THE WISDOM OF JESUS THE SON OF SIRACH, 
OR 
ECCLESIASTICUS

The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, also called Ecclesiasticus, is recognized 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 skillful 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, and 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 favor and attention, and to pardon us, if in any parts of what we have labored 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 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 * To whom has the root of wisdom been revealed? Who has known her shrewd counsels? 7 †
6 There is one wise, greatly to be feared, sitting upon his throne: the Lord.
7 He created her. He saw and measured her.

* 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.
† 1:7 Verse 7 is omitted by the best authorities: To whom was the knowledge of wisdom manifested? Who has understood her abundant experience?
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 among 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,
   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 honor of those who hold her fast.
20 To fear the Lord is the root of wisdom.
   Her branches are length of days.  21†

† 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.
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. Keep watch over your lips.
30 Don’t exalt yourself, lest you fall and bring dishonor 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 humiliation.
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 forsaken?
      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 honors the father over the children,  
and has confirmed the judgment of the mother over her sons.  
3 He who honors his father will make atonement for sins.  
4 He who gives glory to his mother is as one who lays up treasure.  
5 Whoever honors 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 Honor 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 dishonor of your father,  
for your father’s dishonor is no glory to you.  
11 For the glory of a man is from the honor of his father,  
and a mother in dishonor 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 honor their father,
and don’t grieve him as long as he lives.

13 If he fails in understanding, have patience with him.
   Don’t dishonor 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 favor 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,
   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 judgment to slip.

25 ‡There is no light without eyes.
   There is no wisdom without knowledge.

† 3:19 Some manuscripts add Many are lofty and renowned, but he reveals
   his secrets to the humble.  ‡ 3:25 Some manuscripts omit verse 25.
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 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 judgment.
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.  
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 judgments.  
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,  

* 4:13 Or, she
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 seeming 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.
    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?”

† 4:23 Some manuscripts omit this line.
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 neighbor;
   but if not, put your hand over your mouth.

13 Glory and dishonor 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 reproach. 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 defense. 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 neighbor also.

18 My son, gather instruction from your youth up.
   Even when you have gray hair you will find wisdom.
19 Come to her as one who plows 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 judgment.
   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.
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 honor from the king.

✡ 6:30 Numbers 15:38
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 labor or farm work, which the Most High has created.
16 Don’t number yourself among the multitude of sinners. Remember that wrath will not wait.
17 Humble your soul greatly,

* 7:12 Gr. Don’t plow
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,
    and don’t be overly indulgent toward 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 Honor 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;

† 7:26 Many authorities omit this line
and revere his priests.
30 With all your strength love him who made you.
   Don’t forsake his ministers.
31 Fear the Lord and honor 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.
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 contend with a talkative man.
   Don’t heap wood upon his fire.
4 Don’t jest with a rude man,
   lest your ancestors be dishonored.
5 Don’t reproach a man when he turns from sin.
Remember that we are all worthy of punishment.

6 Don’t dishonor a man in his old age;
   for some of us are also growing old.

7 Don’t rejoice over one who is dead.
   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 instruction
   and how to minister to great men.

9 Don’t miss the discourse of the aged,
   for they also learned from their fathers,
   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 burned 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 mightier than yourself;
    and if you lend, be as one who has lost.

13 Don’t be surety above your power.
    If you are surety, think as one who will have to pay.

14 Don’t go to law with a judge;
    for according to his honor they will give judgment
    for him.

15 Don’t go in the way with a rash man,
    lest he be burdensome to you;
    for he will do according to his own will,
    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 take counsel with a fool,
    for he will not be able to conceal the matter.
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 favor.

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,
    that she should set her foot upon your strength.
3 Don’t go to meet a woman who plays the prostitute,
    lest perhaps you fall into her snares.
4 Don’t use the company of a woman who is a singer,
    lest perhaps you be caught by her attempts.
5 Don’t gaze at a maid,
    lest perhaps you be trapped in her penalties.
6 Don’t give your soul to prostitutes,
    that you not lose your inheritance.
7 Don’t look around you in the streets of the city,
    neither wander in its solitary 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, affection is kindled as a fire.
9 Don’t sit at all with a woman who has a husband,
    or revel with her at the wine,*
    lest perhaps your soul turn away to her,
    and with your spirit you slide into destruction.

* 9:9 The preceding line of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
10 Don’t forsake an old friend; for the new is not comparable to him.  
A new friend is like new wine: if it becomes old, you will drink it with gladness.

11 Don’t envy the glory of a sinner; for you don’t know what his overthrow 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 have no suspicion of 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 neighbors, and take counsel with the wise.  
15 Let your conversation be with men of understanding. Let all your discourse be in the law of the Most High.  
16 Let just men be companions at your table. Let your glorying be in the fear of the Lord.

17 A work is commended because of the hand of the artisan; so he who rules the people will be considered wise for his speech.  
18 A talkative man is dangerous in his city. He who is headlong in his speech will be hated.

† 9:12 Gr. Hades. ‡ 9:13 Or, authority
A wise judge will instruct his people.  
The government of a man of understanding will be well ordered.

As is the judge of his people, so are his ministers.  
As the city’s ruler is, so are all those who dwell in it.

An uninstructed king will destroy his people.  
A city will be established through the understanding of the powerful.

The authority of the earth is in the Lord’s hand.  
In due time, he will raise up over it one who is profitable.

A man’s prosperity is in the Lord’s hand.  
He will lay his honor upon the person of the scribe.

Don’t be angry with your neighbor for every wrong.  
Do nothing by works of violence.

Pride is hateful before the Lord and men.  
Unrighteousness is abhorrent in the judgment of both.

Sovereignty is transferred from nation to nation  
because of iniquities, deeds of violence, and greed for money.

Why are dirt and ashes proud?*  
Because in life, my body decays.

A long disease mocks the physician.  
He is a king today, and tomorrow he will die.

For when a man is dead,  
he will inherit creeping things, and beasts, and worms.

It is the beginning of pride when a man departs from the Lord.

* 10:9 Two lines of this verse are here omitted by the best authorities.
His heart has departed from him who made him.

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.

The Lord cast down the thrones of rulers
and set the meek in their place.

The Lord plucked up the roots of nations
and planted the lowly in their place.

The Lord overthrew the lands of nations
and destroyed them to the foundations of the earth.

He took some of them away and destroyed them,
and made their memorial to cease from the earth.

Pride has not been created for men,
nor wrathful anger for the offspring of women.

What manner of seed has honor?
The seed of man, those who fear the Lord.
What manner of seed has no honor?
The seed of man, those who transgress the commandments.

In the midst of kindred he who rules them has honor.
Those who fear the Lord have honor in his eyes.

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

It is not right to dishonor a poor man who has understanding.
It is not fitting to glorify a man who is a sinner.

The great man, the judge, and the mighty man will be glorified.

† 10:21 Verse 21 is omitted by the best authorities: Fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance, but obstinace and pride are the beginning of rejection.
25 There is not one of them greater than he who fears the Lord.  
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 glorify yourself in the time of your distress.  

