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. 2 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\(^1\) and writing things. 3 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, 4 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.

5 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. 6 For what was originally said in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. 7 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.

8 For when I arrived in Egypt, in the 38th year of King Ptolemaios the Benefactor, and spent some time there, I found opportunity for\(^2\) no little discipline. 9 Therefore, it seemed highly necessary that I myself should also devote some diligence and love-of-labor to the translation of this book. 10 During that interval of time, I have applied much sleeplessness and experience in order to discipline.

CHAPTER 1

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

6 To whom has wisdom’s root been revealed? And who has known her subtleties? To whom has wisdom’s understanding been disclosed? And who has understood her great experience?\(^6\)

8 There is but one who is wise,\(^7\) exceedingly fearsome, seated upon his throne: it is Yahweh; he created her, and has seen her and numbered her. 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 her.\(^8\)

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.\(^9\) Fear of Yahweh is a gift from Yahweh; also for love he makes firm paths.\(^10\)

13 He who fears Yahweh will fare well at the last; even on the day of his end he will be blest.\(^11\)

14 Fear of Yahweh is a beginning of wisdom, and it is founded with faithful men in the womb. From the foundation of the age, she nestled 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. She will fill her\(^12\) entire house with desirable foods, and her\(^13\) granaries 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.\(^14\)

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.\(^15\)

21 Fear of Yahweh drives away sins; and where it abides, it will turn away all fury.\(^16\)

22 Unrighteous fury cannot be made righteous; for his fury plunges him to his downfall. 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.\(^17\)

26 If you desire wisdom, keep the instructions, and Yahweh will supply her to you; For 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. May you not be made to act-hypocritical before humans;\(^18\) and be paying-attention in what you say from your lips.

30 Do not be exalting yourself lest you may fall and 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,\(^21\) 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.\(^22\)

4 Accept whatever happens to you, and in crushing humiliation\(^23\) be longsuffering; 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.\(^24\)

6 Have faith and he will assist you;

\(^1\) literally “saying”
\(^2\) (2:18) some / most “I found the reproduction of”\(^1\)
\(^3\) [1:1 Hebrew emendation / LXX “from the Lord” (and in all other occurrences where the LXX survives]
\(^4\) [1:3 Lat, Copt, Eth / LXX “breadth, and the abyss and wisdom” / Syr “breadth, the great ocean”\(^1\)]
\(^5\) [1:4 LXX(I) add]
\(^6\) [1:6 LXX(II), Vul add]
\(^7\) [1:8 LXX add]
\(^8\) [1:10 few LXX, Syr “fear”]
\(^9\) [1:10 some LXX(II), Lat add]
\(^10\) [1:12 Syr “joy and perpetual life”]
\(^11\) [1:12] LXX(I) add
\(^12\) [1:15] some LXX “will find favor”
\(^13\) [1:17] most LXX, Lat, Syr / some LXX “theirs”
\(^14\) [1:17] most LXX, Lat, Syr / LXX “their”
\(^15\) [1:18–19] some LXX, most Lat, most Sah add / some LXX, some Lat, some Sah only add “Both are gifts...love him.”
\(^16\) [1:20] Syr “Her roots are perpetual life, and her flowers are length of days.”
\(^17\) [1:21] LXX(I) / LXX(I) omit “The fear of Yahweh...all wrath”
\(^18\) [1:25] Lat omit “Among wisdom’s...to a sinner”
\(^19\) [1:29] some LXX / some LXX, haplological, Lat, Syr “hypocritical in the mouths of humans”
\(^20\) [1:30] some LXX add
\(^21\) [2:1] Syr “come to the fear of God”
\(^22\) [2:13] Syr “...so that you may be wise in your ways”
\(^23\) [2:4] Syr “in disease and poverty”
\(^24\) [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
8 All of you who are fearing Yahweh, put your faith him, and your reward will not make misstep and be lost.²⁹
9 All of you who are fearing Yahweh, hope for good things, and for lasting gladness and mercy.³² 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?³³
Has anyone remained in his fear and been forsaken?³³
Before Yahweh is piteous and merciful, and he forgives sins, and he saves in a season of tribulation.³³

12 Woe to terrified hearts and drooping hands, and a sinner who treads two different paths!³³
13 Woe to a drooping heart, because it does not have faith, This is why he will not be sheltered!³³
14 Woe to all of you whose endurance has perished! And what will all of you whenever Yahweh may visit?³³

15 Those who are fearing Yahweh will not be disobedient to his words; and those who are loving him preserve his ways.³³
16 Those who are fearing Yahweh will seek to please him,⁵ and those who are loving him are filled with the law.³³
17 Those who are fearing Yahweh will prepare their hearts and will humble their souls before him.³³

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 shows⁶ and equal to his name are his works.⁷

CHAPTER 3

1 [{The children of wisdom are the congregation of the righteous: observance 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.¹³}
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.³³
4 The man who is honoring his father will be gladdened by children, and in a day of his being, he will be heard.
5 The man who is glorifying his father will live a long life; and] the man who is honoring his father ([is listening to Yahweh.¹³]
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 blessings¹⁵ may come upon you; for a father’s blessing establishes a root,¹⁶ but a mother’s curse uproots she plant.¹⁷
8 Do not glory in your father’s dishonor, for his dishonor¹⁸ is no glory to you!¹⁹
9 A man’s²³ glory is his father’s glory;²⁴

10 Those who curse their mother multiply sin.²¹
12 My son,²² assist your father when he is old; and do not grieve him as long as he has life.²³
13 Even if his intelligence is failing, have allowance with him; do not shame him with all of your strength.²⁴
14 For kindness to a father will not be forgotten,²⁶ 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 neglects²⁷ his father; accursed of his Creator is he who angers his mother.
17 My son, conduct your affairs with humility,²⁸ and you will be loved more than givers of gifts.²⁹
18 Humble your soul³⁰ 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 sinner³⁴ 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 afterward;³⁶ when he falls, he finds a support.

CHAPTER 4

1 My son, do not rob the poor man of his livelihood;³⁷ and do not force the eyes of the needy to turn away.³⁸
2 May you not grieve²⁹ 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 someone⁴³ to curse you;

2¹ [3:1-2] Heb(A) / LXX “and a mother in disgust is a reproach to her children”
2² [3:2-12] Heb(A) / LXX “child”
2³ [3:12] LXX(I) / Heb(A), Syr “him all the days of your life”
2⁴ [3:13] Heb(A) / LXX “dishonor”
2⁵ [3:15] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “him all the days of your life/your life”
2⁶ [3:14] Heb(C), LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “be blotted out”
2⁷ [3:16] Heb(C), LXX, Heb(A) “deprives”
2⁸ [3:17] LXX “meekness”
2⁹ [3:17] Heb / LXX “loved by acceptable humans”; Vul “loved more than humans of glory”
3⁰ [3:18] Heb / LXX “yourself”
3² [3:25] Heb(A), LXX(I), Heb(A) “make no claims”; / LXX(I) 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 “impudent”
3⁵ [3:29] LXX / Heb(A), Syr add
3⁶ [3:31] LXX / Heb(A) “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 [4:2] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “do not mock the life of the poor man”
3⁹ [4:2] Heb / LXX omit “a spirit of”
4⁰ [4:2] Heb / LXX “And do not be concealing from a pounded soul”
4¹ [-4-5] LXX / Heb(A), Syr omit “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,1 his Maker2 will hear his prayer.

7 Endear your soul3 to the assembly of the poor;4 before a ruler5 bow your head.

8 Give a hearing to the poor man, and return his greeting with courtesy.6

9 Deliver the oppressee 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 master6 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, and do not hide away your wisdom;20 for it is through speech that wisdom becomes known, and knowledge through the tongue's rejoinder.

24 Never gainsay the truth,20 but rather be ashamed of your ignorance.21 Do not be ashamed to acknowledge your guilt,22 and do not struggle against the rushing stream.

25 Do not ascribe your soul7 before an impious human.24

26 But if he fails her, she will abandon him and deliver him into the hands of despisers.16

27 Do not ascribe your soul before an impious human.24

---

1 [4:3] Heb(A) / LXX “; do not add more trouble to a heart that is provoked to anger”
2 [4:6] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “Rock”
3 [4:7] Heb / LXX “yourself”
4 [4:7] Lxx add
5 [4:7] most LXX / some LXX “before rulers” / Heb(A) “before the city’s ruler” / Syr “before the city’s rulers”
6 [4:8] Heb / LXX “answer him with peaceable words”
7 [4:9] Heb(A) / LXX “May you not be faint-hearted in your judgment”
8 [4:10] Heb / LXX, Vul “man”
9 [4:10] Heb(A) “would, and he will be kindly to you, and will deliver you from the pit”
10 [4:11] Heb(A), Syr / LXX “exalts”
11 [4:14] LXX / Syr “his tent”
12 [4:15] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “true”
13 [4:16] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) omit “If one trusts her…inherit her.”
14 [4:17] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) omit “Fear and dread she brings upon him”
16 [4:11-19] LXX / Heb(A), Syr has the segment from “He who obeys…despoiler” in first person.
17 [4:20] Heb(A), LXX / LXX, Syr omit “My son”
18 [4:23] Heb(A) / LXX “or a time of salvation”
19 [4:23] some LXX, Heb, Syr, Lat / most LXX omit “and do not hide away your wisdom”
20 [4:25] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “gainsay God”
21 [4:27] Heb / LXX “yourself”
23 [4:28] Heb(A), LXX, Syr / Heb(A), Lat “righteousness”
24 [4:30] Heb(C), LXX / Heb(A), Syr “dog”
25 [4:30] Heb(A) / LXX “or a faithfinder with your servants”
26 [5:1] Heb(A) add
27 [5:2] Heb(A) / LXX add
28 [5:3] Heb(A) “for the Lord will surely avenge you” / some Greek, Lat “for the Lord will surely avenge you” / other Greek “for the Lord will surely avenge your pride”
29 [5:4] Heb(A) / LXX, Heb(A) “God” / most Greek “the Lord” / LXX(O), Lat “the Most High”
30 [5:4] Heb(A) add
32 [5:6] Heb / LXX “be (or “it”) will atone for”
33 [5:7] Heb(C), LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “; on the day”
34 [5:8] LXX “calamity”
36 [5:9] LXX add
37 [5:11] some Greek add
38 [5:13] Heb / LXX “and be a vocalizer an answer in longsuffering”
39 [5:13] Heb(A) / LXX, Syr “through one who talks”
40 [5:14] Heb (or “double-tongued”) / LXX “slanderer”
41 [5:14] LXX / Heb(A) add
42 [5:14] Heb(A) / LXX, Syr “and harsh reproach”
44 [5:28] Heb(A) / LXX “; walk after the desire of your soul”
6.1 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!”

