WISDOM OF JESHUA, SON OF ELEAZAR, SON OF SIRACH

PROLOGUE
Many and great teachings are given to us through the law and the prophets, and the others follow them; and for these, we must praise Israel for discipline and wisdom. And those who read them must, not only themselves become experienced with them, but instead must also, as lovers-of-learning, be able to help the outsiders by speaking and writing things. My grandfather Jeshua, who had devoted himself especially to the reading of both the law and the prophets, and the other books of our fathers, and had acquired considerable proficiency in them, was himself also led to write down something pertaining to discipline and wisdom, so that by also becoming familiar with his book, those who are lovers-of-learning might make even greater progress in having a manner-of-life according to the law.

Therefore, you are invited to read it with goodwill and attention, and to be indulgent in cases where, despite our love-of-labor in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. For what was originally said in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. Now this is true, not only with this book; but instead, even the law itself, and the prophecies, and the rest of the books, differ not a little when spoken in the original.

For when I arrived in Egypt, in the 38th year of King Ptolemaios the Benefactor, and spent some time there, I found opportunity for no little discipline. Therefore, it seemed highly necessary that I myself should also devote some diligence and love-of-labor to the translation of this book. During that interval of time, I have applied much sleeplessness and experience in order to complete and publish the book for those in the sojourning who wish to be lovers-of-learning and are predisposed in the habits to live according to the law.

CHAPTER 1

1 (All wisdom is from Yahweh, and it is with him even into the age.
2 Sand of the sea, and drops of rain, and the days of an age: who can number these?
3 Heaven’s height, and earth’s breadth, and the depths of the abyss: who can explore these?
4 Before everything wisdom was created; and intelligence of sensibleness, from the first age.
5 The fountain of wisdom is the word of God in the heights, and her runlets are perpetual commandments.

6 To whom has wisdom’s root been revealed? And who has known her subtleties?
7 To whom has wisdom’s understanding been disclosed? And who has understood her great experience?
8 There is but one who is wise; exceedingly fearsome, seated upon his throne;
9 it is Yahweh; he created her, and has seen her and numbered her.
10 And he poured her out over all of his works, on all flesh according to his giving; and he supplied her to those who love her.

Love of Yahweh is ennobling wisdom;
to those to whom he appears he apportions her, that they may see him.

11 Fear of Yahweh is glory and something to boast about, and gladness and a crown of exceeding-joy.
12 Fear of Yahweh warms a heart, and gives gladness and joy and length of days.

Fear of Yahweh is a gift from Yahweh;
also for love he makes firm paths.

13 He who fears Yahweh will fare well at the last; even on the day of his end he will be blest.
14 Fear of Yahweh is a beginning of wisdom, and it is founded with faithful men in the womb.
15 From the foundation of the age, she nested with humans, and she will be entrusted with their seed.
16 To fear Yahweh is an indulgence of wisdom; and she intoxicates them from her fruits.
17 She will fill her entire house with desirable foods, and her gransaries with her produce.
18 Fear of Yahweh is a crown of wisdom, reviving peace and a healthy healing. Both are gifts of God for peace:
glory opens out for those who love him.
And he saw her and numbered her.

19 She pours out experience and knowledge of intelligence, and she heightens the glory of those who possess her.
20 To fear Yahweh is a root of wisdom;
and her branches are length of days.
21 Fear of Yahweh drives away sins;
and where it abides, it will turn away all fury.
22 Unrighteous fury cannot be made righteous;
for his fury plumbs him to his downfall.
23 A long-suffering man need stand firm but for a time;
and later gladness will come back to him.
24 For a time he conceals his accounts,
and the lips of many describe his intelligence.

25 Within wisdom’s storehouses is a parable of experience;
but reverence-of-God is an abomination to a sinner.
26 If you desire wisdom, keep the instructions, and Yahweh will supply her to you;
27 For fear of Yahweh is wisdom and discipline; and faith and meekness are his good-pleasure.
28 May you not refuse-to-be-persuaded by the fear of Yahweh, and may you not approach him in a double heart.
29 May you not be made to act-hypocritical before humans;
and be paying-attention in what you say from your lips.
30 Do not be exalting yourself lest you may fall and may bring dishonor upon your soul;
and Yahweh will reveal your secrets and he will throw you down in the middle of a meeting-hall, because you approached not the fear of Yahweh and your heart was full of deceit.)

CHAPTER 2

1 (My child, when you come to be enslaved to Yahweh, prepare your soul for a trial.
2 Make your heart straight and persevere, and do not make haste in a season of calamity.
3 Glue yourself to him, and do not withdraw from him; so that your last days may increase.

4 Accept whatever happens to you, and in crushing humiliation be long-suffering;
because gold is tested in a fire, and acceptable humans in a furnace of humiliation.
5 In sickness and poverty put your trust in him.
6 Have faith and he will assist you;

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1 [1:12] LXX(I) add
2 [1:13] some LXX “will find favor”
3 [1:17] most LXX, Lat, Syr / some LXX “theirs”
4 [1:17] most LXX, Lat, Syr / LXX “their”
5 [1:18–19] some LXX, most Lat, most Sah add / some LXX, some Lat, some Sah only add “Both are gifts...love him.”
6 [1:18–19] LXX(I) add
7 [1:19] Syr “He is but one...who love him.”
8 [1:20] LXX(I) / LXX(I) omit “The fear of Yahweh...all wrath”
9 [1:21] LXX(I) / LXX(I) omit “The fear of Yahweh...all wrath”
10 [1:21] LXX(I) / LXX(I) / LXX(I) omit “The fear of Yahweh...all wrath”
12 [2:5] LXX(I) add
13 [2:5] LXX(I) add
make straight your ways and hope in him.\(^1\)

7 All of you who are fearing Yahweh, wait for his mercy, and do not turn away lest you may fall.
8 All of you who are fearing Yahweh, put your faith in him, and your reward will not make you fall and be lost.\(^2\)
9 All of you who are fearing Yahweh, hope for good things, and for lasting gladness and mercy.\(3\) for his reward is an everlasting gift with joy.\(4\)

10 Consider the ancient generations and see: Has anyone put their faith in Yahweh and been ashamed of doing so? Has anyone remained in his fear and been forsaken? Has anyone called on him and been disregarded? Because Yahweh is piteous and merciful, and he forgives sins, and he saves in a season of tribulation.

12 Woe to terrified hearts and drooping hands, and a sinner who treads two different paths!
13 Woe to a drooping heart, because it does not have faith, This is why he will not be sheltered!
14 Woe to all of you whose endurance has perished! And what will all of you whenever Yahweh may visit?
15 Those who are fearing Yahweh will not be disobedient to his words; and those who are loving him preserve his ways.
16 Those who are fearing Yahweh will seek to please him,\(^5\) and those who are loving him are filled with the law.
17 Those who are fearing Yahweh will prepare their hearts and will humble their souls before him.
18 Let us fall into the hands of Yahweh and not into the hands of humans, for equal to his greatness is the mercy which he shows\(^6\) and equal to his name are his works.\(^7\)

CHAPTER 3
1 { The children of wisdom are the congregation of the righteous; obedience and love are what they beget.\(8\)
My children, hear me, your father; and do so that all of you may be saved with the life which is forever and ever.\(9\)

2 For Yahweh glorifies a father over his children; and he confirms a mother’s judgment over her sons.
3 The man who is honoring his father is atoning for sins; and the man who is glorifying his mother is storing up treasures.
4 The man who is honoring his father will be gladdened by children, and in a day of prayer, he will be heard.
5 The man who is glorifying his father will live a long life; and] the man who is honoring\(10\) his mother ([is listening to Yahweh.]
6 And the man who is fearing Yahweh honors his father,\(^11\) and is enslaved to his parents as masters.\(12\)
7 My son,\(^13\) honor your father in word and in deed,\(^14\) so that all blessings\(^15\) may come upon you;
9 for a father’s blessing establishes a root,\(^16\) but a mother’s curse uproots she plant.\(17\)
10 Do not glory in your father’s dishonor, for his dishonor\(^18\) is no glory to you!
11 A man’s\(^19\) glory is his father’s glory;\(20\)

12 My son,\(21\) assist your father when he is old; and do not grieve him as long as he has life.\(22\)
13 Even if his intelligence is failing, have allowance with him; do not shame\(1\) him with all of your strength.\(23\)
14 For kindness to a father will not be forgotten,\(24\) it will serve as a sin offering—it will take lasting root.
15 In time of tribulation it will be recalled to your advantage, like warmth upon frost it will melt away your sins.
16 A blasphemer is he who neglects\(25\) his father; accused of his Creator is he who angers his mother.
17 My son, conduct your affairs with humility, and you will be loved more than givers of gifts.\(26\)
18 Humble your soul\(^27\) the more, the greater you are, and you will find favor with the Lord.
19 Many are lofty and the noble; but it is to the humble that he reveals his plans.\(31\)
20 For great is the power of the Lord; he is glorified by the humble.
21 What is too sublime for you, do not seek, into things beyond your strength, do not search.
22 What is committed to you, attend to; for what is hidden is not your concern.
23 With what is too much for you, do not meddle, when shown things beyond any intelligence of humans.
24 For many are the conceits of the sons of a human, and bad reasoning caused them to wander.
25 Where the pupil of the eye is missing, there is no light, and where there is no knowledge, there is no wisdom.\(32\)
26 A stubborn man will fare badly in the end, and he who loves danger will perish in it.\(33\)
27 A stubborn man will be burdened with sorrow; a sinner\(^28\) will heap up sin upon sin.
28 For the affliction of the proud man there is no cure; he is the offshoot of an evil plant.
29 The mind of a sage appreciates proverbs of the wise,\(35\) and an attentive ear is the wise man’s joy.
30 Water quenches a flaming fire, and alms alone for sins.
31 He who does a kindness is remembered after旅游度假; when he falls, he finds a support.

CHAPTER 4
1 My son, do not rob the poor man of his livelihood; and do not force the eyes of the needy to turn away.\(38\)
2 May you not grieve\(39\) the spirit of a hungering soul, and may you not provoke a man in a state of-being-at-a-loss to anger.\(41\)
3 Do not exasperate the downtrodden; nor delay to give to the needy.
4 Do not reject a beggar in distress; nor avert your face from the poor.
5 Do not turn your eyes from the needy,\(42\) and do not give a place for someone\(^1\) to curse you;

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1 \[2-6\] LXO, Syr
t; hope in him, and he will make straight your ways
2 \[2\] Syr “and he will not hold back your reward”
3 \[2:9\] Syr “salvation”
4 \[2:9\] LXXII add literally “seek his good-pleasure”
5 literally “for as is his greatness, so is his mercy”
6 \[2:18\] Syr “all others omit “and equal to his name are his works”
7 \[3:1\] Lat add
8 \[3:1\] Heb / LXX “refreshing”
9 \[3:7\] LXXIII, Lat / LXXI(II), Heb(A), Syr omit “The man who is fearing Yahweh honors his father”
10 \[3:7\] LXX / Heb(A), Syr omit “and serves his parents as rulers”
11 \[3:8\] Heb(A), Syr add / LXX omit “My son”
12 \[3:8\] Heb(A) / LXX “to deed and account”
13 \[3:9\] Heb(A), Syr / LXX “that his blessing”
14 \[3:9\] Heb(A) / LXX “established a house of children”
15 \[3:9\] Heb(A) / LXX “foundations”
16 \[3:10\] Heb(A) / LXX “for your father’s dishonor”
17 \[3:11\] Heb(A) / LXX “human’s”
18 \[3:11\] Heb(A) / LXX “honor”
21 \[3:12\] Heb(A) / LXX “a place for someone”
22 \[3:13\] Heb(A) / LXX “and a mother in duglory is a reproach to her children”
23 \[3:13\] Heb(A) / LXX “child”
24 \[3:13\] Heb(A) / LXX “dishonor”
25 \[3:13\] Heb(A) / LXX / Heb(A), Syr “him all the days of his life”
26 \[3:14\] Heb(C), LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “he blotted out”
27 \[3:16\] Heb(C), LXX / Heb(A) “despises”
28 \[3:17\] LXX “mockness”
29 \[3:17\] Heb / LXX “loved by acceptable humans”; Vul “loved more than humans of glory”
30 \[3:18\] Heb / LXX “yourself”
31 \[3:19\] LXXII add
32 \[3:25\] Heb(A), LXXII(II), Syr [LXXI(II)] “make no claims”; Syr “., do not give persuasive advice” / LXXII omit “Where the pupil...no wisdom.”
33 \[3:26\] Heb(A) “and he who loves what is good will be brought along by it”
34 \[3:27\] LXX / Heb(A) “madman” / Syr “impatient”
35 \[3:29\] LXX / Heb(A), Syr add
36 \[3:31\] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “The kindness a person does crossed his path as he goes”
37 \[4:1\] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “do not mock the life of the poor man”
38 \[4:1\] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “do not mock the life of the poor man”
39 \[4:1\] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “do not meddle”
40 \[4:2\] Heb / LXX omit “a spirit of”
41 \[4:2\] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “do not avert your face...needy”
42 \[4:5\] Heb / LXX “place to a human”
6 for if in the bitterness of spirit of his soul he curse you, his Maker7 will hear his prayer.
7 Endear your soul8 to the assembly of the poor: before a ruler9 bow your head.
8 Give a hearing to the poor man, and return his greeting with courtesy.6
9 Deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor; do not let a spirit of justice be repugnant to you;7
10 Become as a father to the fatherless, and a replacement of a master10 to their mother; thus will you be like a son to the Most High, and he will be more tender to you than a mother.9
11 Wisdom instructs10 her children and admonishes those who seek her.
12 He who loves her loves life; those who seek her out win her favor.
13 He who holds her fast inherits glory; wherever he dwells, Yahweh bestows blessings.
14 Those who serve her serve the Holy One; those who love her11 Yahweh loves.
15 He who obeys her judges nations;12 he who listens to her dwells in her inmost chambers.
16 If one trusts her, he will possess her; his descendants too will inherit her.13
17 She walks with him as a stranger, and at first she puts him to the test; fear and dread she brings upon him14 and tries him with her discipline; with her precepts she puts him to the proof, until his heart15 is fully with her.
18 Then she comes back to bring him happiness and reveal her secrets to him.
19 But if he fails her, she will abandon him and deliver him into the hands of despisers.16
20 My son,17 use your time well; guard yourself from evil, and bring no shame upon your soul.
21 There is a sense of shame laden with guilt, and a shame that merits honor and respect.
22 Show no favoritism against your own soul; let no one intimidate you to your own downfall.
23 Do not refrain from speaking at the proper time,18 and do not hide away your wisdom;19 for it is through speech that wisdom becomes known, and knowledge through the tongue’s rejoinder.
24 Do not be ashamed to acknowledge your guilt, never gainsay the truth, and answer him with peaceable words.20
25 Never gainsay the truth,20 but rather be ashamed of your ignorance.21
26 Do not be ashamed to acknowledge your guilt,22 and do not struggle against the rushing stream.
27 Do not abuse your soul23 before an impious human,24 nor refuse to do so before rulers.

CHAPTER 5

1 Do not rely on your wealth; do not say: “I have the power.” Do not walk after the desire of your soul.25
2 Do not rely on your soul and26 strength in following the desires of your heart.
3 Do not say: “Who can prevail against me?” for Yahweh will exact the punishment.27
4 Do not say: “I have sinned, yet what has befallen me?” for Yahweh11 hides his time.
5 Do not say: “Yahweh is merciful, and all my sins he will blot out.”12
6 Do not be overconfident of forgiveness,23 adding sin upon sin.
7 Do not say: “Great is his mercy; he will forgive44 my many sins.” For mercy and anger alike are with him; upon the wicked alights his wrath.
8 Do not rely upon deceitful wealth, for it will be no help on the day of wrath.36
9 Do not winnow in every spirit,37 and do not start off in every direction. So it is with the double-tongued sinner.38
10 Be consistent in your thoughts; steadfast be your words.
11 Be swift to hear, and let your life be in truth.39
12 If you have the knowledge, answer your neighbor; if not, put your hand over your mouth.
13 Honor and dishonesty through talking.40 A human’s tongue can be his downfall.
14 Do not be called a detractor;41 do not use your tongue for slandering a neighbor;43 for shame has been created for the thief, and the reproach of his neighbor for the double-tongued.
15 Do not say anything harmful,26 in small or great matters;
CHAPTER 6

2 Do not fall into the hand of your soul, lest, like fire, it consume your strength;
3 your leaves it will eat, your fruits destroy, and you will be left a dry tree,
4 for a fierce soul destroys its master and makes him the sport of his enemies.

5 Pleasant speech multiplies friends and soothes enemies, and gracious lips prompt friendly greetings.

6 Let men who are your acquaintances be many, but one in a thousand your confidant.

7 When you gain a friend, first test him, and do not be too ready to trust him.

8 For one sort of friend is a friend when it suits him, but he will not be with you in time of distress.

9 Another is a friend who becomes an enemy, and tells of the quarrel to your shame.

10 Another is a friend, a boon companion, who will not be with you when sorrow comes.

11 When things go well, he is your other self, and lords it over your servants;

12 but if you are brought low, he turns against you and avoids meeting you.

13 Keep away from your enemies; be on your guard with your friends.

14 A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he who finds one finds a treasure.

15 A faithful friend is beyond price, for he who fears the Lord behaves accordingly.

16 A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy, such as he who fears the Lord finds;

17 for he who fears the Lord behaves accordingly, and his friend will be like himself, and as his name, so are his deeds.

18 My son, from your youth embrace discipline; thus will you find wisdom with graying hair.

19 As though plowing and sowing, draw close to her; then await her bountiful crops.

20 For in cultivating her you will labor but little, and soon you will eat of her fruits.

21 She will be like a burdensome stone to test him, and he will not delay in casting her aside.

22 For discipline is like her name, she is not accessible to many.

23 Listen, my son, and heed my advice; do not refuse my counsel.

24 Put your feet into her fetters, and your neck under her yoke.

25 Stoop your shoulders and carry her and do not be irked at her bonds.

26 With all your soul draw close to her;

with all your strength keep her ways.

27 Search her out, discover her; seek her and you will find her.

28 Then when you have her, do not let her go;

29 thus afterward you will find rest in her, and she will become your joy.