‡ Better is he who labors and abounds in all things,  
Than he who glorifies himself and lacks bread.

28 My son, glorify your soul in humility,  
and esteem yourself honor according to your worthiness.

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

30 A poor man is glorified for his knowledge.  
A rich man is glorified for his riches.

31 But he who is glorified in poverty, how much more in riches?  
He who is dishonored in riches, how much more in poverty?

11 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 beauty.  
Don’t abhor a man for his outward appearance.

3 The bee is little among 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 honor;

‡ 10:27 The Greek text of this verse is uncertain.
for the Lord’s works are wonderful,  
and his works are hidden among 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.

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, labors, and makes haste,  
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 marveled at him.

14 Good things and evil, 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.

* 11:5 Gr. tyrants   † 11:15-16 Verses 15 and 16 are omitted by the best authorities.
One grows rich by his diligence and self-denial,
and this is the portion of his reward:
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.
Be steadfast in your covenant and be doing it,
and grow old in your work.

Don’t marvel at the works of a sinner,
but trust the Lord and stay in your labor;
for it is an easy thing in the sight of the Lord
to swiftly and suddenly make a poor man rich.
The Lord’s blessing is in the reward of the godly.
He makes his blessing flourish in an hour that comes swiftly.
Don’t say, “What use is there of me?
What further good things can be mine?”
Don’t say, “I have enough.
What harm could happen to me now?”
In the day of good things, evil things are forgotten.
In the day of evil things, a man will not remember things that are good.
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.
The affliction of an hour causes delights to be forgotten.
In the end, a man’s deeds are revealed.
Call no man happy before his death.
A man will be known in his children.

Don’t bring every man into your house,
for many are the plots of a deceitful man.
Like a decoy partridge in a cage, so is the heart of a proud man.
Like a spy, he looks for your weakness.
For he lies in wait to turn things that are good into evil,
and assigns blame in things that are praiseworthy.
From a spark of fire, a heap of many coals is kindled,
and a sinful man lies in wait for blood.
Take heed of an evil-doer, for he plans wicked things,
lest perhaps he ruin your reputation forever.
Receive a stranger into your house, and he will distract you with arguments
and estrange you from your own.

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.*
7 Give to the good man,

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

† 12:8 Or, punished
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 apologizes.
4 If you are profitable, he will make merchandise of you.
   If you are in lack, he will forsake you.
5 If you own something, he will live with you.
   He will drain you bare 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 meats
   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 mirth.
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.

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.

He who doesn’t keep secrets to himself is unmerciful.
He won’t hesitate to harm and to bind.

Keep them to yourself and be careful,
for you walk* in danger of falling.  

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

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

What fellowship would the wolf have with the lamb?
So is the sinner to the godly.

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

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

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

When a rich man is shaken, he is supported by his friends,
but when one of low degree is down, he is pushed away even by his friends.

When a rich man falls, there are many helpers.
He speaks things not to be spoken, and men justify him.
A man of low degree falls, and men rebuke him.

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

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 an envious man 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 stingy with 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.

‡ 13:25 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
Wicked injustice dries up his soul.

A miser begrudges bread,
and it is lacking at his table.

My son, according to what you have, treat yourself well,
and bring worthy offerings to the Lord.

Remember that death will not wait,
and that the covenant of Hades hasn’t been shown to you.

Do good to your friend before you die.
According to your ability, reach out and give to him.

Don’t defraud yourself of a good day.
Don’t let the portion of a good desire pass you by.

Won’t you leave your labors to another,
and your toils be divided by lot?

Give, take, and treat yourself well,
because there is no seeking of luxury in Hades.

All flesh grows old like a garment,
for the covenant from the beginning is, “You must die.”

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.

Every work rots and falls away,
and its builder will depart with it.

Blessed is the man who meditates on wisdom,
and who reasons by his understanding.

He who considers her ways in his heart
will also have knowledge of her secrets.

Go after her like one who tracks,
and lie in wait in her ways.

He who pries 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 confounded.

5 She will exalt him above his neighbors.
She will open his mouth in the midst of the congre-
gation.

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 will, you shall keep the commandments.
    To be faithful is good pleasure.
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 work 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 condition:
        for one is 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 the congregation of sinners, a fire will be kindled.
   In a disobedient nation, wrath is kindled.
7 He was not pacified toward the giants of old time,
   who revolted in their strength.
8 He didn’t spare Lot’s neighbors,
   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 *

17 Don’t say, “I will be hidden from the Lord,”
   and “Who will remember me from on high?”
I will not be known among 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.

* 16:15-16 Verses 15 and 16 are omitted by the best authorities.
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,
   Yes, the majority of his works are† hidden.
22 Who will declare his works of righteousness?
   Who will endure them?
   For his covenant is afar off.‡
23 He who is lacking in§ understanding thinks about these things.
   An unwise and erring man thinks follies.
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 judgment of the Lord are his works from the beginning.
   From the making of them he determined their parts.
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 thrusts aside his neighbor.
   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 face,

† 16:21 Gr. among hidden things.
‡ 16:22 The remainder of this verse
§ 16:23 Gr. heart.
* 16:30 The Greek text of this line is uncertain.
† 16:30 Gr. The soul of every living thing.
and into it is their return.

17

1 The Lord created mankind out of the 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 the name of his holiness, ‡ 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 judgments.
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 neighbor.

* 17:5 Verse 5 is omitted by the best authorities. † 17:9 Verse 9 is omitted by the best authorities. ‡ 17:10 This line is added by the best authorities.
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 the bounty of a man as the apple of the eye. §

23 Afterwards he will rise up and recompense them, and render their recompense upon their head.  

24 However to those who repent he grants a return. He comforts those who are losing patience.  

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 those who live and 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 all things can’t be in men,
because the son of man is not immortal.
31 What is brighter than the sun? Yet even this fails.
An evil man thinks about flesh and blood.
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 all things in common.
2 The Lord alone will be justified. 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 ceases, then he will be in perplexity.
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.

* 18:3 The remainder of verse 2, and verse 3, are omitted by the best authorities.
13 The mercy of a man is upon his neighbor; but the mercy of the Lord is upon 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 judgments.

15 My son, to your good deeds add no blemish, and no grief of 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 man.

18 A fool is ungracious and abusive. The gift of an envious man consumes the eyes.

19 Learn before you speak. Take care of your health before you are sick.

20 Before judgment examine yourself, and in the hour of visitation you will find forgiveness.

21 Humble yourself before you become sick. In the time of sins, show repentance.

22 Let nothing hinder you to pay your vow in due time. Don’t wait until death to be justified.

23 Before you make a vow, prepare yourself. Don’t be like a man who tempts 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 offense.†

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.
   Refrain yourself from 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 upon borrowing
   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 understanding fall away.
   And he who joins with prostitutes will be more reckless.

3 Moths and worms will have him as their heritage.
   A reckless soul will be taken away.

4 He who is hasty to trust is shallow-hearted.
   He who sins will offend against his own soul.

† 18:27 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
‡ 18:31 Or, a rejoicing to
§ 18:33 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
He who makes merry in his heart will be condemned.