CHAPTER 6
2 Do not fall into the hand of your soul,  
lest, like fire, it consume your strength;  
your leaves it will eat, your fruits destroy,  
and you will be left a dry tree,  
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;  
who finds one finds a treasure.

15 A faithful friend is beyond price,  
no sum can balance his worth.

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  
do not be a foe instead of a friend;  
with all your strength keep her ways.

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

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

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

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

30 Her yoke is a golden ornament,  
and her bonds are a cord of purple.

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 proverbs 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;  
2 avoid wickedness, and it will turn aside from you.

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

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

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

6 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.

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

8 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 lies,  
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 your fellows;  
remember, his wrath will not delay.

17 Humble your pride very-much;
18 Do not barter a friend for money, nor a dear brother for the gold of Ophir.

19 Do not dismiss a sensible woman; a gracious woman is more precious than coral.3

20 Do not mistreat a servant who faithfully serves, nor a laborer who devotes his soul to you.

21 Let a wise servant be dear to you as your own soul; do not refuse him his freedom.

22 If you have a quadraped, look after them; if they are dependable, keep them.

23 If you have sons, chastise them; bend their necks from childhood.6

24 If you have daughters, keep them chaste, and do not be indulgent to them.

25 Giving your daughter in marriage ends a great task; but give her to a discerning fellow.

26 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.

27 With all your heart honor your father; do not forget your mother’s birthpangs.

28 Remember, of these parents you were born; what can you give them for all they gave you?

29 With all your soul,5 fear God, revere his priests.

30 With all your strength, love your Creator, do not forsake his ministers.

31 Honor God and respect the priest; give him his portion as you have been commanded: First fruits and contributions, due sacrifices and holy offerings.

32 To the poor man also extend your hand, that your blessing may be complete.

33 Be generous to all the living, and do not withhold your kindness from the dead.

34 Do not avoid those who weep, but mourn with those who mourn.

35 Do not neglect to lift up someone’s heart,9 for these things you will be loved.

36 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 rejoice when a man dies; remember, we are all to die.

8 Do not spurn the discourse of the wise, but acquaint yourself with their proverbs; from them you will acquire the training to serve in the presence of princes.

9 Do not reject the tradition of elders which they have learned from their fathers; from it you will obtain the knowledge how to answer in time of need.

10 Do not kindle the coals of a sinner, lest you be consumed in his flaming fire.

11 Do not let the impious man intimidate you; it will set him in ambush against you.

12 Do not lend to one more powerful than yourself; and whatever you lend, count it as lost.

13 Do not go surety beyond your means; think any pledge a debt you must pay.

14 Do not contend at law with a judge, for he will settle it according to his whim.11

15 Do not travel with a ruthless man, lest he weigh you down with calamity; for he will go his own way straight, and through his folly you will perish with him.

16 Do not provoke a quarrel with a quick-tempered man, nor ride with him through the desert, for bloodshed is nothing to him; when there is no one to help you, he will destroy you.

17 Do not take counsel with a fool, for he can keep nothing to himself.

18 Do not do anything before a stranger that should be kept secret, for you know not what it will engender.

19 Open your heart to no man, and do not banish your happiness.12

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 stranger woman, lest you fall into her snare.

4 Do not daily with a female singer, lest you be caught in her wiles.13

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 prostitutes, lest you surrender your inheritance.

7 Do not gaze about the lanes of the city and do not wander through its squares; avert your eyes from a comely woman—do not gaze upon the beauty of another’s woman—through woman’s beauty many perish, for lust for it burns like fire.

9 Do not dine with a mistress; and do not encircle with her while intoxicated, lest your heart shall turn to her and you shall go down in blood to a grave.

10 You [must-not] discard an old friend, because the new one cannot equal him. A new friend is like new wine which you drink with pleasure only when it has aged.

11 Do not envy a sinner’s fame,
12 Do not rejoice at a proud man’s success; remember he will not reach death1 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.

16 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 The word of the wise is in the man of rousing speech, and he who talks rashly is hated.

19.1 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 7

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

7 Odiou 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.

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

10 Why are dust and ashes proud? even during life man’s body decays;

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;

13 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.

16 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.

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 fail short all the more.

12 Another goes his way a weakling 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,

13 lifts up his head and exalts him to the amazement of the many.
Good and evil, life and death, 
poverty and riches, are from Yahweh.  
Wisdom and understanding and knowledge of affairs are from Yahweh, 
love and virtuous paths are from Yahweh.  
Error and darkness were made for sinners at their birth, 
and evil abides with evildoers.  
Yahweh’s gift remains with the pious; 
his favor brings continued success.  
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.  
My son, hold fast to your duty, 
grow old while doing your task.  
Do not admire how sinners live, 
but trust in Yahweh and wait for his light;  
for it is easy in the eyes of Yahweh, 
and he refreshes to the soul of the afflicted.  
The blessing of the Lord is in the lot of the pious man, 
and in due time his hopes bear fruit.  
Do not say: “What do I need? 
What further pleasure can be mine?” 
Do not say: “I am self-sufficient. 
What harm can come to me now?”  
The day of prosperity makes one forget adversity; 
the day of adversity makes one forget prosperity.  
For it is easy with Yahweh on the day of a human’s end, 
repay a human according to his deeds.  
A moment’s affliction brings forgetfulness of past delights; 
when a man dies, his life is revealed. 
Do not be considering a fellow happy before his death, 
because a man is being recognized in his end. 
Do not bring every man into your house, 
do not consider a fellow a friend. 
Do not be considering how sinners live, 
for it is easy in the eyes of Yahweh, 
and he refreshes to the soul of the afflicted.  
The blessing of the Lord is in the lot of the pious man, 
and in due time his hopes bear fruit.  
Do not say: “What do I need? 
What further pleasure can be mine?”  
The talebearer turns good into evil; 
with a spark he sets many coals afire.  
A moment’s affliction brings forgetfulness of past delights; 
when a man dies, his life is revealed.  
The blessing of the Lord is in the lot of the pious man, 
and in due time his hopes bear fruit.  
Do not say: “What do I need? 
What further pleasure can be mine?”  
Though your enemy has caused your tears in his eyes, 
and in the end you appreciate my advice, 
when you groan with regret, as I warned you. 
Who pities a snake charmer when he is bitten, 
or anyone who goes near a living creature with a tooth?
So is it with the companion of the proudest man, 
who is involved in his sins:  
While you stand firm, he makes no bold move; 
but if you slip, he cannot hold back. 
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. 
If evil comes upon you, you will find him at hand; 
feigning to help, he will trip you up. 
then he will nod his head and clap his hands 
and estrange you from your own household. 
CHAPTER 13  
He who touches pitch blackens his hand;  
who associates with an impious man learns his ways.  
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?
The rich man does wrong and boasts of it, 
the poor man is wronged and begs forgiveness. 
As long as the rich man can use you, 
he will enslav[e] you, 
but when you are exhausted, he will abandon you.  
As long as you own anything he will be part of your household, 
then without regret he will impoverish you. 
When he needs something from you he will cajole 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. 
Then twice or three times he will terrify you, 
and finally laugh you to scorn.
When later he sees you he will pass you by,
and shake his head over you.

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

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

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

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.

Mercilessly he will make a laughingstock of your soul,2
and will not refrain from injury or chains.

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

If you hear these things in your sleep, wake up!
With your whole life, love the Lord,
and call on him for your salvation.3

Every living thing loves its own kind,
every man a man like himself.

Every being is drawn to its own kind;
no man associates with his own kind.

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

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

Can there be peace between the hyena and the dog?5
Or can there be peace between the rich and the poor?

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

A proud man6 abhors lowliness;
so does the rich man abhor the poor.

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

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

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

A rich man speaks and all are silent,
his wisdom they extol to the clouds.
A poor man speaks and they say: “Who is that?”
If he slips they cast him down.

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

A mortal’s heart changes his face;7
either for good or for evil,
and a glad heart makes a cheerful countenance.8

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

Happy a mortal who meditates on

All flesh grows old, like a garment;
the old decree is by mistake,10
and of what use is gold to the miser?
But do not be humiliated when you are enjoying yourself.

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,
and she will open his mouth in the midst of the assembly.
3 and give him the water of learning to
4 and reflects on knowledge;
and his handiwork will follow after him.

5 He will find gladness and joy,
who fear Yahweh will do this;

6 who is practiced in the law will come to wisdom.
7 He will lean upon her and not fall,
his heart will trust in her and not be put to shame.
8 And when he slumbers she is by his side;
and she will open his mouth in the midst of the assembly.
9 He will find gladness and joy,
and she will endow him with an everlasting name.
10 Worthless men will not attain to her,
his heart will trust in her and not be put to shame.
11 She is far from the impious,
not to be spoken of by the impious.
12 Unseemly is praise on a sinner’s lips,
for it is not accorded to him by God.

