

Bible, Revised Standard Version

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Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach

Sir.0

[1-14] Whereas many great teachings have been given to us through the law and the prophets and the others that followed them, on account of which we should praise Israel for instruction and wisdom; and since it is necessary not only that the readers themselves should acquire understanding but also that those who love learning should be able to help the outsiders by both speaking and writing, my grandfather Jesus, after devoting himself especially to the reading of the law and the prophets and the other books of our fathers, and after acquiring considerable proficiency in them, was himself also led to write something pertaining to instruction and wisdom, in order that, by becoming conversant with this also, those who love learning should make even greater progress in living according to the law.

[15-26]

You are urged therefore to read with good will and attention, and to be indulgent in cases where, despite out diligent labor in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. Not only this work, but even the law itself, the prophecies, and the rest of the books differ not a little as originally expressed.

[27-36]

When I came to Egypt in the thirty-eighth year of the reign of Euergetes and stayed for some time, I found opportunity for no little instruction. It seemed highly necessary that I should myself devote some pains and labor to the translation of the following book, using in that period of time great watchfulness and skill in order to complete and publish the book for those living abroad who wished to gain learning, being prepared in character to live according to the law.

Sir.1

[1] All wisdom comes from the Lord
and is with him for ever.

[2] The sand of the sea, the drops of rain,
and the days of eternity -- who can count them?

[3] The height of heaven, the breadth of the earth,
the abyss, and wisdom -- who can search them out?

[4] Wisdom was created before all things,
and prudent understanding from eternity.
[5] The root of wisdom -- to whom has it been revealed?
Her clever devices -- who knows them?
[6] There is One who is wise, greatly to be feared,
sitting upon his throne.
[7] The Lord himself created wisdom;
he saw her and apportioned her,
he poured her out upon all his works.
[8] She dwells with all flesh according to his gift,
and he supplied her to those who love him.

[9] The fear of the Lord is glory and exultation,
and gladness and a crown of rejoicing.
[10] The fear of the Lord delights the heart,
and gives gladness and joy and long life.
[11] With him who fears the Lord it will go well at the end;
on the day of his death he will be blessed.

[12] To fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
she is created with the faithful in the womb.
[13] She made among men an eternal foundation,
and among their descendants she will be trusted.
[14] To fear the Lord is wisdom's full measure;
she satisfies men with her fruits;
[15] she fills their whole house with desirable goods,
and their storehouses with her produce.
[16] The fear of the Lord is the crown of wisdom,
making peace and perfect health to flourish.
[17] He saw her and apportioned her;
he rained down knowledge and discerning comprehension,
and he exalted the glory of those who held her fast.
[18] To fear the Lord is the root of wisdom,
and her branches are long life.

[22] Unrighteous anger cannot be justified,
for a man's anger tips the scale to his ruin.
[23] A patient man will endure until the right moment,
and then joy will burst forth for him.
[24] He will hide his words until the right moment,
and the lips of many will tell of his good sense.
[25] In the treasures of wisdom are wise sayings,
but godliness is an abomination to a sinner.
[26] If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments,
and the Lord will supply it for you.
[27] For the fear of the Lord is wisdom and instruction,
and he delights in fidelity and meekness.
[28] Do not disobey the fear of the Lord;
do not approach him with a divided mind.
[29] Be not a hypocrite in men's sight,
and keep watch over your lips.

[30] Do not exalt yourself lest you fall,
and thus bring dishonor upon yourself.
The Lord will reveal your secrets
and cast you down in the midst of the congregation,
because you did not come in the fear of the Lord,
and your heart was full of deceit.

Sir.2

[1] My son, if you come forward to serve the Lord,
prepare yourself for temptation.
[2] Set your heart right and be steadfast,
and do not be hasty in time of calamity.
[3] Cleave to him and do not depart,
that you may be honored at the end of your life.
[4] Accept whatever is brought upon you,
and in changes that humble you be patient.
[5] For gold is tested in the fire,
and acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation.
[6] Trust in him, and he will help you;
make your ways straight, and hope in him.

[7] You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy;
and turn not aside, lest you fall.
[8] You who fear the Lord, trust in him,
and your reward will not fail;
[9] you who fear the Lord, hope for good things,
for everlasting joy and mercy.
[10] Consider the ancient generations and see:
who ever trusted in the Lord and was put to shame?
Or who ever persevered in the fear of the Lord
and was forsaken?
Or who ever called upon him and was overlooked?
[11] For the Lord is compassionate and merciful;
he forgives sins and saves in time of affliction.

[12] Woe to timid hearts and to slack hands,
and to the sinner who walks along two ways!
[13] Woe to the faint heart, for it has no trust!
Therefore it will not be sheltered.
[14] Woe to you who have lost your endurance!
What will you do when the Lord punishes you?
[15] Those who fear the Lord will not disobey his words,
and those who love him will keep his ways.
[16] Those who fear the Lord will seek his approval,
and those who love him will be filled with the law.
[17] Those who fear the Lord will prepare their hearts,
and will humble themselves before him.
[18] Let us fall into the hands of the Lord,

but not into the hands of men;
for as his majesty is,
so also is his mercy.

Sir.3

- [1] Listen to me your father, O children;
and act accordingly, that you may be kept in safety.
[2] For the Lord honored the father above the children,
and he confirmed the right of the mother over her sons.
[3] Whoever honors his father atones for sins,
[4] and whoever glorifies his mother is like one
who lays up treasure.
[5] Whoever honors his father will be gladdened
by his own children,
and when he prays he will be heard.
[6] Whoever glorifies his father will have long life,
and whoever obeys the Lord will refresh his mother;
[7] he will serve his parents as his masters.
[8] Honor your father by word and deed,
that a blessing from him may come upon you.
[9] For a father's blessing strengthens the houses of the children,
but a mother's curse uproots their foundations.
- [10] Do not glorify yourself by dishonoring your father,
for your father's dishonor is no glory to you.
[11] For a man's glory comes from honoring his father,
and it is a disgrace for children not to respect their mother.
[12] O son, help your father in his old age,
and do not grieve him as long as he lives;
[13] even if he is lacking in understanding, show forbearance;
in all your strength do not despise him.
[14] For kindness to a father will not be forgotten,
and against your sins it will be credited to you;
[15] in the day of your affliction it will be remembered
in your favor;
as frost in fair weather, your sins will melt away.
[16] Whoever forsakes his father is like a blasphemer,
and whoever angers his mother is cursed by the Lord.
- [17] My son, perform your tasks in meekness;
then you will be loved by those whom God accepts.
[18] The greater you are, the more you must humble yourself;
so you will find favor in the sight of the Lord.
[20] For great is the might of the Lord;
he is glorified by the humble.
[21] Seek not what is too difficult for you,
nor investigate what is beyond your power.
[22] Reflect upon what has been assigned to you,

for you do not need what is hidden.

[23] Do not meddle in what is beyond your tasks,
for matters too great for human understanding
have been shown you.

[24] For their hasty judgment has led many astray,
and wrong opinion has caused their thoughts to slip.

[26] A stubborn mind will be afflicted at the end,
and whoever loves danger will perish by it.

[27] A stubborn mind will be burdened by troubles,
and the sinner will heap sin upon sin.

[28] The affliction of the proud has no healing,
for a plant of wickedness has taken root in him.

[29] The mind of the intelligent man will ponder a parable,
and an attentive ear is the wise man's desire.

[30] Water extinguishes a blazing fire:
so almsgiving atones for sin.

[31] Whoever requites favors gives thought to the future;
at the moment of his falling he will find support.

Sir.4

[1] My son, deprive not the poor of his living,
and do not keep needy eyes waiting.

[2] Do not grieve the one who is hungry,
nor anger a man in want.

[3] Do not add to the troubles of an angry mind,
nor delay your gift to a beggar.

[4] Do not reject an afflicted suppliant,
nor turn your face away from the poor.

[5] Do not avert your eye from the needy,
nor give a man occasion to curse you;

[6] for if in bitterness of soul he calls down a curse upon you,
his Creator will hear his prayer.

[7] Make yourself beloved in the congregation;
bow your head low to a great man.

[8] Incline your ear to the poor,
and answer him peaceably and gently.

[9] Deliver him who is wronged from the hand of the wrongdoer;
and do not be fainthearted in judging a case.

[10] Be like a father to orphans,
and instead of a husband to their mother;
you will then be like a son of the Most High,
and he will love you more than does your mother.

[11] Wisdom exalts her sons
and gives help to those who seek her.

[12] Whoever loves her loves life,

and those who seek her early will be filled with joy.

[13] Whoever holds her fast will obtain glory,
and the Lord will bless the place she enters.

[14] Those who serve her will minister to the Holy One;
the Lord loves those who love her.

[15] He who obeys her will judge the nations,
and whoever gives heed to her will dwell secure.

[16] If he has faith in her he will obtain her;
and his descendants will remain in possession of her.

[17] For at first she will walk with him on tortuous paths,
she will bring fear and cowardice upon him,
and will torment him by her discipline
until she trusts him,

and she will test him with her ordinances.

[18] Then she will come straight back to him and gladden him,
and will reveal her secrets to him.

[19] If he goes astray she will forsake him,
and hand him over to his ruin.

[20] Observe the right time, and beware of evil;
and do not bring shame on yourself.

[21] For there is a shame which brings sin,
and there is a shame which is glory and favor.

[22] Do not show partiality, to your own harm,
or deference, to your downfall.

[23] Do not refrain from speaking at the crucial time,
and do not hide your wisdom.

[24] For wisdom is known through speech,
and education through the words of the tongue.

[25] Never speak against the truth,
but be mindful of your ignorance.

[26] Do not be ashamed to confess your sins,
and do not try to stop the current of a river.

[27] Do not subject yourself to a foolish fellow,
nor show partiality to a ruler.

[28] Strive even to death for the truth
and the Lord God will fight for you.

[29] Do not be reckless in your speech,
or sluggish and remiss in your deeds.

[30] Do not be like a lion in your home,
nor be a faultfinder with your servants.

[31] Let not your hand be extended to receive,
but withdrawn when it is time to repay.

Sir.5

[1] Do not set your heart on your wealth,
nor say, "I have enough."

[2] Do not follow your inclination and strength,
walking according to the desires of your heart.
[3] Do not say, "Who will have power over me?"
for the Lord will surely punish you.

[4] Do not say, "I sinned, and what happened to me?"
for the Lord is slow to anger.

[5] Do not be so confident of atonement
that you add sin to sin.

[6] Do not say, "His mercy is great,
he will forgive the multitude of my sins,"
for both mercy and wrath are with him,
and his anger rests on sinners.

[7] Do not delay to turn to the Lord,
nor postpone it from day to day;
for suddenly the wrath of the Lord will go forth,
and at the time of punishment you will perish.

[8] Do not depend on dishonest wealth,
for it will not benefit you in the day of calamity.

[9] Do not winnow with every wind,
nor follow every path:
the double-tongued sinner does that.

[10] Be steadfast in your understanding,
and let your speech be consistent.

[11] Be quick to hear,
and be deliberate in answering.

[12] If you have understanding, answer your neighbor;
but if not, put your hand on your mouth.

[13] Glory and dishonor come from speaking,
and a man's tongue is his downfall.

[14] Do not be called a slanderer,
and do not lie in ambush with your tongue;
for shame comes to the thief,
and severe condemnation to the double-tongued.

[15] In great and small matters do not act amiss,

Sir.6

[1] and do not become an enemy instead of a friend;
for a bad name incurs shame and reproach:
so fares the double-tongued sinner.

[2] Do not exalt yourself through your soul's counsel,
lest your soul be torn in pieces like a bull.

[3] You will devour your leaves and destroy your fruit,
and will be left like a withered tree.

[4] An evil soul will destroy him who has it,

and make him the laughingstock of his enemies.

[5] A pleasant voice multiplies friends,
and a gracious tongue multiplies courtesies.

[6] Let those that are at peace with you be many,
but let your advisers be one in a thousand.

[7] When you gain a friend, gain him through testing,
and do not trust him hastily.

[8] For there is a friend who is such at his own convenience,
but will not stand by you in your day of trouble.

[9] And there is a friend who changes into an enemy,
and will disclose a quarrel to your disgrace.

[10] And there is a friend who is a table companion,
but will not stand by you in your day of trouble.

[11] In prosperity he will make himself your equal,
and be bold with your servants;

[12] but if you are brought low he will turn against you,
and will hide himself from your presence.

[13] Keep yourself far from your enemies,
and be on guard toward your friends.

[14] A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter:
he that has found one has found a treasure.

[15] There is nothing so precious as a faithful friend,
and no scales can measure his excellence.

[16] A faithful friend is an elixir of life;
and those who fear the Lord will find him.

[17] Whoever fears the Lord directs his friendship aright,
for as he is, so is his neighbor also.

[18] My son, from your youth up choose instruction,
and until you are old you will keep finding wisdom.

[19] Come to her like one who plows and sows,
and wait for her good harvest.

For in her service you will toil a little while,
and soon you will eat of her produce.

[20] She seems very harsh to the uninstructed;
a weakling will not remain with her.

[21] She will weigh him down like a heavy testing stone,
and he will not be slow to cast her off.

[22] For wisdom is like her name,
and is not manifest to many.

[23] Listen, my son, and accept my judgment;
do not reject my counsel.

[24] Put your feet into her fetters,
and your neck into her collar.

[25] Put your shoulder under her and carry her,
and do not fret under her bonds.

[26] Come to her with all your soul,
and keep her ways with all your might.

[27] Search out and seek, and she will become known to you;
and when you get hold of her, do not let her go.

[28] For at last you will find the rest she gives,
and she will be changed into joy for you.

[29] Then her fetters will become for you a strong protection,
and her collar a glorious robe.

[30] Her yoke is a golden ornament,
and her bonds are a cord of blue.

[31] You will wear her like a glorious robe,
and put her on like a crown of gladness.

[32] If you are willing, my son, you will be taught,
and if you apply yourself you will become clever.

[33] If you love to listen you will gain knowledge,
and if you incline your ear you will become wise.

[34] Stand in the assembly of the elders.
Who is wise? Cleave to him.

[35] Be ready to listen to every narrative,
and do not let wise proverbs escape you.

[36] If you see an intelligent man, visit him early;
let your foot wear out his doorstep.

[37] Reflect on the statutes of the Lord,
and meditate at all times on his commandments.

It is he who will give insight to your mind,
and your desire for wisdom will be granted.

Sir.7

[1] Do no evil, and evil will never befall you.

[2] Stay away from wrong, and it will turn away from you.

[3] My son, do not sow the furrows of injustice,
and you will not reap a sevenfold crop.

[4] Do not seek from the Lord the highest office,
nor the seat of honor from the king.

[5] Do not assert your righteousness before the Lord,
nor display your wisdom before the king.

[6] Do not seek to become a judge,
lest you be unable to remove iniquity,
lest you be partial to a powerful man,
and thus put a blot on your integrity.

[7] Do not offend against the public,
and do not disgrace yourself among the people.

[8] Do not commit a sin twice;
even for one you will not go unpunished.

[9] Do not say, "He will consider the multitude of my gifts,
and when I make an offering to the Most High
God he will accept it."

[10] Do not be fainthearted in your prayer,
nor neglect to give alms.

[11] Do not ridicule a man who is bitter in soul,
for there is One who abases and exalts.

[12] Do not devise a lie against your brother,
nor do the like to a friend.

[13] Refuse to utter any lie,
for the habit of lying serves no good.

[14] Do not prattle in the assembly of the elders,
nor repeat yourself in your prayer.

[15] Do not hate toilsome labor,
or farm work, which were created by the Most High.

[16] Do not count yourself among the crowd of sinners;
remember that wrath does not delay.

[17] Humble yourself greatly,
for the punishment of the ungodly is fire and worms.

[18] Do not exchange a friend for money,
or a real brother for the gold of Ophir.

[19] Do not deprive yourself of a wise and good wife,
for her charm is worth more than gold.

[20] Do not abuse a servant who performs his work faithfully,
or a hired laborer who devotes himself to you.

