

# SIRACH

## TO THE READER

### EDITION OF THE GREEK TEXT

The book of Sirach actually has three different titles, depending on the language of its transmission or the religious tradition that reads it. In Hebrew the book is known as The Wisdom of Joshua (Jesus) Ben Sira. In the Vulgate, the book is called Ecclesiasticus (the church's book). In the Jewish-Greek scriptures and for NETS, the title is that given above, Sirach. For Sirach, I have used the Göttingen edition of Joseph Ziegler (*Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Göttingensis editum XII.2: Sapientia Iesu Filii Sirach* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965]). In his critical text, Ziegler places verses from a later Greek recension (GKII; see below) in smaller typeface, and I have followed his judgments as to what constitutes GKII. As a result, I have punctuated the entire consecutive text, including the GKII. In some cases, if the reader skips over the GKII, the punctuation might not make the best English sense, since it relies on the presence of the additional verses. All the Greek manuscripts extant for Sirach contain a textual displacement in which the order of 30.25–33.13a and 33.13b–36.16a is reversed. Ziegler has placed the Greek in the correct order. The NRSV along with Patrick W. Skehan's and Alexander Di Lella's Anchor Bible commentary follow Ziegler in giving the text in its proper order. In the NETS translation, I have followed suit, and I give the chapter and verse numbers following the correct order with the chapter and verse numbers of the Greek in its displaced order in parentheses.

One feature of Ziegler's edition is the frequency of reconstructions of an original Greek text that nowhere exists in the Greek manuscript tradition. Usually Ziegler takes his cue from Alfred Rahlfs or Rudolph Smend in deciding that the entire Greek tradition is a corruption of a no-longer-extant Greek original. I have followed Ziegler in almost every case. For example, NETS for Sir 3.17 reads, "Child, in gentleness conduct your affairs, and you will be loved more than a person who gives," which reflects Ziegler's text, ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον δότην, instead of the majority of the Greek tradition, which reads ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπου δεκτοῦ "by an acceptable person." Ziegler has adopted this conjecture from Smend, who, based on the Hebrew texts and the Latin version, concluded that the Greek manuscript tradition preserved a corruption. The NRSV seems to depend here on the Greek manuscript tradition, although it has glossed the verse, apparently to wring some meaning out of it.

### THE HEBREW AND GREEK TEXTS OF BEN SIRA

The textual situation of the Wisdom of Ben Sira, notably the often confused and fragmentary state of the Hebrew manuscripts, created some unique difficulties for this translation. Hebrew texts of Ben Sira are extant for about two-thirds of the book. Portions of chapters 39–44 survive in the Masada manuscript, which dates from the first century BCE. 2Q18 contains the remains of several lines, and 11QP<sup>sa</sup> preserves a number of verses from chapter 51. The most extensive extant Hebrew sections are found in the six fragmentary manuscripts (designated A–F) discovered in the Cairo Geniza. On occasion the contents of these manuscripts overlap, but more often only one manuscript preserves any given passage from Ben Sira in Hebrew. The Hebrew manuscripts do, however, seem, *in their essentials*, to preserve the Hebrew of Ben Sira but not without numerous mistakes, additions and corruptions. The ultimate effect of this situation on the NETS translation is simply to make comparison between the Hebrew and Greek for matters such as vocabulary consistency, lexical choice and other elements of translation technique much more difficult to isolate and characterize.

As a result of the Hebrew textual situation, I have had to approach the translation of this book more from the perspective of a book like 1 Makkabees, which was translated from Hebrew but for which no Hebrew survives into modernity. Part of the reason for this approach is the inconsistency of the translator for various aspects of his work. The practical impact on the reader is that my translation differs from the NRSV quite frequently, probably more than for those books that have the MT as a basis of comparison. Moreover, whereas the NRSV attempts to present the reader with, as much as possible, an Ur-Text of the book, NETS is interested solely in its Greek translation. The Hebrew texts become relevant only to the

extent that the source text can arbitrate between competing readings and interpretations of the target text and can, furthermore, account for the kind of Greek found in the translation.

One additional matter that both the NETS translation of Ben Sira and the NRSV had to deal with was the presence of the later Greek recension. In the process of the textual transmission of the Greek, a number of proverbs were added to the book, and this recension is usually designated GKII. For the most part, the NRSV puts readings from this Greek recension in footnotes leaving in the main text only GKI (= OG), that is, the translation of the author's grandson, who rendered the Hebrew text into Greek. In the NETS translation, I have worked in analogous fashion both to Ziegler and to how NETS has handled similar cases elsewhere. GKII passages appear in the running text where they should be located. I have set them off by (a) marking them with square brackets at the beginning and end of each line and (b) by placing them in italics. Manuscript 248, one of the most important manuscript witnesses for GKII, contains an alternative prologue to the original translation, which Ziegler places in smaller typeface following the prologue of Ben Sira's grandson. The alternative prologue is not included in NETS. The decision to exclude it was based on several factors. First, it only appears in Ms 248 and in no other Greek text. Second, although of considerable importance, Ms 248 does not contain all of the GKII readings for Sirach. Consequently, this prologue was probably not intended to introduce any GKII "recension." Finally, according to Ziegler (66), the prologue stems from a work entitled *Synopsis Scripturae Sacrae*, falsely attributed to the Egyptian church father Athanasius.

#### TRANSLATION PROFILE OF THE GREEK

When one compares the Greek of the Prologue with that of the translation, one will see a tremendous difference between the two. The Prologue is written in good, literary style. The translation, on the other hand, looks to have been executed in a generally isomorphic manner, and it thus mirrors many aspects of its Hebrew source text. I hope that the qualitative difference between the Greek of the Prologue and the frequently unidiomatic, even awkward Greek of the translation will be readily apparent to the NETS reader. In general, the conclusions that I gave concerning the relationship between the Hebrew and Greek of Sirach in my 1989 study of translation technique (*No Small Difference: Sirach's Relationship to Its Hebrew Parent Text* [SBLSCS 26; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989]) still hold, it seems to me.

Here I make some general remarks about the Greek translation that illustrate its character. First, the isomorphic approach of the grandson to the process of translation means that he, like most of the translators of the LXX/OG corpus, does try to keep close to the Hebrew word order and, for the most part, he maintains a quantitative parity with his parent text. One finds in this translation, then, a number of aspects of the translation that suggest that the translator was working essentially in an interlinear way; that is, the Greek could be seen as a kind of "pony" to the Hebrew, since the translator often reproduces many aspects of the grammatical form of the Hebrew in the translation. In some cases, however, a perfectly acceptable feature of Greek might also serve the agenda of isomorphism. One example illustrates the case well. The Hebrew of Ben Sira uses several circumlocutions for possession, most of which involve some use of the dative. So, 3.22b reads in Hebrew (Ms A), וְאִין לְךָ עֵסֶק בְּנִסְתָּרוֹתַי "You have no business with hidden things." Rather than take the clause as a whole and render the Hebrew idiom for possession, לְךָ, by using some standard Greek verb such as ἔχω, the translator simply follows the Hebrew word-for-word, οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν σοι χρεία τῶν κρυπτῶν. While one might be tempted to translate this Greek with something like "For there is for you no need for hidden matters," Greek can also indicate possession through the use of a dative with the verb to be, the so-called dative of possession. As a result, according to NETS principles (see "TO THE READER OF NETS") normal Greek idiom means normal English idiom. Thus, I have translated cases like this one using the normal English verb "have," and 3.22 appears in NETS as "for you have no need of hidden matters."

Second, the translator's word-by-word approach to his work also means that various parts of speech get transferred from Hebrew directly into Greek. The result is that Hebrew participles generally become Greek participles; Hebrew prepositions become Greek prepositions, etc. The most common difficulty produced by this translational practice is that prepositions will oftentimes get used in ways that are foreign to their uses in standard Greek, and often they can be found in strange contexts. They frequently appear as part of an object complement to a verb for which they are not suited in standard Greek, or they get used in non-Greek contexts. ὑπέρ, for example, often renders the Hebrew preposition ׀ in places where in Hebrew the preposition functions to indicate the comparative, even though it does not normally have that function in Greek. In 7.19 the Greek ἡ χάρις αὐτῆς ὑπὲρ τὸ χρυσίον "her grace is beyond gold" renders מִפְּנֵי נִימְךָ "grace more than pearls." Other than the lexical shift from "pearls" to "gold," the translator has employed ὑπὲρ in a context for which it is not normally used outside of the LXX/OG corpus.

Third, even though the translator worked in essentially a word-for-word manner, he does not exhibit a tendency to confine one Greek lexeme to the same Hebrew lexeme. So, for instance, the noun ἀγαλλίαμα “joy, exultation” renders three different Hebrew terms—שמחה (31.26), תפארה (6.31) and גיל (30.23). On the other side of the coin, one Hebrew word might have several different Greek equivalents. In fact, there is enough semantic differentiation that one can rarely reconstruct, on the basis of the existing Hebrew-Greek equivalences, what the Hebrew lexical items in the parent text were in those sections of Sirach where Hebrew does not survive. Illustrative is the Hebrew verb בנע, “withhold, hold back,” which is never rendered twice with the same word. The various Greek equivalents are: ἀντιλαμβάνω (12.7), ἀποκωλύω (7.33), ἀφυστερέω (14.14), ἐμποδίζω (32.3), κωλύω (4.23), παρέλκω (4.3), στερέω (7.21) and συνέχω (14.4).

Within the translator’s general policy of isomorphism, there are occasionally times when he seems to engage in an interpretive move. In most cases, he is confronting a text that seems to baffle him. For example, in 49.2, part of the section about Josias (Josiah), the grandson apparently did not understand the clause על משובתינו כי נחל על משובתינו “for he was sickened/grieved at our apostasies.” Although the resulting Greek has an almost one-to-one correspondence with the Hebrew on a purely formal level, it looks like the translator recognized the root שׁוּב in the word משובתינו as coming from the Hebrew verb meaning “return, turn back.” He thus interpreted the entire clause, probably on the basis of his identification of שׁוּב, as αὐτὸς κατευθύθη ἐν ἐπιστροφῇ λαοῦ “He prospered in turning around the people.” The Greek, although it does not accurately translate the Hebrew, makes good contextual sense in a passage about Josiah.

Given the examples above, it should not be a surprise to note that the Greek does not contain a high number of calques or even thoroughly stereotyped renderings, although some cases do present difficulties for the NETS translator. One particularly interesting case is the Greek-Hebrew equivalence καύχημα – תפארה. The Greek translates the Hebrew five times (9.16; 10.22; 44.7; 45.8; 50.11) and the related noun καύχησις translates the Hebrew term once (31.10). Both Greek words indicate some kind of “boasting.” Yet, the primary lexical meaning of תפארה is “splendor, beauty, glory,” and only as a subsidiary meaning related to “glory” does the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew lexicon list “boasting.” Even though the Greek-Hebrew equivalence seems fixed for the translator, there does not seem to be any warrant for ascribing the meaning of “splendor” or “beauty” to the two related Greek words. As far as Sirach is concerned, they retain their Greek meaning, and they are translated in NETS as “boast” and “boasting.”

The Greek representations of the Hebrew נפש present a more difficult case, particularly when it is used in Hebrew with a personal pronoun to mean “him/her/itself”—so, for instance, נפשו “himself.” The Greek translator usually prefers to give a rather awkward and wooden rendering into Greek, ψυχή αὐτοῦ, “his soul.” The Greek phrase, although it represents each element in the Hebrew phrase, does not normally mean “himself” in Greek, although the word ψυχή can have the sense of one’s “self.” Hence in the NETS translation of Sirach, I render this wooden representation of the Hebrew “his/her/their soul.” The translator did have at his disposal a perfectly good and idiomatic Greek word to indicate the reflexive, εἑαυτοῦ, which he, in fact, uses in 37.8c, where εἑαυτῶ translates נפשו. There are quite a number of individual instances of Hebraistic renderings such as this in the Greek translation and almost none take on the meaning of the Hebrew. They are simply overly wooden renderings. Sir 35.12 offers another prime example of a normal Hebrew idiom being rendered into a stilted and essentially meaningless Greek. Here עין בטוב עין “with generosity” becomes quite woodenly in Greek ἐν ἀγαθῷ ὀφθαλμῶ “with a good eye.”

Interestingly, one of the terms that is clearly a calque in almost the entirety of the Jewish-Greek translation corpus, διαθήκη “covenant” as a translation of ברית, is not one for the translator of Ben Sira, who uses the word for both ברית and הוֹק (in both technical and non-technical contexts). This situation presents some difficulty for the English translator. Ben Sira’s grandson has leveled the meanings of the two Hebrew words. He has used the same Greek for both Hebrew nouns, for which he intended the meaning “covenant,” and NETS reflects that meaning in all the cases of the Greek noun. In some cases, however, the use of διαθήκη changes the sense of the underlying Hebrew. Sirach 11.20 encourages the student to “stand by your agreement,” עמד בחוקך. The Greek στήθῳ ἐν διαθήκῃ σου “stand by your covenant” might suggest that the translator understood the Greek term in its usual sense of “testament,” or he simply uses the now technical Greek term in a non-technical context. In 42.2, however, διαθήκη as a translation of הוֹק seems more definitely to change the sense of the Hebrew parent text. As part of a list of things that should not cause shame for the student, the Hebrew has על תורת עליון וחוק “of the law of the Most High and of the statute.” The Greek, περὶ νόμου ὑψίστου καὶ διαθήκης “of the law of the Most High and covenant,” broadens the focus considerably—from some unspecified statute to the entirety of

God's covenant with Israel. Finally, 44.20, in the section on Abraam (Abraham), διαθήκη renders both ברית and קח, thus, at the least, masking the intention of the Hebrew original.

Hebrew (Ms B and Masada): וּבֹא בְּבְרִית עִמּוֹ בְּבָשָׂרוֹ כִּרְתָה לּוֹ חוּק

Translation: "And he [God] entered into a covenant with him; in his flesh he made for him a statute."<sup>1</sup>

Greek: καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν διαθήκῃ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐν σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ ἔστησεν διαθήκην

NETS: "and he entered in a covenant with him; in his flesh he established a covenant."

In this verse, the "statute" almost certainly means the law of circumcision for all of Abraam's descendants. The Greek, however, completely levels the semantic difference of the Hebrew between the "covenant" that God makes and the "statute" that God establishes "in his flesh."

#### THE NETS TRANSLATION OF SIRACH

Since elsewhere in the NETS corpus, the English translators have worked with the general dictum vis-à-vis the NRSV "Change what you must, and keep what you can," several specific comments on the relationship of NETS Sirach to the NRSV are in order. There are a number of ways that the NETS translation of Sirach differs routinely from that in the NRSV. Many of the differences between NETS and NRSV result from the different purposes of the translations. The NRSV intends to produce a faithful translation in nicely idiomatic and fluid English—a purpose it accomplishes well. Sirach, however, is also somewhat unique among the NRSV translations. The NRSV "Old Testament" is translated from Hebrew, the original language of the various books, into English, but the NRSV Sirach, because of its transmission history, is already, in large part, a translation of a translation. The NRSV cannot translate the Hebrew, because it is incomplete and the text is frequently corrupt, and the Greek, which it does translate for the most part, is itself a translation. This approach produces two results that affect the NETS translation. First, although it primarily relies on the Greek, the NRSV uses an eclectic approach to the text. That is, the translator is interested in using the best, most original text possible. For Sirach, that might mean a preference for the Latin or the Syriac or the Hebrew rather than for the Greek. In places where the NRSV relies on the Hebrew or one of the other daughter translations, NETS will almost certainly be different, since it translated the best Greek text available. Second, in giving a fluid English translation, the English of the NRSV necessarily in many cases erases the awkwardness of the Greek. NETS, which is more intent on reflecting the translationese character of the Greek, requires a different approach, and in many cases I attempt to retain the awkwardness of the Greek that the NRSV has smoothed over. Moreover, exegetical openness, that is, rendering the Greek text as carefully as possible for what it says, is deemed in and of itself a virtue.