1 [13:8] others “humiliated in your folly
2 [13:12] Heb(A) / LXX(x) “Cruel is he who does not keep words to himself” / LXX(I), Origen, Lat(similar)
3 “Mercilessly he will store up your words as a threat against your life”
4 [13:13] some LXX add
5 [13:17] Heb(A) add
6 [13:20] LXX / Heb(A) “Pride” / Syr omit “A proud man...abhor the poor.”
7 [13:21] LXX / Heb(A) “pushed off from friend to friend”
8 [13:21] LXX “humble”
9 [13:26] Heb, LXX / others add
10 [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
11 [14:2] Heb / LXX omit “a man”
12 [14:5] Heb / LXX “with himself”
13 It is through forgetfulness
14 In the miser’s opinion his share is insufficient;
and though smiling he will probe you.
15 If he slips they cast him down.
16 Your earnings to be divided by lots.
17 He will find gladness and joy,
and she will open his mouth in the midst of the assembly.
18 And when he slumbers she is by his side;
and she will endow him with an everlasting name.
19 Worthless men will not attain to her,
his heart will trust in her and not be put to shame.
20 Unseemly is praise on a sinner’s lips,
for it is not accorded to him by God.

15 It is through forgetfulness
16 If he ever is generous, it is by mistake;
an old decree is by mistake;
and do not keep too far away lest you be forgotten.
17 In the miser’s opinion his share is insufficient;
and though smiling he will probe you.
18 In the miser’s opinion his share is insufficient;
and though smiling he will probe you.
19 In the miser’s opinion his share is insufficient;
and though smiling he will probe you.
20 In the miser’s opinion his share is insufficient;
and though smiling he will probe you.
CHAPTER 16

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

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

3 Do not count on their length of life, nor permit them to be dominating beasts and flying creatures.

4 Through one wise man a city can be filled with people; through a clan of rebels it becomes desolate.

5 Many such things has my eye seen, even more than these has my ear heard.

6 Against a sinful band fire is enkindled, upon a godless people wrath flares out.

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

8 he did not spare the doomed people who were uprooted because of their sin;

9 nor did he spare the sojourners around Lot, who perished for the impiety of their hearts.

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

11 And if there had been but one stiff-necked man, it were a wonder had he gone unpunished.

12 Great as his mercy is his punishment;

13 A criminal does not escape with his plunder;

14 he judges men, each according to his deeds.

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

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

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

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;

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

25 while I pour-out a weighed spirit, and impart accurate knowledge.

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

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

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

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

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

31 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

3 again.

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 impart knowledge in a

7 wisdom and knowledge he fills them;
good and evil he shows to them.

8 He sets his eye upon their hearts, and shows his glorious works to them, and he gave them to boast of his marvels throughout the ages.\(^2\)

9 that they may describe the wonders of his deeds and praise his holy name.

10 He has set before them knowledge, a law of life as their inheritance; so that they may know that they who are alive are now mortal.\(^3\)

11 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.

14 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.

16 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,\(^4\) Over every nation he places a ruler, but Israel is Yahweh’s own portion.

18 Whom, being his firstborn, he cares for with chastisement, and allotting him the light of his love, he does not neglect him.\(^5\)

19 All their actions are clear as the sun to him, his eyes are ever upon their ways.

20 Their wickedness cannot be hidden from him; all of their sins are before Yahweh.

21 But the Lord, who is good and knowing how they are formed, has neither neglected them nor abandoned them, but has spared them.\(^6\)

22 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.\(^7\)

23 Later he will rise up and repay them, and require each one of them as they deserve.

24 But to the one who changes his mind, he provides a way back, he encourages those who are losing hope!

25 Return to Yahweh and give up sin, pray to him and make your offenses few.

26 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.\(^8\)

27 Who in the Netherworld can glorify the Most High in place of the living who offer their praise?

28 No more can the dead give praise than those who have never lived;\(^9\) those who are alive and well are the ones who glorify Yahweh.

29 How great the mercy of Yahweh, his forgiveness of those who return to him!

30 The like cannot be found in men for none of the sons of men are immortal.

31 Is anything brighter than the sun? Yet it can be eclipsed. How obscure then the thoughts of flesh and blood!

32 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;

2 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.\(^10\)

4 Whom has he made\(^1\) equal to describing his works, and who can probe his mighty deeds?

5 Who can measure his majestic power, or exhaust the tale of his mercies?

6 One cannot lessen, nor increase, nor penetrate the wonders of Yahweh.

7 When a man ends he is only beginning, and when he stops he is still bewildered.

8 What is man, of what worth is he? the good, the evil in him, what are these?

9 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.\(^12\)

10 Like a drop of sea water, like a grain of sand, so are these few years among the days of eternity.

11 That is why Yahweh is patient with men and showers upon them his mercy.

12 He sees and understands that their death is grievous, and so he forgives them all the more.

13 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.

15 My son, add no reproach to your charity, nor spoil any gift by harsh words.

16 Like dew that abates a burning wind, so does a word improve a gift.

17 Sometimes the word means more than the gift; both are offered by a kindly man.

18 Only a fool upbraids before giving; a grudging gift wears out the expectant eyes.

19 Be informed before speaking; before sickness prepare the cure.

20 Before you are judged, seek merit for yourself, and at the time of visitation you will have a ransom.

21 Before you have fallen,\(^13\) humble yourself; when you have sinned, show a change-of-mind.

22 Do not delay to forsake sins, do not neglect it till you are in distress.

23 Do not set a time for abandoning sin; remember that death will not delay.\(^14\)

22 Let nothing prevent the prompt payment of your vows; do not wait to fulfill them when you are dying.\(^15\)

23 Before making a vow have the means to fulfill it; do not be one who puts Yahweh to the test.

24 Think of wrath and a day of an end.

25 Remember the time of hunger in the time of plenty, poverty and want in the day of wealth.

26 Between morning and evening the weather changes; before Yahweh all things are fleeting.

27 A wise man is circumspect in all things; when sin is rife he keeps himself from wrongdoing.

28 Any learned man should make wisdom known, and he who attains to her should declare her praise; those trained in her words must show their wisdom, dispensing sound proverbs like life-giving waters.

29 Better is confidence in the one Lord, than clinging with a dead heart to a dead idol.\(^16\)

30 Do not go after your lusts, but keep your desires in check.

31 If-at-any-time you might supply your soul with good-pleasures of desire, it will make you the sport of your enemies.

32 Have no joy in the pleasures of a moment which bring on poverty redoubled.

33 Do not become someone who is a glutton and imbibing.\(^17\)

\(^{1}\) [17:8] LXX “He put the fear of him into” // Syr omit “With wisdom and knowledge…upon their hearts.”

\(^{2}\) [17:8] LXX(I)I add

\(^{3}\) [17:11] LXX(I)I add

\(^{4}\) [17:15] LXX(I)I add

\(^{5}\) [17:18] LXX(I)I add

\(^{6}\) [17:21] LXX(I)I add

\(^{7}\) [17:22] LXX(I)I add

\(^{8}\) [17:26] LXX(I)I add

\(^{9}\) [18:28] Syr omit “No more can the dead…never lived”

\(^{10}\) [18:2-3] LXX(I)I add

\(^{11}\) [18:4] LXX(I)I, Lat, Syr / LXX(I) “He has made no one”

\(^{12}\) [18:9] LXX(I)I add

\(^{13}\) [18:21] Syr / LXX “before you get sick”

\(^{14}\) [18:21] Syr / all others omit “Do not delay to forsake sins; do not neglect it till you are in distress.”

\(^{15}\) [18:21] Syr omit “Let nothing prevent the prompt payment of your vows; do not delay to forsake sins, do not neglect it till you are in distress.”

\(^{16}\) [18:29] LXX(I)I add

\(^{17}\) [18:33] Heb / LXX “Do not be a destitute man, making-engagements from out of looting.”
and with nothing in your purse,
for you will be plotting against your own life.1

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

3 He who lightly trusts in them has no sense,
and he who strays after them sins against his own life.6

4 Rottenness and worms will possess him,
for contumacious desire destroys its owner.7

CHAPTER 19

5 He who goats in wickedness will be condemned,
but one who resists pleasures preserves his life.

6 He who controls his tongue will live without strife,9
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,10 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.12

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.13

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.14

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.15

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.

26 There is the wicked man who is bowed in grief,
but is full of guile within;

27 he bows his head and feigns to not hear,

but when not observed, he will take advantage of you:

28 Even though his lack of strength keeps him from sinning,
when he finds the opportunity, he will do harm.

29 One can tell a man by his appearance;
a wise man is known as such when first met.

30 A man’s attire, his hearty laughter and his gait,
proclaim him for what he is.

CHAPTER 20

1 An admonition can be inopportune,
and a man may be wise to hold his peace.

2 It is much better to admonish than to lose one’s temper,
and for one who admits his fault will be kept from disgrace.

3 Like a eunuch lusts for intimacy with a virgin
is he who does right under compulsion.

4 One man is silent and is thought wise,
another is talkative and is disliked.

5 One man is silent because he has nothing to say;
another is silent, biding his time.

6 A wise man is silent until the right time comes,
but a boasting fool ignores the proper time.

7 He who talks too much is detested;
he who usurps authority is hated.

8 How good it is to have a change-of-mind when rebuked,
for this is how you will flee deliberate sin!17

9 Some misfortunes bring success;
some things gained are a man’s loss.

10 Some gifts do one no good,
and some must be paid back double.

11 Humiliation can follow fame,
while from obscurity a man can lift up his head.

12 A man may buy much for little,
but pay for it seven times over.

13 A wise man makes his soul popular by a few10 words,
but fools pour out their blashmishments in vain.

14 A gift from a rogue will do you no good,
and likewise with the envious who give under compulsion,20
for in his eyes his one gift is equal to seven.21

15 He gives little and criticizes often,
and like a crier he shouts aloud.
He lends today, he asks it back tomorrow;
hateful indeed is such a man to God and men.22

16 A fool has no friends,
nor thanks for his generosity;
those who eat his bread have an evil tongue.

17 How many times they laugh him to scorn!
for he has not honestly received what he has,
and what he does not have is unimportant to him.23

18 A fall to the ground is less sudden than a slip of the tongue;
that is why the downfall of the wicked comes so quickly.