† He who hates talk has less wickedness.

Never repeat what is told you, and you won’t be lacking.

Whether it is of friend or foe, don’t tell it.

Unless it is a sin to you, don’t reveal it.

For he has heard you and observed you, and when the time comes, he will hate you.

Have you heard a word? Let it die with you.

Be of good courage: it will not burst you.

A fool will travail in pain with a word, as a woman in labor with a child.

As an arrow that sticks in the flesh of the thigh, so is a word in a fool’s belly.

Reprove a friend; it may be he didn’t do it.

If he did something, it may be that he may do it no more.

Reprove your neighbor; it may be he didn’t say it.

If he has said it, it may be that he may not say it again.

Reprove a friend; for many times there is slander.

Don’t trust every word.

There is one who slips, and not from the heart.

Who is he who hasn’t sinned with his tongue?

Reprove your neighbor before you threaten him; and give place to the law of the Most High.

All wisdom is the fear of the Lord.

In all wisdom is the doing of the law.
The knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom.
   The prudence of sinners is not counsel.
There is a wickedness, and it is abomination.
   There is a fool lacking in wisdom.
Better is one who has small understanding, and fears,
   than one who has much prudence, and transgresses the law.
There is an exquisite subtlety, and it is unjust.
   And there is one who perverts favor to gain a judgment.*
There is one who does wickedly, who hangs down his head with mourning;
   but inwardly he is full of deceit,
bowing down his face, and making as if he were deaf in one ear.
   Where he isn't known, he will be beforehand with you.
And if for lack of power he is hindered from sinning,
   if he finds opportunity, he will do mischief.
A man will be known by his look,
   One who has understanding will be known by his face, when you meet him.
A man’s attire, grinning laughter,
   and gait show what he is.

1 There is a reproof that is not timely;
   and there is a man who keeps silent and is wise.
2 How good is it to reprove, rather than to be angry.
   He who confesses will be kept back from harm. 3 *

* 19:25 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
* 20:3 Verse 3 is omitted by the best authorities.
4 As is the lust of a eunuch to deflower a virgin, so is he who executes judgments with violence.
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, as knowing his time.
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 misfortunes; 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 is an abasement 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 his eyes are many instead 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.

† 20:14 A line of this verse is here omitted by the best authorities.
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 A parable from a fool's mouth will be rejected;
   for he will not speak it in its season.

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 a foul blot in a man.
   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 disposition of a liar is dishonor.
   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 heap high.
   He who pleases great men will get pardon for iniquity.
29 Presents and gifts blind the eyes of the wise,

‡ 20:17 The latter part of verse 17 is omitted by the best authorities.
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 them both?

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

21

1 My son, have you sinned? Add no more to it; and ask forgiveness for your past sins.

2 Flee from sin as from the face of a serpent; for if you draw near, it will bite you.

Its teeth are lion’s teeth, slaying men’s souls.

3 All iniquity is as a two-edged sword. Its stroke has no healing.

4 Terror and violence will lay waste 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 judgment comes speedily.

6 One who hates reproof is in the path of the sinner. He who fears the Lord will turn again 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 with a flame of fire at the end of them.

10 The way of sinners is paved with stones;

§ 20:32 Verse 32 is omitted by the best authorities. * 21:5 Gr. him.
and at the end of it is the pit of Hades.

11 He who keeps the law becomes master of its intent. 
   The end 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 puts it away behind his back.
16 The discourse of a fool is like a burden in the way, 
   but grace will be found on the lips of the wise.
17 The mouth 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, 
   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,

† 21:18 Gr. unexamined words.
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 outside.

24 It is a lack of instruction in a man to listen at a door, but a prudent man 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 Satan, 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 at hiss him in his disgrace.

2 A slothful man is compared to the filth of a dunghill. Every man who takes it up will shake out his hand.

3 An uninstructed 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 bold brings shame upon father and husband. She will be despised by both of them.

6 Unseasonable discourse is as music in mourning, but stripes and correction are wisdom in every season.

‡ 21:25 The text seems to be uncertain.
7 He who teaches a fool is as one who glues a potsherd together, even as 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, all the days of his life.

13 Don’t talk much with a foolish man, and don’t go to one who has no understanding: Beware of him, lest you have trouble and be defiled 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 a 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 understanding is as an ornament of plaster on a polished wall.

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

20 Whoever casts a stone at birds scares them away. He who insults a friend will dissolve friendship.

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 neighbor 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 vapor 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,

† 22:23 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
that I don’t fall from it, and that my tongue 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 by 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,
   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 taken.

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 a bruise,

* 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.
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 in vain, he will not be justified,
   for his house will be filled with calamities.
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 custom;
so you may wish that you had not been born,
   and curse the day of your nativity.
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 mind, as 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 burned 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 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 brings in an heir by a stranger.

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 whoredom, and brought in children by a stranger.

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 §

1 Wisdom will praise her own soul, and will proclaim her glory in the midst of her people.

§ 23:28 Verse 28 is omitted by the best authorities.
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 got 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 commandment. He who created me made my tabernacle to rest, and said, ‘Let your tabernacle be in Jacob, and your inheritance in Israel.’
9 He created me from the beginning before the world. 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 glorified, 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, and as rose plants in Jericho, and as a fair olive tree in the plain. I was exalted as a plane tree.
15 As cinnamon and aspalathus, I have given a scent to perfumes.
As choice myrrh, I spread abroad a pleasant fragrance,  
* galbanum, onyx, stacte,  
and as the smell of frankincense in the tabernacle.  
16 As the terebinth, I stretched out my branches.  
My branches are branches of glory and grace.  
17 As the vine, I put forth grace.  
My flowers are the fruit of glory and riches.  
18†

“Come to me, all you who desire me,  
and be filled with my fruits.  
20 For my memorial 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 in 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‡

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 Euphrates,  
and as 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,

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* 24:15  See Exodus 30:34.  
† 24:18  Verse 18 is omitted by the best authorities.  
‡ 24:24  Verse 24 is omitted by the best authorities.
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 morning, and will make these things clear from far away.
33 I will continue to pour out doctrine like prophecy, and leave it to generations of ages.
34 Behold that I have not labored for myself only, but for all those who diligently seek her.

25

1 I enjoy three things, and they are beautiful before the Lord and men: the concord of kindred, the friendship of neighbors, 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 man who is an adulterer lacking understanding.

3 If you gathered nothing in your youth, how could you find anything in your old age?
4 How beautiful a thing is judgment for gray hairs, and for elders to know counsel!
5 How beautiful is the wisdom of old men, and thought and counsel to men who are in honor!
6 Much experience is the crown of old men. 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 of his children, 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, Aad 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 is there none above him who fears the Lord.
11 The fear of the Lord passes all things.
   To whom shall he who holds it be likened? 12 *

13 Any plague but a plague 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 enemies!
15 There is no head above the head of a serpent. There is no wrath above the wrath of an enemy.