30 Her fetters will become for you a strong protection, and her collar a golden robe.

31 You will wear her like a golden robe, and carry her like a splendid crown.

32 My son, if you wish, you can be taught; if you apply your soul, you will be shrewd.

33 If you are willing to listen, you will learn; if you give heed, you will be wise.

34 Frequent the company of the elders; whoever is wise, stay close to him.

35 Be eager to hear every godly discourse; let no wise saying escape you.

36 If you see a man of prudence, seek him out; let your feet wear away his doorstep!

37 Reflect on the precepts of Yahweh, and let his commandments be your constant meditation;

38 Then he will enlighten your mind, and he will grant the wisdom you desire.

CHAPTER 7

1 Do no evil, and evil will not overtake you; avoid wickedness, and it will turn aside from you.

2 My son, do not sow in the furrows of injustice, lest you harvest it sevenfold.

3 Do not seek authority from Yahweh, nor from the king a place of honor.

4 Do not parade your righteousness before the Lord, and do not flaunt your wisdom before the king.

5 Do not seek to become a judge if you do not have strength to root out crime, or you will show favor to the ruler and mar your integrity.

6 Do not be guilty of any evil before the city’s populace, nor disgrace yourself before the assembly.

7 Do not plot to repeat a sin; not even for one will you go unpunished.

9 Do not say: “He will appreciate my many gifts; the Most High will accept my offerings.”

10 Do not be impatient in prayers, and do not neglect the giving of alms.

11 Do not laugh at a mortal who is in bitterness of his spirit; for there is the one who is humbling and heightening.

12 Do not plot mischief against your brother, nor against your friend and companion.

13 Do not delight in telling lie after lie, for it never results in good.

14 Do not thrust yourself into the deliberations of princes, and do not repeat the words of your prayer.

15 Do not hate laborious tasks, nor farming, which was ordained by the Most High.

16 Do not esteem yourself better than guys of your people; remember, his wrath will not delay.

17 Humble your pride very-much;

18 My son, do not be a foe instead of a friend; a bad name and disgrace you will acquire: “That for a bad man with a double tongue!”
Do not barter a friend for money,
nor a dear brother for the gold of Ophir.
Do not dismiss a sensible woman;
a gracious woman is more precious than corals.
Do not mistreat a servant who faithfully serves,
nor a laborer who devotes his soul to you.
Let a wise servant be dear to you as your own soul;
do not refuse him his freedom.
If you have a quadraped, look after them;
if they are dependable, keep them.
If you have sons, chastise them;
bend their necks from childhood.
If you have daughters, keep them chaste,
and do not be indulgent to them.
Giving your daughter in marriage ends a great task;
but give her to a discerning fellow.
If you have a woman in accordance with your soul, do not let her be hated by you;
but where there is ill-feeling, do not trust her.
With all your heart honor your father;
do not forget your mother’s birthpangs.
Remember, of these parents you were born;
what can you give them for all they gave you?
With all your soul, fear God,
revere his priests.
With all your strength, love your Creator,
do not forsake his ministers.
Honor God and respect the priest;
give him his portion as you have been commanded:
First fruits and contributions,
due sacrifices and holy offerings.
To the poor man also extend your hand,
that your blessing may be complete.
Be generous to all the living,
and do not withhold your kindness from the dead.
Do not avoid those who weep,
but mourn with those who mourn.
Do not neglect to lift up someone’s heart,
for these things you will be loved.
In whatever you do, remember your last days,
and you will never sin.

CHAPTER 8

1 Do not contend with an influential man,
lest you fall into his power.
2 Do not quarrel with a rich man,
lest he pay out the price of your downfall;
for gold has dazzled many,
and perverts the character of princes.
3 Do not dispute with a man of railing speech,
do not heap wood upon his fire.
4 Do not be too familiar with an unruly man,
lest he speak ill of your ancestors.
5 Do not shame a man who is turning away from a sin;
remember, we all are guilty.
6 Do not insult a mortal who is old,
for some of us, too, will grow old.
7 Do not hasten to say: “Disaster!”
Rely on God and be content with his way.

CHAPTER 9

1 Do not be jealous of the woman of your bosom,
lest you teach her to do evil against you.
2 Do not give your soul to a woman,
to trample upon your dignity.
3 Do not be intimate with a strange woman,
lest you fall into her snares.
4 Do not dally with a female singer,
lest you be caught in her wiles.
5 Do not entertain any thoughts against an unmarried woman,
lest you be enmeshed in damages for her.
6 Do not give your soul to whores,
lest you surrender your inheritance.
7 Do not gaze about the lanes of the city
and do not wander through its squares;
8 avert your eyes from the beauty of another’s woman
and do not be jealous of her.
9 Do not use your soul to women,
lest you fall into their seductions.
10 Do not lend to one more powerful than yourself;
and whatever you lend, count it as lost.
11 Do not go surety beyond your means;
do not barter a friend for money.
12 Do not take counsel with a fool,
for he will go his own way straight,
and through his folly you will perish with him.
13 Do not protract a quarrel with a quick-tempered man,
or ride with him through the desert,
for bloodshed is nothing to him;
when there is no one to help you, he will destroy you.
14 Do not take counsel with a fool,
for he can keep nothing to himself.
15 Do not do anything before a stranger that should be kept secret,
for you know not what it will engender.
16 Open your heart to no man,
and do not blush at your happiness.
for you do not know what disaster awaits him.

12 Do not rejoice at a proud man’s success; remember he will not reach death unpunished.

13 Keep far from the man who has power to kill, and you will not be filled with the dread of death. But if you approach him, do not offend him, lest he take away your life; know that you are stepping among snares and walking over a net.

14 As best you can, take your neighbors’ measure, and associate with the wise.

15 Be intimate with the learned; let all your conversation be about the law of Yahweh. Have righteous men for your table companions; let your glory be in the fear of God.

CHAPTER 10

17 Skilled artisans are esteemed for their deftness; but the skilled sage is the ruler of his people.

18 Being-learned in the city is the man of railing speech, and he who talks rashly is hated.

[8.1] A wise magistrate lends stability to his people, and the leadership of a prudent man is well ordered.

2 As the people’s judge, so are his ministers; as the head of a city, its inhabitants.

3 A wanton king destroys his people, but a city grows through the wisdom of its princes.

4 Sovereignty over the earth is in the hand of the Lord, who raises up on it the man of the hour.

5 Sovereignty over every fellow is in the hand of God, who imparts his majesty to the ruler. 6

6 No matter the wrong, do no violence to your neighbor, and do not walk the path of arrogance.

7 Odious to the Lord and to men is arrogance, and the sin of oppression they both hate.

8 Dominion is transferred from one people to another because of violence and arrogance and wealth.

Nothing is more wicked than one who loves money, for such a person puts his own soul up for sale.

9 Why are dust and ashes proud? even during life man’s body decays; a slight illness— the doctor jests, a king today—tomorrow he is dead.

11 When a human dies, he inherits corruption; worm and gnats and creepers.

12 The beginning of pride is man’s stubbornness in withdrawing his heart from his Maker; for pride is the reservoir of sin, a source which runs over with vice; because of it God sends unheard-of afflictions and brings men to utter ruin.

14 The thrones of the arrogant God overturns and establishes the lowly in their stead.

15 The roots of the proud nations God plucks up, to plant the humble in their place: He breaks down their stem to the level of the ground, then digs their roots from the earth.

17 God sweeps away the traces of the proud and effaces the memory of them from the earth.

18 Insolence is not allotted to a mortal, nor stubborn anger to one born of woman.

19 What kind of seed can be being-honored?

A mortal’s seed.

What kind of seed is being-honored?
The one fearing the Lord.

What kind of seed can be being-disgraced?
A mortal’s seed. 12

What kind of seed is being-disgraced?
The one transgressing an instruction. 13

20 Among brothers their leader is in honor; he who fears the Lord is in honor among his people.

21 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance; effrontery and pride are the beginning of rejection.

22 Be it tenant or wayfarer, alien or pauper, his glory is the fear of Yahweh.

23 It is not right to despise a man who is wise but poor, nor proper to honor any sinner.

24 The prince, the ruler, the judge are in honor; but none is greater than he who fears the Lord.

25 When free men serve a prudent slave, the wise man does not complain.

26 Do not flout your wisdom in managing your affairs, and do not boast in your time of need.

27 Better the worker who has plenty of everything than the boaster who is without bread.

28 My child, glorify your soul in meekness; prize yourself as you deserve.

29 Who will acquit him who condemns his own soul? who will honor him who discredits his own soul? 30

The poor man is honored for his wisdom as the rich man is honored for his wealth; honored in poverty, how much more so in wealth! dishonored in wealth, in poverty how much the more!

CHAPTER 11

1 The poor man’s wisdom lifts his head high and sets him among princes.

2 Do not praise a man for his looks; do not despise an ugly man for his appearance.

3 Least is the bee among flying-creatures, but she reaps the choicest of all harvests.

4 Do not mock the worn cloak and do not jibe at any man’s bitter day: for strange are the works of Yahweh, his deeds hidden from men.

5 The oppressed often rise to a throne, and some that none would consider wear a crown.

6 The exalted often fall into utter disgrace; the honored are given into enemy hands.

7 Before investigating, find no fault; examine first, then criticize.

8 Before hearing, answer not, and interrupt no one in the middle of his speech.

9 Do not dispute about what is not your concern; take no part in the strife of the arrogant.

10 My son, why increase your cares, since he who is avid for wealth will not be blameless? Even if you chase after it, you will never overtake it; however you seek it, you will not find it.

11 One may toil and struggle and drive, and fall short all the more.

12 Another goes his way a weakening and a failure, with little strength and great misery—yet the eyes of Yahweh look favorably upon him; he raises him free of the vile dust, lifts up his head and exalts him to the amazement of the many.
14 Good and evil, life and death,  
poverty and riches, are from Yahweh.  
15 Wisdom and understanding and knowledge of affairs are from Yahweh,  
love and virtuous paths are from Yahweh.  
16 Error and darkness were made for sinners at their birth,  
and evil abides with evildoers.  
17 Yahweh’s gift remains with the pious;  
his favor brings continued success.  
18 A man may become rich through a miser’s life,  
and this is his allotted reward:  
when he says: “I have found rest,  
now I will feast on my possessions,”  
he does not know how long it will be  
till he dies and leaves them to others.  
20 My son, hold fast to your duty,  
grow old while doing your task.  
21 Do not admire how sinners live,  
but trust in Yahweh and wait for his light;  
for it is easy in the eyes of Yahweh,  
suddenly, in an instant, to make a poor man rich.  
22 The blessing of the Lord is in  
the lot of the pious man,  
and in due time his hopes bear fruit.  
23 Do not say: “What do I need?  
What further pleasure can be mine?”  
What harm can come to me now?”  
25 The day of prosperity makes one forget adversity;  
the day of adversity makes one forget prosperity.  
26 For it is easy with Yahweh on the day of a human’s end,  
to repay a human according to his deeds.  
27 A moment’s affliction brings forgetfulness of past delights;  
when a man dies, his life is revealed.  
28 Do not be considering a fellow  
happy before his death,  
because a man is being recognized in his end.  
29 Do not bring every man into your house,  
for many are the snares of the crafty one;  
though he seem like a flying-creature confined in a cage,  
yet like a spy he will observe your weakness,  
like a wolf in ambush for prey.  
The peddler waits in ambush like a bear,  
for the house of scoundrels.  
31 The talebearer turns good into evil;  
with a spark he sets many coals afire.  
32 The worthless man lies in wait for blood,  
and plots against your choicest possessions.  
33 Avoid a wickeder waits in ambush like a bear,  
lodged a stranger with you, and he will subvert your course,  
does not bring every man into your house,  
for he breeds only evil,  
lest you incur a lasting stain.  
34 Lodge a stranger with you, and he will subvert your course,  
and estrange you from your own household.

CHAPTER 12  
1 If you do good, know for whom you are doing it,  
and your kindness will have its effect.  
2 Do good to the righteous man and reward will be yours,  
if not from him, from Yahweh.  
3 No good comes to him who gives comfort to the wicked,  
nor is it an act of mercy that he does.  
4 Give to the good man,  
refuse the sinner.  
5 Refresh the downtrodden,  
give nothing to the proud.  
Do not give him arms for combat,  
lest he use them against you;  
for you will receive twice as much evil in time of need for every good deed you do for him.  
6 The Most High himself hates sinners,  
and he inflicts punishment upon the wicked.  
and he keeps them for the day of vengeance.  
7 Give to the pious man,  
but refuse the sinner.  
8 A friend is not known in prosperity,  
in adversity an enemy will not remain concealed.  
9 When a man is successful even his enemy is friendly,  
in adversity even his friend disappears.  
10 Never trust your enemy,  
for his wickedness is like corrosion in bronze.  
11 Even though he acts humbly and peaceably toward you,  
stand watch over your heart  
and be caused-to-fear from him.  
Rub him as one polishes a brazen mirror,  
you will find that there is still corrosion.  
12 Do not let him sit near you,  
lest he oust you and take your place.  
Do not let him sit at your right hand,  
lest he then demand your seat,  
and in the end you appreciate my advice,  
you then groan with regret, as I warned you.  
13 Who pities a snake charmer when he is bitten,  
or anyone who goes near a living-creature with a tooth?  
14 So is it with the companion of the proud man,  
who is involved in his sins:  
While you stand firm, he makes no bold move;  
but if you slip, he cannot hold back.  
16 An enemy speaks sweetly with his lips,  
but in his heart he schemes to plunge you into the abyss.  
Though your enemy has tears in his eyes,  
if given the chance, he will never have enough of your blood.  
17 If evil comes upon you, you will find him at hand;  
feigning to help, he will trip you up.  
18 then he will nod his head and clap his hands  
and hiss repeatedly, and show his true face.

CHAPTER 13  
1 He who touches pitch blackens his hand;  
he who associates with an impious man learns his ways.  
2 Bear no burden too heavy for you,  
go with no one greater or wealthier than yourself.  
How can the earthen pot go with the metal cauldron?  
When they knock together, the pot will be smashed.  
Or why should the rich man associate with the poor man?  
3 The rich man does wrong and boasts of it,  
the poor man is wronged and begs forgiveness.  
4 As long as the rich man can use you, he will enslave you,  
but when you are exhausted, he will abandon you.  
5 As long as you own anything he will be part of your household,  
then without regret he will impoverish you.  
6 When he needs something from you he will extort you,  
and with smiles he will win your confidence;  
he will speak fair words to you and ask what you need,  
and embarrass you with gifts of delicacies.  
7 Then twice or three times he will terrify you,  
11 [11:15-16] LXX(I), Heb(B), most Lat / Heb(A), LXX(II), Syr, late Lat add verse here [(reading according to LXX(II)) Heb(A) reads “Wisdom and understanding and knowing how to speak are from Yahweh, sin and virtuous paths are from Yahweh, folly and darkness were made for sinners [LXX(II) add ‘at their birth], and evil abides [LXX(II) “grows old”] with evildoers”]  
12 [12:1] Heb(A) / LXX, Lat omit “My son”  
13 [12:2] Heb(A) / LXX, Lat “covenant”  
16 [11:26] Heb(A) omit “For it is weary…deeds.” (Syr omit “The blessing of the Lord…his deeds.”)  
17 Judean War 79:15(5:461)  
18 Heb / LXX, Josephus “considering no-one”  
19 Heb, Josephus / LXX “end”  
20 Heb / LXX “and”  
21 Heb / LXX “children” (which is a possible interpretation of the Hebrew)  
22 [11:29] LXX / Heb(A) “wounds”  
24 [11:31] Heb(A) / LXX add  
25 [11:34] Heb(A) / LXX “will upset you with commotion”  
26 [12:2] most LXX “from the Most High” / LXX(O), Lat “from the Lord” / Syr “from his Lord”  
27 [13:2] LXX / Heb(A), Syr add
and finally laugh you to scorn.
When later he sees you he will pass you by, and shake his head over you.

8 Guard against being presumptuous; do not be humiliated when you are enjoying yourself.1

9 When invited by a man of influence, keep your distance; then he will urge you all the more.

10 Do not be bold with him lest you be rebuffed, but do not keep too far away lest you be forgotten.

11 Do not engage freely in discussion with him, do not trust his many words; for by prolonged talk he will test you, and though smiling he will probe you.

12 Mercilessly he will make a laughingstock of your soul, and will not refrain from injury or chains.

13 Be on your guard and take care never to accompany men of violence.

14 If you hear these things in your sleep, wake up! With your whole life, love the Lord, and call on him for your salvation.2

15 All the flesh loves its own species, every man a man like himself.3

16 Every being is drawn to its own species; every man associates with his own species.

17 Is a wolf ever allied with a lamb? So it is with the sinner and the pious.

18 And so for the rich man keeping close to the poor man.4

19 Can there be peace between the hyena and the dog? Or can there be peace between the rich and the poor?

19 Lion’s prey are the wild asses of the desert; so too the poor are feeding grounds for the rich.

20 A proud man abhors lowliness; so does the rich man abhor the poor.

21 When a rich man stumbles he is supported by a friend; when a poor man trips he is pushed down by a friend.6

22 Many are the supporters for a rich man when he speaks; though what he says is odious, it wins approval.

23 When a poor man speaks they make sport of him; he speaks wisely and no attention is paid him.

24 A rich man speaks and all are silent, his wisdom they extol to the clouds.

25 A proud man speaks and they say: “Who is that?” If he slips they cast him down.

26 Wealth is good when there is no sin; but poverty is evil by the standards of the proud.

25 A mortal’s heart changes his face, either for good or for evil, and a glad heart makes a cheerful countenance.6

26 The sign of a good heart is a cheerful countenance; the toiling schemer is withdrawn and perplexed.9

14.1 Happy a mortal whose mouth brings him no grief, who is not stung by remorse for sin.

2 Happy a man whose conscience does not reproach his own soul, who has not lost hope.

CHAPTER 14
3 Wealth ill becomes the mean man; and of what use is gold to the miser?