19 Insipid food is the untimely tale;
the unruly are always ready to offer it.24

20 A proverb when spoken by a man
may not make you burst.

21 But when not observed, he will take advantage of you:

22 Even though his lack of strength keeps him from sinning,
when he finds the opportunity, he will do harm.

23 One can tell a man by his appearance;
a wise man is known as such when first met.

24 A lie is a foul blot in a man,
yet is constantly on the lips of the unruly.

25 Better a thief than an inveterate liar,
yet both will suffer disgrace;
a liar’s way leads to dishonor, 
    his shame remains ever with him.

A wise man advances himself by his words, 
    a prudent man pleases the great.

He who works his land has abundant crops, 
    he who pleases the great is pardoned his faults. Favors and gifts blind the eyes of the wise, like a muzzle over the mouth they silence reproof. Hidden wisdom and unseen treasure— of what value is either? Better the man who hides his folly than the one who hides his wisdom. Unworeid endurance in seeking the Lord, is better than a masterless charioteer of one’s own life.

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 too it praud’s home is destroyed. 
4 Violence and arrogance wipe out wealth; 
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. 
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; 
14 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 chain of gold is learning to a wise man, like a bracelet on his right arm. 

CHAPTER 22
1 The sluggard is like a stone in the mud; everyone hisses at his disgrace. 
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. 
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, veil over the ignoble birth of their own parents. 
8 Children who are disdainfully and boorishly haughty besmirch the nobility of their own kindred. 
9 Teaching a fool is like gluing a broken pot, or disturbing a man in the depths of sleep; he talks with a slumberer who talks with a fool, for when it is over, he will say, “What was that?” 
10 Weep over the dead man, for his light has gone out; weep over the fool, for sense has left him. Weep but a little over the dead man, for he is at rest; but worse than death is the life of a fool. 
11 Seven days of mourning for the dead, but for the wicked fool a whole lifetime. 
12 Speak but seldom with the stupid man, do not be the companion of a brute, for he will treat you with total and callous disregard; beware of him lest you have trouble and be spattered when he shakes himself; turn away from him and you will find rest and not be wearied by his lack of sense. 
13 What is heavier than lead, and what is its name but “Fool”? 
14 Sand and salt and an iron mass are easier to bear than a stupid man. 
15 Masonry bonded with wooden beams is not loosened by an earthquake; neither is a resolve constructed with careful deliberation shaken in a moment of fear. 
16 A resolve that is backed by prudent understanding is like the polished surface of a smooth wall. 
17 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;
20 he who pierces the heart bares its feelings.
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.
23 Make fast friends with a man while he is poor;
24 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.\[23:27\] 
25 From a friend in need of support, no one need hide in shame;
26 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?

23:1 Yahweh, Father and Master of my life, permit me to not fall by them!
22:1 Yahweh, Father and Master of my life, do not permit me to be estranged by my friends.
22:24 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.

A man who swears often heaps up obligations; so one who swears continually by the holy name just as a slave who is constantly under scrutiny,Give heed, my children, to the instruction that I pronounce, that nothing is better than the fear of Yahweh, nothing more salutary than to obey his commandments.

12 There are words which merit death; they may 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 to sin?\([23:18-19]\)
19 He is not mindful of the Most High.\([23:18~19]\)
20 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.
21 The One who knows all things before they exist still knows them all after they are made.
22 Such a man will be punished in the streets of the city; when he least expects it, he will be apprehended.
23 So also with a woman who leaves her husband and offers as heir her son by a stranger.
24 First, she has disobeyed the law of the Most High. Secondly, she has wronged her husband. Thirdly, in her wanton audacity she has borne children by another man.
25 Such a woman will be dragged before the assembly, and her punishment will extend to her children.
26 Her children will not take root; her branches will not bring forth fruit.
27 She will leave an accursed memory; her disgrace will never be blotted out.

28 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.\([23:18~19]\)

CHAPTER 24
1 Wisdom will praise her own soul, before her own people she proclaims her glory;
2 in the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth, in the presence of his hosts she declares her worth:
3 “From the mouth of the Most High I came forth, 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;\([23:12]\) they may 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 to sin?\([23:18-19]\)
19 He is not mindful of the Most High.\([23:18~19]\)
20 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.
21 The One who knows all things before they exist still knows them all after they are made.
22 Such a man will be punished in the streets of the city; when he least expects it, he will be apprehended.
23 So also with a woman who leaves her husband and offers as heir her son by a stranger.
24 First, she has disobeyed the law of the Most High. Secondly, she has wronged her husband. Thirdly, in her wanton audacity she has borne children by another man.
25 Such a woman will be dragged before the assembly, and her punishment will extend to her children.
26 Her children will not take root; her branches will not bring forth fruit.
27 She will leave an accursed memory; her disgrace will never be blotted out.

28 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.\([23:18~19]\)
It sparkles, like the Nile, with knowledge,
It overflows, like the Pishon, with wisdom
For the Lord Almighty alone is God,
Do not grow weary of striving
All this is true of the book of the Most High's covenant,

I have struck root among the glorious people,
I ministered before him in the holy tent,
Saying, 'In Jacob
in the highest heavens did I dwell,
and through all ages I will not cease to be.
I will make my garden plot intoxicated;
then this stream of mine, a sea.
Thus do I send my teachings forth shining like the dawn,
to become known afar off.
Thus do I pour out 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;
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 like a donkey yoked with an ox.
Happy is he who does not sin with his tongue,
and he who speaks to attentive ears.
He who finds wisdom is great indeed,
but not greater than he who fears Yahweh.
Fear of Yahweh surpasses all else.
its possessor is beyond compare.
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of loving him,
and fidelity is the beginning of clinging to him.

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 cline to him so that he may reforse you,
the Lord Almighty alone is God,
and apart from him there is no savior."
It overflows, like the Pishon, with wisdom—like the Hiddekel in the days of the new fruits.
It runs over, like the Euphrates, with understanding, like the Jordan at harvest time.
It sparkles, like the Nile, with knowledge,
and like the odor of incense in the holy place.

CHAPTER 25
1 With three things I am delighted,
for they are beautiful to God and to men;
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 like a donkey yoked with an ox.
Happy is he who does not sin with his tongue,
and he who speaks to attentive ears.
He who finds wisdom is great indeed,
but not greater than he who fears Yahweh.
Fear of Yahweh surpasses all else.
its possessor is beyond compare.
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of loving him,
and fidelity is the beginning of clinging to him.

There is scarce any evil like that in a woman;
9 Wickedness changes a woman's looks,
With a dragon or a lion I would rather dwell
than in her that wears gold and pearl.
may she fall to the lot of the sinner!

20 Like a sandy hill to aged feet
is a railing woman to a quiet man.

21 Do not stumble through a woman’s beauty,
and do not be greedy for her wealth;¹

22 harsh is the slavery, great² the shame,
when a woman supports her master.³

23 Depressed mind, saddened face, broken heart—
this from a wicked woman.
Feeble hands and quaking knees—
from a wife who brings no happiness to her master.

24 In woman was sin’s beginning,
and because of her we all die.

25 May you 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 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;
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 slanders in public, trial before all the people,
and lying testimony are harder to bear than death,
a woman jealous against another woman is pain of heart and mourning,
and a whip 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-immortality of a woman will be known.

10 Keep a strict watch over an unruly wife,⁵
lest, finding an opportunity, she makes use of it;
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 faithful 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,
and there with confidence sow the seed of your increase;
so will you have your offspring around you,
and they will grow up in confidence.

22 A prostitute is thought of as spittle,
and a married woman is a tower of death to those who embrace her.

23 An impious woman will be given as a portion to the lawless man,
but a devout wife will be given to the man who fears the Lord.

24 A shameless hussy wears out reproach,
but an exemplary daughter will be modest even before her husband.

25 The unruly wife will be thought of as a bitch,
but the one with a sense of shame fears the Lord.

26 The woman who respects her husband will be seen as wise by everyone,
but the one who proudly scorns her spouse will be known as impious by all.

Happy is the man of a good wife:
each year of his life counts for two.
A complaint by a wife should be made in meekness,
and show itself in a slight flush.⁸

27 But a loud-mouthed, scolding wife
is a battle trumpet signaling attack;
and any man who answers that challenge
will spend his life amid the turbulence of war.⁹

28 These two bring grief to my heart,
and the third arouses my horror:
A noble man¹⁰ reduced to want;
illustrious men held in contempt;
and the man who passes from righteousness to sin,
for whom Yahweh makes ready the sword.

CHAPTER 27

29 A merchant can hardly remain upright,
nor a shopkeeper free from sin;
many have committed sin for profit,¹¹
and the struggle for wealth blinds the eyes.

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 inconstant.

12 Limit the time you spend among fools,
but frequent the company of thoughtful men.

13 The conversation of fools¹² is offensive,
their laughter is wanton guilt.

14 Their oath-filled talk makes the hair stand on end,
their brawls make one stoop 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;
for as an enemy might kill a man,
you have killed your neighbor’s friendship.

