See ver. 21.

Or live unrighteously, or lightly forswear themselves.

29 For putting their trust in lifeless idols,
When they have sworn a wicked oath, they expect
not to suffer harm.

30 But for both *sins* shall the just doom pursue
them,
Because they had evil thoughts of God by giving
heed to idols,
And swore unrighteously in deceit through contempt for holiness.

31 For it is not the power of them by whom men swear,
But it is † that Justice which hath regard to them
that sin,
That visiteth always the transgression of the unrighteous.

15

1 But thou, our God, art gracious and true,
Longsuffering, and in mercy ordering all things.

2 For even if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy
dominion;
But we shall not sin, knowing that we have been
accounted thine:

3 For to be acquainted with thee is * perfect righteousness,
And to know thy dominion is the root of immortality.

4 For neither were we led astray by any evil device
of men's art,

† 14:31 Gr. the Justice of them that sin. * 15:3 Gr. entire.

Nor yet by painters' fruitless labour,
A form stained with varied colours;

⁵ The sight whereof leadeth fools into † lust:

Their desire is for the breathless form of a dead
image.

⁶ Lovers of evil things, and worthy of such hopes
as these,

Are both they that do, and they that desire, and
they that worship.

⁷ For a potter, kneading soft earth,

Laboriously mouldeth each several *vessel* for our
service:

Nay, out of the same clay doth he fashion

Both the vessels that minister to clean uses, and
those of a contrary sort,

All in like manner;

But what shall be the use of each *vessel* of either
sort,

The ‡ craftsman *himself* is the judge.

⁸ And also, labouring to an evil end, he mouldeth
a vain god out of the same clay,

He who, having but a little before been made of
earth,

After a short space goeth his way *to the earth* out
of which he was taken,

When he is required to render back the § soul
which was lent him.

⁹ Howbeit he hath anxious care,

Not because his powers must fail,

Nor because his span of life is short;

† 15:5 Some authorities read reproach. ‡ 15:7 Gr. worker in
clay. § 15:8 Or, life

But he matcheth himself against goldsmiths and
 ** silversmiths,
 And he imitateth moulders in †† brass,
 And esteemeth it glory that he mouldeth counter-
 feits.

10 His heart is ashes,
 And his hope of less value than earth,
 And his life of less honour than clay:

11 Because he was ignorant of him that moulded
 him,
 And of him that inspired into him †† an active §§
 soul,
 And breathed into him a vital spirit.

12 But *** he accounted our *very* life to be a †††
 plaything,
 And our ††† lifetime a gainful §§§ fair;
 For, saith he, one must get gain whence one can,
 though it be by evil.

13 For this man beyond all others knoweth that he
 sinneth,
 Out of earthy matter making brittle vessels and
 graven images.

14 But most foolish * *were* they all, and † of feebler
 soul than a babe,
 The enemies of thy people, who oppressed them;

15 Because they even accounted all the idols of the
 nations *to be* gods;

** 15:9 Gr. silver-founders. †† 15:9 Or, copper †† 15:11 Gr.
 a soul that moveth to activity. §§ 15:11 Or, life *** 15:12
 Some authorities read they accounted. ††† 15:12 Or, sport
 ††† 15:12 Or, way of life §§§ 15:12 Or, keeping of festival
 * 15:14 Or, are † 15:14 Gr. more wretched than the soul of a
 babe.

Which have neither the use of eyes for seeing,
 Nor nostrils for drawing breath,
 Nor ears to hear,
 Nor fingers for handling,
 And their feet are helpless for walking.

¹⁶ For a man made them,
 And one whose own spirit is borrowed moulded
 them;

For no one hath power, *being* a man, to mould a
 god like unto himself,

¹⁷ But, being mortal, he maketh a dead thing by the
 work of lawless hands;

For he is better than the objects of his worship,

‡ Forasmuch as he indeed had life, but they never.

¹⁸ Yea, and the creatures that are most hateful do
 they worship,

§ For, being compared as to want of sense, these
 are worse than all others;

¹⁹ Neither, as seen beside *other* creatures, are they
 beautiful, so that one should desire them,

But they have escaped both the praise of God and
 his blessing.

16

¹ For this cause were *these men* worthily punished
 through *creatures* like *those which they*
worship,

And tormented through a multitude of vermin.

² Instead of which punishment, thou, bestowing
 benefits on thy people,

‡ 15:17 Most authorities read *Of which, he indeed.*

The Greek text here is perhaps corrupt.

