

The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus

The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, also called *Ecclesiasticus*, is recognised as Deuterocanonical Scripture by the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Russian Orthodox Churches.

The Prologue of the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach.

WHEREAS many and great things have been delivered to us by the law and the prophets, and by the others that have followed in their steps, for which we must give Israel the praise for instruction and wisdom; and since not only the readers need to become skilful themselves, but also those who love learning must be able to profit those who are outside, both by speaking and writing; my grandfather Jesus, having much given himself to the reading of the law, the prophets, and the other books of our fathers, and having gained great familiarity with them, was also drawn on himself to write somewhat pertaining to instruction and wisdom, in order that those who love learning, and are devoted to these things, might make progress much more by living according to the law. You are entreated therefore to read with favour and attention, and to pardon us, if in any parts of what we have laboured to interpret, we may seem to fail in some of the phrases. For things

originally spoken in Hebrew don't have the same force in them when they are translated into another language. Not only these, but the law itself, and the prophecies, and the rest of the books, have no small difference, when they are spoken in their original language. For having come into Egypt in the thirty-eighth year of Energetes the king, and having continued there some time, I found a copy giving no small instruction. I thought it therefore most necessary for me to apply some diligence and travail to translate this book, applying indeed much watchfulness and skill in that space of time to bring the book to an end and publish for them also, who in the land of their travels are desiring to learn, preparing their character in advance, so as to live according to the law.

1

- ¹ All wisdom comes from the Lord,
and is with him forever.
- ² Who can count the sand of the seas,
the drops of rain,
and the days of eternity?
- ³ Who will search out the height of the sky,
the breadth of the earth, the deep,
and wisdom?
- ⁴ Wisdom has been created before all things,
and the understanding of prudence from everlasting.
- ⁵ †

† 1:5: Verse 5 is omitted by the best authorities: *The source of wisdom is God's word in the highest heaven, and her ways are the eternal commandments.*

⁶ To whom has the root of wisdom been revealed?
Who has known her shrewd counsels?
⁷ ‡

⁸ There is one wise, greatly to be feared,
sitting upon his throne: the Lord.

⁹ He created her.
He saw and measured her.
He poured her out upon all his works.

¹⁰ She is with all flesh according to his gift.
He gave her freely to those who love him.

¹¹ The fear of the Lord is glory, exultation,
gladness, and a crown of rejoicing.

¹² The fear of the Lord will delight the heart,
and will give gladness, joy, and length of days.

¹³ Whoever fears the Lord, it will go well with him
at the last.
He will be blessed in the day of his death.

¹⁴ To fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
It was created together with the faithful in the
womb.

¹⁵ She § laid an eternal foundation with men.
She will be trusted amongst their offspring.

¹⁶ To fear the Lord is the fullness of wisdom.
She inebriates men with her fruits.

¹⁷ She will fill all her house with desirable things,
and her storehouses with her produce.

¹⁸ The fear of the Lord is the crown of wisdom,

‡ **1:7:** Verse 7 is omitted by the best authorities: *To whom was the knowledge of wisdom manifested? Who has understood her abundant experience?* § **1:15:** Gr. *nested*.

- making peace and[†] perfect health to flourish.[‡]
- 19 He both saw and measured her.
He rained down skill and knowledge of understanding,
and exalted the honour of those who hold her fast.
- 20 To fear the Lord is the root of wisdom.
Her branches are length of days.
- 21 §
- 22 Unjust wrath can never be justified,
for his wrath tips the scale to his downfall.
- 23 A man that is patient will resist for a season,
and afterward gladness will spring up to him.
- 24 He will hide his words until the right moment,
and the lips of many will tell of his understanding.
- 25 A wise saying is in the treasures of wisdom;
but godliness is an abomination to a sinner.
- 26 If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments
and the Lord will give her to you freely;
- 27 for the fear of the Lord is wisdom and instruction.
Faith and humility are his good pleasure.
- 28 Don't disobey the fear of the Lord.
Don't come to him with a double heart.
- 29 Don't be a hypocrite in men's sight.

[†] 1:18: Gr. *health of cure*. [‡] 1:18: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities: *Both are gifts of God for peace; glory opens out for those who love him. He saw her and took her measure.*

§ 1:21: Verse 21 is omitted by the best authorities: *The fear of the Lord drives away sins. Where it resides, it will turn away all anger.*

Keep watch over your lips.

³⁰ Don't exalt yourself,
lest you fall and bring dishonour upon your
soul.

The Lord will reveal your secrets
and will cast you down in the midst of the
congregation,
because you didn't come to the fear of the
Lord
and your heart was full of deceit.

2

¹ My son, if you come to serve the Lord,
prepare your soul for temptation.

² Set your heart aright, constantly endure,
and don't make haste in time of calamity.

³ Cling to him, and don't depart,
that you may be increased at your latter end.

⁴ Accept whatever is brought upon you,
and be patient when you suffer humiliation.

⁵ For gold is tried in the fire,
and acceptable men in the furnace of humili-
ation.

⁶ Put your trust in him, and he will help you.
Make your ways straight, and set your hope
on him.

⁷ All you who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy.
Don't turn aside, lest you fall.

⁸ All you who fear the Lord, put your trust in him,
and your reward will not fail.

⁹ All you who fear the Lord, hope for good things,
and for eternal gladness and mercy.

- 10 Look at the generations of old, and see:
 Who ever put his trust in the Lord, and was
 ashamed?
 Or who remained in his fear, and was for-
 saken?
 Or who called upon him, and he neglected
 him?
- 11 For the Lord is full of compassion and mercy.
 He forgives sins and saves in time of affliction.
- 12 Woe to fearful hearts, to faint hands,
 and to the sinner who goes two ways!
- 13 Woe to the faint heart! For it doesn't believe.
 Therefore it won't be defended.
- 14 Woe to you who have lost your patience!
 And what will you all do when the Lord visits
 you?
- 15 Those who fear the Lord will not disobey his
 words.
 Those who love him will keep his ways.
- 16 Those who fear the Lord will seek his good
 pleasure.
 Those who love him will be filled with the law.
- 17 Those who fear the Lord will prepare their
 hearts,
 and will humble their souls in his sight.
- 18 We will fall into the hands of the Lord,
 and not into the hands of men;
for as his majesty is,
 so also is his mercy.

3

- 1 Hear me, your father, O my children,

- and do what you hear, that you all may be safe.
- ² For the Lord honours the father over the children,
and has confirmed the judgement of the mother over her sons.
- ³ He who honours his father will make atonement for sins.
- ⁴ He who gives glory to his mother is as one who lays up treasure.
- ⁵ Whoever honours his father will have joy in his own children.
He will be heard in the day of his prayer.
- ⁶ He who gives glory to his father will have length of days.
He who listens to the Lord will bring rest to his mother,
- ⁷ †and will serve under his parents, as to masters.
- ⁸ Honour your father in deed and word,
that a blessing may come upon you from him.
- ⁹ For the blessing of the father establishes the houses of children,
but the curse of the mother roots out the foundations.
- ¹⁰ Don't glorify yourself in the dishonour of your father,
for your father's dishonour is no glory to you.
- ¹¹ For the glory of a man is from the honour of his father,
and a mother in dishonour is a reproach to her children.
- ¹² My son, help your father in his old age,

† 3:7: Some manuscripts add *those who fear the Lord honour their father*;

- and don't grieve him as long as he lives.
- 13 If he fails in understanding, have patience with him.
Don't dishonour him in your full strength.
- 14 For the kindness to your father will not be forgotten.
Instead of sins it will be added to build you up.
- 15 In the day of your affliction it will be remembered for you,
as fair weather upon ice,
so your sins will also melt away.
- 16 He who forsakes his father is as a blasphemer.
He who provokes his mother is cursed by the Lord.
- 17 My son, go on with your business in humility;
so you will be loved by an acceptable man.
- 18 The greater you are, humble yourself the more,
and you will find favour before the Lord.
- 19 ‡
- 20 For the power of the Lord is great,
and he is glorified by those who are lowly.
- 21 Don't seek things that are too hard for you,
and don't search out things that are above your strength.
- 22 Think about the things that have been commanded you,
for you have no need of the things that are secret.
- 23 Don't be overly busy in tasks that are beyond you,

‡ 3:19: Some manuscripts add *Many are lofty and renowned, but he reveals his secrets to the humble.*

- for more things are shown to you than men
can understand.
- 24 For the conceit of many has led them astray.
Evil opinion has caused their judgement to
slip.
- 25 § There is no light without eyes.
There is no wisdom without knowledge.
- 26 A stubborn heart will do badly at the end.
He who loves danger will perish in it.
- 27 A stubborn heart will be burdened with troubles.
The sinner will heap sin upon sins.
- 28 The calamity of the proud has no healing,
for a weed of wickedness has taken root in
him.
- 29 The heart of the prudent will understand a
proverb.
A wise man desires the ear of a listener.
- 30 Water will quench a flaming fire;
almsgiving will make atonement for sins.
- 31 He who repays good turns is mindful of that
which comes afterward.
In the time of his falling he will find a support.

4

- 1 My son, don't deprive the poor of his living.
Don't make the needy eyes wait long.
- 2 Don't make a hungry soul sorrowful,
or provoke a man in his distress.

§ 3:25: Some manuscripts omit verse 25.

³ Don't add more trouble to a heart that is provoked.

Don't put off giving to him who is in need.

⁴ Don't reject a suppliant in his affliction.

Don't turn your face away from a poor man.

⁵ Don't turn your eye away from one who asks.

Give no occasion to a man to curse you.

⁶ For if he curses you in the bitterness of his soul,
he who made him will hear his supplication.

⁷ Endear yourself to the assembly.

Bow your head to a great man.

⁸ Incline your ear to a poor man.

Answer him with peaceful words in humility.

⁹ Deliver him who is wronged from the hand of
him who wrongs him;

Don't be hesitant in giving judgement.

¹⁰ Be as a father to the fatherless,
and like a husband to their mother.

So you will be as a son of the Most High,
and he will love you more than your mother
does.

¹¹ Wisdom exalts her sons,
and takes hold of those who seek her.

¹² He who loves her loves life.

Those who seek her early will be filled with
gladness.

¹³ He who holds her fast will inherit glory.

Where[†] he enters, the Lord will bless.

¹⁴ Those who serve her minister to the Holy One.

The Lord loves those who love her.

¹⁵ He who listens to her will judge the nations.

[†] 4:13: Or, *she*

- He who heeds her will dwell securely.
16 If he trusts her, he will inherit her,
and his generations will possess her.
17 For at the first she will walk with him in crooked
ways,
and will bring fear and dread upon him,
and torment him with her discipline,
until she may trust his soul, and try him by her
judgements.
18 Then she will return him again to the straight
way,
and will gladden him, and reveal to him her
secrets.
19 If he goes astray, she will forsake him,
and hand him over to his fall.
20 Watch for the opportunity, and beware of evil.
Don't be ashamed of your soul.
21 For there is a shame that brings sin,
and there is a shame that is glory and grace.
22 Don't show partiality, discrediting your soul.
Don't revere any man to your falling.
23 Don't refrain from speaking when it is for safety.
‡ Don't hide your wisdom for the sake of seem-
ing fair.
24 For wisdom will be known by speech,
and instruction by the word of the tongue.
25 Don't speak against the truth
and be shamed for your ignorance.
26 Don't be ashamed to confess your sins.
Don't fight the river's current.
27 Don't lay yourself down for a fool to tread upon.

‡ 4:23: Some manuscripts omit this line.

- Don't be partial to one who is mighty.
- ²⁸ Strive for the truth to death,
and the Lord God will fight for you.
- ²⁹ Don't be hasty with your tongue,
or slack and negligent in your deeds.
- ³⁰ Don't be like a lion in your house,
or suspicious of your servants.
- ³¹ Don't let your hand be stretched out to receive,
and closed when you should repay.

5

- ¹ Don't set your heart upon your goods.
Don't say, "They are sufficient for me."
- ² Don't follow your own mind and your strength
to walk in the desires of your heart.
- ³ Don't say, "Who will have dominion over me?"
for the Lord will surely take vengeance on
you.
- ⁴ Don't say, "I sinned, and what happened to me?"
for the Lord is patient.
- ⁵ Don't be so confident of atonement
that you add sin upon sins.
- ⁶ Don't say, "His compassion is great.
He will be pacified for the multitude of my
sins,"
for mercy and wrath are with him,
and his indignation will rest on sinners.
- ⁷ Don't wait to turn to the Lord.
Don't put off from day to day;
for suddenly the wrath of the Lord will come
on you,
and you will perish in the time of vengeance.

- ⁸ Don't set your heart upon unrighteous gains,
for you will profit nothing in the day of
calamity.
- ⁹ Don't winnow with every wind.
Don't walk in every path.
This is what the sinner who has a double
tongue does.
- ¹⁰ Be steadfast in your understanding.
Let your speech be consistent.
- ¹¹ Be swift to hear
and answer with patience.
- ¹² If you have understanding, answer your neigh-
bour;
but if not, put your hand over your mouth.
- ¹³ Glory and dishonour is in talk.
A man's tongue may be his downfall.
- ¹⁴ Don't be called a whisperer.
Don't lie in wait with your tongue;
for shame is on the thief,
and an evil condemnation is on him who has
a double tongue.
- ¹⁵ Don't be ignorant in a great or small matter.

6

- ¹ Don't become an enemy instead of a friend;
for an evil name will inherit shame and re-
proach.
So it is with the sinner who has a double
tongue.
- ² Don't exalt yourself in the counsel of your soul,
that your soul not be torn in pieces like a bull.
- ³ You will eat up your leaves, destroy your fruit,

- and leave yourself like a dry tree.
- ⁴ A wicked soul will destroy him who has it,
and will make him a laughing stock to his
enemies.
- ⁵ Sweet words will multiply a man's friends.
A gracious tongue will multiply courtesies.
- ⁶ Let those that are at peace with you be many,
but your advisers one of a thousand.
- ⁷ If you want to gain a friend, get him in a time of
testing,
and don't be in a hurry to trust him.
- ⁸ For there is a friend just for an occasion.
He won't continue in the day of your affliction.
- ⁹ And there is a friend who turns into an enemy.
He will discover strife to your reproach.
- ¹⁰ And there is a friend who is a companion at the
table,
but he won't continue in the day of your affliction.
- ¹¹ In your prosperity he will be as yourself,
and will be bold over your servants.
- ¹² If you are brought low, he will be against you,
and will hide himself from your face.
- ¹³ Separate yourself from your enemies,
and beware of your friends.
- ¹⁴ A faithful friend is a strong defence.
He who has found him has found a treasure.
- ¹⁵ There is nothing that can be taken in exchange
for a faithful friend.
His excellency is beyond price.
- ¹⁶ A faithful friend is a life-saving medicine.

- Those who fear the Lord will find him.
17 He who fears the Lord directs his friendship properly;
for as he is, so is his neighbour also.
- 18 My son, gather instruction from your youth up.
Even when you have grey hair you will find wisdom.
- 19 Come to her as one who ploughs and sows
and wait for her good fruit;
for your toil will be little in her cultivation,
and you will soon eat of her fruit.
- 20 How exceedingly harsh she is to the unlearned!
He who is without understanding will not remain in her.
- 21 She will rest upon him as a mighty stone of trial.
He won't hesitate to cast her from him.
- 22 For wisdom is according to her name.
She isn't manifest to many.
- 23 Give ear, my son, and accept my judgement.
Don't refuse my counsel.
- 24 Bring your feet into her fetters,
and your neck into her chain.
- 25 Put your shoulder under her and bear her.
Don't be grieved with her bonds.
- 26 Come to her with all your soul.
Keep her ways with your whole power.
- 27 Search and seek, and she will be made known to you.
When you get hold of her, don't let her go.
- 28 For at the last you will find her rest;
and she will be turned for you into gladness.

- 29 Her fetters will be to you for a covering of strength,
and her chains for a robe of glory.
- 30 For there is a golden ornament upon her,
and her bands are *a purple cord.
- 31 You shall put her on as a robe of glory,
and shall put her on as a crown of rejoicing.
- 32 My son, if you are willing, you will be instructed.
If you will yield your soul, you will be prudent.
- 33 If you love to hear, you will receive.
If you incline your ear, you will be wise.
- 34 Stand in the multitude of the elders.
Attach yourself to whomever is wise.
- 35 Be willing to listen to every godly discourse.
Don't let the proverbs of understanding escape you.
- 36 If you see a man of understanding, get to him early.
Let your foot wear out the steps of his doors.
- 37 Let your mind dwell on the ordinances of the Lord
and meditate continually on his commandments.
He will establish your heart
and your desire for wisdom will be given to you.

7

- 1 Do no evil,
so no evil will overtake you.

* 6:30: Numbers 15:38

- ² Depart from wrong,
and it will turn away from you.
- ³ My son, don't sow upon the furrows of unrighteousness,
and you won't reap them sevenfold.
- ⁴ Don't seek preeminence from the Lord,
nor the seat of honour from the king.
- ⁵ Don't justify yourself in the presence of the Lord,
and don't display your wisdom before the king.
- ⁶ Don't seek to be a judge,
lest you not be able to take away iniquities,
lest perhaps you fear the person of a mighty man,
and lay a stumbling block in the way of your uprightness.
- ⁷ Don't sin against the multitude of the city.
Don't disgrace yourself in the crowd.
- ⁸ Don't commit a sin twice,
for even in one you will not be unpunished.
- ⁹ Don't say, "He will look upon the multitude of my gifts.
When I make an offering to the Most High God, he will accept it."
- ¹⁰ Don't be faint-hearted in your prayer.
Don't neglect to give alms.
- ¹¹ Don't laugh a man to scorn when he is in the bitterness of his soul,
for there is one who humbles and exalts.