¹ [25:21] Heb, Syr / LXX “and may you not yearn-after a woman”
² [25:22] LXX / Syr “dire”
³ [26:2] LXX / Heb / Syr “man”
⁴ [26:28] Syr / LXX “daughter”
⁵ [26:15] one LXX “A modest and faithful” / Lat “A holy and modest”
⁶ [26:18] Syr / Lat / most LXX “butze”
⁷ [26:26] Syr add “Complaint...light flush.”
⁸ [26:12] LXX(E) / Syr, Clement of Alexandria add “for a trifle”
⁹ [27:1] LXX / others “for a trifle”
¹⁰ [27:13] LXX, Syr / Lat “sinners”
And like a flying-creature released out of your hand, you have let your friend go and you will not recapture him; do not follow him, for he is far away, he has fled like a gazelle from the trap. A wound can be bound up, and an insult forgiven, but he who betrays secrets does hopeless damage. He who has shifty eyes plots mischief, and no one can ward him off. 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. There is nothing that I hate so much, and Yahweh hates him as well. As a stone falls back on him who throws it up, so a blow struck in treachery injures more than one. 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. Mockery and abuse will be the lot of the proud, and vengeance lies in wait for them like a lion. The trap seizes those who rejoice in pitfalls, and pain will consume them before they die. Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hedges them tight.

The vengeful will suffer Yahweh’s vengeance, for he keeps a strict account of their sins.

CHAPTER 28
2 Forgive your neighbor’s injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven. Should a man nourish anger against his fellows and expect healing from Yahweh? Should a man refuse mercy to his fellows, yet seek pardon for his own sins? If he who is but flesh cherishes wrath, who will forgive his sins? Remember your last days, set enmity aside; remember death and decay, and cease from sin.

Avoid strife and your sins will be fewer, for a quarrelsome man kindles disputes, commits the sin of disrupting friendship and sows discord among those at peace. The more wood, the greater the fire, the more underlying it, the more strife will increase; the greater a man’s strength, the sterner his anger, the greater his power, the greater his wrath.

Pitch and resin make fires flare up, and insistent quarrels provoke bloodshed. If you blow upon a spark, it quickens into flame, if you spit on it, it dies out; yet both you do with your mouth! Cursed be gossips and the double-tongued, for they destroy the peace of many. A meddlesome tongue subverts many, and makes them refugees among the peoples; it destroys walled cities, and overthrows powerful dynasties.

A meddlesome tongue can drive virtuous women from their homes and rob them of the fruit of their toil; whoever heeds it has no rest, nor can he dwell in peace.

A blow from a whip raises a welt, but a blow from the tongue smashes bones; many have fallen by the edge of the sword, but not as many as by the tongue. 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! Dire is the death it inflicts, besides which even the Netherworld is a gain; it will not take hold among the pious nor scourch him in its flame.

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. As you hedge round your vineyard with thorns, set barred doors over your mouth, as you seal up your silver and gold, so balance and weigh your words. 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.

CHAPTER 29
1 He who lends to his neighbor does a kindness, and he who holds out a helping hand fulfills the precepts. Lend to your neighbor in his hour of need, and pay back your neighbor when a loan falls due; keep your promise, be honest with him, and you will always come by what you need. Many a man who asks for a loan adds to the burdens of those who help him; 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.

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. Therefore, Many refuse to lend, not out of meanness, but from fear of being cheated.

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.

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. 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.

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.

The wicked turn a pledge on their behalf into misfortune, and the ingrate abandons his protector; going surety has ruined many prosperous men and tossed them about like waves of the sea.

---

1 [27:22] most LXX / LXX[II] “", whoever knows him will give him a wide berth."
2 [27:25] Vul “pieces // And when they are hedged in when thorns, // lest they should receive words of envious detraction."  
3 [28:10] LXX “burn”  
4 literally “manly”
has exiled men of prominence
and sent them wandering through foreign lands.

19 Through surety, the sinner comes to grief,
and he who undertakes too much falls into lawsuits.

20 Go surety for your neighbor according to your means,
but take care lest you fall thereby.

21 Life’s prime needs are water, bread, and clothing,
a house, too, for decent privacy.

22 Better a poor man’s fare under the shadow of one’s own roof
than sumptuous banquets among strangers.

23 Be it little or much, be content with what you have,
and you will hear no reproach from your family.  

24 A miserable life it is to go from house to house,
for as a guest you dare not open your mouth.

25 The visitor has no thanks for filling the cups;
besides, you will hear these bitter words:

26 “Come here, stranger, set the table,
give me to eat the food you have!

27 Away, stranger, for one more worthy;
for my brother’s visit I need the room!”

28 Painful things to a sensitive man
are abuse at home and insults from his creditors.

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,

5 whom he looks upon through life with joy,
and even in the end, without regret:

6 the avenger he leaves against his foes,
and the one to repay his friends with kindness.

7 He who spoils his son will have wounds to bandage,
and will quake inwardly at every outcry.

8 A colt untamed turns out stubborn;
a son left to himself grows up unruly.

9 Pamper your child and he will be a terror for you,
indulge him and he will bring you grief.

10 Do not share in his frivolity lest you share in his sorrow.

11 Do not give him his own way in his youth,
and do not close your eyes to his follies.  

12 Bend him to the yoke when he is young,
thrust his sides while he is still small,
est he become stubborn, disobey you,
and leave you breathing out your soul.  

13 Discipline your son, make heavy his yoke,
lest his folly humiliate you.

14 Better a poor man strong and robust,
than a rich man with wasted frame.

15 More precious than gold is health and well-being,
a good spirit rather than coral.

16 No treasure greater than a healthy body;
no happiness, than a joyful heart!

17 Death is preferable to a bitter life,

18 and unending sleep to constant illness.  

19 Dainties set before one who cannot eat
are like the offerings placed before a tomb.

So it is with he who is punished by the Lord,
who groans at the good things his eyes behold;
like the eunuch,
who groans when embracing a young-woman?  

20 so is he who does right under compulsion;
who is confirmed when abiding with an unmarried-woman,
and Yahweh will require it at his hand.  

21 Do not give your soul over into grief,
do not torment yourself with brooding.

22 A glad heart is the very life of man,
cheerfulness prolongs his days.

23 Distract your soul, renew your courage,
drive resentment far away from you;

24 Envy and anger shorten one’s life,
worries brings on premature old age.

25 Who is one who is cheerful and gay while at table
benefits from his food.

CHAPTER 31

1 Keeping watch over riches wastes the flesh,
and the care of wealth drives away rest.

2 Concern for one’s livelihood banishes slumber;
and a serious illness carries off repose.  

3 The rich man labors to pile up wealth,
and his only rest is wanton pleasure;

4 the poor man toils for a meager subsistence,
and if ever he rests, he finds himself in want.

5 The lover of gold will not be free from sin,
for he who pursues wealth is led astray by it.

6 Many have been ensnared by gold,
though destruction lay before their eyes;

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,

10 for he has been tested by gold and come off safe,
and this remains his glory;
he could have sinned but did not,
could have done evil but would not,

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 glutony is evil.
No creature is greedier than the eye:
therefore it weeps for any ca

14 Recognize that your neighbor feels as your soul
in what he eats, not what he does for the same dish.

15 toward what he eats, do not put out a hand;
nor reach when he does for the same dish.

12 [30:20] LXX(I), Lat, Syr, Heb(B) / LXX(I) omit “like the eunuch…young-woman!”
13 [30:20] LXX(II), Heb(I), Syr, Heb(B) add
14 [30:20] Heb(B), Syr add
15 [31:2] LXX “Delude”
16 [31:2] LXX / others omit “and rebuke carries off a serious illness”
17 [31:2] Heb(B) / LXX omit “A faithful comrade…as a soul.”
18 [31:5] Heb, Syr / LXX “pursues destruction will be filled”
19 [31:17] LXX / others omit “unending sleep”
20 HEBREW TEXT MENTIONS SOMETHING ABOUT ‘THE NETHERWORLD HERE
21 [30:18] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) “before an idol”
22 [31:14] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) “basket”
16 Eat what is set before you like a well brought-up person, 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, 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 wisely fed with food, and this testimony to his singleness is lasting.
25 And also do not gain-power for yourself on the wine, for new-wine has caused many to fall.
26 As a furnace examines the work of a smith, so does the wine in-regard to the chaff of scorners.
As a discerning man looks at one work on another, so does an intoxicating-drink in-regard to striving scorners.
27 Who does not know that the wine is very life for a mortal, if he shall drink in moderation.
Who has life who lacks the wine which was created from the beginning for joy to humans?
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, bitterness of soul, is much wine being drunk in irritation and conflict.
Increasing foaming-wine is a snare for a fool; it lessens his strength and multiplies his wounds.
30 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, but with the guests be as one of themselves; take care of them first before you sit down; 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, do not pour out discourse. And why stop the music in order to pour out discourse? And why flaunt your wisdom at the wrong time?
5 Like a seal upon a purse full of gold, is a song to God at a drinking-party of the wine. 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.
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.
10 When it is time to leave, do not tarry; be off for home!
11 Take your ease, 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.
13 He who seeks God 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.
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.
20 Do not be overconfident even on smooth roads, and be careful on all your paths.
21 Guard your soul in whatever you do, for in this way you will keep the commandments.
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.
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 one day more important than another, when it is the sun that lights up every day?
8 It is due to Yahweh’s wisdom that they differ; it is through him that the seasons and feasts come and go.
9 Some he dignifies and sanctifies, and others he lists as ordinary данной.
10 It is through him that the seasons and feasts come and go.
11 So too, all men are of clay, for from earth Adam was formed.
12 No evil can harm the man who fears Yahweh; through trials, again and again he is safe.
13 He who hates the law is without wisdom, and is tossed about like a boat in a storm.
14 The prudent man trusts in the word of Yahweh, and the law is dependable for him as a divine oracle.
15 Prepare your words and you will be listened to; draw upon your training, and then give your answer.
16 Like the wheel of a cart is the mind of a fool; his thoughts revolve in circles.
17 A fickle friend is like the stallion that neighs, no matter who the rider.
18 Why is one day more important than another, when it is the sun that lights up every day?
19 It is due to Yahweh’s wisdom that they differ; it is through him that the seasons and feasts come and go.
20 Some he dignifies and sanctifies, and others he lists as ordinary days.
21 So too, all men are of clay, for from earth Adam was formed.
22 No evil can harm the man who fears Yahweh; through trials, again and again he is safe.
23 He who hates the law is without wisdom, and is tossed about like a boat in a storm.
24 The prudent man trusts in the word of Yahweh, and the law is dependable for him as a divine oracle.
25 Prepare your words and you will be listened to; draw upon your training, and then give your answer.
26 Like the wheel of a cart is the mind of a fool; his thoughts revolve in circles.
27 A fickle friend is like the stallion that neighs, no matter who the rider.
28 Why is one day more important than another, when it is the sun that lights up every day?
29 It is due to Yahweh’s wisdom that they differ; it is through him that the seasons and feasts come and go.
30 Some he dignifies and sanctifies, and others he lists as ordinary days.
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. 14 As evil contrasts with good, and death with life, so are sinners in contrast with the pious and darkness with the light; 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 1 last, as someone gleaning behind the vintage; since in Yahweh’s blessing I proceeded; and as someone harvesting I filled a wine press, 17 I would inform you that I have not toiled only for myself, but for every seeker after wisdom. 18 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 3 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; 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 tarnish 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. 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; 28 let his hands be idle 4 and he will seek to be free. 29 Force him to work that he be not idle, 5 for idleness is an apt teacher of mischief. 30 Put him to work, for that is what befits him; 6 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, 7 for you need him as you need 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 bore aloft by dreams. 2 Like a man who grasps for shadows or chases the wind, is the one who puts trust in dreams. 3 What is seen in dreams is 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;  
6 what you already expect, the mind depicts.  7 Unless it be a vision specially sent by the Most High, do not fix your heart on it; 8 for dreams have led many astray, and those who believed in them have perished. 9 The law is fulfilled without fail, and perfect wisdom is found in the mouth of the faithful man. 10 An educated man gains wide knowledge; a man of experience speaks sense. 11 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; 15 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 buys up the spirits, brings a sparkle to the eyes, gives health and life and blessings.  
21 If one sacrifices ill-gotten goods, the offering is tainted. 22 The presents 8 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: 27 he sheds blood who denies the laborer his wages. 28 If one 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 pleasures 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 9 show a cheerful countenance, and pay your tenths in a spirit of joy. 9 Give to the Most High 10 as he has given to you,
He who gives to the poor makes the Lord his debtor, and who is the source of recompenses if not he?