§ 15:18

Preparedst quails for food,
Food of * rare taste, to *satisfy* the desire of *their*
 appetite;

³ To the end that † thine enemies, desiring food,
 Might for the hideousness of the *creatures* sent
 among them

Loathe even the necessary appetite;
 But these, *thy people*, having for a short space
 suffered want,

Might even partake of *food of* ‡ rare taste.

⁴ For it was needful that upon those should come
 inexorable want in their tyrannous dealing,
 But that to these it should only be shewed how
 their enemies were tormented.

⁵ For even when terrible raging of wild beasts
 came upon § thy people,
 And they were perishing by the bites of crooked
 serpents,

Thy wrath continued not to the uttermost;

⁶ But for admonition were they troubled for a
 short space,

Having a token of salvation,
 To put them in remembrance of the command-
 ment of thy law:

⁷ For he that turned toward it was not saved be-
 cause of that which was beheld,
 But because of thee, the Saviour of all.

⁸ Yea, and in this didst thou persuade our enemies,
 That thou art he that delivereth out of every evil.

⁹ For them verily the bites of locusts and flies did
 slay,

* **16:2** Gr. strange. † **16:3** Gr. those. ‡ **16:3** Gr. strange.

§ **16:5** Gr. them.

And there was not found a healing for their life,
Because they were worthy to be punished by such
as these;

10 But thy sons not the very teeth of venomous
dragons overcame,
For thy mercy passed by where they were, and
healed them.

11 For they were ^{**} bitten, to put them in remem-
brance of thine oracles;
And were quickly saved, lest, falling into deep
forgetfulness,
They should become †† unable to be ‡‡ roused by
thy beneficence:

12 For of a truth it was neither herb nor mollifying
plaister that cured them,
But thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things;

13 For thou hast authority over life and death,
And thou leadest down to the gates of Hades, and
leadest up again.

14 But though a man *may* slay by his §§ wicked-
ness,
Yet the spirit that is gone forth he turneth not
again,
Neither giveth release to the soul that *Hades* hath
received.

15 But thy hand it is not possible to escape;

16 For ungodly men, ^{***} refusing to know thee,
were scourged in the strength of thine arm,

** 16:11 Gr. pricked †† 16:11 Some authorities read bereft of
help from thy beneficence. ‡‡ 16:11 Gr. distracted, or, drawn

away. The meaning is somewhat obscure. §§ 16:14 Or, malice

*** 16:16 Or, denying that they knew thee

Pursued with strange rains and hails and showers
inexorable,

And utterly consumed with fire;

¹⁷ For, what was most marvellous *of all*,

In the water which quenqueth all things the fire
wrought yet more mightily;

For the world fighteth for the righteous.

¹⁸ For at one time the flame lost its fierceness,

That it might not burn up the creatures sent
against the ungodly,

But that *these* themselves as they looked might
††† see that they were chased through the
judgement of God:

¹⁹ And at another time even in the midst of water
it burneth above the power of fire,

That it may destroy the ††† fruits of an unrighteous
land.

²⁰ Instead whereof thou gavest thy people angels'
food to eat,

And bread ready *for their use* didst thou provide
for them from heaven without *their* toil,

Bread having the virtue of every pleasant savour,

And agreeing to every taste;

²¹ For §§§ thy * nature manifested thy sweetness
toward *thy* children;

While *that bread*, ministering to the desire of the
eater,

Tempered itself according to every man's choice.

²² But snow and ice endured fire, and melted not,

††† **16:18** Some authorities read know. ††† **16:19** Gr. products

§§§ **16:21** Some authorities read the substance thereof.

* **16:21** Or, creation Gr. substance.

That *men* might know that fire was destroying the
fruits of the enemies,

Burning in the hail and flashing in the rains;

²³ And † that this *element* again, in order that
righteous men may be nourished,

Hath even forgotten its own power.

²⁴ For the creation, ministering to thee its maker,

Straineth its force against the unrighteous, for
punishment,

And slackeneth it in behalf of them that trust in
thee, for beneficence.

²⁵ Therefore at that time also, converting itself
into all forms,

It ministered to thine all-nourishing bounty,

According to the desire of them that ‡ made sup-
plication;

²⁶ That thy sons, whom thou lovedst, O Lord, might
learn

That it is not the § growth of *the earth's* fruits that
nourisheth a man,

But that thy word preserveth them that trust thee.