My basic approach in the NETS translation of Sirach is to provide the English reader with as much information as possible about the character of the Greek and the relationship between the Hebrew (where it exists) and its Greek translation. Essentially, what this means for the reader of NETS is that my translation of Sirach is more independent of the NRSV than is the case for other NETS translations. The following paragraphs explain my approach to selected aspects of the NETS translation, and in these ways NETS will typically depart from the NRSV.

(a) For the most part, where possible, I have tried to represent the poetic form of the verses as much as possible. The Greek, by trying to represent the Hebrew word order, often reproduces the poetic structure of the Hebrew text. That is, if two Hebrew cola have the structure, verb-subject-object, subject-verb-object, the Greek will very often keep that order. I have tried to do the same in NETS where the rules of English permit and where no hardship for the reader results. This often results in an English word order different from NRSV. Thus, for example, NETS at 1.27, "For wisdom and education are the fear of the Lord, and his delight is fidelity and gentleness," differs from NRSV, "For the fear of the Lord is wisdom and discipline, fidelity and humility are his delight" because the Greek (which most likely represents the Hebrew word order) has the parallelism A:B:B':A', which I have kept in NETS. This procedure does not represent dissatisfaction with NRSV; I operate this way in order to provide the English reader of NETS as much information about the relationship between the Greek and Hebrew texts as possible.

(b) The reader of NETS will find that the vocabulary choices in many places differ from the NRSV. Although a high level of stereotyping does not characterize the translation of Sirach, the translator does

<sup>1</sup> The NRSV here reads, "and entered into a covenant with him; he certified the covenant in his flesh," which seems to presuppose the Greek text.

seem to have a corpus of words that he uses consistently for particular Hebrew words. In such cases, I have maintained that consistency as much as possible in NETS. Sometimes the translator will maintain a high level of lexical consistency in individual poetic units. Where such consistency occurs, NETS is also consistent in its use of English vocabulary. On the other hand, where the NRSV uses the same English word for different Greek words in a poetic unit, I have used English synonyms to indicate to the reader that the Greek words are not the same.

(c) As I noted above, in many instances the Greek translator tries hard to maintain a one-for-one translation of the Hebrew. This technique produces several different results. Sometimes one encounters one word in Greek for one word in Hebrew. In those places where the Greek translator appears to be concerned about this type of lexical representation, I have tried to be as well. This usually means translating a single Greek word by a single English word. The translator, however, might also try to reproduce on a one-to-one basis the word order or even the grammatical form of the Hebrew. So, for example, the relationship between verbal tenses grates against the ear, or the lack of the definite article where one would expect it in standard Greek produces a strange sounding phrase. The resulting Greek is frequently stilted and awkward. In such cases I have tried as best I can within the bounds of acceptable English to represent in NETS the awkwardness of the Greek of Sirach. A couple of short examples will illustrate the nature of the case. In 13.22, the first stich of the verse uses the present tense to describe the help given to a rich person, πλουσίου σφαλέντος πολλοὶ ἀντιλήμτορες "when a rich person staggers, many are his helpers." Yet, the second switches to the aorist, rendered into the past tense in English, ἐλάλησεν ἀπόρητα καὶ ἐδικαίωσαν αὐτόν "he spoke things not to be spoken, and they justified him." With respect to the article, the Greek translation very frequently employs anarthrous nouns, which creates at best some ambiguity and at worst some real difficulty. So, for instance, in Simon II's temple service described in chapter 50, we read καὶ αὐτὸς ἕστῳσ παρ' ἑσχάρᾳ βωμοῦ "when he stood by altar's (or "an altar's") hearth." It seems clear that the altar in the Jerusalem temple is intended, but the lack of the article here introduces some awkwardness and ambiguity that the definite article would have easily resolved.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Several resources proved of tremendous value in preparing this NETS translation. For the Hebrew text of Sirach, I consulted primarily Z. ben-Hayyim, *The Book of Ben Sira: Text, Concordance and an Analysis of the Vocabulary* (Jerusalem: Academy of the Hebrew Language and the Shrine of the Book, 1973) and P. C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) in addition to many shorter studies on individual aspects of the Hebrew text. Besides the NRSV, the translation produced by Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella for their Anchor Bible Commentary, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (AB 39; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987) proved a valuable aid. I benefited enormously from their commentary as well. The commentary of M. H. Segal, *ספר בן־סירא השלם* (Jerusalem: Bialik Foundation, 1958) also provided numerous insights into the different textual traditions in which Sirach survives.

BENJAMIN G. WRIGHT

#### PROLOGUE

(1) Seeing that many and great things have been given to us through the Law and the Prophets and the others that followed them, for which reason it is necessary to commend Israel for education and wisdom, and whereas it is necessary that not only those who read them gain understanding, (5)but also that those who love learning be capable of service to outsiders, both when they speak and when they write, Iesus, my grandfather, since he had given himself increasingly both to the reading of the Law and the Prophets (10)and the other ancestral books and since he had acquired considerable proficiency in them, he too was led to compose something pertaining to education and

wisdom in order that lovers of learning, when they come under their<sup>a</sup> sway as well, might gain much more in living by the law.

(15) You are invited, therefore, to a reading with goodwill and attention, and to exercise forbearance in cases where we may be thought (20)to be insipid with regard to some expressions that have been the object of great care in rendering; for what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have the same force when it is in fact rendered in another language. And not only in this case, but also in the case of the Law itself and the Prophets (25)and the rest of the books the difference is not small when these are expressed in their own language.

<sup>a</sup>Antecedent unclear, referring either to his grandfather's book or to *education and wisdom*

For in the thirty-eighth year, in the reign of Euergetes the king, when I had arrived in Egypt and stayed a while, when I had discovered an exemplar of no little education, <sup>(30)</sup>I myself too made it a most compulsory task to bring some speed and industry to the translating of this tome, meanwhile having contributed much sleeplessness and skill, with the aim of bringing the book to completion and to publish it also for those living abroad if they wish to become learned, preparing their character to live by the law.

- 1 All wisdom is from the Lord,  
and with him it exists forever.
- 2 Sand of seas and drops of rain  
and days of eternity—who shall  
enumerate?
- 3 The sky's height and earth's breadth  
and abyss and wisdom—who will  
track?
- 4 Before all things wisdom has been created,  
and understanding of prudence is from  
eternity.
- [5 *Wisdom's spring is God's word in the highest,*  
*[and her journeys are everlasting*  
*commandments.]*
- 6 Wisdom's root—to whom was it  
revealed?  
And her wondrous feats—who knew?
- [7 *Wisdom's skill—to whom was it manifested?*  
*[And her great experience—who has*  
*understood it?]*
- 8 One who is wise, greatly feared,  
seated upon his throne.
- 9 The Lord, he created her,  
and he saw and enumerated her  
and poured her out upon all his works,  
10 among all flesh according to his giving,  
and he furnished her abundantly to those  
who love him.  
*[Loving the Lord is esteemed wisdom,  
[but to whomever he appears, he apportions  
her as a vision of himself.]*
- 11 Fear of the Lord is reputation and  
boasting  
and gladness and a garland of rejoicing.
- 12 Fear of the Lord will delight the heart,  
and it will give gladness and joy and  
length of days.  
*[Fear of the Lord is a gift from the Lord,  
[for he also establishes paths for love.]*
- 13 For the one who fears the Lord, it will be  
well at the end,  
and in the day of his death he will be  
blessed.
- 14 Wisdom's beginning is to fear the Lord,  
and with the faithful in the womb—she  
was created together with them.
- 15 Among human beings she built her nest as  
an eternal foundation,

- and among their offspring she will be  
trusted.
- 16 Wisdom's fullness is to fear the Lord,  
and she inebriates them with her fruits.
- 17 Their every house she will fill with desirable  
things,  
and the <sup>a</sup>reception halls<sup>a</sup> from her  
produce.
- 18 Wisdom's garland is fear of the Lord,  
sprouting peace and well-being for  
healing.  
*[And both are gifts of God for peace,  
[and boasting creates space for those that love  
him.]*
- 19 *[And he saw and enumerated her.]*  
Skill and knowledge of understanding  
she rained down,  
and the reputation of people who hold  
her fast she exalted.
- 20 Wisdom's root is to fear the Lord,  
and her branches are length of days.
- [21 *The fear of the Lord repels sins,*  
*[and when it endures, it will turn away all  
wrath.]*
- 22 Unjust anger can never be justified,  
for the weight of his<sup>b</sup> anger is his<sup>b</sup>  
downfall.
- 23 Until the right time a patient person will  
restrain himself,  
and afterwards gladness will pay him  
back.
- 24 Until the right time he will hide his words,  
and the lips of many will tell of his  
discernment.
- 25 Among wisdom's treasures there is  
illustration of intelligence,  
but godliness is an abomination to a  
sinner.
- 26 If you desire wisdom, keep the  
commandments,  
and the Lord will furnish her abundantly  
to you.
- 27 For wisdom and education are the fear of  
the Lord,  
and his delight is fidelity and gentleness.
- 28 Do not disobey the fear of the Lord,  
and do not approach him<sup>c</sup> with a double  
heart.
- 29 Do not be a hypocrite in the mouths of  
humankind,  
and with your lips pay heed.
- 30 Do not exalt yourself, lest you fall  
and bring dishonor to your soul,  
and the Lord will reveal your secrets,  
and in the midst of a gathering he will  
overthrow you,  
because you did not approach in the fear of  
the Lord  
and your heart was full of deceit.

<sup>a</sup>Perhaps storehouses <sup>b</sup>I.e. the person who suffers from it <sup>c</sup>Or it

## SIRACH 2-3

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2 Child, if you come to be subject to the Lord,  
prepare your soul for testing.  
2 Set straight your heart, and be steadfast,  
and do not be hasty in a time of distress.  
3 Cling to him, and do not stand aloof  
so that you may be strengthened at your  
end.  
4 Anything that might happen to you accept,  
and in the vicissitudes of your  
humiliation be patient,  
5 because with fire gold is tested,  
and acceptable people in the furnace of  
humiliation.  
*[In sickness and in poverty have trust in  
him.]*  
6 Have faith in him, and he will support you,  
and make straight your ways, and hope in  
him.  
7 You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy,  
and do not turn away, lest you fall.  
8 You who fear the Lord, have faith in him,  
and your wage will not be forfeited.  
9 You who fear the Lord, hope for good  
things  
and for everlasting gladness and mercy,  
*[because his repayment is an everlasting gift  
with joy.]*  
10 Look to ancient generations, and see;  
who had faith in the Lord and was put to  
shame?  
Or who has held fast to fear of him and was  
forsaken?  
Or who called upon him, and he  
despised him?  
11 For compassionate and merciful is the Lord,  
and he forgives sins and saves in a time  
of affliction.  
12 Woe to timid hearts and to slack hands  
and to a sinner when he treads on two  
paths.  
13 Woe to a faint heart, because it does not  
have faith;  
therefore it will not be sheltered.  
14 Woe to you who have lost endurance.  
And what will you do when the Lord  
makes his reckoning?  
15 Those who fear the Lord will not disobey  
his words,  
and those who love him will preserve his  
ways.  
16 Those who fear the Lord will seek his favor,  
and those who love him will be filled  
with the law.  
17 Those who fear the Lord will prepare their  
hearts,  
and before him they will humble their  
souls.  
18 We shall fall into the hands of the Lord  
and not into the hands of human beings!

For as his majesty is,  
so also is his mercy.

3 Listen to a father's reproof, children,  
and act accordingly so that you may be  
safe.  
2 For the Lord has glorified father over  
children,  
and he has confirmed a mother's  
judgment over sons.  
3 He who honors father will atone for sins,  
4 and like one who lays up treasure is he  
who glorifies his mother.  
5 He who honors father will be gladdened by  
children,  
and in the day of his prayer he will be  
heard.  
6 He who glorifies father will prolong his  
days,  
and he who listens to the Lord will give  
rest to his mother.  
7 *[He who fears the Lord will honor his father,]*  
and <sup>b</sup>among those who begot him he will  
act as a slave to masters<sup>b</sup>.  
8 By deed and word honor your father  
so that a blessing from him might come  
upon you.  
9 For a father's blessing supports children's  
houses,  
but a mother's curse uproots foundations.  
10 Do not glorify yourself by your father's  
disgrace,  
for you have no glory in a father's  
disgrace.  
11 For a person's repute comes from his father's  
honor,  
and a mother in ill repute is a reproach to  
children.  
12 Child, support your father in old age,  
and do not grieve him during his life.  
13 But if he fails in comprehension, excuse  
him,  
and do not dishonor him in the fullness  
of your strength.  
14 For charity for a father will not be  
forgotten,  
and it will be credited to you against sins.  
15 In a day of affliction it will be remembered  
of you;  
as fair weather upon frost, so will your  
sins be dissolved.  
16 Like a blasphemer is the one who neglects a  
father,  
and cursed by the Lord is the one who  
angers his mother.  
17 Child, in gentleness conduct your affairs,  
and you will be loved more than a person  
who gives.  
18 The greater you are, the more you should  
humble yourself,

<sup>a</sup>I.e. the Lord    <sup>b</sup>Gk uncertain

and before the Lord you will find favor.  
 [19 *Many are lofty and of repute,*  
*[but to the meek he reveals his mysteries,]*  
 20 because great is the dominance of the Lord  
 and by the humble he is glorified.  
 21 Things too difficult for you do not seek,  
 and things too strong for you do not  
 scrutinize.  
 22 The things that have been prescribed for  
 you, think about these,  
 for you have no need of hidden matters.  
 23 With matters greater than your affairs do not  
 meddle,  
 for things beyond human understanding  
 have been shown to you.  
 24 For their presumption has led many astray,  
 and their evil fancy has diminished their  
 understanding.  
 [25 *If you have no pupils, you will be at a loss for*  
*light,*  
*[and when you want for knowledge, do not*  
*profess it.]*  
 26 A hard heart will fare badly at the end,  
 and he who loves danger will perish in it.  
 27 A hard heart will be weighed down by  
 troubles,  
 and the sinner will add sin to sins.  
 28 For the misery of the arrogant there is no  
 healing,  
 because a plant of wickedness has taken  
 root in him.  
 29 The heart of the intelligent will think of an  
 illustration,  
 and a hearer's ear is the desire of the wise.  
 30 A blazing fire water will extinguish,  
 and charity will atone for sins.  
 31 He who repays favors gives thought to what  
 comes after,  
 and at the moment of a fall he will find  
 support.

**4** Child, the life of the poor do not defraud,  
 and do not put off needy eyes.  
 2 A hungry soul do not grieve,  
 and do not anger a man in his difficulty.  
 3 An angry heart do not trouble,  
 and do not delay giving to one in need.  
 4 A suppliant in distress do not keep rejecting,  
 and do not turn your face away from the  
 poor.  
 5 From one who begs do not turn away an  
 eye,  
 and do not give him occasion to curse  
 you.  
 6 For if one curses you in bitterness of his soul,  
 the one who made him will hear his  
 petition.  
 7 Make yourself beloved to a gathering,  
 and for a nobleman bow your head.