4 What he denies his own soul, he collects for someone else, and in his possessions a stranger will revel.

5 To whom will be generous who is stingy with his own soul?11 and does not enjoy what is his own?

6 No man is more stingy than he who is stingy with his own soul;12 he punishes his own miserliness.

7 If ever he is generous, it is by mistake;13 and in the end he displays his greed.

8 The miser with an eye is a wicked man; turning-away persons and overlooking souls.14

9 In the miser’s opinion his share is insufficient; but his stinginess withers a soul.

10 The miser’s eye is rapacious for bread, but on his own table he sets it stale.

11 My son, if you have anything, do good to yourself,15 and enjoy it as best you can.

12 Remember that death does not tarry, nor has the decree of the Netherworld been shown to you.

13 Before you die, be good to your friend, and give him a share in what you possess.

14 Do not deprive yourself of present good things, let no choice portion escape you.

15 Will you not leave your riches to others, and your earnings to be divided by lot?

16 Give, and take, and pamper your soul, for there are no joys to seek in the Netherworld.

17 All flesh grows old, like a garment; the age-old decree is: All must die.

18 As with the leaves that grow on a vigorous tree: one falls off and another sprouts—

19 So with the generations of flesh and blood: one dies and another is born.

20 All man’s works will perish in decay, and his handiwork will follow after him.

20 Happy a mortal who meditates on wisdom, and reflects on knowledge;

21 who ponders her ways in his heart, and understands her paths;

22 who pursues her like a scout, and lies in wait at all her entryways;

23 who peeps through her windows, and listens at her doors;

24 who encamps near her house, and fastens his tent pegs next to her walls;

25 who pitches his tent beside her, and lives as her welcome neighbor;

26 who builds his nest in her leaflage, and lodges in her branches;

27 who takes shelter with her from the heat, and dwells in her home.

CHAPTER 15
1 He who fears Yahweh will do this; he who is practiced in the law will come to wisdom.

2 She will meet him like a mother, like a young woman20 she will embrace him,

3 nourish him with the bread of understanding, and give him the water of learning to drink.

4 He will lean upon her and not fall, he will trust in her and not be put to shame.

5 She will exult him above his fellows; and she will open his mouth in the midst of the assembly.

6 He will find gladness and joy, and she will endow him with an everlasting name.

7 Guys of vanity will not attain to her, and men of haughtiness will not behold her.

8 She is far from the impious, not to be spoken of by liars.

9 Unseemly is praise on a sinner’s lips, 

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1 [13:8] others “humiliated in your folly”
2 [13:12] Heb(A) - LXX(II) “Cruel is he who does not keep words to himself” / LXX(II), Origen, Lat(similar) “Mercilessly he will store up your words as a threat against your life”
4 [13:20] LXX / Heb(A) “Pride” / Syr omit “A proud man...abhor the poor.”
5 [13:21] LXX / Heb(A) “pushed off from friend to friend”
6 [13:21] LXX “humble”
7 [13:26] Heb, LXX / others add
8 [13:26] Heb(A) / LXX “and the finding of parables is a wearisome toil of the mind” / Syr “; and a multitude of discourses are the thoughts of sinners”
9 [14:2] Heb / LXX omit “a man”
10 [14:5] Heb / LXX “with himself”
12 [14:7] Syr / LXX “it is through forgetfulness”
13 [14:8] LXX / Heb(A) omit “If ever he is generous...ruin on himself.” / Syr omit “In the miser’s opinion...ruin on himself.”
14 [14:11] LXX / Heb(A) “if you have anything serve your soul; if you have anything, do good to yourself” / Syr “if you have anything serve yourself”
15 [14:12] Heb, Syr / LXX “covenant”
16 [14:17] Heb / LXX “covenant”
17 [14:20] others “who dies in”
18 [14:22] LXX, Lat, Syr / Heb(A) add
19 [15:2] Heb / LXX “a woman of virginity”
for it is not accorded to him by God.

10 But praise is offered by the wise man’s tongue; its rightful steward will proclaim it.

11 Do not say: “It was God’s doing that I fell away”; for he does not do what he hates.

12 Do not say: “It was he who made me stumble”; for he has no need of wicked man.

13 Yahweh hates abominable wickedness; he does not let it befall those who fear him.

14 When God, in the beginning, created man, he made him subject to his own free choice, and he put him into the hand of his kidnappers. 

15 If you choose you can keep his commandment; it is loyalty to do his will, and if you believe in him you too will live.

16 Fire and water are set before you; to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand.

17 Life and death are before man, whichever he chooses will be given him.

18 Immense is the wisdom of Yahweh; he is mighty in power, and all-seeing.

19 The eyes of God see all he has made; he understands man’s every deed.

20 He does not command a mortal to sin, and he does not give strength to a man for a lie, and he does not have-compasion upon someone who makes vanity.

CHAPTER 16

1 Do not desire a brood of worthless children, nor rejoice in wicked offspring.

2 Although they be many, do not exult them if they do not have the fear of Yahweh.

3 Do not count on their length of life, do not hope in their future. For you will groan in untimely mourning, and will know of their sudden end.

4 For one can be better than a thousand; rather die childless than have godless children!

5 Many such things has my eye seen, even among those who has my ear heard.

6 Against a sinful band fire is enkindled, among a godless people wrath flames out.

7 He did not forgive the leaders of old, who rebelled long ago in their might;

8 he did not spare the sojourners around Lot the ones who were being abominable in their pride;

9 nor did he spare the doomed people who were uprooted because of their sin;

10 All these things he did to the hard-hearted nations, and he was not appeased by the multitude of his holy ones.

11 nor the 600,000 foot soldiers who perished for the impiety of their hearts.

12 Chastising, sparing, striking, healing, the Lord pursued in mercy and discipline.

13 And if there had been but one stiff-necked man, it would have been a wonder he had gone unpunished.

For mercy and anger alike are with him who remits and forgives, though his wrath alights upon the wicked.

12 Great as his mercy is his punishment;

he judges men, each according to his deeds.

13 A criminal does not escape with his plunder; God does not leave a pious man’s hope unfulfilled.

14 Whoever does good has his reward, which each receives according to his deeds.

15 The Lord hardened Pharaoh so that he did not recognize him, in order that his works might be known under the heavens.

16 His mercy is manifest to the whole of creation, and he divided his light and darkness with a plumb line.

17 Do not say: “I am hidden from God; in heaven who remembers me?

Among so many people I cannot be known; what is my soul in the world of spirits of all the sons of the human?”

18 Behold, the heavens, the heavens of the heavens, the earth and the abyss tremble at his visitation; the whole world past and present is in his will.

19 the roots of the mountains, the earth’s foundations, at his mere glance, quiver and quake.

20 Therefore, of me, he will take no thought; who will concern himself with my ways?

21 If I sin, no eye will see me; if all in secret I am disloyal, who is to know?

22 Who tells him about righteous deeds and who will await them? For the decree is far off, and a scrutiny for all comes to an end.

23 Such is a heart of senseless men, and only a fellow who is foolish knave will think this.

24 Listen to me, my son, take my advice, apply your mind to my words, while I pour-out a weighed spirit, and impart accurate knowledge.

25 When at the first the Lord created his works and, as he made them, assigned their tasks,

26 he ordered for all time what they were to do and their domains from generation to generation.

They were not to hunger, nor grow weary, nor ever cease from their tasks.

28 Not one should ever crowd its neighbor, nor should they ever disobey his word.

29 Yahweh looked upon the earth, and filled it with his blessings.

30 Its face he covered with the soul of every living-creature, and they must return into it again.

CHAPTER 17

1 From the earth Yahweh created man, and made him in his own image.

2 He gives him limited days of life and makes him return to earth again.

3 He endows man with a strength of his own, and with power over all things else on earth.

4 He put the fear of him over all flesh,

and for him to be dominating beasts and flying-creatures.

5 They received the use of the five faculties of the Lord, as sixth he distributed to them the gift of mind, and as seventh, reason, the interpreter of one’s faculties.

6 He forms men’s tongues and eyes and ears, and imparts to them an understanding heart.

15 [15:15] Heb(A) / LXX “for you ought not do”

16 [15:16] Heb(A) / LXX “hates all abominations”

17 [15:14] Heb(A,B) / LXX “It was he, from the first”

18 [15:15] LXX / Heb(A) add

19 [15:16] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr “keep the commandments”

20 [15:15] Heb(D) / Heb(A,B) “understanding”

21 [15:15] Heb(A,B) / Heb(B) “God’s”

22 [15:15] LXX / Heb(A,B) add / Syr add and also omit “it is loyalty to do his will”

23 [15:20] Heb “/ give a relaxing to no-one to be sinning”

24 [16:1] Heb / LXX “unprofitable”

25 [16:3] Heb / LXX “I show it to you”

26 [16:3-16] LXX(II) add / Lat / Heb(A,B), LXX(II), Syr add

27 [16:17] LXX, Saadia / Heb(A), Syr add

28 [16:18] LXX(B) add

29 [16:21] Heb, Syr / LXX (uncertain) “Like a tempest that no one can see, so most of his works are concealed.”

30 [16:22] LXX(B) add

31 [16:24] Heb(A), Syr omit “my son”


33 [16:26] LXX / Heb(A) “words, I will pour out by measure the spirit that I have, and impart knowledge in a careful way”

34 [16:27] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “first God”

35 [16:26] Heb(A) / LXX “judged”

36 [16:26] Syr / LXX “alloments”

37 [17:2] Lat / LXX “it”

38 [17:3] Lat “strength proper to them”

39 [17:4] most LXX, Syr “Syr [them] instead of “him” / some LXX “He puts his eye on their hearts”

40 [17:4] LXX(B) add
With wisdom and knowledge he fills them;
and good and evil he shows to them.
He sets his eye upon their hearts,
and shows his glorious works to them,
and gave them to boast of his marvels throughout the ages.  
that they may describe the wonders of his deeds
and praise his holy name.
He has set before them knowledge,
so that they may know that they are alive and now mortal.
He has made an everlasting covenant with them,
he has revealed his commandments to them.
Their eyes beheld his majestic glory,
their ears heard his glorious voice.
He says to them, “Avoid all evil”;
each of them he gives precepts about his fellow men.
Their ways are ever known to him,
they cannot be hidden from his eyes.
Their ways are directed toward evil from their youth,
and they are unable to make their hearts fleshly
in place of their stony hearts.
For in the division of the nations of the whole earth,
over every nation he places a ruler,
but Israel is Yahweh’s own portion.
Whom, being his firstborn, he cares for with chastisement,
and allotting him the light of his love, he does not neglect him.
All their actions are clear as the sun to him,
his eyes are ever upon their ways.
Their wickedness cannot be hidden from him;
all of their sins are before Yahweh.
But the Lord, who is good and knowing how they are formed,
has neither neglected them nor abandoned them, but has spared them.
The Lord cherishes a man’s almsgiving like a signet ring,
a man’s virtue, like the apple of his eye,
apportioning a change-of-mind to his sons and daughters.
Later he will rise up and repay them,
and require each one of them as they deserve.
But to the one who changes his mind, he provides a way back,
he encourages those who are losing hope!
Return to Yahweh and give up sin,
pray to him and make your offenses few.
Turn again to the Most High and away from sin,
hate intensely what he loathes;
for he will lead out of darkness into the light of life.
Who in the Netherworld can glorify the Most High
in place of the living who offer their praise?
No more can the dead give praise than those who have never lived;
those who are alive and well are the ones who glorify Yahweh.
How great the mercy of Yahweh,
his forgiveness of those who return to him!
The like cannot be found in men,
for none of the sons of men are immortal.
Is anything brighter than the sun? Yet it can be eclipsed.
How obscure then the thoughts of flesh and blood!
God watches over the hosts of highest heaven,
while all men are dust and ashes.

CHAPTER 18
1 The Eternal is the judge of all things without exception;
Yahweh alone is righteous,
and there is no other beside him.
3 He steers the world with the span of his hand,
and all things obey his will;
for he is king of all things by his power,
separating among them the holy things from the profane.
Whom has he made equal to describing his works,
and who can probe his mighty deeds?
Who can measure his majestic power,
or exhaust the tale of his mercies?
One cannot lessen, nor increase,
nor penetrate the wonders of Yahweh.
When a man ends he is only beginning,
and when he stops he is still bewildered.
What is man, of what worth is he?
the good, the evil in him, what are these?
The sum of a man’s days is great
if it reaches a hundred years:
but the death of each one is beyond the calculation of all.
Like a drop of sea water, like a grain of sand,
so are these few years among the days of eternity.
That is why Yahweh is patient with men
and showers upon them his mercy.
He sees and understands that their death is grievous,
and so he forgives them all the more.
Man may be merciful to his fellow man,
but Yahweh’s mercy reaches all flesh,
reproving, admonishing, teaching,
as a shepherd guides his flock;
merciful to those who accept his guidance,
who are diligent in his precepts.
My son, add no reproach to your charity,
nor spoil any gift by harsh words.
Like dew that abates a burning wind, it will make you the sport of your enemies.
Sometimes the word means more than the gift;
both are offered by a kindly man.
Only a fool upbraids before giving;
a grudging gift wears out the expectant eyes.
Be informed before speaking:
before sickness prepare the cure.
Before you are judged, seek merit for yourself,
and at the time of visitation you will have a ransom.
Before you have fallen, humble yourself;
when you have sinned, show a change-of-mind.
Do not delay to forsake sins,
do not neglect it till you are in distress.
Do not set a time for abandoning sin;
remember that death will not delay.
Let nothing prevent the prompt payment of your vows;
do not wait to fulfill them when you are dying.
Before making a vow have the means to fulfill it;
do not be one who puts Yahweh to the test.
Think of wrath and a day of an end,
the time of vengeance when he will hide his face.
Remember the time of hunger in the time of plenty,
poverty and want in the day of wealth.
Between morning and evening the weather changes;
before Yahweh all things are fleeting.
A wise man is circumspect in all things;
when sin is rife he keeps himself from wrongdoing.
Any learned man should make wisdom known,
and he who attains to her should decide her praise;
those trained in her words must show their wisdom,
dispensing sound proverbs like life-giving waters.
Better is confidence in the one Lord,
than clinging with a dead heart to a dead idol.
Do not go after your lusts,
but keep your desires in check.
If-at-any-time you might supply your soul with good-pleasures of desire,
 it will make you the sport of your enemies.
Have no joy in the pleasures of a moment
which bring on poverty redoubled.
Do not become someone who is a glutton and imbibing.
and with nothing in your purse, 
for you will be plotting against your own life.  

19.1 He who does this shall not become-rich; 
and he who wastes the little he has will be stripped bare. 
2 Wine and women make the heart reckless, 
and the companion of prostitutes becomes a reckless soul. 
3 He who lightly trusts in them has no sense, 
and he who strays after them sins against his own life. 
4 Rottenness and worms will possess him, 
for contumacious desire destroys its owner.

CHAPTER 19
5 He who gloats in wickedness will be condemned, 
but one who resists pleasure has his life. 
6 He who controls his tongue will live without strife, 
and he who repeats an evil report has no sense. 
7 Never repeat gossip, 
and you will not be reviled. 
8 Do not tell anything accusing to friend or foe; 
unless withholding it would be sinful, do not reveal it. 
9 For he who hears it will hold it against you, 
and in time become your enemy. 
10 Let anything you hear die within you; 
be assured it will not make you burst. 
11 When a fool hears something, he is in labor, 
like a woman giving birth to a child. 
12 Like an arrow lodged in a man's thigh 
is gossip in the breast of a fool.

13 Admonish your friend—he may not have done it; 
and if he did, that he may not do it again. 
14 Admonish your neighbor—he may not have said it; 
and if he did, that he may not say it again. 
15 Admonish your friend—often it may be slander; 
every story you must not believe. 
16 Then, too, a man can slip and not have it come from his soul; 
who has not sinned with his tongue? 
17 Admonish your neighbor before you break with him; 
and let the law of the Most High take its course and do not be angry.

18 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance, 
and wisdom from him obtains love. 
19 Knowledge of the Lord's commandments is life-giving instruction; 
those who do what is pleasing to him will harvest the fruit of the tree of immortality.
20 All wisdom is fear of Yahweh; 
perfect wisdom is the fulfillment of the law, 
and the awareness of his omnipotence.
21 The slave who says to his master, “What pleases you I will not do,” 
even if afterward he does it, provokes the one who supports him. 
22 The knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom, 
nor is there prudence in the counsel of sinners.
23 There is a shrewdness that is detestable, 
while the simple man may be free from sin. 
24 There are those with little understanding who fear God, 
and those of great intelligence who violate the law. 
25 There is a shrewdness keen but dishonest, 
and there is one who by duplicity wins a judgment, 
and there is the wise who judges justly.
26 There is the wicked man who is bowed in grief, 
but is full of guile within;

1 [18:33] Heb / LXX “Do not be a destitute man, making-engagements four out of loathing” 
2 [18:33] LXX(II) add 
4 [19:2] Heb(C) omit “and the companion of prostitutes becomes a reckless soul” 
5 [19:4] LXX, Syr omit “in them” 
6 [19:4] two LXX(II) “and the incompetent man” 
7 [19:4] Syr “sense. // The one who condemns himself, who will acquit?” 
8 [19:5] Heb(C) omit “rottenness and worms will possess him” / Syr omit “Rottenness and worms...its owner” 
9 [19:5] LXX “heart” 
10 [19:5-6] LXX(II), ClemAlex add 
12 [19:8] LXX / Syr, Lat “; if you have a fault” 
13 [19:17] some add 
14 [19:16-19] LXX(II) add 
15 [19:20] LXX(II) add 
16 [19:23] Syr / LXX “be lacking in wisdom” 
17 [19:25] LXX(II) add

18 [20:6] LXX(II) add 
20 [20:13] Heb(C) / LXX omit “a few” 
21 [20:14] LXX(II) add 
22 [20:14] Syr, Lat / LXX “for he has many eyes instead of one” 
23 [20:15] LXX / others add 
24 [20:17] LXX(II) add 
25 [20:19] LXX / Syr omit “the unruly are always ready to offer it” 
26 [20:22] others “because of his foolish posturing”
yet both will suffer disgrace;
26 a liar’s way leads to dishonor,
his shame remains ever with him.