²⁷ For that which was not marred by fire,

When it was simply warmed by a faint sunbeam
melted away;

²⁸ That it might be known that *we* must rise before
the sun to give thee thanks,

And must plead with thee at the dawning of the
light:

²⁹ For the hope of the unthankful shall melt as the
winter's hoar frost,

And shall flow away as water that hath no use.

† **16:23** Some authorities omit that.

‡ **16:25** Or, had need

§ **16:26** Gr. generations.

17

1 For great are thy judgements, and hard to *
interpret;

Therefore souls undisciplined went astray.

2 For when lawless men had supposed that they
held a holy nation in their power,

They, *themselves*, prisoners of darkness, and
bound in the fetters of a long night,

Close kept beneath their roofs,

Lay exiled from the eternal providence.

3 For while they thought that they were unseen in
their secret sins,

They were † Sundered one from another by a dark
curtain of forgetfulness,

Stricken with terrible awe, and sore troubled by
spectral forms.

4 For neither did ‡ the dark recesses that held them
guard them from fears,

But sounds § rushing down rang around them,

And phantoms appeared, cheerless with unsmil-
ing faces.

5 And no force of fire prevailed to give *them* light,
Neither were the brightest flames of the stars

strong enough to illumine that gloomy
night:

6 But only there appeared to them the glimmering
of a fire self-kindled, full of fear;

And in terror they deemed the things which they
saw

To be worse than that sight, on which they could
not gaze.

* 17:1 Or, set forth † 17:3 Gr. scattered by. ‡ 17:4 Gr. the
recess. § 17:4 Some authorities read troubling them sore.

7** And they lay *helpless*, made the sport of magic art,
And a shameful rebuke of their vaunts of understanding:

8 For they that promised to drive away terrors and troublings from a sick soul,
These were *themselves* sick with a ludicrous fearfulness:

9 For even if no troublous thing affrighted them,
Yet, scared with the creepings of vermin and hissings of serpents,

10 they perished †† for very trembling,
Refusing even to look on the air, which could on no side be escaped.

11 †† For wickedness, condemned by a witness within, is a coward thing,
And, being pressed hard by conscience, always §§ forecasteth the worst *lot*:

12 For fear is nothing else but a surrender of the succours which reason offereth;

13 And from within *the heart* the expectation of *them* being less

Maketh of greater account the ignorance of the cause that bringeth the torment.

14 But they, all through the night which was powerless indeed,

And which came upon them out of the recesses of powerless Hades,

All sleeping the same sleep,

** 17:7 Some authorities read And the mockeries of magic art lay low, and shameful was the rebuke &c. †† 17:10 Or, trembling, and refusing to †† 17:11 This is the probable sense: the Greek text is perhaps slightly corrupt. §§ 17:11 Most authorities read hath added.

15 Now were haunted by monstrous apparitions,
And now were paralysed by their soul's surren-
dering;

For fear sudden and unlooked for *** came upon
them.

16 So then *every man*, whosoever it might be,
sinking down ††† in his place,
Was kept in ward shut up in that prison which was
barred not with iron:

17 For whether he were a husbandman, or a shep-
herd,

Or a labourer whose toils were in the wilderness,
He was overtaken, and endured that inevitable
necessity,

For with one chain of darkness were they all
bound.

18 Whether there were a whistling wind,
Or a melodious noise of birds among the spread-
ing branches,

Or a measured fall of water running violently,

19 Or a harsh crashing of rocks hurled down,
Or the swift course of animals bounding along
unseen,

Or the voice of wild beasts harshly roaring,
Or an echo rebounding from ††† the hollows of the
mountains,

All these things paralysed them with terror.

20 For the whole world *beside* was enlightened
with clear light,

And was occupied with unhindered works;

*** 17:15 Some authorities read was poured upon them.

††† 17:16 Gr. there. ††† 17:19 Or, a hollow

21 While over them alone was spread a heavy night,
 An image of the darkness that should afterward receive them;
 But yet heavier than darkness were they unto themselves.