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 appearance, and darkens her countenance like that of a bear.
18 Her husband will sit among his neighbors,

* 25:12 Verse 12 is omitted by the best authorities.
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 way is to the feet of the aged,
   so is a wife full of words to a quiet man.

21 Don’t throw yourself upon the beauty of a woman.
   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 palsied 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 off from your flesh.†

26

1 Happy is the husband of a good wife.
   The number of his days will be doubled.

2 A brave woman gives joy to her husband.
   He will fulfill 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 multitude,
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 as a yoke of oxen shaken back and
forth.
He who takes hold of her is as one who grasps a
scorpion.

8 A drunken woman causes great wrath;
she will not cover her own shame.

9 The whoredom 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 Look well after 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;
And 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.
There are no scales that can weigh the value of a self-
controlled soul.

* 26:5 Gr. countenance. † 26:13 or, fatten
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-organized home.
17 As the lamp that shines upon the holy candlestick, 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. 

28 For two things my heart is grieved, and for the third anger comes upon me: A man of war 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.
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,

† 26:19-27 Verses 19-27 are omitted by the best authorities.
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 practice 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 among people void of understanding,
    but persevere among 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 neighbor.

19 As a bird which you have released out of your hand,
so you have let your neighbor 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 distance.

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.
Sirach 28:1

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 neighbor the hurt that he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.
3 Does anyone harbor 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 being himself 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 neighbor. 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 among those who are at peace.
10 As is the fuel of the fire, so will it burn; and as the stoutness of the strife is, so will it 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 labors.
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 burned in its flame.
23 Those who forsake the Lord will fall into it.
It will burn among 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,
so make a balance and a weight for your words, 
and make a door and a bar for your mouth.

Take heed lest you slip with it, 
lest you fall before one who lies in wait.

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

Lend to your neighbor in time of his need. 
Repay your neighbor on time.

Confirm your word, and keep faith with him; 
and at all seasons you will find what you need.

Many have considered a loan to be a windfall, 
and have given trouble to those who helped them.

Until he has received, he will kiss a man’s hands. 
For his neighbor’s money he will speak submissly.

Then when payment is due, he will prolong the time, 
return excuses, and complain about the season.

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 honor, he will pay him disgrace.

* Many on account of fraud have turned away. 
They are afraid of being defrauded for nothing.

However be patient with a man in poor estate. 
Don’t keep him waiting for your alms.

Help a poor man for the commandment’s sake. 
According to his need don’t send him empty away.

* 29:7 Some ancient authorities read Many therefore.
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 commandments 
   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 neighbor. 
   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 among foreign nations.
19 A sinner who falls into suretiship and undertakes 
   contracts for work 
   will fall into lawsuits.
20 Help your neighbor 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 honored 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 among 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 behavior be an offense 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.

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,

* 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.
§ 30:17 The oldest MSS. omit and eternal rest. * 30:17 Gr. age-long rest.
seeing with his eyes and groaning, like a eunuch embracing a virgin and groaning.

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 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.

* 31:2 This appears to be the meaning; but the Greek text here is probably corrupt.
Sirach 31:8

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 among 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 neighbor’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 among 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.
Sirach 31:21  70  Sirach 31:31

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

25 Don’t show not 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 quarreling 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 neighbor 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.

1 Have they made you ruler of a feast?
   Don’t be lifted up.
   Be among 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 among great men, don’t behave as their equal.
   When another is speaking, don’t babble.

10 Lightning speeds before thunder.
    Approval goes before a modesty.
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.
Sirach 32:13

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 favor.

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 judgment,
and will kindle righteous acts like a light.

17 A sinful man shuns reproof,
and will find a judgment 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 command-
   ment.
   He who trusts in the Lord will suffer no loss.

Sirach 33:2

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 knowledge, 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 render to them according to his judgment.
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 labored 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.
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 honor.
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.

* 33:14 A line of this verse is here omitted by the best authorities.
26 Set your slave to work, and you will find rest.
    Leave his hands idle, and he will seek liberty.
27 Yoke and thong will bow the neck.
    For an evil slave there are racks and tortures.
28 Send him to labor, 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 toward 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 labor.
6 If they are not sent in a visitation from the Most High,
    don’t give your heart to them.

† 33:32 The Greek text of this line is probably corrupt.
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 traveled increases cleverness.
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 acceptable.
19 The Most High has no pleasure in the offerings of the ungodly,
Neither is he pacified for sins by the multitude of sacrifices.

Like one who kills a son before his father’s eyes is he who brings a sacrifice from the goods of the poor.

The bread of the needy is the life of the poor. He who deprives him of it is a man of blood.

Like one who murders his neighbor is he who takes away his living. Like a shedder of blood is he who deprives a hireling of his hire.

When one builds, and another pulls down, what profit do they have but toil?

When one prays, and another curses, whose voice will the Lord listen to?

He who washes himself after touching a dead body, and touches it again, what does he gain by his washing?

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?

He who keeps the law multiplies offerings. He who heeds the commandments sacrifices a peace offering.

He who returns a kindness offers fine flour. He who gives alms sacrifices a thank offering.

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 toward 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 unrighteous, 

19 until he has rendered to every man according 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, like 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 favor; 

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.

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* 36:2  The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
Glorify your hand and your right arm.†
7 Raise up indignation and pour out wrath.
    Take away the adversary and destroy the enemy.
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 firstborn.
13 Have compassion upon the city of your sanctuary,
    Jerusalem, the place of your rest.
14 Fill Sion. Exalt your oracles
    and fill your people with your glory.
15 Give testimony to those who were your creatures in the
    beginning,
    and fulfill 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.

† 36:6 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
‡ 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 labors 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 counselor extols counsel, but some give counsel in their own interest.
8 Let your soul beware of a counselor, 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 kindliness, 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.
For a man’s soul is sometimes inclined to inform him better than seven watchmen who sit on high on a watch-tower.

Above all this ask the Most High that he may direct your way in truth.

Let reason be the beginning of every work. Let counsel go before every action.

As a token of the changing of the heart, four kinds of things rise up: good and evil, life and death. That which rules over them continually is the tongue.

There is one who is clever and the instructor of many, and yet is unprofitable to his own soul.

There is one who is subtle in words, and is hated. He will be destitute of all food.

For grace was not given to him from the Lord, because he is deprived of all wisdom.

There is one who is wise to his own soul; and the fruits of his understanding are trustworthy in the mouth.

A wise man will instruct his own people. The fruits of his understanding are trustworthy.

A wise man will be filled with blessing. All those who see him will call him happy.

The life of a man is counted by days. The days of Israel are innumerable.

The wise man will inherit confidence among his people. His name will live forever.

My son, test your soul in your life. See what is evil for it, and don’t give in to it.

For not all things are profitable for all men.
Sirach 37:29

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.