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

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 favors.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

till he requites a mortal according to his deeds, and repays a human according to his thoughts;
till he defends the cause of his people, and gladdens them by his mercy.

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!

2 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 you, 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, humble the enemy, scatter the foe.

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,

11 rouse your anger, pour out wrath,

12 till he breaks the backs of the merciless and wrecks vengeance upon the proud;

13 till he destroys the haughty root and branch, and crushes the scepter of the wicked;

14 till he requites a mortal according to his deeds, and repays a human according to his thoughts;

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

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

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 afar 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, but some counsel ways of their own.

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, who you are sure keeps the commandments; whose mind is like your mind, and will feel for you if you fall.  

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, limited are the days of one man’s life, when a man is wise to his people’s advantage, for the Lord has withheld the gift of grace.  

22 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: limited are the days of one man’s life, but the life of Israel is days without number.  

25 One wise to his own soul has full enjoyment, and all who see him praise him; but the life of Israel is days without number.  

27 My child, while you are living, govern your soul, so that you allow it not what is bad for you; because not all things are good to every person, and not every soul chooses every kind of thing.  

29 Do not be drawn after every enjoyment, neither become a glutton for choice foods, for sickness comes with overeating, and glutony brings on biliousness.  

31 Through lack of self-control many have died, but the aberrant 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.  

9 My son, when you are ill, do not delay, but pray to God, who will heal you:  

10 Flee wickedness; let your hands be just, cleanse your heart of every sin; offer your sweet-smelling sacrifice and a memorial, a portion of choice flour, as much as you can afford.  

12 Then give a healer his place for the Lord created him; do not let him leave; for you need him too.  

13 There are times when recovery lies in his hands, and he too beseeches the Lord that his diagnosis may be correct and his treatment bring about a cure.  

14 He who is a sinner toward his Maker will be defiant toward a healer.  

16 My son, shed tears for one who is dead with wailing and bitter lamentation as is proper, prepare the body, do not absent yourself from his burial:  

17 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.  

19 In affliction, grief persists; the curse that ranks makes for a wretched life.  

20 Do not turn your thoughts to him again; cease to recall him; think rather of the end.  

21 Do not recall him, for there is no hope of his return; it will not help him, but will do you harm.  

22 Remember that his fate will also be yours; for him it was yesterday, for you today.  

23 With the departed dead, let memory fade; rally your courage, once his soul has left.  

24 The scribe’s profession increases his wisdom for himself, whoever is free from toil can become a wise man.  

25 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?

26 His care is for plowing furrows, and he keeps a watch on the beasts in the stalls.

27 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.

28 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.

29 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.

30 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.

31 All these men are skilled with their hands, each one an expert at his own task;
only 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;
so they do not occupy the judge’s bench, nor can they set forth decisions or judgments, they cannot expound the instruction of wisdom,
or are they found among the rulers.

34 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-though-comprehension in a law of the Most High!

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

4 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.

5 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.

6 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-forth to Yahweh.

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

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

9 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.

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

12 Once more I will set forth my theme to shine like the moon in its fullness!
13 Listen, my faithful children: open up your petals, like roses planted near running waters;
14 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!

15 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:

16 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.

17 At his word the waters become still as in a flask; he had but to speak and the reservoirs were made.
18 He has but to command and his will is done; nothing can limit his achievement.

19 The works of all men are present to him; not a thing escapes his eye.
He has but to speak and the reservoirs were made.

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

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

22 His blessing overflows as the canal; and as the river, it saturates the surface of the earth.
23 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.

26 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 grape, and oil, and cloth;
for the good all these are good, but for the wicked they turn out evil.

28 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.

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

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 household for the proper time;1

31 in doing his bidding they rejoice, in their assignments they do not disobey his command.

32 So from the first I took my stand, and wrote down as my theme:

33 the works of the Lord are all of them good; every need when it comes he fills.

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

35 So now with full joy of heart proclaim and bless the name of the Holy One.2

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,4

2 his thoughts, the fear in his heart, and his troubled forebodings until the day of their end—3

whether he sits on a lofty throne or grovels in dust and ashes,

4 whether he bears a crown and head ornament6 or is wrapped in the coarsest of cloaks—7

5 are of wrath and envy, trouble and dread, terror of death, fury and strife.

6 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 eye sees, like a fugitive being pursued;

7 as he reaches safety,8 he wakes up astonished that there was nothing to fear.

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

9 Plague and bloodshed, fiery heat and drought,10 plunder and ruin, famine11 and death:

10 for the wicked, these were created evil, and because of them destruction hastens.12

11 All that is of earth returns to earth, and what is from above returns above.13

12 All that comes from bribes or injustice will be wiped out, but loyalty remains for ages.14

13 Wealth out of wickedness is like a wadi in spate: like a mighty stream with lightning and thunder, which, in its rising, rolls along the stones, but suddenly, once and for all, comes to an end.

15 The offshoot of violence will not flourish, for the root of unclean men is on a sheer rock;15

16 or they are like reeds on the riverbank, withered before all other plants;

17 but goodness, like eternity, will never be cut off,16 and righteousness endures forever.

18 Wine and intoxicating-drink will sweeten life,17 but better than either is finding a treasure.

19 A child or a city will preserve one’s name, but better than either, attaining wisdom.

Sheepfolds and orchards bring flourishing health;18 but better than either, a devoted woman.

Wine and intoxicating-drink9 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 pure11 tongue.

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

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

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

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

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.

Fear of God is like a delight19 of blessing; its canopy, all that is glorious.

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

29 when one has to look to another’s table, his life is not really a life.

His neighbor’s delicacies bring revulsion of soul to one who understands inward feelings.

30 In the soul20 of the shameless man begging is sweet, but within him it burns like fire.

CHAPTER 41

1 O death! how bitter the thought of you for the man living at peace in his home,25 for the man unrefined and always successful, who still can enjoy life’s pleasures.26

2 O death! how welcome your sentence to the weak27 man who is failing in strength, the man who is tottering and always rebuffed, devoid of sight, and with vanished hope.

3 Do not fear death’s decree for you;28 remember, it embraces those before you, and those after.

4 This is the end29 for all flesh from God; why then should you reject the will of the Most High?

5 Whether one has lived ten years, a hundred, or a thousand, in the Netherworld he has no claim on life.

6 A reprobate line are the children of sinners, and restless offspring are in the homes of the wicked.

7 Their dominion is lost to sinners’ children, and reproach abides with their descendants.

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

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

10 If you have children, calamity will seize them; you will beget them only for groaning. When you stumble, there is lasting joy; at death, you become a curse.31

11 Whatever is of nothing returns to nothing, but too much is from void to void.

12 Man’s body is a fleeting thing, but a virtuous name will never be blotted out.3

---

1 [39:38] DSS(frag), Heb(B) / LXX omit “all these were...proper time”

2 [39:35] Heb(B) / LXX “of the Lord”

3 [40:1] other LXX, Lat “they are buried in”

4 [40:1] Heb / LXX omit “the living”

5 [40:2] Heb(B) omit “his thoughts...he dies”

6 [40:4] Heb(B) / LXX “bears purple and a crown” / Syr “bears a crown”

7 [40:4] Heb(B) (lit. “a garment of hair”) / Syr “a garment of poverty”

8 [40:6] Heb / LXX “heart”

9 [40:7] Heb(B) (lit. “in the time of his deliverance”) / LXX “in the time of his need”

10 [40:4] Heb / LXX “bloodshed, wrath and the sword”

11 [40:9] LXX / Heb(B) “evil”

12 [40:9–10] Heb(B), LXX have these verses / Syr omit “Plague...destruction.” / LXX “evil,” and because of him the flood came

13 [40:11] Heb, Syr / LXX, Latin “,” and what comes from the waters returns to the sea

14 [40:12] DSS(frag), LXX, Heb(B) / LXX omit “All that comes...for ages.”