8 Incline your ear to the poor,  
 and answer him peaceably with  
 gentleness.  
 9 Deliver the wronged from the hand of the  
 wrongdoer,  
 and do not be faint-hearted when you  
 render judgment.  
 10 Be like a father to orphans  
 and instead of a husband to their  
 mother,  
 and you will be like a son of the Most  
 High,  
 and he will love you more than does your  
 mother.  
 11 Wisdom will exalt her sons  
 and lays hold of those who seek her.  
 12 He who loves her loves life,  
 and those who turn to her early will be  
 filled with gladness.  
 13 He who holds her fast will inherit a  
 reputation,  
 and where he enters, the Lord blesses.  
 14 Those who serve her will minister to one  
 holy,  
 and those who love her the Lord loves.  
 15 He who obeys her will judge nations,  
 and the one who gives heed to her will  
 dwell in confidence.  
 16 If he has faith, he will inherit her,  
 and his descendants will be in possession  
<sup>a</sup>of her<sup>a</sup>.  
 17 Because at first she will travel with him  
 though he twist and turn,  
 fear and dread she will bring upon him,  
 and she will torment him with her training  
 until she has faith in his soul,  
 and she will test him with her statutes.  
 18 And again she will return straight back to  
 him and will make him glad  
 and will reveal to him her secrets.  
 19 If he goes astray, she will abandon him  
 and hand him over to the grip of his  
 fall.  
 20 Watch for an opportune time, and beware of  
 evil,  
 and about your soul do not be ashamed.  
 21 For there is a shame that brings on sin,  
 and there is a shame that is glory and  
 favor.  
 22 Do not receive a person against your soul,  
 and do not feel embarrassment to your  
 fall.  
 23 Do not hinder speech in a time of need,  
 [and do not hide your wisdom in comeliness.]  
 24 For by speech will wisdom be known,  
 and education through a word of the  
 tongue.  
 25 Do not speak against the truth,  
 and concerning your lack of education  
 feel shame.

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk



## SIRACH 4-6

723

- 26 Do not be ashamed to acknowledge your sins,  
and do not try to force a river's flow.
- 27 Do not be subject to a foolish person,  
and do not accept the person of a ruler.
- 28 Exert yourself to the death for the truth,  
and the Lord God will do battle for you.
- 29 Do not become rash with your tongue  
or sluggish and remiss in your deeds.
- 30 Do not be like a lion in your home,  
even conceiving vain fancies among your domestics.
- 31 Do not let your hand be extended to receive  
and withdrawn when paying back.
- 5** Do not be occupied with your money,  
and do not say, "I am self-sufficient."  
2 Do not follow your soul and your strength,  
to walk in your heart's desires.  
3 And do not say, "Who shall hold power over me?"  
For the Lord, when he punishes, will punish.
- 4 Do not say, "I sinned, and what has happened to me?"  
For the Lord is long-suffering.
- 5 Do not become fearless concerning atonement,  
to add sin upon sins.
- 6 And do not say, "His compassion is great;  
it will atone for the multitude of my sins";  
for mercy and wrath are with him,  
and upon sinners will his anger rest.
- 7 Do not wait to turn back to the Lord,  
and do not postpone it day after day;  
for suddenly the wrath of the Lord will go forth,  
and in the time of punishment you will perish.
- 8 Do not be occupied with ill-gotten money,  
for it will not be of benefit in a day of distress.
- 9 Do not winnow in every wind,  
and do not go on every short cut;  
thus is the double-tongued sinner.
- 10 Be firm in your understanding,  
and let your speech be one.
- 11 Be quick in your hearing,  
and with long-suffering utter a reply.
- 12 If you have understanding, answer your fellow,  
but if not, let your hand be upon your mouth.
- 13 Repute and dishonor are in speaking,  
and a person's tongue is his downfall.
- 14 Do not be called a slanderer,  
and do not ambush with your tongue;
- for upon the thief is shame  
and grievous condemnation upon the double-tongued.
- 15 In a great and a small matter do not remain ignorant.
- 6** And do not become an enemy instead of a friend,  
for a bad name will inherit shame and reproach;  
thus is the double-tongued sinner.
- 2 Do not raise yourself up in your soul's deliberation,  
lest your strength be seized as a bull <sup>a</sup>is seized<sup>a</sup>.
- 3 Your leaves you will devour, and your fruit you will destroy,  
and you will leave yourself like a withered tree.
- 4 An evil soul will destroy him who possesses it,  
and it will make him a laughingstock of enemies.
- 5 A <sup>b</sup>sweet throat<sup>b</sup> will multiply its friends,  
and a well-speaking tongue will multiply courtesies.
- 6 Let those who are at peace with you be many,  
but let your advisors be one in a thousand.
- 7 If you acquire a friend, acquire him through testing,  
and do not have faith in him hastily.
- 8 For there is a friend when it suits him,  
and he will not remain in a day of affliction.
- 9 And there is a friend who turns to enmity,  
and he will disclose strife to your disgrace.
- 10 And there is a friend who is a table companion,  
and he will not remain in a day of affliction.
- 11 And among your goods he will be as you are,  
and he will speak boldly to your domestics.
- 12 If you are brought low, he will be against you,  
and he will hide himself from your face.
- 13 From your enemies, keep your distance,  
and with your friends pay heed.
- 14 A loyal friend is a sturdy shelter,  
and he who finds him has found a treasure.
- 15 A loyal friend is priceless,  
and no one can weigh his worth.
- 16 A loyal friend is life's drug,  
and those who fear the Lord will find him.

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>b</sup>Perhaps *pleasant speech*

## SIRACH 6-7

- 724
- 17 He who fears the Lord directs his friendship  
aright,  
because like him, so also is his fellow.
- 18 Child, from your youth welcome education,  
and until gray hairs you will find  
wisdom.
- 19 Like him who plows and him who sows  
approach her,  
and wait for her good fruits;  
for in cultivation of her you will toil little,  
and you will soon eat of her produce.
- 20 How harsh is wisdom to the uneducated,  
and the cowardly will not remain with  
her.
- 21 Like a formidable stone of testing she will  
be upon him,  
and he will not delay to cast her aside.
- 22 For wisdom is like her name,  
and she is not conspicuous to many.
- 23 Listen, child, and accept my opinion,  
and do not reject my counsel.
- 24 Put your feet into her fetters,  
and into her collar, your neck.
- 25 Offer your shoulder, and carry her,  
and do not be offended at her bonds.
- 26 With all your soul approach her,  
and with all your might keep her ways.
- 27 Trace, and seek, and she will become known  
to you,  
and when you get a firm hold, do not let  
her go.
- 28 For in the end you will find her repose,  
and she will be changed into gladness for  
you.
- 29 And her fetters will be a shelter of strength  
for you,  
and her collars a robe of glory.
- 30 For a golden ornament is upon her,  
and her bonds are a blue thread.
- 31 You will wear her as a robe of glory,  
and you will put her on like a garland of  
joy.
- 32 If you are willing, child, you will be  
instructed,  
and if you surrender your soul, you will  
be clever.
- 33 If you love to listen, you will receive,  
and if you incline your ear, you will be  
wise.
- 34 Stand in a crowd of elders,  
and cling to their wisdom.
- 35 Be willing to listen to every godly  
discourse,  
and do not let proverbs of understanding  
escape you.
- 36 If you see an intelligent person, turn to him  
early,  
and let your foot wear out the thresholds  
of his doors.
- 37 Exercise your thought in the Lord's  
ordinances,  
and on his commandments continually  
meditate.  
It is he who will make your heart firm,  
and the desire for wisdom will be given  
to you.
- 7 Do not do evil things, and an evil will not  
overtake you.
- 2 Stay away from wrong, and it will turn away  
from you.
- 3 Do not sow in the furrows of injustice,  
and you will not reap them<sup>a</sup> sevenfold.
- 4 Do not seek from the Lord authority  
or from a king a seat of honor.
- 5 Do not assert righteousness before the Lord,  
and with a king do not display wisdom.
- 6 Do not seek to become a judge;  
you might not have the strength to get rid  
of injustice,  
lest you have trepidation in the presence of  
one powerful,  
and you shall erect an obstacle to your  
uprightness.
- 7 Do not sin against a city's multitude,  
and do not throw yourself down in a  
crowd.
- 8 Do not bind up a sin twice,  
for in one you will not be innocent.
- 9 Do not say, "He will have regard for the  
multitude of my gifts,  
and when I bring a gift to the Most High  
God, he will accept it."
- 10 Do not be fainthearted in your prayer,  
and do not neglect to practice charity.
- 11 Do not deride a person when he is  
embittered in spirit,  
for there is one who humbles and exalts.
- 12 Do not cultivate a lie against your brother  
or do the same to a friend.
- 13 Do not consent to concoct any lie,  
for the continuation of it results in no  
good.
- 14 Do not babble in a great number of elders,  
and do not repeat a word in your prayer.
- 15 Do not hate toilsome labor  
and tillage created by the Most High.
- 16 Do not reckon yourself among the  
multitude of sinners;  
remember that wrath will not delay.
- 17 Humble your soul greatly,  
because the punishment of the impious is  
fire and worm.
- 18 Do not exchange a friend for cash  
or a real brother for gold of Soughir.
- 19 Do not fail a wise and good wife,  
for her grace is beyond gold.

<sup>a</sup>Probable antecedent, *evil things* (7.1)

- 20 Do not abuse a domestic when he truly works  
or a laborer when he gives his soul.
- 21 Let your soul love an intelligent domestic;  
do not deprive him of freedom.
- 22 Do you have cattle? Look after them,  
and if they are useful to you, let them  
remain with you.
- 23 Do you have children? Educate them,  
and bend their neck from youth.
- 24 Do you have daughters? Give heed to their  
body,  
and do not brighten your face towards  
them.
- 25 Give a daughter in marriage, and you will  
have completed a great task,  
and present her to an understanding  
man.
- 26 Do you have a wife like your soul? Do not  
divorce her,  
and do not entrust yourself to her when  
she is hated.
- 27 With your whole heart honor your father,  
and a mother's birth pangs do not forget.
- 28 Remember that you were born through  
them—  
and how will you repay them what they  
have done for you?
- 29 With your whole soul, revere the Lord,  
and admire his priests.
- 30 With your whole might, love him who  
made you,  
and his ministers do not neglect.
- 31 Fear the Lord, and honor a priest,  
and give him his portion, as it has been  
commanded of you:  
first fruits and <sup>a</sup>concerning error<sup>a</sup> and gift of  
forearms  
and sacrifice of sanctification and first  
fruits of holy things.
- 32 And stretch out your hand to a poor person  
in order that your blessing may be  
complete.
- 33 The kindness of something given is before  
everyone alive,  
and do not hinder kindness for a corpse.
- 34 Do not lag behind those who weep,  
but mourn with those who mourn.
- 35 Do not hesitate to visit a sick person,  
for because of such deeds you will be  
loved.
- 36 In all your words, remember the end,  
and you will not ever sin.
- 8** Do not contend with a powerful person,  
lest you fall into his hands.
- <sup>2</sup> Do not quarrel with a rich person,  
lest he counter your weight;
- for gold has ruined many  
and has perverted hearts of kings.
- 3 Do not contend with a garrulous person,  
and do not heap wood on his fire.
- 4 Do not make fun of the uneducated,  
lest your ancestors be insulted.
- 5 Do not reproach a person when he is  
turning away from sin;  
remember that we all are subject to  
rebuke.
- 6 Do not disdain a person in his old age,  
for some of us, too, are growing old.
- 7 Do not rejoice over a corpse;  
remember that we all pass away.
- 8 Do not disregard a discourse of the wise,  
and turn to their proverbs,  
because from them you will learn  
instruction  
and how to minister to noblemen.
- 9 Do not miss out on the discourse of the  
aged,  
for even they themselves learned from  
their fathers,  
because from them you will learn  
understanding  
and how to give an answer in time of  
need.
- 10 Do not stoke a sinner's coals;  
do not be set afire by the fire of his flame.
- 11 Do not vacate your seat before an insolent  
person,  
lest he sit down as an ambush to your  
mouth.
- 12 Do not lend to a person stronger than you,  
and if you do lend, be as one who has  
lost.
- 13 Do not give surety beyond your ability,  
and if you do give surety, regard it as a  
paying back.
- 14 Do not go to law with a judge,  
for according to his status will they judge  
in his favor.
- 15 With a reckless person do not travel on the  
road,  
lest your troubles weigh you down;  
for he will travel as he wants to,  
and by his folly you will perish as well.
- 16 With a quick-tempered person do not pick a  
fight,  
and do not traverse the desert with him,  
because bloodshed is as nothing in his  
eyes,  
and where there is no help, he will cast  
you down.
- 17 With a foolish one do not consult,  
for he cannot cover up a secret.
- 18 In the presence of a stranger do not do  
something secret,

<sup>a</sup>I.e. a sin offering

for you do not know what he will bring forth.

19 Do not expose your heart to any person, and do not let him return a favor to you.

9 Do not be jealous of the wife of your bosom, nor teach an evil lesson against yourself.

2 Do not give your soul to a woman, to let her trample upon your strength.

3 Do not meet with a female escort, lest you fall into her snares.

4 With a female strummer do not dally, lest you become caught in her endeavors.

5 Do not ogle a maiden, lest you be made to stumble in her rebukes.

6 Do not give your soul to whores, lest you lose your inheritance.

7 Do not look around in city alleyways, and in its deserted places do not wander.

8 Turn an eye from a shapely woman, and do not ogle beauty belonging to another; by a woman's beauty many have gone astray, and from it fondness flares up like a fire.

9 With a married woman do not sit down at all, and do not feast with her at wine, lest your soul incline to her and by your blood you slip into destruction.

10 Do not abandon an old friend, for the recent one is not his equal; a new friend is like new wine; if it ages, you will drink it with merriment.

11 Do not envy a sinner's good repute, for you do not know what his undoing will be.

12 Do not delight in the success of the impious; remember that they will not be deemed righteous until Hades<sup>a</sup>.

13 Keep far from a person who has authority to kill, and you will not be apprehensive of the fear of death, and if you approach him<sup>b</sup>, do not make a mistake, lest he take your life. Recognize that you are treading in the midst of snares, and you are walking about on a city's battlements.

14 According to your strength take stock of your fellow, and consult with the wise.

15 Let your discussion be with intelligent people, and all your exposition in the law of the Most High.

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

17 In the hand of artisans a work will be praised, and the people's leader is wise by his word.

18 Feared in his city is a garrulous man, and he who is reckless in his speech will be hated.

10 A wise judge will educate his people, and the rule of an intelligent person will be orderly.

2 As the people's judge is, so also are his officials, and as the ruler of the city is, are all its inhabitants.

3 An uneducated king will destroy his people, and a city will be populated by the intelligence of its<sup>b</sup> rulers.

4 In the Lord's hand is the governance of the earth, and he will raise up over it the person useful for the time.

5 In the Lord's hand is a man's success, and to a scribe's face he will add his reputation.

6 For every wrong do not be angry with your neighbor, and do not do anything with acts of insolence.

7 Hateful before the Lord and humans is pride, and to both injustice is wrong.

8 Dominion is transferred from nation to nation on account of injustice and insolence and money.  
[For there is nothing more lawless than love of money;]  
[for this person even makes his own soul a commodity.]