[21] Let your soul love an intelligent servant;
do not withhold from him his freedom.

[22] Do you have cattle? Look after them;
if they are profitable to you, keep them.

[23] Do you have children? Discipline them,
and make them obedient from their youth.

[24] Do you have daughters? Be concerned for their chastity,
and do not show yourself too indulgent with them.

[25] Give a daughter in marriage; you will have
finished a great task.

But give her to a man of understanding.

[26] If you have a wife who pleases you, do not cast her out;
but do not trust yourself to one whom you detest.

[27] With all your heart honor your father,
and do not forget the birth pangs of your mother.

[28] Remember that through your parents you were born;
and what can you give back to them that equals
their gift to you?

[29] With all your soul fear the Lord,
and honor his priests.

[30] With all your might love your Maker,
and do not forsake his ministers.

[31] Fear the Lord and honor the priest,

and give him his portion, as is commanded you:
the first fruits, the guilt offering, the gift
of the shoulders,
the sacrifice of sanctification,
and the first fruits of the holy things.

[32] Stretch forth your hand to the poor,
so that your blessing may be complete.

[33] Give graciously to all the living,
and withhold not kindness from the dead.

[34] Do not fail those who weep,
but mourn with those who mourn.

[35] Do not shrink from visiting a sick man,
because for such deeds you will be loved.

[36] In all you do, remember the end of your life,
and then you will never sin.

Sir.8

[1] Do not contend with a powerful man,
lest you fall into his hands.

[2] Do not quarrel with a rich man,
lest his resources outweigh yours;
for gold has ruined many,
and has perverted the minds of kings.

[3] Do not argue with a chatterer,
nor heap wood on his fire.

[4] Do not jest with an ill-bred person,
lest your ancestors be disgraced.

[5] Do not reproach a man who is turning away from sin;
remember that we all deserve punishment.

[6] Do not disdain a man when he is old,
for some of us are growing old.

[7] Do not rejoice over any one's death;
remember that we all must die.

[8] Do not slight the discourse of the sages,
but busy yourself with their maxims;
because from them you will gain instruction
and learn how to serve great men.

[9] Do not disregard the discourse of the aged,
for they themselves learned from their fathers;
because from them you will gain understanding
and learn how to give an answer in time of need.

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

[11] Do not get up and leave an insolent fellow,
lest he lie in ambush against your words.

- [12] Do not lend to a man who is stronger than you;
but if you do lend anything, be as one who has lost it.
- [13] Do not give surety beyond your means,
but if you give surety, be concerned as one who must pay.
- [14] Do not go to law against a judge,
for the decision will favor him because of his standing.
- [15] Do not travel on the road with a foolhardy fellow,
lest he be burdensome to you;
for he will act as he pleases,
and through his folly you will perish with him.
- [16] Do not fight with a wrathful man,
and do not cross the wilderness with him;
because blood is as nothing in his sight,
and where no help is at hand, he will strike you down.
- [17] Do not consult with a fool,
for he will not be able to keep a secret.
- [18] In the presence of a stranger do nothing that
is to be kept secret,
for you do not know what he will divulge.
- [19] Do not reveal your thoughts to every one,
lest you drive away your good luck.
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Sir.9

- [1] Do not be jealous of the wife of your bosom,
and do not teach her an evil lesson to your own hurt.
- [2] Do not give yourself to a woman
so that she gains mastery over your strength.
- [3] Do not go to meet a loose woman,
lest you fall into her snares.
- [4] Do not associate with a woman singer,
lest you be caught in her intrigues.
- [5] Do not look intently at a virgin,
lest you stumble and incur penalties for her.
- [6] Do not give yourself to harlots
lest you lose your inheritance.
- [7] Do not look around in the streets of a city,
nor wander about in its deserted sections.
- [8] Turn away your eyes from a shapely woman,
and do not look intently at beauty belonging to another;
many have been misled by a woman's beauty,
and by it passion is kindled like a fire.
- [9] Never dine with another man's wife,
nor revel with her at wine;
lest your heart turn aside to her,
and in blood you be plunged into destruction.
- [10] Forsake not an old friend,

for a new one does not compare with him.
A new friend is like new wine;
when it has aged you will drink it with pleasure.

[11] Do not envy the honors of a sinner,
for you do not know what his end will be.

[12] Do not delight in what pleases the ungodly;
remember that they will not be held guiltless
as long as they live.

[13] Keep far from a man who has the power to kill,
and you will not be worried by the fear of death.
But if you approach him, make no misstep,
lest he rob you of your life.
Know that you are walking in the midst of snares,
and that you are going about on the city battlements.

[14] As much as you can, aim to know your neighbors,
and consult with the wise.

[15] Let your conversation be with men of understanding,
and let all your discussion be about the law of the Most High.

[16] Let righteous men be your dinner companions,
and let your glorying be in the fear of the Lord.

[17] A work will be praised for the skill of the craftsmen;
so a people's leader is proved wise by his words.

[18] A babbler is feared in his city,
and the man who is reckless in speech will be hated.

Sir.10

[1] A wise magistrate will educate his people,
and the rule of an understanding man will be well ordered.

[2] Like the magistrate of the people, so are his officials;
and like the ruler of the city, so are all its inhabitants.

[3] An undisciplined king will ruin his people,
but a city will grow through the understanding of its rulers.

[4] The government of the earth is in the hands of the Lord,
and over it he will raise up the right man for the time.

[5] The success of a man is in the hands of the Lord,
and he confers his honor upon the person of the scribe.

[6] Do not be angry with your neighbor for any injury,
and do not attempt anything by acts of insolence.

[7] Arrogance is hateful before the Lord and before men,
and injustice is outrageous to both.

[8] Sovereignty passes from nation to nation
on account of injustice and insolence and wealth.

[9] How can he who is dust and ashes be proud?
for even in life his bowels decay.

[10] A long illness baffles the physician;
the king of today will die tomorrow.
[11] For when a man is dead,
he will inherit creeping things, and wild beasts, and worms.
[12] The beginning of man's pride is to depart from the Lord;
his heart has forsaken his Maker.
[13] For the beginning of pride is sin,
and the man who clings to it pours out abominations.
Therefore the Lord brought upon them extraordinary afflictions,
and destroyed them utterly.
[14] The Lord has cast down the thrones of rulers,
and has seated the lowly in their place.
[15] The Lord has plucked up the roots of the nations,
and has planted the humble in their place.
[16] The Lord has overthrown the lands of the nations,
and has destroyed them to the foundations of the earth.
[17] He has removed some of them and destroyed them,
and has extinguished the memory of them from the earth.
[18] Pride was not created for men,
nor fierce anger for those born of women.

[19] What race is worthy of honor? The human race.
What race is worthy of honor? Those who fear the Lord.
What race is unworthy of honor? The human race.
What race is unworthy of honor? Those who
transgress the commandments.
[20] Among brothers their leader is worthy of honor,
and those who fear the Lord are worthy of honor in his eyes.
[22] The rich, and the eminent, and the poor --
their glory is the fear of the Lord.
[23] It is not right to despise an intelligent poor man,
nor is it proper to honor a sinful man.
[24] The nobleman, and the judge, and the ruler will be honored,
but none of them is greater than the man who fears the Lord.
[25] Free men will be at the service of a wise servant,
and a man of understanding will not grumble.

[26] Do not make a display of your wisdom when you do your work,
nor glorify yourself at a time when you are in want.
[27] Better is a man who works and has an abundance of everything,
than one who goes about boasting, but lacks bread.
[28] My son, glorify yourself with humility,
and ascribe to yourself honor according to your worth.
[29] Who will justify the man that sins against himself?
And who will honor the man that dishonors his own life?
[30] A poor man is honored for his knowledge,
while a rich man is honored for his wealth.
[31] A man honored in poverty, how much more in wealth!
And a man dishonored in wealth, how much more in poverty!

Sir.11

[1] The wisdom of a humble man will lift up his head,
and will seat him among the great.

[2] Do not praise a man for his good looks,
nor loathe a man because of his appearance.

[3] The bee is small among flying creatures,
but her product is the best of sweet things.

[4] Do not boast about wearing fine clothes,
nor exalt yourself in the day that you are honored;
for the works of the Lord are wonderful,
and his works are concealed from men.

[5] Many kings have had to sit on the ground,
but one who was never thought of has worn a crown.

[6] Many rulers have been greatly disgraced,
and illustrious men have been handed over to others.

[7] Do not find fault before you investigate;
first consider, and then reprove.

[8] Do not answer before you have heard,
nor interrupt a speaker in the midst of his words.

[9] Do not argue about a matter which does not concern you,
nor sit with sinners when they judge a case.

[10] My son, do not busy yourself with many matters;
if you multiply activities you will not go unpunished,
and if you pursue you will not overtake,
and by fleeing you will not escape.

[11] There is a man who works, and toils, and presses on,
but is so much the more in want.

[12] There is another who is slow and needs help,
who lacks strength and abounds in poverty;
but the eyes of the Lord look upon him for his good;
he lifts him out of his low estate

[13] and raises up his head,
so that many are amazed at him.

[14] Good things and bad, life and death,
poverty and wealth, come from the Lord.

[17] The gift of the Lord endures for those who are godly,
and what he approves will have lasting success.

[18] There is a man who is rich through his diligence
and self-denial,

and this is the reward allotted to him:

[19] when he says, "I have found rest,
and now I shall enjoy my goods!"
he does not know how much time will pass
until he leaves them to others and dies.

[20] Stand by your covenant and attend to it,
and grow old in your work.

[21] Do not wonder at the works of a sinner,
but trust in the Lord and keep at your toil;
for it is easy in the sight of the Lord
to enrich a poor man quickly and suddenly.
[22] The blessing of the Lord is the reward of the godly,
and quickly God causes his blessing to flourish.
[23] Do not say, "What do I need,
and what prosperity could be mine in the future?"
[24] Do not say, "I have enough,
and what calamity could happen to me in the future?"
[25] In the day of prosperity, adversity is forgotten,
and in the day of adversity, prosperity is not remembered.
[26] For it is easy in the sight of the Lord
to reward a man on the day of death according to his conduct.
[27] The misery of an hour makes one forget luxury,
and at the close of a man's life his deeds will be revealed.
[28] Call no one happy before his death;
a man will be known through his children.

[29] Do not bring every man into your home,
for many are the wiles of the crafty.
[30] Like a decoy partridge in a cage, so is the
mind of a proud man,
and like a spy he observes your weakness;
[31] for he lies in wait, turning good into evil,
and to worthy actions he will attach blame.
[32] From a spark of fire come many burning coals,
and a sinner lies in wait to shed blood.
[33] Beware of a scoundrel, for he devises evil,
lest he give you a lasting blemish.
[34] Receive a stranger into your home and he will
upset you with commotion,
and will estrange you from your family.

Sir.12

[1] If you do a kindness, know to whom you do it,
and you will be thanked for your good deeds.
[2] Do good to a godly man, and you will be repaid --
if not by him, certainly by the Most High.
[3] No good will come to the man who persists in evil
or to him who does not give alms.
[4] Give to the godly man, but do not help the sinner.
[5] Do good to the humble, but do not give to the ungodly;
hold back his bread, and do not give it to him,
lest by means of it he subdue you;
for you will receive twice as much evil
for all the good which you do to him.

[6] For the Most High also hates sinners
and will inflict punishment on the ungodly.
[7] Give to the good man, but do not help the sinner.
[8] A friend will not be known in prosperity,
nor will an enemy be hidden in adversity.
[9] A man's enemies are grieved when he prospers,
and in his adversity even his friend will separate from him.
[10] Never trust your enemy,
for like the rusting of copper, so is his wickedness.
[11] Even if he humbles himself and goes about cringing,
watch yourself, and be on your guard against him;
and you will be to him like one who has polished a mirror,
and you will know that it was not hopelessly tarnished.
[12] Do not put him next to you,
lest he overthrow you and take your place;
do not have him sit at your right,
lest he try to take your seat of honor,
and at last you will realize the truth of my words,
and be stung by what I have said.

[13] Who will pity a snake charmer bitten by a serpent,
or any who go near wild beasts?
[14] So no one will pity a man who associates with a sinner
and becomes involved in his sins.
[15] He will stay with you for a time,
but if you falter, he will not stand by you.

[16] An enemy will speak sweetly with his lips,
but in his mind he will plan to throw you into a pit;
an enemy will weep with his eyes,
but if he finds an opportunity his thirst
for blood will be insatiable.
[17] If calamity befalls you, you will find him there ahead of you;
and while pretending to help you, he will
trip you by the heel;
[18] he will shake his head, and clap his hands,
and whisper much, and change his expression.

Sir.13

[1] Whoever touches pitch will be defiled,
and whoever associates with a proud man will become like him.
[2] Do not lift a weight beyond your strength,
nor associate with a man mightier and richer than you.
How can the clay pot associate with the iron kettle?
The pot will strike against it, and will itself be broken.
[3] A rich man does wrong, and he even adds reproaches;
a poor man suffers wrong, and he must add apologies.
[4] A rich man will exploit you if you can be of use to him,

but if you are in need he will forsake you.
[5] If you own something, he will live with you;
he will drain your resources and he will not care.
[6] When he needs you he will deceive you,
he will smile at you and give you hope.
He will speak to you kindly and say, "What do you need?"
[7] He will shame you with his foods,
until he has drained you two or three times;
and finally he will deride you.
Should he see you afterwards, he will forsake you,
and shake his head at you.

[8] Take care not to be led astray,
and not to be humiliated in your feasting.
[9] When a powerful man invites you, be reserved;
and he will invite you the more often.
[10] Do not push forward, lest you be repulsed;
and do not remain at a distance, lest you be forgotten.
[11] Do not try to treat him as an equal,
nor trust his abundance of words;
for he will test you through much talk,
and while he smiles he will be examining you.
[12] Cruel is he who does not keep words to himself;
he will not hesitate to injure or to imprison.
[13] Keep words to yourself and be very watchful,
for you are walking about with your own downfall.

[15] Every creature loves its like,
and every person his neighbor;
[16] all living beings associate by species,
and a man clings to one like himself.
[17] What fellowship has a wolf with a lamb?
No more has a sinner with a godly man.
[18] What peace is there between a hyena and a dog?
And what peace between a rich man and a poor man?
[19] Wild asses in the wilderness are the prey of lions;
likewise the poor are pastures for the rich.
[20] Humility is an abomination to a proud man;
likewise a poor man is an abomination to a rich one.

[21] When a rich man totters, he is steadied by friends,
but when a humble man falls, he is even pushed
away by friends.
[22] If a rich man slips, his helpers are many;
he speaks unseemly words, and they justify him.
If a humble man slips, they even reproach him;
he speaks sensibly, and receives no attention.
[23] When the rich man speaks all are silent,
and they extol to the clouds what he says.
When the poor man speaks they say, "Who is this fellow?"
And should he stumble, they even push him down.

[24] Riches are good if they are free from sin,
and poverty is evil in the opinion of the ungodly.

[25] A man's heart changes his countenance,
either for good or for evil.

[26] The mark of a happy heart is a cheerful face,
but to devise proverbs requires painful thinking.

Sir.14

[1] Blessed is the man who does not blunder with his lips
and need not suffer grief for sin.

[2] Blessed is he whose heart does not condemn him,
and who has not given up his hope.

[3] Riches are not seemly for a stingy man;
and of what use is property to an envious man?

[4] Whoever accumulates by depriving himself, accumulates
for others;
and others will live in luxury on his goods.

[5] If a man is mean to himself, to whom will he be generous?
He will not enjoy his own riches.

[6] No one is meaner than the man who is grudging to himself,
and this is the retribution for his baseness;

[7] even if he does good, he does it unintentionally,
and betrays his baseness in the end.

[8] Evil is the man with a grudging eye;
he averts his face and disregards people.

[9] A greedy man's eye is not satisfied with a portion,
and mean injustice withers the soul.

[10] A stingy man's eye begrudges bread,
and it is lacking at his table.

[11] My son, treat yourself well, according to your means,
and present worthy offerings to the Lord.