- 12 Don't devise[†] a lie against your brother,
or do the same to a friend.
- 13 Refuse to utter a lie,
for that habit results in no good.
- 14 Don't babble in the assembly of elders.
Don't repeat your words in your prayer.
- 15 Don't hate hard labour
or farm work, which the Most High has created.
- 16 Don't number yourself amongst the multitude
of sinners.
Remember that wrath will not wait.
- 17 Humble your soul greatly,
for the punishment of the ungodly man is fire
and the worm.
- 18 Don't exchange a friend for something,
neither a true brother for the gold of Ophir.
- 19 Don't deprive yourself of a wise and good wife,
for her grace is worth more than gold.
- 20 Don't abuse a servant who works faithfully,
or a hireling who gives you his life.
- 21 Let your soul love a wise servant.
Don't defraud him of liberty.
- 22 Do you have cattle? Look after them.
If they are profitable to you, let them stay by you.
- 23 Do you have children? Correct them,
and make them obedient from their youth.
- 24 Do you have daughters? Take care of their
bodies,

[†] 7:12: Gr. *Don't plough*

- and don't be overly indulgent towards them.
- 25 Give your daughter in marriage, and you will
have accomplished a great matter.
Give her to a man of understanding.
- 26 Do you have a wife who pleases you? Don't cast
her out.
‡But don't trust yourself to one who is hateful.
- 27 Honour your father with your whole heart,
and don't forget the birth pangs of your
mother.
- 28 Remember that you were born of them.
What will you repay them for the things that
they have done for you?
- 29 Fear the Lord with all your soul;
and revere his priests.
- 30 With all your strength love him who made you.
Don't forsake his ministers.
- 31 Fear the Lord and honour the priest.
Give him his portion, even as it is commanded
you:
the first fruits, the trespass offering, the gift of
the shoulders,
the sacrifice of sanctification, and the first
fruits of holy things.
- 32 Also stretch out your hand to the poor man,
that your blessing may be complete.
- 33 A gift has grace in the sight of every living man.
Don't withhold grace for a dead man.

‡ 7:26: Many authorities omit this line

- ³⁴ Don't avoid those who weep,
and mourn with those who mourn.
³⁵ Don't be slow to visit a sick man,
for by such things you will gain love.
³⁶ In all your words, remember eternity,
and you will never sin.

8

- ¹ Don't contend with a mighty man,
lest perhaps you fall into his hands.
² Don't strive with a rich man, lest perhaps he
overpower you;
for gold has destroyed many,
and turned away the hearts of kings.
³ Don't argue with a loudmouthed man.
Don't heap wood upon his fire.

⁴ Don't make fun of a rude man,
lest your ancestors be dishonoured.
⁵ Don't reproach a man when he turns from sin.
Remember that we are all worthy of punishment.
⁶ Don't dishonour a man in his old age,
for some of us are also growing old.
⁷ Don't rejoice over anyone's death.
Remember that we all die.

⁸ Don't neglect the discourse of the wise.
Be conversant with their proverbs;
for from them you will learn discipline
and how to serve great men.
⁹ Don't miss the discourse of the aged,
for they also learnt from their parents,

because from them you will learn understanding,
and to give an answer in time of need.

- 10 Don't kindle the coals of a sinner,
lest you be burnt with the flame of his fire.
- 11 Don't rise up from the presence of an insolent man,
lest he lie in wait as an ambush for your mouth.
- 12 Don't lend to a man who is stronger than you;
and if you lend, count it as a loss.
- 13 Don't be surety beyond your means.
If you give surety, think as one who will have to pay.
- 14 Don't go to law with a judge;
for according to his honour they will give judgement for him.
- 15 Don't travel with a reckless man,
lest he be burdensome to you;
for he will do as he pleases,
and you will perish with his folly.
- 16 Don't fight with a wrathful man.
Don't travel with him through the desert,
for blood is as nothing in his sight.
Where there is no help, he will overthrow you.
- 17 Don't consult with a fool,
for he will not be able to keep a secret.
- 18 Do no secret thing before a stranger,
for you don't know what it will cause.
- 19 Don't open your heart to every man.
Don't let him return you a favour.

9

- ¹ Don't be jealous over the wife of your bosom,
and don't teach her an evil lesson against
yourself.
- ² Don't give your soul to a woman
and let her trample down your strength.
- ³ Don't go to meet a woman who plays the prosti-
tute,
lest perhaps you fall into her snares.
- ⁴ Don't associate with a woman who is a singer,
lest perhaps you be caught by her tricks.
- ⁵ Don't gaze at a virgin,
lest perhaps you stumble and incur penalties
for her.
- ⁶ Don't give your soul to prostitutes,
that you not lose your inheritance.
- ⁷ Don't look around in the streets of the city.
Don't wander in its deserted places.
- ⁸ Turn your eye away from a beautiful woman,
and don't gaze at another's beauty.
Many have been led astray by the beauty of a
woman;
and with this, passion is kindled like a fire.
- ⁹ Don't dine at all with a woman who has a hus-
band,
or revel with her at wine,[†]
lest perhaps your soul turn away to her,
and with your spirit you slide into destruc-
tion.
- ¹⁰ Don't forsake an old friend;
for a new one is not comparable to him.

[†] 9:9: The preceding line of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

A new friend is like new wine;
if it becomes old, you will drink it with glad-
ness.

¹¹ Don't envy the success of a sinner;
for you don't know what his end will be.

¹² Don't delight in the delights of the ungodly.
Remember they will not go unpunished to[‡]
the grave.

¹³ Keep yourself far from the man who has[§] power
to kill,
and you will not be troubled by the fear of
death.

If you come to him, commit no fault,
lest he take away your life.

Know surely that you go about in the midst of
snares,
and walk upon the battlements of a city.

¹⁴ As well as you can, aim to know your neigh-
bours,
and take counsel with the wise.

¹⁵ Let your conversation be with men of under-
standing.

Let all your discourse be in the law of the Most
High.

¹⁶ Let righteous people be companions at your
table.

Let your glorying be in the fear of the Lord.

¹⁷ A work is commended because of the skill of the
artisan;

[‡] 9:12: Gr. *Hades*. [§] 9:13: Or, *authority*

so he who rules the people will be considered wise for his speech.

- ¹⁸ A loudmouthed man is dangerous in his city.
He who is reckless in his speech will be hated.

10

- ¹ A wise judge will instruct his people.
The government of a man of understanding will be well ordered.
- ² As is the judge of his people, so are his officials.
As the city's ruler is, so are all those who dwell in it.
- ³ An undisciplined king will destroy his people.
A city will be established through the understanding of the powerful.
- ⁴ The government of the earth is in the Lord's hand.
In due time, he will raise up over it the right person at the right time.
- ⁵ A man's prosperity is in the Lord's hand.
He will lay his honour upon the person of the scribe.
- ⁶ Don't be angry with your neighbour for every wrong.
Do nothing by works of violence.
- ⁷ Pride is hateful before the Lord and men.
Arrogance is abhorrent in the judgement of both.
- ⁸ Sovereignty is transferred from nation to nation because of injustice, violence, and greed for money.

- 9 Why are dirt and ashes proud?[†]
Because in life, my body decays.
- 10 A long disease mocks the physician.
The king of today will die tomorrow.
- 11 For when a man is dead,
he will inherit maggots, vermin, and worms.
- 12 It is the beginning of pride when a man departs
from the Lord.
His heart has departed from him who made
him.
- 13 For the beginning of pride is sin.
He who keeps it will pour out abomination.
For this cause the Lord brought upon them
strange calamities
and utterly overthrew them.
- 14 The Lord cast down the thrones of rulers
and set the lowly in their place.
- 15 The Lord plucked up the roots of nations
and planted the lowly in their place.
- 16 The Lord overthrew the lands of nations
and destroyed them to the foundations of the
earth.
- 17 He took some of them away and destroyed them,
and made their memory to cease from the
earth.
- 18 Pride has not been created for men,
nor wrathful anger for the offspring of
women.
- 19 Whose offspring has honour?
Human offspring who fear the Lord.
Whose offspring has no honour?

[†] **10:9:** Two lines of this verse are here omitted by the best authorities.

Human offspring who break the commandments.

20 In the midst of kindred he who rules them has honour.

Those who fear the Lord have honour in his eyes.

21 ‡

22 The rich man, the honourable, and the poor all glory in the fear of the Lord.

23 It is not right to dishonour a poor man who has understanding.

It is not fitting to glorify a man who is a sinner.

24 The prince, the judge, and the mighty man will be honoured.

There is not one of them greater than he who fears the Lord.

25 Free men will minister to a wise servant.

A man who has knowledge will not complain.

26 Don't flaunt your wisdom in doing your work.

Don't boast in the time of your distress.

27 Better is he who labours and abounds in all things,

than he who boasts and lacks bread.

28 My son, glorify your soul in humility, and ascribe to yourself honour according to your worthiness.

29 Who will justify him who sins against his own soul?

Who will honour him who dishonours his own life?

‡ 10:21: Verse 21 is omitted by the best authorities: Fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance, but obstinance and pride are the beginning of rejection.

- 30 A poor man is honoured for his knowledge.
A rich man is honoured for his riches.
31 But he who is honoured in poverty, how much
more in riches?
He who is dishonoured in riches, how much
more in poverty?

11

- 1 The wisdom of the lowly will lift up his head,
and make him sit in the midst of great men.
- 2 Don't commend a man for his good looks.
Don't abhor a man for his outward appearance.
- 3 The bee is little amongst flying creatures,
but what it produces is the best of confections.
- 4 Don't boast about the clothes you wear,
and don't exalt yourself in the day of honour;
for the Lord's works are wonderful,
and his works are hidden amongst men.
- 5 Many[†] kings have sat down upon the ground,
but one who was never thought of has worn a crown.
- 6 Many mighty men have been greatly disgraced.
Men of renown have been delivered into
other men's hands.
- 7 Don't blame before you investigate.
Understand first, and then rebuke.
- 8 Don't answer before you have heard.
Don't interrupt while someone else is speaking.

[†] 11:5: Gr. *tyrants*

⁹ Don't argue about a matter that doesn't concern you.
Don't sit with sinners when they judge.

¹⁰ My son, don't be busy about many matters;
for if you meddle much, you will not be unpunished.

If you pursue, you will not overtake,
and you will not escape by fleeing.

¹¹ There is one who toils, labours, and hurries,
and is even more behind.

¹² There is one who is sluggish, and needs help,
lacking in strength, and who abounds in poverty,

but the Lord's eyes looked upon him for good,
and he raised him up from his low condition,

¹³ and lifted up his head
so that many marvelled at him.

¹⁴ Good things and bad, life and death,
poverty and riches, are from the Lord.
¹⁵⁻¹⁶ ‡

¹⁷ The Lord's gift remains with the godly.
His good pleasure will prosper forever.

¹⁸ One grows rich by his diligence and self-denial,
and this is the portion of his reward:

¹⁹ when he says, "I have found rest,
and now I will eat of my goods!"

he doesn't know how much time will pass
until he leaves them to others and dies.

²⁰ Be steadfast in your covenant and be doing it,
and grow old in your work.

‡ **11:15-16:** Verses 15 and 16 are omitted by the best authorities.

- 21 Don't marvel at the works of a sinner,
but trust the Lord and stay in your labour;
for it is an easy thing in the sight of the Lord
to swiftly and suddenly make a poor man
rich.
- 22 The Lord's blessing is in the reward of the godly.
He makes his blessing flourish in an hour that
comes swiftly.
- 23 Don't say, "What use is there of me?
What further good things can be mine?"
- 24 Don't say, "I have enough.
What harm could happen to me now?"
- 25 In the day of good things, bad things are forgotten.
In the day of bad things, a man will not remember
things that are good.
- 26 For it is an easy thing in the sight of the Lord
to reward a man in the day of death according
to his ways.
- 27 The affliction of an hour causes delights to be
forgotten.
In the end, a man's deeds are revealed.
- 28 Call no man happy before his death.
A man will be known in his children.
- 29 Don't bring every man into your house,
for many are the tricks of a deceitful man.
- 30 Like a decoy partridge in a cage, so is the heart
of a proud man.
Like a spy, he looks for your weakness.
- 31 For he lies in wait to turn things that are good
into evil,

- and assigns blame in things that are praise-worthy.
- 32 From a spark of fire, a heap of many coals is kindled,
and a sinful man lies in wait to shed blood.
- 33 Take heed of an evil-doer, for he plans wicked things,
lest perhaps he ruin your reputation forever.
- 34 Receive a stranger into your house, and he will distract you with arguments
and estrange you from your own family.

12

- 1 If you do good, know to whom you do it,
and your good deeds will have thanks.
- 2 Do good to a godly man, and you will find a reward—
if not from him, then from the Most High.
- 3 No good will come to him who continues to do evil,
nor to him who gives no alms.
- 4 Give to the godly man,
and don't help the sinner.
- 5 Do good to one who is lowly.
Don't give to an ungodly man.
Keep back his bread, and don't give it to him,
lest he subdue you with it;
for you would receive twice as much evil
for all the good you would have done to him.
- 6 For the Most High also hates sinners,
and will repay vengeance to the ungodly.†

† 12:6: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

7 Give to the good man,
and don't help the sinner.

8 A man's friend won't be[‡] fully tried in prosperity.
His enemy won't be hidden in adversity.

9 In a man's prosperity, his enemies are grieved.
In his adversity, even his friend leaves.

10 Never trust your enemy,
for his wickedness is like corrosion in copper.

11 Though he humbles himself and walks bowed
down,
still be careful and beware of him.

You will be to him as one who has wiped a mirror,
to be sure it doesn't completely tarnish.

12 Don't set him next to you,
lest he overthrow you and stand in your
place.

Don't let him sit on your right hand,
lest he seek to take your seat,
and at the last you acknowledge my words,
and be pricked with my sayings.

13 Who will pity a charmer that is bitten by a snake,
or any who come near wild beasts?

14 Even so, who will pity him who goes to a sinner,
and is associated with him in his sins?

15 For a while he will stay with you,
and if you falter, he will not stay.

16 The enemy will speak sweetly with his lips,
and in his heart plan to throw you into a pit.
The enemy may weep with his eyes,

[‡] 12:8: Or, *punished*

but if he finds opportunity, he will want more blood.

¹⁷ If adversity meets you, you will find him there before you.

Pretending to help you, he will trip you.

¹⁸ He will shake his head, clap his hands, whisper much, and change his countenance.

13

¹ He who touches pitch will be defiled.

He who has fellowship with a proud man will become like him.

² Don't take up a burden above your strength.

Have no fellowship with one who is mightier and richer than yourself.

What fellowship would the earthen pot have with the kettle?

The kettle will strike, and the pot will be dashed in pieces.

³ The rich man does a wrong and threatens.

The poor is wronged and apologises.

⁴ If you are profitable, he will exploit you.

If you are in need, he will forsake you.

⁵ If you own something, he will live with you.

He will drain your resources and will not be sorry.

⁶ Does he need you? Then he will deceive you,

smile at you, and give you hope.

He will speak kindly to you and say, "What do you need?"

⁷ He will shame you by his delicacies

until he has made you bare twice or thrice, and in the end he will laugh you to scorn.

Afterward he will see you, will forsake you,
and shake his head at you.

⁸ Beware that you are not deceived
and brought low in your enjoyment.

⁹ If a mighty man invites you, be reserved,
and he will invite you more.

¹⁰ Don't press him, lest you be thrust back.
Don't stand far off, lest you be forgotten.

¹¹ Don't try to speak with him as an equal,
and don't believe his many words;
for he will test you with much talk,
and will examine you in a smiling manner.

¹² He who doesn't keep secrets to himself is un-
merciful.

He won't hesitate to harm and to bind.

¹³ Keep them to yourself and be careful,
for you walk[†] in danger of falling.

¹⁴ ‡

¹⁵ Every living creature loves its own kind,
and every man loves his neighbour.

¹⁶ All flesh associates with their own kind.
A man will stick to people like himself.

¹⁷ What fellowship would the wolf have with the
lamb?

So is the sinner to the godly.

¹⁸ What peace is there between a hyena and a dog?
What peace is there between a rich man and
the poor?

[†] **13:13:** Gr. *along with*. [‡] **13:14:** The remainder of verse 13, and
verse 14, are omitted by the best authorities.

19 Wild donkeys are the prey of lions in the wilderness;
likewise poor men are feeding grounds for the rich.

20 Lowliness is an abomination to a proud man;
likewise a poor man is an abomination to the rich.

21 When a rich man is shaken, he is supported by his friends,
but when the humble is down, he is pushed away even by his friends.

22 When a rich man falls, there are many helpers.
He speaks things not to be spoken, and men justify him.

A humble man falls, and men rebuke him.
He utters wisdom, and is not listened to.

23 A rich man speaks, and all keep silence.
They extol what he says to the clouds.

A poor man speaks, and they say, "Who is this?"
If he stumbles, they will help to overthrow him.