15 [40:15] DSS, Heb(B) / LXX “on a rocky crag”

16 [40:17] Heb / LXX “but favor is like a garden with blessings”

17 [40:18] Heb / LXX “Life is sweet for a self-reliant man and worker”

18 [40:19] DSS, Heb(B), Syr / LXX omit “but better...health” (possibly by scribal error)

19 [40:20] Heb(B) / LXX “wine and musical things” / Syr “Old wine”


21 [40:21] Heb(B) / LXX “pleasant”

22 [40:23] Heb, Syr / LXX “a woman with a man”

23 [40:27] Heb (or possibly as a proper name “Elen”) / LXX “garden”

24 [40:30] Heb / LXX “mouth”

25 [41:1] DSS, Heb(B) / LXX, Syr “amid his possessions”

26 [41:3] DSS, Heb(B) / LXX “enjoy food”

27 [41:2] Heb(B) “sorrowful”

28 [41:3] DSS, LXX / Syr “Do not fear death, for it is your portion”

29 [41:4] DSS, Syr / LXX “decreed” / Heb(B) “portion”

30 [41:6] Heb(B), Heb(B) / LXX reverses “a thousand & “a thousand”

31 [40:9] LXX [some LXX] “[If you multiply, it is for destruction] and if you are born, you will be born for a curse; and if you die, you will be appointed a curse.”
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,
or of bargaining in dealing with a merchant;
or of constant training of children;
or of recording all that is given or received;
or of a key placed where there are many hands;
or of beatings of a disloyal servant;
or of bargaining in dealing with a merchant;
or of dividing an inheritance or property;
6 of a seal to keep a wicked woman at home,
or of a key placed where there are many hands;
or of numbering every deposit,
or of recording all that is given or received;
or 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 be ashamed according to my judgment.
7 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;
8 while in an unmarried-state, lest she be seduced,
or in her master’s house, lest she prove unfaithful;
lest she conceive in her father’s home,
or be sterile in that of her man.
9 My son, keep a close watch on your unmarried-daughter,
lest she make you the sport of your enemies,
and of the city, a reproach among the people,
and 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.
Do not let her parade her beauty before any male,
and do not let her converse in a house of women;
for just as moth comes from garments,
so a woman’s wickedness comes from another woman.
Better a man’s harshness than a woman’s indulgence,
and a frightened daughter than any disgrace.
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.
As the rising sun is clear to all,
so the glory of the Lord fills all his works;
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.
He plumbs the abyss and penetrates the heart;
he understands their secrets.
The Most High possesses all knowledge,
and sees in advance what is to come upon the age;
he makes known the past and the future,
and reveals the deepest secrets.
No understanding does he lack;
no single thing escapes him.
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!
How beautiful are all his works!
even to the spark and the fleeting vision!
All of them live and abide forever;
and each one is preserved to meet a particular need.
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?

CHAPTER 43

1 The beauty of the celestial heights and the pure firmament,
the firm heavens manifest its glory.
2 The orb of the sun, resplendent at its rising,
what a wonderful work of the Most High!
3 At noon it seethes the surface of the earth,
and who can bear its scorching heat?
Like a blazing furnace of solid metal,
it sets the mountains aflame with its rays;
by its fiery darts the land is consumed;
the eyes are dazzled by its light.
Great indeed is the Lord who made it,
at whose orders it urges on its steeds.
6 The moon, too, that marks the changing times,
governing the seasons, their lasting sign;
7 by it we know the appointed seasons, and from it the feast days;
lest the boon of life is for limited days,
but a good name, for days without number.

1 [41:11] Heb / LXX “People grieve over the death of the body, but the bad name of sinners will be blotted out.”
2 [41:12] Heb(B)[mg], one Lat (lit. “treasures of desire”)/ Heb(B[txt]) “treasures of wisdom” / LXX “great treasures of gold” / Syr “treasuries of desert”
3 [41:13-22] follows DSS verse order (13,14b,15,14a,16b,17,18,19,21a,21b,20,21,22,22b,22c,22d) / Syr omit 41:13–42:8, except for parts of 19–20
4 [41:16] Heb / others add “or of constant training...servant”
5 [41:16] DSS / LXX “and not everything is confidently esteemed by everyone”
6 [41:19] DSS / LXX “and before the truth of God and the covenant
7 [42:4] DSS / LXX omit “or of tested measures and weights”
8 [42:5] DSS / Heb(B) omit “of constant training...servant”
9 [42:9] DSS / Heb(B) “lest she commit adultery”

10 literally “unmarried-woman”
11 [42:11] LXX / Syr “lest you make a bad name for yourself” / DSS, Heb(B) are too fragmentary
12 [42:11] Heb / LXX “to shame before the great multitude”
13 [42:11] Heb / LXX omit “See that...house.”
14 [42:15] others “the Lord”
15 [42:35] DSS / Syr “and all his creatures do his will” / some LXX “and judgment happens by his good will”
16 [42:37] LXX / Heb(B) all “obedient” at the end
17 [42:40] DSS, Heb(B) “forever for ever, and all are obedient” / DSS also has “obedient” at the end
18 [42:41] DSS / Syr / LXX “All things come in pairs, one opposite the other” / Heb(B) “all things are different, one from another”
19 [43:4] NRS translates “A man tending a furnace works in burning heat, but three times as hot is the sun scorching the mountains” (other manuscripts replace “tending” with “blowing upon”)
20 [43:7] DSS / Heb(B) “them” / LXX, Syr “the moon”
CHAPTER 44

1 Let me now sing the praises of pious men, our ancestors, each in his own time:
2 The Most High apportioned to them great glory, and his greatness from the days of old.
3 Subduers of the land in kingly fashion, men of renown for their might, or counselors in their prudence, or seers of all things in prophecy;
4 resolute princes of the folk, and governors with their staves; authors skilled in composition, and framers of epigrams and pointed maxims;
5 composers of melodious psalms, or discoursers on lyric themes; stalwart men, solidly established and at peace in their own estates—
6 all these were glorious in their time, each illustrious in his day.
7 Some of them have left behind a name and men recount their praiseworthy deeds;
8 but of others there is no memory, for when they ceased, they ceased, and they are as though they had not lived, they and their children after them.
9 Yet these also were godly men whose virtues have not been forgotten; their wealth remains in their families, their heritage with their descendants; through God’s covenant with them their family endures, their posterity, for their sake.
10 And for all time their progeny will endure, their glory will never be blotted out; their bodies are peacefully laid away, but their name lives on and on.
11 The assembly declares their wisdom, and the congregation proclaims their praise.

16 ENOCH walked with Yahweh and was taken up, that succeeding generations might learn by his example.

17 NOAH, was found righteous and perfect; in the time of devastation he kept the race alive. Because of his worth there were survivors, and with a sign to him the deluge ended; a lasting agreement was made with him, that all flesh will never be destroyed.

19 ABRAHAM, father of many peoples, kept his glory without stain; and when tested he was found loyal.

20 he observed the precepts of the Most High, and entered into an agreement with him; in his own flesh he incised the ordinance, and when tested he was found loyal.

21 For this reason, God promised him with an oath that in his seed the nations of the earth would be blessed, that he would make him numerous as the grains of dust, and exalt his seed like the stars;

22 that he would give them an inheritance from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

23 And he renewed the same promise 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,1 and gave him his inheritance.

He fixed the boundaries for his tribes, and their division into twelve.

From him was to spring the man2 who won the favor of all:

CHAPTER 45

1 Dear to God and men, MOSES,
whose memory is held in benediction.3

2 He made him equal in honor to the holy ones, and the Lord strengthened him with fearful powers;4

3 by his words he wrought swift miracles5 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 priestly honor of his people; he established him in honor6 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 about,7 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 breastpiece in golden settings, every precious stone,8 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, majestic, glorious, renowned for splendor, a delight to the eyes, beauty supreme.

13 Before him, no one was adorned 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,9 for Moses ordained him 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 the10 people of Israel.

17 He gave to him his laws, and authority and11 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.

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 his 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 his people;11 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 glory114

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,15 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 when his enemies beset him on all sides, and God Most High gave answer to him in hailstones of tremendous power, which he rained upon the hostile army until on the slope he destroyed the foe; that all the doomed nations might know that Yahweh was watching over his people’s battles.

1 4[42:23] Heb(B)[mg]) / Heb(B)[txt], LXX “him with a blessing.”
2 4[42:23] Heb(B), LXX / Lat., Syr “hith” “men”
3 4[45:1] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr “memory is a blessing”
4 4[45:2] Heb(B)[mg], LXX, Syr / Heb(B)[txt] “him in the heights”
5 4[45:3] Heb / LXX “he caused signs to cease”
6 4[47:5] LXX / Heb(B) “he ministered to him in his glory”
7 4[45:9] LXX / Heb(B) places “and a rustle of bells around about” before “with pomegranates…”
8 4[46:11] LXX / Heb(B) add “on the breastpiece” & “every precious stone”
9 4[46:9-14] Heb(B), LXX / Syr omitt “with pomegranates around…” each day
10 4[45:16] others “his” / others “your”
11 4[45:17] Heb / LXX “authority in covenants of”
12 4[45:22] others “your”
13 4[46:24] Heb(B) / LXX add
14 4[46:26] Heb / LXX omit “And now…glory”
15 4[46:1] LXX / Heb(B) “be in his 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, and from the grave he raised his voice as a prophet, to put an end to the wickedness of the people.

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, in the sight of the Lord and of all the living, and testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince, thus two governments came into being, one of the people.