[12] Remember that death will not delay,
and the decree of Hades has not been shown to you.

[13] Do good to a friend before you die,
and reach out and give to him as much as you can.

[14] Do not deprive yourself of a happy day;
let not your share of desired good pass by you.

[15] Will you not leave the fruit of your labors to another,
and what you acquired by toil to be divided by lot?

[16] Give, and take, and beguile yourself,
because in Hades one cannot look for luxury.

[17] All living beings become old like a garment,
for the decree from of old is, "You must surely die!"

[18] Like flourishing leaves on a spreading tree
which sheds some and puts forth others,

so are the generations of flesh and blood:
one dies and another is born.

[19] Every product decays and ceases to exist,
and the man who made it will pass away with it.

[20] Blessed is the man who meditates on wisdom
and who reasons intelligently.

[21] He who reflects in his mind on her ways
will also ponder her secrets.

[22] Pursue wisdom like a hunter,
and lie in wait on her paths.

[23] He who peers through her windows
will also listen at her doors;

[24] he who encamps near her house
will also fasten his tent peg to her walls;

[25] he will pitch his tent near her,
and will lodge in an excellent lodging place;

[26] he will place his children under her shelter,
and will camp under her boughs;

[27] he will be sheltered by her from the heat,
and will dwell in the midst of her glory.

Sir.15

[1] The man who fears the Lord will do this,
and he who holds to the law will obtain wisdom.

[2] She will come to meet him like a mother,
and like the wife of his youth she will welcome him.

[3] She will feed him with the bread of understanding,
and give him the water of wisdom to drink.

[4] He will lean on her and will not fall,
and he will rely on her and will not be put to shame.

[5] She will exalt him above his neighbors,
and will open his mouth in the midst of the assembly.

[6] He will find gladness and a crown of rejoicing,
and will acquire an everlasting name.

[7] Foolish men will not obtain her,
and sinful men will not see her.

[8] She is far from men of pride,
and liars will never think of her.

[9] A hymn of praise is not fitting on the lips of a sinner,
for it has not been sent from the Lord.

[10] For a hymn of praise should be uttered in wisdom,
and the Lord will prosper it.

[11] Do not say, "Because of the Lord I left the right way";
for he will not do what he hates.

[12] Do not say, "It was he who led me astray";

for he had no need of a sinful man.

[13] The Lord hates all abominations,
and they are not loved by those who fear him.

[14] It was he who created man in the beginning,
and he left him in the power of his own inclination.

[15] If you will, you can keep the commandments,
and to act faithfully is a matter of your own choice.

[16] He has placed before you fire and water:
stretch out your hand for whichever you wish.

[17] Before a man are life and death,
and whichever he chooses will be given to him.

[18] For great is the wisdom of the Lord;
he is mighty in power and sees everything;

[19] his eyes are on those who fear him,
and he knows every deed of man.

[20] He has not commanded any one to be ungodly,
and he has not given any one permission to sin.

Sir.16

[1] Do not desire a multitude of useless children,
nor rejoice in ungodly sons.

[2] If they multiply, do not rejoice in them,
unless the fear of the Lord is in them.

[3] Do not trust in their survival,
and do not rely on their multitude;
for one is better than a thousand,
and to die childless is better than to have ungodly children.

[4] For through one man of understanding a city
will be filled with people,
but through a tribe of lawless men it will be made desolate.

[5] Many such things my eye has seen,
and my ear has heard things more striking than these.

[6] In an assembly of sinners a fire will be kindled,
and in a disobedient nation wrath was kindled.

[7] He was not propitiated for the ancient giants
who revolted in their might.

[8] He did not spare the neighbors of Lot,
whom he loathed on account of their insolence.

[9] He showed no pity for a nation devoted to destruction,
for those destroyed in their sins;

[10] nor for the six hundred thousand men on foot,
who rebelliously assembled in their stubbornness.

[11] Even if there is only one stiff-necked person,
it will be a wonder if he remains unpunished.

For mercy and wrath are with the Lord;
he is mighty to forgive, and he pours out wrath.

[12] As great as his mercy, so great is also his reproof;

he judges a man according to his deeds.

[13] The sinner will not escape with his plunder,
and the patience of the godly will not be frustrated.

[14] He will make room for every act of mercy;
every one will receive in accordance with his deeds.

[17] Do not say, "I shall be hidden from the Lord,
and who from on high will remember me?

Among so many people I shall not be known,
for what is my soul in the boundless creation?

[18] Behold, heaven and the highest heaven,
the abyss and the earth, will tremble at his visitation.

[19] The mountains also and the foundations of the earth
shake with trembling when he looks upon them.

[20] And no mind will reflect on this.

Who will ponder his ways?

[21] Like a tempest which no man can see,
so most of his works are concealed.

[22] Who will announce his acts of justice?

Or who will await them? For the covenant is far off."

[23] This is what one devoid of understanding thinks;
a senseless and misguided man thinks foolishly.

[24] Listen to me, my son, and acquire knowledge,
and pay close attention to my words.

[25] I will impart instruction by weight,
and declare knowledge accurately.

[26] The works of the Lord have existed from the beginning by his
creation, and when he made them, he determined their divisions.

[27] He arranged his works in an eternal order,
and their dominion for all generations;
they neither hunger nor grow weary,
and they do not cease from their labors.

[28] They do not crowd one another aside,
and they will never disobey his word.

[29] After this the Lord looked upon the earth,
and filled it with his good things;

[30] with all kinds of living beings he covered its surface,
and to it they return.

Sir.17

[1] The Lord created man out of earth,
and turned him back to it again.

[2] He gave to men few days, a limited time,
but granted them authority over the things upon the earth.

[3] He endowed them with strength like his own,
and made them in his own image.

- [4] He placed the fear of them in all living beings,
and granted them dominion over beasts and birds.
- [6] He made for them tongue and eyes;
he gave them ears and a mind for thinking.
- [7] He filled them with knowledge and understanding,
and showed them good and evil.
- [8] He set his eye upon their hearts
to show them the majesty of his works.
- [10] And they will praise his holy name,
to proclaim the grandeur of his works.
- [11] He bestowed knowledge upon them,
and allotted to them the law of life.
- [12] He established with them an eternal covenant,
and showed them his judgments.
- [13] Their eyes saw his glorious majesty,
and their ears heard the glory of his voice.
- [14] And he said to them, "Beware of all unrighteousness."
And he gave commandment to each of them concerning
his neighbor.
- [15] Their ways are always before him,
they will not be hid from his eyes.
- [17] He appointed a ruler for every nation,
but Israel is the Lord's own portion.
- [19] All their works are as the sun before him,
and his eyes are continually upon their ways.
- [20] Their iniquities are not hidden from him,
and all their sins are before the Lord.
- [22] A man's almsgiving is like a signet with the Lord
and he will keep a person's kindness like
the apple of his eye.
- [23] Afterward he will arise and requite them,
and he will bring their recompense on their heads.
- [24] Yet to those who repent he grants a return,
and he encourages those whose endurance is failing.
- [25] Turn to the Lord and forsake your sins;
pray in his presence and lessen your offenses.
- [26] Return to the Most High and turn away from iniquity,
and hate abominations intensely.
- [27] Who will sing praises to the Most High in Hades,
as do those who are alive and give thanks?
- [28] From the dead, as from one who does not exist,
thanksgiving has ceased;
he who is alive and well sings the Lord's praises.
- [29] How great is the mercy of the Lord,
and his forgiveness for those who turn to him!
- [30] For all things cannot be in men,
since a son of man is not immortal.
- [31] What is brighter than the sun? Yet its light fails.
So flesh and blood devise evil.
- [32] He marshals the host of the height of heaven;

but all men are dust and ashes.

Sir.18

- [1] He who lives for ever created the whole universe;
[2] the Lord alone will be declared righteous.
[4] To none has he given power to proclaim his works;
and who can search out his mighty deeds?
[5] Who can measure his majestic power?
And who can fully recount his mercies?
[6] It is not possible to diminish or increase them,
nor is it possible to trace the wonders of the Lord.
[7] When a man has finished, he is just beginning,
and when he stops, he will be at a loss.
[8] What is man, and of what use is he?
What is his good and what is his evil?
[9] The number of a man's days is great if he reaches
a hundred years.
[10] Like a drop of water from the sea and a grain of sand
so are a few years in the day of eternity.
[11] Therefore the Lord is patient with them
and pours out his mercy upon them.
[12] He sees and recognizes that their end will be evil;
therefore he grants them forgiveness in abundance.
[13] The compassion of man is for his neighbor,
but the compassion of the Lord is for all living beings.
He rebukes and trains and teaches them,
and turns them back, as a shepherd his flock.
[14] He has compassion on those who accept his discipline
and who are eager for his judgments.
- [15] My son, do not mix reproach with your good deeds,
nor cause grief by your words when you present a gift.
[16] Does not the dew assuage the scorching heat?
So a word is better than a gift.
[17] Indeed, does not a word surpass a good gift?
Both are to be found in a gracious man.
[18] A fool is ungracious and abusive,
and the gift of a grudging man makes the eyes dim.
- [19] Before you speak, learn,
and before you fall ill, take care of your health.
[20] Before judgment, examine yourself,
and in the hour of visitation you will find forgiveness.
[21] Before falling ill, humble yourself,
and when you are on the point of sinning, turn back.
[22] Let nothing hinder you from paying a vow promptly,
and do not wait until death to be released from it.
[23] Before making a vow, prepare yourself;

and do not be like a man who tempts the Lord.

[24] Think of his wrath on the day of death,
and of the moment of vengeance when he turns away his face.

[25] In the time of plenty think of the time of hunger;
in the days of wealth think of poverty and need.

[26] From morning to evening conditions change,
and all things move swiftly before the Lord.

[27] A wise man is cautious in everything,
and in days of sin he guards against wrongdoing.

[28] Every intelligent man knows wisdom,
and he praises the one who finds her.

[29] Those who understand sayings become skilled themselves,
and pour forth apt proverbs.

[30] Do not follow your base desires,
but restrain your appetites.

[31] If you allow your soul to take pleasure in base desire,
it will make you the laughingstock of your enemies.

[32] Do not revel in great luxury,
lest you become impoverished by its expense.

[33] Do not become a beggar by feasting with borrowed money,
when you have nothing in your purse.

Sir.19

[1] A workman who is a drunkard will not become rich;
he who despises small things will fail little by little.

[2] Wine and women lead intelligent men astray,
and the man who consorts with harlots is very reckless.

[3] Decay and worms will inherit him,
and the reckless soul will be snatched away.

[4] One who trusts others too quickly is lightminded,
and one who sins does wrong to himself.

[5] One who rejoices in wickedness will be condemned,

[6] and for one who hates gossip evil is lessened.

[7] Never repeat a conversation,
and you will lose nothing at all.

[8] With friend or foe do not report it,
and unless it would be a sin for you, do not disclose it;

[9] for some one has heard you and watched you,
and when the time comes he will hate you.

[10] Have you heard a word? Let it die with you.
Be brave! It will not make you burst!

[11] With such a word a fool will suffer pangs
like a woman in labor with a child.

[12] Like an arrow stuck in the flesh of the thigh,
so is a word inside a fool.

- [13] Question a friend, perhaps he did not do it;
but if he did anything, so that he may do it no more.
- [14] Question a neighbor, perhaps he did not say it;
but if he said it, so that he may not say it again.
- [15] Question a friend, for often it is slander;
so do not believe everything you hear.
- [16] A person may make a slip without intending it.
Who has never sinned with his tongue?
- [17] Question your neighbor before you threaten him;
and let the law of the Most High take its course.
- [20] All wisdom is the fear of the Lord,
and in all wisdom there is the fulfilment of the law.
- [22] But the knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom,
nor is there prudence where sinners take counsel.
- [23] There is a cleverness which is abominable,
but there is a fool who merely lacks wisdom.
- [24] Better is the God-fearing man who lacks intelligence,
than the highly prudent man who transgresses the law.
- [25] There is a cleverness which is scrupulous but unjust,
and there are people who distort kindness to gain a verdict.
- [26] There is a rascal bowed down in mourning,
but inwardly he is full of deceit.
- [27] He hides his face and pretends not to hear;
but where no one notices, he will forestall you.
- [28] And if by lack of strength he is prevented from sinning,
he will do evil when he finds an opportunity.
- [29] A man is known by his appearance,
and a sensible man is known by his face, when you meet him.
- [30] A man's attire and open-mouthed laughter,
and a man's manner of walking, show what he is.
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Sir.20

- [1] There is a reproof which is not timely;
and there is a man who keeps silent but is wise.
- [2] How much better it is to reprove than to stay angry!
And the one who confesses his fault will be kept from loss.
- [4] Like a eunuch's desire to violate a maiden
is a man who executes judgments by violence.
- [5] There is one who by keeping silent is found wise,
while another is detested for being too talkative.
- [6] There is one who keeps silent because he has no answer,
while another keeps silent because he knows when to speak.
- [7] A wise man will be silent until the right moment,
but a braggart and fool goes beyond the right moment.
- [8] Whoever uses too many words will be loathed,
and whoever usurps the right to speak will be hated.

- [9] There may be good fortune for a man in adversity,
and a windfall may result in a loss.
- [10] There is a gift that profits you nothing,
and there is a gift that brings a double return.
- [11] There are losses because of glory,
and there are men who have raised their heads
from humble circumstances.
- [12] There is a man who buys much for a little,
but pays for it seven times over.
- [13] The wise man makes himself beloved through his words,
but the courtesies of fools are wasted.
- [14] A fool's gift will profit you nothing,
for he has many eyes instead of one.
- [15] He gives little and upbraids much,
he opens his mouth like a herald;
today he lends and tomorrow he asks it back;
such a one is a hateful man.
- [16] A fool will say, "I have no friend,
and there is no gratitude for my good deeds;
those who eat my bread speak unkindly."
- [17] How many will ridicule him, and how often!

- [18] A slip on the pavement is better than a slip of the tongue;
so the downfall of the wicked will occur speedily.
- [19] An ungracious man is like a story told at the wrong time,
which is continually on the lips of the ignorant.
- [20] A proverb from a fool's lips will be rejected,
for he does not tell it at its proper time.

- [21] A man may be prevented from sinning by his poverty,
so when he rests he feels no remorse.
- [22] A man may lose his life through shame,
or lose it because of his foolish look.
- [23] A man may for shame make promises to a friend,
and needlessly make him an enemy.

- [24] A lie is an ugly blot on a man;
it is continually on the lips of the ignorant.
- [25] A thief is preferable to a habitual liar,
but the lot of both is ruin.
- [26] The disposition of a liar brings disgrace,
and his shame is ever with him.

- [27] He who speaks wisely will advance himself,
and a sensible man will please great men.
- [28] Whoever cultivates the soil will heap up his harvest,
and whoever pleases great men will atone for injustice.
- [29] Presents and gifts blind the eyes of the wise;
like a muzzle on the mouth they avert reproofs.
- [30] Hidden wisdom and unseen treasure,

what advantage is there in either of them?
[31] Better is the man who hides his folly
than the man who hides his wisdom.

Sir.21

[1] Have you sinned, my son? Do so no more,
but pray about your former sins.

[2] Flee from sin as from a snake;
for if you approach sin, it will bite you.

Its teeth are lion's teeth,
and destroy the souls of men.

[3] All lawlessness is like a two-edged sword;
there is no healing for its wound.

[4] Terror and violence will lay waste riches;
thus the house of the proud will be laid waste.

[5] The prayer of a poor man goes from his lips to the ears of God,
and his judgment comes speedily.

[6] Whoever hates reproof walks in the steps of the sinner,
but he that fears the Lord will repent in his heart.

[7] He who is mighty in speech is known from afar;
but the sensible man, when he slips, is aware of it.

[8] A man who builds his house with other people's money
is like one who gathers stones for his burial mound.

[9] An assembly of the wicked is like tow gathered together,
and their end is a flame of fire.

[10] The way of sinners is smoothly paved with stones,
but at its end is the pit of Hades.