27 A wise man advances himself by his words,
a prudent man pleases the great.
28 He who works his land has abundant crops,
he who pleases the great is pardoned his faults.
29 Favors and gifts blind the eyes of the wise, like a muzzle over the mouth they silence reproof.
30 Hidden wisdom and unseen treasure—
of what value is either?
31 Better the man who hides his folly
than the one who hides his wisdom.
32 Unwearyed endurance in seeking the Lord,
is better than a masterless charioteer of one’s own life.2

CHAPTER 21

1 My son, if you have sinned, do so no more,
and pray to be forgiven for your past sins.
2 Flee from sin as from a serpent
that will bite you if you go near it;
its teeth are lion’s teeth,
destroying the souls of humans.
3 Every offense is a two-edged sword;
when it cuts, there can be no healing.
4 Violence and arrogance wipe out wealth;
so too a proud man’s home is destroyed.3
5 Prayer from a poor man’s lips is heard at once,
and justice is quickly granted him.
6 He who hates correction walks the sinner’s path,
but he who fears Yahweh turns back in his heart.
7 Widely known is the boastful speaker
but the wise man knows his own faults.
8 He who builds his house with another’s money
is collecting stones for his burial mound.4
9 A band of criminals is like a bundle of tow;
they will end in a flaming fire.
10 The path of sinners is smooth stones
that end in the depths of the Netherworld.
11 He who keeps the law controls his impulses;
he who is perfect in fear of Yahweh has wisdom.
12 He who is not shrewd can never be taught,
but one form of shrewdness is thoroughly bitter.

13 A wise man’s knowledge wells up in a flood,
and his counsel, like a living spring;
A fool’s mind is like a broken cistern—
no knowledge at all can it hold.
15 When an intelligent man hears words of wisdom,
he approves them and adds to them;
when the wanton hears them, he dislikes them,
and casts them behind his back.
16 A fool’s chatter is like a load on a journey,
but there is charm to be found upon the lips of the wise.
17 The views of a prudent man are sought in an assembly,
and his words are considered with care.
18 Like a house in ruins is wisdom to a fool;
the stupid man knows it only as incomprehensible chatter.

19 Like fetters on the legs is learning to a fool,
like a manacle on his right hand.
20 A fool raises his voice in laughter,
but the prudent man at the most smiles gently.
21 Like a chain5 of gold is learning to a wise man,
like a bracelet on his right arm.
22 The fool steps boldly into a house,
while the well-bred man remains outside.
23 A boor peeps boldly into a house,
but a tactful man keeps his glance cast down.
24 It is rude for one to listen at a door;
a cultured man would be overwhelmed by the disgrace of it.
25 The lips of the impious speak of what is not their concern,15
but the words of the prudent are carefully weighed.
26 Fools’ thoughts are in their mouths,
wise men’s words are in16 their hearts.
27 An impious man, in the act to be cursing his adversary,
is cursing his own soul.
28 The whispering man is defiling his own soul,
and he will be hated in the neighborhood.

CHAPTER 22

1 The sluggard is like a stone in the mud;
everyone hisses at his disgrace.15
2 The sluggard is like a lump of dung;
whoever touches him wipes his hands.
3 An unruly child is a disgrace to its father;
if it be a daughter, she brings him to poverty.
4 A thoughtful daughter becomes a treasure to her husband,
A shameless one is her father’s grief.16
5 A hussy shames her father and her husband;
by both she is despised.
6 Like a song in time of mourning is inopportune talk,
but lashes and discipline are at all times wisdom.
7 Children who are brought up in a good life,
will inherit the kingdom of heaven;
children who are brought up in a bad life,
will inherit the kingdom of the Netherworld.
8 A thoughtful daughter is a crown to her father;
intelligent men do not despise her.
9 A prudent daughter is a joy to her father;
and he who is perfect in fear of Yahweh has wisdom.
10 A prudent daughter is like a bracelet on his right arm.
11 A prudent daughter is like a pearl in a necklace;
A prudent daughter is like a jewel in a crown.
12 A prudent daughter is more desirable than rubies;
the heart of a prudent daughter is more desirable than pearls.
13 A prudent daughter is like a band of gold
put on the neck of a princess.
14 A prudent daughter has grace and beauty;
her reputation is more desirable than precious stones.
15 A prudent daughter is better than silver
and gold;
her virtue is more desirable than rubies.
16 A prudent daughter is like the gem
in the crown of a king.
17 A prudent daughter is like a apple
that is easy to eat and pleasant to the taste.

18 Like a chain of gold is learning to a wise man,
like a bracelet on his right arm.
21 The fool steps boldly into a house,
while the well-bred man remains outside.
22 A boor peeps boldly into a house,
but a tactful man keeps his glance cast down.
23 It is rude for one to listen at a door;
a cultured man would be overwhelmed by the disgrace of it.
25 The lips of the impious speak of what is not their concern,
but the words of the prudent are carefully weighed.
26 Fools’ thoughts are in their mouths,
wise men’s words are in their hearts.
27 An impious man, in the act to be cursing his adversary,
is cursing his own soul.
28 The whispering man is defiling his own soul,
and he will be hated in the neighborhood.
18 Pebbles set on an open height will not remain when the wind blows; neither can a timid resolve based on foolish plans withstand fear of any kind. 

19 One who pokes the eye brings tears; he who pierces the heart bares its feelings. 

20 He, throwing stones at flying-creatures, is scaring them away, and the one who is reproaching a friend will dissipate a friendship. 

21 If-at-any-time you might draw a sword against a friend, do not despair, it can be undone. 

22 If-at-any-time you might speak sharply to a friend, do not fear, you can be reconciled. But a contemptuous insult, a confidence broken, or a treacherous attack will drive away any friend. 

23 Make fast friends with a man while he is poor; thus will you enjoy his prosperity with him; for there should never be any despising of a man’s appearance or admiration of a rich man who is stupid, in time of trouble remain true to him, so as to share in his inheritance when it comes. 

24 Before flames burst forth an oven smokes; so does abuse come before bloodshed. 

25 From a friend in need of support, no one need hide in shame; but from him who brings harm to his friend, all who hear of it will stand aloof from him. 

CHAPTER 23 

27 Who will set a guard over my mouth, and upon my lips an effective seal, that I may not fail through them, that my tongue may not destroy me? 

28 Yahweh, Father and Master of my life, permit me to not fall by them! 

2 Who will apply the lash to my thoughts, the rod of discipline to my mind, that my failings may not be spared, nor the sins of their heart overlooked; 

3 lest my failings increase, and my sins be multiplied; lest I succumb to my opponents, and my enemy rejoice over me; For these things, the hope of your mercy is remote. 

4 Yahweh, Father and God of my life, do not abandon me into their control! 

5 Do not allow me a brazen look; always remove vain hopes from your servant, ward off passion from my heart, and always sustain him who wishes to serve you. 

6 Do not let the lustful cravings of the flesh master me, do not surrender me to a shameless soul. 

7 Give heed, my children, to the instruction that I pronounce, for he who keeps it will not be enslaved. 

8 Through his own lips is the sinner ensnared; the raider and the arrogant man fall by them. 

9 Do not let your mouth form the habit of swearing, or becoming too familiar with the holy name. 

10 Just as a slave who is constantly under scrutiny will not remain cleansed from sin. 

11 A man who swears often heaps up obligations; the scourge will never be far from his house. If he swears in error, he incurs guilt; if he neglects his obligation, his sin is doubly great. If he swears without reason he cannot be found righteous, and all his house will suffer affliction. 

12 There are words which merit death; may they never be heard among Jacob’s heirs. For all such words are foreign to the devout, who do not wallow in sin. 

13 Do not let your mouth become used to coarse talk, for in it lies sinful matter. 

14 Keep your father and mother in mind when you sit among the mighty, lest in their presence you commit a blunder and disgrace your upbringing, by wishing you had never been born or cursing the day of your birth. 

15 A man who has the habit of abusive language will never mature in character as long as he lives. 

16 Two types of men multiply sins, a third draws down wrath; for a warm soul is as a burning fire, never being extinguished until it burns itself out: the man given to sins of the flesh, who never stops until the fire breaks forth; the rake to whom all bread is sweet and who is never through until he dies. 

18 And a human who dishonors his marriage bed, saying in his soul, “Who can see me? Darkness surrounds me, walls hide me; no one sees me; why should I fear sin?” He is not mindful of the Most High, fearing only the eyes of men. He does not understand that the eyes of Yahweh, ten thousand times brighter than the sun, observe every step a man takes and peer into hidden corners. 

20 The One who knows all things before they exist still knows them all after they are made. 

21 Such a man will be punished in the streets of the city; when he least expects it, he will be apprehended. 

22 So also with a woman who leaves her man and offers as heir her son by a stranger. 

23 First, she has disobeyed the law of the Most High. Secondly, she has wronged her husband. Thirdly, in her wanton adultery she has borne children by another man. 

24 Such a woman will be dragged before the assembly, and her punishment will extend to her children. 

25 Her children will not take root; her branches will not bring forth fruit. 

26 She will leave an accursed memory; her disgrace will never be blotted out. 

27 Thus all who dwell on the earth will know, and all who inhabit the world will understand, that nothing is better than the fear of Yahweh, nothing more salutary than to obey his commandments. It is a great glory to follow after God, and for you to be received by him is length of days. 

CHAPTER 24 

1 Wisdom will praise her own soul, before her own people she proclaims her glory; in the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth, in the presence of his hosts she declares her worth: 

[1] [22:18] LXX / others “Fences” 
[2] [22:23] some LXX add 
[4] [23:1] LXX(II), Lat add “do not abandon me into their control” before “permit me to not fall by them!” 
[5] [23:1b] LXX / Syr “the instruction of the mouth” / most LXX, Lat “the instruction of my mouth” 
[6] [23:2] LXX(II), Clement of Alexandria add and read “always remove...servant, and turn aside improper desires from me, and always...serve you.” 
[7] [23:7] one LXX, Syr (lit, “the instruction of my mouth”) / most LXX, Lat “the instruction of the mouth” 
[8] [23:10] LXX / Syr “free” 

[9] [23:11] Syr / LXX “if he offends” 
[10] [23:12] LXX / others “words clothed about with death” 
[12] [23:18] Syr / LXX “The Most High will not be mindful of my sin.” 
[13] [23:18–19] Syr omit “He is not mindful of the Most High, fearing only the eyes of men” 
[14] [23:22] LXX / Syr “who sins against” 
[15] literally “the” 
[16] [23:27] LXX(I), Lat add [two LXX(I), many Lat have “the Lord” instead of “God”]
“From the mouth of the Most High I came forth, 
and mist-like covered the earth.

In the highest heavens did I dwell, 
and my throne was in a pillar of a cloud.

The vault of heaven I compassed alone, 
and through a deep abyss I wandered.

In waves of the sea, and in all the earth, 
and over every people and nation I held sway. 1

Among all these I sought a resting place; 
and in whose inheritance should I abide?

“Then the Creator of all gave me his command, 
and he who formed me chose the spot for my tent, 
Saying, ‘In Jacob make your dwelling, in Israel your inheritance.’

Before all ages, in the beginning, he created me, 
and through all ages I will not cease to be.

I ministered before him in the holy tent, 
and I fixed my abode in Zion.

Thus he had given me rest in the chosen city, 
my domain is in Jerusalem.

I have struck root among the glorious people, 
in the portion of Yahweh, his 7 heritage.

"Like a cedar in Lebanon I am raised aloft, 
and like a cypress on Mount Hermon;
raised tall like a palm tree in En-gedi, 3 
and like a rosebush in Jericho, 
and like a fair olive tree in a plain; 
and raised tall like a plane tree growing beside the water. 4

Like cinnamon, or fragrant balm I give forth a perfume, 5 
or precious myrrh, I give forth perfume; 
like galbanum and onycha and sweet spices, 
like the odor of incense in the holy place.

“I spread out my branches like a terebinth, 
my branches so bright and so graceful.

I bud forth delights like the vine, 
my blossoms become fruit fair and rich.

I am the mother of beautiful love, of fear, 
of knowledge, and of holy hope; 6
Being eternal, I am given to all my children, 
to those who are named by him. 6
In me is every gift of life and truth, 
in me all is hope of life and of virtue. 7

Come to me, all you who yearn for me, 
and be filled with my fruits;
you will remember me as sweeter than honey, 
better to have than the honeycomb.

He who eats of me will hunger still, 
who drinks of me will thirst for more; 
he who obeys me will not be put to shame, 
he who serves me will never fail.”

All this is true of the book of the Most High’s covenant, 
the law which Moses commanded us 
as an inheritance for the community of Jacob.

“Do not grow weary of striving with the Lord’s help, 
but cling to him so that he may reinforce you; 
the Lord Almighty alone is God, 
and apart from him there is no savior. 8

It overflows, like the Fishon, with wisdom— 
like the Hiddelketh in the days of the new fruits.
It runs over, like the Euphrates, 
like galbanum and onycha and sweet spices, 
like the odor of incense in the holy place.

It sparksles, like the Nile, with knowledge. 11

28 The first man never finished comprehending wisdom, 
and will the last succeed in fathoming her.

29 For deeper than the sea are her thoughts;  
her counsels, than the great abyss.

30 Now I, like a rivulet from her stream, 
channeling the waters into a garden,
31 said to myself, “I will given-drink to my plants, 
and I will make my garden plot intoxicated”; 12
and suddenly this rivulet of mine became a river, 
then this stream of mine, a sea.

32 Thus do I pour out my instruction like prophecy 
and bestow it upon generations to come.

CHAPTER 25
1 With three things I am delighted, 
for they are beautiful to God and to men: 13
harmony among brothers, friendship among neighbors, 
and the mutual love of a woman and a man.

2 Three kinds of men my soul hates; 
their manner of life I loathe indeed: 
a proud pauper, a rich dissembler, 
and an old man lecherous in his dotage.

3 What you have not saved in your youth, 
how will you acquire in your old age?

4 How becoming to the gray-haired is judgment, 
and a knowledge of counsel to those on in years!

5 How becoming to the aged is wisdom, 
understanding and prudence to the venerable!

6 The crown of old men is wide experience; 
their glory, the fear of Yahweh.

7 There are nine who come to my mind as blessed, 
a tenth whom my tongue proclaims: 
the man who finds joy in his children, 
and he who lives to see his enemies’ downfall.

8 Happy is a master who dwells with a sensible woman, 
and he who does not plow a donkey yoked with an ox. 14
Happy is he who does not sin with his tongue, 
and he who does not serve his inferior.

9 Happy is he who finds a friend, 15 
and he who speaks to attentive ears.

10 He who finds wisdom is great indeed, 
but not greater than he who fears Yahweh.

11 Fear of Yahweh surpasses all else, 
its possessor is beyond compare.

12 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of loving him, 
and fidelity is the beginning of clinging to him. 16

13 Worst of all wounds is that of the heart, 
worst of all evils is that of a woman.

14 Worst of all sufferings is that from one’s foes, 
worst of all vengeance is that of one’s enemies: 
No poison 17 worse than a serpent’s poison, 
no venom greater than a woman’s 19 venom.

16 With a dragon or a lion I would rather dwell 
than live with a wicked woman.

17 Wickedness changes a woman’s looks, 20 
and makes her sullen as a female bear. 21

18 When her master sits 22 among his neighbors, 
a bitter sigh escapes him unawares. 23
CHAPTER 26

1 Happy is a master of a good woman,
and twice-lengthened are his days.
2 A worthy woman brings joy to her master,
peaceful and full is his life.
3 A good woman is a good portion,
which will be given to him who fears Yahweh;
4 be he rich or poor, his heart is content,
and a smile is ever on his face.

5 There are three things at which my heart quakes,
a fourth before which I quail:
Though slanderers in public, trial before all the people,
and lying testimony are harder to bear than death,
6 a woman jealous against another woman is pain of heart and mourning,
and a whim of a tongue like the other three.

7 A wicked woman is a chafing yoke;
the man who grasps her seizes a scorpion.
8 A woman addicted-to-intoxication arouses great anger,
and she will not completely-cover her indecency.
9 In her lifting-up of the eyes and in her eyelids,
sexual-immorality of a woman will be known.

10 Keep a strict watch over an unruly wife,6
lest, finding an opportunity, she makes use of it;
11 follow close if her eyes are bold,
and be not surprised if she betrays you:
12 as a thirsty traveler with eager mouth,
drinks from any water that he finds,
so she settles down before every tent peg,
and opens her quiver for every arrow.

13 The grace of a woman will delight her man,
her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones.
14 A silent woman is a gift of Yahweh,
and there is not a better exchange than a soul having been disciplined.
15 A shamefaced and faithful7 woman is the choicest of blessings,
her self-restrained soul is priceless.
16 Like the sun rising in Yahweh’s heavens,
the beauty of a good woman is the radiance of her home.
17 Like the light which shines above the holy lampstand,
are her beauty of face and graceful figure.
18 Golden pillars on silver bases
are her shapely limbs and steady feet.7

19 My son, keep intact in the prime of your life,
by not surrendering your strength to strangers;
20 single out from the land a fertile field.

21 so will you have your offspring around you,
and they will grow up in confidence.
22 A prostitute is thought of as spittle.
23 An inopportune woman is a tower of death to those who embrace her.
24 A shameless hussy wears out reproach,
and every man who answers that challenge
will spend his life amid the turbulence of war.8

25 You may not give an outlet to water,
nor outspokenness to a wicked woman.
26 If she walks not by your side,
cut her away from you with a bill of divorce.4

CHAPTER 27

29 A merchant can hardly remain upright,
nor a shopkeeper free from sin;
27.1 many have committed sin for profit.9
2 Like a peg driven between fitted stones,
between buying and selling sin is wedged in.
3 Unless you earnestly hold fast to the fear of Yahweh,
suddenly your house will be thrown down.

4 When a sieve is shaken, the husks appear;
so do a man’s faults when he speaks.
5 As the test of what the potter molds is in the furnace,
so in his conversation is the test of a man.
6 The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had;
so too does a man’s speech disclose the bent of his mind.
7 Praise no man before he speaks,
for it is then that men are tested.
8 If you strive after righteousness you will attain it,
and put it on like a splendid robe.
9 Flying-creatures will nest with the ones like them,
and truth will revisit with the ones who are working it.
10 As a lion crouches in wait for prey,
so do sins for evildoers.
11 Ever wise are the discourses of the pious,
but the godless man, like the moon, is inconsistent.
12 Limit the time you spend among fools,
but frequent the company of thoughtful men.
13 The conversation of fools is offensive,
their laughter is wanton guilt.
14 Their oath-filled talk makes the hair stand on end,
their brows make one stop one’s ears.
15 Wrangling among the haughty ends in bloodshed,
their cursing is painful to hear.