9 How can <sup>c</sup>earth and ashes<sup>c</sup> behave arrogantly?—  
<sup>d</sup>because in life I hurled his entrails<sup>d</sup>.

10 A long illness mocks a physician; today a king, and tomorrow he will die.

11 For when a person dies, he inherits creeping things and beasts and worms.

12 Pride's beginning for a human is to rebel against the Lord,

<sup>a</sup>I.e. the grave <sup>b</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>c</sup>I.e. a human being <sup>d</sup>Gk uncertain

- and against him who made him his heart rebels,  
 13 because pride's beginning is sin,  
 and he who clings to it will pour out abomination.  
 Therefore the Lord brought on incredible attacks  
 and ruined him<sup>a</sup> completely.  
 14 Thrones of rulers the Lord brought down,  
 and he seated the gentle in their place.  
 15 Roots of nations the Lord plucked up,  
 and he planted the humble in their place.  
 16 Lands of nations the Lord ruined,  
 and he destroyed them as far as earth's foundations.  
 17 He removed some people and destroyed them,  
 and he erased their memorial from earth.  
 18 Pride was not created for human beings,  
 nor violent anger for what is born of women.
- 19 What kind of offspring is honorable?  
 Human offspring.  
 What kind of offspring is honorable?  
 Those who fear the Lord.  
 What kind of offspring is dishonorable?  
 Human offspring.  
 What kind of offspring is dishonorable?  
 Those who transgress the commandments.  
 20 In the midst of kin their leader is honorable,  
 and those who, in his eyes, fear the Lord.  
 [21 *The beginning of acceptance is fear of the Lord,  
 [but the beginning of rejection is obduracy  
 and arrogance.]*  
 22 Guest and stranger and poor person—  
 their boast is fear of the Lord.  
 23 It is not right to dishonor an intelligent  
 poor person,  
 and it is not proper to glorify a sinful  
 man.  
 24 Noble and judge and ruler will be glorified,  
 but none of them is greater than he who  
 fears the Lord.  
 25 Free persons will attend to a wise domestic,  
 and a knowledgeable man will not  
 grumble.  
 26 Do not craftily perform your task,  
 and do not extol yourself in your time of  
 difficulty.  
 27 Superior is a person who works and excels  
 in all things  
 to one who struts about extolling himself  
 and lacks bread.  
 28 Child, in meekness give repute to your  
 soul,  
 and give it value according to its worth.
- 29 Him who errs against his own soul—who  
 will vindicate?  
 And who will give repute to him who  
 devalues his own life?  
 30 A poor person has repute because of his  
 knowledge,  
 and a rich person has repute because of  
 his wealth.  
 31 He who has repute in poverty, how much  
 more also in wealth?  
 And he who is held in disrepute in  
 wealth, how much more also in  
 poverty?
- 11** A humble person's wisdom will raise up his  
 head,  
 and it will seat him in the midst of  
 nobles.  
 2 Do not praise a man for his good looks,  
 and do not loathe a man for his  
 appearance.  
 3 Small among flying creatures is a bee,  
 and the origin of sweet things is its  
 produce.  
 4 Do not boast about the putting-on of  
 clothes,  
 and do not exalt yourself in a day of  
 glory,  
 because the works of the Lord are  
 wonderful,  
 and his works are hidden among  
 humans.  
 5 Many tyrants have sat on the ground,  
 but one not expected to was wearing a  
 diadem.  
 6 Many dynasts have been utterly dishonored,  
 and people of high repute have been  
 given over into the hands of others.  
 7 Before you investigate, do not find fault;  
 reflect first, and then rebuke.  
 8 Before listening, do not answer,  
 and in the middle of speaking, do not  
 interrupt.  
 9 About a matter that is of no use to you, do  
 not quarrel,  
 and in a trial of sinners, do not  
 deliberate.  
 10 Child, let not your actions entail many  
 things;  
 if you multiply them<sup>a</sup>, you will not be  
 held blameless,  
 and if you pursue, you will not overtake,  
 and you will not escape when you flee.  
 11 There exists one who toils and struggles and  
 hurries  
 but is so much the more in want.  
 12 There exists one who is sluggish and in need  
 of assistance,  
 lacking strength and abounding in  
 poverty,

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk

and the eyes of the Lord looked upon him  
for good,  
and he restored him from his low estate  
13 and raised up his head,  
and many marveled at him.

14 Good things and bad, life and death,  
poverty and wealth are from the Lord.  
15 *Wisdom and skill and knowledge of the law are  
from the Lord,*  
*[affection and the ways of good works are  
from him.]*

16 *Error and darkness have been created with  
sinners,*  
*[and evil things grow old along with those  
who take pride in evil.]*

17 The Lord's gift remains with the pious,  
and his favor will bring success forever.

18 There exists one who becomes rich from his  
diligence and miserliness,  
and this is the portion of his  
recompense.

19 When he says, "I have found rest,  
and now I will eat of my good things,"  
even he does not know how time will pass  
by,  
and he will leave them to others and will  
die.

20 Stand by your covenant<sup>a</sup>, and attend to it,  
and in your work grow old.

21 Do not wonder at the works of a sinner,  
but have faith in the Lord, and continue  
your labor,  
because it is easy in the eyes of the Lord  
quickly, suddenly, to make a needy  
person rich.

22 The Lord's blessing is in the wage of a pious  
person,  
and in a short time his good pleasure  
flourishes.

23 Do not say, "What is my need?  
And what will be my good things from  
now on?"

24 Do not say, "I have enough,  
and what distress will I suffer from now  
on?"

25 In a day of <sup>b</sup>prosperity, adversity<sup>b</sup> is  
forgotten,  
and in a day of <sup>c</sup>adversity, prosperity<sup>c</sup> will  
not be remembered,  
26 because it is easy with the Lord in a day of  
death  
to give back to a person according to his  
ways.

27 An hour's misery engenders forgetfulness of  
luxury,  
and a person's end is a disclosure of his  
deeds.

28 Before death call no one happy,  
and in his children a man will be known.

29 Do not bring every person into your home,  
for many are the ambushes of the  
deceitful.

30 A decoy partridge in a cage, so is the heart of  
an arrogant person,  
and like a spy he observes a downfall.

31 For he lies in ambush turning good things  
into bad,  
and <sup>d</sup>among choice things he adds  
disgrace<sup>d</sup>.

32 From a spark of fire coals are multiplied,  
and a sinful person lies in ambush for  
blood.

33 Beware of a scoundrel—for he devises  
wicked things—  
lest he deliver to you disgrace forever.

34 Welcome a stranger, and he will twist you  
around in confusion  
and alienate you from your own.

**12** If you do good, know for whom you do it<sup>e</sup>,  
and there will be gratitude for your good  
deeds.

2 Do good to a pious person, and you will  
find repayment,  
and if not from him, then from the Most  
High.

3 There is no good for him who persists in  
evil  
and for him who does not willingly offer  
charity.

4 Give to the pious person, but do not assist  
the sinner.

5 Treat the humble well, and do not give to  
an impious person;  
hold back loaves of bread, and do not give  
to him,  
lest by them he prevail over you;  
for you will get twice as many bad things  
for all the good things that you might do  
for him,

6 because also the Most High hated sinners,  
and on the impious he will render  
punishment.  
*[And he is keeping them for the day of their  
punishment.]*

7 Give to the good person, and do not assist  
the sinner.

8 The friend will not be punished in good  
things,  
and the enemy will not be hidden in evil  
things.

9 In a man's good things, his enemies are in  
pain,  
and in his evil things, a friend also will  
be separated.

10 Never trust your enemy;  
for just as copper corrodes, so does his  
wickedness.

11 And if he is brought low and walks  
stooped,

<sup>a</sup>Or agreement <sup>b</sup>Or good things, bad things <sup>c</sup>Or bad things, good things <sup>d</sup>Perhaps among chosen ones he sets disgrace  
<sup>e</sup>Lacking in Gk

- trust your soul, and be on guard against him,  
and you shall be to him as one who wipes a mirror,  
and you shall know that it was not completely tarnished.
- 12 Do not stand him next to you,  
lest, having overthrown you, he stand in your place;  
do not seat him at your right,  
lest he seek your seat,  
and at last you will understand my words  
and be pricked by my sayings.
- 13 Who will pity a charmer bitten by a snake,  
or all who approach wild beasts?—  
14 so the one who goes near a man who sins  
and one who gets mixed up in his sins.  
15 For a time he will remain with you,  
and if you falter, he will not be steadfast.  
16 With his lips the enemy will speak sweetly,  
and in his heart he will plan to throw you  
into a trench.  
With his eyes the enemy will weep,  
and if he finds an opportunity, he will  
not be sated with blood.
- 17 If harm meets you, you will find him there  
ahead of you,  
and pretending to help, he will trip your  
heel.
- 18 He will shake his head and clap his hands  
and whisper many things and alter his  
face.
- 13** He who touches pitch will become dirty,  
and he who associates with a proud  
person will become like him.
- 2 Do not lift what is too heavy for you,  
and do not associate with one stronger  
and richer than you.  
How will a clay pot associate with a  
cauldron?  
The former will strike against, and the  
former will be smashed.
- 3 A rich person did wrong, and he was angry  
to boot;  
a poor person has been wronged, and he  
will plead.
- 4 If you are useful, he will work with you,  
and if you are in want, he will abandon  
you.
- 5 If you have something<sup>a</sup>, he will live with  
you,  
and he will clean you out, and he will  
not suffer.
- 6 He has need of you and will deceive you  
and will smile at you and will give you  
hope;  
he will speak nice things to you and say,  
"What do you need?"
- 7 He will shame you with his foods  
until he cleans you out two or three times,  
and at last he will mock you;  
after these things, he will see you and leave  
you  
and will shake his head at you.
- 8 Take care that you are not led astray,  
and do not be humiliated by your folly.
- 9 When a powerful person invites you, be  
reserved,  
and he will invite you so much more.
- 10 Do not be forward, lest you be rejected,  
and do not stand far off, lest you be  
forgotten.
- 11 Do not aim to speak as an equal with  
him,  
and do not put faith in his rather many  
words;  
for with much talk he will test you,  
and as though smiling he will be  
examining you.
- 12 Merciless is he who does not guard words,  
and he will not spare you from doing bad  
and imprisonment.
- 13 Be on guard, and pay attention,  
because you are walking about with your  
own downfall.
- [<sup>14</sup> *When you hear them in your sleep, wake up.*]  
[*In your entire life, love the Lord,*]  
[*and call upon him for your deliverance.*]
- 15 Every living thing loves what is like to it,  
and every person his fellow.
- 16 All flesh congregates according to kind,  
and with one like himself will a man  
cleave.
- 17 What will a wolf have in common with a  
lamb?—  
so is<sup>a</sup> a sinner to a pious person.
- 18 What peace is there between a hyena and a  
dog?  
And what peace between a rich person  
and a needy person?
- 19 The prey of lions is onagers in the desert;  
thus the poor are the fodder of the rich.
- 20 An abomination to a proud person is  
humility;  
thus an abomination to a rich person is a  
poor person.
- 21 When a rich person totters, he is supported  
by friends,  
but when a humble person falls, he is  
pushed away by friends.
- 22 When a rich person staggers, many are his  
helpers;  
he spoke things not to be spoken, and  
they justified him.  
A humble person staggered, and in addition  
they rebuked him;  
he uttered sense, and no place was given  
to him.
- 23 A rich person spoke, and all kept silent,

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk

and they exalted his word up to the clouds.  
 A poor person spoke, and they said, "Who is this?"  
 And if he should stumble, they will even overturn him.  
 24 Wealth in which there is no sin is good, but in the mouths of an impious person poverty is wicked.  
 25 A person's heart changes his face, whether for good things or bad.  
 26 A heart's footstep in good things is a cheerful face, and the invention of illustrations is conversations along with toils.

**14** Happy is the man who did not slip with his mouth and was not stabbed with the pain of sins.  
 2 Happy the one whose soul has not condemned him<sup>a</sup> and who has not lost his hope.  
 3 For a petty man wealth is not good, and to a begrudging person—why is there money?  
 4 He who constrains his appetite collects for others, and with his goods others will live luxuriously.  
 5 He who is evil to himself, to whom will he be good? And he will never be gladdened by his money.  
 6 There is none worse than he who begrudges himself, and this is repayment for his evil.  
 7 Even if he acts well, he does it with forgetting, and in the end he reveals his evil.  
 8 Wicked is the one who is grudging with the eye, when he turns away his<sup>a</sup> face and overlooks souls.  
 9 The eye of the greedy is not satisfied with a portion, and wicked injustice withers the soul.  
 10 An evil eye is envious over bread, and it is lacking on his<sup>b</sup> table.  
 11 Child, even as you have, treat yourself well, and bring offerings to the Lord worthily.  
 12 Remember that death will not tarry, and the covenant of Hades has not been shown to you.  
 13 Before you die, treat a friend well, and, according to your strength, reach out, and give to him.  
 14 Do not withdraw from a good day, and do not let a share of a good desire pass you by.

15 Will you not leave behind your toils to another and your toils to division by lot?  
 16 Give, and take, and deceive your soul, because in Hades there is no seeking of luxury.  
 17 All flesh becomes old like a garment, for the covenant of old is, "By death you shall die!"  
 18 Like a sprouting leaf on a thickly leaved tree, some it sheds, but others it puts forth; so is a generation of flesh and blood, the one dies and the other is born.  
 19 Every decaying deed ceases, and the one who does it will pass away with it.  
 20 Happy is the man who will meditate on wisdom and who will converse with his understanding.  
 21 He who considers her ways in his heart also will reflect on her obscurities.  
 22 Go out after her like a tracker, and in her entrance-ways lie in wait!  
 23 He who peers through her windows also will listen at her doorways.  
 24 He who lodges near her house also will pitch a peg in her walls.  
 25 He will set his tent <sup>c</sup>according to her hands, and he will lodge in a lodging place of good things.  
 26 He will place his children in her shelter, and under her boughs he will encamp.  
 27 He will be sheltered by her from heat, and in her glory he will lodge.