[11] Whoever keeps the law controls his thoughts,
and wisdom is the fulfilment of the fear of the Lord.

[12] He who is not clever cannot be taught,
but there is a cleverness which increases bitterness.

[13] The knowledge of a wise man will increase like a flood,
and his counsel like a flowing spring.

[14] The mind of a fool is like a broken jar;
it will hold no knowledge.

[15] When a man of understanding hears a wise saying,
he will praise it and add to it;
when a reveler hears it, he dislikes it
and casts it behind his back.

[16] A fool's narration is like a burden on a journey,
but delight will be found in the speech of the intelligent.

[17] The utterance of a sensible man will be sought in the assembly,
and they will ponder his words in their minds.

[18] Like a house that has vanished, so is wisdom to a fool;
and the knowledge of the ignorant is unexamined talk.

[19] To a senseless man education is fetters on his feet,
and like manacles on his right hand.

[20] A fool raises his voice when he laughs,
but a clever man smiles quietly.

[21] To a sensible man education is like a golden ornament,
and like a bracelet on the right arm.

[22] The foot of a fool rushes into a house,
but a man of experience stands respectfully before it.

[23] A boor peers into the house from the door,
but a cultivated man remains outside.

[24] It is ill-mannered for a man to listen at a door,
and a discreet man is grieved by the disgrace.

[25] The lips of strangers will speak of these things,
but the words of the prudent will be weighed in the balance.

[26] The mind of fools is in their mouth,
but the mouth of wise men is in their mind.

[27] When an ungodly man curses his adversary,
he curses his own soul.

[28] A whisperer defiles his own soul
and is hated in his neighborhood.

Sir.22

[1] The indolent may be compared to a filthy stone,
and every one hisses at his disgrace.

[2] The indolent may be compared to the filth of dunghills;
any one that picks it up will shake it off his hand.

[3] It is a disgrace to be the father of an undisciplined son,
and the birth of a daughter is a loss.

[4] A sensible daughter obtains her husband,
but one who acts shamefully brings grief to her father.

[5] An impudent daughter disgraces father and husband,
and will be despised by both.

[6] Like music in mourning is a tale told at the wrong time,
but chastising and discipline are wisdom at all times.

[7] He who teaches a fool is like one who glues potsherds together,
or who rouses a sleeper from deep slumber.

[8] He who tells a story to a fool tells it to a drowsy man;
and at the end he will say, "What is it?"

[11] Weep for the dead, for he lacks the light;
and weep for the fool, for he lacks intelligence;
weep less bitterly for the dead, for he has attained rest;
but the life of the fool is worse than death.

[12] Mourning for the dead lasts seven days,

but for a fool or an ungodly man it lasts all his life.

[13] Do not talk much with a foolish man,
and do not visit an unintelligent man;
guard yourself from him to escape trouble,
and you will not be soiled when he shakes himself off;
avoid him and you will find rest,
and you will never be wearied by his madness.

[14] What is heavier than lead?
And what is its name except "Fool"?

[15] Sand, salt, and a piece of iron
are easier to bear than a stupid man.

[16] A wooden beam firmly bonded into a building
will not be torn loose by an earthquake;
so the mind firmly fixed on a reasonable counsel
will not be afraid in a crisis.

[17] A mind settled on an intelligent thought
is like the stucco decoration on the wall of a colonnade.

[18] Fences set on a high place
will not stand firm against the wind;
so a timid heart with a fool's purpose
will not stand firm against any fear.

[19] A man who pricks an eye will make tears fall,
and one who pricks the heart makes it show feeling.

[20] One who throws a stone at birds scares them away,
and one who reviles a friend will break off the friendship.

[21] Even if you have drawn your sword against a friend,
do not despair, for a renewal of friendship is possible.

[22] If you have opened your mouth against your friend,
do not worry, for reconciliation is possible;
but as for reviling, arrogance, disclosure
of secrets, or a treacherous blow --
in these cases any friend will flee.

[23] Gain the trust of your neighbor in his poverty,
that you may rejoice with him in his prosperity;
stand by him in time of affliction,
that you may share with him in his inheritance.

[24] The vapor and smoke of the furnace precede the fire;
so insults precede bloodshed.

[25] I will not be ashamed to protect a friend,
and I will not hide from him;

[26] but if some harm should happen to me because of him,
whoever hears of it will beware of him.

[27] O that a guard were set over my mouth,
and a seal of prudence upon my lips,
that it may keep me from falling,

so that my tongue may not destroy me!

Sir.23

[1] O Lord, Father and Ruler of my life,
do not abandon me to their counsel,
and let me not fall because of them!

[2] O that whips were set over my thoughts,
and the discipline of wisdom over my mind!
That they may not spare me in my errors,
and that it may not pass by my sins;

[3] in order that my mistakes may not be multiplied,
and my sins may not abound;
then I will not fall before my adversaries,
and my enemy will not rejoice over me.

[4] O Lord, Father and God of my life,
do not give me haughty eyes,

[5] and remove from me evil desire.

[6] Let neither gluttony nor lust overcome me,
and do not surrender me to a shameless soul.

[7] Listen, my children, to instruction concerning speech;
the one who observes it will never be caught.

[8] The sinner is overtaken through his lips,
the reviler and the arrogant are tripped by them.

[9] Do not accustom your mouth to oaths,
and do not habitually utter the name of the Holy One;

[10] for as a servant who is continually examined under torture
will not lack bruises,
so also the man who always swears and utters the Name
will not be cleansed from sin.

[11] A man who swears many oaths will be filled with iniquity,
and the scourge will not leave his house;
if he offends, his sin remains on him,
and if he disregards it, he sins doubly;
if he has sworn needlessly, he will not be justified,
for his house will be filled with calamities.

[12] There is an utterance which is comparable to death;
may it never be found in the inheritance of Jacob!
For all these errors will be far from the godly,
and they will not wallow in sins.

[13] Do not accustom your mouth to lewd vulgarity,
for it involves sinful speech.

[14] Remember your father and mother
when you sit among great men;
lest you be forgetful in their presence,
and be deemed a fool on account of your habits;
then you will wish that you had never been born,

and you will curse the day of your birth.

[15] A man accustomed to use insulting words
will never become disciplined all his days.

[16] Two sorts of men multiply sins,
and a third incurs wrath.

The soul heated like a burning fire
will not be quenched until it is consumed;
a man who commits fornication with his near of kin
will never cease until the fire burns him up.

[17] To a fornicator all bread tastes sweet;
he will never cease until he dies.

[18] A man who breaks his marriage vows
says to himself, "Who sees me?

Darkness surrounds me, and the walls hide me,
and no one sees me. Why should I fear?

The Most High will not take notice of my sins."

[19] His fear is confined to the eyes of men,
and he does not realize that the eyes of the Lord
are ten thousand times brighter than the sun;
they look upon all the ways of men,
and perceive even the hidden places.

[20] Before the universe was created, it was known to him;
so it was also after it was finished.

[21] This man will be punished in the streets of the city,
and where he least suspects it, he will be seized.

[22] So it is with a woman who leaves her husband
and provides an heir by a stranger.

[23] For first of all, she has disobeyed the law of the Most High;
second, she has committed an offense against her husband;
and third, she has committed adultery through harlotry
and brought forth children by another man.

[24] She herself will be brought before the assembly,
and punishment will fall on her children.

[25] Her children will not take root,
and her branches will not bear fruit.

[26] She will leave her memory for a curse,
and her disgrace will not be blotted out.

[27] Those who survive her will recognize
that nothing is better than the fear of the Lord,
and nothing sweeter than to heed the commandments of the Lord.

Sir.24

[1] Wisdom will praise herself,

and will glory in the midst of her people.

[2] In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth,
and in the presence of his host she will glory:

[3] "I came forth from the mouth of the Most High,

and covered the earth like a mist.

[4] I dwelt in high places,
and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.

[5] Alone I have made the circuit of the vault of heaven
and have walked in the depths of the abyss.

[6] In the waves of the sea, in the whole earth,
and in every people and nation I have gotten a possession.

[7] Among all these I sought a resting place;
I sought in whose territory I might lodge.

[8] "Then the Creator of all things gave me a commandment,
and the one who created me assigned a place for my tent.

And he said, 'Make your dwelling in Jacob,
and in Israel receive your inheritance.'

[9] From eternity, in the beginning, he created me,
and for eternity I shall not cease to exist.

[10] In the holy tabernacle I ministered before him,
and so I was established in Zion.

[11] In the beloved city likewise he gave me a resting place,
and in Jerusalem was my dominion.

[12] So I took root in an honored people,
in the portion of the Lord, who is their inheritance.

[13] "I grew tall like a cedar in Lebanon,
and like a cypress on the heights of Hermon.

[14] I grew tall like a palm tree in En-ge'di,
and like rose plants in Jericho;
like a beautiful olive tree in the field,
and like a plane tree I grew tall.

[15] Like cassia and camel's thorn I gave forth the aroma of spices,
and like choice myrrh I spread a pleasant odor,
like galbanum, onycha, and stacte,
and like the fragrance of frankincense in the tabernacle.

[16] Like a terebinth I spread out my branches,
and my branches are glorious and graceful.

[17] Like a vine I caused loveliness to bud,
and my blossoms became glorious and abundant fruit.

[19] "Come to me, you who desire me,
and eat your fill of my produce.

[20] For the remembrance of me is sweeter than honey,
and my inheritance sweeter than the honeycomb.

[21] Those who eat me will hunger for more,
and those who drink me will thirst for more.

[22] Whoever obeys me will not be put to shame,
and those who work with my help will not sin."

[23] All this is the book of the covenant of the Most High God,
the law which Moses commanded us
as an inheritance for the congregations of Jacob.

[25] It fills men with wisdom, like the Pishon,

and like the Tigris at the time of the first fruits.
[26] It makes them full of understanding, like the Euphrates,
and like the Jordan at harvest time.
[27] It makes instruction shine forth like light,
like the Gihon at the time of vintage.
[28] Just as the first man did not know her perfectly,
the last one has not fathomed her;
[29] for her thought is more abundant than the sea,
and her counsel deeper than the great abyss.

[30] I went forth like a canal from a river
and like a water channel into a garden.
[31] I said, "I will water my orchard
and drench my garden plot";
and lo, my canal became a river,
and my river became a sea.
[32] I will again make instruction shine forth like the dawn,
and I will make it shine afar;
[33] I will again pour out teaching like prophecy,
and leave it to all future generations.
[34] Observe that I have not labored for myself alone,
but for all who seek instruction.

Sir.25

[1] My soul takes pleasure in three things,
and they are beautiful in the sight of the Lord and of men;
agreement between brothers, friendship between neighbors,
and a wife and a husband who live in harmony.
[2] My soul hates three kinds of men,
and I am greatly offended at their life:
a beggar who is proud, a rich man who is a liar,
and an adulterous old man who lacks good sense.

[3] You have gathered nothing in your youth;
how then can you find anything in your old age?
[4] What an attractive thing is judgment in gray-haired men,
and for the aged to possess good counsel!
[5] How attractive is wisdom in the aged,
and understanding and counsel in honorable men!
[6] Rich experience is the crown of the aged,
and their boast is the fear of the Lord.

[7] With nine thoughts I have gladdened my heart,
and a tenth I shall tell with my tongue:
a man rejoicing in his children;
a man who lives to see the downfall of his foes;
[8] happy is he who lives with an intelligent wife,
and he who has not made a slip with his tongue,

and he who has not served a man inferior to himself;
[9] happy is he who has gained good sense,
and he who speaks to attentive listeners.
[10] How great is he who has gained wisdom!
But there is no one superior to him who fears the Lord.
[11] The fear of the Lord surpasses everything;
to whom shall be likened the one who holds it fast?

[13] Any wound, but not a wound of the heart!
Any wickedness, but not the wickedness of a wife!
[14] Any attack, but not an attack from those who hate!
And any vengeance, but not the vengeance of enemies!
[15] There is no venom worse than a snake's venom,
and no wrath worse than an enemy's wrath.

[16] I would rather dwell with a lion and a dragon
than dwell with an evil wife.
[17] The wickedness of a wife changes her appearance,
and darkens her face like that of a bear.
[18] Her husband takes his meals among the neighbors,
and he cannot help sighing bitterly.
[19] Any iniquity is insignificant compared to a wife's iniquity;
may a sinner's lot befall her!
[20] A sandy ascent for the feet of the aged --
such is a garrulous wife for a quiet husband.
[21] Do not be ensnared by a woman's beauty,
and do not desire a woman for her possessions.
[22] There is wrath and impudence and great disgrace
when a wife supports her husband.
[23] A dejected mind, a gloomy face,
and a wounded heart are caused by an evil wife.
Drooping hands and weak knees
are caused by the wife who does not make her husband happy.
[24] From a woman sin had its beginning,
and because of her we all die.
[25] Allow no outlet to water,
and no boldness of speech in an evil wife.
[26] If she does not go as you direct,
separate her from yourself.

Sir.26

[1] Happy is the husband of a good wife;
the number of his days will be doubled.
[2] A loyal wife rejoices her husband,
and he will complete his years in peace.
[3] A good wife is a great blessing;
she will be granted among the blessings of
the man who fears the Lord.

- [4] Whether rich or poor, his heart is glad,
and at all times his face is cheerful.
- [5] Of three things my heart is afraid,
and of a fourth I am frightened:
The slander of a city, the gathering of a mob,
and false accusation -- all these are worse than death.
- [6] There is grief of heart and sorrow
when a wife is envious of a rival, and a tongue-lashing
makes it known to all.
- [7] An evil wife is an ox yoke which chafes;
taking hold of her is like grasping a scorpion.
- [8] There is great anger when a wife is drunken;
she will not hide her shame.
- [9] A wife's harlotry shows in her lustful eyes,
and she is known by her eyelids.
- [10] Keep strict watch over a headstrong daughter,
lest, when she finds liberty, she use it to her hurt.
- [11] Be on guard against her impudent eye,
and do not wonder if she sins against you.
- [12] As a thirsty wayfarer opens his mouth
and drinks from any water near him,
so will she sit in front of every post
and open her quiver to the arrow.
- [13] A wife's charm delights her husband,
and her skill puts fat on his bones.
- [14] A silent wife is a gift of the Lord,
and there is nothing so precious as a disciplined soul.
- [15] A modest wife adds charm to charm,
and no balance can weigh the value of a chaste soul.
- [16] Like the sun rising in the heights of the Lord,
so is the beauty of a good wife in her well-ordered home.
- [17] Like the shining lamp on the holy lampstand,
so is a beautiful face on a stately figure.
- [18] Like pillars of gold on a base of silver,
so are beautiful feet with a steadfast heart.
- [28] At two things my heart is grieved,
and because of a third anger comes over me:
a warrior in want through poverty,
and intelligent men who are treated contemptuously;
a man who turns back from righteousness to sin --
the Lord will prepare him for the sword!
- [29] A merchant can hardly keep from wrongdoing,
and a tradesman will not be declared innocent of sin.
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Sir.27

[1] Many have committed sin for a trifle,
and whoever seeks to get rich will avert his eyes.
[2] As a stake is driven firmly into a fissure between stones,
so sin is wedged in between selling and buying.
[3] If a man is not steadfast and zealous in the fear of the Lord,
his house will be quickly overthrown.

[4] When a sieve is shaken, the refuse remains;
so a man's filth remains in his thoughts.
[5] The kiln tests the potter's vessels;
so the test of a man is in his reasoning.
[6] The fruit discloses the cultivation of a tree;
so the expression of a thought discloses the
cultivation of a man's mind.
[7] Do not praise a man before you hear him reason,
for this is the test of men.

[8] If you pursue justice, you will attain it
and wear it as a glorious robe.
[9] Birds flock with their kind;
so truth returns to those who practice it.
[10] A lion lies in wait for prey;
so does sin for the workers of iniquity.