24 Riches are good if they have no sin.
Poverty is evil only in the opinion of the ungodly.

25 The heart of a man changes his countenance,
whether it is for good or for evil. §

26 A cheerful countenance is a sign of a prosperous heart.
Devising proverbs takes strenuous thinking.

§ 13:25: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

14

- ¹ Blessed is the man who has not slipped with his mouth,
and doesn't suffer from sorrow for sins.
- ² Blessed is he whose soul does not condemn him,
and who has not given up hope.
- ³ Riches are not appropriate for a stingy person.
What would a miser do with money?
- ⁴ He who gathers by denying himself gathers for others.
Others will revel in his goods.
- ⁵ If one is mean to himself, to whom will he be good?
He won't enjoy his possessions.
- ⁶ There is none more evil than he who is grudging to himself.
This is a punishment for his wickedness.
- ⁷ Even if he does good, he does it in forgetfulness.
In the end, he reveals his wickedness.
- ⁸ A miser is evil.
He turns away and disregards souls.
- ⁹ A covetous man's eye is not satisfied with his portion.
Wicked injustice dries up his soul.
- ¹⁰ A miser begrudges bread,
and it is lacking at his table.
- ¹¹ My son, according to what you have, treat yourself well,
and bring worthy offerings to the Lord.
- ¹² Remember that death will not wait,
and that the covenant of Hades hasn't been shown to you.

- 13 Do good to your friends before you die.
According to your ability, reach out and give to them.
- 14 Don't deprive yourself of a good day.
Don't let your share of a desired good pass you by.
- 15 Won't you leave your labours to another,
and your toils be divided by lot?
- 16 Give, take, and treat yourself well,
because there is no seeking of luxury in Hades.
- 17 All flesh grows old like a garment,
for the covenant from the beginning is, "You must die!"
- 18 Like the leaves flourishing on a thick tree,
some it sheds, and some grow,
so also are the generations of flesh and blood:
one comes to an end and another is born.
- 19 Every work rots and falls away,
and its builder will depart with it.
- 20 Blessed is the man who meditates on wisdom,
and who reasons by his understanding.
- 21 He who considers her ways in his heart
will also have knowledge of her secrets.
- 22 Go after her like a hunter,
and lie in wait in her paths.
- 23 He who peers in at her windows
will also listen at her doors.
- 24 He who lodges close to her house
will also fasten a nail in her walls.
- 25 He will pitch his tent near at hand to her,
and will lodge in a lodging where good things are.

- 26 He will set his children under her shelter,
and will rest under her branches.
27 By her he will be covered from heat,
and will lodge in her glory.

15

- 1 He who fears the Lord will do this.
He who has possession of the law will obtain
her.
2 She will meet him like a mother,
and receive him like a wife married in her
virginity.
3 She will feed him with bread of understanding
and give him water of wisdom to drink.
4 He will be stayed upon her, and will not be
moved.
He will rely upon her, and will not be con-
founded.
5 She will exalt him above his neighbours.
She will open his mouth in the midst of the
congregation.
6 He will inherit joy, a crown of gladness,
and an everlasting name.
7 Foolish men will not obtain her.
Sinners will not see her.
8 She is far from pride.
Liars will not remember her.
9 Praise is not attractive in the mouth of a sinner;
for it was not sent to him from the Lord.
10 For praise will be spoken in wisdom;
The Lord will prosper it.
11 Don't say, "It is through the Lord that I fell
away;"
for you shall not do the things that he hates.

- 12 Don't say, "It is he that caused me to err;"
for he has no need of a sinful man.
- 13 The Lord hates every abomination;
and those who fear him don't love them.
- 14 He himself made man from the beginning
and left him in the hand of his own counsel.
- 15 If you choose, you can keep the commandments.
To be faithful is a matter of your choice.
- 16 He has set fire and water before you.
You will stretch forth your hand to whichever
you desire.
- 17 Before man is life and death.
Whichever he likes, it will be given to him.
- 18 For the wisdom of the Lord is great.
He is mighty in power, and sees all things.
- 19 His eyes are upon those who fear him.
He knows every act of man.
- 20 He has not commanded any man to be ungodly.
He has not given any man license to sin.

16

- 1 Don't desire a multitude of unprofitable children,
neither delight in ungodly sons.
- 2 If they multiply, don't delight in them
unless the fear of the Lord is in them.
- 3 Don't trust in their life.
Don't rely on their numbers;
for one can be better than a thousand,
and to die childless than to have ungodly children.
- 4 For from one who has understanding, a city will
be populated,

but a race of wicked men will be made desolate.

⁵ I have seen many such things with my eyes.
My ear has heard mightier things than these.

⁶ In a congregation of sinners, a fire will be kindled.

In a disobedient nation, wrath is kindled.

⁷ He was not pacified towards the giants of old time,
who revolted in their strength.

⁸ He didn't spare Lot's neighbours,
whom he abhorred for their pride.

⁹ He didn't pity the people of perdition
who were taken away in their sins,
¹⁰ or in like manner, the six hundred thousand
footmen
who were gathered together in the hardness
of their hearts.

¹¹ Even if there is one stiff-necked person,
it is a marvel if he will be unpunished;
for mercy and wrath are both with him who
is mighty to forgive,
and he pours out wrath.

¹² As his mercy is great, so is his correction also.
He judges a man according to his works.

¹³ The sinner will not escape with plunder.
The perseverance of the godly will not be
frustrated.

¹⁴ He will make room for every work of mercy.
Each man will receive according to his works.
¹⁵⁻¹⁶ †

† **16:15-16:** Verses 15 and 16 are omitted by the best authorities.

- 17 Don't say, "I will be hidden from the Lord,"
and "Who will remember me from on high?"
I will not be known amongst so many people,
for what is my soul in a boundless creation?
- 18 Behold, the heaven, the heaven of heavens,
the deep, and the earth, will be moved when
he visits.
- 19 The mountains and the foundations of the earth
together
are shaken with trembling when he looks at
them.
- 20 No heart will think about these things.
Who could comprehend his ways?
- 21 Like a tempest which no man can see,
so, the majority of his works are[‡] hidden.
- 22 Who will declare his works of righteousness?
Who will wait for them?
For his covenant is afar off.[§]
- 23 He who is lacking in[†] understanding thinks
about these things.
An unwise and erring man thinks foolishly.
- 24 My son, listen to me, learn knowledge,
and heed my words with your heart.
- 25 I will impart instruction with precision,
and declare knowledge exactly.
- 26 In the judgement of the Lord are his works from
the beginning.
From the making of them he determined their
boundaries.

[‡] 16:21: Gr. *amongst hidden things*. [§] 16:22: The remainder of
this verse is omitted by the best authorities. [†] 16:23: Gr. *heart*.

- 27 He arranged his works for all time,
and their beginnings to their generations.
They aren't hungry or weary,
and they don't cease from their works.
- 28 No one pushes aside his neighbour.
They will never disobey his word.
- 29 After this also the Lord looked at the earth
and filled it with his blessings.
- 30 All manner of living things covered its surface,
and they return into it.

17

- 1 The Lord created mankind out of earth,
and turned them back to it again.
- 2 He gave them days by number, and a set time,
and gave them authority over the things that
are on it.
- 3 He endowed them with strength proper to them,
and made them according to his own image.
- 4 He put the fear of man upon all flesh,
and gave him dominion over beasts and
birds.
- 5 †
- 6 He gave them counsel, tongue, eyes,
ears, and heart to have understanding.
- 7 He filled them with the knowledge of wisdom,
and showed them good and evil.
- 8 He set his eye upon their hearts,
to show them the majesty of his works.
- 9 ‡
- 10 And they will praise his holy name,

† 17:5: Verse 5 is omitted by the best authorities. ‡ 17:9: Verse 9 is omitted by the best authorities.

- § That they may declare the majesty of his works.
- 11 He added to them knowledge,
and gave them a law of life for a heritage.
- 12 He made an everlasting covenant with them,
and showed them his decrees.
- 13 Their eyes saw the majesty of his glory.
Their ears heard the glory of his voice.
- 14 He said to them, "Beware of all unrighteousness."
So he gave them commandment, each man
concerning his neighbour.
- 15 Their ways are ever before him.
They will not be hidden from his eyes.
- 16 †
- 17 ‡ For every nation he appointed a ruler,
but Israel is the Lord's portion.
- 18 §
- 19 All their works are as clear as the sun before him.
His eyes are continually upon their ways.
- 20 Their iniquities are not hidden from him.
All their sins are before the Lord.
- 21 †
- 22 With him the alms of a man is as a signet.
He will keep a man's kindness as the pupil of the eye.‡

§ 17:10: This line is added by the best authorities. † 17:16: Verses 16, 18, and 21 are omitted by the best authorities. ‡ 17:17: The preceding part of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

§ 17:18: Verses 16, 18, and 21 are omitted by the best authorities.

† 17:21: Verses 16, 18, and 21 are omitted by the best authorities.

‡ 17:22: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

- 23 Afterwards he will rise up and repay them,
and give their repayment upon their head.
- 24 However to those who repent he grants a re-
turn.
He comforts those who are losing hope.
- 25 Return to the Lord, and forsake sins.
Make your prayer before his face offend less.
- 26 Turn again to the Most High, and turn away
from iniquity.§
Greatly hate the abominable thing.
- 27 Who will give praise to the Most High in Hades,
in place of the living who return thanks?
- 28 Thanksgiving perishes from the dead, as from
one who doesn't exist.
He who is in life and health will praise the
Lord.
- 29 How great is the mercy of the Lord,
and his forgiveness to those who turn to him!
- 30 For humans are not capable of everything,
because the son of man is not immortal.
- 31 What is brighter than the sun? Yet even this can
be eclipsed.
So flesh and blood devise evil.
- 32 He looks upon the power of the height of
heaven,
while all men are earth and ashes.

18

- 1 He who lives forever created the whole universe.
2 The Lord alone is just.

§ 17:26: A line is here omitted by the best authorities.

3 †

4 He has given power to declare his works to no one.

Who could trace out his mighty deeds?

5 Who could measure the strength of his majesty?

Who could also proclaim his mercies?

6 As for the wondrous works of the Lord, it is not possible to take from them nor add to them, neither is it possible to explore them.

7 When a man has finished, then he is just at the beginning.

When he stops, then he will be perplexed.

8 What is mankind, and what purpose do they serve?

What is their good, and what is their evil?

9 The number of man's days at the most are a hundred years.

10 As a drop of water from the sea, and a pebble from the sand,

so are a few years in the day of eternity.

11 For this cause the Lord was patient over them, and poured out his mercy upon them.

12 He saw and perceived their end, that it is evil.

Therefore he multiplied his forgiveness.

13 The mercy of a man is on his neighbour;

but the mercy of the Lord is on all flesh:

reproving, chastening, teaching,

and bringing back, as a shepherd does his flock.

14 He has mercy on those who accept chastening, and that diligently seek after his judgements.

† 18:3: The remainder of verse 2, and verse 3, are omitted by the best authorities.

- 15 My son, don't add reproach to your good deeds,
and no harsh words in any of your giving.
- 16 Doesn't the dew relieve the scorching heat?
So a word is better than a gift.
- 17 Behold, isn't a word better than a gift?
Both are with a gracious person.
- 18 A fool is ungracious and abusive.
The gift of a grudging person consumes the eyes.
- 19 Learn before you speak.
Take care of your health before you get sick.
- 20 Before judgement, examine yourself,
and in the hour of scrutiny you will find forgiveness.
- 21 Humble yourself before you get sick.
In the time of sins, repent.
- 22 Let nothing hinder you to pay your vow in due time.
Don't wait until death to be released.
- 23 Before you make a vow, prepare yourself.
Don't be like a man who tests the Lord.
- 24 Think about the wrath coming in the days of the end,
and the time of vengeance, when he turns away his face.
- 25 In the days of fullness remember the time of hunger.
Remember poverty and lack in the days of wealth.
- 26 From morning until evening, the time changes.
All things are speedy before the Lord.
- 27 A wise man is cautious in everything.

- In days of sinning, he will beware of offence.‡
28 Every man of understanding knows wisdom.
He will give thanks to him who found her.
29 They who were of understanding in sayings also
became wise themselves,
and poured out apt proverbs.
30 Don't go after your lusts.
Restrain your appetites.
31 If you give fully to your soul the delight of her
desire,
she will make you§ the laughing stock of your
enemies.
32 Don't make merry in much luxury,
and don't be tied to its expense.
33 Don't be made a beggar by banqueting with
borrowed money
when you have nothing in your purse.†

19

- 1 A worker who is a drunkard will not become
rich.
He who despises small things will fall little by
little.
2 Wine and women will make men of understand-
ing go astray.
He who joins with prostitutes is reckless.
3 Decay and worms will have him as their heritage.
A reckless soul will be taken away.

‡ 18:27: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best author-
ities. § 18:31: Or, *a rejoicing to* † 18:33: The remainder of
this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

- 4 He who is hasty to trust is shallow-hearted.
He who sins offends against his own soul.
- 5 He who rejoices in wickedness will be condemned.[†]
- 6 [‡]He who hates gossip has less wickedness.
- 7 Never repeat what is told you,
and you won't lose anything.
- 8 Whether it is of friend or foe, don't tell it.
Unless it is a sin to you, don't reveal it.
- 9 For if he has heard you and observed you,
when the time comes, he will hate you.
- 10 Have you heard something? Let it die with you.
Be brave: it will not make you burst!
- 11 A fool will travail in pain with a word,
as a woman in labour with a child.
- 12 As an arrow that sticks in the flesh of the thigh,
so is gossip in a fool.
- 13 Question a friend; it may be he didn't do it.
If he did something, it may be that he may do
it no more.
- 14 Question your neighbour; it may be he didn't
say it.
If he has said it, it may be that he may not say
it again.
- 15 Question a friend; for many times there is slander.
Don't trust every word.
- 16 There is one who slips, and not from the heart.
Who is he who hasn't sinned with his tongue?

[†] 19:5: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities. [‡] 19:6: The preceding part of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

17 Reprove your neighbour before you threaten him;
and give place to the law of the Most High.
18-19 §

20 All wisdom is the fear of the Lord.
In all wisdom is the doing of the law.
21 †

22 The knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom.
The prudence of sinners is not counsel.

23 There is a wickedness, and it is an abomination.
There is a fool lacking in wisdom.

24 Better is one who has little understanding, and
fears God,
than one who has much intelligence and
transgresses the law.

25 There is an exquisite subtlety, and it is unjust.
And there is one who perverts favour to gain
a judgement.‡

26 There is one who does wickedly, who hangs
down his head with mourning;
but inwardly he is full of deceit,

27 bowing down his face, and pretending to be
deaf in one ear.

Where he isn't known, he will take advantage
of you.

28 And if for lack of power he is hindered from
sinning,
if he finds opportunity, he will do mischief.

§ 19:18-19: Verses 18 and 19 are omitted by the best authorities.

† 19:21: The remainder of verse 20 and verse 21 are omitted by the best authorities. ‡ 19:25: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

- 29 A man will be known by his appearance.
One who has understanding will be known by
his face when you meet him.
- 30 A man's attire, grinning laughter,
and the way he walks show what he is.

20

- 1 There is a reproof that is not timely;
and there is a person who is wise enough to
keep silent.
- 2 How good is it to reprove, rather than to be angry.
He who confesses will be kept back from
harm.
- 3 †
- 4 As is the lust of a eunuch to deflower a virgin,
so is he who executes judgements with vio-
lence.
- 5 There is one who keeps silent and is found wise;
and there is one who is hated for his much
talk.
- 6 There is one who keeps silent, for he has no
answer to make;
And there is one who keeps silent, knowing
when to speak.
- 7 A wise man will be silent until his time has come,
but the braggart and fool will miss his time.
- 8 He who uses many words will be abhorred.
He who takes authority for himself will be
hated in it.
- 9 There is a prosperity that a man finds in misfor-
tunes;

† 20:3: Verse 3 is omitted by the best authorities.

- and there is a gain that turns to loss.
10 There is a gift that will not profit you;
and there is a gift that pays back double.
11 There are losses because of glory;
and there is one who has lifted up his head
from a low estate.
12 There is one who buys much for a little,
and pays for it again sevenfold.
13 He who is wise in words will make himself
beloved;
but the pleasantries of fools will be wasted.
14 The gift of a fool will not profit you,‡
for he looks for repayment many times in-
stead of one.
15 He will give little and insult much.
He will open his mouth like a crier.
Today he will lend, and tomorrow he will ask for
it back.
Such a one is a hateful man.
16 The fool will say, "I have no friend,
and I have no thanks for my good deeds.
Those who eat my bread have an evil tongue."
17 How often, and of how many, will he be laughed
to scorn!§
18 A slip on a pavement is better than a slip with
the tongue.
So the fall of the wicked will come speedily.
19 A man without grace is a tale out of season.
It will be continually in the mouth of the
ignorant.

‡ 20:14: A line of this verse is here omitted by the best authorities.

§ 20:17: The latter part of verse 17 is omitted by the best authorities.

- 20 A parable from a fool's mouth will be rejected;
for he won't tell it at the proper time.
- 21 There is one who is hindered from sinning
through lack.
When he rests, he will not be troubled.
- 22 There is one who destroys his soul through
bashfulness.
By a foolish countenance, he will destroy it.
- 23 There is one who for bashfulness makes
promises to his friend;
and he makes him his enemy for nothing.
- 24 A lie is an ugly blot on a person.
It will be continually in the mouth of the
ignorant.
- 25 A thief is better than a man who is continually
lying,
but they both will inherit destruction.
- 26 The destination of a liar is dishonour.
His shame is with him continually.
- 27 He who is wise in words will advance himself.
And one who is prudent will please great
men.
- 28 He who tills his land will raise his harvest high.
He who pleases great men will get pardon for
iniquity.
- 29 Favours and gifts blind the eyes of the wise,
and as a muzzle on the mouth, turn away
reproofs.
- 30 Wisdom that is hidden, and treasure that is out
of sight—
what profit is in either of them?