16 He who betrays a secret cannot be trusted,
he may never find a friend close to his soul.
17 Cherish your friend, keep faith with him;
but if you betray his confidence, do not follow him;

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1 [25:21] Heb / Syr / LXX “‘and may you not yearn after a woman”
2 [25:22] LXX(II), Syr, Clement of Alexandria add “Complaint…slight flush.”
3 [25:26] LXX(II), Syr, Clement of Alexandria add “...in the mouth.”
4 [26:10] Syr / LXX “daughter”
5 [26:15] one LXX “A modest and faithful” / Lat “A holy and modest”
6 [26:18] Syr, Lat / mast LXX “bust”
7 [26:26] Syr add “Complaint…slight flush.”
8 [26:26] Syr add “Complaint…slight flush.”
9 [26:18-27] LXX(II), Syr, Clement of Alexandria add “A warrior”
10 [27:1] LXX / others “for a trifle”
11 [27:13] LXX, Syr / Lat “sinners”
18 for as an enemy might kill a man, 
you have killed your neighbor’s friendship.
19 And like a flying creature released out of your hand, 
you have let your friend go and you will not recapture him;
20 do not follow him, for he is far away,
he has fled like a gazelle from the trap.
21 A wound can be bound up, and an insult forgiven,
but he who betrays secrets does hopeless damage.
22 He who has shifty eyes plots mischief,
and no one can ward him off. ¹
23 In your presence he uses honeyed talk,
and admires your every word,
but later he changes his tone
and twists your words to your ruin.
24 There is nothing that I hate so much,
and Yahweh hates him as well. ²
25 As a stone falls back on him who throws it up,
so a blow struck in treachery injures more than one. ³
26 As he who digs a pit falls into it,
and he who lays a snare is caught in it,
whoever does harm will be involved in it
without knowing how it came upon him.
28 Mockery and abuse will be the lot of the proud,
and vengeance lies in wait for them like a lion.
29 The trap seizes those who rejoice in pitfalls,⁴
and pain will consume them before they die.
30 Wrath and anger are hateful things,
yet the sinner hags them tight.
2.1 The vengeful will suffer Yahweh’s vengeance,
for he keeps a strict account of their sins.

CHAPTER 28

2 Forgive your neighbor’s injustice; unknown
3 then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.
3 Should a man nourish anger against his fellows
and expect healing from Yahweh? 
4 Should a man refuse mercy to his fellows,
yet seek pardon for his own sins? 
5 If he who is but flesh cherishes wrath,
who will forgive his sins? 
6 Remember your last days, set enmity aside;
remember death and decay, and cease from sin!⁵
7 Think of the commandments, do not hate your neighbor;
of the Most High’s covenant, and overlook faults.
8 Avoid strife and your sins will be fewer,
for a quarrelsome kindles disputes,
9 commits the sin of disrupting friendship
and sows discord among those at peace.
10 The more wood, the greater the fire,
more underly ing it, the more strife will increase; ⁶
the greater a man’s strength, the sterner his anger,
the greater his power, the greater his wrath.
11 Pitch and resin make fires flare up,
and insistent quarrels provoke bloodshed.
12 If you blow upon a spark, it quickens into flame,
if you spit on it, it dies out;
both you do with your mouth!
13 Cursed be gossips and the double-tongued,
for they destroy the peace of many.
14 A meddlesome tongue subverts many,
and makes them refugees among the peoples;
it destroys walled cities,
and overthrows powerful dynasties.
15 A meddlesome tongue can drive virtuous⁷ women from their homes
and rob them of the fruit of their toil;
16 whoever heeds it has no rest,
nor can he dwell in peace.
17 A blow from a whip raises a welt,
but a blow from the tongue smashes bones;
18 many have fallen by the edge of the sword,
but not as many as by the tongue.
19 Happy he who is sheltered from it,
and has not endured its wrath;
who has not borne its yoke
nor been fettered with its chain;
for its yoke is a yoke of iron
and its chains are chains of bronze!
21 Dire is the death it inflicts,
because when it is had that
the Netherworld is a gift;
22 it will not take hold among the pious
nor scorch them in its flame,
23 but those who forsake Yahweh will fall victims to it,
as it burns among them unquenchably!
It will hurl itself against them like a lion;
like a panther, it will tear them to pieces.
24 As you hedge round your vineyard with thorns,
set barred doors over your mouth;⁹
25 as you seal up your silver and gold,
so balance and weigh your words.
26 Take care not to slip by your tongue
and fall victim to your foe waiting in ambush
and your case will become incurable, leading to death. ¹⁰

CHAPTER 29

1 He who lends to his neighbor does a kindness,
and he who holds out a helping hand fulfills the precepts.
2 Lend to your neighbor in his hour of need,
and pay back your neighbor when a loan falls due;
3 keep your promise, be honest with him,
and you will always come by what you need.
4 Many a man who asks for a loan¹¹ adds to the burdens of those who help him;
5 when he borrows, he kisses the lender’s hand
and speaks with respect of his creditor’s wealth;
but when payment is due he disappoints him
and says he is helpless to meet the claim.
6 If the lender is able to recover barely half,
he considers this an achievement;
if not, he is cheated of his wealth
and acquires an enemy at no extra charge;
with curses and insults the borrower pays him back,
with abuse instead of honor.
7 Therefore, many refuse to lend, not out of meanness,
but from fear¹² of being cheated.
8 To a poor man, however, be generous;
do not keep him waiting for your alms;
because of the precept, help the needy,
and in their want, do not send them away empty-handed.¹³
10 Spend your money for your brother and friend,
and do not hide it under a stone to perish;
dispose of your treasure as the Most High commands,
for that will profit you more than the gold.
12 Store up almsgiving in your treasure house,
and it will save you from every evil;
better than a stout shield and a sturdy spear
it will fight for you against the foe.
14 A good man goes surety for his neighbor,
and only the shameless would play him false;
do not forget the kindness of your backer,
for he gave his soul in behalf of you.
16 The wicked turn a pledge on their behalf into misfortune,
and the ingrate abandons his protector;
17 who so ever heeds it has no rest,
nor can he dwell in peace.
17 A blow from a whip raises a welt,
but a blow from the tongue smashes bones;
18 many have fallen by the edge of the sword,
but not as many as by the tongue.
19 Happy he who is sheltered from it,
and has not endured its wrath;
who has not borne its yoke
nor been fettered with its chain;
for its yoke is a yoke of iron
and its chains are chains of bronze!
21 Dire is the death it inflicts,
because when it is had that
the Netherworld is a gift;
22 it will not take hold among the pious
nor scorch them in its flame,
23 but those who forsake Yahweh will fall victims to it,
as it burns among them unquenchably!
It will hurl itself against them like a lion;
like a panther, it will tear them to pieces.
24 As you hedge round your vineyard with thorns,
set barred doors over your mouth;⁹
25 as you seal up your silver and gold,
so balance and weigh your words.
26 Take care not to slip by your tongue
and fall victim to your foe waiting in ambush
and your case will become incurable, leading to death. ¹⁰

¹ [27:22] most LXX / LXX(ii) “", whoever knows him will give him a wide berth."
² [27:24] LXX / Syr “and God hates him and curses him”
³ [27:25] LXX / Syr “", and he who strikes in secret will be given over to destruction”
⁴ [27:29] Syr “Traps and snares seize those who delight in them”
⁵ [28:1] LXX / others “for he firmly establishes"
⁶ [28:6] Syr / LXX “and abide by the commandments!”
⁷ [28:10] LXX “burn”²
⁸ literally “manly”
⁹ [28:25] Vul “pieces. // And when they are hedged in when thorns, // lest they should receive words of envious detraction.”
¹⁰ [28:26] Lat add
¹¹ [28:4] Syr “Many a man consider a loan as a find”
¹² [28:7] others “lend, because of such meanness; they are afraid”
¹³ [29:9] LXX / Syr “and if there is a loss, do not bring it to mind”
CHAPTER 30

1 He who loves his son chastises him often, that he may be his joy when he grows up. 
2 He who disciplines his son will benefit from him, and boast of him among his intimates. 
3 He who educates his son makes his enemy jealous, and shows his delight in him among his friends. 
4 At the father’s death, he will not seem dead, since he leaves after him one like himself, whom he looks upon through life with joy, and even in the end, without regret; 
5 the avenger he leaves against his foes, and the one to repay his friends with kindness. 
6 He who spoils his son will have wounds to bandage, and will quake inwardly at every outcry. 
7 A colt untamed turns out stubborn; a son left to himself grows up unruly. 
8 Pamper your child and he will be a terror for you; 
9 Be it little or much, be content with what you have, and you will hear no reproach from your family. 
10 Disciple your son, make heavy his yoke, lest he become stubborn, disobey you, and leave you breathing out your soul. 
11 Avoid, stranger, for one more worthy; for my brother’s visit I need the room! 
12 Painful things to a sensitive man are abuse at home and insults from his creditors. 

CHAPTER 31

1 Keeping watch over riches wastes the flesh, and the care of wealth drives away rest. 
2 For one’s livelihood banishes slumber; and a serious illness carries off repose. 
3 A faithful comrade drives away reproach, and the friend who keeps secrets is as loved as a soul. 
4 The rich man labors to pile up wealth, and his only rest is wanton pleasure; 
5 the poor man toils for a meager subsistence, and even in the end, without regret; 
6 Many have been ensnared by gold, though destruction lay before their eyes; but their possessions were unable to deliver them from disaster, or to save them on the day of wrath. 
7 It is a stumbling block to those who are avid for it, a snare for every fool. 
8 Happy the rich man found without fault, who does not turn aside after gain! 
9 Who is he, that we may praise him? He, of all his kindred, has done wonders, and if ever he rests, he finds himself in want. 
10 He who pursues wealth is led astray by it. 
11 so that his possessions are secure because of this, and the assembly recounts his praises. 
12 Discipline […] bread and wine together […] If you are seated at the table of the great, do not bring a greedy gullet to his table, nor cry out, “How much food there is here!” 
13 Remember that gluttony is evil. No creature is greedier than the eye: therefore it weeps for any cause. 
14 Recognize that your neighbor feels as your soul does, and keep in mind your own dislikes: 
15 toward what he eyes, do not put out a hand;

[1] [34:20] LXX(I) / Heb add “like the eunuch…young-woman!” 
[2] [34:20] LXX(I) / Heb add “at a great table” 
[3] [34:20] Heb add “for my brother’s visit I need the room!” 
[4] [34:20] Heb add “like the eunuch,…young-woman!” 
[5] [34:20] Heb add “at a great table” 
[6] [34:20] Heb add “for my brother’s visit I need the room!” 
[7] [34:20] Heb add “like the eunuch…young-woman!” 
[8] [34:20] Heb add “at a great table” 
[9] [34:20] Heb add “for my brother’s visit I need the room!” 
[10] [34:20] Heb add “like the eunuch…young-woman!” 
[11] [34:20] Heb add “at a great table” 
[12] [34:20] Heb add “for my brother’s visit I need the room!” 

[1] [30:20] LXX(I), Lat, Syr, Heb(B) / LXXII(I) omit “like the eunuch…young-woman!” 
[2] [30:20] LXX(I) / Heb add “at a great table” 
[3] [30:20] Heb add “for my brother’s visit I need the room!” 
[6] [30:20] Heb add “for my brother’s visit I need the room!”
nor reach when he does for the same dish,1
16 Eat what is set before you like a well brought-up person,2 and do not be greedy, lest you be despised.
17 Be the first to stop, as befits good manners; do not gorge yourself, lest you give offense.
18 If there are many with you at table, do not be the first to reach out your hand.
19 Does not a little suffice for a well-bred mortal? When he lies down, it is without discomfort.
20 Distress and anguish and loss of sleep, and restless tossing for the glutton! Moderate eating ensures sound slumber and a clear soul next day on rising.
21 If perchance you have eaten too much, once you have emptied your stomach, you will have relief.
22 Listen to me, my son, and do not scorn me; later you will find my advice good. In whatever you do, be moderate,3 and no sickness will befall you.
23 On a man generous with food, blessings are invoked, and this testimony to his goodness is lasting.
24 he who is miserly with food is denounced in public, and this testimony to his stinginess is lasting.
25 And also do not gain-power for yourself on the wine, for new-wine4 has caused many to fall.
26 As a furnace examines the work of a smith,5 so does the wine in-regard-to the strife of scorners.
27 Who does not know that the wine is very life6 for a mortal, if he shall drink in moderation.
Who has life7 who lacks the wine which was created from the beginning for joy to humans?8
28 Leaping-for-joy of heart, and gladness of soul, is self-sufficient wine being drunk in the proper time.
29 Pain of the head, bitterness9 of soul, is much wine being drunk in irritation and conflict.
30 Increasing foaming-wine10 is a snare for a fool;11 it lessens his strength and multiplies his wounds.
31 Do not rebuke your neighbor in a drinking-party of the wine, and do not put him to shame while he is merry; use no harsh words with him and do not distress him in the presence of others.

CHAPTER 32
1 If you are chosen to preside at dinner, do not be puffed up, and take no prominent place among the rich,12 but with the guests be as one of themselves; take care of them first before you sit down;
2 when you have fulfilled your duty, then take your place, to share in their joy and win praise for your hospitality.
3 Being older, you may talk; that is only your right, but temper your wisdom, and may you not disturb the singing.
4 When the wine is present,13 do not pour out discourse. And why stop the music in order to pour out discourse?14 And why flaunt your wisdom at the wrong time?
5 Like a seal upon a purse
Like a jewel of carnelian in a setting of gold
is a right song at a drinking-party of the wine.
Like a necklace of gold set with garnets and sapphires, so are lovely and beautiful words at a drinking-party of the wine.15
6 Like a gold mounting with an emerald seal is string music with the delightfulness of new-wine.
7 Young man, speak only when necessary, when they have asked you more than once; be brief, but say much in those few words, be like the wise man, taciturn.
8 When among your elders do not be forward, and with officials do not be too insistent.
9 Like the lightning that flashes before a storm is the esteem that shines on modesty.17
10 When it is time to leave, do not tarry; be off for home!
11 There take your case, and there enjoy doing as you wish, but without sin or words of pride.
12 Above all, give praise to your Creator, who showers his favors upon you.20
13 He who seeks God11 must accept discipline; and those who rise early to seek him will find favor.
14 He who studies the law masters it, but the hypocrite finds it a trap.
15 He who fears Yahweh has sound judgment; out of his soul he draws forth a clear plan.
16 The sinner turns aside reproof and distorts the law to suit his purpose.
17 The thoughtful man will not neglect direction; the proud and insolent man is deterred by nothing.24
18 Do nothing without counsel, and then you need have no regrets.
19 Do not go on a way that is set with snares, and do not stumble on the same obstacle twice.25
20 Do not be overconfident even on smooth roads, and be careful on all your path.
21 Guard15 your soul in whatever you do, for in this way you will keep the commandments.24
22 He who keeps the law preserves his own soul, and he who trusts in Yahweh will not be put to shame.

Chapter 33
1 No evil can harm the man who fears Yahweh; through trials, again and again he is safe.
2 He who hates the law is without wisdom, and is tossed about like a boat in a storm.
3 The prudent man trusts in the word of Yahweh, and the law is dependable for him as a divine oracle.30
4 Prepare your words and you will be listened to; draw upon your training, and then give your answer.
5 Like the wheel of a cart is the mind of a fool; his thoughts revolve in circles.
6 A fickle friend is like the stallion that neighs, no matter who the rider.
7 Why is day one more important than another, when it is the sun that lights up every day? It is due to Yahweh’s wisdom that they differ; it is through him that the seasons and feasts come and go.
Some he dignifies and sanctifies, and others he lists as ordinary days.
10 So too, all men are of clay, for from earth Adam was formed; yet with his great knowledge Yahweh makes men unlike;
in different paths he has them walk.

12 Some he blesses 1 and makes great,
    some he sanctifies and draws to himself.
Others he curses and brings low,
    and expels them from their place.

13 Like clay in the hands of a potter,
    to be molded according to his pleasure,
    so are men in the hands of their Creator,
    to be assigned by him their function. 2

14 As evil contrasts with good, and death with life,
    so are sinners in contrast with the pious
    and darkness with the light; 3

15 see now all the works of the Most High:
    they come in pairs, the one the opposite of the other.

16 And I stayed-alert 4 last,
    as someone gleaning behind the vintage;
since in Yahweh’s blessing I proceeded;
    and as someone harvesting I filled a wine press,

18 I would inform you that I have not toiled only for myself,
    but for every seeker after wisdom.

19 Listen to me, O leaders of the multitude;
O rulers of the assembly, give ear!

20 Let neither son nor woman, brother nor friend,
    have power over you as long as you live.

21 While breath of life is still in you,
    let no man have dominion over you.
Do not give to another your wealth,
    lest then you have to plead with him; 6

22 far better that your children plead with you
    than that you should look to their generosity.

23 Keep control over all your affairs;
    let no one tamish your glory.

24 When your few days reach their limit,
    at a season of an end, distribute your inheritance.

25 Fodder and whip and loads for an ass;
    the yoke and harness and the rod of his master. 7

26 Food, correction and work for a slave;
    and for a wicked slave, punishment in the stocks.

27 Make a slave work and he will look for his rest;
    let his hands be idle and he will seek to be free.

28 Force him to work that he be not idle; 10
    for idleness is an apt teacher of mischief; 11

30 Put him to work, for that is what befits him; 12
    if he becomes unruly, load him with chains.
But never lord it over any human being,
    and do nothing unjust.

31 If you have but one slave, treat him like yourself,
    for you have acquired him with your life’s blood.

32 If you have but one slave, deal with him as a brother, 13
    for you need him as your own soul.

33 If you mistreat him and he runs away,
    in what direction will you look for him?

CHAPTER 34

1 Empty and false are the hopes of the senseless,
    and fools are borne aloft by dreams.

2 Like a man who grasps for shadows or chases the wind,
    is the one who puts trust 14 in dreams.

3 What is seen in dreams is to reality
    what the reflection of a face is to the face itself.

4 Can something unclean produce the clean?
    can the liar ever speak the truth?

5 Soothsayings, and auguries, and dreams all vain;
    what you already expect, the mind depicts.

6 Unless it be a vision specially sent by the Most High,
    do not fix your heart on it;
    for dreams have led many astray,
    and those who believed in them have perished.