[11] The talk of the godly man is always wise,
but the fool changes like the moon.
[12] Among stupid people watch for a chance to leave,
but among thoughtful people stay on.
[13] The talk of fools is offensive,
and their laughter is wantonly sinful.
[14] The talk of men given to swearing makes one's
hair stand on end,
and their quarrels make a man stop his ears.
[15] The strife of the proud leads to bloodshed,
and their abuse is grievous to hear.

[16] Whoever betrays secrets destroys confidence,
and he will never find a congenial friend.
[17] Love your friend and keep faith with him;
but if you betray his secrets, do not run after him.
[18] For as a man destroys his enemy,
so you have destroyed the friendship of your neighbor.
[19] And as you allow a bird to escape from your hand,
so you have let your neighbor go, and will
not catch him again.
[20] Do not go after him, for he is too far off,
and has escaped like a gazelle from a snare.
[21] For a wound may be bandaged,
and there is reconciliation after abuse,

but whoever has betrayed secrets is without hope.

[22] Whoever winks his eye plans evil deeds,
and no one can keep him from them.

[23] In your presence his mouth is all sweetness,
and he admires your words;
but later he will twist his speech
and with your own words he will give offense.

[24] I have hated many things, but none to be compared to him;
even the Lord will hate him.

[25] Whoever throws a stone straight up throws it on his own head;
and a treacherous blow opens up wounds.

[26] He who digs a pit will fall into it,
and he who sets a snare will be caught in it.

[27] If a man does evil, it will roll back upon him,
and he will not know where it came from.

[28] Mockery and abuse issue from the proud man,
but vengeance lies in wait for him like a lion.

[29] Those who rejoice in the fall of the godly
will be caught in a snare,
and pain will consume them before their death.

[30] Anger and wrath, these also are abominations,
and the sinful man will possess them.

Sir.28

[1] He that takes vengeance will suffer vengeance from the Lord,
and he will firmly establish his sins.

[2] Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done,
and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.

[3] Does a man harbor anger against another,
and yet seek for healing from the Lord?

[4] Does he have no mercy toward a man like himself,
and yet pray for his own sins?

[5] If he himself, being flesh, maintains wrath,
who will make expiation for his sins?

[6] Remember the end of your life, and cease from enmity,
remember destruction and death, and be true
to the commandments.

[7] Remember the commandments, and do not be angry
with your neighbor;
remember the covenant of the Most High, and
overlook ignorance.

[8] Refrain from strife, and you will lessen sins;
for a man given to anger will kindle strife,

[9] and a sinful man will disturb friends
and inject enmity among those who are at peace.

[10] In proportion to the fuel for the fire, so will be the burning,
and in proportion to the obstinacy of strife
will be the burning;

in proportion to the strength of the man will be his anger,
and in proportion to his wealth he will heighten his wrath.

[11] A hasty quarrel kindles fire,
and urgent strife sheds blood.

[12] If you blow on a spark, it will glow;
if you spit on it, it will be put out;
and both come out of your mouth.

[13] Curse the whisperer and deceiver,
for he has destroyed many who were at peace.

[14] Slander has shaken many,
and scattered them from nation to nation,
and destroyed strong cities,
and overturned the houses of great men.

[15] Slander has driven away courageous women,
and deprived them of the fruit of their toil.

[16] Whoever pays heed to slander will not find rest,
nor will he settle down in peace.

[17] The blow of a whip raises a welt,
but a blow of the tongue crushes the bones.

[18] Many have fallen by the edge of the sword,
but not so many as have fallen because of the tongue.

[19] Happy is the man who is protected from it,
who has not been exposed to its anger,
who has not borne its yoke,
and has not been bound with its fetters;

[20] for its yoke is a yoke of iron,
and its fetters are fetters of bronze;

[21] its death is an evil death,
and Hades is preferable to it.

[22] It will not be master over the godly,
and they will not be burned in its flame.

[23] Those who forsake the Lord will fall into its power;
it will burn among them and will not be put out.

It will be sent out against them like a lion;
like a leopard it will mangle them.

[24] See that you fence in your property with thorns,
lock up your silver and gold,

[25] make balances and scales for your words,
and make a door and a bolt for your mouth.

[26] Beware lest you err with your tongue,
lest you fall before him who lies in wait.

Sir.29

- [1] He that shows mercy will lend to his neighbor,
and he that strengthens him with his hand
keeps the commandments.
- [2] Lend to your neighbor in the time of his need;
and in turn, repay your neighbor promptly.
- [3] Confirm your word and keep faith with him,
and on every occasion you will find what you need.
- [4] Many persons regard a loan as a windfall,
and cause trouble to those who help them.
- [5] A man will kiss another's hands until he gets a loan,
and will lower his voice in speaking of his neighbor's money;
but at the time for repayment he will delay,
and will pay in words of unconcern,
and will find fault with the time.
- [6] If the lender exert pressure, he will hardly get back half,
and will regard that as a windfall.
If he does not, the borrower has robbed him of his money,
and he has needlessly made him his enemy;
he will repay him with curses and reproaches,
and instead of glory will repay him with dishonor.
- [7] Because of such wickedness, therefore, many
have refused to lend;
they have been afraid of being defrauded needlessly.
- [8] Nevertheless, be patient with a man in humble circumstances,
and do not make him wait for your alms.
- [9] Help a poor man for the commandment's sake,
and because of his need do not send him away empty.
- [10] Lose your silver for the sake of a brother or a friend,
and do not let it rust under a stone and be lost.
- [11] Lay up your treasure according to the commandments
of the Most High,
and it will profit you more than gold.
- [12] Store up almsgiving in your treasury,
and it will rescue you from all affliction;
- [13] more than a mighty shield and more than a heavy spear,
it will fight on your behalf against your enemy.
- [14] A good man will be surety for his neighbor,
but a man who has lost his sense of shame will fail him.
- [15] Do not forget all the kindness of your surety,
for he has given his life for you.
- [16] A sinner will overthrow the prosperity of his surety,
[17] and one who does not feel grateful will abandon his rescuer.
- [18] Being surety has ruined many men who were prosperous,
and has shaken them like a wave of the sea;
it has driven men of power into exile,
and they have wandered among foreign nations.
- [19] The sinner who has fallen into suretyship

and pursues gain will fall into lawsuits.

[20] Assist your neighbor according to your ability,
but take heed to yourself lest you fall.

[21] The essentials for life are water and bread
and clothing and a house to cover one's nakedness.

[22] Better is the life of a poor man under the shelter of his roof
than sumptuous food in another man's house.

[23] Be content with little or much.

[24] It is a miserable life to go from house to house,
and where you are a stranger you may not open your mouth;

[25] you will play the host and provide drink without being thanked,
and besides this you will hear bitter words:

[26] "Come here, stranger, prepare the table,
and if you have anything at hand, let me have it to eat."

[27] "Give place, stranger, to an honored person;
my brother has come to stay with me; I need my house."

[28] These things are hard to bear for a man who has feeling:
scolding about lodging and the reproach of the moneylender.

Sir.30

[1] He who loves his son will whip him often,
in order that he may rejoice at the way he turns out.

[2] He who disciplines his son will profit by him,
and will boast of him among acquaintances.

[3] He who teaches his son will make his enemies envious,
and will glory in him in the presence of friends.

[4] The father may die, and yet he is not dead,
for he has left behind him one like himself;

[5] while alive he saw and rejoiced,
and when he died he was not grieved;

[6] he has left behind him an avenger against his enemies,
and one to repay the kindness of his friends.

[7] He who spoils his son will bind up his wounds,
and his feelings will be troubled at every cry.

[8] A horse that is untamed turns out to be stubborn,
and a son unrestrained turns out to be wilful.

[9] Pamper a child, and he will frighten you;
play with him, and he will give you grief.

[10] Do not laugh with him, lest you have sorrow with him,
and in the end you will gnash your teeth.

[11] Give him no authority in his youth,
and do not ignore his errors.

[12] Bow down his neck in his youth,
and beat his sides while he is young,
lest he become stubborn and disobey you,
and you have sorrow of soul from him.

[13] Discipline your son and take pains with him,
that you may not be offended by his shamelessness.

[14] Better off is a poor man who is well and strong in constitution
than a rich man who is severely afflicted in body.

[15] Health and soundness are better than all gold,
and a robust body than countless riches.

[16] There is no wealth better than health of body,
and there is no gladness above joy of heart.

[17] Death is better than a miserable life,
and eternal rest than chronic sickness.

[18] Good things poured out upon a mouth that is closed
are like offerings of food placed upon a grave.

[19] Of what use to an idol is an offering of fruit?
For it can neither eat nor smell.

So is he who is afflicted by the Lord;

[20] he sees with his eyes and groans,
like a eunuch who embraces a maiden and groans.

[21] Do not give yourself over to sorrow,
and do not afflict yourself deliberately.

[22] Gladness of heart is the life of man,
and the rejoicing of a man is length of days.

[23] Delight your soul and comfort your heart,
and remove sorrow far from you,
for sorrow has destroyed many, and there is no profit in it.

[24] Jealousy and anger shorten life,
and anxiety brings on old age too soon.

[25] A man of cheerful and good heart
will give heed to the food he eats.

Sir.31

[1] Wakefulness over wealth wastes away one's flesh,
and anxiety about it removes sleep.

[2] Wakeful anxiety prevents slumber,
and a severe illness carries off sleep.

[3] The rich man toils as his wealth accumulates,
and when he rests he fills himself with his dainties.

[4] The poor man toils as his livelihood diminishes,
and when he rests he becomes needy.

[5] He who loves gold will not be justified,
and he who pursues money will be led astray by it.

[6] Many have come to ruin because of gold,
and their destruction has met them face to face.

[7] It is a stumbling block to those who are devoted to it,
and every fool will be taken captive by it.

[8] Blessed is the rich man who is found blameless,
and who does not go after gold.

[9] Who is he? And we will call him blessed,
for he has done wonderful things among his people.

[10] Who has been tested by it and been found perfect?

Let it be for him a ground for boasting.

Who has had the power to transgress and did not transgress,
and to do evil and did not do it?

[11] His prosperity will be established,
and the assembly will relate his acts of charity.

[12] Are you seated at the table of a great man?

Do not be greedy at it,

and do not say, "There is certainly much upon it!"

[13] Remember that a greedy eye is a bad thing.

What has been created more greedy than the eye?

Therefore it sheds tears from every face.

[14] Do not reach out your hand for everything you see,
and do not crowd your neighbor at the dish.

[15] Judge your neighbor's feelings by your own,
and in every matter be thoughtful.

[16] Eat like a human being what is set before you,
and do not chew greedily, lest you be hated.

[17] Be the first to stop eating, for the sake of good manners,
and do not be insatiable, lest you give offense.

[18] If you are seated among many persons,
do not reach out your hand before they do.

[19] How ample a little is for a well-disciplined man!

He does not breathe heavily upon his bed.

[20] Healthy sleep depends on moderate eating;
he rises early, and feels fit.

The distress of sleeplessness and of nausea
and colic are with the glutton.

[21] If you are overstuffed with food,
get up in the middle of the meal, and you will have relief.

[22] Listen to me, my son, and do not disregard me,
and in the end you will appreciate my words.

In all your work be industrious,
and no sickness will overtake you.

[23] Men will praise the one who is liberal with food,
and their testimony to his excellence is trustworthy.

[24] The city will complain of the one who is niggardly with food,
and their testimony to his niggardliness is accurate.

[25] Do not aim to be valiant over wine,
for wine has destroyed many.

[26] Fire and water prove the temper of steel,
so wine tests hearts in the strife of the proud.

[27] Wine is like life to men,

if you drink it in moderation.
What is life to a man who is without wine?
It has been created to make men glad.
[28] Wine drunk in season and temperately
is rejoicing of heart and gladness of soul.
[29] Wine drunk to excess is bitterness of soul,
with provocation and stumbling.
[30] Drunkenness increases the anger of a fool to his injury,
reducing his strength and adding wounds.
[31] Do not reprove your neighbor at a banquet of wine,
and do not despise him in his merrymaking;
speak no word of reproach to him,
and do not afflict him by making demands of him.

Sir.32

[1] If they make you master of the feast, do not exalt yourself;
be among them as one of them;
take good care of them and then be seated;
[2] when you have fulfilled your duties, take your place,
that you may be merry on their account
and receive a wreath for your excellent leadership.

[3] Speak, you who are older, for it is fitting that you should,
but with accurate knowledge, and do not interrupt the music.
[4] Where there is entertainment, do not pour out talk;
do not display your cleverness out of season.
[5] A ruby seal in a setting of gold
is a concert of music at a banquet of wine.
[6] A seal of emerald in a rich setting of gold
is the melody of music with good wine.

[7] Speak, young man, if there is need of you,
but no more than twice, and only if asked.
[8] Speak concisely, say much in few words;
be as one who knows and yet holds his tongue.
[9] Among the great do not act as their equal;
and when another is speaking, do not babble.

[10] Lightning speeds before the thunder,
and approval precedes a modest man.
[11] Leave in good time and do not be the last;
go home quickly and do not linger.
[12] Amuse yourself there, and do what you have in mind,
but do not sin through proud speech.
[13] And for these things bless him who made you
and satisfies you with his good gifts.

[14] He who fears the Lord will accept his discipline,

and those who rise early to seek him will find favor.

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

[16] Those who fear the Lord will form true judgments,
and like a light they will kindle righteous deeds.

[17] A sinful man will shun reproof,
and will find a decision according to his liking.

[18] A man of judgment will not overlook an idea,
and an insolent and proud man will not cower in fear.

[19] Do nothing without deliberation;
and when you have acted, do not regret it.

[20] Do not go on a path full of hazards,
and do not stumble over stony ground.

[21] Do not be overconfident on a smooth way,

[22] and give good heed to your paths.

[23] Guard yourself in every act,
for this is the keeping of the commandments.

[24] He who believes the law gives heed to the commandments,
and he who trusts the Lord will not suffer loss.

Sir.33

[1] No evil will befall the man who fears the Lord,
but in trial he will deliver him again and again.

[2] A wise man will not hate the law,
but he who is hypocritical about it is like a boat in a storm.

[3] A man of understanding will trust in the law;
for him the law is as dependable as an inquiry
by means of Urim.

[4] Prepare what to say, and thus you will be heard;
bind together your instruction, and make your answer.

[5] The heart of a fool is like a cart wheel,
and his thoughts like a turning axle.

[6] A stallion is like a mocking friend;
he neighs under every one who sits on him.

[7] Why is any day better than another,
when all the daylight in the year is from the sun?

[8] By the Lord's decision they were distinguished,
and he appointed the different seasons and feasts;

[9] some of them he exalted and hallowed,
and some of them he made ordinary days.

[10] All men are from the ground,
and Adam was created of the dust.

[11] In the fulness of his knowledge the Lord distinguished them
and appointed their different ways;

[12] some of them he blessed and exalted,

and some of them he made holy and brought near to himself;
but some of them he cursed and brought low,
and he turned them out of their place.
[13] As clay in the hand of the potter --
for all his ways are as he pleases --
so men are in the hand of him who made them,
to give them as he decides.

[14] Good is the opposite of evil,
and life the opposite of death;
so the sinner is the opposite of the godly.
[15] Look upon all the works of the Most High;
they likewise are in pairs, one the opposite of the other.

[16] I was the last on watch;
I was like one who gleanes after the grape-gatherers;
by the blessing of the Lord I excelled,
and like a grape-gatherer I filled my wine press.
[17] Consider that I have not labored for myself alone,
but for all who seek instruction.
[18] Hear me, you who are great among the people,
and you leaders of the congregation, hearken.

[19] To son or wife, to brother or friend,
do not give power over yourself, as long as you live;
and do not give your property to another,
lest you change your mind and must ask for it.
[20] While you are still alive and have breath in you,
do not let any one take your place.
[21] For it is better that your children should ask from you
than that you should look to the hand of you sons.
[22] Excel in all that you do;
bring no stain upon your honor.
[23] At the time when you end the days of your life,
in the hour of death, distribute your inheritance.