SOLOMON reigned during an era of peace, 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. 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 brought dishonor upon your reputation, 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, and even to the time of his decease he was found prudent in the sight of the Lord and of all the living.

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, in the sight of the Lord and of all the living, and testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince, thus two governments came into being, one of the people.

SOLOMON reigned during an era of peace, 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. 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 brought dishonor upon your reputation, 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, and even to the time of his decease he was found prudent in the sight of the Lord and of all the living.

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, in the sight of the Lord and of all the living, and testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince, thus two governments came into being, one of the people.

SOLOMON reigned during an era of peace, 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. 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 brought dishonor upon your reputation, 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, and even to the time of his decease he was found prudent in the sight of the Lord and of all the living.

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, in the sight of the Lord and of all the living, and testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince, thus two governments came into being, one of the people.

SOLOMON reigned during an era of peace, 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. 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 brought dishonor upon your reputation, 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, and even to the time of his decease he was found prudent in the sight of the Lord and of all the living.

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, in the sight of the Lord and of all the living, and testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince, thus two governments came into being, one of the people.

SOLOMON reigned during an era of peace, 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. 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 brought dishonor upon your reputation, 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, and even to the time of his decease he was found prudent in the sight of the Lord and of all the living.

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, in the sight of the Lord and of all the living, and testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince, thus two governments came into being, one of the people.
16.1 till like a fire there appeared the prophet whose words were as a flaming furnace.
2 Their staff of bread he shattered, in his zeal he reduced them to straits;
3 by God’s word he shut up the heavens and three times brought down fire.
4 How awesome are you, ELIJAH!
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 as your successor.
9 You were taken aloft in a whirlwind, in a chariot with fiery horses.
10 You are destined, it is written, in time to come to put an end to wrath before the day of Yahweh, 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 for we too will surely live.
12 When Elijah was enveloped in the whirlwind, ELEISHA was filled with his spirit.
13 Nothing was beyond his power; from where he lay buried, his dead body prophesied.
14 In life he performed wonders, and after death, marvellous deeds.
15 Despite all this the people did not change during his lifetime he did not quake at anyone, nor did they give up their sins, until they were rooted out of their land and scattered all over the earth.
16 But Judah remained, a tiny people, with its rulers from the house of David.
17 Some of these did what was right, but others were extremely sinful.
18 HEZEKIAH fortified his city and had water brought into it; with iron tools he cut through the rock and he built reservoirs for water.
19 During his reign Sennacherib led an invasion and sent his adjutant from Lachish.
20 He shook his fist at Zion and blasphemed God in his pride.
21 The people’s hearts melted within them, and they were in anguish like that of childbirth.
22 But they called upon the Most High God and lifted up their hands to him; he heard the prayer they uttered, and saved them through ISAIAH.
23 God struck the camp of the Assyrians and he routed them with a heavy-smite.
24 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.
25 In his lifetime he turned back the sun and prolonged the life of the king.
26 By his powerful spirit he looked into the future and consoled the mourners of Zion;
27 he foretold what should be till the end of time, hidden things yet to be fulfilled.

CHAPTER 49

1 The name of JOSIAH is like blended incense, made lasting by a skilled perfumer. Precious is his memory, like honey to the taste, like music at a drinking-party of the wine.
2 For he grieved over our betrayals, 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 foreign nation who burned the holy city and left its streets desolate.
6 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 EZEKIEL beheld the vision of the Glory, and described the different creatures of the chariot.
9 He also referred to JOB, who always persevered in the right path.
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?
12 In their time they built the altar; and they erected the holy inner-sanctum, 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.
14 Few have ever been created on earth like ENOCH, for he was taken up bodily.
15 Was ever a fellow born like JOSEPH? The leader of his brothers, the support of the people, even his dead body was provided for.

16 Glorious, too, were SHEM and SETH and ENOS,
CHAPTER 50

1 The greatest among his brothers, the glory of his people,\(^1\) was SIMON the priest, son of Johanan, in whose time\(^2\) the house of God was renovated, in whose days the inner-sanctum was reinforced.\(^3\) In his time also the wall was built with powerful turrets for the temple enclosures;\(^4\) in his time the reservoir was dug, the pool with a vastness like the sea’s.\(^5\) He protected his people against brigands and strengthened his city against the enemy.\(^6\) How splendid he was as he appeared from the tent,\(^7\) as he came from within the veil!\(^8\) Like a star shining among the clouds, like the full moon at the holyday season;\(^9\) like the sun shining upon the inner-sanctum, like the rainbow appearing in the cloudy sky; like the blossoms\(^10\) on the branches in springtime, like a lily on the banks of a stream; like the trees of Lebanon in summer, like fire at the sacrifice; like a vessel of beaten gold, studded with precious stones; like a luxuriant olive tree thick with fruit, a plant whose branches run with oil;\(^11\) 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.

12 When he received the sinned 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; 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.\(^12\) Once he had completed the services at the altar\(^13\) 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,\(^14\) 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.

17 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.

18 Then hymns would re-echo, and over the throng sweet strains of praise resound.\(^15\) 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.

21 Then again the people would lie prostrate to receive from him the blessing of the Most High.

22 And now, bless the God of all,\(^16\) who has done wondrous things on earth, who fosters men’s growth from their mother’s womb, and fashions them according to his will!\(^17\) May he grant you\(^18\) 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.\(^19\)

25 My soul loathes two nations, the third is not even a people; those who live in Seir\(^20\) and Philistia, and the degenerate folk who dwell in Shechem.

27 Wise instruction, appropriate proverbs,\(^21\) I have written in this book,\(^22\) I, Jeshua, son of Eleazar, son of Sirach the Jerusalemite,\(^23\) as they gushed forth from my heart’s understanding.

28 Happy the man who meditates 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\(^24\) of Yahweh is his path.\(^25\)

CHAPTER 51A

1 I give you thanks, O God of my father;\(^26\) I praise you, O God my savior;\(^27\) I will make known your name, refuge of my life; you have been my helper against my adversaries.

2 You have redeemed my soul from death,\(^28\) and kept back my body from the pit, 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 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 the arrows of slanderous tongues.

5 I was at the point of death, my soul was nearing the lowest region of the Netherworld; I turned every way, but there was no one to help me, I looked for one to sustain me, but could find no one.

8 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.

10 I called out: “O Lord, you are my father,”\(^29\)

---

\(^{11}\) [50:22] LXX / Heb(B) “blessed the Lord, the God of Israel”

\(^{14}\) [50:23] Heb(B) / LXX “us”

\(^{15}\) [50:23] Heb(B) / LXX “joy”

\(^{16}\) [50:23–24] 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//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.”

\(^{17}\) [50:26] Heb, Lat / LXX “live on the mountain of Samaria”

\(^{18}\) [50:27] Syr “All the proofs of the wise and their riddles”

\(^{19}\) [50:27] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) omit “I have written in this book”

\(^{20}\) [50:27] LXX add

\(^{21}\) [50:29] Heb(B), LXX, Syr / others “light”

\(^{22}\) [50:29] LXX / Heb(B) “life” / Syr “is exalted above everything” (Instead of “If...path”, Syr reads “The height of the fear of the Lord is exalted above everything; hold on to it, my son, and do not let it go.”)

\(^{23}\) [51:1] Heb(B) / LXX “O Lord and King”

\(^{24}\) [51:1] Heb(B), LXX / Syr “you have redeemed my soul from death”

\(^{25}\) [51:5] LXX / Heb “of the abyss(?)”

\(^{26}\) [51:8] others “work”

\(^{27}\) [51:9] Heb / LXX “death”

\(^{28}\) [51:10] Heb / LXX “the Father of my Lord”
11 I will ever praise your name
and be constant in my prayers to you.”

Thereupon Yahweh heard my voice, 1
he listened to my appeal;
12 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 of 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
13 When I was still young and innocent,
I sought wisdom openly in my prayer.
I asked for her, 6
14 She came to me in her beauty,
and until the end I will seek her out.

15 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.
16 In the short time I inclined my ear and received her, 6
I met with great captivation. 7
17 Since in this way I have profited; 6
18 I became resolutely devoted to her—
I persistently strove for the good,
and I will never be put to shame. 8

1 [51:11] Heb(B) / LXX omit “Thereupon Yahweh heard my voice”
2 [51:12b] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr omit this entire hymn
3 This Psalm was found amongst the DSS as a separate composition. / Heb omit it / LXX includes it as part of Sirach.
4 [51:13] DSS / LXX add
5 [51:14] DSS / LXX “Before the inner-sanctum I asked for her”
6 [51:16] DSS / LXX add
7 [51:17] DSS / LXX “instruction”
8 [51:17] DSS / LXX “I made progress in her” / Heb(B), Syr “I have taken her yoke”
9 [51:18] DSS / LXX “to Him who gives wisdom I will give glory”
10 [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 (LXX: “my internal organs”) / some LXX “My heart”
14 [51:21] LXX / Heb(B), Syr “to look upon her”
15 [51:21] Heb(B), Syr / LXX “made her”
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 [51:25] Heb(B), Syr / LXX omit “wisdom”
20 [51:26] Heb / others “the”
21 [51:26] Heb(B) / LXX omit “and to the one…her”
22 [51:27] LXX add
23 [51:28] Heb(B), Syr / LXX “Acquire instruction with a large sum of silver, and you will gain much gold.”
24 [51:28] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) “my”
25 [51:30] LXX / Heb(B), Syr add
26 [51:30] Heb(B) add “This is far…eternity.” / LXX instead add “Wisdom of Jeshua, son of Sirach” / oldest Syr instead add “Wisdom of Joshua, son of Sirach” / oldest Syr instead add “Thus far the words of Jeshua, son of Sirach, the son of Simeon, who is called son of Sirach. The beginning of the writing of the Wisdom of 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, Gl, two early Armenian omit chapters 44–51)