8 The law is fulfilled without fail,
    and perfect wisdom is found in the mouth of the faithful man.

9 An educated man gains wide knowledge;
    a man of experience speaks sense.

10 One never put to the proof knows little,
    whereas with travel a man adds to his resourcefulness.

12 I have seen much in my travels,
    learned more than ever I could say.

13 Often I was in danger of death,
    but by these attainments I was saved.

14 A spirit of those who are filling themselves with fear of Yahweh will live
    for itself,
    for they put their hope on the One who is saving them;

16 he who fears Yahweh is never alarmed, never afraid;
    for Yahweh is his hope.

17 Happy the soul that fears Yahweh!

18 In whom does he trust, and who is his support?

19 The eyes of Yahweh are upon those who love him;
    he is their mighty shield and strong support,
a shelter from the heat, a shade from the noonday sun,
    a guard against stumbling, a help against falling.

20 He buoy the spirits, brings a sparkle to the eyes,
    gives health and life and blessings. 15

21 If one sacrifices ill-gotten goods, the offering is tainted. 16

22 The presents 17 from the lawless are not acceptable.

23 The Most High does not approve the gifts of the godless,
    nor for their many sacrifices does he forgive their sins.

24 Like the man who slays a son in his father’s presence
    is he who offers sacrifice from the possessions of the poor.

25 The bread of charity is life itself for the needy;
    he who withholds it is a man of blood.

26 He slays his neighbor who deprives him of his living;
    he sheds blood who denies the laborer his wages.

28 If one man builds up and another tears down,
    what do they gain but trouble?

29 If one man prays and another curses,
    whose voice will Yahweh hear?

30 If a man again touches a corpse after he has bathed,
    what did he gain by the purification?

31 So with a man who fasts for his sins,
    but then goes and commits them again:
    who will hear his prayer,
    and what has he gained by his mortification?

CHAPTER 35

1 To keep the law is a great obligation,
    and he who observes the commandments sacrifices a peace offering.

2 In works of charity one offers fine flour,
    and when he gives alms he presents his sacrifice of praise.

3 To refrain from evil pleases Yahweh,
    and to avoid unrighteousness is an atonement.

4 Do not appear before Yahweh empty-handed,
    for all that you offer is in fulfillment of the precepts.

5 The righteous man’s offering enriches the altar
    and rises as a sweet odor before the Most High.

6 The righteous man’s sacrifice is most pleasing,
    nor will it ever be forgotten.

7 In generous spirit pay homage to Yahweh,
    do not be sparing of freewill gifts.

8 With each contribution 1 show a cheerful countenance,

   1 [33:9] Heb(E), Syr / LXX “rewards”
   2 [33:13] Heb(E) / LXX “to be required according as he judges them” / Syr “to raise him up among all his works”
   3 [33:14] LXX / Heb(E) add / Syr also add, but omit “sinners in contrast with the pious”
   4 [33:19] Syr literally “become-without-slumber”
   5 [33:20] Heb(E) omit “over you”
   6 [33:20] Heb(H), Syr / LXX places “Do not give…with him” after “as long as you live.”
   7 [33:25] Heb(E) / LXX “barnes are a care for stubborness”
   8 [33:27] LXX“labor” / LXX“rich” / Heb E “Work at discipline and you will find rest”. / Heb(E), Syr “Make a slave work and give him no rest, that he may not seek rest”
   9 [33:27] LXX “labor”; “if you lift up his head, he will play you false”
   10 [33:28] LXX / Heb(E), Syr “that he rebel not”
   11 [33:28] LXX / Heb(E), Syr “idleness does much mischief”
   12 [33:30] LXX / Heb(E), Syr “As may suit him, give him authority in your house”
   13 [33:31] most LXX / some LXX “as yourself”
   14 [34:2] Syr / LXX “who pays heed to”
   15 1 [34:20] LXX / Syr “blessings”
   16 1 [34:21] LXX “others ‘is made in mockery’”
   17 1 [34:22] LXX “mockeries”
and pay your tithes in a spirit of joy.

9 Give to the Most High as he has given to you, generously, according to your means.

He who gives to the poor makes the Lord his debtor, and who is the source of recompenses if not he?

10 For God is one who always repays, and he will give back to you sevenfold.

11 But offer no bribes, these he does not accept!

Do not trust in sacrifice of the fruits of extortion, for he is a God of justice, who knows no favorites.

12 Though not unduly partial toward the weak, yet he hears the cry of the oppressed.

13 He is not deaf to the prophet of the orphan, nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint;

15 do not the tears that stream down her cheek cry out against him who causes them to fall?

16 He who serves God willingly is heard; his petition reaches the heavens.

17 The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds; it does not rest till it reaches its goal,

18 nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds, judges justly and affirms the right.

19 The Lord indeed will not delay, and like a warrior, will not be still

20 till he breaks the backs of the merciless and wreaks vengeance upon the proud;

21 till he destroys the haughty root and branch, and smashes the scepter of the wicked;

22 till he requires a mortal according to his deeds, and repays a human according to his thoughts;

23 till he defends the cause of his people, and gladdens them by his mercy.

24 Welcome is his mercy in time of distress as rain clouds in time of drought.

CHAPTER 36

1 Come to our aid, O Sovereign, God of the universe,

and put all the nations in dread of you!

3 Raise your hand against the heathen, that they may realize your power.

4 As you have used us to show your holiness to them, so now use them to show your glory to us.

5 Thus they will know we, as we know, that there is no God but you, O Lord.

6 Give new signs and work new wonders; show forth the splendor of your right hand and arm,

7 rouse your anger, pour out wrath, let the night overtakes him?

8 Hasten the day, and remember the appointed time;

9 when your mighty deeds are to be proclaimed.

10 Let raging fire consume the fugitive, and your people's oppressors meet destruction.

11 Gather all the tribes of Jacob, that they may inherit the land as of old,

12 show mercy, O Lord to the people called by your name;

Israel, whom you have named your firstborn.

13 Take pity on your holy city,

Jerusalem, your dwelling place.

14 Fill Zion with your majesty,

your temple with your glory.

15 Give a testimony of your deeds of old; fulfill the prophecies spoken in your name,

reward those who have hoped in you,

and let your prophets be proved true.

17 Hear, O Lord, the prayer of your servants, according to your goodwill toward your people;

thus it will be known to the very ends of the earth that you are the Lord, the God of the ages.

18 The throat can swallow any food, yet some foods are more agreeable than others;

as the palate tests meat by its savor, so does a keen mind insinicate words.

20 A deceitful character causes grief, but an experienced man can turn the tables on him.

21 A woman will accept every male for a husband, but one daughter will be better than another daughter.

22 A woman's beauty makes a man's face light up, and it surpasses all else that charms the eye;

and if, in addition, her speech is soothing, his lot is beyond that of mortal men.

24 He who gets a woman gets his best possession, a helper and a pillar of support.

25 A vineyard with no hedge will be overrun; a man with no woman becomes a homeless wanderer.

26 Who will trust an armed band that shifts from city to city? Or a man who has no nest, but lodges where night overtakes him?

CHAPTER 37

1 Every friend declares his friendship, but there are friends who are friends in name only.

2 Is it not a sorrow unto death when your friend like your own soul becomes your enemy?

3 “Alas, my companion! he says, Why were you created to blanket the earth with deceit?"

4 A false friend will share your joys, but in time of trouble he stands far off.

5 A true friend will fight with you against the foe, against your enemies he will be your shield-bearer.

6 Do not forget your comrade during the battle, and do not neglect him when you distribute your spoils.

7 Every counselor points out a way,
8 Guard your soul from a counselor, and find out first of all what he wants. For he may be thinking of his own soul; why should the profit fall to him? 
9 He may tell you how good your way will be, and then stand by to watch your misfortune.
10 Seek no advice from one who regards you with hostility, from those who envy you, keep your intentions hidden.
11 Do not speak to a woman about her rival, nor to a coward about war, to a merchant about business, to a buyer about value, to a miser about generosity, to a cruel man about mercy, to a lazy man about work, to a seasonal laborer about the harvest, to an idle slave about a great task: pay no attention to any advice they give. 
12 Instead, associate with a religious man, where you are sure keeps the commandments; whose mind is like your mind, and will feed you if you fail.
13 Then, too, heed your own heart’s counsel; for what have you that you can depend on more?
14 For a mortal’s heart can tell him his situation better than seven watchmen in a lofty tower.
15 Most important of all, pray to God to set your feet in the path of truth.
16 A word is the source of every deed; a thought, of every act.
17 The root of all conduct is the mind; four branches it shoots forth: Good and evil, death and life, their absolute mistress is the tongue.
18 A man may be wise, making many wise, and yet be useless to his own soul.
19 Though a man be wise, if his words are rejected, he will be deprived of all enjoyment,
20 for the Lord has withheld the gift of grace, since he is lacking in all wisdom.
21 When a man is wise to his own soul, the fruits of his knowledge will be praiseworthy; when a man is wise to his people’s advantage, the fruits of his knowledge are enduring:
22 limited are the days of one man’s life, but the life of Israel is days without number.
23 One wise to his own soul has full enjoyment, and all who see him praise him; one wise for his people wins a heritage of honor,
24 and his name endures forever.
25 My child, while you are living, govern your soul, so that you allow it not what is bad for you; neither be absent from your heart’s counsel, and not every soul chooses every kind of thing.
26 Do not be drawn after every enjoyment, for it brings about a gluton for choice foods, for sickness comes with overeating, and gluttony brings on biliousness.
27 Through lack of self-control many have died, but the abstemious man prolongs his life.

CHAPTER 38
1 Hold a healer in honor, for he is essential to you, and God it was who established his profession.
2 For a healer is gaining wisdom from God, and the king provides for his sustenance.
3 His knowledge makes a healer distinguished, and lets him stand before princes.
4 God makes the earth yield healing herbs which a discerning fellow should not neglect.
5 Was not the water sweetened by a twig that a mortal might learn his power?
6 He gave knowledge to a mortal to glory in his mighty works, through which a healer cases pain and a druggist prepares his medicines; this is how his creative work continues without cease in its efficacy on the surface of the earth.
7 My son, when you are ill, do not delay, but pray to God, who will heal you.
8 Flee wickedness; let your hands be just, cleanse your heart of every sin;
9 offer your sweet-smelling sacrifice and a memorial, a portion of choice flour, as much as you can afford.
10 Then give a healer his place for the Lord created him; do not let him leave; for you need him too.
11 There are times when recovery lies in his hands, and he too besees the Lord that his diagnosis may be correct and his treatment bring about a cure.
12 He who is a sinner toward his Maker will be defiant toward a healer. 
13 My son, shed tears for one who is dead with wailing and bitter lament; as is only proper, prepare the body, do not absent yourself from his burial: Weeping bitterly, mourning fully, pay your tribute of sorrow, as he deserves, one or two days, to prevent slander; then compose yourself after your grief, for grief can bring on an extremity, and heartache destroy one’s health.
14 In affliction, grief persists; the curse that rankles makes for a wretched life.
15 Do not turn your thoughts to him again; cease to recall him; think rather of the end.
16 Do not recall him, for there is no hope of his return; it will not help him, but will do you harm.
17 Remember that his fate will also be yours; for him it was yesterday, for you today.
18 With the departed dead, let memory fade; rally your courage, once his soul has left.
19 The scribe’s profession increases his wisdom for himself, whoever is free from toil can become a wise man.

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1 [37:7] Heb(B) / Heb(B[mg], D) “counselor says, ‘Look!’” / LXX “counselor praises counsel”
2 [37:8] Heb / LXX “lacks he be taking chances against your interest”
3 [37:10] LXX / Lat “from your father-in-law”
4 [37:11] Heb / LXX “gratitude”
5 [37:14] Heb / LXX “reason”
6 [37:17] Heb / LXX “As a clue to changes of heart, four kinds of destiny appear”
7 [37:20] Heb(D) / LXX “a skillful speaker may be hated, he will be deprived of all food”
9 [37:22] others “trustworthily”
10 [37:25] Heb(B), D / LXX “Syr omit limited are the days…”
12 [37:26] Heb(B, C, D) / LXX places “One wise…praise him” after “knowledge are enduring”
13 [37:26] others “confident”
14 [1 Cor 6:12, 1 Cor 10:23] “for not all things are being-beneficial”
15 [38:2] Heb / LXX “For a healing is from the Highest-One”
16 [38:2] Heb(B) / Heb(B[mg]) “kings” / LXX “nobles”
17 [38:4] Heb / LXX “the Lord” / Vul “The Highest-One”
19 [38:11] LXX / Heb(B) “his might”
20 [38:7] Heb / LXX “which he”
21 [38:11] Heb, LXX? / Lat om “as much as you can afford”
22 [38:14] Heb / LXX “ries the body”
23 [38:15] Heb(B) / Heb(B[mg]) “will be delivered into the hands of the healer” / LXX “may he fall into the hands of a healer” / Syr “he will be given into the hands of the healer”
24 [38:21] Heb(B) / LXX “on death”
25 [38:19] LXX “in affliction…life…” / Syr “For thus the sad heart, rather than death, breaks the poor with cares and brings grief; because the life of the poor becomes the heart’s curse” / Heb(B) omit altogether
26 [38:21] Heb(B) / LXX places “Do not recall…harm” after “Remember…for you today.”
27 [38:22] Heb / LXX “my”
28 [38:22] Heb / LXX “me”
29 [38:24] Heb / LXX “spirit”
30 [38:24] Heb(B) Syr (Syr add “for himself”) / LXX “The scribe’s wisdom is acquired in the opportunity of leisure”
How can he become learned who guides the plow, who thrills in wielding the goad like a lance, who guides the ox and urges on the bullock, and whose every concern is for cattle? His care is for plowing furrows, and he keeps a watch on the beasts in the stalls.

So with every engraver and designer who, laboring night and day, fashions carved seals, and whose concern is to vary the pattern. His care is to produce a vivid impression, and he keeps watch till he finishes his design.

So with the smith standing near his anvil, forging crude iron. The heat from the fire sears his flesh, yet he toils away in the furnace heat. The clang of the hammer deafens his ears, his eyes are fixed on the tool he is shaping. His care is to finish his work, and he keeps watch till he perfects it in detail.

So with the potter sitting at his labor, revolving the wheel with his feet. He is always concerned for his products, and turns them out in quantity. With his hands he molds the clay, and with his feet softens it. His care is for proper coloring, and he keeps watch on the fire of his kiln.

All these men are skilled with their hands, each one an expert at his own task; without them no city could be lived in, and wherever they stay, they need not hunger. But they are not sought out for the council of the people, nor are they prominent in the assembly; they do not occupy the judge’s bench, nor can they set forth decisions or judgments, they cannot expound the instruction of wisdom, nor are they found among the rulers.

Yet they maintain God’s ancient handiwork, and their concern is for the exercise of their skill.

CHAPTER 39
How different the man who gives his soul over to the fear of God, and makes thorough comprehension in a law of the Most High!

He explores the wisdom of the men of old and occupies himself with the prophecies; he treasures the discourses of famous men, and goes to the heart of involved sayings; he studies obscure parables, and is busied with the hidden meanings of the sages.

He is in attendance on the great, and has entrance to the ruler. He travels among the peoples of foreign lands to learn what is good and evil among men. His care is to rise early to seek Yahweh, his Maker, to petition the Most High, to open his lips in prayer, to ask pardon for his sins.

If-at any time Yahweh the Great might want, he will be filled with a spirit of intelligence; he will pour forth his words of wisdom, and in prayer to God he will confess-thought to Yahweh.

He himself will guide his counsel and experience, and he will be made to thoroughly-comprehend the things hidden from humans.

He himself will show forth the discipline of his teaching, and he will boast in a law of Yahweh’s covenant.

Many will praise his intelligence; and his fame can never be effaced; unfading will be his remembrance, and his name will live into generations of generations; the congregation will speak of his wisdom, and the assembly will sing his praises.

While he lives he is one out of a thousand, and when he dies his renown will not cease.

Once more I will set forth my theme to shine like the moon in its fullness!

Listen, my faithful children: open up your petals, like roses planted near running waters; send up the sweet odor of incense, break forth in blossoms like the lily, raise your voices in a hymn of praise; bless Yahweh for all he has done!

Proclaim the greatness of his name, loudly sing his praises, with music on the harp and all stringed instruments; sing out with joy as you proclaim:

All of the works of God are good; in its own time every need is supplied. No cause to say, “What is the purpose of this?” for in God’s time all things will be sought after.

At his word the waters become still as a flask; he had but to speak and the reservoirs were made.

He has but to command and his will is done; nothing can limit his achievement.

The works of all men are present to him; not a thing escapes his eye.

His gaze spans all the ages; is there any counting what he achieves? To him there is nothing small or insignificant.

No cause then to say, “What is the purpose of this?” Everything is chosen to satisfy a need.

His blessing overflows as the canal; and as the river, it saturates the surface of the earth.

Again, his wrath expels the nations and turns a fertile land into a salt marsh.

For the virtuous his paths are level, to the haughty they are steep; from the beginning, he provided good things for the good, but for the wicked good things and bad.

Chief of all needs for human life are water and fire, iron and salt, the heart of the wheat, milk and honey, the blood of the grapes, and oil, and cloth; for the good all these are good, but for the wicked they turn out evil.

There are spirits created to punish, which in their fury can dislodge mountains; when destruction must be, they hurl all their force and appease the anger of their Maker.

Fire and hail, famine, pestilence; these too were created for punishment;

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1 [38:28] LXX / Syr “furnace”  
2 [38:28] LXX (lit. “breath”) / Syr “flame”  
3 [38:28] LXX / Syr “melts”  
4 [38:28] LXX / Syr “furnace”  
5 [38:30] LXX / Syr “and they neither sojourn nor walk around”  
6 [38:32] LXX / Syr “but they are not sought…assembly”  
7 [38:33] LXX “instruction and justice”  
8 [38:34] Heb / LXX “their prayer is in”  
9 [38:34] LXX / Syr “their prayer is in”  
10 [38:34] Heb / LXX “they treasure his discourses of famous men”
30. a living-creature with a tooth, a scorpion, a viper, and the avenging sword to exterminate the wicked: all these were created to meet a need, and are kept in his storehouse for the proper time; in doing his bidding they rejoice, in their assignments they do not disobey his command.

31. So from the first I took my stand, and wrote down as my theme: the works of the Lord are all of them good; every need when it comes he fills.