**15** He who fears the Lord will do it<sup>d</sup>, and he who has a hold on the law will lay hold of her.  
 2 And she will come to meet him like a mother, and like a woman of maidenhood, she will welcome him.  
 3 She will feed him bread of understanding, and water of wisdom she will give him to drink.  
 4 He will be propped up on her and will not <sup>e</sup>lie down<sup>e</sup>, and he will attend to her, and he will not be put to shame.  
 5 And she will exalt him above his fellows, and in the midst of an assembly she will open his mouth.  
 6 Gladness and a garland of rejoicing and an everlasting name will he inherit.  
 7 Witless people will never lay hold of her, and sinful men will never see her.  
 8 She is far from arrogance, and lying men will never remember her.  
 9 A song of praise is not proper in the mouth of a sinner,

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>b</sup>Or *its* <sup>c</sup>I.e. *as she directs* <sup>d</sup>Antecedent unclear <sup>e</sup>Or *fall*



## SIRACH 15-16

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- because it has not been apportioned by the Lord.
- 10 For in wisdom a song of praise will be uttered,  
and the Lord will make it prosper.
- 11 Do not say, "On account of the Lord I fell away,"  
for what he hates, he will not do.
- 12 Do not say, "It was he who led me astray,"  
for he has no need of a sinful man.
- 13 Every abomination the Lord hated,  
and it<sup>a</sup> is not beloved to those who fear him.
- 14 It was he who from the beginning made humankind,  
and he left him in the hand of his deliberation.
- 15 If you want to, you shall preserve the commandments,  
and to keep faith is a matter of good pleasure.
- 16 He has set aside for you fire and water;  
to whichever you want, you shall stretch out your hand.
- 17 Before humans are life and death,  
and whichever one he desires will be given to him,  
18 because great is the wisdom of the Lord;  
he is mighty in dominance and one who sees everything.
- 19 And his eyes are on those who fear him,  
and he will know every human deed.
- 20 He did not command anyone to be impious,  
and he did not give anyone leave to sin.
- 16** Do not desire a multitude of useless children,  
and do not be glad over impious sons.
- 2 If they multiply, do not be glad over them  
unless the fear of the Lord is with them.
- 3 Do not have faith in their life,  
and do not be intent on the multitude of them.  
*[For you will groan in untimely mourning,  
and suddenly you will know of their end.]*  
For better is one than a thousand,  
and to die childless rather than to have impious children.
- 4 For by one intelligent person a city will be peopled,  
but a tribe of lawless people will be left without<sup>b</sup>.
- 5 Many such things has my eye seen,  
and more mighty things than these has my ear heard.
- 6 In a gathering of sinners a fire will blaze out,  
and in a disobedient nation wrath has blazed out.
- 7 He did not propitiate for the ancient giants,  
those who revolted in their strength.
- 8 He did not spare the neighbors of Lot  
whom he loathed on account of their arrogance.
- 9 He did not have mercy on a nation of destruction,  
those carried away by their sins.  
*[All these things he did to hard-hearted nations,  
and by the multitude of his holy ones he was not entreated]*
- 10 even so six hundred thousand foot soldiers,  
those assembled in their hardness of heart.  
*[In flogging, showing mercy, striking, healing,  
the Lord watched closely with compassion and instruction.]*
- 11 Even if there might be one stiff-necked person,  
it would be a wonder if he would go unpunished;  
for mercy and wrath are with him,  
a dynast of propitiations and pouring out wrath.
- 12 According to his great mercy, so also is his reproof;  
he will judge a man according to his deeds.
- 13 A sinner will not escape with booty,  
and the endurance of the pious will never fail.
- 14 He will make a place for every act of charity;  
each will get according to his deeds.
- 15 *The Lord hardened Pharaoh so that he did not know him*  
*[so that his actions might be known to what lies beneath the sky.]*
- 16 *To all creation is his mercy manifest,*  
*[and his light and darkness he apportioned to Adam.]*
- 17 Do not say, "I will be hidden from the Lord—  
and from on high who will remember me?"  
Among a great many people I will not be known;  
for what is my soul in an immeasurable creation?
- 18 Look, the sky and the sky of the sky,  
abyss and earth will totter at his visitation.  
*[The entire world, past and present, is in his will.]*
- 19 At once the mountains and the foundations of the earth  
are being shaken together with trembling  
when he looks at them.
- 20 And to them the heart will give no thought—

<sup>a</sup>I.e. abomination    <sup>b</sup>I.e. without a city

and his ways who has pondered?  
 21 And a tempest there is, which person shall  
     not see—  
     and most of his deeds are in secret.  
 22 Acts of justice who will announce,  
     or who will await? For the covenant is far  
     off.  
     [*And an examination for all is at the end.*]  
 23 One who is lacking in heart thinks these  
     things,  
     and a foolish and misled man thinks  
     foolish things.  
 24 Listen to me, child, and learn knowledge,  
     and to my words apply your heart.  
 25 I will disclose instruction by fixed standard,  
     and with accuracy I will declare  
     knowledge.  
 26 In the Lord's creation are his works from the  
     beginning,  
     and from the making of them he defined  
     their portions.  
 27 He put in order their tasks forever  
     and their rule for their generations;  
     they neither hungered, nor did they grow  
     weary,  
     and they did not abandon their tasks.  
 28 Each one did not crowd its fellow,  
     and they will not ever disobey his  
     dictum.  
 29 And after these things, the Lord looked  
     upon the earth,  
     and he filled it with his good things.  
 30 With the soul of every living thing he  
     covered its face,  
     and into it is their return.

**17** The Lord created a human being out of  
     earth,  
     and he returned him into it again.  
 2 He gave them days in number and a fixed  
     time,  
     and he gave them authority over the  
     things upon it.  
 3 He clothed them in a strength like  
     himself,  
     and in his image he made them.  
 4 He placed the fear of him<sup>a</sup> upon all flesh,  
     even to have dominion over beasts and  
     birds.  
 [5 *They received use of the five faculties of the  
     Lord,*  
     [*but, apportioning a sixth, he gave to them  
     the gift of mind,*  
     [*and the seventh, reason, the interpreter of  
     his faculties.*]  
 6 Deliberation and a tongue and eyes,  
     ears and a heart for thinking he gave  
     them.  
 7 With knowledge of understanding he filled  
     them,

<sup>a</sup>i.e. the first human

and good things and bad he showed to  
     them.  
 8 He put the fear of him upon their hearts,  
     to show them the majesty of his works.  
     [*He allowed that they boast of his wonders  
     through ages.*]  
 10 And they shall praise a name of holiness  
 9 in order to recount the majesties of his  
     works.  
 11 He set before them knowledge,  
     and a law of life he allotted to them  
     [*in order to be mindful that those who exist  
     now are mortal.*]  
 12 A perpetual covenant he established with  
     them,  
     and his judgments he showed to them.  
 13 Majesty of glory their eyes saw,  
     and the glory of his voice their ear heard.  
 14 And he said to them, "Be on guard against  
     all wrong,"  
     and he commanded each of them  
     concerning his fellow.  
 15 Their ways are before him always;  
     they will not be hidden from his eyes.  
 [16 *Their ways from youth are upon evil things,*  
     [*and they were not strong enough to make  
     their hearts of flesh*  
     [*rather than of stone.*]  
 17 [*For in the division of the nations of the entire  
     earth,*  
     for each nation he appointed a leader,  
     and the Lord's portion is Israel,  
 [18 *whom, being the firstborn, he nurtures with  
     instruction,*  
     [*and allotting the light of love, he does not  
     neglect him.*]  
 19 All of their works are before him like the  
     sun,  
     and his eyes are continually upon their  
     ways.  
 20 Their injustices were not hidden from him,  
     and all their sins are before the Lord.  
 [21 *But the Lord, being kind and knowing his  
     formation,*  
     [*neither neglected them nor forsook sparing  
     them.*]  
 22 A man's charity is like a signet with him,  
     and a person's kindness he will preserve  
     like the apple of his eye,  
     [*apportioning repentance to his sons and  
     daughters.*]  
 23 After these things he will arise and repay  
     them,  
     and their repayment he will deliver upon  
     their head.  
 24 Except to those who repented he granted a  
     return,  
     and he exhorted those who were  
     abandoning hope.  
 25 Turn back to the Lord, and leave sins  
     behind;

- petition in person, and minimize the offense.
- 26 Return to the Most High, and turn away  
from injustice,  
[for he will guide out of darkness into the  
light of health,]  
and intensely hate abomination.
- 27 Who will sing praises to the Most High in  
Hades  
instead of the living and those who give  
thanks?
- 28 From a corpse, since it does not exist,  
acknowledgement has perished;  
a living and healthy person will praise  
the Lord.
- 29 How great is the charity of the Lord  
and his propitiation to those who turn  
back to him.
- 30 For not all things are able to be among  
humans,  
because a son of man is not immortal.
- 31 What is brighter than the sun? Even this  
thing fails.  
And flesh and blood will ponder evil.
- 32 It is he who reviews the power of the sky's  
height,  
and all human beings are earth and  
ashes.
- 18** He who lives forever created everything in  
common.
- <sup>2</sup> The Lord alone will be justified,  
[and there is no other beside him,]  
<sup>3</sup> he who steers the world with the span of his  
hand,  
[and all things obey his will,]  
[for he is king of all things by his power,]  
[separating among them holy things from  
profane.]
- 4 He has permitted no one to announce his  
works—  
and who can search out his majestic  
deeds?
- 5 The power of his greatness who will  
enumerate?  
And who will add to recount his mercies?
- 6 It is impossible to diminish or to increase  
them<sup>a</sup>,  
and it is impossible to search out the  
wonders of the Lord.
- 7 When a person finishes, then he is  
beginning,  
and when he stops, then he will be at a  
loss.
- 8 What is a human being, and what is his use?  
What is his good, and what is his evil?
- 9 The number of a person's days is as many as  
a hundred years,  
[but indeterminable by all is the sleep of each  
one.]
- 10 Like a drop of water from the sea and a  
grain of sand,  
so are a few years in a day of eternity.
- 11 For this reason the Lord was long-suffering  
with them,  
and he poured out his mercy upon them.
- 12 He saw and knew their end, that it is  
grievous;  
for this reason he multiplied his  
propitiation.
- 13 A person's mercy is upon his fellow,  
but the mercy of the Lord is upon all  
flesh,  
when he corrects and instructs and teaches  
and turns as a shepherd does his flock.
- 14 He shows mercy to those who accept  
discipline  
and who hasten to his judgments.
- 15 Child, do not allow reproach among good  
deeds  
nor pain of words with every giving.  
Does not dew mitigate scorching heat?  
So better a word than a gift.
- 17 Look! Does not a word exceed a good gift?  
And both are with a man who has been  
favored.
- 18 A foolish person will upbraid ungraciously,  
and the giving of a grudging person melts  
eyes.
- 19 Before speaking, learn,  
and before illness, take care of yourself.
- 20 Before judgment, examine yourself,  
and in the hour of scrutiny you will find  
propitiation.
- 21 Before you fall ill, humble yourself,  
and in a time of sinful actions  
demonstrate repentance.
- 22 Do not be hindered from repaying a vow  
appropriately,  
and do not wait until death to be  
vindicated.
- 23 Before making a vow, prepare yourself,  
and do not be like a person who tempts  
the Lord.
- 24 Be mindful of wrath in days of death  
and of a time of vengeance<sup>b</sup> in the  
turning away of a face<sup>b</sup>.
- 25 Be mindful of a time of hunger in a time of  
plenty,  
of poverty and want in days of wealth.
- 26 From morning until evening opportunity  
changes,  
and all things are swift<sup>c</sup> before the Lord.
- 27 A wise person will be cautious in everything,  
and in days of sins he will take heed  
against error.
- 28 Every intelligent person recognized wisdom,  
and to him who finds her she<sup>d</sup> will give  
acknowledgment.
- 29 Persons who are intelligent with words also  
became wise themselves,

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>b</sup>Or when he turns away (his) face <sup>c</sup>Perhaps fleeting <sup>d</sup>Possibly he

and they poured forth apt proverbs.  
 [Better is confidence in a single master]  
 [than clinging with a dead heart to a dead  
 one.]

## SELF CONTROL

- 30 After your desires do not go,  
 and from your appetites restrain yourself.  
 31 If you furnish your soul with consent for  
 desire,  
 it will make you a laughingstock of your  
 enemies.  
 32 Do not be glad in great luxury;  
 do not be made needy by its contact.  
 33 Do not become poor by feasting out of  
 borrowing,  
 and you have nothing in your pocket.  
 [For you will be plotting against your own life.]

- 19** A drunken worker will not become rich,  
 and he who despises few things will fall  
 little by little.  
 2 Wine and women will mislead intelligent  
 men,  
 and he who joins himself to prostitutes  
 will be more reckless.  
 3 Decay and worms will take possession of  
 him,  
 and a reckless soul will be carried off.  
 4 He who trusts quickly is light in heart,  
 and he who sins will do wrong to his soul.  
 5 He who is gladdened by wickedness will be  
 condemned,  
 [but he who withstands pleasures crowns his  
 life.]  
 6 [He who controls the tongue will live without  
 strife,]  
 and he who hates discussion will be  
 lacking in heart.  
 7 Never repeat a word,  
 and nothing will be lacking to you.  
 8 Among friend and foe do not describe,  
 and unless it is a sin for you, do not  
 disclose.  
 9 Suppose he<sup>a</sup> has heard you and kept watch  
 on you  
 and in time will hate you.  
 10 Have you heard a word? Let it perish along  
 with you.  
 Be brave! It will never make you burst.  
 11 From a word, a foolish person will go into  
 labor pains,  
 as does she who is giving birth from a  
 babe to be born.  
 12 An arrow stuck in a thigh of flesh,  
 so is a word in the gut of a foolish  
 person.  
 13 Question a friend; perhaps he didn't,  
 and if he did something, lest perchance  
 he add.

- 14 Question your fellow; perhaps he didn't  
 say,  
 and if he has said, lest he repeat.  
 15 Question a friend, for oftentimes it becomes  
 slander,  
 and do not believe every word.  
 16 There exists one who slips, and it is not  
<sup>b</sup>from the soul—  
 and who has not sinned with his  
 tongue?  
 17 Question your fellow before threatening,  
 and give a place to the law of the Most  
 High.  
 [18 Fear of the Lord is the beginning of acquisition,]  
 [and wisdom secures affection from him.]  
 [19 Knowledge of the Lord's commandments is  
 education for life,]  
 [and those who do things pleasing to him  
 will enjoy the fruits of the tree of  
 immortality.]  
 20 All wisdom is fear of the Lord,  
 and in all wisdom there is doing of the  
 law  
 [and knowledge of his omnipotence.]  
 [21 When a domestic says to a master, "I will not  
 do what pleases you,"]  
 [if after these things he does, he angers him  
 who supports him.]  
 22 There is no wisdom that is knowledge of  
 wickedness,  
 and there is no prudence in advice of  
 sinners.  
 23 There is cleverness that is also an  
 abomination,  
 and there is a fool lacking in wisdom.  
 24 Better is a fearful person inferior in  
 intelligence  
 than one superior in prudence and  
 transgressing the law.  
 25 There exists exact cleverness that is also  
 unjust,  
 and there is one who perverts a favor in  
 order to produce a judgment,  
 [and he who deems righteous is wise in  
 judgment.]  
 26 There is one who acts wickedly, bent down  
 with blackness,  
 and what is inside him is full of  
 treachery.  
 27 As he lowers face and feigns deafness,  
 when no one observes, he will outrun you.  
 28 And if by lack of strength he is prevented  
 from sinning,  
 if he finds opportunity, he will do evil.  
 29 From appearance a man will be  
 recognized,  
 and from a meeting in person a rational  
 person will be recognized.  
 30 A man's clothing and a laughter of teeth<sup>c</sup>  
 and a person's gait will announce things  
 about him.

<sup>a</sup>i.e. friend or foe <sup>b</sup>i.e. intentional <sup>c</sup>i.e. toothy laugh

**20** There is questioning that is not timely,  
and there is one who keeps silent, and he  
is prudent.

<sup>2</sup> How good it is to question rather than to be  
angry.

<sup>3</sup> And he who admits freely will be kept from  
disparagement.

<sup>4</sup> A eunuch's desire to violate a girl—  
thus is he who makes judgments by  
force.

<sup>5</sup> There exists a person who keeps silent, who  
is found to be wise,  
and there is one who is hated from much  
talk.

<sup>6</sup> There exists one who keeps silent, for he  
does not have an answer,  
and there is one who keeps silent, since  
he knows the proper time.

<sup>7</sup> A wise person will be silent until a proper  
time,  
but the swaggerer and fool overstep a  
proper time.