Sirach 38:10

38

1 Honor a physician according to your need with the
    honors 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 marvelous 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 righ-
    teousness.
    Cleanse your heart from all sin.
11 Give a sweet savor 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 in 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 honor. 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 me, 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 plow,
   who glories in the shaft of the goad,
   who drives oxen and is occupied in their labors,
   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 skillful 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 judgment.
Neither will they declare instruction and judgment.
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 that 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 among great men
   and appear before him who rules.
He will travel through the land of foreign nations,
   for he has learned what is good and evil among 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.

* 38:33 This line is absent from the oldest MSS.
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 generation.

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 that 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 destruction.

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

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 labors 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 remembrance of you to a man
that is at peace in his possessions,
To the man that has nothing to distract him, and has
prosperity in all things,
And that still has strength to receive meat!
2 O death, acceptable is your sentence to a man that is
needy, and that fails in strength,
That is in extreme old age, and is distracted about all
things,
And is perverse, and has lost patience!
3 Don't be afraid of the sentence of death;
Remember those who have been before you, and that
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 it be ten, or a hundred, or a thousand years,
There is no inquisition of life in* the grave.

5 The children of sinners are abominable children,
And they frequent the dwellings of the ungodly.
6 The inheritance of sinners’ children shall perish,
And with their posterity shall be a perpetual reproach.
7 Children will complain of an ungodly father,
Because they shall be reproached for his sake.
8 Woe to you, ungodly men,
Which have forsaken the law of the Most High God!*†
9 If you° be born, you° shall be born to a curse;
If you° die, a curse shall be your portion.
10 All things that are of the earth shall go back to the earth:
So the ungodly shall go from a curse to perdition.
11 The mourning of men is about their bodies:
But the name of sinners being evil shall be blotted out.

* 41:4 Gr. hades † 41:8 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the
best authorities.
12 Have regard to your name;  
For it continues with you longer than a thousand great  
treasures of gold.  
13 A good life has its number of days;  
And a good name continues forever.  

14 My children, keep instruction in peace:  
But wisdom that is hid, and a treasure that is not seen,  
What profit is in them both?  
15 Better is a man that hides his foolishness  
Than a man that hides his wisdom.  
16 Wherefore show reverence to my word:  
For it is not good to retain every kind of shame;  
And not all things are approved by all in good faith.  

17 Be ashamed of whoredom before father and mother:  
And of a lie before a prince and a mighty man;  
18 Of an offense 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 regard of the place where you sojourn,  
And in regard of the truth of God and his covenant;  
And of leaning with your elbow at meat;  
And of scurrility in the matter of giving and taking;  
20 And of silence before those who salute you;  
And of looking upon a woman that is a prostitute;  
21 And of turning away your face from a kinsman;  
Of taking away a portion or a gift;  
And of gazing upon a woman that has a husband;  
22 Of being over busy with his maid; and come not near  
her bed;  
Of upbraiding speeches before friends;  

‡ 41:21 Or, the face of a kinsman
And after you have given, upbraid not;  
Of repeating and speaking what you have heard;  
And of revealing of secrets.  
So shall you be truly shamefast,  
And find favor in the sight of every man.

1 Of these things be not ashamed,  
And accept no man’s person to sin by it:  
2 Of the law of the Most High, and his covenant;  
And of judgment to do justice to the ungodly;  
3 Of reckoning with a partner and with travellers;  
And of a gift from the heritage of friends;  
4 Of exactness of balance and weights;  
And of getting much or little;  
5 Of indifferent selling of merchants;  
And of much correction of children;  
And of making the side of an evil servant to bleed.  
* Sure keeping is good, where an evil wife is;  
And where many hands are, shut you close.  
7 Whatsoever you hand over, let it be by number and weight;  
And in giving and receiving let all be in writing.  
8 Be not ashamed to instruct the unwise and foolish,  
And one of extreme old age that contends with those that are young;  
And so shall you be well instructed indeed,  
And approved in the sight of every man living.

9 A daughter is a secret cause of wakefulness to a father;  
And the care for her puts away sleep;  
In her youth, lest she pass the flower of her age;  

* 42:6 Or, A seal
And when she is married, lest she should be hated:
And in her virginity, lest she should be defiled
And be with child in her father’s house;
And when she has a husband, lest she should transgress;
And when she is married, lest she should be barren.

Keep a strict watch over a headstrong daughter,
Lest she make you a laughing stock to your enemies,
A byword in the city and notorious among the people,
And shame you before the multitude.

Look not upon every body in regard of beauty,
And sit not in the midst of women;
For from garments comes a moth,
And from a woman a woman’s wickedness.

Better is the wickedness of a man than a pleasant-dealing woman,
And a woman which puts you to shameful reproach.

I will make mention now of the works of the Lord,
And will declare the things that I have seen:
In the words of the Lord are his works.
The sun that gives light looks upon all things;
And the work of the Lord is full of his glory.
The Lord has not given power to the saints to declare all his marvelous works;
Which the Almighty Lord firmly settled,
That whatever is might be established in his glory.

He searches out the deep, and the heart,
And he has understanding of their cunning plans:
For the Most High knows all knowledge,
And he looks into the signs of the world,

† 42:11 Or, a rejoicing  ‡ 42:11 Gr. called forth.  § 42:18 Gr. sign.
Declaring the things that are past, and the things that shall be,
And revealing the traces of hidden things.
No thought escapes him;
There is not a word hid from him.
The mighty works of his wisdom he has ordered,
Who is from everlasting to everlasting:
Nothing has been added to them, nor diminished from them;
And he had no need of any counselor.
How desirable are all his works!
One may behold this even to a spark.
All these things live and remain forever in all manner of uses,
And they are all obedient.
All things are double one against another:
And he has made nothing imperfect.
One thing establishes the good things of another:
And who shall be filled with beholding his glory?

The pride of the height is the firmament* in its clearness,
The appearance of heaven, in the spectacle of its glory.
The sun when he appears, bringing tidings as he goes forth,
Is a marvelous instrument, the work of the Most High:
At his noon he dries up the country,
And who shall stand against his burning heat?
A man blowing a furnace is in works of heat,
But the sun three times more, burning up the mountains:
Breathing out fiery vapours,
And sending forth bright beams, he dims the eyes.

* 43:1 Gr. of clearness.
5 Great is the Lord that made him;  
And at his word he hastens his course.

6 The moon also is in all things for her season,  
For a declaration of times, and a sign of the world.  
7 From the moon is the sign of the feast day;  
A light that wanes when she is come to the full.  
8 The month is called after her name,  
Increasing wonderfully in her changing;  
An instrument of the army on high,  
Shining forth in the firmament 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,  
And they will not faint in their watches.  
11 Look upon the rainbow, and praise him that made it;  
Exceeding beautiful in the brightness thereof.  
12 It encircles the heaven round about with a circle of glory;  
The hands of the Most High have stretched it.