- 31 Better is a man who hides his folly
than a man who hides his wisdom.
32 †

21

- 1 My son, have you sinned?
Do it no more;
and ask forgiveness for your past sins.
- 2 Flee from sin as from the face of a snake;
for if you go near, it will bite you.
Its teeth are like lion's teeth,
slaying people's souls.
- 3 All iniquity is as a two-edged sword.
Its stroke has no healing.
- 4 Terror and violence will waste away riches.
So the house of an arrogant man will be laid
waste.
- 5 Supplication from a poor man's mouth reaches
to the ears of † God,
and his judgement comes speedily.
- 6 One who hates reproof is in the path of the sinner.
He who fears the Lord will repent in his heart.
- 7 He who is mighty in tongue is known far away;
but the man of understanding knows when
he slips.
- 8 He who builds his house with other men's money
is like one who gathers stones for his own
tomb.
- 9 The congregation of wicked men is as a bundle of
tow

† 20:32: Verse 32 is omitted by the best authorities. † 21:5: Gr.
him.

- with a flame of fire at the end of them.
10 The way of sinners is paved with stones;
and at the end of it is the pit of Hades.
- 11 He who keeps the law becomes master of its
intent.
The fulfilment of the fear of the Lord is wisdom.
- 12 He who is not clever will not be instructed.
There is a cleverness which makes bitterness
abound.
- 13 The knowledge of a wise man will be made to
abound as a flood,
and his counsel as a fountain of life.
- 14 The inward parts of a fool are like a broken
vessel.
He will hold no knowledge.
- 15 If a man of knowledge hears a wise word,
he will commend it and add to it.
The wanton man hears it, and it displeases him,
so he throws it away behind his back.
- 16 The chatter of a fool is like a burden in the way,
but grace will be found on the lips of the wise.
- 17 The utterance of the prudent man will be sought
for in the congregation.
They will ponder his words in their heart.
- 18 As a house that is destroyed, so is wisdom to a
fool.
The knowledge of an unwise man is talk without sense.‡
- 19 Instruction is as fetters on the feet of an unwise
man,

‡ 21:18: Gr. *unexamined words*.

- and as manacles on the right hand.
- ²⁰ A fool lifts up his voice with laughter,
but a clever man smiles quietly.
- ²¹ Instruction is to a prudent man as an ornament
of gold,
and as a bracelet upon his right arm.
- ²² The foot of a fool rushes into a house,
but a man of experience will be ashamed of
entering.
- ²³ A foolish man peers into the door of a house,
but a man who is instructed will stand out-
side.
- ²⁴ It is rude for someone to listen at a door,
but a prudent person will be grieved with the
disgrace.
- ²⁵ The lips of strangers will be grieved at these
things,
but the words of prudent men will be weighed
in the balance.
- ²⁶ The heart of fools is in their mouth,
but the mouth of wise men is their heart.
- ²⁷ When the ungodly curses an adversary,
he curses his own soul.
- ²⁸ A whisperer defiles his own soul,
and will be hated wherever he travels.

22

- ¹ A slothful man is compared to a stone that is
defiled.
Everyone will hiss at him in his disgrace.
- ² A slothful man is compared to the filth of a
dunghill.

Anyone who picks it up will shake it out of his hand.

³ An undisciplined child is a disgrace to his father, and a foolish daughter is born to his loss.

⁴ A prudent daughter will inherit a husband of her own.

She who brings shame is the grief of her father.

⁵ She who is arrogant brings shame on father and husband.

She will be despised by both of them.

⁶ Ill-timed conversation is like music in mourning, but stripes and correction are wisdom in every season.

⁷ He who teaches a fool is like one who glues potsherds together, even like one who wakes a sleeper out of a deep sleep.

⁸ He who teaches a fool is as one who teaches a man who slumbers.

In the end he will say, "What is it?"

⁹⁻¹⁰ †

¹¹ Weep for the dead, for he lacks light.

Weep for a fool, for he lacks understanding.

Weep more sweetly for the dead, because he has found rest,

but the life of the fool is worse than death.

¹² Mourning for the dead lasts seven days,

but for a fool and an ungodly man, it lasts all the days of his life.

† **22:9-10:** Verses 9 and 10 are omitted by the best authorities.

- 13 Don't talk much with a foolish man,
and don't go to one who has no understand-
ing.
Beware of him, lest you have trouble and be de-
filed in his onslaught.
Turn away from him, and you will find rest,
and you won't be wearied in his madness.
- 14 What would be heavier than lead?
What is its name, but "Fool"?
- 15 Sand, salt, and a mass of iron is easier to bear
than a man without understanding.
- 16 Timber girded and bound into a building will
not be released with shaking.
So a heart established in due season on well
advised counsel will not be afraid.
- 17 A heart settled upon a thoughtful understand-
ing
is as an ornament of plaster on a polished
wall.
- 18 Fences set on a high place will not stand against
the wind;
so a fearful heart in the imagination of a fool
will not stand against any fear.
- 19 He who pricks the eye will make tears fall.
He who pricks the heart makes it show feel-
ing.
- 20 Whoever casts a stone at birds scares them
away.
He who insults a friend will dissolve friend-
ship.
- 21 If you have drawn a sword against a friend,
don't despair,

- for there may be a way back.
- 22 If you have opened your mouth against a friend,
don't be afraid,
for there may be reconciliation,
unless it is for insulting, arrogance, disclosing
of a secret, or a treacherous blow—
for these things any friend will flee.
- 23 Gain trust with your neighbour in his poverty,
that in his prosperity you may have gladness.
Stay steadfast to him in the time of his affliction,
that you may be heir with him in his inheritance.‡
- 24 Before fire is the vapour and smoke of a furnace,
so insults precede bloodshed.
- 25 I won't be ashamed to shelter a friend.
I won't hide myself from his face.
- 26 If any evil happens to me because of him,
everyone who hears it will beware of him.
- 27 Who will set a watch over my mouth,
and a seal of shrewdness upon my lips,
that I may not fall from it, and that my tongue
may not destroy me?

23

- 1 O Lord, Father and Master of my life,
don't abandon me to their counsel.
Don't let me fall because of them.
- 2 Who will set scourges over my thought,
and a discipline of wisdom over my heart,
that they spare me not for my errors,

‡ 22:23: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

- and not overlook their sins?
3 Otherwise my errors might be multiplied,
and my sins abound,
I fall before my adversaries,
and my enemy rejoice over me.[†]
4 O Lord, Father and God of my life,
don't give me a haughty eyes,[‡]
5 and turn away evil desire from me.§
6 Let neither gluttony nor lust overtake me.
Don't give me over to a shameless mind.
7 Listen, my children, to the discipline of the
mouth.
He who keeps it will not be caught.
8 The sinner will be overpowered through his lips.
By them, the insulter and the arrogant will
stumble.
9 Don't accustom your mouth to an oath,
and don't be accustomed to naming the Holy
One,
10 for as a servant who is continually scourged will
not lack bruises,
so he also who swears and continually utters
the Name will not be cleansed from sin.
11 A man of many oaths will be filled with iniquity.
The scourge will not depart from his house.
If he offends, his sin will be upon him.
If he disregards it, he has sinned doubly.
If he has sworn falsely, he will not be justified,
for his house will be filled with calamities.

[†] 23:3: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities. [‡] 23:4: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities. [§] 23:5: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

12 There is a manner of speech that is clothed with death.

Let it not be found in the heritage of Jacob,
for all these things will be far from the godly,
and they will not wallow in sins.

13 Don't accustom your mouth to gross rudeness,
for it involves sinful speech.

14 Remember your father and your mother,
for you sit in the midst of great men,
that you be not forgetful before them,
and become a fool by your bad habit;
so you may wish that you had not been born,
and curse the day of your birth.

15 A man who is accustomed to abusive language
won't be corrected all the days of his life.

16 Two sorts of people multiply sins,
and the third will bring wrath:
a hot passion, like a burning fire, will not be
quenched until it is consumed;
a fornicator in the body of his flesh will never
cease until he has burnt out the fire.

17 All bread is sweet to a fornicator.
He will not cease until he dies.

18 A man who goes astray from his own marriage
bed
says in his heart, "Who sees me?

Darkness is around me, and the walls hide me.
No one sees me. Of whom am I afraid?
The Most High will not remember my sins."

19 The eyes of men are his terror.
He doesn't know that the eyes of the Lord are
ten thousand times brighter than the sun,
seeing all the ways of men,

- and looking into secret places.
- ²⁰ All things were known to him before they were created,
and also after they were completed.
- ²¹ This man will be punished in the streets of the city.
He will be seized where he least expects it.
- ²² So also is a wife who leaves her husband,
and produces an heir by another man.
- ²³ For first, she was disobedient in the law of the Most High.
Second, she trespassed against her own husband.
Third, she played the adulteress in fornication,
and had children by another man.
- ²⁴ She shall be brought out into the congregation.
Her punishment will extend to her children.
- ²⁵ Her children will not take root.
Her branches will bear no fruit.
- ²⁶ She will leave her memory for a curse.
Her reproach won't be blotted out.
- ²⁷ And those who are left behind will know that
there is nothing better than the fear of the Lord,
and nothing sweeter than to heed the commandments of the Lord.
- ²⁸ †

24

- ¹ Wisdom will praise her own soul,

† **23:28:** Verse 28 is omitted by the best authorities.

- and will proclaim her glory in the midst of her people.
- ² She will open her mouth in the congregation of the Most High,
and proclaim her glory in the presence of his power.
- ³ “I came out of the mouth of the Most High,
and covered the earth as a mist.
- ⁴ I lived in high places,
and my throne is in the pillar of the cloud.
- ⁵ Alone I surrounded the circuit of heaven,
and walked in the depth of the abyss.
- ⁶ In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth,
and in every people and nation, I obtained a possession.
- ⁷ With all these I sought rest.
In whose inheritance shall I lodge?
- ⁸ Then the Creator of all things gave me a command.
He who created me made my tent to rest,
and said, ‘Let your dwelling be in Jacob,
and your inheritance in Israel.’
- ⁹ He created me from the beginning, before the ages.
For all ages, I will not cease to exist.
- ¹⁰ In the holy tabernacle, I ministered before him.
So I was established in Zion.
- ¹¹ In the beloved city, likewise he gave me rest.
In Jerusalem was my domain.
- ¹² I took root in a people that was honoured,
even in the portion of the Lord’s own inheritance.
- ¹³ I was exalted like a cedar in Lebanon,

- And like a cypress tree on the mountains of Hermon.
- 14 I was exalted like a palm tree on the sea shore,
like rose bushes in Jericho,
and like a fair olive tree in the plain.
I was exalted like a plane tree.
- 15 Like cinnamon and aspalathus, I have given a
scent to perfumes.
Like choice myrrh, I spread abroad a pleasant
fragrance,
like† galbanum, onycha, stacte,
and as the smell of frankincense in the tabernacle.
- 16 Like the terebinth, I stretched out my branches.
My branches are glorious and graceful.
- 17 Like the vine, I put forth grace.
My flowers are the fruit of glory and riches.
- 18 ‡
- 19 “Come to me, all you who desire me,
and be filled with my fruits.
- 20 For my memory is sweeter than honey,
and my inheritance than the honeycomb.
- 21 Those who eat me will be hungry for more.
Those who drink me will be thirsty for more.
- 22 He who obeys me will not be ashamed.
Those who work with me will not sin.”
- 23 All these things are the book of the covenant of
the Most High God,
the law which Moses commanded us for an
inheritance for the assemblies of Jacob.

† 24:15: See Exodus 30:34.
best authorities.

‡ 24:18: Verse 18 is omitted by the

24 §

- ²⁵ It is he who makes wisdom abundant, as Pishon,
and as Tigris in the days of first fruits.
- ²⁶ He makes understanding full as the Euphrates,
and as the Jordan in the days of harvest,
- ²⁷ who makes instruction shine forth as the light,
as Gihon in the days of vintage.
- ²⁸ The first man didn't know her perfectly.
In like manner, the last has not explored her.
- ²⁹ For her thoughts are filled from the sea,
and her counsels from the great deep.
- ³⁰ I came out as a canal stream from a river,
and as an irrigation ditch into a garden.
- ³¹ I said, "I will water my garden,
and will drench my garden bed."
Behold, my stream became a river,
and my river became a sea.
- ³² I will yet bring instruction to light as the morn-
ing,
and will make these things clear from far
away.
- ³³ I will continue to pour out teaching like
prophecy,
and leave it to all generations.
- ³⁴ See that I have not laboured for myself only,
but for all those who diligently seek wisdom.

25

- ¹ I enjoy three things,

§ 24:24: Verse 24 is omitted by the best authorities.

and they are beautiful before the Lord and men:
the agreement of kindred,
the friendship of neighbours,
and a woman and her husband who walk together in agreement.

² But my soul hates three sorts of people,
and I am greatly offended at their life:
a poor man who is arrogant,
a rich man who is a liar,
and an old fool who is an adulterer.

³ If you gathered nothing in your youth,
how could you find anything in your old age?

⁴ How beautiful a thing is judgement in the grey-haired,
and for elders to know good counsel!

⁵ How beautiful is the wisdom of old men,
and understanding and counsel to men who are in honour!

⁶ Much experience is the crown of the aged.
Their glory is the fear of the Lord.

⁷ There are nine things that I have thought of, and in my heart counted happy,
and the tenth I will utter with my tongue:
a man who has joy with his children,
and a man who lives and sees the fall of his enemies.

⁸ Happy is he who dwells with a wife of understanding,
he who has not slipped with his tongue,
and he who has not served a man who is unworthy of him.

- 9 Happy is he who has found prudence,
and he who speaks in the ears of those who
listen.
- 10 How great is he who has found wisdom!
Yet there is none greater than one who fears
the Lord.
- 11 The fear of the Lord surpasses all things.
To whom shall he who holds it be likened?
- 12 †
- 13 Any wound but a wound of the heart!
Any wickedness but the wickedness of a
woman!
- 14 Any calamity but a calamity from those who
hate me!
Any vengeance but the vengeance of ene-
mies!
- 15 There is no venom worse than a snake's venom.
There is no wrath worse than an enemy's
wrath.
- 16 I would rather dwell with a lion and a dragon
than keep house with a wicked woman.
- 17 The wickedness of a woman changes her ap-
pearance,
and darkens her countenance like that of a
bear.
- 18 Her husband will sit amongst his neighbours,
and when he hears it, he sighs bitterly.
- 19 All malice is small compared to the malice of a
woman.
Let the portion of a sinner fall on her.
- 20 As walking up a sandy hill is to the feet of the
aged,

† 25:12: Verse 12 is omitted by the best authorities.

- so is a wife full of words to a quiet man.
- ²¹ Don't be ensnared by a woman's beauty.
Don't desire a woman for her beauty.
- ²² There is anger, impudence, and great reproach
if a woman supports her husband.
- ²³ A wicked woman is abasement of heart,
sadness of countenance, and a wounded
heart.
A woman who won't make her husband happy
is like hands that hang down, and weak knees.
- ²⁴ The beginning of sin came from a woman.
Because of her, we all die.
- ²⁵ Don't give water an outlet,
and don't give a wicked woman freedom of
speech.
- ²⁶ If she doesn't go as you direct,
cut her away from your flesh.‡

26

- ¹ Happy is the husband of a good wife.
The number of his days will be doubled.
- ² A faithful wife gives joy to her husband.
He will fulfil his years in peace.
- ³ A good wife is a great gift.
She will be given to those who fear the Lord.
- ⁴ Whether a man is rich or poor,
a good heart makes a cheerful face at all
times.
- ⁵ Of three things my heart was afraid,

‡ 25:26: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

and concerning the fourth[†] kind I made supplication:

The slander of a city, the assembly of a mob,
and a false accusation.

All these are more grievous than death.

⁶ A grief of heart and sorrow is a woman who is
jealous of another woman.

Her tongue-lashing makes it known to all.

⁷ A wicked woman is like a chafing yoke.

He who takes hold of her is like one who
grasps a scorpion.

⁸ A drunken woman causes great wrath.

She will not cover her own shame.

⁹ The fornication of a woman is in the lifting up of
her eyes;

it will be known by her eyelids.

¹⁰ Keep strict watch on a headstrong daughter,
lest she find liberty for herself, and use it.

¹¹ Watch out for an impudent eye,
and don't be surprised if it sins against you.

¹² She will open her mouth like a thirsty traveller,
and drink from every water that is near.

She will sit down at every post,
and open her quiver to any arrow.

¹³ The grace of a wife will delight her husband.

Her knowledge will strengthen[‡] his bones.

¹⁴ A silent woman is a gift of the Lord.

There is nothing worth so much as a well-
instructed soul.

¹⁵ A modest woman is grace upon grace.

[†] 26:5: Gr. *countenance*. [‡] 26:13: or, *fatten*

There are no scales that can weigh the value
of a self-controlled soul.

¹⁶ As the sun when it arises in the highest places of
the Lord,
so is the beauty of a good wife in her well-
organised home.

¹⁷ As the lamp that shines upon the holy lamp-
stand,
so is the beauty of the face on a well-
proportioned body.

¹⁸ As the golden pillars are upon a base of silver,
so are beautiful feet with the breasts of one
who is steadfast.