[24] Fodder and a stick and burdens for an ass;
bread and discipline and work for a servant.
[25] Set your slave to work, and you will find rest;
leave his hands idle, and he will seek liberty.
[26] Yoke and thong will bow the neck,
and for a wicked servant there are racks and tortures.
[27] Put him to work, that he may not be idle,
for idleness teaches much evil.
[28] Set him to work, as is fitting for him,
and if he does not obey, make his fetters heavy.
[29] Do not act immoderately toward anybody,
and do nothing without discretion.

[30] If you have a servant, let him be as yourself,
because you have bought him with blood.

[31] If you have a servant, treat him as a brother,
for as your own soul you will need him.
If you ill-treat him, and he leaves and runs away,
which way will you go to seek him?

Sir.34

- [1] A man of no understanding has vain and false hopes,
and dreams give wings to fools.
[2] As one who catches at a shadow and pursues the wind,
so is he who gives heed to dreams.
[3] The vision of dreams is this against that,
the likeness of a face confronting a face.
[4] From an unclean thing what will be made clean?
And from something false what will be true?
[5] Divinations and omens and dreams are folly,
and like a woman in travail the mind has fancies.
[6] Unless they are sent from the Most High as a visitation,
do not give your mind to them.
[7] For dreams have deceived many,
and those who put their hope in them have failed.
[8] Without such deceptions the law will be fulfilled,
and wisdom is made perfect in truthful lips.
- [9] An educated man knows many things,
and one with much experience will speak with understanding.
[10] He that is inexperienced knows few things,
but he that has traveled acquires much cleverness.
[11] I have seen many things in my travels,
and I understand more than I can express.
[12] I have often been in danger of death,
but have escaped because of these experiences.
- [13] The spirit of those who fear the Lord will live,
for their hope is in him who saves them.
[14] He who fears the Lord will not be timid,
nor play the coward, for he is his hope.
[15] Blessed is the soul of the man who fears the Lord!
To whom does he look? And who is his support?
[16] The eyes of the Lord are upon those who love him,
a mighty protection and strong support,
a shelter from the hot wind and a shade from noonday sun,
a guard against stumbling and a defense against falling.
[17] He lifts up the soul and gives light to the eyes;
he grants healing, life, and blessing.
- [18] If one sacrifices from what has been wrongfully obtained, the
offering is blemished; the gifts of the lawless are not acceptable.
[19] The Most High is not pleased with the offerings of the ungodly;

and he is not propitiated for sins by a multitude of sacrifices.

[20] Like one who kills a son before his father's eyes is the man who offers a sacrifice from the property of the poor.

[21] The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; whoever deprives them of it is a man of blood.

[22] To take away a neighbor's living is to murder him; to deprive an employee of his wages is to shed blood.

[23] When one builds and another tears down, what do they gain but toil?

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

[25] If a man washes after touching a dead body, and touches it again, what has he gained by his washing?

[26] So if a man fasts for his sins, and goes again and does the same things, who will listen to his prayer?

And what has he gained by humbling himself?

Sir.35

[1] He who keeps the law makes many offerings; he who heeds the commandments sacrifices a peace offering.

[2] He who returns a kindness offers fine flour, and he who gives alms sacrifices a thank offering.

[3] To keep from wickedness is pleasing to the Lord, and to forsake unrighteousness is atonement.

[4] Do not appear before the Lord empty-handed,

[5] for all these things are to be done because of the commandment.

[6] The offering of a righteous man anoints the altar, and its pleasing odor rises before the Most High.

[7] The sacrifice of a righteous man is acceptable, and the memory of it will not be forgotten.

[8] Glorify the Lord generously, and do not stint the first fruits of your hands.

[9] With every gift show a cheerful face, and dedicate your tithe with gladness.

[10] Give to the Most High as he has given, and as generously as your hand has found.

[11] For the Lord is the one who repays, and he will repay you sevenfold.

[12] Do not offer him a bribe, for he will not accept it; and do not trust to an unrighteous sacrifice; for the Lord is the judge, and with him is no partiality.

[13] He will not show partiality in the case of a poor man;
and he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged.
[14] He will not ignore the supplication of the fatherless,
nor the widow when she pours out her story.
[15] Do not the tears of the widow run down her cheek
as she cries out against him who has caused them to fall?
[16] He whose service is pleasing to the Lord will be accepted,
and his prayer will reach to the clouds.
[17] The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds,
and he will not be consoled until it reaches the Lord;
he will not desist until the Most High visits him,
and does justice for the righteous, and executes judgment.
[18] And the Lord will not delay,
neither will he be patient with them,
till he crushes the loins of the unmerciful
and repays vengeance on the nations;
till he takes away the multitude of the insolent,
and breaks the scepters of the unrighteous;
[19] till he repays the man according to his deeds,
and the works of men according to their devices;
till he judges the case of his people
and makes them rejoice in his mercy.
[20] Mercy is as welcome when he afflicts them
as clouds of rain in the time of drought.

Sir.36

[1] Have mercy upon us, O Lord, the God of all, and look upon us,
[2] and cause the fear of thee to fall upon all the nations.
[3] Lift up thy hand against foreign nations
and let them see thy might.
[4] As in us thou hast been sanctified before them,
so in them be thou magnified before us;
[5] and let them know thee, as we have known
that there is not God but thee, O Lord.
[6] Show signs anew, and work further wonders;
make thy hand and thy right arm glorious.
[7] Rouse thy anger and pour out thy wrath;
destroy the adversary and wipe out the enemy.
[8] Hasten the day, and remember the appointed time,
and let people recount thy mighty deeds.
[9] Let him who survives be consumed in the fiery wrath,
and may those who harm thy people meet destruction.
[10] Crush the heads of the rulers of the enemy,
who say, "There is no one but ourselves."
[11] Gather all the tribes of Jacob,
and give them their inheritance, as at the beginning.
[12] Have mercy, O Lord, upon the people called by thy name,
upon Israel, whom thou hast likened to a first-born son.

[13] Have pity on the city of thy sanctuary,
Jerusalem, the place of thy rest.
[14] Fill Zion with the celebration of thy wondrous deeds,
and thy temple with thy glory.
[15] Bear witness to those whom thou didst create in the beginning,
and fulfil the prophecies spoken in thy name.
[16] Reward those who wait for thee,
and let thy prophets be found trustworthy.
[17] Hearken, O Lord, to the prayer of thy servants,
according to the blessing of Aaron for thy people,
and all who are on the earth will know
that thou art the Lord, the God of the ages.

[18] The stomach will take any food,
yet one food is better than another.
[19] As the palate tastes the kinds of game,
so an intelligent mind detects false words.
[20] A perverse mind will cause grief,
but a man of experience will pay him back.
[21] A woman will accept any man,
but one daughter is better than another.
[22] A woman's beauty gladdens the countenance,
and surpasses every human desire.
[23] If kindness and humility mark her speech,
her husband is not like other men.
[24] He who acquires a wife gets his best possession,
a helper fit for him and a pillar of support.
[25] Where there is no fence, the property will be plundered;
and where there is no wife, a man will wander about and sigh.
[26] For who will trust a nimble robber
that skips from city to city?
So who will trust a man that has no home,
and lodges wherever night finds him?

Sir.37

[1] Every friend will say, "I too am a friend";
but some friends are friends only in name.
[2] Is it not a grief to the death
when a companion and friend turns to enmity?
[3] O evil imagination, why were you formed
to cover the land with deceit?
[4] Some companions rejoice in the happiness of a friend,
but in time of trouble are against him.
[5] Some companions help a friend for their stomach's sake,
and in the face of battle take up the shield.
[6] Do not forget a friend in your heart,
and be not unmindful of him in your wealth.

- [7] Every counselor praises counsel,
but some give counsel in their own interest.
- [8] Be wary of a counselor,
and learn first what is his interest --
for he will take thought for himself --
lest he cast the lot against you
- [9] and tell you, "Your way is good,"
and then stand aloof to see what will happen to you.
- [10] Do not consult the one who looks at you suspiciously;
hide your counsel from those who are jealous of you.
- [11] Do not consult with a woman about her rival
or with a coward about war,
with a merchant about barter
or with a buyer about selling,
with a grudging man about gratitude
or with a merciless man about kindness,
with an idler about any work
or with a man hired for a year about completing his work,
with a lazy servant about a big task --
pay no attention to these in any matter of counsel.
- [12] But stay constantly with a godly man
whom you know to be a keeper of the commandments,
whose soul is in accord with your soul,
and who will sorrow with you if you fail.
- [13] And establish the counsel of your own heart,
for no one is more faithful to you than it is.
- [14] For a man's soul sometimes keeps him better informed
than seven watchmen sitting high on a watchtower.
- [15] And besides all this pray to the Most High
that he may direct your way in truth.
- [16] Reason is the beginning of every work,
and counsel precedes every undertaking.
- [17] As a clue to changes of heart
- [18] four turns of fortune appear,
good and evil, life and death;
and it is the tongue that continually rules them.
- [19] A man may be shrewd and the teacher of many,
and yet be unprofitable to himself.
- [20] A man skilled in words may be hated;
he will be destitute of all food,
- [21] for grace was not given him by the Lord,
since he is lacking in all wisdom.
- [22] A man may be wise to his own advantage,
and the fruits of his understanding may be
trustworthy on his lips.
- [23] A wise man will instruct his own people,
and the fruits of his understanding will be trustworthy.
- [24] A wise man will have praise heaped upon him,
and all who see him will call him happy.
- [25] The life of a man is numbered by days,

but the days of Israel are without number.

[26] He who is wise among his people will inherit confidence,
and his name will live for ever.

[27] My son, test your soul while you live;
see what is bad for it and do not give it that.

[28] For not everything is good for every one,
and not every person enjoys everything.

[29] Do not have an insatiable appetite for any luxury,
and do not give yourself up to food;

[30] for overeating brings sickness,
and gluttony leads to nausea.

[31] Many have died of gluttony,
but he who is careful to avoid it prolongs his life.

Sir.38

[1] Honor the physician with the honor due him,
according to your need of
him, for the Lord created him;

[2] for healing comes from the Most High,
and he will receive a gift from the king.

[3] The skill of the physician lifts up his head,
and in the presence of great men he is admired.

[4] The Lord created medicines from the earth,
and a sensible man will not despise them.

[5] Was not water made sweet with a tree
in order that his power might be known?

[6] And he gave skill to men
that he might be glorified in his marvelous works.

[7] By them he heals and takes away pain;

[8] the pharmacist makes of them a compound.
His works will never be finished;
and from him health is upon the face of the earth.

[9] My son, when you are sick do not be negligent,
but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you.

[10] Give up your faults and direct your hands aright,
and cleanse your heart from all sin.

[11] Offer a sweet-smelling sacrifice, and a memorial
portion of fine flour,

and pour oil on your offering, as much as you can afford.

[12] And give the physician his place, for the Lord created him;
let him not leave you, for there is need of him.

[13] There is a time when success lies in the hands of physicians,

[14] for they too will pray to the Lord
that he should grant them success in diagnosis
and in healing, for the sake of preserving life.

[15] He who sins before his Maker,

may he fall into the care of a physician.

[16] My son, let your tears fall for the dead,
and as one who is suffering grievously begin the lament.
Lay out his body with the honor due him,
and do not neglect his burial.

[17] Let your weeping be bitter and your wailing fervent;
observe the mourning according to his merit,
for one day, or two, to avoid criticism;
then be comforted for your sorrow.

[18] For sorrow results in death,
and sorrow of heart saps one's strength.

[19] In calamity sorrow continues,
and the life of the poor man weighs down his heart.

[20] Do not give your heart to sorrow;
drive it away, remembering the end of life.

[21] Do not forget, there is no coming back;
you do the dead no good, and you injure yourself.

[22] "Remember my doom, for yours is like it:
yesterday it was mine, and today it is yours."

[23] When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance cease,
and be comforted for him when his spirit is departed.

[24] The wisdom of the scribe depends on the opportunity of leisure;
and he who has little business may become wise.

[25] How can he become wise who handles the plow,
and who glories in the shaft of a goad,
who drives oxen and is occupied with their work,
and whose talk is about bulls?

[26] He sets his heart on plowing furrows,
and he is careful about fodder for the heifers.

[27] So too is every craftsman and master workman
who labors by night as well as by day;
those who cut the signets of seals,
each is diligent in making a great variety;
he sets his heart on painting a lifelike image,
and he is careful to finish his work.

[28] So too is the smith sitting by the anvil,
intent upon his handiwork in iron;
the breath of the fire melts his flesh,
and he wastes away in the heat of the furnace;
he inclines his ear to the sound of the hammer,
and his eyes are on the pattern of the object.
He sets his heart on finishing his handiwork,
and he is careful to complete its decoration.

[29] So too is the potter sitting at his work
and turning the wheel with his feet;
he is always deeply concerned over his work,
and all his output is by number.

[30] He moulds the clay with his arm
and makes it pliable with his feet;

he sets his heart to finish the glazing,
and he is careful to clean the furnace.

[31] All these rely upon their hands,
and each is skilful in his own work.

[32] Without them a city cannot be established,
and men can neither sojourn nor live there.

[33] Yet they are not sought out for the council of the people,
nor do they attain eminence in the public assembly.

They do not sit in the judge's seat,
nor do they understand the sentence of judgment;
they cannot expound discipline or judgment,
and they are not found using proverbs.

[34] But they keep stable the fabric of the world,
and their prayer is in the practice of their trade.

Sir.39

[1] On the other hand he who devotes himself
to the study of the law of the Most High
will seek out the wisdom of all the ancients,
and will be concerned with prophecies;

[2] he will preserve the discourse of notable men
and penetrate the subtleties of parables;

[3] he will seek out the hidden meanings of proverbs
and be at home with the obscurities of parables.

[4] He will serve among great men
and appear before rulers;
he will travel through the lands of foreign nations,
for he tests the good and the evil among men.

[5] He will set his heart to rise early
to seek the Lord who made him,
and will make supplication before the Most High;
he will open his mouth in prayer
and make supplication for his sins.

[6] If the great Lord is willing,
he will be filled with the spirit of understanding;
he will pour forth words of wisdom
and give thanks to the Lord in prayer.

[7] He will direct his counsel and knowledge aright,
and meditate on his secrets.

[8] He will reveal instruction in his teaching,
and will glory in the law of the Lord's covenant.

[9] Many will praise his understanding,
and it will never be blotted out;
his memory will not disappear,
and his name will live through all generations.

[10] Nations will declare his wisdom,

and the congregation will proclaim his praise;
[11] if he lives long, he will leave a name greater than a thousand,
and if he goes to rest, it is enough for him.
[12] I have yet more to say, which I have thought upon,
and I am filled, like the moon at the full.
[13] Listen to me, O you holy sons,
and bud like a rose growing by a stream of water;
[14] send forth fragrance like frankincense,
and put forth blossoms like a lily.
Scatter the fragrance, and sing a hymn of praise;
bless the Lord for all his works;
[15] ascribe majesty to his name
and give thanks to him with praise,
with songs on your lips, and with lyres;
and this you shall say in thanksgiving:
[16] "All things are the works of the Lord, for they are very good,
and whatever he commands will be done in his time."

[17] No one can say, "What is this?" "Why is that?"
for in God's time all things will be sought after.
At his word the waters stood in a heap,
and the reservoirs of water at the word of his mouth.
[18] At his command whatever pleases him is done,
and none can limit his saving power.
[19] The works of all flesh are before him,
and nothing can be hid from his eyes.
[20] From everlasting to everlasting he beholds them,
and nothing is marvelous to him.
[21] No one can say, "What is this?" "Why is that?"
for everything has been created for its use.
[22] His blessing covers the dry land like a river,
and drenches it like a flood.
[23] The nations will incur his wrath,
just as he turns fresh water into salt.
[24] To the holy his ways are straight,
just as they are obstacles to the wicked.
[25] From the beginning good things were created for good people,
just as evil things for sinners.
[26] Basic to all the needs of man's life
are water and fire and iron and salt
and wheat flour and milk and honey,
the blood of the grape, and oil and clothing.
[27] All these are for good to the godly,
just as they turn into evils for sinners.