32. No cause then to say, “This is not as good as that”; for each shows its worth at the proper time.

33. So now with full joy of heart proclaim and bless the name of the Holy One.

CHAPTER 40

1. Hard work was created for everyone, and a heavy yoke, to the sons of Adam; from the day one leaves his mother’s womb to the day he returns to the mother of all the living,

2. his thoughts, the fear in his heart, and his troubled forebodings until the day of their end—which whether he sits on a lofty throne or grovels in dust and ashes,

3. whether he bears a crown and head ornament or is wrapped in the coarsest of cloaks until he dies,

4. or whether he bears a crown and head ornament or grovels in dust and ashes, even when he lies on his bed to rest, his cares at night disturb his sleep.

5. So short is his rest it seems like none, till in his dreams he struggles as he did by day, terrified by what his soul’s eyes sees, like a fugitive being pursued, as he reaches safety, he wakes up astonished that there was nothing to fear.

6. So it is with all flesh, with man and with beast, but for sinners seven times more.

7. Plague and bloodshed, fiery heat and drought, plunder and rain, famine and death:

8. for the wicked, these were created evil, and because of them destruction hastens.

9. All that is of earth returns to earth, and what is from above returns above, but loyalty remains for ages.

10. Wealth out of wickedness is like a wadi in spate: whatever is of earth returns to earth, but for sinners seven times more.

11. Wealth from the earth, and from the day one leaves his mother’s womb, is on a sheer rock; but for sinners seven times more, it is on a mountain.

12. The offshoot of violence will not flourish, for the root of unclean men is on a sheer rock; or they are like reeds on the riverbank, withered before all other plants;

13. but goodness, like eternity, will never be cut off, and righteousness endures forever.

14. Wine and intoxicating-drink will sweeten life, but better than either is finding a treasure.

15. My son, do not live the life of a beggar, for the man unshielded and always successful, who still can enjoy life’s pleasures;

16. Wealth and vigor build up confidence, but loyalty remains for ages.

17. Gold and silver make one’s way secure, but for sinners seven times more, it is on a sheer rock:

18. A child or a city will preserve one’s name, but better than either, attaining wisdom. Sheepfolds and orchards bring flourishing health; but better than either, a devoted woman.

19. Wine and intoxicating-drink delight the soul, but better than either, the love of friends.

20. The flute and the harp offer sweet melody, but better than either, a pure tongue.

21. Charm and beauty delight the eye, but better than either, the flowers of the field.

22. A friend, a neighbor, are timely guides, but better than either, a prudent woman.

23. A brother, a helper, for times of stress; but better than either, charity that rescues.

24. Gold and silver make one’s way secure, but better than either, sound judgment.

25. Wealth and vigor build up confidence, but better than either, fear of God. The fear of Yahweh leaves nothing wanting; he who has it need seek no other support.

26. Fear of God is like a delight of blessing; its canopy, all that is glorious.

27. My son, do not live the life of a beggar, better to die than to beg;

28. for the man unshielded and always rebuffed, the man who is tottering and always rebuffed, devoid of sight, and with vanished hope.

29. Do not fear death’s decree for you;

30. remember, it embraces those before you, and those after.

31. This is the end for all flesh from God; why then should you reject the will of the Most High? Whether one has lived ten years, a hundred, or a thousand, in the Netherworld he has no claim on life.

32. A repubricate line are the children of sinners, and wileless offspring are in the homes of the wicked.

33. Their dominion is lost along the stones, and reproach abides with their descendants.

34. Children curse their wicked father, for they suffer disgrace through him.

35. Woe to you, O sinful men, who forsake the law of the Most High.

36. If you have children, calamity will seize them; you will beget them only for groaning.

37. When you stumble, there is lasting joy; at death, you become a curse.

38. Whatsoever is of nothing returns to nothing, so too the godless from void to void.

39. Man’s body is a fleeting thing, but a virtuous name will never be blotted out.
CHAPTER 42
But do not be ashamed of the following things, lest you sin through human partiality:

2 Do not be ashamed of the law of the Most High and his precepts, or of rendering judgment to acquit the wicked;
3 of sharing the expenses of a business or a journey, or of dividing an inheritance or property;
4 of accuracy of scales and balances, or of tested measures and weights;
5 of acquiring much or little,
6 or of bargaining in dealing with a merchant;
7 of constant training of children,
8 of a seal to keep a wicked woman at home,
9 of constant training of children,
10 or of dividing the sides of a disloyal servant;
11 of a seal to keep a wicked woman at home,
12 or of recording all that is given or received;
13 of chastisement of the silly and the foolish, or of the tottering old gray-beard occupied with sexual immorality.
This is how you will be truly refined, and recognized by all men as discreet.

9 A daughter is a treasure that keeps her father wakeful, and worry over her drives away rest: lest she pass her prime in an unmarried-state, or when she is married, lest she be disliked;
10 while in an unmarried-state, lest she be seduced, or, in her master’s house, lest she prove unfaithful;

11 My children, listen to instruction concerning shame and be ashamed according to my judgment.
Therefore, show respect for my words.

12 Be ashamed of breaking an oath or agreement;
13 and of stretching out your elbow when you dine;
14 of refusing to give when asked;
15 and of turning away the face of your relative;
16 of defrauding another of his appointed share;
17 and of failing to return a greeting;
18 of gazing upon a strange woman;
19 and of complaining what is under-a-man;
20 of trifling with your servant-girl,
21 and of violating her bed;
22 of speaking words of reproach before friends, and of following up your gifts with insults;
23 of repeating what you hear, and of betraying secrets—these are the things you should rightly avoid as shameful and you will find favor in the sight of everyone.

CHAPTER 43
The beauty of the celestial heights and the pure firmament, the firm heavens manifest his glory.

2 The orb of the sun, resplendent at its rising:
3 At noon it seethes the surface of the earth,
4 and who can bear its scorching heat?
5 what a fearsome sight!
6 how scorching the mountains are!
7 and the earth is consumed by its fiery darts.
8 Like a blazing furnace of solid metal,
9 and what a fearsome sight!
10 and who can bear its scorching heat?
11 and the earth is consumed by its fiery darts.
12 like a blazing furnace of solid metal,
13 and what a fearsome sight!
14 and who can bear its scorching heat?
15 and the earth is consumed by its fiery darts.
16 Like a blazing furnace of solid metal,
17 and what a fearsome sight!
18 and who can bear its scorching heat?
19 and the earth is consumed by its fiery darts.
20 Like a blazing furnace of solid metal,
21 and what a fearsome sight!
22 and who can bear its scorching heat?
23 and the earth is consumed by its fiery darts.
24 Like a blazing furnace of solid metal,
25 and what a fearsome sight!
26 and who can bear its scorching heat?
27 and the earth is consumed by its fiery darts.

11 My son, keep a close watch on your unmarried-daughter, lest she make you the sport of your enemies, a byword in the city, a reproach among the people, an object of derision in public gatherings. See that there is no lattice in her room, no place that overlooks the approaches to the house.

12 Do not let her parade her beauty before any male, and do not let her converse in a house of women;
13 for just as moths come from garments, so a woman’s wickedness comes from another woman.
14 Better a man’s harshness than a woman’s indulgence, and a frightened daughter than any disgrace.
15 Now will I recall the works of God, and I will describe what I have seen. At the word of the Lord were his works brought into being; and an act of his grace is his doctrine.
16 As the rising sun is clear to all, so the glory of the Lord fills all his works;
17 yet even God’s holy ones must fail in recounting all his marvelous works, though the Lord has given his hosts, the strength to stand firm before his glory.
18 He plumbs the abyss and penetrates the heart; he understands their secrets.
19 The Most High possesses all knowledge, and sees in advance what is to come upon the age;
20 he makes known the past and the future, and reveals the deepest secrets.
21 Perennial is his almighty wisdom: he is one and the same from all eternity, with nothing added, nothing taken away; no need of a counselor for him!
22 How beautiful are all his works! even to the spark and the fleeting vision!
23 All of them live and abide forever; and each one is preserved to meet a particular need.
24 All of them come in pairs, one from another, yet none of them has he made in vain, for each in turn, as it comes, is good; can one ever see enough of their splendor?
this light-giver which wanes in its course.

8 The new moon, as its name suggests, renews itself;¹
how fearsome in this change!¹¹
A signal for the host of the waterskins in the heights,
it paves the firmament with its brilliance.
9 The beauty of the heavens are the glory of the stars;
sparkling adornments in the heights of God.
10 At the orders³ of the Lord⁴ they keep their appointed place
and never relax in their watch.⁵
11 Behold the rainbow! Then bless its Maker,
for majestic indeed is its splendor;
12 it spans the heavens with its glory,
this bow bent by the mighty⁶ hands of God.⁷
13 His rebuke marks out the path for the lightning,¹⁰
and speeds the arrows of his judgment to their goal.
14 At it the storehouse is opened,
and the clouds hurry forth like flying-creatures.
15 In his majesty he gives the clouds their power
and breaks off the hailstones.
16 The thunder of his voice makes the earth writhe;
before his might the mountains quake.
17 A word from him drives on the south wind,
the angry north-wind, the hurricane and the storm.¹¹
He sprinkles the snow like fluttering flying-creatures;
it comes to settle like swarms of locusts.
18 Its shining whiteness blinds the eyes,
the mind is baffled by its steady fall.
19 He scatters frost like salt;
it shines like blossoms on the thornbush.
20 He blows the coolness of a spirit of the north-wind,¹²
that turn the ponds to lumps of ice.
He freezes over every body of water,
and clothes each pool with a coat of mail.
21 When the mountain growth is scorched with heat,
and the flowering meadows as though by flames,
the dripping clouds restore them all,
and the scattered dew enriches the parched land.
23 His is the plan that calms the deep,
and plants the islands in the sea.
24 Those who go down to the sea tell part of its story,
and when we hear them we are thunderstruck;
there are wonders, miracles which are his works:
species of every living creature and Rahab's¹³ powers.
26 For him each messenger shall succeed,
and at his bidding shall accomplish his will.

27 More than this we need not add;
let the last word be, he is all in all!
28 Let us praise him the more, since we cannot fathom him,
and the flowering meadows as though by flames,
and when we hear them we are thunderstruck;
29 Yahweh is awesome indeed,
and wonderful is his power.
30 Lift up your voices to glorify Yahweh,
that he would set his seed above all other nations
and Rahab's¹³ powers.
31 For him each messenger shall succeed,
and at his bidding shall accomplish his will.

22 And he renewed the same promise¹ for ISAAC,
because of his father Abraham.
The covenant with all his ancestors was confirmed,
and the blessing rested upon the head of JACOB.
God acknowledged him as the firstborn,2
and gave him his inheritance.
He fixed the boundaries for his tribes,
and their division into twelve.
From him was to spring the man1
who won the favor of all:

CHAPTER 45

1 Dear to God and men, MOSES,
whose memory is held in benediction.4
2 He made him equal in honor to the holy ones,
and the Lord strengthened him with fearful powers;5
3 by his words he wrought swift miracles6
and sustained him in the king’s presence.
He gave him the commandments for his people,
and revealed to him his glory.
4 For his trustworthiness and meekness
God selected him from all men.
5 He permitted him to hear his voice,
and led him into the cloud,
where, face to face, he gave him the commandments,
the law of life and understanding,
that he might teach his precepts to Jacob,
his judgments and decrees to Israel.
6 He raised up also, like Moses in holiness,
his brother AARON, of the tribe of Levi.
7 He made him perpetual in his office
when he bestowed on him the priesthood of his people;
he established him in honor7
and crowned him with lofty majesty.
8 He clothed him with splendid apparel,
and adorned him with the glorious vestments:
breeches and tunic and robe
with pomegranates around the hem,
and a rustle of bells round about,8
through whose pleasing sound at each step
he would be heard within the inner-sanctum,
and the children of his race would be remembered;
the sacred vestments of gold, of violet,
and of crimson, wrought with embroidery;
the breastpiece for decision, the ephod and cincture
with scarlet yarn, the work of the weaver;
precious stones with seal engravings on the breastplate
in golden settings, every precious stone,9 the work of the jeweler,
to commemorate in incised letters
each of the tribes of Israel;
12 on his turban the diadem of gold,
its plate wrought with the insignia of holiness,
jestically, gloriously, renowned for splendor,
a delight to the eyes, beauty supreme.
13 Before him, no one was adored with these,
nor may they ever be worn by any
except his sons and them alone.
14 His cereal offering is wholly burnt
with the established sacrifice twice each day;10
for Moses ordained him
15 and anointed him with the holy oil,
in a lasting covenant with him and with his family,
as permanent as the heavens,
that he should serve God in his priesthood
and bless his people in his name.
16 He chose him from all men
to offer holocausts and choice offerings,
to burn sacrifices of sweet odor for a memorial,
and to atone for the11 people of Israel.

17 He gave to him his laws,
and authority and12 judgments:
to teach the testimonies to his people,
and the ritual to the descendants of Israel.
18 Men of other families were inflamed against him,
were jealous of him in the desert,
the followers of Dathan and Abiram,
and the band of Korah in their defiance.
19 But Yahweh saw this and became angry,
he destroyed them in his burning wrath.
He brought down upon them a miracle,
and consumed them with his flaming fire.
20 Then he increased the glory of Aaron
and bestowed upon him his inheritance:
the sacred offerings he allotted to him,
with the showbread as his portion;
21 the oblations of Yahweh are his food,
a gift to him and his descendants.
22 But he holds no land among the people
nor shares with them their heritage;
for Yahweh himself is his13 portion,
his inheritance in the midst of Israel.

23 PHINEHAS too, the son of Eleazar,
was the courageous third of his line
when, zealous for the God of all,
he met the crisis of his people,
in goodness of eagerness of his soul;
and he atoned for the children of Israel.
24 Therefore on him, God again conferred the right,
in a covenant of friendship, to provide for the inner-sanctum and of his people,14
so that he and his descendants should possess
the chief-priesthood forever.
25 For even his covenant with David,
the son of Jesse of the tribe of Judah,
was an individual heritage through one son alone;
but the heritage of Aaron is for all his descendants.
And now bless Yahweh
who has crowned you with glory!15
26 May he grant you wisdom of heart
to govern his people in righteousness,
lest their welfare should ever be forgotten,
or your authority, throughout all time.

CHAPTER 46

1 JOSHUA, son of Nun, was a valiant leader,
assistant to Moses in the prophetic office,
formed to be, as his name implies,16
the great savior of God’s chosen ones,
to wreak vengeance upon the enemy
and to win the inheritance for Israel.
2 What glory was his when he raised his arm,
to brandish his javelin against the city!
3 And who could withstand him
when he fought the battles of Yahweh?
4 Did he not stop the sun by his power,
so that one day became two?
5 He called upon the Most High God
and revealed to him his glory.

6 He destroyed them in his burning wrath.
7 He brought down upon them a miracle,
and consumed them with his flaming fire.
8 He fixed the boundaries for his tribes,
and God Most High gave an answer to him
in hailstones of tremendous power,
in a covenant of friendship, to provide for the inner-sanctum and of his people.
9 And who could withstand him
when he fought the battles of Yahweh?
10 Did he not stop the sun by his power,
so that one day became two?
11 He called upon the Most High God
and revealed to him his glory.
12 He raised up a son1
who won the favor of all:
CHAPTER 45

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whose memory is held in benediction.4
2 He made him equal in honor to the holy ones,
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and sustained him in the king’s presence.
He gave him the commandments for his people,
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4 For his trustworthiness and meekness
God selected him from all men.
5 He permitted him to hear his voice,
and led him into the cloud,
where, face to face, he gave him the commandments,
the law of life and understanding,
that he might teach his precepts to Jacob,
his judgments and decrees to Israel.
6 He raised up also, like Moses in holiness,
his brother AARON, of the tribe of Levi.
7 He made him perpetual in his office
when he bestowed on him the priesthood of his people;
he established him in honor7
and crowned him with lofty majesty.
8 He clothed him with splendid apparel,
and adorned him with the glorious vestments:
breeches and tunic and robe
with pomegranates around the hem,
and a rustle of bells round about,8
through whose pleasing sound at each step
he would be heard within the inner-sanctum,
and the children of his race would be remembered;
the sacred vestments of gold, of violet,
and of crimson, wrought with embroidery;
the breastpiece for decision, the ephod and cincture
with scarlet yarn, the work of the weaver;
precious stones with seal engravings on the breastplate
in golden settings, every precious stone,9 the work of the jeweler,
to commemorate in incised letters
each of the tribes of Israel;
12 on his turban the diadem of gold,
its plate wrought with the insignia of holiness,
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a delight to the eyes, beauty supreme.
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nor may they ever be worn by any
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and bless his people in his name.
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26 May he grant you wisdom of heart
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was the courageous third of his line
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who has crowned you with glory!15
26 May he grant you wisdom of heart
to govern his people in righteousness,
lest their welfare should ever be forgotten,
or your authority, throughout all time.
And because he was a devoted follower of God and in Moses’ lifetime showed himself loyal, he and CALEB, son of Jephunneh, when they opposed the congregation, averted God’s anger from the people and suppressed the wicked complaint—because of this, they were the only two spared from the 600,000 infantry, to lead the people into their inheritance, the land flowing with milk and honey.

And the strength he gave to Caleb remained with him even in his old age until he won his way onto the summits of the land; his family too received an inheritance, that all the people of Jacob might know how good it is to be a devoted follower of Yahweh.

The JUDGES, too, each one of them, whose hearts were not deceived, who did not abandon God; may their memory be ever blessed, their bones return to life from their resting place, and their names receive fresh luster in their children!

Beloved of his people, dear to his Maker, dedicated from his mother’s womb, consecrated to Yahweh as a prophet, was Samuel, the judge and priest.

At God’s word he established the kingdom and anointed princes to rule the people. By the law of Yahweh he judged the nation, when he visited the encampments of Jacob. As a trustworthy prophet he was sought out and his words proved him a true seer. He, too, called upon God; when he was hard pressed with enemies on every side, and offered him a suckling lamb; then Yahweh thundered forth from the heavens, and the tremendous roar of his voice was heard. He brought low the rulers of the enemy and destroyed all the lords of the Philistines. When Samuel approached the end of his life, he testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince, “No bribe or secret gift have I taken from any man!” and no one dared gainsay him, and even to the time of his decease he was found prudent in the sight of the Lord and of all the living.