13 By his commandment he makes the snow to fall apace,  
And sends swiftly the lightnings of his judgment.  
14 By reason thereof the treasure-houses are opened;  
And clouds fly forth as fowls.  
15 By his mighty power he makes strong the clouds,  
And the hailstones are broken small:  
16 And at his appearing the mountains will be shaken,  
And at his will the south wind will blow.  
17 The voice of his thunder makes the earth to travail;  
So does the northern storm and the whirlwind:

† 43:10 Gr. judgment.
As birds flying down he sprinkles the snow;
And as the lighting of the locust is the falling down thereof:
18 The eye will marvel at the beauty of its whiteness,
And the heart will be astonished at the raining of it.
19 The hoar frost also he pours on the earth as salt;
And when it is congealed, it is as points of thorns.

20 The cold north wind shall blow,
And the ice shall be congealed on the water:
It shall lodge upon every gathering together of water,
And the water shall put on as it were a breastplate.
21 It shall devour the mountains, and burn up the wilderness,
And consume the green herb as fire.
22 A mist coming speedily is the healing of all things;
A dew coming after heat shall bring cheerfulness.
23 By his counsel he has stilled the deep,
And† planted islands therein.
24 They that sail on the sea tell of the danger thereof;
And when we hear it with our ears, we marvel.
25 Therein be also those strange and wondrous works,
Variety of all that has life, the§ race of sea-monsters.
26 By reason of him his end has success,
And by his word all things consist.

27 We may say many things, yet shall we not attain;
And the sum of our words is, He is all.
28 How shall we have strength to glorify him?
For he is himself the great one above all his works.
29 The Lord is terrible and exceedingly great;

† 43:23 The most ancient authorities read Jesus planted it.
§ 43:25 Gr. creation. Several ancient authorities read possession of cattle.
And marvelous is his power.
30 When you° glorify the Lord, exalt him as much as you°
can;
For even yet he will exceed:
And when you° exalt him, put forth your full strength:
Be not weary; for you° will never attain.
31 Who has seen him, that he may declare him?
And who shall magnify him as he is?
32 Many things are hidden greater than these;
For we have seen but a few of his works.
33 For the Lord made all things;
And to the godly gave he wisdom.

44
1 Let us now praise famous men,
And our fathers that became the father of us.
2 The Lord* manifested in them great glory,
Even his mighty power from the beginning.
3 Such as did bear rule in their kingdoms,
And were men renowned for their power,
† Giving counsel by their understanding,
Such as have brought tidings in prophecies:
4 Leaders of the people by their counsels,
And by their understanding‡ men of learning for the
people;
Wise were their words in their instruction:
5 Such as sought out musical tunes,
And set forth verses in writing:
6 Rich men furnished with ability,
Living peaceably in their habitations:

* 44:2 Gr. created. † 44:3 Most authorities read They shall take counsel. ‡ 44:4 The Greek text is here corrupt.
7 All these were honored in their generations,  
And were a glory in their days.  
8 There be of them, that have left a name behind them,  
To declare their praises.  
9 And some there be, which have no memorial;  
Who are perished as though they had not been,  
And are become as though they had not been born;  
And their children after them.  
10 But these were men of mercy,  
Whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten.  
11 With their seed shall remain continually a good inheritance;  
Their children are § within the covenants.  
12 Their seed stands fast,  
And their children for their sakes.  
13 Their seed shall remain forever,  
And their glory shall not be blotted out.  
14 Their bodies were buried in peace,  
And their name lives to all generations.  
15 Peoples will declare their wisdom,  
And the congregation tells out their praise.  

16 Enoch pleased the Lord, and was translated,  
Being an example of repentance to all generations.  
17 Noah was found perfect and righteous;  
In the season of wrath he was taken in exchange for the world;  
Therefore was there left a remnant to 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;  
And there was none found like him in glory;  

§ 44:11 Or, In their testaments
20 Who kept the law of the Most High,
And was taken into covenant with him:
In his flesh he established the covenant;
And when he was proved, he was found faithful.

21 Therefore he assured him by an oath,
That the nations should be blessed in his seed;
That he would multiply him as the dust of the earth,
And exalt his seed as the stars,
And cause them to inherit from sea to sea,
And from the River to the utmost part of the earth.

22 In Isaac also did he establish likewise, for Abraham his father’s sake,
The blessing of all men, and the covenant:

23 And he made it rest upon the head of Jacob;
He acknowledged him in his blessings,
And gave to him by inheritance,
And divided his portions;
Among twelve tribes did he part them.

45

1 And he brought out of him a man of mercy,
Which found favor in the sight of all flesh;
A man beloved of God and men, even Moses,
Whose memorial is blessed.

2 He made him like 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;
He glorified him in the sight of kings;
He gave him commandment 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 flesh.

5 He made him to hear his voice,
Sirach 45:6

And 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 judgments.

6 He exalted Aaron, a holy man like to him,  
Even his brother, of the tribe of Levi.  
7 He established for him an everlasting covenant,  
And gave him the priesthood of the people;  
He * beautified him with comely ornaments,  
And girded him about with a robe of glory.  
8 He clothed him with the perfection of exultation;  
And strengthened him with apparel of† honor,  
The linen trousers, the long robe, and the ephod.

9 And he compassed him with pomegranates of gold,  
And with many bells round about,  
To send forth a sound as he went,  
To make a sound that might be heard in the temple,  
For a memorial to the children of his people;

10 With a holy garment, with gold and blue and purple,  
the work of the embroiderer,  
With an oracle of judgment, even with the Urim and Thummim;

11 With twisted scarlet, the work of the craftsman;  
With precious stones graven like a signet, in a setting of gold, the work of the jeweller,  
For a memorial engraved in writing, after the number of the tribes of Israel;

12 With a crown of gold upon the mitre,‡ having graven on it, as on a signet, HOLINESS,  
An ornament of honor, a work of might,

* 45:7 Gr. blessed. † 45:8 Gr. strength. ‡ 45:12 Gr. an engraving of a signet of holiness.
The desires of the eyes, goodly and beautiful.
13 Before him there never have been any such;
No stranger put them on, but his sons only, and his
offspring perpertually.
14 His sacrifices shall be wholly consumed
Every day twice continually.
15 Moses§ consecrated him,
And anointed him with holy oil:
It was to him for an everlasting covenant,
And to his seed, all the days of heaven,
To minister to him, and to execute also the priest’s office,
And bless his people in his name.
16 He chose him out of all living
To offer sacrifice to the Lord,
Incense, and a sweet savor, for a memorial,
To make reconciliation for your people.
17 He gave to him in his commandments,
Yes, authority in the covenants of judgments,
To teach Jacob the testimonies,
And to enlighten Israel in his law.
18 Strangers gathered themselves together against him,
And envied him in the wilderness,
Even Dathan and Abiram with their company,
And the congregation of Korah, with wrath and anger.
19 The Lord saw it, and it displeased him;
And in the wrath of his anger they were destroyed:
He did wonders upon them,
To consume them with flaming fire.
20 And he added glory to Aaron,
And gave him a heritage:
He divided to him the first fruits of the increase;
And first did he prepare bread in abundance:

§ 45:15 Gr. filled his hands.
For they shall eat the sacrifices of the Lord, Which he gave to him and to his seed.

However in the land of the people he shall have no inheritance, And he has no portion among the people: For he himself is your portion and inheritance.