[28] There are winds that have been created for vengeance,
and in their anger they scourge heavily;
in the time of consummation they will pour out their strength
and calm the anger of their Maker.
[29] Fire and hail and famine and pestilence,
all these have been created for vengeance;

[30] the teeth of wild beasts, and scorpions and vipers,
and the sword that punishes the ungodly with destruction;
[31] they will rejoice in his commands,
and be made ready on earth for their service,
and when their times come they will not transgress his word.
[32] Therefore from the beginning I have been convinced,
and have thought this out and left it in writing:
[33] The works of the Lord are all good,
and he will supply every need in its hour.
[34] And no one can say, "This is worse than that,"
for all things will prove good in their season.
[35] So now sing praise with all your heart and voice,
and bless the name of the Lord.

Sir.40

[1] Much labor was created for every man,
and a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam,
from the day they come forth from their mother's womb
till the day they return to the mother of all.
[2] Their perplexities and fear of heart --
their anxious thought is the day of death,
[3] from the man who sits on a splendid throne
to the one who is humbled in dust and ashes,
[4] from the man who wears purple and a crown
to the one who is clothed in burlap;
[5] there is anger and envy and trouble and unrest,
and fear of death, and fury and strife.
And when one rests upon his bed,
his sleep at night confuses his mind.
[6] He gets little or no rest,
and afterward in his sleep, as though he were on watch,
he is troubled by the visions of his mind
like one who has escaped from the battle-front;
[7] at the moment of his rescue he wakes up,
and wonders that his fear came to nothing.
[8] With all flesh, both man and beast,
and upon sinners seven times more,
[9] are death and bloodshed and strife and sword,
calamities, famine and affliction and plague.
[10] All these were created for the wicked,
and on their account the flood came.
[11] All things that are from the earth turn back to the earth,
and what is from the waters returns to the sea.

[12] All bribery and injustice will be blotted out,
but good faith will stand for ever.
[13] The wealth of the unjust will dry up like a torrent,
and crash like a loud clap of thunder in a rain.

- [14] A generous man will be made glad;
likewise transgressors will utterly fail.
- [15] The children of the ungodly will not put forth many branches;
they are unhealthy roots upon sheer rock.
- [16] The reeds by any water or river bank
will be plucked up before any grass.
- [17] Kindness is like a garden of blessings,
and almsgiving endures for ever.
- [18] Life is sweet for the self-reliant and the worker,
but he who finds treasure is better off than both.
- [19] Children and the building of a city establish a man's name,
but a blameless wife is accounted better than both.
- [20] Wine and music gladden the heart,
but the love of wisdom is better than both.
- [21] The flute and the harp make pleasant melody,
but a pleasant voice is better than both.
- [22] The eye desires grace and beauty,
but the green shoots of grain more than both.
- [23] A friend or a companion never meets one amiss,
but a wife with her husband is better than both.
- [24] Brothers and help are for a time of trouble,
but almsgiving rescues better than both.
- [25] Gold and silver make the foot stand sure,
but good counsel is esteemed more than both.
- [26] Riches and strength lift up the heart,
but the fear of the Lord is better than both.
There is no loss in the fear of the Lord,
and with it there is no need to seek for help.
- [27] The fear of the Lord is like a garden of blessing,
and covers a man better than any glory.
- [28] My son, do not lead the life of a beggar;
it is better to die than to beg.
- [29] When a man looks to the table of another,
his existence cannot be considered as life.
He pollutes himself with another man's food,
but a man who is intelligent and well instructed
guards against that.
- [30] In the mouth of the shameless begging is sweet,
but in his stomach a fire is kindled.

Sir.41

- [1] O death, how bitter is the reminder of you
to one who lives at peace among his possessions,
to a man without distractions, who is prosperous in everything,
and who still has the vigor to enjoy his food!
- [2] O death, how welcome is your sentence
to one who is in need and is failing in strength,

very old and distracted over everything;
to one who is contrary, and has lost his patience!

[3] Do not fear the sentence of death;
remember your former days and the end of life;
this is the decree from the Lord for all flesh,

[4] and how can you reject the good pleasure of the Most High?
Whether life is for ten or a hundred or a thousand years,
there is no inquiry about it in Hades.

[5] The children of sinners are abominable children,
and they frequent the haunts of the ungodly.

[6] The inheritance of the children of sinners will perish,
and on their posterity will be a perpetual reproach.

[7] Children will blame an ungodly father,
for they suffer reproach because of him.

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

[9] When you are born, you are born to a curse;
and when you die, a curse is your lot.

[10] Whatever is from the dust returns to dust;
so the ungodly go from curse to destruction.

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

[12] Have regard for your name, since it will remain for
you longer than a thousand great stores of gold.

[13] The days of a good life are numbered,
but a good name endures for ever.

[14] My children, observe instruction and be at peace;
hidden wisdom and unseen treasure,
what advantage is there in either of them?

[15] Better is the man who hides his folly
than the man who hides his wisdom.

[16] Therefore show respect for my words:
For it is good to retain every kind of shame,
and not everything is confidently esteemed by every one.

[17] Be ashamed of immorality, before your father or mother;
and of a lie, before a prince or a ruler;

[18] of a transgression, before a judge or magistrate;
and of iniquity, before a congregation or the people;
of unjust dealing, before your partner or friend;

[19] and of theft, in the place where you live.
Be ashamed before the truth of God and his covenant.

Be ashamed of selfish behavior at meals,
of surliness in receiving and giving,

[20] and of silence, before those who greet you;
of looking at a woman who is a harlot,

[21] and of rejecting the appeal of a kinsman;
of taking away some one's portion or gift,
and of gazing at another man's wife;

[22] of meddling with his maidservant --
and do not approach her bed;
of abusive words, before friends --
and do not upbraid after making a gift;
[23] of repeating and telling what you hear,
and of revealing secrets.
Then you will show proper shame,
and will find favor with every man.

Sir.42

[1] Of the following things do not be ashamed,
and do not let partiality lead you to sin:
[2] of the law of the Most High and his covenant,
and of rendering judgment to acquit the ungodly;
[3] of keeping accounts with a partner or with
traveling companions,
and of dividing the inheritance of friends;
[4] of accuracy with scales and weights,
and of acquiring much or little;
[5] of profit from dealing with merchants,
and of much discipline of children,
and of whipping a wicked servant severely.
[6] Where there is an evil wife, a seal is a good thing;
and where there are many hands, lock things up.
[7] Whatever you deal out, let it be by number and weight,
and make a record of all that you give out or take in.
[8] Do not be ashamed to instruct the stupid or foolish
or the aged man who quarrels with the young.
Then you will be truly instructed,
and will be approved before all men.

[9] A daughter keeps her father secretly wakeful,
and worry over her robs him of sleep;
when she is young, lest she do not marry,
or if married, lest she be hated;
[10] while a virgin, lest she be defiled
or become pregnant in her father's house;
or having a husband, lest she prove unfaithful,
or, though married, lest she be barren.
[11] Keep strict watch over a headstrong daughter,
lest she make you a laughingstock to your enemies,
a byword in the city and notorious among the people,
and put you to shame before the great multitude.

[12] Do not look upon any one for beauty,
and do not sit in the midst of women;
[13] for from garments comes the moth,
and from a woman comes woman's wickedness.

[14] Better is the wickedness of a man than a woman who does good;
and it is a woman who brings shame and disgrace.

[15] I will now call to mind the works of the Lord,
and will declare what I have seen.

By the words of the Lord his works are done.

[16] The sun looks down on everything with its light,
and the work of the Lord is full of his glory.

[17] The Lord has not enabled his holy ones
to recount all his marvelous works,
which the Lord the Almighty has established
that the universe may stand firm in his glory.

[18] He searches out the abyss, and the hearts of men,
and considers their crafty devices.

For the Most High knows all that may be known,
and he looks into the signs of the age.

[19] He declares what has been and what is to be,
and he reveals the tracks of hidden things.

[20] No thought escapes him,
and not one word is hidden from him.

[21] He has ordained the splendors of his wisdom,
and he is from everlasting and to everlasting.

Nothing can be added or taken away,
and he needs no one to be his counselor.

[22] How greatly to be desired are all his works,
and how sparkling they are to see!

[23] All these things live and remain for ever
for every need, and are all obedient.

[24] All things are twofold, one opposite the other,
and he has made nothing incomplete.

[25] One confirms the good things of the other,
and who can have enough of beholding his glory?

Sir.43

[1] The pride of the heavenly heights is the clear firmament,
the appearance of heaven in a spectacle of glory.

[2] The sun, when it appears, making proclamation as it goes forth,
is a marvelous instrument, the work of the Most High.

[3] At noon it parches the land;
and who can withstand its burning heat?

[4] A man tending a furnace works in burning heat,
but the sun burns the mountains three times as much;
it breathes out fiery vapors,
and with bright beams it blinds the eyes.

[5] Great is the Lord who made it;
and at his command it hastens on its course.

[6] He made the moon also, to serve in its season

to mark the times and to be an everlasting sign.

[7] From the moon comes the sign for feast days,
a light that wanes when it has reached the full.

[8] The month is named for the moon,
increasing marvelously in its phases,
an instrument of the hosts on high
shining forth in the firmament of heaven.

[9] The glory of the stars is the beauty of heaven,
a gleaming array in the heights of the Lord.

[10] At the command of the Holy One they stand as ordered,
they never relax in their watches.

[11] Look upon the rainbow, and praise him who made it,
exceedingly beautiful in its brightness.

[12] It encircles the heaven with its glorious arc;
the hands of the Most High have stretched it out.

[13] By his command he sends the driving snow
and speeds the lightnings of his judgment.

[14] Therefore the storehouses are opened,
and the clouds fly forth like birds.

[15] In his majesty he amasses the clouds,
and the hailstones are broken in pieces.

[16] At his appearing the mountains are shaken;
at his will the south wind blows.

[17] The voice of his thunder rebukes the earth;
so do the tempest from the north and the whirlwind.
He scatters the snow like birds flying down,
and its descent is like locusts alighting.

[18] The eye marvels at the beauty of its whiteness,
and the mind is amazed at its falling.

[19] He pours the hoarfrost upon the earth like salt,
and when it freezes, it becomes pointed thorns.

[20] The cold north wind blows,
and ice freezes over the water;
it rests upon every pool of water,
and the water puts it on like a breastplate.

[21] He consumes the mountains and burns up the wilderness,
and withers the tender grass like fire.

[22] A mist quickly heals all things;
when the dew appears, it refreshes from the heat.

[23] By his counsel he stilled the great deep
and planted islands in it.

[24] Those who sail the sea tell of its dangers,
and we marvel at what we hear.

[25] for in it are strange and marvelous works,
all kinds of living things, and huge creatures of the sea.

[26] Because of him his messenger finds the way,
and by his word all things hold together.

[27] Though we speak much we cannot reach the end,

and the sum of our words is: "He is the all."

[28] Where shall we find strength to praise him?

For he is greater than all his works.

[29] Terrible is the Lord and very great,
and marvelous is his power.

[30] When you praise the Lord, exalt him as much as you can;
for he will surpass even that.

When you exalt him, put forth all your strength,
and do not grow weary, for you cannot praise him enough.

[31] Who has seen him and can describe him?

Or who can extol him as he is?

[32] Many things greater than these lie hidden,
for we have seen but few of his works.

[33] For the Lord has made all things,
and to the godly he has granted wisdom.

Sir.44

[1] Let us now praise famous men,
and our fathers in their generations.

[2] The Lord apportioned to them great glory,
his majesty from the beginning.

[3] There were those who ruled in their kingdoms,
and were men renowned for their power,
giving counsel by their understanding,
and proclaiming prophecies;

[4] leaders of the people in their deliberations
and in understanding of learning for the people,
wise in their words of instruction;

[5] those who composed musical tunes,
and set forth verses in writing;

[6] rich men furnished with resources,
living peaceably in their habitations --

[7] all these were honored in their generations,
and were the glory of their times.

[8] There are some of them who have left a name,
so that men declare their praise.

[9] And there are some who have no memorial,
who have perished as though they had not lived;
they have become as though they had not been born,
and so have their children after them.

[10] But these were men of mercy,
whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten;

[11] their prosperity will remain with their descendants,
and their inheritance to their children's children.

[12] Their descendants stand by the covenants;
their children also, for their sake.

[13] Their posterity will continue for ever,
and their glory will not be blotted out.

[14] Their bodies were buried in peace,
and their name lives to all generations.
[15] Peoples will declare their wisdom,
and the congregation proclaims their praise.

[16] Enoch pleased the Lord, and was taken up;
he was an example of repentance to all generations.

[17] Noah was found perfect and righteous;
in the time of wrath he was taken in exchange;
therefore a remnant was left to the earth
when the flood came.

[18] Everlasting covenants were made with him
that all flesh should not be blotted out by a flood.

[19] Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations,
and no one has been found like him in glory;

[20] he kept the law of the Most High,
and was taken into covenant with him;
he established the covenant in his flesh,
and when he was tested he was found faithful.

[21] Therefore the Lord assured him by an oath
that the nations would be blessed through his posterity;
that he would multiply him like the dust of the earth,
and exalt his posterity like the stars,
and cause them to inherit from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

[22] To Isaac also he gave the same assurance
for the sake of Abraham his father.

[23] The blessing of all men and the covenant
he made to rest upon the head of Jacob;
he acknowledged him with his blessings,
and gave him his inheritance;
he determined his portions,
and distributed them among twelve tribes.

Sir.45

[1] From his descendants the Lord brought forth a man of mercy,
who found favor in the sight of all flesh
and was beloved by God and man,
Moses, whose memory is blessed.

[2] He made him equal in glory to the holy ones,
and made him great in the fears of his enemies.

[3] By his words he caused signs to cease;
the Lord glorified him in the presence of kings.
He gave him commands for his people,
and showed him part of his glory.

[4] He sanctified him through faithfulness and meekness;
he chose him out of all mankind.

[5] He made him hear his voice,
and led him into the thick darkness,
and gave him the commandments face to face,
the law of life and knowledge,
to teach Jacob the covenant,
and Israel his judgments.

[6] He exalted Aaron, the brother of Moses,
a holy man like him, of the tribe of Levi.

[7] He made an everlasting covenant with him,
and gave him the priesthood of the people.
He blessed him with splendid vestments,
and put a glorious robe upon him.

[8] He clothed him with superb perfection,
and strengthened him with the symbols of authority,
the linen breeches, the long robe, and the ephod.

[9] And he encircled him with pomegranates,
with very many golden bells round about,
to send forth a sound as he walked,
to make their ringing heard in the temple
as a reminder to the sons of his people;

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

[11] with twisted scarlet, the work of a craftsman;
with precious stones engraved like signets,
in a setting of gold, the work of a jeweler,
for a reminder, in engraved letters,
according to the number of the tribes of Israel;

[12] with a gold crown upon his turban,
inscribed like a signet with "Holiness,"
a distinction to be prized, the work of an expert,
the delight of the eyes, richly adorned.

[13] Before his time there never were such beautiful things.
No outsider ever put them on,
but only his sons
and his descendants perpetually.

[14] His sacrifices shall be wholly burned
twice every day continually.

[15] Moses ordained him,
and anointed him with holy oil;
it was an everlasting covenant for him
and for his descendants all the days of heaven,
to minister to the Lord and serve as priest
and bless his people in his name.

[16] He chose him out of all the living
to offer sacrifice to the Lord,
incense and a pleasing odor as a memorial portion,
to make atonement for the people.

[17] In his commandments he gave him
authority and statutes and judgments,
to teach Jacob the testimonies,
and to enlighten Israel with his law.
[18] Outsiders conspired against him,
and envied him in the wilderness,
Dathan and Abiram and their men
and the company of Korah, in wrath and anger.
[19] The Lord saw it and was not pleased,
and in the wrath of his anger they were destroyed;
he wrought wonders against them
to consume them in flaming fire.
[20] He added glory to Aaron
and gave him a heritage;
he allotted to him the first of the first fruits,
he prepared bread of first fruits in abundance;
[21] for they eat the sacrifices to the Lord,
which he gave to him and his descendants.
[22] But in the land of the people he has no inheritance,
and he has no portion among the people;
for the Lord himself is his portion and inheritance.