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²⁸ For two things my heart is grieved,
and for the third anger comes upon me:
a warrior who suffers for poverty,
men of understanding who are counted as
garbage,
and one who turns back from righteousness
to sin—
the Lord will prepare him for the sword!

²⁹ It is difficult for a merchant to keep himself from
wrong doing,
and for a retailer to be acquitted of sin.

27

¹ Many have sinned for profit.
He who seeks to multiply wealth will turn his
eye away.

§ **26:19-27:** Verses 19-27 are omitted by the best authorities.

- ² As a nail will stick fast between the joinings of stones,
so sin will thrust itself in between buying and selling.
- ³ Unless a person holds on diligently to the fear of the Lord,
his house will be overthrown quickly.
- ⁴ In the shaking of a sieve, the refuse remains,
so does the filth of man in his thoughts.
- ⁵ The furnace tests the potter's vessels;
so the test of a person is in his thoughts.
- ⁶ The fruit of a tree discloses its cultivation,
so is the utterance of the thought of a person's heart.
- ⁷ Praise no man before you hear his thoughts,
for this is how people are tested.
- ⁸ If you follow righteousness, you will obtain it,
and put it on like a long robe of glory.
- ⁹ Birds will return to their own kind,
so truth will return to those who practise it.
- ¹⁰ The lion lies in wait for prey.
So does sin for those who do evil.
- ¹¹ The discourse of a godly man is always wise,
but the fool changes like the moon.
- ¹² Limit your time amongst people void of understanding,
but persevere amongst the thoughtful.
- ¹³ The talk of fools is offensive.
Their laughter is wantonly sinful.
- ¹⁴ Their talk with much swearing makes hair stand upright.

Their strife makes others plug their ears.

15 The strife of the proud leads to bloodshed.
Their abuse of each other is a grievous thing
to hear.

16 He who reveals secrets destroys trust,
and will not find a close friend.

17 Love a friend, and keep faith with him;
but if you reveal his secrets,
you shall not follow him;

18 for as a man has destroyed his enemy,
so you have destroyed the friendship of your
neighbour.

19 As a bird which you have released out of your
hand,
so you have let your neighbour go, and you
will not catch him again.

20 Don't pursue him, for he has gone far away,
and has escaped like a gazelle out of the snare.

21 For a wound may be bound up, and after abuse
there may be reconciliation;
but he who reveals secrets is without hope.

22 One who winks the eye contrives evil things;
and those who know him will keep their dis-
tance.

23 When you are present, he will speak sweetly,
and will admire your words;
but afterward he will twist his speech
and set a trap in your words.

24 I have hated many things, but nothing like him.
The Lord will hate him.

- 25 One who casts a stone straight up casts it on his own head.
A deceitful blow opens wounds.
- 26 He who digs a pit will fall into it.
He who sets a snare will be caught in it.
- 27 He who does evil things, they will roll back upon him,
and he will not know where they came from.
- 28 Mockery and reproach are from the arrogant.
Vengeance lies in wait for them like a lion.
- 29 Those who rejoice at the fall of the godly will be caught in a snare.
Anguish will consume them before they die.
- 30 Wrath and anger, these also are abominations.
A sinner will possess them.

28

- 1 He who takes vengeance will find vengeance from the Lord,
and he will surely make his sins firm.
- 2 Forgive your neighbour the hurt that he has done,
and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.
- 3 Does anyone harbour anger against another and expect healing from the Lord?
- 4 Upon a man like himself he has no mercy,
and does he make supplication for his own sins?
- 5 He himself, being flesh, nourishes wrath.
Who will make atonement for his sins?
- 6 Remember your last end, and stop enmity.

Remember corruption and death, and be true
to the commandments.

⁷ Remember the commandments, and don't be
angry with your neighbour.

Remember the covenant of the Highest, and
overlook ignorance.

⁸ Abstain from strife, and you will diminish your
sins,

for a passionate man will kindle strife.

⁹ A man who is a sinner will trouble friends
and sow discord amongst those who are at
peace.

¹⁰ As is the fuel of the fire, so it will burn;
and as the stoutness of the strife is, so it will
burn.

As is the strength of the man, so will be his wrath;
and as is his wealth, so he will exalt his anger.

¹¹ A contention begun in haste kindles a fire;
and hasty fighting sheds blood.

¹² If you blow on a spark, it will burn;
and if you spit upon it, it will be quenched.
Both of these come out of your mouth.

¹³ Curse the whisperer and double-tongued,
for he has destroyed many who were at peace.

¹⁴ A slanderer has shaken many,
and dispersed them from nation to nation.

It has pulled down strong cities
and overthrown the houses of great men.

¹⁵ A slanderer has cast out brave women
and deprived them of their labours.

¹⁶ He who listens to it will not find rest,

- nor will he live quietly.
- 17 The stroke of a whip makes a mark in the flesh,
but the stroke of a tongue will break bones.
- 18 Many have fallen by the edge of the sword,
yet not so many as those who have fallen
because of the tongue.
- 19 Happy is he who is sheltered from it,
who has not passed through its wrath,
who has not drawn its yoke,
and has not been bound with its bands.
- 20 For its yoke is a yoke of iron,
and its bands are bands of brass.
- 21 Its death is an evil death,
and Hades is better than it.
- 22 It will not have rule over godly men.
They will not be burnt in its flame.
- 23 Those who forsake the Lord will fall into it.
It will burn amongst them, and won't be
quenched.
- It will be sent against them like a lion.
It will destroy them like a leopard.
- 24 As you hedge your possession about with
thorns,
and secure your silver and your gold,
- 25 so make a balance and a weight for your words,
and make a door and a bar for your mouth.
- 26 Take heed lest you slip with it,
lest you fall before one who lies in wait.

29

- 1 He who shows mercy will lend to his neighbour.
He who strengthens him with his hand keeps
the commandments.

- ² Lend to your neighbour in time of his need.
Repay your neighbour on time.
- ³ Confirm your word, and keep faith with him;
and at all seasons you will find what you need.
- ⁴ Many have considered a loan to be a windfall,
and have given trouble to those who helped
them.
- ⁵ Until he has received, he will kiss a man's hands.
For his neighbour's money he will speak sub-
missively.
Then when payment is due, he will prolong the
time,
return excuses, and complain about the sea-
son.
- ⁶ If he prevails, the creditor will hardly receive
half;
and he will count it as a windfall.
If not, he has deprived him of his money,
and he has gotten him for an enemy without
cause.
He will pay him with cursing and railing.
Instead of honour, he will pay him disgrace.
- ⁷ Many on account of fraud have turned away.
They are afraid of being defrauded for noth-
ing.
- ⁸ However be patient with a man in poor estate.
Don't keep him waiting for your alms.
- ⁹ Help a poor man for the commandment's sake.
According to his need don't send him empty
away.
- ¹⁰ Lose your money for a brother and a friend.
Don't let it rust under a stone and be lost.
- ¹¹ Allocate your treasure according to the com-
mandments of the Most High

- and it will profit you more than gold.
- 12 Store up almsgiving in your store-chambers
and it will deliver you out of all affliction.
- 13 It will fight for you against your enemy
better than a mighty shield and a ponderous
spear.
- 14 A good man will be surety for his neighbour.
He who has lost shame will fail him.
- 15 Don't forget the kindness of your guarantor,
for he has given his life for you.
- 16 A sinner will waste the property of his guarantor.
- 17 He who is thankless will fail him who delivered him.
- 18 Being surety has undone many who were prospering
and shaken them as a wave of the sea.
It has driven mighty men from their homes.
They wandered amongst foreign nations.
- 19 A sinner who falls into suretiship and undertakes contracts for work
will fall into lawsuits.
- 20 Help your neighbour according to your power,
and be careful not to fall yourself.
- 21 The essentials of life are water, bread,
a garment, and a house for privacy.
- 22 Better is the life of a poor man under a shelter
of logs
than sumptuous fare in another man's house.
- 23 With little or with much, be well satisfied.†
- 24 It is a miserable life to go from house to house.

† 29:23: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

Where you are a guest, you dare not open your mouth.

²⁵ You will entertain, serve drinks, and have no thanks.

In addition to this, you will hear bitter words.

²⁶ “Come here, you sojourner, set a table, and if you have anything in your hand, feed me with it.”

²⁷ “Leave, you sojourner, for an honoured guest is here.

My brother has come to be my guest. I need my house.”

²⁸ These things are grievous to a man of understanding:

The scolding about lodging and the insults of creditors.

30

¹ He who loves his son will continue to lay stripes upon him,

that he may have joy from him in the end.

² He who chastises his son will have profit from him,

and will brag about him amongst his acquaintances.

³ He who teaches his son will provoke his enemy to jealousy.

Before friends, he will rejoice in him.

⁴ His father dies, and is as though he had not died; for he has left one behind him like himself.

⁵ In his life, he saw his son and rejoiced.

When he died, it was without regret.

- 6 He left behind him an avenger against his enemies,
and one to repay kindness to his friends.
- 7 He who makes too much of his son will bind up
his wounds.
His heart will be troubled at every cry.
- 8 An unbroken horse becomes stubborn.
An unrestrained son becomes headstrong.
- 9 Pamper your child, and he will make you afraid.
Play with him, and he will grieve you.
- 10 Don't laugh with him, lest you have sorrow with
him,
and you gnash your teeth in the end.
- 11 Give him no liberty in his youth,
and don't ignore his follies.†
- 12 ‡Bow down his neck in his youth,
and beat him on the sides while he is a child,
lest he become stubborn, and be disobedient
to you,
and there be sorrow to your soul.§
- 13 Chastise your son, and give him work,
lest his shameless behaviour be an offence to
you.
- 14 Better is a poor man who is healthy and fit,
than a rich man who is afflicted in his body.
- 15 Health and fitness are better than all gold,
and a strong body better than wealth without
measure.

† 30:11: This line and the previous two lines are absent from some older MSS. ‡ 30:12: These three lines are absent from the oldest MSS. § 30:12: These three lines are absent from the oldest MSS.

- 16 There is no wealth better than health of body.
There is no gladness above the joy of the heart.
- 17 Death is better than a bitter life,
and eternal rest than a continual sickness.
- 18 Good things poured out upon a mouth that is closed
are like food offerings laid upon a grave.
- 19 What does an offering profit an idol?
For it can't eat or smell.
So is he who is punished by the Lord,
20 seeing with his eyes and groaning,
like a eunuch embracing a virgin and groan-
ing.
- 21 Don't give your soul to sorrow.
Don't afflict yourself deliberately.
- 22 Gladness of heart is the life of a man.
Cheerfulness of a man lengthens his days.
- 23 Love your own soul, and comfort your heart.
Remove sorrow far from you,
for sorrow has destroyed many,
and there is no profit in it.
- 24 Envy and wrath shorten life.
Anxiety brings old age before its time.
- 25 Those who are cheerful and merry
will benefit from their food.

31

- 1 Wakefulness that comes from riches consumes
the flesh,
and anxiety about it takes away sleep.
- 2 Wakeful anxiety will crave slumber.

In a severe disease, sleep will be broken.

- ³ A rich man toils in gathering money together.
When he rests, he is filled with his good things.
- ⁴ A poor man toils in lack of substance.
When he rests, he becomes needy.
- ⁵ He who loves gold won't be justified.
He who follows destruction will himself have his fill of it.
- ⁶ Many have been given over to ruin for the sake of gold.
Their destruction meets them face to face.
- ⁷ It is a stumbling block to those who sacrifice to it.
Every fool will be taken by it.
- ⁸ Blessed is the rich person who is found blameless,
and who doesn't go after gold.
- ⁹ Who is he, that we may call him blessed?
For he has done wonderful things amongst his people.
- ¹⁰ Who has been tried by it, and found perfect?
Then let him boast.
Who has had the power to transgress, and has not transgressed?
And to do evil, and has not done it?
- ¹¹ His prosperity will be made sure.
The congregation will proclaim his alms.
- ¹² Do you sit at a great table? Don't be greedy there.
Don't say, "There is a lot of food on it!"
- ¹³ Remember that a greedy eye is a wicked thing.

What has been created more greedy than an eye?

Therefore it sheds tears from every face.

14 Don't stretch your hand wherever it looks.

Don't thrust yourself with it into the dish.

15 Consider your neighbour's feelings by your own.

Be discreet in every point.

16 Eat like a human being those things which are set before you.

Don't eat greedily, lest you be hated.

17 Be first to stop for manners' sake.

Don't be insatiable, lest you offend.

18 And if you sit amongst many,

Don't reach out your hand before them.

19 How sufficient to a well-mannered man is a very little.

He doesn't breathe heavily in his bed.

20 Healthy sleep comes from moderate eating.

He rises early, and his wits are with him.

The pain of wakefulness, colic,

and griping are with an insatiable man.

21 And if you have been forced to eat,

rise up in the middle of it, and you shall have rest.

22 Hear me, my son, and don't despise me,

and in the end you will appreciate my words.

In all your works be skilful,

and no disease will come to you.

23 People bless him who is liberal with his food.

The testimony of his excellence will be believed.

²⁴ The city will murmur at him who is a stingy with his food.
The testimony of his stinginess will be accurate.

²⁵ Don't show yourself valiant in wine,
for wine has destroyed many.

²⁶ The furnace tests the temper of steel by dipping;
so does wine test hearts in the quarrelling of the proud.

²⁷ Wine is as good as life to men,
if you drink it in moderation.

What life is there to a man who is without wine?
It has been created to make men glad.

²⁸ Wine drunk in season and in moderation
is joy of heart and gladness of soul:

²⁹ Wine drunk excessively is bitterness of soul,
with provocation and conflict.

³⁰ Drunkenness increases the rage of a fool to his hurt.
It diminishes strength and adds wounds.

³¹ Don't rebuke your neighbour at a banquet of wine.

Don't despise him in his mirth.

Don't speak a word of reproach to him.

Don't distress him by making demands of him.

32

¹ Have they made you ruler of a feast?

Don't be lifted up.

Be amongst them as one of them.

Take care of them first, and then sit down.

- ² And when you have done all your duties, take
your place,
that you may be gladdened on their account,
and receive a wreath for your good service.
- ³ Speak, you who are older, for it's your right, but
with sound knowledge;
and don't interrupt the music.
- ⁴ Don't pour out talk where there is a performance
of music.
Don't display your wisdom at the wrong time.
- ⁵ As a ruby signet in a setting of gold,
so is a music concert at a wine banquet.
- ⁶ As an emerald signet in a work of gold,
so is musical melody with pleasant wine.
- ⁷ Speak, young man, if you are obliged to,
but no more than twice, and only if asked.
- ⁸ Sum up your speech, many things in few words.
Be as one who knows and yet holds his
tongue.
- ⁹ When amongst great men, don't behave as their
equal.
When another is speaking, don't babble.
- ¹⁰ Lightning speeds before thunder.
Approval goes before one who is modest.
- ¹¹ Rise up in good time, and don't be last.
Go home quickly and don't loiter
- ¹² Amuse yourself there and do what is in your
heart.
Don't sin by proud speech.
- ¹³ For these things bless your Maker,

who gives you to drink freely of his good things.

¹⁴ He who fears the Lord will receive discipline.

Those who seek him early will find favour.

¹⁵ He who seeks the law shall be filled with it,
but the hypocrite will stumble at it.

¹⁶ Those who fear the Lord will find true judgement,
and will kindle righteous acts like a light.

¹⁷ A sinful man shuns reproof,
and will find a judgement according to his will.

¹⁸ A sensible person won't neglect a thought.
An insolent and proud man won't crouch in fear,
even after he has done a thing by himself
without counsel.

¹⁹ Do nothing without counsel,
but when you have acted, don't regret it.

²⁰ Don't go in a way of conflict.
Don't stumble in stony places.

²¹ Don't be overconfident on a smooth road.

²² Beware of your own children.

²³ In every work guard your own soul,
for this is the keeping of the commandments.

²⁴ He who believes the law gives heed to the commandment.

He who trusts in the Lord will suffer no loss.

33

¹ No evil will happen to him who fears the Lord,

- but in trials once and again he will deliver him.
- ² A wise man will not hate the law,
but he who is a hypocrite about it is like a boat
in a storm.
- ³ A man of understanding will put his trust in the
law.
And the law is faithful to him, as when one
asks a divine oracle.
- ⁴ Prepare your speech, and so you will be heard.
Bind up instruction, and make your answer.
- ⁵ The heart of a fool is like a cartwheel.
His thoughts are like a rolling axle.
- ⁶ A stallion horse is like a mocking friend.
He neighs under every one who sits upon
him.
- ⁷ Why does one day excel another,
when all the light of every day in the year is
from the sun?
- ⁸ They were distinguished by the Lord's knowl-
edge,
and he varied seasons and feasts.
- ⁹ Some of them he exalted and hallowed,
and some of them he has made ordinary days.
- ¹⁰ And all men are from the ground.
Adam was created from dust.
- ¹¹ In the abundance of his knowledge the Lord
distinguished them,
and made their ways different.
- ¹² Some of them he blessed and exalted,
and some of them he made holy and brought
near to himself.
Some of them he cursed and brought low,

- and overthrew them from their place.
- 13 As the clay of the potter in his hand,
all his ways are according to his good pleasure,
so men are in the hand of him who made them,
to give to them according to his judgement.
- 14 Good is the opposite of evil,
and life is the opposite of death;
so† the sinner is the opposite of the godly.
- 15 Look upon all the works of the Most High like
this,
they come in pairs, one against another.
- 16 I was the last on watch,
like one who gleans after the grape gatherers.
- 17 By the Lord's blessing I arrived before them,
and filled my winepress like one who gathers
grapes.
- 18 Consider that I laboured not for myself alone,
but for all those who seek instruction.
- 19 Hear me, you great men of the people,
and listen with your ears, you rulers of the
congregation.
- 20 To son and wife, to brother and friend,
don't give power over yourself while you live,
and don't give your goods to another,
lest you regret it and must ask for them.
- 21 While you still live and breath is in you,
don't give yourself over to anybody.