And Phinehas the son of Eleazar is the third in glory, In that he was zealous in the fear of the Lord, And stood fast in the good forwardness of his soul when the people turned away, And he made reconciliation for Israel.

Therefore was there a covenant of peace established for him, That he should be leader of the saints and of his people; That he and his seed Should have the dignity of the priesthood forever.

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.

God give you wisdom in your heart To judge his people in righteousness, That their good things be not abolished, And that their glory endure for all their generations.

Joshua the son of Nun was valiant in war, And was the successor of Moses in prophecies: Who according to his name was made great For the saving of God’s elect,
To take vengeance of the enemies that rose up against them,
That he might give Israel their inheritance.
2 How was he glorified in the lifting up his hands,
And in stretching out his sword against the cities!
3 Who before him so stood fast?
For the Lord himself brought his enemies to him.
4 Did not the sun go back by his hand?
And didn’t one day become as two?
5 He called upon the Most High and Mighty One,
When his foes pressed him round about;
And the great Lord heard him.
6 With hailstones of mighty power
He caused war to break violently upon the nation,
And in the going down he destroyed those who resisted;
That the nations might know his armor,
How that he fought in the sight of the Lord;
For he followed after 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 the murmuring of wickedness.
8 And of six hundred thousand people on foot, they two alone were preserved
To bring them into the heritage,
Even into a land flowing with milk and honey.
9 Also the Lord gave strength to Caleb,
And it remained with him to his old age;
So that he entered upon the height of the land,
And his seed obtained it for a heritage:

10 That all the children of Israel might see
That it is good to walk after the Lord.

11 Also the judges, every one by his name,
All whose hearts went not a whoring,
And who turned not away from the Lord,
May their memorial be blessed.
12 May their bones flourish again out of their place,
And may the name of those who have been honored be
renewed upon their children.

13 Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, beloved of his Lord,
Established a kingdom, and anointed princes over his
people.
14 By the law of the Lord he judged the congregation,
And the Lord visited Jacob.
15 By his faithfulness he was proved to be a prophet,
And by his words he was known to be faithful in vision.
16 Also when his enemies pressed him round about
He called upon the Lord, the Mighty One,
With the offering of the sucking lamb.
17 And the Lord thundered from heaven,
And with a mighty sound made his voice to be heard.
18 And he utterly destroyed the rulers of the Tyrians,
And all the princes of the Philistines.
19 Also before the time of his* long sleep
He made protestations in the sight of the lord and his
anointed,
I have not taken any man’s goods, so much as a sandal:
And no man did accuse him.
20 And after he fell asleep he prophesied,
And showed the king his end,

* 46:19 Gr. age-long sleep.
And lifted up his voice from the earth in prophecy,
To blot out the wickedness of the people.

1 And after him rose up Nathan
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 did he not 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 of 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 ten thousands,
And praised him for the blessings of the Lord,
In that there was given him a diadem of glory.
7 For he destroyed the enemies on every side,
And brought to nothing the Philistines his adversaries,
Brake 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;
With his whole heart he sang praise,
And loved him that made him.
9 Also he set singers before the altar,
And to make sweet melody by their music.*
10 He gave beauty to the feasts,

* 47:9 The remainder of this verse is omitted by the best authorities.
And set in order the seasons to perfection,
While they praised his holy name,
And the sanctuary sounded from early morning.
11 The Lord took away his sins,
And exalted his horn forever;
And gave him a covenant of kings,
And a throne of glory in Israel.
12 After him rose up a son, a man of understanding;
And for his sake he lived at large.
13 Solomon reigned in days of peace;
And to him God gave rest round about,
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 soul covered the earth,
And you filled it with† dark parables.
16 Your name reached to the isles afar off;
And for your peace you were beloved.
17 For your songs and proverbs and parables,
And for your interpretations, the countries marveled at you.
18 By the name of the Lord God,
Which is called the God of Israel,
You did gather gold as tin,
And did multiply silver as lead.
19 You did bow your loins to women,
And in your body you were brought into subjection.
20 You did blemish your honor,
And profane your seed,
To bring wrath upon your children;
And I was grieved for your folly:

† 47:15 Gr. parables of riddles.
So that the sovereignty was divided,  
And out of Ephraim ruled a disobedient kingdom.  
But the Lord will never forsake his mercy;  
And he will not destroy any of his works,  
Nor blot out the posterity of his elect;  
And the seed of him that loved him he will not take away;  
And he gave a remnant to Jacob,  
And to David a root out of him.  
And so rested Solomon with his fathers;  
And of his seed he left behind him Rehoboam,  
Even the foolishness of the people, and one that lacked understanding,  
Who made the people to revolt by his counsel.  
Also Jeroboam the son of Nebat,  
Who made Israel to sin,  
And gave to Ephraim a way of sin.  
And their sins were multiplied exceedingly,  
To remove them from their land.  
For they sought out all manner of wickedness,  
Till vengeance should come upon them.

Also there arose Elijah the prophet as fire,  
And his word burned like a torch:  
Who brought a famine upon them,  
And by his zeal made them few in number.  
By the word of the Lord he shut up the heaven:  
Thrice did he thus bring down fire.  
How you were glorified, O Elijah, in your wondrous deeds!  
And who shall glory like to you?  
Who did raise up a dead man from death,
And from* the place of the dead, by the word of the Most High:
6 Who brought down kings to destruction,
And honorable men from their bed:
7 Who heard rebuke in Sinai,
And judgments of vengeance in Horeb:
8 Who anointed kings for retribution,
And prophets to succeed after him:
9 Who was taken up in a tempest of fire,
In a chariot of fiery horses:
10 Who was recorded for reproofs in their seasons,
To pacify anger, before it brake forth 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 it was, who was wrapped in a tempest:
And Elisha was filled with his spirit;
And in all his days he was not moved by the fear of any ruler,
And no one brought him into subjection.
13 † Nothing was too high for him;
And when he was laid on sleep his body prophesied.
14 As in his life he did wonders,
So in death were his works marvelous.
15 For all this the people repented not,
And they departed not from their sins,
Till they were carried away as a plunder from their land,
And were scattered through all the earth;
And the people was left very few in number,

* 48:5 Gr. Hades. † 48:13 Or, No man’s word overcame him
And a ruler was left in the house of David. 
16 Some of them did that which was pleasing to God, 
And some multiplied sins.

17 Hezekiah fortified his city, 
And brought in‡ water into the midst of them: 
He digged the sheer rock with iron, 
And built up wells for waters. 
18 In his days Sennacherib came up, 
And sent Rabshakeh, and departed; 
And he lifted up his hand against Sion, 
And boasted great things in his arrogance. 
19 Then were their hearts and their hands shaken, 
And they were in pain, as women in travail; 
20 And they called upon the Lord which is merciful, 
Spreading forth their hands to him: 
And the Holy One heard them speedily 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 David his father, 
Which Isaiah the prophet commanded, 
Who was great and faithful in his vision. 
23 In his days the sun went backward; 
And he added life to the king. 
24 He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last; 
And he comforted those who mourned in Sion. 
25 He showed the things that should be to the end of time, 
And the hidden things or ever they came.