[23] Phinehas the son of Eleazar is the third in glory,
for he was zealous in the fear of the Lord,
and stood fast, when the people turned away,
in the ready goodness of his soul,
and made atonement for Israel.
[24] Therefore a covenant of peace was established with him,
that he should be leader of the sanctuary and of his people,
that he and his descendants should have
the dignity of the priesthood for ever.
[25] A covenant was also established with David,
the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah:
the heritage of the king is from son to son only;
so the heritage of Aaron is for his descendants.
[26] May the Lord grant you wisdom in your heart
to judge his people in righteousness,
so that their prosperity may not vanish,
and that their glory may endure throughout their generations.

Sir.46

[1] Joshua the son of Nun was mighty in war,
and was the successor of Moses in prophesying.
He became, in accordance with his name,
a great savior of God's elect,
to take vengeance on the enemies that rose against them,
so that he might give Israel its inheritance.
[2] How glorious he was when he lifted his hands

and stretched out his sword against the cities!

[3] Who before him ever stood so firm?

For he waged the wars of the Lord.

[4] Was not the sun held back by his hand?

And did not one day become as long as two?

[5] He called upon the Most High, the Mighty One,
when enemies pressed him on every side,

[6] and the great Lord answered him
with hailstones of mighty power.

He hurled down war upon that nation,
and at the descent of Beth-horon he destroyed
those who resisted,

so that the nations might know his armament,
that he was fighting in the sight of the Lord;
for he wholly followed the Mighty One.

[7] And in the days of Moses he did a loyal deed,
he and Caleb the son of Jephunneh:
they withstood the congregation,
restrained the people from sin,
and stilled their wicked murmuring.

[8] And these two alone were preserved
out of six hundred thousand people on foot,
to bring them into their inheritance,
into a land flowing with milk and honey.

[9] And the Lord gave Caleb strength,
which remained with him to old age,
so that he went up to the hill country,
and his children obtained it for an inheritance;

[10] so that all the sons of Israel might see
that it is good to follow the Lord.

[11] The judges also, with their respective names,
those whose hearts did not fall into idolatry
and who did not turn away from the Lord --
may their memory be blessed!

[12] May their bones revive from where they lie,
and may the name of those who have been honored
live again in their sons!

[13] Samuel, beloved by his Lord,
a prophet of the Lord, established the kingdom
and anointed rulers over his people.

[14] By the law of the Lord he judged the congregation,
and the Lord watched over Jacob.

[15] By his faithfulness he was proved to be a prophet,
and by his words he became known as a trustworthy seer.

[16] He called upon the Lord, the Mighty One,
when his enemies pressed him on every side,
and he offered in sacrifice a sucking lamb.

[17] Then the Lord thundered from heaven,
and made his voice heard with a mighty sound;

[18] and he wiped out the leaders of the people of Tyre
and all the rulers of the Philistines.
[19] Before the time of his eternal sleep,
Samuel called men to witness before the Lord and his anointed:
"I have not taken any one's property,
not so much as a pair of shoes."
And no man accused him.
[20] Even after he had fallen asleep he prophesied
and revealed to the king his death,
and lifted up his voice out of the earth in prophecy,
to blot out the wickedness of the people.

Sir.47

[1] And after him Nathan rose up
to prophesy in the days of David.
[2] As the fat is selected from the peace offering,
so David was selected from the sons of Israel.
[3] He played with lions as with young goats,
and with bears as with lambs of the flock.
[4] In his youth did he not kill a giant,
and take away reproach from the people,
when he lifted his hand with a stone in the sling
and struck down the boasting of Goliath?
[5] For he appealed to the Lord, the Most High,
and he gave him strength in his right hand
to slay a man mighty in war,
to exalt the power of his people.
[6] So they glorified him for his ten thousands,
and praised him for the blessings of the Lord,
when the glorious diadem was bestowed upon him.
[7] For he wiped out his enemies on every side,
and annihilated his adversaries the Philistines;
he crushed their power even to this day.
[8] In all that he did he gave thanks
to the Holy One, the Most High, with ascriptions of glory;
he sang praise with all his heart,
and he loved his Maker.
[9] He placed singers before the altar,
to make sweet melody with their voices.
[10] He gave beauty to the feasts,
and arranged their times throughout the year,
while they praised God's holy name,
and the sanctuary resounded from early morning.
[11] The Lord took away his sins,
and exalted his power for ever;
he gave him the covenant of kings
and a throne of glory in Israel.

[12] After him rose up a wise son
who fared amply because of him;
[13] Solomon reigned in days of peace,
and God gave him rest on every side,
that he might build a house for his name
and prepare a sanctuary to stand for ever.
[14] How wise you became in your youth!
You overflowed like a river with understanding.
[15] Your soul covered the earth,
and you filled it with parables and riddles.
[16] Your name reached to far-off islands,
and you were loved for your peace.
[17] For your songs and proverbs and parables,
and for your interpretations, the countries marveled at you.
[18] In the name of the Lord God,
who is called the God of Israel,
you gathered gold like tin
and amassed silver like lead.
[19] But you laid your loins beside women,
and through your body you were brought into subjection.
[20] You put stain upon your honor,
and defiled your posterity,
so that you brought wrath upon your children
and they were grieved at your folly,
[21] so that the sovereignty was divided
and a disobedient kingdom arose out of Ephraim.
[22] But the Lord will never give up his mercy,
nor cause any of his works to perish;
he will never blot out the descendants of his chosen one,
nor destroy the posterity of him who loved him;
so he gave a remnant to Jacob,
and to David a root of his stock.

[23] Solomon rested with his fathers,
and left behind him one of his sons,
ample in folly and lacking in understanding,
Rehoboam, whose policy caused the people to revolt.
Also Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin
and gave to Ephraim a sinful way.
[24] Their sins became exceedingly many,
so as to remove them from their land.
[25] For they sought out every sort of wickedness,
till vengeance came upon them.

Sir.48

[1] Then the prophet Elijah arose like a fire,
and his word burned like a torch.
[2] He brought a famine upon them,

and by his zeal he made them few in number.

[3] By the word of the Lord he shut up the heavens,
and also three times brought down fire.

[4] How glorious you were, O Elijah, in your wondrous deeds!
And who has the right to boast which you have?

[5] You who raised a corpse from death
and from Hades, by the word of the Most High;

[6] who brought kings down to destruction,
and famous men from their beds;

[7] who heard rebuke at Sinai
and judgments of vengeance at Horeb;

[8] who anointed kings to inflict retribution,
and prophets to succeed you.

[9] You who were taken up by a whirlwind of fire,
in a chariot with horses of fire;

[10] you who are ready at the appointed time, it is written,
to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury,
to turn the heart of the father to the son,
and to restore the tribes of Jacob.

[11] Blessed are those who saw you,
and those who have been adorned in love;
for we also shall surely live.

[12] It was Elijah who was covered by the whirlwind,
and Elisha was filled with his spirit;
in all his days he did not tremble before any ruler,
and no one brought him into subjection.

[13] Nothing was too hard for him,
and when he was dead his body prophesied.

[14] As in his life he did wonders,
so in death his deeds were marvelous.

[15] For all this the people did not repent,
and they did not forsake their sins,
till they were carried away captive from their land
and were scattered over all the earth;
the people were left very few in number,
but with rulers from the house of David.

[16] Some of them did what was pleasing to God,
but others multiplied sins.

[17] Hezekiah fortified his city,
and brought water into the midst of it;
he tunneled the sheer rock with iron
and built pools for water.

[18] In his days Sennacherib came up,
and sent the Rabshakeh;
he lifted up his hand against Zion
and made great boasts in his arrogance.

[19] Then their hearts were shaken and their hands trembled,
and they were in anguish, like women in travail.

- [20] But they called upon the Lord who is merciful,
spreading forth their hands toward him;
and the Holy One quickly heard them from heaven,
and delivered them by the hand of Isaiah.
- [21] The Lord smote the camp of the Assyrians,
and his angel wiped them out.
- [22] For Hezekiah did what was pleasing to the Lord,
and he held strongly to the ways of David his father,
which Isaiah the prophet commanded,
who was great and faithful in his vision.
- [23] In his days the sun went backward,
and he lengthened the life of the king.
- [24] By the spirit of might he saw the last things,
and comforted those who mourned in Zion.
- [25] He revealed what was to occur to the end of time,
and the hidden things before they came to pass.
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Sir.49

- [1] The memory of Josiah is like a blending of incense
prepared by the art of the perfumer;
it is sweet as honey to every mouth,
and like music at a banquet of wine.
- [2] He was led aright in converting the people,
and took away the abominations of iniquity.
- [3] He set his heart upon the Lord;
in the days of wicked men he strengthened godliness.
- [4] Except David and Hezekiah and Josiah
they all sinned greatly,
for they forsook the law of the Most High;
the kings of Judah came to an end;
- [5] for they gave their power to others,
and their glory to a foreign nation,
- [6] who set fire to the chosen city of the sanctuary,
and made her streets desolate,
according to the word of Jeremiah.
- [7] For they had afflicted him;
yet he had been consecrated in the womb as prophet,
to pluck up and afflict and destroy,
and likewise to build and to plant.
- [8] It was Ezekiel who saw the vision of glory
which God showed him above the chariot of the cherubim.
- [9] For God remembered his enemies with storm,
and did good to those who directed their ways aright.
- [10] May the bones of the twelve prophets
revive from where they lie,

for they comforted the people of Jacob
and delivered them with confident hope.

[11] How shall we magnify Zerubbabel?

He was like a signet on the right hand,

[12] and so was Jeshua the son of Jozadak;

in their days they built the house

and raised a temple holy to the Lord,

prepared for everlasting glory.

[13] The memory of Nehemiah also is lasting;

he raised for us the walls that had fallen,

and set up the gates and bars

and rebuilt our ruined houses.

[14] No one like Enoch has been created on earth,

for he was taken up from the earth.

[15] And no man like Joseph has been born,

and his bones are cared for.

[16] Shem and Seth were honored among men,

and Adam above every living being in the creation.

Sir.50

[1] The leader of his brethren and the pride of his people

was Simon the high priest, son of Onias,

who in his life repaired the house,

and in his time fortified the temple.

[2] He laid the foundations for the high double walls,

the high retaining walls for the temple enclosure.

[3] In his days a cistern for water was quarried out,

a reservoir like the sea in circumference.

[4] He considered how to save his people from ruin,

and fortified the city to withstand a siege.

[5] How glorious he was when the people gathered round him

as he came out of the inner sanctuary!

[6] Like the morning star among the clouds,

like the moon when it is full;

[7] like the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High,

and like the rainbow gleaming in glorious clouds;

[8] like roses in the days of the first fruits,

like lilies by a spring of water,

like a green shoot on Lebanon on a summer day;

[9] like fire and incense in the censer,

like a vessel of hammered gold

adorned with all kinds of precious stones;

[10] like an olive tree putting forth its fruit,

and like a cypress towering in the clouds.

[11] When he put on his glorious robe

and clothed himself with superb perfection

and went up to the holy altar,
he made the court of the sanctuary glorious.
[12] And when he received the portions from the
hands of the priests,
as he stood by the hearth of the altar
with a garland of brethren around him,
he was like a young cedar on Lebanon;
and they surrounded him like the trunks of palm trees,
[13] all the sons of Aaron in their splendor
with the Lord's offering in their hands,
before the whole congregation of Israel.
[14] Finishing the service at the altars,
and arranging the offering to the Most High, the Almighty,
[15] he reached out his hand to the cup
and poured a libation of the blood of the grape;
he poured it out at the foot of the altar,
a pleasing odor to the Most High, the King of all.
[16] Then the sons of Aaron shouted,
they sounded the trumpets of hammered work,
they made a great noise to be heard
for remembrance before the Most High.
[17] Then all the people together made haste
and fell to the ground upon their faces
to worship their Lord,
the Almighty, God Most High.
[18] And the singers praised him with their voices
in sweet and full-toned melody.
[19] And the people besought the Lord Most High
in prayer before him who is merciful,
till the order of worship of the Lord was ended;
so they completed his service.
[20] Then Simon came down, and lifted up his hands
over the whole congregation of the sons of Israel,
to pronounce the blessing of the Lord with his lips,
and to glory in his name;
[21] and they bowed down in worship a second time,
to receive the blessing from the Most High.

[22] And now bless the God of all,
who in every way does great things;
who exalts our days from birth,
and deals with us according to his mercy.
[23] May he give us gladness of heart,
and grant that peace may be in our days in Israel,
as in the days of old.
[24] May he entrust to us his mercy!
And let him deliver us in our days!

[25] With two nations my soul is vexed,
and the third is no nation:
[26] Those who live on Mount Seir, and the Philistines,

and the foolish people that dwell in Shechem.

[27] Instruction in understanding and knowledge
I have written in this book,
Jesus the son of Sirach, son of Eleazar, of Jerusalem,
who out of his heart poured forth wisdom.

[28] Blessed is he who concerns himself with these things,
and he who lays them to heart will become wise.

[29] For if he does them, he will be strong for all things,
for the light of the Lord is his path.

Sir.51

[1] I will give thanks to thee, O Lord and King,
and will praise thee as God my Savior.

I give thanks to thy name,

[2] for thou hast been my protector and helper
and hast delivered my body from destruction
and from the snare of a slanderous tongue,
from lips that utter lies.

Before those who stood by
thou wast my helper,

[3] and didst deliver me,
in the greatness of thy mercy and of thy name,
from the gnashings of teeth about to devour me,
from the hand of those who sought my life,
from the many afflictions that I endured,

[4] from choking fire on every side
and from the midst of fire which I did not kindle,

[5] from the depths of the belly of Hades,
from an unclean tongue and lying words --

[6] the slander of an unrighteous tongue to the king.

My soul drew near to death,
and my life was very near to Hades beneath.

[7] They surrounded me on every side,
and there was no one to help me;

I looked for the assistance of men,
and there was none.

[8] Then I remembered thy mercy, O Lord,
and thy work from of old,
that thou dost deliver those who wait for thee
and dost save them from the hand of their enemies.

[9] And I sent up my supplication from the earth,
and prayed for deliverance from death.

[10] I appealed to the Lord, the Father of my lord,
not to forsake me in the days of affliction,
at the time when there is no help against the proud.

[11] I will praise thy name continually,
and will sing praise with thanksgiving.

My prayer was heard,
[12] for thou didst save me from destruction
and rescue me from an evil plight.
Therefore I will give thanks to thee and praise thee,
and I will bless the name of the Lord.

[13] While I was still young, before I went on my travels,
I sought wisdom openly in my prayer.

[14] Before the temple I asked for her,
and I will search for her to the last.

[15] From blossom to ripening grape
my heart delighted in her;
my foot entered upon the straight path;

from my youth I followed her steps.

[16] I inclined my ear a little and received her,
and I found for myself much instruction.

[17] I made progress therein;
to him who gives wisdom I will give glory.

[18] For I resolved to live according to wisdom,
and I was zealous for the good;
and I shall never be put to shame.

[19] 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.

[20] I directed my soul to her,
and through purification I found her.
I gained understanding with her from the first,
therefore I will not be forsaken.

[21] My heart was stirred to seek her,
therefore I have gained a good possession.

[22] The Lord gave me a tongue as my reward,
and I will praise him with it.

[23] Draw near to me, you who are untaught,
and lodge in my school.

[24] Why do you say you are lacking in these things,
and why are your souls very thirsty?

[25] I opened my mouth and said,
Get these things for yourselves without money.

[26] Put your neck under the yoke,
and let your souls receive instruction;
it is to be found close by.

[27] See with your eyes that I have labored little
and found myself much rest.

[28] Get instruction with a large sum of silver,
and you will gain by it much gold.

[29] May your soul rejoice in his mercy,
and may you not be put to shame when you praise him.

[30] Do your work before the appointed time,

and in God's time he will give you your reward.