18

1 But for thy holy ones there was great light;
 And *the Egyptians*, hearing their voice but seeing not their form,
 Counted it a happy thing that they too had suffered,
 2 Yet for that they do not hurt them *now*, though wronged *by them* before, they are thankful;
 And because they had been at variance *with them*, they made supplication *to them*.
 3 Whereas thou didst provide *for thy people* a burning pillar of fire,
 To be a guide for *their* unknown journey,
 And withal a * kindly sun for *their* † proud exile.
 4 For well did ‡ the Egyptians deserve to be deprived of light and imprisoned by darkness,
 They who had kept in close ward thy sons,
 Through whom the incorruptible light of the law was to be given to § the race of men.
 5 After they had taken counsel to slay the babes of the holy ones,

* 18:3 Gr. unharmed. † 18:3 Or, aspiring ‡ 18:4 Gr. they.
 § 18:4 Or, future time Gr. the age.

And when a single child had been cast forth and
 saved ** to convict *them of their sin*,
 Thou tookest away from them their multitude of
 children,
 And destroyedst all *their host* together in a mighty
 flood.

⁶ Of that night were our fathers made aware be-
 forehand,

That, having sure knowledge, they might be
 cheered by the oaths which they had
 trusted:

⁷ So by thy people was expected salvation of the
 righteous and destruction of the enemies;

⁸ For as thou didst take vengeance on the adver-
 saries,

†† By the same means, calling us unto thyself, thou
 didst glorify us.

⁹ For holy children †† of good men offered sacrifice
 in secret,

And with one consent they took upon themselves
 the covenant of the §§ divine law,

That *** they would partake alike in the same
 good things and the same perils;

The fathers already leading the sacred songs of
 praise.

¹⁰ But there sounded back in discord the cry of the
 enemies,

** **18:5** Or, to be to them a rebuke †† **18:8** Gr. By this. †† **18:9**
 Or, of blessing Gr. of good men, or, of good things. §§ **18:9** Gr.
 law of divineness. *** **18:9** Some authorities read the saints
 would partake...perils; already leading the fathers' songs of praise.

††† And a piteous voice of lamentation for children
was borne abroad.

11 And servant along with master punished with a
like just doom,

And commoner suffering the same as king,

12 Yea, all *the people* together, under one form of
death,

Had *with them* corpses without number;

For the living were not sufficient even to bury
them,

Since at a single ††† stroke their §§§ nobler off-
spring was consumed.

13 For while they were disbelieving all things by
reason of the enchantments,

Upon the destruction of the firstborn they con-
fessed the people to be God's son.

14 For while peaceful silence enwrapped all
things,

And night in her own swiftness was in mid course,

15 Thine all-powerful word leaped from heaven
out of * *the* royal † throne,

A stern warrior, into the midst of the ‡ doomed
land,

16 Bearing as a sharp sword thine unfeigned com-
mandment;

And standing it filled all things with death;

And while it touched the heaven it trode upon the
earth.

††† **18:10** Some authorities read And was piteously borne abroad
in lamentation for children. ††† **18:12** Gr. turn of the scale.

§§§ **18:12** Or, more cherished * **18:15** Or, thy † **18:15** Gr.
thrones. ‡ **18:15** Or, destroying

17 Then forthwith apparitions in dreams terribly troubled them,

And fears came upon them unlooked for.

18 And *each*, one thrown here half dead, another there,

Made manifest wherefore he was dying:

19 For the dreams, perturbing them, did foreshew this,

That they might not perish without knowing why they were afflicted.

20 But it § befell the righteous also to make trial of death,

And a multitude were stricken in the wilderness: Howbeit the wrath endured not for long.

21 For a blameless man hasted to be their champion:

Bringing the weapon of his own ministry,

Even prayer and the propitiation of incense,

He withstood the indignation, and set an end to the calamity,

Shewing that he was thy servant.

22 And he overcame the ** anger,

Not by strength of body, not by efficacy of weapons;

But †† by word did he subdue ‡‡ the minister of punishment,

By bringing to remembrance oaths and covenants made with the fathers.

§ 18:20 Gr. touched. ** 18:22 The word rendered anger differs only by the transposition of two letters from the reading of the Greek text, which here yields no sense. †† 18:22 Or, to a word did he subject ‡‡ 18:22 Gr. him who was punishing.

23 For when the dead were already fallen in heaps
 one upon another,
 Standing between he stopped the *advancing*
 wrath,

And §§ cut off the way to the living.

24 For upon *his* long *high-priestly* robe was the
 whole world,

And the glories of the fathers *were* upon the
 graving of the four rows of *** precious
 stones,

And thy majesty *was* upon the diadem of his head.

25 To these the destroyer gave place, and these †††
the people feared;

For it was enough only to make trial of the wrath.