<sup>8</sup> He who is excessive with speech will be  
loathed,  
and he who pretends to authority will be  
hated.

*[How good that when one is rebuked, one  
shows repentance,  
[for thus shall you escape willful sinning.]*

<sup>9</sup> A man has success in evil things,  
and there is a windfall resulting in loss.

<sup>10</sup> There exists giving that will not profit you,  
and there exists giving of which the  
repayment is double.

<sup>11</sup> There exists loss for the sake of reputation,  
and there exists a person who from a low  
estate raised his<sup>a</sup> head.

<sup>12</sup> There exists a person who buys much for a  
little  
and pays for it seven times.

<sup>13</sup> The wise person will make himself beloved  
in a few things,  
but favors of foolish ones will be poured  
out.

<sup>14</sup> A gift of a fool will not profit you,  
*[and likewise also that of a grudging person  
on account of his compulsion,]*  
for his eyes are many instead of one.

<sup>15</sup> He will seldom give and reproach often,  
and he will open his mouth like a  
herald;  
today he will lend and ask back  
tomorrow;  
such a person is hateful.

<sup>16</sup> A foolish person says, "I do not have a  
friend,  
and there is no gratitude for my good  
deeds."

Those who eat his bread are mean in  
tongue.

<sup>17</sup> How often and how many will ridicule him?

*[For he has not received what he has with true  
feeling,]*

*[and what he does not have similarly is  
indifferent to him.]*

<sup>18</sup> A slip on the ground rather than of the  
tongue;  
so the downfall of evil persons will come  
speedily.

<sup>19</sup> An ungracious person, an untimely story,  
it will persist in the mouth of the  
uneducated.

<sup>20</sup> An illustration from the mouth of a foolish  
person will be rejected,  
for he will not tell it at its proper time.

<sup>21</sup> There exists a person who is prevented from  
sinning by indigence,  
and in his rest he will not be  
bewildered.

<sup>22</sup> There exists a person who destroys his life  
through shame,  
and he will destroy it due to a fool.

<sup>23</sup> There exists a person who promises to a  
friend a favor out of shame  
and made him an enemy to no purpose.

<sup>24</sup> A lie is an evil blemish on a person;  
it will persist in the mouth of the  
uneducated.

<sup>25</sup> Preferable is a thief over one who persists in  
a lie,  
but both will inherit destruction.

<sup>26</sup> A lying person's character is dishonor,  
and his shame is constantly with him.

#### ILLUSTRATIVE SAYINGS

<sup>27</sup> The wise person will apply himself in few  
things,  
and a prudent person will please nobles.  
<sup>28</sup> He who tills the soil will raise up his heap,  
and he who pleases nobles will atone for  
injustice.

<sup>29</sup> Friendly gift and presents<sup>b</sup> blind the eyes of  
wise persons,  
and like a muzzle on a mouth they turn  
away reproofs.

<sup>30</sup> Hidden wisdom and unseen treasure,  
what profit is there in both?

<sup>31</sup> Better is a person who hides his  
foolishness  
than a person who hides his wisdom.

<sup>[32</sup> *Better is implacable endurance in seeking the  
Lord]*

*[than a spurious charioteer of one's own life.]*

**21** Child, you sinned; do not add any longer,  
and concerning your former ones petition.

<sup>2</sup> As from before a snake, flee from sin,  
for if you approach, it will bite you;  
it's teeth are lion's teeth,  
destroying people's lives.

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>b</sup>Or *bribes*

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## SIRACH 21-22

- 3 All lawlessness is like a two-edged sword;  
for its wound there is no healing.
- 4 Consternation and insolence will desolate  
wealth;  
so an arrogant person's house will be  
uprooted.
- 5 A poor person's petition is from the mouth  
to his<sup>a</sup> ears,  
and his judgment comes speedily.
- 6 One who hates reproof is in the footstep of  
a sinner,  
and he who fears the Lord will turn with  
the heart.
- 7 Known from afar is he who is mighty in  
tongue,  
but he who is sensible knows when he  
makes a slip.
- 8 He who builds his house with others'  
money  
is like one who gathers his stones for a  
burial mound.
- 9 A gathering of the lawless is bundled flax,  
and a flame of fire is their end.
- 10 A way of sinners is leveled out of stones,  
and at its end is a hole of Hades.
- 11 He who keeps the law gains mastery over  
the object of his thought,  
and consummation of the fear of the  
Lord is wisdom.
- 12 He who is not clever shall not be instructed,  
but there is a cleverness that increases  
bitterness.
- 13 A wise person's knowledge will increase like  
a flood,  
and his counsel is like a spring of life.
- 14 The inward parts<sup>b</sup> of a foolish person are  
like a broken vessel,  
and he will not master any knowledge.
- 15 A wise word—if one who understands hears  
it,  
he will praise it and will add to it.  
He who lives luxuriously heard and was  
displeased with it,  
and he turned it aside behind his back.
- 16 A foolish person's explanation is like a  
burden on a journey,  
but upon the lips of an intelligent person  
grace will be found.
- 17 The mouth of a prudent person will be  
sought in an assembly,  
and his words they will ponder in their<sup>b</sup>  
heart.
- 18 Like a house that has been razed, so is  
wisdom to a foolish person,  
and an ignorant person's knowledge is  
meaningless words.
- 19 On a thoughtless person's feet education is  
fetters,  
and like manacles on one's right hand.
- 20 A foolish person raises his voice in  
laughter,  
but a clever man will scarcely smile in  
silence.
- 21 Like a golden ornament is instruction to a  
prudent person,  
and like a bracelet on the right arm.
- 22 A foolish person's foot is quick into a house,  
but an experienced person will feel  
restraint in front.
- 23 A fool peeks into a house from a door,  
but an educated man will stand outside.
- 24 It is lack of education for a person to listen  
at a door,  
but a prudent person will be weighed  
down by dishonor.
- 25 Lips of strangers will tell tales with these  
things,  
but the words of prudent persons will be  
placed on a scale.
- 26 In the mouth of foolish persons is their  
heart,  
but in the heart of wise persons is their  
mouth.
- 27 When an impious person curses the satan,  
he curses his own soul.
- 28 He who whispers defiles his own soul,  
and he will be hated in a  
neighborhood.
- 22** A sluggard has been compared to a filthy  
stone,  
and everyone will hiss at his dishonor.
- 2 A sluggard has been compared to cow dung  
of dunghills;  
everyone who picks it up will shake off  
his<sup>b</sup> hand.
- 3 A father's shame is in engendering an  
ineducable son<sup>b</sup>,  
but a daughter is born at a loss.
- 4 A prudent daughter will obtain a husband  
of her own,  
and she who is put to shame is as a grief  
for a begetter.
- 5 The impudent woman shames father and  
husband,  
and she will be held in dishonor by both  
of them.
- 6 Untimely narration is music during  
mourning,  
but whips and instruction<sup>c</sup> are wisdom at  
any time.
- [7 *Children who have a rearing in a good life*  
*[will hide the lowly birth of their own*  
*begetters.]*
- [8 *Children who take pride in contempt and lack*  
*of instruction*  
*[sully the good birth of their own family.]*

<sup>a</sup>I.e. God's    <sup>b</sup>Lacking in Gk    <sup>c</sup>Or *discipline*

## SIRACH 22-23

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- 9 He who teaches a foolish person is one  
gluing together a potsherd,  
one arousing a sleeper out of a deep  
sleep.
- 10 He who recounts to a foolish person is  
recounting to one who is drowsy,  
and at the conclusion he will say, "What  
is it?"
- 11 Weep over a corpse, for he has left the  
light,  
and weep over a foolish person, for he  
has left understanding behind.  
Weep sweetly over a corpse, because he died,  
but the life of the foolish person is a  
sorry plight beyond death.
- 12 Mourning for a corpse is for seven days,  
but for a foolish and impious person, it is  
all the days of his life.
- 13 Do not increase speech with a fool,  
and do not go to an unintelligent person;  
*[for when a person is without sense, he will  
bring to nothing everything of yours;]*  
keep away from him, lest you have trouble,  
and you will not be sullied by his shaking  
off;  
stay clear of him, and you will find rest,  
and you will never be wearied by his  
madness.
- 14 What will be heavier than lead?  
And what name does he have but  
"foolish person"?
- 15 Sand and salt and a lump of iron  
are easier to bear than an unintelligent  
person.
- 16 A tie-beam fastened into a building  
will not be loosed by an earthquake;  
so a heart firmly set upon a thought from  
counsel  
will not be afraid at any time.
- 17 A heart fixed upon thoughtful  
understanding  
is like an engraved ornament on a  
smooth wall.
- 18 Pebbles lying on a high surface  
will never endure against a wind;  
so a heart in dread at the thought of a  
foolish person  
will never endure against any fear.
- 19 He who pricks an eye will draw down tears,  
and he who pricks a heart brings to light  
feelings.
- 20 He who throws a stone at birds scares them  
off,  
and he who insults a friend dissolves a  
friendship.
- 21 If you draw a sword on a friend,  
do not despair, for a way back is  
possible.
- 22 If you open your<sup>a</sup> mouth against a friend,  
be not concerned, for reconciliation is  
possible—  
with the exception of reproach and  
arrogance and revealing a secret and  
a treacherous blow—  
in these cases any friend will flee.
- 23 Gain your fellow's trust in poverty  
so that in his prosperity you may be filled  
as well;  
in a time of distress stay with him  
so that in his inheritance you may be a  
joint heir.  
*[For one should not always despise the outline,]  
[nor is a rich person admirable when he has  
no purpose.]*
- 24 Preceding a fire there are a furnace's vapor  
and smoke;  
so preceding bloodshed there are  
abuses.
- 25 I will not be ashamed to shelter a friend,  
and from before him I will never hide.
- 26 And if bad things will happen to me on his  
account,  
everyone who hears will guard against  
him.
- 27 Who will grant a guard upon my  
mouth  
and a shrewd seal upon my lips,  
lest I fall because of them  
and my tongue destroy me?
- 23** O Lord, Father and Master of my life,  
do not abandon me to their design,  
and do not let me fall among them.
- 2 Who will set whips upon my thought  
and discipline of wisdom upon my  
heart  
so that they might not spare my faults of  
ignorance  
and he shall not let their sins go?—
- 3 that my acts of ignorance may not be  
multiplied,  
and my sins may increase,  
and I will fall before my adversaries,  
and my enemy will rejoice over me.  
*[Far from them is the hope of your mercy.]*
- 4 O Lord, Father and God of my life,  
do not give me a lifting up of eyes,  
and turn desire away from me.
- 5 Let not the belly's appetite and sexual  
intercourse seize me,  
and do not give me over to a shameless  
soul.
- DISCIPLINE OF THE MOUTH
- 7 Listen, children, to discipline of the  
mouth,  
and he who observes it will never be  
caught.
- 8 By his lips a sinner will be seized,

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk

and an abusive person and an arrogant person will be made to stumble by them.

9 Do not accustom your mouth to an oath, and do not become used to the naming of the Holy One.

10 For just as a domestic who is constantly scrutinized will not be wanting for a bruise, so also he who swears and always speaks the name will never be cleansed from sin.

11 A man of many oaths will be full of lawlessness, and a scourge will not depart from his house; if he errs, his sin is upon him, and if he disregards it, he has sinned doubly, and if he swore in vain, he will not be justified, for his house will be full of distress.

12 There is a way of speaking that compares with death, let it not be found in the inheritance of Iakob; for all these things shall stand away from the pious, and they shall not wallow in sins.

13 Do not let your mouth become used to lewd want of education, for there is in it a word of sin.

14 Remember your father and mother, for you sit in council among nobles, lest you forget yourself before them and act foolishly by your habit, and you will wish that you were never born, and you will curse the day of your birth.

15 A person who is accustomed to words of reproach, in all his days, will never be instructed.

16 Two kinds multiply sins, and a third will bring on wrath. A hot temperament like a burning fire will never be quenched until it is consumed; a person who is sexually promiscuous with <sup>a</sup>the body of his flesh<sup>a</sup> will never cease until a fire burns out.

17 To a sexually promiscuous person all bread is sweet; he will never grow weary until he dies.

18 There is a person who transgresses against his bed, saying in his soul, "Who will see me? Darkness surrounds me, and the walls will hide me, and no one will see me. Why am I discreet? The Most High will never remember my sins."

<sup>a</sup>I.e. his own flesh and blood

19 And people's eyes are his fear, and he was unaware that the eyes of the Lord are ten thousand times brighter than the sun, as they look upon all the ways of human beings and as they look into obscure parts.

20 Before all things were created, they were known to him, so also after they were completed.

21 This one will be punished in the streets of the city, and when he did not suspect it, he will be seized.

22 So also a woman when she leaves her husband and presents an heir by another.

23 Now, first, she disobeyed the law of the Most High, and second, she committed a wrong against her husband, and third, she committed adultery by an illicit act and presented children by another man.

24 She herself shall be brought out into an assembly, and there will be a visitation on her children.

25 Her children will not spread out into a root, and her branches will not bear fruit. She will leave behind her memory for a curse, and her reproach will not be blotted out.

27 And those who are left behind will know that nothing is better than fear of the Lord, and nothing is sweeter than to heed commandments of the Lord.

[<sup>28</sup> *It is a great glory to follow God,*  
[and for you to be received by him is length of days.]

PRAISE OF WISDOM

**24** Wisdom will praise her soul, and in the midst of her people she will boast.

2 In an assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth, and before his power she will boast.

3 "I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, and like a mist I covered earth.

4 I encamped in the heights, and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.

5 A circle of sky I encircled alone, and in the deep of abysses I walked.

6 In the waves of the sea and in all the earth and in every people and nation I led.

7 With all these I sought repose, and in whose inheritance I would settle.



8 "Then the creator of all commanded me,  
and he who created me put down my  
tent  
and said, 'Encamp in Iakob,  
and in Israel let your inheritance be.'  
9 Before the age, from the beginning, he  
created me,  
and until the age I will never fail.  
10 In a holy tent I ministered before him,  
and thus in Sion I was firmly set.  
11 In a beloved city as well he put me  
down,  
and in Ierousalem was my authority.  
12 And I took root among a glorified people,  
in the portion of the Lord is my  
inheritance.