Even when he lay buried, his guidance was sought; he made known to the king his fate, and from the grave he raised his voice as a prophet, to put an end to the wickedness of the people.

CHAPTER 47
1 After him came NATHAN who served in the presence of David.
2 Like the choice fat of the sacred offerings, so was DAVID in Israel.
3 He made sport of lions as though they were kids, like the choice fat of the sacred offerings.
4 As a youth he slew the giant and wiped out the people’s disgrace, when his hand let fly the slingstone that crushed the pride of Goliath.
5 Since he called upon the Most High God, who gave strength to his right arm to defeat the skilled warrior and raise up the might of his people, therefore the women sang his praises and ascribed to him tens of thousands. When he assumed the royal crown, he battled and subdued enemies on every side. He destroyed his opponents, the Philistines, and shattered their power till our own day. With his every deed he offered thanks to the Holy One, the Most High, proclaiming his glory; he sang praise with all his heart, and loved his Maker and daily had his praises sung; he added beauty to the feasts and solemnized the seasons of each year with string music before the altar, providing sweet melody for the psalms so that when the Holy Name was praised, before daybreak the inner-sanctum would resound.
6 Yahweh forgave him his sins and exalted his strength forever; he conferred on him the rights of royalty and established his throne in Israel. Because of his merits he had as his successor a wise son, who lived in security: SOLOMON reigned during an era of peace, for God made tranquil all his borders. He built a house to the name of God, and established a lasting inner-sanctum.

14 How wise you were when you were young, overflowing with instruction, like the canal in flood! Your soul covered the whole earth, and, like a sea, filled it with knowledge. Your fame reached distant coasts, and their peoples came to hear you; with song and story and riddle, and with your answers, you astounded the nations.

You were called by that glorious name which was conferred upon Israel. You gathered gold like so much iron, you heaped up silver as though it were lead; but you gave your loins to women and gave them dominion over your body. You brought dishonor upon your reputation, shame upon your marriage, wrath upon your descendants, and they were grieved at your folly; thus two governments came into being, when in Ephraim kingship was usurped. But God does not withdraw his mercy, nor permit even one of his promises to fail. He does not uproot the posterity of his chosen one, nor destroy the offspring of his friend. So he gave to Jacob a remnant, to David a root from his own family.

23 Solomon finally slept with his fathers, and left behind him one of his sons, expansive in folly, limited in sense, REHOBOAM, who by his policy made the people rebel; until one arose who should not be remembered, the sinner who led Israel into sin, who brought ruin to Ephraim and caused them to be exiled from their land.
and they lent themselves to every evil,\(^1\)

1 tilike a fire there appeared the prophet whose words were as a flaming furnace.

2 Their staff of bread he shattered;\(^2\)
in his zeal he reduced them to straights;

3 by God’s word he shut up the heavens and three times brought down fire.

4 How awesome are you, ELIJA\(^1\)H! Whose glory is equal to yours?

5 You raised up a dead man from the Netherworld, by the will of Yahweh.

6 You sent kings down to destruction, and nobles, from their beds of sickness.

7 You heard threats at Sinai, at Horeb, avenging judgments.

8 You anointed kings who should inflict vengeance, and a prophet\(^3\) as your\(^4\) successor.

9 You were taken aloft in a whirlwind, in a chariot with fiery horses.\(^5\)

10 You are destined,\(^6\) it is written, in time to come to put an end to wrath before the day of Yahweh,\(^7\) to turn back the hearts of fathers toward their sons, and to reestablish the tribes of Jacob.

11 Blessed is he who will have seen you before he dies!\(^8\) for we too will surely live.\(^9\)

12 When Elijah was enveloped in the whirlwind, ELI\(^1\)SHA was filled with his spirit. He wrought twice as many signs and marvels with every utterance of his mouth.\(^10\)

13 During his lifetime he did not quite at anyone, And not any flesh was able to rule his spirit.\(^11\)

13 Nothing was beyond his power; from where he lay buried, his dead body prophesied.

14 In life he performed wonders, and after death, marvelous deeds.

15 Despite all this the people did not change their mind, nor did they give up their sins, until they were rooted out of their land and scattered all over the earth.

15 But Judah remained, a tiny people, with its rulers from the house of David.

16 Some of these did what was right, but others were extremely sinful.

17 HEZEKIA\(^1\)H fortified his city and had water brought into it; with iron\(^1\) tools he cut through the rock and he built reservoirs for water.\(^1\)

18 During his reign Sennacherib led an invasion and sent his adjutant from Lachish:\(^14\)

19 He shook his fist at Zion and blasphemed God in his pride.

19 The people’s hearts melted within them, and they were in anguish like that of childbirth.

20 But they called upon the Most High God\(^5\) and lifted up their hands to him; he heard the prayer they uttered,\(^16\) and saved them through ISAIAH.\(^1\)

21 God struck the camp of the Assyrians and he routed them with a heavy-smite.\(^17\)

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\(^1\) [47:25] Heb(B) / LXX “; till vengeance came upon them”

\(^2\) [48:2] Heb(B) / LXX “furnace, who [Syr “furnace, and he’”] brought down on them a famine”

\(^3\) [48:8] Heb(B) / LXX “and prophets”

\(^4\) [48:8] Heb / LXX “his”

\(^5\) [48:9] LXX / Syr “; by fiery captives, into the heavens”

\(^6\) [48:10] Heb / LXX “are for reproaches”

\(^7\) [48:10] Heb / LXX “to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury’s”

\(^8\) [48:11] LXX “Blessed are those who saw you and were adorned with your love,”

\(^9\) [48:11] LXX / Syr “; but he will not die, but will certainly live” / Lat “; for we live our lives only, but after death our fame will not be such as his”

\(^10\) [48:12] Heb, Syr / LXX omit “He wrought…mouth”

\(^11\) [48:12] Heb / LXX “and no one oppressed him”

\(^12\) [48:17] LXX / Heb(B) “bronze”

\(^13\) [48:17] Syr omit “with iron tools…for water.”

\(^14\) [48:18] Heb(B) / LXX “upon the Lord who is Merciful”

\(^15\) [48:20] Heb(B) / LXX “of the Lord who is Merciful”

\(^16\) [48:20] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr “; and the Holy One [Syr “and God’”] quickly heard them from heaven”

\(^17\) [49:16] Heb(B) / LXX “Provided for” (instead of “Glorious”)

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22 For Hezekiah did what was right and held fast to the paths of David, as ordered by the illustrious prophet ISAIAH, who saw the truth in visions.

23 In his lifetime he turned back the sun and prolonged the life of the king.

24 By his powerful spirit he looked into the future and consolved the mourners of Zion;
he foretold what should be till the end of time, hidden things yet to be fulfilled.

CHAPTER 49

1 The name\(^18\) of JO\(^1\)SHIA is like blended incense, made lasting by a skilled perfumer. Precious is his memory,\(^19\) like honey to the taste, like music at a drinking-party of the wine.

2 For he grieved over our betrayers, and destroyed the abominable idols.

3 He turned to God with his whole heart, and, though times were evil, he practiced virtue.

4 Except for David, Hezekiah and Josiah, they all were wicked; they abandoned the Law of the Most High, these kings of Judah, right to the very end.

5 So he gave over their power to others, their glory to a foolish\(^20\) foreign nation who burned the holy city\(^21\), and left its streets desolate.

7 as JEREMIAH had foretold; for they had treated him badly who even in the womb had been made a prophet, to root out, pull down, and destroy, and then to build and to plant.\(^22\)

8 EZ\(^1\)KIEL beheld the vision of the Glory, and described the different creatures of the chariot.\(^23\)

9 He also referred to JOB, who always persevered in the right path.\(^24\)

10 Then, too, the TWELVE PROPHETS (may their bones return to life from their resting place!) gave new strength to Jacob and saved him by their faith and hope.

11 How can we fittingly praise ZERUBBABEL, who was like a signet ring on God’s right hand; and JESHUA, the son of Jozadak?\(^25\) In their time they built the altar;\(^26\) and they erected the holy inner-sanctum,\(^26\) destined for everlasting glory.

13 Extolled be the memory of NEHEMIAH! He rebuilt our ruined walls, restored our shattered defenses, and set up gates and bars.\(^27\)

14 Few have\(^28\) ever been created on earth like ENOCH, for he was taken up bodily.

15 Was ever a fellow born like JOSEPH?\(^29\) The leader of his brothers, the support of the people,\(^29\) even his dead body was provided for.

16 Glorious, too, were SHEM and SETH and ENOS;\(^3\)

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\(^17\) [48:22] Heb(B) / LXX “and his messenger wore them out”

\(^18\) [49:1] Heb(B) / LXX “memory”

\(^19\) [49:1] Heb(B) / LXX “precious is it”

\(^20\) [49:5] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr omit “foolish”

\(^21\) [49:6] Heb(B) / LXX “the chosen city of the inner-sanctum”

\(^22\) [49:7] Syr omit “to root out…to plant”

\(^23\) [49:8] Heb(B) / LXX “vision of the Glory, which he showed him upon the chariot with the cherubs”

\(^24\) [49:9] Heb(B) / LXX “For God remembered his enemies with storm, and did good to those who directed themselves in the right path.”

\(^25\) [49:12] Heb(B) / Syr / LXX “vision of the Glory, which he showed him upon the chariot with the cherubs”

\(^26\) [49:13] Heb(B) / LXX places “and set up gates and bars” before “restored our…”

\(^27\) [49:14] Heb, Syr, LXX “No one has”

\(^28\) [49:15] Heb, Syr / LXX add

\(^29\) [49:16] Heb, LXX / Heb(B) “Provided for” (instead of “Glorious”)

28
CHAPTER 50

1 The greatest among his brothers, the glory of his people, was SIMON the priest, son of Johanan, in whose time the house of God was renovated, in whose days the inner-sanctum was reinforced. In his time also the wall was built with powerful turrets for the temple enclosures; in his time the reservoir was dug, the pool with a vastness like the sea's. He protected his people against brigands and strengthened his city against the enemy.

5 How splendid he was as he appeared from the tent, as he came from within the veil! Like a star shining among the clouds, like the full moon at the holyday season; like the sun shining upon the inner-sanctum, like the rainbow appearing in the cloudy sky; like the blossoms on the branches in springtime, like a lily on the banks of a stream; like the trees of Lebanon in summer, like the trees of Lebanon in summer, like a luxuriant olive tree thick with fruit, a plant whose branches run with oil;

10 vested in his magnificent robes, and wearing his garments of splendor, as he ascended the glorious altar and lent majesty to the court of the inner-sanctum. When he received the sullered victims from the priests while he stood before the sacrificial wood, his brothers ringed him about like a garland, like a stand of cedars on Lebanon;

15 all the sons of Aaron in their dignity clustered around him like poplars, with the offerings to Yahweh in their hands, in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel. Once he had completed the services at the altar with the arranging of the sacrifices for the Most High, and had stretched forth his hand for the cup, to offer blood of the grape, and poured it out at the foot of the altar, a sweet-smelling odor to the Most High God;

20 the sons of Aaron would sound a blast, the priests, on their trumpets of beaten metal; a blast to resound mightily as a reminder before the Most High. Then all the people with one accord would quickly fall prostrate to the ground in adoration before the Most High, before the Holy One of Israel.

25 Then hymns would re-echo, and over the throng sweet strains of praise resound. All the people of the land would shout for joy, praying to the Merciful One, as the chief-priest completed the services at the altar by presenting to God the sacrifice due; then coming down he would raise his hands over all the congregation of Israel. The blessing of Yahweh would be upon his lips, the name of Yahweh would be his glory.

29 Then again the people would lie prostrate to receive from him the blessing of the Most High. And now, bless the God of all, who has done wondrous things on earth, who fosters men's growth from their mother's womb, and fashions them according to his will!

23 May he grant you wisdom of heart and may peace abide among you; may his goodness toward Simeon be lasting; may he fulfill for him the covenant with Phinehas so that it may not be abrogated for him or for his descendants, as long as heavens are above.

25 My soul loathes two nations, the third is not even a people;


27 Wise instruction, appropriate proverbs, I have written in this book.

29 I, Jeshua, son of Eleazar, son of Sirach the Jerusalemite, as they gushed forth from my heart's understanding.

28 Happy the man who mediates upon these things, wise the man who takes them to heart!

29 If he puts them into practice, he can cope with anything, for the fear of Yahweh is his path.

CHAPTER 51A

1 I give you thanks, O God of my father; I praise you, O God my savior. I will make known your name, refuge of my life; you have been my helper against my adversaries. You have redeemed my soul from death, and kept back my body from the clutches of the Netherworld you have snatched my feet; you have delivered me, in your great mercy from the scourge of a slanderous tongue, and from lips that went over to falsehood; from the snare of those who watched for my downfall, and from the power of those who sought my soul.

4 From many a danger you have saved me, from flames that hemmed me in on every side, from the midst of unremitting fire, from the deep belly of the Netherworld, from an unclean tongue and painters of lies, from the arrows of slanderous tongues.

6 I was at the point of death, my soul was nearing the lowest region of the Netherworld;

7 I turned every way, but there was no one to help me, I looked for one to sustain me, but could find no one. But then I remembered the mercies of Yahweh, his kindness through ages past; for he saves those who take refuge in him, and rescues them from every evil.

9 So I raised my voice from the very earth, from the gates of the Netherworld, my cry.

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[11] Heb (B) / LXX “blessed the Lord, the God of Israel”
[12] Heb (B) / LXX “joy”
[13] Heb (B) / LXX “heart” and may there be peace in our days in Israel, as in the days of old…May his goodness remain constantly with us and may he save us in our days.”
[14] Heb, Lat / LXX “live on”
[15] Heb (B) / LXX “write”
[16] Heb, Lat / LXX “live”
[17] Heb (B) / LXX “breath”
[18] Heb, Lat / LXX “live”
[19] Heb (B) / LXX “sweet”
[20] Heb, Lat / LXX “write”
[21] Heb (B) / LXX “heart” and may there be peace in our days in Israel, as in the days of old…May his goodness remain constantly with us and may he save us in our days.”
[22] Heb, Lat / LXX “live”
[23] Heb (B) / LXX “heart” and may there be peace in our days in Israel, as in the days of old…May his goodness remain constantly with us and may he save us in our days.”
I called out: “O Lord, you are my father, you are my champion and my savior; do not abandon me in time of trouble, in the midst of storms and dangers. I will ever praise your name and be constant in my prayers to you.”

Thereupon Yahweh heard my voice; he listened to my appeal;

he saved me from evil of every kind and preserved me in time of trouble. For this reason I thank him and I praise him; I bless the name of Yahweh.

CHAPTER 51B

Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of glory, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the guardian of Israel, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the creator of the universe, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the redeemer of Israel, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to him who gathers the dispersed of Israel, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to him who builds his city and his inner-sanctum, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to him who makes a horn to sprout forth for the house of David, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to him who has chosen for his priests the sons of Zadok, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the shield of Abraham, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the rock of Isaac, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the mighty one of Jacob, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to him who has chosen Zion, for his mercy endures forever.

Give thanks to the king over kings, for his mercy endures forever.

He has lifted up the horn of his people, be this his praise from all his faithful ones, from the children of Israel, the people close to him. Praise Yahweh!

CHAPTER 51C

When I was still young and innocent, I sought wisdom openly in my prayer, facing the temple. I asked for her; and until the end I will seek her out.

As the blossoms yielded to ripening grapes, the heart’s joy, my feet kept to the level path because from earliest youth I was familiar with her.

In the short time I inclined my ear and gazed upon her, I met with great captivation. Because from earliest youth I was familiar with her, I persistedently strove for the good,

and I will never be put to shame.

My soul burned with desire for her, never turning my soul back. I became preoccupied with her, and never wearied extolling her.

My hand spread her gate and I came to know her secrets.

For her I purified my hands, in cleanness I attained to her.

At first acquaintance with her, I gained understanding such that I will never forsake her.

My whole being was stirred to seek her; therefore I have made her my prize possession.

Yahweh has granted me my lips as a reward, and my tongue will declare his praises.

Come aside to me, you untutored, and take up lodging in the house of instruction.

How long will you be deprived of wisdom’s food, how long will you let your souls endure such bitter thirst?

I open my mouth and speak of her; gain, at no cost, wisdom for yourselves.

Submit your neck to her yoke, that your soul may accept her teaching. For she is close to those who seek her, and to the one who gives his soul to find her.

See for yourselves! I have labored only a little, but have found much rest.

Acquire but a little instruction; you will win silver and gold through her.

Let your soul rejoice in his mercy, and be not ashamed to give him praise.

Work at your tasks in due season, and in his own time God will give you your reward.

Blessed be Yahweh forever, and praised be his name from generation to generation.

This is the extent of the words of Simeon, the son of Jeshua, who is called son of Sirach. The Wisdom of Simeon, the son of Jeshua, the son of Eleazar, the son of Sirach. May the name of Yahweh be blessed from now to eternity.

[1] [51:18] DSS / LXX add
[11] [51:19] DSS / LXX (for this entire verse) “My soul grappled with wisdom, and in my conduct I was strict; I spread out my hands to the heavens, and lamented my ignorance of her.”
[12] [51:20] Heb / LXX “I guided my soul into her”
[13] [51:21] Heb(B), Syr, most LXX (Lit. “my internal organs”) / some LXX “My heart”
[14] [51:21] LXX / Heb(B), Syr “to look upon her”
[15] [51:22] Heb(B), Syr / LXX “made a”
[16] [51:23] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) “my”
[17] [51:24] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr “of these things”
[18] [51:25] Heb(B), Syr / LXX omit “of her”
[19] [51:26] Heb(B), Syr / LXX omit “and to the one…her”
[20] [51:27] LXX add
[21] [51:28] Heb(B), Syr / LXX “Acquire instruction with a large sum of silver, and you will gain much gold.”
[22] [51:28] LXX / Heb(B), Syr “me”
[23] [51:30] Heb(B), Syr add
[24] [51:30] LXX / Heb(B), Syr “This is far…eternity.” / LXX instead add “Wisdom of Jeshua, son of Sirach” / oldest Syr instead add “Thus far the words of Joshua, the son of Sirach.” / most Syr “The writing of the son of Sirach is finished. [one further add “in the time of the Maccabees.”] (also, OL, two early Armenian omit chapters 44–51)