† 33:14: A line of this verse is here omitted by the best authorities.

- 22 For it is better that your children should ask
from you
than that you should look to the hand of your
children.
- 23 Excel in all your works.
Don't bring a stain on your honour.
- 24 In the day that you end the days of your life,
in the time of death, distribute your inheritance.
- 25 Fodder, a stick, and burdens are for a donkey.
Bread, discipline, and work are for a servant.
- 26 Set your slave to work, and you will find rest.
Leave his hands idle, and he will seek liberty.
- 27 Yoke and whip will bow the neck.
For an evil slave there are racks and tortures.
- 28 Send him to labour, that he not be idle,
for idleness teaches much mischief.
- 29 Set him to work, as is fit for him.
If he doesn't obey, make his fetters heavy.
- 30 Don't be excessive towards any.
Do nothing unjust.
- 31 If you have a slave, treat him like yourself,
because you have bought him with blood.
- 32 If you have a slave, treat him like yourself.
For like your own soul, you will need him.
If you treat him ill, and he departs and runs away,
33 which way will you go to seek him?

34

- 1 Vain and false hopes are for a man void of understanding.

Dreams give wings to fools.

² As one who grasps at a shadow and follows after
the wind,
so is he who sets his mind on dreams.

³ The vision of dreams is a reflection,
the likeness of a face near a face.

⁴ From an unclean thing what can be cleansed?
From that which is false what can be true?

⁵ Divinations, and soothsayings, and dreams, are
vain.

The heart has fantasies like a woman in
labour.

⁶ If they are not sent in a visitation from the Most
High,
don't give your heart to them.

⁷ For dreams have led many astray.
They have failed by putting their hope in
them.

⁸ Without lying the law will be fulfilled.
Wisdom is complete in a faithful mouth.

⁹ A well-instructed man knows many things.
He who has much experience will declare
understanding.

¹⁰ He who has no experience knows few things.
But he who has travelled increases clever-
ness.

¹¹ I have seen many things in my travels.
My understanding is more than my words.

¹² I was often in danger even to death.
I was preserved because of these experiences.

¹³ The spirit of those who fear the Lord will live,
for their hope is in him who saves them.

- 14 Whoever fears the Lord won't be afraid, and
won't be a coward,
for he is his hope.
- 15 Blessed is the soul of him who fears the Lord.
To whom does he give heed? Who is his
support?
- 16 The eyes of the Lord are on those who love him,
a mighty protection and strong support,
a cover from the hot blast, a shade from the
noonday sun,
a guard from stumbling, and a help from
falling.
- 17 He raises up the soul, and enlightens the eyes.
He gives health, life, and blessing.
- 18 He who sacrifices a thing wrongfully gotten, his
offering is made in mockery.
The mockeries of wicked men are not accept-
able.
- 19 The Most High has no pleasure in the offerings
of the ungodly,
Neither is he pacified for sins by the multitude
of sacrifices.
- 20 Like one who kills a son before his father's eyes
is he who brings a sacrifice from the goods of
the poor.
- 21 The bread of the needy is the life of the poor.
He who deprives him of it is a man of blood.
- 22 Like one who murders his neighbour is he who
takes away his living.
Like a shedder of blood is he who deprives a
hireling of his hire.

- 23 When one builds, and another pulls down,
what profit do they have but toil?
24 When one prays, and another curses,
whose voice will the Lord listen to?
25 He who washes himself after touching a dead
body, and touches it again,
what does he gain by his washing?
26 Even so a man fasting for his sins,
and going again, and doing the same,
who will listen to his prayer?
What profit does he have in his humiliation?

35

- 1 He who keeps the law multiplies offerings.
He who heeds the commandments sacrifices
a peace offering.
2 He who returns a kindness offers fine flour.
He who gives alms sacrifices a thank offering.
3 To depart from wickedness pleases the Lord.
To depart from unrighteousness is an atoning
sacrifice.
4 See that you don't appear in the presence of the
Lord empty.
5 For all these things are done because of the
commandment.
6 The offering of the righteous enriches the altar.
The sweet fragrance of it is before the Most
High.
7 The sacrifice of a righteous man is acceptable.
It won't be forgotten.
8 Glorify the Lord with generosity.
Don't reduce the first fruits of your hands.
9 In every gift show a cheerful countenance,

And dedicate your tithe with gladness.

¹⁰ Give to the Most High according as he has given.
As your hand has found, give generously.

¹¹ For the Lord repays,
and he will repay you sevenfold.

¹² Don't plan to bribe him with gifts, for he will not
receive them.
Don't set your mind on an unrighteous sacrifice,
For the Lord is the judge,
and with him is no respect of persons.

¹³ He won't accept any person against a poor man.
He will listen to the prayer of him who is
wronged.

¹⁴ He will in no way despise the supplication of the
fatherless
or the widow, when she pours out her tale.

¹⁵ Don't the tears of the widow run down her
cheek?
Isn't her cry against him who has caused them
to fall?

¹⁶ He who serves God according to his good pleasure
will be accepted.
His supplication will reach to the clouds.

¹⁷ The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds.
until it comes near, he will not be comforted.
He won't depart until the Most High visits
and he judges righteously and executes judgment.

¹⁸ And the Lord will not be slack, neither will he be
patient towards them,
until he has crushed the loins of the unmerciful.

He will repay vengeance to the heathen
until he has taken away the multitude of the
arrogant
and broken in pieces the sceptres of the un-
righteous,
¹⁹ until he has rendered to every man accord-
ing to his deeds,
and repaid the works of men according to
their plans,
until he has judged the cause of his people,
and he will make them rejoice in his mercy.
²⁰ Mercy is as welcome in the time of his affliction,
as clouds of rain in the time of drought.

36

- ¹ Have mercy upon us, O Lord the God of all, and
look at us with favour;
² and send your fear upon all the nations.[†]
³ Lift up your hand against the foreign nations
and let them see your mighty power.
⁴ As you showed your holiness in us before them,
so be magnified in them before us.
⁵ Let them know you, as we also have known you,
that there is no God but only you, O God.
⁶ Show new signs, and work various wonders.
Glorify your hand and your right arm.[‡]
⁷ Raise up indignation and pour out wrath.
Take away the adversary and destroy the en-
emy.

[†] **36:2:** The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best author-
ities. [‡] **36:6:** The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best
authorities.

- ⁸ Hasten the time and remember your oath.
Let them declare your mighty works.
- ⁹ Let him who escapes be devoured by raging fire.
May those who harm your people find destruction.
- ¹⁰ Crush the heads of the rulers of the enemies
who say, "There is no one but ourselves."
- ¹¹ Gather all the tribes of Jacob together,
and [§] take them for your inheritance, as from the beginning.
- ¹² O Lord, have mercy upon the people that is
called by your name,
and upon Israel, whom you likened to a first-born.
- ¹³ Have compassion upon the city of your sanctuary,
Jerusalem, the place of your rest.
- ¹⁴ Fill Zion. Exalt your oracles
and fill your people with your glory.
- ¹⁵ Give testimony to those who were your creatures in the beginning,
and fulfil the prophecies that have been spoken in your name.
- ¹⁶ Reward those who wait for you,
and men will put their trust in your prophets.
- ¹⁷ Listen, O Lord, to the prayer of your servants,
according to the blessing of Aaron concerning your people;
and all those who are on the earth will know
that you are the Lord, the [†] eternal God.

[§] **36:11:** The ancient authorities read *I took them for my inheritance*: but the Greek text is here very confused. [†] **36:17:** Gr. *God of the ages*.

- 18 The belly will eat any food,
but one food is better than another.
- 19 The mouth tastes meats taken in hunting,
so does an understanding heart detect false
speech.
- 20 A contrary heart will cause heaviness.
A man of experience will pay him back.
- 21 A woman will receive any man,
but one daughter is better than another.
- 22 The beauty of a woman cheers the countenance.
A man desires nothing more.
- 23 If kindness and humility are on her tongue,
her husband is not like other sons of men.
- 24 He who gets a wife gets his richest treasure,
a help meet for him and a pillar of support.
- 25 Where no hedge is, the property will be plundered.
He who has no wife will mourn as he wanders.
- 26 For who would trust a nimble robber who skips
from city to city?
Even so, who would trust a man who has no
nest, and lodges wherever he finds himself
at nightfall?

37

- 1 Every friend will say, "I also am his friend";
but there is a friend which is only a friend in
name.
- 2 Isn't there a grief in it even to death
when a companion and friend is turned into
an enemy?
- 3 O wicked imagination, why were you formed

- to cover the dry land with deceit?
- ⁴ There is a companion who rejoices in the gladness of a friend,
but in time of affliction will be against him.
- ⁵ There is a companion who for the belly's sake labours with his friend,
yet in the face of battle will carry his buckler.
- ⁶ Don't forget a friend in your soul.
Don't be unmindful of him in your riches.
- ⁷ Every counsellor extols counsel,
but some give counsel in their own interest.
- ⁸ Let your soul beware of a counsellor,
and know in advance what is his interest
(for he will take counsel for himself),
lest he cast the lot against you,
⁹ and say to you, "Your way is good."
Then he will stand near you, to see what will happen to you.
- ¹⁰ Don't take counsel with one who looks askance at you.
Hide your counsel from those who are jealous of you.
- ¹¹ Don't consult with a woman about her rival,
with a coward about war,
with a merchant about business,
with a buyer about selling,
with an envious man about thankfulness,
with an unmerciful man about kindness,
with a sluggard about any kind of work,
with a hireling in your house about finishing his work,
or with an idle servant about much business.

- Pay no attention to these in any matter of counsel.
- 12 But rather be continually with a godly man,
whom you know to be a keeper of the commandments,
who in his soul is as your own soul,
and who will grieve with you, if you fail.
- 13 Make the counsel of your heart stand,
for there is no one more faithful to you than it.
- 14 For a man's soul is sometimes inclined to inform him
better than seven watchmen who sit on high
on a watch-tower.
- 15 Above all this ask the Most High
that he may direct your way in truth.
- 16 Let reason be the beginning of every work.
Let counsel go before every action.
- 17 As a token of the changing of the heart,
18 four kinds of things rise up:
good and evil, life and death.
That which rules over them continually is the tongue.
- 19 There is one who is clever and the instructor of many,
and yet is unprofitable to his own soul.
- 20 There is one who is subtle in words, and is hated.
He will be destitute of all food.
- 21 For grace was not given to him from the Lord,
because he is deprived of all wisdom.
- 22 There is one who is wise to his own soul;
and the fruits of his understanding are trustworthy in the mouth.

- ²³ A wise man will instruct his own people.
The fruits of his understanding are trustworthy.
- ²⁴ A wise man will be filled with blessing.
All those who see him will call him happy.
- ²⁵ The life of a man is counted by days.
The days of Israel are innumerable.
- ²⁶ The wise man will inherit confidence amongst
his people.
His name will live forever.
- ²⁷ My son, test your soul in your life.
See what is evil for it, and don't give in to it.
- ²⁸ For not all things are profitable for all men.
Not every soul has pleasure in everything.
- ²⁹ Don't be insatiable in any luxury.
Don't be greedy in the things that you eat.
- ³⁰ For overeating brings disease,
and gluttony causes nausea.
- ³¹ Because of gluttony, many have perished,
but he who takes heed shall prolong his life.

38

- ¹ Honour a physician according to your need with
the honours due to him,
for truly the Lord has created him.
- ² For healing comes from the Most High,
and he shall receive a gift from the king.
- ³ The skill of the physician will lift up his head.
He will be admired in the sight of great men.
- ⁴ The Lord created medicines out of the earth.
A prudent man will not despise them.

- ⁵ Wasn't water made sweet with wood,
that its power might be known?
- ⁶ He gave men skill
that he might be glorified in his marvellous
works.
- ⁷ With them he heals
and takes away pain.
- ⁸ With these, the pharmacist makes a mixture.
God's works won't be brought to an end.
From him, peace is upon the face of the earth.
- ⁹ My son, in your sickness don't be negligent,
but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you.
- ¹⁰ Put away wrong doing, and direct your hands in
righteousness.
Cleanse your heart from all sin.
- ¹¹ Give a sweet savour and a memorial of fine
flour,
and pour oil on your offering, according to
your means.
- ¹² Then give place to the physician, for truly the
Lord has created him.
Don't let him leave you, for you need him.
- ¹³ There is a time when recovery is in their hands.
¹⁴ For they also shall ask the Lord
to prosper them in diagnosis and in healing
for the maintenance of life.
- ¹⁵ He who sins before his Maker,
let him fall into the hands of the physician.
- ¹⁶ My son, let your tears fall over the dead,
and as one who suffers grievously, begin
lamentation.
Wind up his body with due honour.

Don't neglect his burial.

- 17 Make bitter weeping and make passionate wailing.

Let your mourning be according to his merit,
for one day or two, lest you be spoken evil of;
and so be comforted for your sorrow.

- 18 For from sorrow comes death.
Sorrow of heart saps one's strength.

- 19 In calamity, sorrow also remains.
A poor man's life is grievous to the heart.

- 20 Don't give your heart to sorrow.
Put it away, remembering the end.

- 21 Don't forget it, for there is no returning again.
You do him no good, and you would harm
yourself.

- 22 Remember his end, for so also will yours be:
yesterday for him, and today for you.

- 23 When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance
rest.
Be comforted for him when his spirit departs
from him.

- 24 The wisdom of the scribe comes by the opportunity of leisure.

He who has little business can become wise.

- 25 How could he become wise who holds the
plough,
who glories in the shaft of the goad,
who drives oxen and is occupied in their
labours,
and who mostly talks about bulls?

- 26 He will set his heart upon turning his furrows.
His lack of sleep is to give his heifers their
fodder.

27 So is every craftsman and master artisan
who passes his time by night as by day,
those who cut engravings of signets.

His diligence is to make great variety.

He sets his heart to preserve likeness in his
portraiture,
and is careful to finish his work.

28 So too is the smith sitting by the anvil
and considering the unwrought iron.

The smoke of the fire will waste his flesh.

He toils in the heat of the furnace.

The noise of the hammer deafens his ear.

His eyes are upon the pattern of the object.

He will set his heart upon perfecting his works.

He will be careful to adorn them perfectly.

29 So is the potter sitting at his work

and turning the wheel around with his feet,
who is always anxiously set at his work.

He produces his handiwork in quantity.

30 He will fashion the clay with his arm

and will bend its strength in front of his feet.

He will apply his heart to finish the glazing.

He will be careful to clean the kiln.

31 All these put their trust in their hands.

Each becomes skilful in his own work.

32 Without these no city would be inhabited.

Men wouldn't reside as foreigners or walk up
and down there.

33 They won't be sought for in the council of the
people.

They won't mount on high in the assembly.

They won't sit on the seat of the judge.

They won't understand the covenant of judgement.

Neither will they declare instruction and judgement.

They won't be found where parables are.

³⁴ But they will maintain the fabric of the age.

Their prayer is in the handiwork of their craft.

39

¹ Not so he who has applied his soul
and meditates in the law of the Most High.

He will seek out the wisdom of all the ancients
and will be occupied with prophecies.

² He will keep the sayings of the men of renown
and will enter in amidst the subtleties of parables.

³ He will seek out the hidden meaning of proverbs
and be conversant in the dark sayings of parables.

⁴ He will serve amongst great men
and appear before him who rules.

He will travel through the land of foreign nations,
for he has learnt what is good and evil
amongst men.

⁵ He will apply his heart to return early to the Lord
who made him,
and will make supplication before the Most High,
and will open his mouth in prayer,
and will ask for pardon for his sins.

⁶ If the great Lord wills,

- he will be filled with the spirit of understanding;
he will pour forth the words of his wisdom
and in prayer give thanks to the Lord.
- ⁷ He will direct his counsel and knowledge,
and he will meditate in his secrets.
- ⁸ He will show the instruction which he has been
taught
and will glory in the law of the covenant of the
Lord.
- ⁹ Many will commend his understanding.
So long as the world endures, it won't be
blotted out.
His memory won't depart.
His name will live from generation to genera-
tion.
- ¹⁰ Nations will declare his wisdom.
The congregation will proclaim his praise.
- ¹¹ If he continues, he will leave a greater name
than a thousand.
If he finally rests, it is enough for him.
- ¹² Yet more I will utter, which I have thought about.
I am filled like the full moon.
- ¹³ Listen to me, you holy children,
and bud forth like a rose growing by a brook
of water.
- ¹⁴ Give a sweet fragrance like frankincense.
Put forth flowers like a lily.
Scatter a sweet smell and sing a song of praise.
Bless the Lord for all his works!
- ¹⁵ Magnify his name
and give utterance to his praise
with the songs on your lips and with harps!

Say this when you utter his praise:

¹⁶ All the works of the Lord are exceedingly good,
and every command will be done in its time.

¹⁷ No one can say, "What is this?" "Why is that?"
for at the proper time they will all be sought
out.

At his word, the waters stood as a heap,
as did the reservoirs of water at the word of
his mouth.

¹⁸ At his command all his good pleasure is fulfilled.
There is no one who can hinder his salvation.