13 "Like a cedar I was raised up in Lebanon,  
and like a cypress in the mountains of  
Haërmon.  
14 Like a palm I was raised up in Aiggada,  
and like rosebushes in Iericho,  
like a good-looking olive tree in a plain,  
and I was raised up like a plane tree.  
15 Like cinnamon and camel's thorn for  
spices<sup>a</sup>,  
and like choice myrrh I gave forth a  
fragrance,  
like galbanum and onycha and stacte  
and like the vapor of frankincense in a  
tent.  
16 I, like a terebinth, spread out my  
branches,  
and my branches were branches of glory  
and grace.  
17 I, like a vine, budded forth favor,  
and my blossoms were the fruit of glory  
and wealth.  
[18 *I am a mother of love that is beautiful, and of  
reverence*  
*[and of knowledge and of devout hope,]*  
*[and I give it<sup>b</sup> together with all my children;]*  
*[they are ever-generating, to those who are  
being picked by him.]*

19 "Come to me, you who desire me,  
and from my produce be filled.  
20 For the memory of me is sweet beyond  
honey,  
and the inheritance of me beyond a  
honeycomb of honey.  
21 Those who eat me will hunger for more,  
and those who drink me will thirst for  
more.  
22 He who obeys me will not be ashamed,  
and those who work with me will not  
sin."  
23 All these things are the book of the  
covenant of the Most High God,  
a law that Moyses commanded us,

an inheritance for the gatherings of  
Iakob.  
[24 *Do not cease to be strong in the Lord,]*  
*[and cling to him so that he might strengthen  
you.]*  
*[The Lord Almighty alone is God,]*  
*[and there is no savior beside him.]*  
25 It fills wisdom like Phison  
and like Tigris in days of new things<sup>c</sup>.  
26 It supplies understanding like Euphrates  
and like Jordan in days of harvest,  
27 It shines forth education like light,  
like Geon in days of vintage.  
28 The first man did not complete knowing  
her<sup>d</sup>,  
and so the last one did not track her out;  
29 for her thought was filled from the sea,  
and her counsel from the great abyss.  
30 And I, like a canal from a river  
and a water channel, issued forth into an  
orchard.  
31 I said, "I will water my garden,  
and I will drench my flower bed."  
And look! The canal turned into a river for  
me,  
and my river turned into a sea.  
32 Still I will again make education enlighten  
like dawn,  
and I will shine them<sup>e</sup> forth to far off.  
33 Still I will again pour out teaching like  
prophecy,  
and I will leave it behind for generations  
of eternity.  
34 See that I have not toiled for myself alone  
but for all who seek it<sup>f</sup> out.

**25** My soul found passion in three things,  
and these are beautiful before the Lord  
and human beings:  
harmony of brothers and friendship of  
fellows  
and a wife and husband who  
accommodate each other.  
2 But three kinds my soul hates,  
and I was offended at their life:  
an arrogant poor person and a rich liar,  
an old adulterer lacking in  
understanding.  
3 If in youth you have not gathered,  
how then in your old age could you  
find?  
4 How beautiful a thing is judgment in gray-  
haired women,  
and to discover counsel in elderly men,  
5 How beautiful is the wisdom of aged  
persons  
and thought and counsel in venerable  
persons.

<sup>a</sup>Possibly of spices; + I gave off a fragrant smell = Ra. <sup>b</sup>I.e. love that is beautiful <sup>c</sup>I.e. spring <sup>d</sup>I.e. wisdom <sup>e</sup>Antecedent unclear <sup>f</sup>Possibly her

6 A garland of aged persons is great  
experience,  
and their boast is fear of the Lord.

7 Nine suppositions I deem happy in my<sup>a</sup>  
heart.  
and a tenth I will speak with my<sup>a</sup> tongue:  
a person who is glad over children,  
who lives and looks at the downfall of  
his enemies.

8 Happy is he who dwells with a sensible wife  
and who did not slip with the tongue  
and who did not become a slave to one  
unworthy of himself.

9 Happy is he who found prudence,  
and he who recounts to the ears of  
people who listen.

10 How great is he who finds wisdom,  
but there is none above him who fears  
the Lord.

11 Fear of the Lord surpassed everything;  
he who possesses it—to whom shall he  
be compared?

[12 *Fear of the Lord is the beginning of loving  
him,*  
*[but faith is the beginning of clinging to  
him.]*

13 Any wound, and not a wound of the heart,  
and any wickedness, and not the  
wickedness of a woman;  
14 any attack, and not the attack of those who  
hate,  
and any vengeance, and not the  
vengeance of enemies.

15 There is no head beyond a snake's head,  
and there is no anger beyond a woman's  
anger.

16 I shall be content to live with lion and  
dragon,  
rather than to live with a wicked woman.

17 A woman's wickedness alters her  
appearance,  
and it darkens her face like a bear.

18 Among his neighbors her husband will  
recline  
and involuntarily groaned bitter things.

19 Any evil is small touching a woman's evil;  
may a sinner's lot of befall her.

20 A sandy ascent for the feet of an elderly  
man,  
so is a garrulous woman to a quiet  
husband.

21 Do not fall down upon a woman's beauty,  
and do not yearn after a woman.

22 Wrath and shamelessness and great disgrace  
is a wife  
if she provides for her husband.

23 A dejected heart and a sullen face  
and a wound of the heart is a wicked  
wife;

slack hands and weakened knees  
are from a woman who does not make  
her husband happy.

24 From a woman is the beginning of sin,  
and because of her we all die.

25 Do not give water an outlet  
nor freedom of speech to a wicked wife.

26 If she does not walk <sup>b</sup>according to your  
hands<sup>b</sup>,  
<sup>c</sup>cut her off from your flesh<sup>c</sup>.

**26** Happy is the husband of a good wife,  
and doubled is the number of his days.

2 A courageous wife gladdens her husband,  
and he will fulfill his years in peace.

3 A good wife is a good portion;  
she will be given as a portion to the one  
who fears the Lord.

4 When rich or poor, a good heart,  
at every moment a cheerful face!

5 Of three things was my heart wary,  
and in the face of a fourth I was frightened:  
a slander by a city, an assembly of a mob  
and false accusation, all miserable  
beyond death!

6 Pain of heart and sorrow is a woman who is  
a rival to a wife,  
and a lash of a tongue is she who shares  
with everyone.

7 A chafing ox-yoke is a wicked wife;  
he who holds her is like him who grasps  
a scorpion.

8 A great wrath is a drunken wife,  
and her shameful conduct she will not  
hide.

9 A wife's fornication is in her eyes' haughty  
looks,  
and it will be recognized in her eyelids.

10 Over a wanton daughter keep strict watch,  
otherwise when she discovers release for  
herself, she will use it,

11 After an impudent eye watch out,  
and do not be surprised if she does  
wrong to you.

12 When a traveler is thirsty, he will open his  
mouth  
and will drink from any water that is  
near;  
she will sit opposite every staked<sup>d</sup>  
and she will open quiver to arrow.

13 A wife's charm will delight her husband,  
and her skill will put fat on his bones.

14 A gift from the Lord is a silent wife,  
and there is no exchange for her  
disciplined soul.

15 Charm upon charm is a modest wife,  
and there is no standard weight good  
enough for a self-controlled soul.

16 When the sun rises in the heights of the  
Lord—

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>b</sup>I.e. as you direct <sup>c</sup>I.e. divorce her <sup>d</sup>I.e. membrum virile

## SIRACH 26-27

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- also a good wife's beauty, an ornament of her home.
- 17 When a lamp shines forth upon a holy lampstand—  
also beauty of face upon stable age.
- 18 Golden pillars upon a silver base—  
also beautiful legs upon well-balanced feet.
- [19 *Child, preserve intact the prime of your adulthood,*  
*[and do not give your strength to strangers.]*
- [20 *When you have sought out a fertile plot of an entire plain,*  
*[sow your own seed confident in your excellent descent.]*
- [21 *Thus, your offspring, surrounding you*  
*[and having the confidence of excellent descent, will become great.]*
- [22 *A hired woman will be regarded as equal to spittle,*  
*[but a married one will be regarded as a tower of death to those who use her<sup>a</sup>.]*
- [23 *An impious woman will be given as a portion to a lawless man,*  
*[but a pious woman is given to him who fears the Lord.]*
- [24 *A shameless woman will exhaust dishonor,*  
*[but a decorous daughter will revere even her husband.]*
- [25 *A wanton wife will be regarded as a dog,*  
*[but she who has shame will fear the Lord.]*
- [26 *A woman who honors her own husband will appear wise to everyone,*  
*[but she who dishonors him with arrogance will be known to all as impious.]*  
*[Happy is the husband of a good wife,*  
*[for the number of his years will be double.]*
- [27 *A loud-mouthed and talkative wife*  
*[like a trumpet of war will observe a rout,]*  
*[and the soul of any person who lives in a manner like these]*  
*[will lead his life in the confusions of war.]*
- 28 By two things has my heart been grieved,  
and by a third anger came upon me:  
a warrior wanting on account of indigence  
and intelligent men when they are treated contemptuously:  
a person brought from righteousness to sin,  
the Lord will prepare him for the sword.
- 29 A merchant will scarcely be delivered from wrongdoing,  
and a retailer will not be innocent of sin.
- 27 Many have sinned on account of cash,  
and he who seeks to increase will avert an eye.
- 2 Between joints of stones a peg will be driven,  
and between selling and buying sin will be wedged.
- 3 If one does not hold fast in fear of the Lord,  
quickly, with speed, his house will be overthrown.
- 4 With a shaking of a sieve, refuse remains—  
so a person's offal in his reasoning.
- 5 A kiln tests a potter's vessels,  
and a person's test is in his deliberation.
- 6 Its fruit brings to light a tree's cultivation—  
so reasoning notions of a person's heart.
- 7 Before reasoning do not commend a man,  
for this is the test of people.
- 8 If you pursue what is just, you will take hold  
and wear it like a full-length robe of glory.
- 9 Birds will nest with those like them,  
and truth will come back to those who practice it.
- 10 A lion lies in wait for prey,  
so sin for people who practice injustices.
- 11 The narrative of a pious person is always wisdom,  
but the fool changes like the moon.
- 12 In the midst of unintelligent persons watch closely for occasion,  
but in the midst of thoughtful persons keep going.
- 13 The narrative of foolish persons is an offense,  
and their laughter is in wantonness of sin.
- 14 Talk with much swearing will make the hair stand on end,  
and their strife is a stopping up of ears.
- 15 A shedding of blood is the strife of the arrogant,  
and their railing is miserable to hear.
- 16 He who reveals secrets has destroyed trust  
and will never find a friend for his soul.
- 17 Show a friend affection, and keep faith with him,  
but if you reveal his secrets, do not follow after him.
- 18 For just as a person <sup>b</sup>destroyed his corpse<sup>b</sup>,  
so you destroyed your fellow's friendship.
- 19 And as you let a bird go free from your hand,  
so you let go of your fellow, and you will not catch him.
- 20 Do not pursue him, because he has withdrawn far off,

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>b</sup>Gk uncertain

and he has escaped like a gazelle from a trap.  
 21 Because it is possible to bind up a wound,  
 there is also reconciliation for abuse,  
 but he who revealed secrets was without hope.  
 22 One who winks an eye devises evil things,  
 and he who knows him will turn away from him.  
 23 Before your eyes his mouth will be sweet,  
 and at your words he will be amazed,  
 but later he will distort his mouth,  
 and with your words he will give offense.  
 24 I hated many things, and I did not become like him,  
 and the Lord will hate him.  
 25 He who throws a stone high up throws on his head,  
 and a treacherous blow will open up wounds.  
 26 He who digs a hole will fall into it,  
 and he who sets a trap will get caught in it.  
 27 He who does wickedness—it will be rolled onto him,  
 and he will never recognize whence it has come to him.  
 28 Mocking and reproach belong to an arrogant person,  
 and vengeance, like a lion, will lie in wait for him.  
 29 Those who are glad at the fall of pious persons will get caught in a snare,  
 and sorrow will consume them before their death.  
 30 Ire and anger, these also are abominations,  
 and a sinful man will have possession of them.

**28** He who avenges will discover vengeance from the Lord,  
 and when he observes carefully, he<sup>a</sup> will carefully observe his sins.  
 2 Forgive your neighbor a wrong,  
 and then, when you petition, your sins will be pardoned.  
 3 A person harbors wrath against a person—  
 and will he seek healing from the Lord?  
 4 Does he not have mercy on a person like himself  
 and petition concerning his sins?  
 5 His being flesh maintains ire—  
 who will make atonement for his sins?  
 6 Remember the end things, and cease to be at enmity;  
 remember<sup>b</sup> corruption and death, and cleave to the commandments.  
 7 Remember commandments, and do not be irate with your fellow,

and remember<sup>b</sup> the covenant of the Most High,  
 and overlook a mistake<sup>c</sup>.  
 8 Refrain from strife, and you will reduce sins,  
 for a hot-tempered person will kindle strife  
 9 and a sinful man will disturb friends,  
 and among people at peace he will cast slander.  
 10 In proportion to a fire's wood, so will it burn,  
 and in proportion to the obstinacy of strife,  
 it will increase;  
 in proportion to a person's strength, will his anger be,  
 and in proportion to his wealth, he will raise up his wrath.  
 11 A quarrel being hastened kindles a fire,  
 and strife in a hurry sheds blood.  
 12 If you blow on a spark, it will flame up,  
 and if you spit on it, it will be extinguished,  
 and both will proceed out of your mouth.  
 13 Curse a slanderous and double-tongued person,  
 for he has destroyed many who are at peace.  
 14 <sup>d</sup>A third tongue<sup>d</sup> has shaken many  
 and separated them from nation to nation  
 and demolished strong cities  
 and overturned the houses of nobles.  
 15 <sup>d</sup>A third tongue<sup>d</sup> has cast out courageous women  
 and deprived them of their labors.  
 16 He who pays heed to it will never find rest,  
 nor will he encamp with quiet.  
 17 A whip's blow produces a welt,  
 but a tongue's blow will break bones.  
 18 Many have fallen by a dagger's edge,  
 but not like those who have fallen because of a tongue.  
 19 Happy is the one protected from it,  
 who has not endured in its anger,  
 who has not dragged its yoke  
 and with its fetters has not been bound.  
 20 For its yoke is a yoke of iron,  
 and its fetters are fetters of bronze.  
 21 A wicked death is its death,  
 and Hades is more advantageous than it.  
 22 It will never prevail over pious persons,  
 and in its flame they will not be burned.  
 23 Those who forsake the Lord will fall into it,  
 and in them it will burn, and it will never be extinguished;  
 it will be sent after them like a lion,  
 and like a leopard it will injure them.  
 24a See! Fence your property with thorns,  
 25b and make for your mouth a door and a bolt.

<sup>a</sup>I.e. the Lord <sup>b</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>c</sup>Or sin of ignorance <sup>d</sup>Possibly talk of a third party

## SIRACH 28-30

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- 24b Lock up your silver and gold,  
25a and make for your words a balance and a weight.  
26 Take heed lest you slip by it;  
do not fall before one who lies in wait.

**29** He who does mercy will lend to his fellow,  
and he who prevails with his hand keeps  
the commandments.

- 2 Lend to your fellow in his time of need,  
and again pay back your fellow at the  
proper time.  
3 Firmly establish a word, and be trustworthy  
with him,  
and on every occasion you will find what  
you need.  
4 Many regarded a loan as a windfall,  
and they caused trouble for those who  
helped them.  
5 Until he receives it, he will kiss his hands,  
and about his fellow's money he lowers  
his<sup>a</sup> voice,  
and at the moment for repayment he will  
delay for time  
and will pay back words of apathy,  
and he will blame the time.  
6 If he is capable, he will recover scarcely  
half,  
and he will consider that as a windfall;  
but if not, he has defrauded him of his  
money,  
and he has needlessly made him an  
enemy;  
curses and insults he will repay him,  
and instead of glory he will repay him  
dishonor.  
7 Many turned away not because of  
wickedness;  
they were wary of being defrauded  
needlessly.  
8 Nevertheless, with a lowly person be  
patient,  
and do not make him wait for charity.  
9 On account of the commandment, assist a  
needy person,  
and according to his need do not turn  
him away empty.  
10 Lose silver for the sake of a brother and a  
friend,  
and do not let it corrode under the stone  
unto destruction.  
11 Dispose of your treasure according to the  
commandments of the Most High,  
and it will profit you more than gold.  
12 Store up charity in your treasuries,  
and it will deliver you from every  
affliction.  
13 More than a shield of might and more than  
a spear of weight,  
it will fight against your enemy on your  
behalf.