‡ 48:17 Some ancient authorities, apparently by a confusion, read Gog.
The memorial of Josiah is like the composition of incense
Prepared by the work of the apothecary:
It shall be sweet as honey in every mouth,
And as music at a banquet of wine.

He behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of the
people,
And took away the abominations of iniquity.

He set his heart right toward the Lord;
In the days of wicked men he made godliness to prevail.

Except David and Hezekiah and Josiah,
All committed trespass:
For they forsook the law of the Most High;
The kings of Judah failed.

For they gave their* power to others,
And their glory to a strange nation.

They set on fire the chosen city of the sanctuary,
And made her streets desolate, as it was written by the
hand of Jeremiah.

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

It was Ezekiel who saw the vision of glory,
Which God showed him upon the chariot of the cherubim.

For truly he remembered the enemies in† storm,
And to do good to those who directed their ways aright.

Also of the twelve prophets‡
May the bones flourish again out of their place.
And he comforted Jacob,

* 49:5 Gr. horn. † 49:9 Gr. rain. ‡ 49:10 The remainder of this line is omitted by the best authorities.
And delivered them by confidence of hope.

11 How shall we magnify Zerubbabel? And he was as a signet on the right hand:
12 So was Jesus the son of Josedek: Who in their days built the house, And exalted a people holy to the Lord, Prepared for everlasting glory.
13 Also of Nehemiah the memorial is great; Who raised up for us the walls that were fallen, And set up the gates and bars, And raised up our homes again.

14 No man was created upon the earth such as was Enoch; For he was taken up from the earth.
15 Neither was there a man born like to Joseph, A governor of his kindred, a stay of the people: Yes, his bones were visited.
16 Shem and Seth were glorified among men; And above every living thing in the creation is Adam.

50

1 It was Simon, the son of Onias, the* great priest, Who in his life repaired the house, And in his days strengthened the temple:
2 And by him was built from the foundation the height of the double wall, The lofty underworks of the inclosure of the temple:
3 In his days the cistern of waters was† diminished, The brazen vessel in compass as the sea.

§ 49:12 Some ancient authorities read temple. * 50:1 Or, high † 50:3 The text here seems to be corrupt.
4 It was he that took thought for his people that they should not fall, and fortified the city against besieging:
5 How glorious was he when the people gathered round him at his coming forth out of the sanctuary!
6 As the morning star in the midst of a cloud, as the moon at the full:
7 As the sun shining forth upon the temple of the Most High, and as the rainbow giving light in clouds of glory:
8 As the flower of roses in the days of new fruits, as lilies at the water spring, as the shoot of the frankincense tree in the time of summer:
9 As fire and incense in the censer, as a vessel all of beaten gold adorned with all manner of precious stones:
10 As an olive tree budding forth fruits, and as a cypress growing high among the clouds.
11 When he took up the robe of glory, and put on the perfection of exultation, in the ascent of the holy altar, he made glorious the precinct of the sanctuary.
12 And when he received the portions out of the priests’ hands, himself also standing by the hearth of the altar, his kindred as a garland round about him, he was as a young cedar in Libanus; and as stems of palm trees compassed they him round about,
13 And all the sons of Aaron in their glory,

‡ 50:4 Gr. to besiege: that is, as to besieging it. § 50:5 Gr. house of the veil.
And the Lord’s offering in their hands, before all the congregation of Israel.

14 And finishing the service at the altars, That he might adorn the offering of the Most High, the Almighty,

15 He stretched out his hand to the* cup, And poured out the cup of the grape; He poured out at the foot of the altar A sweet smelling savor to the Most High, the King of all.

16 Then shouted the sons of Aaron, They sounded the trumpets of beaten work, They made a great noise to be heard, For a remembrance before the Most High.

17 Then all the people together hurried, And fell down upon the earth on their faces To worship their Lord, the Almighty, God Most High.

18 The singers also praised him with their voices; In the whole house was there made sweet melody.

19 And the people implored the Lord Most High, In prayer before him that is merciful. Till the† worship of the Lord should be ended; 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 And he bowed himself down in worship the second time, To declare the blessing from the Most High.

22 And 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 is my soul vexed,
And the third is no nation:

26 They that sit upon the mountain of Samaria, and the
Philistines,
And that foolish people that dwells in Sichem.

27 I have written in this book the instruction of under-
standing and knowledge,
I Jesus, the son of Sirach Eleazar, of Jerusalem,
Who out of his heart poured forth wisdom.

28 Blessed is he that shall be exercised in these things;
And he that lays them up in his heart shall become wise.

29 For if he do them, he shall be strong to 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 Savior:
I do give thanks to your name:

2 For you were my protector and helper,
And did deliver my body out of destruction,
And out of the snare of a slanderous tongue,
From lips that forge lies,
And was my helper before those who stood by;
3 And did deliver me, according to the abundance of your mercy, and greatness of your name,
From the gnashings of teeth ready to devour,
Out of the hand of such as sought my life,
Out of the manifold afflictions which I had;
4 From the choking of a fire on every side,
And out of the midst of fire which I kindled not;
5 Out of the depth of the belly of* the grave,
And from an unclean tongue,
And from lying words,
6 The slander of an unrighteous tongue to the king.
My soul drew near even to death,
And my life was near to† the grave beneath.
7 They compassed me on every side,
And there was none to help me.
I was looking for the help of men,
And it was not.
8 And 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 the enemies.
9 And I lifted up my supplication 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,
And will sing praise with thanksgiving;
And my supplication was heard:
12 For you saved me from destruction,

* 51:5 Gr. Hades. † 51:6 Gr. Hades
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,  
Or ever I went abroad,  
I sought wisdom openly in my prayer.  
14 Before the temple I asked for her,  
And I will seek her out even to the end.  
15 From her flower as from the ripening grape my heart delighted in her:  
My foot trod in uprightness,  
From my youth I tracked her out.  
16 I bowed down my ear a little, and received her,  
And found for myself much instruction.  
17 I profited in her:  
To him that gives me wisdom I will give glory.  
18 For I purposed to practice her,  
And I was zealous for that which is good;  
And I shall never be put to shame.  
19 My soul has wrestled in her,  
And in my doing I was exact:  
I spread forth my hands to the heaven above,  
And bewailed my ignorances of her.  
20 I set my soul aright to her,  
And in pureness I found her.  
I got me a heart joined with her from the beginning:  
Therefore shall I not be forsaken.  
21 My inward part also was troubled to seek her:  
Therefore I have gotten a good possession.  
22 The Lord gave me a tongue for my reward;  
And I will praise him therewith.

23 Draw near to me, you unlearned,
And lodge in the house of instruction.
24 Say, wherefore are you 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 hard at hand to find.
27 Behold with your eyes,
How that I labored but a little,
And found for myself much rest.
28 Get you instruction with a great sum of silver,
And gain much gold by her.
29 May your soul rejoice in his mercy,
And may you 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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