¹⁹ The works of all flesh are before him.
It's impossible to be hidden from his eyes.

²⁰ He sees from everlasting to everlasting.
There is nothing too wonderful for him.

²¹ No one can say, "What is this?" "Why is that?"
for all things are created for their own uses.

²² His blessing covered the dry land as a river
and saturated it as a flood.

²³ As he has made the waters salty,
so the heathen will inherit his wrath.

²⁴ His ways are plain to the holy.
They are stumbling blocks to the wicked.

²⁵ Good things are created from the beginning for
the good.

So are evil things for sinners.

²⁶ The main things necessary for the life of man
are water, fire, iron, salt,
wheat flour, and honey, milk,
the blood of the grape, oil, and clothing.

²⁷ All these things are for good to the godly,
but for sinners, they will be turned into evils.

28 There are winds that are created for vengeance,
and in their fury they lay on their scourges
heavily.

In the time of reckoning, they pour out their
strength,
and will appease the wrath of him who made
them.

29 Fire, hail, famine, and death—
all these are created for vengeance—
30 wild beasts' teeth, scorpions, adders,
and a sword punishing the ungodly to de-
struction.

31 They will rejoice in his commandment,
and will be made ready upon earth when
needed.
In their seasons, they won't disobey his com-
mand.

32 Therefore from the beginning I was convinced,
and I thought it through and left it in writing:

33 All the works of the Lord are good.
He will supply every need in its time.

34 No one can say, "This is worse than that,"
for they will all be well approved in their time.

35 Now with all your hearts and voices, sing
praises
and bless the Lord's name!

40

1 Great travail is created for every man.
A heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam,
from the day of their coming forth from their
mother's womb,

until the day for their burial in the mother of all things.

² The expectation of things to come, and the day of death,
trouble their thoughts, and cause fear in their hearts.

³ From him who sits on a throne of glory,
even to him who is humbled in earth and ashes,

⁴ from him who wears purple and a crown,
even to him who is clothed in burlap,

⁵ there is wrath, jealousy, trouble, unrest,
fear of death, anger, and strife.

In the time of rest upon his bed,
his night sleep changes his knowledge.

⁶ He gets little or no rest,
and afterward in his sleep, as in a day of keeping watch,
he is troubled in the vision of his heart,
as one who has escaped from the front of battle.

⁷ In the very time of his deliverance, he awakens,
and marvels that the fear is nothing.

⁸ To all creatures, human and animal,
and upon sinners sevenfold more,

⁹ come death, bloodshed, strife, sword,
calamities, famine, suffering, and plague.

¹⁰ All these things were created for the wicked,
and because of them the flood came.

¹¹ All things that are of the earth turn to the earth
again.

All things that are of the waters return into
the sea.

- 12 All bribery and injustice will be blotted out.
Good faith will stand forever.
- 13 The goods of the unjust will be dried up like a river,
and like a great thunder in rain will go off in noise.
- 14 In opening his hands, a man will be made glad;
so lawbreakers will utterly fail.
- 15 The children of the ungodly won't grow many branches,
and are as unhealthy roots on a sheer rock.
- 16 The reeds by every water or river bank
will be plucked up before all grass.
- 17 Kindness is like a garden of blessings.
Almsgiving endures forever.
- 18 The life of one who labours and is content will
be made sweet.
He who finds a treasure is better than both.
- 19 Children and the building of a city establish a name.
A blameless wife is better than both.
- 20 Wine and music rejoice the heart.
The love of wisdom is better than both.
- 21 The pipe and the lute make pleasant melody.
A pleasant tongue is better than both.
- 22 Your eye desires grace and beauty,
but the green shoots of grain more than both.
- 23 A friend and a companion is always welcome,
and a wife with her husband is better than both.
- 24 Relatives and helpers are for a time of affliction,
but almsgiving rescues better than both.
- 25 Gold and silver will make the foot stand sure,
and counsel is esteemed better than both.

- 26 Riches and strength will lift up the heart.
The fear of the Lord is better than both.
There is nothing lacking in the fear of the Lord.
In it, there is no need to seek help.
- 27 The fear of the Lord is like a garden of blessing
and covers a man more than any glory.
- 28 My son, don't lead a beggar's life.
It is better to die than to beg.
- 29 A man who looks to the table of another,
his life is not to be considered a life.
He will pollute his soul with another person's
food,
but a wise and well-instructed person will
beware of that.
- 30 Begging will be sweet in the mouth of the
shameless,
but it kindles a fire in his belly.

41

- 1 O death, how bitter is the memory of you to a
man who is at peace in his possessions,
to the man who has nothing to distract him
and has prosperity in all things,
and who still has strength to enjoy food!
- 2 O death, your sentence is acceptable to a man
who is needy and who fails in strength,
who is in extreme old age, is distracted about
all things,
is perverse, and has lost patience!
- 3 Don't be afraid of the sentence of death.
Remember those who have been before you
and who come after.

This is the sentence from the Lord over all flesh.

⁴ And why do you refuse when it is the good pleasure of the Most High?
Whether life lasts ten, or a hundred, or a thousand years,
there is no enquiry about life in Hades.[†]

⁵ The children of sinners are abominable children
and they frequent the dwellings of the ungodly.

⁶ The inheritance of sinners' children will perish
and with their posterity will be a perpetual disgrace.

⁷ Children will complain of an ungodly father,
because they suffer disgrace because of him.

⁸ Woe to you, ungodly men,
who have forsaken the law of the Most High God![‡]

⁹ If you are born, you will be born to a curse.
If you die, a curse will be your portion.

¹⁰ All things that are of the earth will go back to the earth;
so the ungodly will go from a curse to perdition.

¹¹ The mourning of men is about their bodies;
but the evil name of sinners will be blotted out.

¹² Have regard for your name,
for it continues with you longer than a thousand great treasures of gold.

¹³ A good life has its number of days,

[†] 41:4: or, *the place of the dead* or, *Sheol* [‡] 41:8: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

but a good name continues forever.

- ¹⁴ My children, follow instruction in peace.
But wisdom that is hidden and a treasure that
is not seen,
what benefit is in them both?
- ¹⁵ Better is a man who hides his foolishness
than a man who hides his wisdom.
- ¹⁶ Therefore show respect for my words;
for it is not good to retain every kind of shame.
Not everything is approved by all in good
faith.
- ¹⁷ Be ashamed of sexual immorality before father
and mother,
of a lie before a prince and a mighty man,
¹⁸ of an offence before a judge and ruler,
of iniquity before the congregation and the
people,
of unjust dealing before a partner and friend,
¹⁹ and of theft in the place where you sojourn.
- Be ashamed in regard of the truth of God and his
covenant,
of leaning on your elbow at dinner,
of contemptuous behaviour in the matter of
giving and taking,
²⁰ of silence before those who greet you,
of looking at a woman who is a prostitute,
²¹ of turning away your face from a kinsman,
of taking away a portion or a gift,
of gazing at a woman who has a husband,
²² of meddling with his maid—and don't come
near her bed,

- of abusive speech to friends—and after you
have given, don't insult,
²³ of repeating and speaking what you have
heard,
and of revealing of secrets.
²⁴ So you will be ashamed of the right things
and find favour in the sight of every man.

42

- ¹ Don't be ashamed of these things,
and don't sin to save face:
² of the law of the Most High and his covenant,
of judgement to do justice to the ungodly,
³ of reckoning with a partner and with travellers,
of a gift from the inheritance of friends,
⁴ of exactness of scales and weights,
of getting much or little,
⁵ of bargaining dealing with merchants,
of frequent correction of children,
and of making the back of an evil slave to
bleed.
⁶ A seal is good where an evil wife is.
Where there are many hands, lock things up.
⁷ Whatever you hand over, let it be by number and
weight.
In giving and receiving, let all be in writing.
⁸ Don't be ashamed to instruct the unwise and
foolish,
and one of extreme old age who contends
with those who are young.
So you will be well instructed indeed
and approved in the sight of every living man.

- 9 A daughter is a secret cause of wakefulness to a father.
Care for her takes away sleep—
in her youth, lest she pass the flower of her age;
when she is married, lest she should be hated;
10 in her virginity, lest she should be defiled
and be with child in her father's house;
when she has a husband, lest she should transgress;
and when she is married, lest she should be barren.
- 11 Keep a strict watch over a headstrong daughter,
lest she make you a laughingstock to your enemies,
a byword in the city and notorious amongst the people,
and shame you in public.
- 12 Don't gaze at every beautiful body.
Don't sit in the midst of women.
- 13 For from garments comes a moth,
and from a woman comes a woman's wickedness.
- 14 Better is the wickedness of a man than a pleasant woman,
a woman who puts you to shame and disgrace.
- 15 I will make mention now of the works of the Lord,
and will declare the things that I have seen.
The Lord's works are in his words.
- 16 The sun that gives light looks at all things.
The Lord's work is full of his glory.

- 17 The Lord has not given power to the saints to
declare all his marvellous works,
which the Almighty Lord firmly settled,
that the universe might be established in his
glory.
- 18 He searches out the deep and the heart.
He has understanding of their secrets.
For the Most High knows all knowledge.
He sees the signs of the world.
- 19 He declares the things that are past and the
things that shall be,
and reveals the traces of hidden things.
- 20 No thought escapes him.
There is not a word hidden from him.
- 21 He has ordered the mighty works of his wisdom.
He is from everlasting to everlasting.
Nothing has been added to them, nor diminished
from them.
He had no need of any counsellor.
- 22 How desirable are all his works!
One may see this even in a spark.
- 23 All these things live and remain forever in all
manner of uses.
They are all obedient.
- 24 All things are in pairs, one opposite the other.
He has made nothing imperfect.
- 25 One thing establishes the good things of another.
Who could ever see enough of his glory?

43

- 1 The pride of the heavenly heights is the clear sky,
the appearance of heaven, in the spectacle of
its glory.

- ² The sun, when it appears, bringing tidings as it rises,
is a marvellous instrument, the work of the Most High.
- ³ At noon, it dries up the land.
Who can stand against its burning heat?
- ⁴ A man tending a furnace is in burning heat,
but the sun three times more, burning up the mountains,
breathing out fiery vapours,
and sending out bright beams, it blinds the eyes.
- ⁵ Great is the Lord who made it.
At his word, he hastens on its course.
- ⁶ The moon marks the changing seasons,
declares times, and is a sign for the world.
- ⁷ From the moon is the sign of feast days,
a light that wanes when it completes its course.
- ⁸ The month is called after its name,
increasing wonderfully in its changing—
an instrument of the army on high,
shining in the structure of heaven,
⁹ the beauty of heaven, the glory of the stars,
an ornament giving light in the highest places of the Lord.
- ¹⁰ At the word of the Holy One, they will stand in due order.
They won't faint in their watches.
- ¹¹ Look at the rainbow, and praise him who made it.
It is exceedingly beautiful in its brightness.
- ¹² It encircles the sky with its glorious circle.

The hands of the Most High have stretched it out.

¹³ By his commandment, he makes the snow fall and swiftly sends the lightnings of his judgment.

¹⁴ Therefore the storehouses are opened, and clouds fly out like birds.

¹⁵ By his mighty power, he makes the clouds strong and the hailstones are broken in pieces.

¹⁶ At his appearing, the mountains will be shaken. At his will, the south wind will blow.

¹⁷ The voice of his thunder rebukes the earth. So does the northern storm and the whirlwind.

Like birds flying down, he sprinkles the snow.

It falls down like the lighting of locusts.

¹⁸ The eye is dazzled at the beauty of its whiteness. The heart is amazed as it falls.

¹⁹ He also pours out frost on the earth like salt. When it is freezes, it has points like thorns.

²⁰ The cold north wind blows and ice freezes on the water.

It settles on every pool of water.

The water puts it on like it was a breastplate.

²¹ It will devour the mountains, burn up the wilderness, and consume the green grass like fire.

²² A mist coming speedily heals all things. A dew coming after heat brings cheerfulness.

²³ By his counsel, he has calmed the deep and planted islands in it.

²⁴ Those who sail on the sea tell of its dangers.

- We marvel when we hear it with our ears.
25 There are also those strange and wondrous
works in it—
variety of all that has life and the huge crea-
tures of the sea.
26 Because of him, his messengers succeed.
By his word, all things hold together.
- 27 We may say many things, but couldn't say
enough.
The summary of our words is, "He is every-
thing!"
- 28 How could we have strength to glorify him?
For he is himself the greater than all his
works.
- 29 The Lord is awesome and exceedingly great!
His power is marvellous!
- 30 Glorify the Lord and exalt him as much as you
can!
For even yet, he will surpass that.
When you exalt him, summon your full strength.
Don't be weary, because you can't praise him
enough.
- 31 Who has seen him, that he may describe him?
Who can magnify him as he is?
- 32 Many things greater than these are hidden,
for we have seen just a few of his works.
- 33 For the Lord made all things.
He gave wisdom to the godly.

44

- 1 Let us now praise famous men,
our ancestors in their generations.

- ² The Lord created great glory in them—
his mighty power from the beginning.
- ³ Some ruled in their kingdoms
and were men renowned for their power,
giving counsel by their understanding.
- Some have spoken in prophecies,
⁴ leaders of the people by their counsels,
and by their understanding, giving instruction for the people.
Their words in their instruction were wise.
- ⁵ Some composed musical tunes,
and set forth verses in writing,
⁶ rich men endowed with ability,
living peaceably in their homes.
- ⁷ All these were honoured in their generations,
and were outstanding in their days.
- ⁸ Some of them have left a name behind them,
so that others declare their praises.
- ⁹ But of others, there is no memory.
They perished as though they had not been.
They become as though they had not been
born,
they and their children after them.
- ¹⁰ But these were men of mercy,
whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten.
- ¹¹ A good inheritance remains with their offspring.
Their children are within the covenant.
- ¹² Their offspring stand fast,
with their children, for their sakes.
- ¹³ Their offspring will remain forever.
Their glory won't be blotted out.

- 14 Their bodies were buried in peace.
Their name lives to all generations.
- 15 People will declare their wisdom.
The congregation proclaims their praise.
- 16 Enoch pleased the Lord, and was taken up,
an example of repentance to all generations.
- 17 Noah was found perfect and righteous.
In the season of wrath, he kept the race alive.
Therefore a remnant was left on the earth
when the flood came.
- 18 Everlasting covenants were made with him,
that all flesh should no more be blotted out by
a flood.
- 19 Abraham was a great father of a multitude of
nations.
There was none found like him in glory,
20 who kept the law of the Most High,
and was taken into covenant with him.
In his flesh he established the covenant.
When he was tested, he was found faithful.
- 21 Therefore he assured him by an oath
that the nations would be blessed through his
offspring,
that he would multiply him like the dust of the
earth,
exalt his offspring like the stars,
and cause them to inherit from sea to sea,
and from the Euphrates River to the utmost
parts of the earth.

- ²² In Isaac also, he established the same assurance
for Abraham his father's sake,
the blessing of all men, and the covenant.
- ²³ He made it rest upon the head of Jacob.
He acknowledged him in his blessings,
gave to him by inheritance,
and divided his portions.
He distributed them amongst twelve tribes.

45

- ¹ He brought out of him a man of mercy,
who found favour in the sight of all people,
a man loved by God and men, even Moses,
whose memory is blessed.
- ² He made him equal to the glory of the saints,
and magnified him in the fears of his enemies.
- ³ By his words he caused the wonders to cease.
God glorified him in the sight of kings.
He gave him commandments for his people
and showed him part of his glory.
- ⁴ He sanctified him in his faithfulness and meekness.
He chose him out of all people.
- ⁵ He made him to hear his voice,
led him into the thick darkness,
and gave him commandments face to face,
even the law of life and knowledge,
that he might teach Jacob the covenant,
and Israel his judgements.
- ⁶ He exalted Aaron, a holy man like Moses,
even his brother, of the tribe of Levi.
- ⁷ He established an everlasting covenant with
him,

- and gave him the priesthood of the people.
He blessed him with stateliness,
and dressed him in a glorious robe.
- ⁸ He clothed him in perfect splendour,
and strengthened him with symbols of authority:
the linen trousers, the long robe, and the ephod.
- ⁹ He encircled him with pomegranates;
with many golden bells around him,
to make a sound as he went,
to make a sound that might be heard in the temple,
for a reminder for the children of his people;
- ¹⁰ with a holy garment, with gold, blue, and purple,
the work of the embroiderer;
with an oracle of judgement—Urim and Thummim;
- ¹¹ with twisted scarlet, the work of the craftsman;
with precious stones engraved like a signet, in a setting of gold, the work of the jeweller,
for a reminder engraved in writing, after the number of the tribes of Israel;
- ¹² with a crown of gold upon the mitre, having engraved on it, as on a signet, “HOLINESS”,
an ornament of honour, the work of an expert,
the desires of the eyes, goodly and beautiful.
- ¹³ Before him there never have been anything like it.
No stranger put them on, but only his sons
and his offspring perpetually.