19

1 But upon the ungodly there came unto the end
 indignation without mercy;

For their future also *God* foreknew,

2 How that, having changed their minds to *let thy*
people go,

And having speeded them eagerly on their way,
 They would repent themselves and pursue them.

3 For while they were yet in the midst of their
 mourning,

And making lamentation at the graves of the dead,
 They drew upon themselves another counsel of
 folly,

And pursued as fugitives those whom with in-
 treaties they had cast out.

§§ 18:23 Gr. cleft asunder. *** 18:24 Gr. stone. ††† 18:25
 Some authorities read he feared.

4 For * the doom which they deserved was drawing them † unto this end,
 And it made them forget the things that had befallen them,
 That they might fill up the punishment which was yet wanting to their torments,
 5 And that thy people might ‡ journey on by a marvellous road,
 But they *themselves* might find a strange death.

6 For the whole creation, *each part* in its several kind, was fashioned again anew,
 Ministering to *thy* several commandments,
 That thy § servants might be guarded free from hurt.

7 *Then* was beheld the cloud that shadowed the camp,
 And dry land rising up out of what before was water,
 Out of the Red sea an unhindered highway,
 And a grassy plain out of the violent surge;
 8** By which they passed over with all their hosts,
 These that were covered with thy hand,
 Having beheld strange marvels.

9 For like horses they roamed at large,
 And they skipped about like lambs,
 Praising thee, O Lord, who wast their deliverer.

10 For they still remembered the things that came to pass in the time of their sojourning,

* 19:4 Or, their desert by necessity was † 19:4 Some authorities read unto this at last. ‡ 19:5 Some authorities read make trial of. § 19:6 Or, children ** 19:8 Or, Through

How that instead of †† bearing ‡‡ cattle the land
brought forth §§ lice,

And instead of *** fish the river cast up a multi-
tude of frogs.

11 But afterwards they saw also a new ††† race of
birds,

When, led on by desire, they asked for luxurious
dainties;

12 For, to solace them, there came up for them
quails from the sea.

13 And upon the sinners came the punishments
Not without the tokens that were given ‡‡‡ before-
hand by the force of the thunders;

For justly did they suffer through their own
wickednesses,

For §§§ grievous indeed was the hatred which
they practised toward guests.

14 * For whereas the *men of Sodom* received not †
the strangers when they came among *them*;

‡ The Egyptians made slaves of guests who were
their benefactors.

15 And not only so, *but God* shall § visit ** the men
of Sodom after another sort,

†† 19:10 Or, birth of cattle ‡‡ 19:10 Gr. living creatures.

§§ 19:10 Or, sandflies *** 19:10 Gr. creatures of the waters.

††† 19:11 Or, production Gr. generation. ‡‡‡ 19:13 Some
authorities omit beforehand. §§§ 19:13 Or, yet more grievous

was * 19:14 The Greek text of this and the following verse
is perhaps corrupt. † 19:14 Gr. them who knew them not.

‡ 19:14 Gr. These. § 19:15 Or, visit them...sort: since the men
of Sodom received...aliens ** 19:15 Gr. them.

Since they received as enemies them that were
aliens;

16 Whereas these *first* welcomed with feastings,
And *then* afflicted with dreadful toils,
Them that had already shared *with them* in the
same rights.

17 And moreover they were stricken with loss of
sight

(Even as were those *others* at the righteous man's
doors),

When, being compassed about with yawning
darkness,

They sought every one the passage through his
own door.

18 For as the notes of a psaltery vary the character
of the rhythm,

Even so *did* the elements, changing their order
one with another,

Continuing always *the same, each* in its *several*
sound;

As may clearly be †† divined from the sight of the
things that are come to pass.

19 For creatures of the dry land were turned into
creatures of the waters,

And creatures that swim trode *now* upon the
earth:

20 Fire kept the mastery of its own power in *the*
midst of water,

And water forgot its quenching nature:

21 Contrariwise, flames wasted not the flesh of per-
ishable creatures that walked among them;

†† 19:18 Gr. conjectured.

Neither †† melted they the §§ ice-like grains of
ambrosial food, that were *of nature* apt to
melt.

22 For in all things, O Lord, thou didst magnify thy
people,

And thou didst glorify them and not lightly regard
them;

Standing by their side in every time and place.

†† 19:21 The Greek authorities read could be melted. The Latin
seems to have preserved the original Greek text. §§ 19:21 Gr.
ice-like kind.

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The Revised Version of the Holy Bible (1895) with
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