- 14 His sacrifices shall be wholly burnt,
twice every day continually.
- 15 Moses consecrated him,
and anointed him with holy oil.
- It was an everlasting covenant with him
and to his offspring, all the days of heaven,
to minister to the Lord, to serve as a priest,
and to bless his people in his name.
- 16 He chose him out of all living
to offer sacrifice to the Lord—
incense, and a sweet fragrance, for a memorial,
to make atonement for your people.
- 17 He gave to him in his commandments,
authority in the covenants of judgements,
to teach Jacob the testimonies,
and to enlighten Israel in his law.
- 18 Strangers conspired against him
and envied him in the wilderness:
Dathan and Abiram with their company,
and the congregation of Korah, with wrath
and anger.
- 19 The Lord saw it, and it displeased him.
In the wrath of his anger, they were destroyed.
- He did wonders upon them,
to consume them with flaming fire.
- 20 He added glory to Aaron,
and gave him a heritage.
- He divided to him the first fruits of the increase,
and prepared bread of first fruits in abundance.
- 21 For they eat the sacrifices of the Lord,

which he gave to him and to his offspring.

- 22 However, in the land of the people, he has no inheritance,
and he has no portion amongst the people,
for the Lord himself is your portion and inheritance.

- 23 Phinehas the son of Eleazar is the third in glory,
in that he was zealous in the fear of the Lord,
and stood fast when the people turned away,
and he made atonement for Israel.

- 24 Therefore, a covenant of peace was established for him,
that he should be leader of the sanctuary and of his people,
that he and his offspring should have the dignity of the priesthood forever.

- 25 Also he made a covenant with David the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah.
The inheritance of the king is his alone from son to son.
So the inheritance of Aaron is also to his seed.

- 26 May God give you wisdom in your heart
to judge his people in righteousness,
that their good things may not be abolished,
and that their glory may endure for all their generations.

46

- 1 Joshua the son of Nun was valiant in war,
and was the successor of Moses in prophecies.
He was made great according to his name

- for the saving of† God's elect,
to take vengeance on the enemies that rose up
against them,
that he might give Israel their inheritance.
- ² How he was glorified in the lifting up his hands,
and in stretching out his sword against the
cities!
- ³ Who before him stood so firm?
For the Lord himself brought his enemies to
him.
- ⁴ Didn't the sun go back by his hand?
Didn't one day become as two?
- ⁵ He called upon the Most High, the Mighty One,
when his foes pressed in all around him,
and the great Lord heard him.
- ⁶ With hailstones of mighty power,
he caused war to break violently upon the
nation,
and‡ on the slope he destroyed those who
resisted,
so that the nations might know his armour,
how he fought in the sight of the Lord;
for he followed the Mighty One.
- ⁷ Also in the time of Moses, he did a work of
mercy—
he and Caleb the son of Jephunneh—
in that they withstood the adversary,
hindered the people from sin,
and stilled their wicked complaining.
- ⁸ And of six hundred thousand people on foot, they
two alone were preserved
to bring them into their inheritance,

† 46:1: Gr. *his*. ‡ 46:6: See Joshua 10:11

- into a land flowing with milk and honey.
- ⁹ The Lord gave strength to Caleb,
and it remained with him to his old age,
so that he entered the hill country,
and his offspring obtained it for an inheritance,
¹⁰ that all the children of Israel might see that
it is good to follow the Lord.
- ¹¹ Also the judges, every one by his name,
all whose hearts didn't engage in immorality,
and who didn't turn away from the Lord—
may their memory be blessed!
- ¹² May their bones flourish again out of their
place.
May the name of those who have been hon-
oured be renewed in their children.
- ¹³ Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, loved by his
Lord,
established a kingdom and anointed princes
over his people.
- ¹⁴ By the law of the Lord he judged the congrega-
tion,
and the Lord watched over Jacob.
- ¹⁵ By his faithfulness he was proved to be a
prophet.
By his words he was known to be faithful in
vision.
- ¹⁶ When his enemies pressed on him on every side,
he called upon the Lord, the Mighty One,
with the offering of the suckling lamb.
- ¹⁷ Then the Lord thundered from heaven.
He made his voice heard with a mighty sound.

- 18 He utterly destroyed the rulers of the Tyrians
and all the princes of the Philistines.
- 19 Before the time of his age-long sleep,
he testified in the sight of the lord and his
anointed,
“I have not taken any man’s goods, so much as
a sandal;”
and no one accused him.
- 20 Even after he fell asleep, he prophesied,
and showed the king his end,
and lifted up his voice from the earth in
prophecy,
to blot out the wickedness of the people.

47

- 1 After him, Nathan rose up
to prophesy in the days of David.
- 2 As is the fat when it is separated from the peace
offering,
so was David separated from the children of
Israel.
- 3 He played with lions as with kids,
and with bears as with lambs of the flock.
- 4 In his youth didn’t he kill a giant,
and take away reproach from the people
when he lifted up his hand with a sling stone,
and beat down the boasting Goliath?
- 5 For he called upon the Most High Lord,
and he gave him strength in his right hand
to kill a man mighty in war,
to exalt the horn of his people.
- 6 So they glorified him for his tens of thousands,
and praised him for the blessings of the Lord,

- in that a glorious diadem was given to him.
- 7 For he destroyed the enemies on every side,
and defeated the Philistines his adversaries.
He broke their horn in pieces to this day.
- 8 In every work of his he gave thanks to the Holy
One Most High with words of glory.
He sang praise with his whole heart,
and loved him who made him.
- 9 He set singers before the altar,
to make sweet melody by their music.†
- 10 He gave beauty to the feasts,
and set in order the seasons to completion
while they praised his holy name,
and the sanctuary resounded from early
morning.
- 11 The Lord took away his sins,
and exalted his horn forever.
He gave him a covenant of kings,
and a glorious throne in Israel.
- 12 After him a wise son rose up,
who because of him lived in security.
- 13 Solomon reigned in days of peace.
God gave him rest all around,
that he might set up a house for his name,
and prepare a sanctuary forever.
- 14 How wise you were made in your youth,
and filled as a river with understanding!
- 15 Your influence covered the earth,
and you filled it with parables and riddles.
- 16 Your name reached to the far away islands,

† 47:9: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

- and you were loved for your peace.
- 17 For your songs, proverbs, parables,
and interpretations, the countries marvelled
at you.
- 18 By the name of the Lord God,
who is called the God of Israel,
you gathered gold like tin,
and multiplied silver like lead.
- 19 You bowed your loins to women,
and in your body you were brought into sub-
jection.
- 20 You blemished your honour,
and defiled your offspring,
to bring wrath upon your children.
I was grieved for your folly,
21 because the sovereignty was divided,
and a disobedient kingdom ruled out of
Ephraim.
- 22 But the Lord will never forsake his mercy.
He won't destroy any of his works,
nor blot out the posterity of his elect.
- He won't take away the offspring of him who
loved him.
He gave a remnant to Jacob,
and to David a root from his own family.
- 23 So Solomon rested with his fathers.
Of his offspring, he left behind him Re-
hoboam,
the foolishness of the people, and one who
lacked understanding,
who made the people revolt by his counsel.
Also Jeroboam the son of Nebat,

- who made Israel to sin,
and gave a way of sin to Ephraim.
24 Their sins were multiplied exceedingly,
until they were removed from their land.
25 For they sought out all manner of wickedness,
until vengeance came upon them.

48

- 1 Then Elijah arose, the prophet like fire.
His word burnt like a torch.
2 He brought a famine upon them,
and by his zeal made them few in number.
3 By the word of the Lord he shut up the heavens.
He brought down fire three times.
4 How you were glorified, O Elijah, in your wondrous deeds!
Whose glory is like yours?
5 You raised up a dead man from death,
from Hades, by the word of the Most High.
6 You brought down kings to destruction,
and honourable men from their sickbeds.
7 You heard rebuke in Sinai,
and judgements of vengeance in Horeb.
8 You anointed kings for retribution,
and prophets to succeed after you.
9 You were taken up in a tempest of fire,
in a chariot of fiery horses.
10 You were recorded for reproofs in their seasons,
to pacify anger, before it broke out into wrath,
to turn the heart of the father to the son,
and to restore the tribes of Jacob.
11 Blessed are those who saw you,

and those who have been beautified with
love;
for we also shall surely live.

- ¹² Elijah was wrapped in a whirlwind.
Elisha was filled with his spirit.
In his days he was not moved by the fear of
any ruler,
and no one brought him into subjection.
- ¹³ Nothing was too hard for him.
When he was buried, his body prophesied.
- ¹⁴ As in his life he did wonders,
so his works were also marvellous in death.
- ¹⁵ For all this the people didn't repent.
They didn't depart from their sins,
until they were carried away as a plunder
from their land,
and were scattered through all the earth.
The people were left very few in number,
but with a ruler from the house of David.
- ¹⁶ Some of them did that which was right,
but some multiplied sins.
- ¹⁷ Hezekiah fortified his city,
and brought water into its midst.
He tunneled through rock with iron,
and built cisterns for water.
- ¹⁸ In his days Sennacherib invaded,
and sent Rabshakeh, and departed.
He lifted up his hand against Zion,
and boasted great things in his arrogance.
- ¹⁹ Then their hearts and their hands were shaken,
and they were in pain, as women in labour.
- ²⁰ But they called upon the Lord who is merciful,

- spreading out their hands to him.
The Holy One quickly heard them out of Heaven,
and delivered them by the hand of Isaiah.
- ²¹ He struck the camp of the Assyrians,
and his angel utterly destroyed them.
- ²² For Hezekiah did that which was pleasing to the
Lord,
and was strong in the ways of his ancestor
David,
which Isaiah the prophet commanded,
who was great and faithful in his vision.
- ²³ In his days the sun went backward.
He prolonged the life of the king.
- ²⁴ He saw by an excellent spirit what would come
to pass in the future;
and he comforted those who mourned in
Zion.
- ²⁵ He showed the things that would happen
through the end of time,
and the hidden things before they came.

49

- ¹ The memory of Josiah is like the composition of
incense
prepared by the work of the perfumer.
It will be sweet as honey in every mouth,
and like music at a banquet of wine.
- ² He did what was right in the reforming of the
people,
and took away the abominations of iniquity.
- ³ He set his heart right towards the Lord.
In lawless days, he made godliness prevail.

⁴ Except David, Hezekiah, and Josiah,
all were wicked,
because they abandoned the law of the Most
High.

The kings of Judah came to an end.

⁵ They gave their power to others,
and their glory to a foreign nation.

⁶ They set the chosen city of the sanctuary on fire
and made her streets desolate, as it was writ-
ten by the hand of Jeremiah.

⁷ For they mistreated him;
yet he was sanctified in the womb to be a
prophet,
to root out, to afflict, to destroy
and likewise to build and to plant.

⁸ Ezekiel saw the vision of glory,
which God showed him on the chariot of the
cherubim.

⁹ For truly he remembered the enemies in rain-
storm,
and to do good to those who directed their
ways aright.

¹⁰ Also of the twelve prophets,[†]
may their bones flourish again out of their
place.

He comforted the people of Jacob,
and delivered them by confident hope.

¹¹ How shall we magnify Zerubbabel?
He was like a signet ring on the right hand.

¹² So was Jesus the son of Josedek,

[†] **49:10:** The remainder of this line is omitted by the best authori-
ties.

who in their days built the house,
and exalted a‡ people holy to the Lord,
prepared for everlasting glory.

- 13 Also of Nehemiah the memory is great.
He raised up for us fallen walls,
set up the gates and bars,
and rebuilt our houses.

- 14 No man was created upon the earth like Enoch,
for he was taken up from the earth.

- 15 Nor was there a man born like Joseph,
a leader of his kindred, a supporter of the
people.

Even his bones were cared for.

- 16 Shem and Seth were honoured amongst men,
but above every living thing in the creation
was Adam.

50

- 1 It was Simon, the son of Onias, the high priest,
who in his life repaired the house,
and in his days strengthened the temple.

- 2 The foundation was built by him to the height of
the double walls,
the lofty retaining walls of the temple enclosure.

- 3 In his days, a water cistern was dug,
the brazen vessel like the sea in circumference.

- 4 He planned to save his people from ruin,
and fortified the city against siege.

‡ 49:12: Some ancient authorities read *temple*.

- 5 How glorious he was when the people gathered
around him
as he came out of the house of the veil!
- 6 He was like the morning star amongst clouds,
like the full moon,
7 like the sun shining on the temple of the Most
High,
like the rainbow shining in clouds of glory,
8 like roses in the days of first fruits,
like lilies by a water spring,
like the shoot of the frankincense tree in summer time,
9 like fire and incense in the censer,
like a vessel of beaten gold adorned with all
kinds of precious stones,
10 like an olive tree loaded with fruit,
and like a cypress growing high amongst the
clouds.
- 11 When he put on his glorious robe,
and clothed himself in perfect splendour,
ascending to the holy altar,
he made the court of the sanctuary glorious.
- 12 When he received the portions out of the priests'
hands,
as he stood by the hearth of the altar,
with his kindred like a garland around him,
he was like a young cedar in Lebanon
surrounded by the trunks of palm trees.
- 13 All the sons of Aaron in their glory,
held the Lord's offering in their hands before
all the congregation of Israel.
- 14 Finishing the service at the altars,

- that he might arrange the offering of the Most High, the Almighty,
15 he stretched out his hand to the cup of libation,
and poured out the cup of the grape.
He poured it out at the foot of the altar,
a sweet smelling fragrance to the Most High,
the King of all.
- 16 Then the sons of Aaron shouted.
They sounded the trumpets of beaten work.
They made a great fanfare to be heard,
for a reminder before the Most High.
- 17 Then all the people together hurried,
and fell down to the ground on their faces
to worship their Lord, the Almighty, God Most High.
- 18 The singers also praised him with their voices.
There was a sweet melody in the whole house.
- 19 And the people implored the Lord Most High,
in prayer before him who is merciful,
until the worship of the Lord was finished,
and so they accomplished his service.
- 20 Then he went down, and lifted up his hands
over the whole congregation of the children of Israel,
to give blessing to the Lord with his lips,
and to glory in his name.
- 21 He bowed himself down in worship the second time,
to declare the blessing from the Most High.
- 22 Now bless the God of all,

- who everywhere does great things,
who exalts our days from the womb,
and deals with us according to his mercy.
- ²³ May he grant us joyfulness of heart,
and that peace may be in our days in Israel for
the days of eternity,
²⁴ to entrust his mercy with us,
and let him deliver us in his time!
- ²⁵ With two nations my soul is vexed,
and the third is no nation:
²⁶ Those who sit on the mountain of[†] Samaria,
the Philistines,
and the foolish people who live in Shechem.
- ²⁷ I have written in this book the instruction of
understanding and knowledge,
I Jesus, the son of Sirach Eleazar, of Jerusalem,
who out of his heart poured forth wisdom.
- ²⁸ Blessed is he who will exercise these things.
He who lays them up in his heart will become
wise.
- ²⁹ For if he does them, he will be strong in all
things,
for the light of the Lord is his guide.[‡]

51

A Prayer of Jesus the son of Sirach.

- ¹ I will give thanks to you, O Lord, O King,
and will praise you, O God my Saviour.
I give thanks to your name,

[†] 50:26: According to some ancient versions, *Seir*. [‡] 50:29: The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.

² for you have been my protector and helper,
and delivered my body out of destruction,
and out of the snare of a slanderous tongue,
from lips that fabricate lies.

You were my helper before those who stood by,
³ and delivered me, according to the abundance
of your mercy and of your name,
from the gnashings of teeth ready to devour,
out of the hand of those seeking my life,
out of the many afflictions I endured,
⁴ from the choking of a fire on every side,
and out of the midst of fire that I hadn't kindled,
⁵ out of the depth of the belly of Hades,
from an unclean tongue,
and from lying words—
⁶ the slander of an unrighteous tongue to the king.

My soul drew near to death.

My life was near to Hades.

⁷ They surrounded me on every side.

There was no one to help me.

I was looking for human help,
and there was none.

⁸ Then I remembered your mercy, O Lord,
and your working which has been from everlasting,
how you deliver those who wait for you,
and save them out of the hand of their enemies.

⁹ I lifted up my prayer from the earth,
and prayed for deliverance from death.

¹⁰ I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord,

that he would not forsake me in the days of
affliction,
in the time when there was no help against
the proud.

11 I will praise your name continually.

I will sing praise with thanksgiving.

My prayer was heard.

12 You saved me from destruction

and delivered me from the evil time.

Therefore I will give thanks and praise to you,
and bless the name of the Lord.

13 When I was yet young,

before I went abroad,

I sought wisdom openly in my prayer.

14 Before the temple I asked for her.

I will seek her out even to the end.

15 From the first flower to the ripening grape my
heart delighted in her.

My foot walked in uprightness.

From my youth I followed her steps.

16 I inclined my ear a little, and received her,

and found for myself much instruction.

17 I profited in her.

I will give glory to him who gives me wisdom.

18 For I determined to practise her.

I was zealous for that which is good.

I will never be put to shame.

19 My soul has wrestled with her.

In my conduct I was exact.

I spread out my hands to the heaven above,

and bewailed my ignorances of her.

20 I directed my soul to her.

In purity I found her.
I got myself a heart joined with her from the beginning.

- Therefore I won't be forsaken.
21 My belly also was troubled to seek her.
Therefore I have gained a good possession.
22 The Lord gave me a tongue for my reward.
I will praise him with it.

- 23 Draw near to me, all you who are uneducated,
and live in the house of instruction.
24 Why therefore are you all lacking in these things,
and your souls are very thirsty?
25 I opened my mouth and spoke,
"Get her for yourselves without money."
26 Put your neck under the yoke,
and let your soul receive instruction.
She is near to find.

- 27 See with your eyes
how I laboured just a little
and found for myself much rest.
28 Get instruction with a great sum of silver,
and gain much gold by her.
29 May your soul rejoice in his mercy,
and may you all not be put to shame in praising him.
30 Work your work before the time comes,
and in his time he will give you your reward.

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