- 14 A good man will give surety for his fellow,  
and he who lost shame will abandon  
him.  
15 A guarantor's kindness do not forget,  
for he gave his soul on your behalf.  
16 A guarantor's goods a sinner will ruin,  
17 and an ungrateful person will  
intentionally abandon one who  
rescues.  
18 Surety destroyed many who were prosperous  
and tossed them about like a wave of the  
sea;  
powerful men it exiled,  
and they wandered among foreign  
nations.  
19 A sinner will fall into surety,  
and as he pursues profit-taking, he will  
fall into lawsuits.  
20 Assist your fellow according to your  
ability,  
and take care for yourself that you do not  
fall.  
21 Life's beginning is water and bread and  
clothing  
and a house for hiding indecency.  
22 Better is the life of a poor person under a  
shelter of rafters  
than splendid foods among strangers.  
23 With little or much have contentment,  
and you will never hear reproach for  
being a sojourner.  
24 It is a miserable life going<sup>a</sup> from house to  
house,  
and where you will be a sojourner, you  
shall not open your mouth.  
25 You will entertain and provide drink for no  
thanks,  
and besides, you will hear bitter words  
such as these,  
26 "Come here, sojourner; prepare a table,  
and if there is something in your hand,  
feed me."  
27 "Go away, sojourner, because of good  
repute;  
my brother came to me for a visit; I need  
the house."  
28 These are hard things for a person with  
pride,  
criticism about being a sojourner and  
reproach from a money-lender.

## CONCERNING CHILDREN

- 30** He who loves his son will persist in  
whipping him  
so that he may be glad at his outcome.  
2 He who instructs his son will profit by him,  
and among acquaintances he will boast  
about him.  
3 He who teaches his son will make his  
enemy envious,  
and before friends he will exult in him.

<sup>a</sup>Lacking in Gk

4 His father passed away and is as though he  
did not die,  
for he left behind him a person like  
himself.  
5 In his life he saw and was glad,  
and at his end he was not grieved.  
6 Against enemies he has left behind an  
avenger  
and one who repays a kindness to  
friends.

7 When one cherishes a son, one will bind up  
his wounds,  
and with every cry one's insides will be  
troubled.

8 An unbroken horse turns out stubborn,  
and a son when given free reign turns out  
rash.

9 Coddle a child, and it will terrorize you;  
play with him, and he will grieve you.  
10 Do not laugh together with him, lest you  
suffer together,  
and in the end you will gnash your  
teeth.

11 Do not give him license in his youth,  
[and do not overlook his ignorances.]  
12 [Bend his neck in youth.]  
Bruise his sides while he is an infant,  
lest, when he becomes stubborn, he will  
disobey you,

[and you will have distress of soul from him.]  
13 Instruct your son, and work with him,  
lest by his disgraceful behavior you  
become offended.

14 Better a poor person healthy and strong in  
constitution  
than a rich person scourged in his body.  
15 Health and vigor are better than any gold,  
and a robust spirit than boundless  
worldly weal.

## CONCERNING FOODS

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

17 Better death than a bitter life,  
and eternal repose than chronic  
sickness.

18 Good things poured out on a mouth that is  
shut  
are offerings of food set on a grave.

19 Of what use is a fruit offering to an idol?  
For it will neither eat nor smell.

(20) So is he who is banished by the Lord.

20(21) Whoever sees with the eyes and groans  
is like a eunuch who embraces a maiden  
and groans.

[Thus is he who makes judgments by  
compulsion.]

21(22) Do not give your soul to grief,  
and do not afflict yourself by your design.

22(23) Gladness of heart is life for a person,

and exultation is a man's length of days.  
23(24) Deceive your soul, and comfort your heart,  
and remove grief far from you.

(25) For many has grief destroyed,  
and there is no advantage in it.

24(26) Jealousy and anger lessen days,  
and before the proper time anxiety brings  
old age.

25(27; 33.13b) A cheerful and good heart at meats  
will take care of its food.

**31** (34)<sup>1</sup> Wakefulness over wealth wastes away  
flesh,

and anxiety about it removes sleep.

2 Anxiety over wakefulness will remove

sleepiness,

and a severe illness will carry off sleep.

3 A rich person toiled at the accumulation of  
money,  
and in rest he fills himself with his  
delicacies.

4 A poor person toiled for a diminution of  
life,  
and in rest he becomes needy.

5 He who loves gold will not be justified,  
and he who pursues profits will be led  
astray by them.

6 Many were given over to ruin because of  
gold,  
and their destruction has happened in  
front of them.

7 It is a block for stumbling for those who are  
possessed by it,  
and every fool will be taken captive by it.

8 Happy is a rich person who was found  
blameless

and who did not go after gold.

9 Who is he and shall we call him happy?

For he did wonders among his people.

10 Who has been tested by it and been made  
perfect?

And it will be as a boast for him.

Who was able to transgress and did not  
transgress,

and to do evil and did not do so?

11 Therefore his good things will be confirmed,  
and his acts of charity an assembly will  
recount.

12 Were you seated at a great table?

Do not open your throat at it.

(13) And do not say, "Indeed how many are the  
things on it!"

13(14) Remember that a wicked eye is an evil thing.

(15) What was created more wicked than an  
eye?

Therefore it sends tears from a whole  
face.

14(16) Do not extend a hand for whatever you  
see,

(17) and do not crowd for it at a bowl.

- 15<sup>(18)</sup> Consider the things of your fellow <sup>a</sup>from yourself<sup>a</sup>,  
and about every matter be thoughtful.
- 16<sup>(19)</sup> Eat like a human being the things set before you,  
and do not chomp, lest you be hated.
- 17<sup>(20)</sup> Be the first to stop, due to your training,  
and do not be gluttonous, lest you give offense.
- 18<sup>(21)</sup> And if you sat among rather many,  
do not extend your hand before they do.
- 19<sup>(22)</sup> For the person of education the little is as enough,  
and upon his bed he does not gasp for breath.
- 20<sup>(24)</sup> A sleep of health due to a moderate bowel!  
He rose early and his soul with him.
- (23) The pain of sleeplessness and of nausea  
and colic are with the gluttonous man.
- 21<sup>(25)</sup> And if you were overpowered by foods,  
get up, and vomit a distance away, and  
you will have rest.
- 22<sup>(26)</sup> Listen, child, and do not scorn me,  
and in the end you will acquire my words;
- (27) in all of your works be skillful,  
and no illness will ever come upon you.
- 23<sup>(28)</sup> Lips will bless a person munificent with respect to bread,  
and trustworthy is the testimony to his fine quality.
- 24<sup>(29)</sup> The city will murmur about a wicked one for bread,  
and accurate is the testimony to his wickedness.
- 25<sup>(30)</sup> With wine do not be macho,  
for wine has destroyed many.
- 26<sup>(31)</sup> A furnace tests steel by dipping;  
thus wine tests<sup>b</sup> hearts in strife of the proud.
- 27<sup>(32)</sup> Equal to life is wine for human beings,  
if you drink it in <sup>c</sup>its measure<sup>c</sup>.
- (33) What is life to one who lacks wine?  
(35) And it was created from the beginning for gladness.
- 28<sup>(36)</sup> Joy of heart and gladness of soul  
is sufficient wine drunk at the proper time.
- 29<sup>(39)</sup> Bitterness of soul is much wine drunk  
amid provocation and stumbling.
- 30<sup>(40)</sup> Drunkenness increases a fool's temper for hurt,  
since it reduces strength and adds wounds.
- 31<sup>(41)</sup> At a banquet of wine do not reprove your fellow,  
and do not scorn him in his gladness;
- (42) do not speak to him a word of reproach,  
and do not distress him with demanding repayment.
- 32** <sup>(35).1</sup> They appointed you leader; do not exalt yourself;  
be among them as one of them;
- (2) take thought for them, and then sit down.
- 2 And when you have performed all your service, recline
- (3) so that you may be merry on account of them,  
and due to your good conduct you might receive a garland.
- 3<sup>(4)</sup> Speak, O elderly person, for it is fitting for you,  
(5) with accurate knowledge, and do not interrupt the music.
- 4<sup>(6)</sup> Where there is entertainment, do not pour out talk,  
and do not be smart at an inopportune moment.
- 5<sup>(7)</sup> A ruby seal on a gold ornament  
is a concert of music at a banquet of wine.
- 6<sup>(8)</sup> An emerald seal in a gold setting  
is a melody of music with sweet wine.
- 7<sup>(10)</sup> Speak, O young person, if you have need,  
(11) only twice if you were asked;
- 8<sup>(12)</sup> Summarize your speech; in a few things  
there are many;  
be as one who knows and at the same time one who is silent.
- 9<sup>(13)</sup> In the midst of nobles do not exercise authority,  
and where there are old men, do not prate about many things.
- 10<sup>(14)</sup> Before thunder lightning hastens,  
and goodwill will go before a modest person.
- 11<sup>(15)</sup> Awaken in time, and do not bring up the rear;  
depart for home, and do not be idle.
- 12<sup>(16)</sup> There play, and do the things you desire,  
and do not sin by arrogant speech.
- 13<sup>(17)</sup> And in addition, bless the one who made you  
and intoxicates you with his good things.
- 14<sup>(18)</sup> He who fears the Lord will accept instruction,  
and those who rise early will find approval.
- 15<sup>(19)</sup> He who seeks the law will be filled with it,  
and he who is hypocritical will stumble on it.
- 16<sup>(20)</sup> Those who fear the Lord will get a verdict,  
and they will kindle right acts like a light.
- 17<sup>(21)</sup> A sinful person will turn away reproof,  
and according to his will, he will find a judgment.

<sup>a</sup>I.e. put yourself in his place    <sup>b</sup>Lacking in Gk    <sup>c</sup>I.e. moderation

18<sup>(22)</sup> A man of deliberation will never overlook a thought;  
the stranger and the arrogant will not cower from fear.

19<sup>(24)</sup> Do nothing without deliberation, and do not feel regret when you have acted.

20<sup>(25)</sup> On a path of stumbling do not go, and do not stumble on rocky ground.

21 Do not trust an unexplored road,  
22<sup>(26)</sup> and guard against your children.

23<sup>(27)</sup> In every deed trust your soul, for this as well is a means of keeping the commandments.

24<sup>(28)</sup> He who has faith in the law attends to the commandments,  
and he who trusts in the Lord will not suffer loss.

**33** <sup>(36).1</sup> No evil will befall him who fears the Lord,  
but in a test he will also be delivered in turn.

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

3 An intelligent person will trust in a word,  
and the law for him is as trustworthy as an inquiry of the clear ones.

4 Prepare a speech, and so you will be heard;  
consolidate instruction, and reply.

5 The emotions of a foolish person are like a wheel of a wagon,  
and his argument is like a turning axle.

6 A <sup>a</sup>horse for breeding<sup>a</sup> is like a mocking friend;  
underneath anyone who sits on him, he whinnies.

7 Why is a day superior to a day,  
when all the light of a day of a year is from the sun?

8 By the Lord's knowledge they were marked off,  
and he made seasons and feasts different.

9<sup>(10)</sup> Some of them he exalted and hallowed,  
and some of them he established for a number of days.

10 And all human beings are from the ground,  
and out of earth Adam was created.

11 In fullness of knowledge the Lord marked them off  
and made their ways different.

12 Some of them he blessed and exalted,  
and some of them he hallowed and brought near to himself;  
some of them he cursed and brought low  
and turned them out of their position.

13 Like a potter's clay in his hand,  
14<sup>(14)</sup> to fashion it according to his liking,

so are human beings in the hand of him who made them,  
to repay them according to his judgment.

14<sup>(15)</sup> Good is opposite evil,  
and life is opposite death;  
so a sinner is opposite a pious person.

15 And so look at all of the works of the Most High,  
two by two, one opposite the other one.

16 As a last one, it was I who kept vigil,  
17<sup>(25)</sup> as one who gleaned after the grape-pickers.

17<sup>(25)</sup> By the blessing of the Lord I arrived first,  
and like one who picks grapes I filled a wine vat.

18<sup>(26)</sup> Consider that I have not labored for myself alone  
but for all those who seek instruction.

19<sup>(27)</sup> Listen to me, nobles of the people,  
and leaders of the assembly, give ear.

20<sup>(28)</sup> To son and wife, to brother and friend  
do not give authority over you in your lifetime,  
and do not give your property to another,  
lest you change your mind and ask for it.

21<sup>(29)</sup> While you are still alive and there is breath in you,  
do not exchange yourself with any flesh.

22<sup>(30)</sup> For it is better that your children ask of you  
than that you should look to the hands of your sons.

23<sup>(31)</sup> In all your works be one who excels;  
do not bring a stain on your reputation.

24<sup>(32)</sup> In the day of the completion of the days of your life  
and at the moment of death, distribute an inheritance.

25<sup>(33)</sup> Fodder and a rod and burdens for a donkey;  
bread and instruction and work for a domestic.

26<sup>(34)</sup> Work with instruction, and you will find rest;  
let loose his hands, and he will seek freedom.

27<sup>(35)</sup> A yoke and a thong will bow a neck,  
and for a wicked domestic there are racks and tortures.

28<sup>(36)</sup> Put him to work so that he might not be unoccupied,

29<sup>(37)</sup> for lack of work has taught much evil.

30<sup>(38)</sup> Set him to work as is fitting for him,  
and if he does not obey, make his fetters heavy.

And do not be excessive over any flesh,  
and without judgment do not do anything.

31<sup>(39)</sup> If you have a domestic, let him be like you,  
because with blood you acquired him;

<sup>a</sup>i.e. stallion



if you have a domestic, treat him like a  
brother,  
because you will need him like your own  
soul.  
32(40) If you do him evil and he departs and runs  
away,  
33 on which road will you seek him?

**34** (31).<sup>1</sup>A senseless man has empty and false  
hopes,  
and dreams excite fools.  
2 Like one who grasps a shadow and pursues  
wind,  
so is he who pays heed to dreams.  
3 An appearance in dreams is <sup>a</sup>this against  
that<sup>a</sup>,  
a likeness of a face opposite a face.  
4 Of an unclean thing what will become clean?  
And of a false thing what will be true?  
5 Divinations and omens and dreams are  
vain,  
and as of a woman in labor the heart  
fantasizes.  
6 Unless it has been sent from the Most High  
by a visitation,  
do not give your heart to them.  
7 For dreams have deceived many,  
and persons who hope in them have  
fallen.  
8 Without falsehood the law will be  
accomplished,  
and wisdom in a trustworthy mouth is  
completeness.  
9 Since a man roamed, he knew many things,  
and he who is experienced will tell with  
understanding.  
10 He who had no experience knows few  
things,  
11 but he who has roamed will increase  
cleverness.  
12 I have seen many things in my wandering,  
and more than my words is my  
understanding.  
13 Frequently I was in danger of death,  
and I was saved because of these things.  
14 The spirit of people who fear the Lord will  
live,  
15 for their hope is in the one who saves  
them.  
16 He who fears the Lord will be timid in  
nothing,  
and he will never be cowardly, because  
he<sup>b</sup> is his hope.  
17 Happy is the soul of one who fears the Lord.  
18 Upon whom is he intent? And who is his  
support?  
19 The eyes of the Lord are upon those who  
love him,  
a shield of dominance and a support of  
strength,

a shelter from the burning heat and shade  
from midday,  
a guard against stumbling and a help  
against falling,  
20 one who uplifts the soul and enlightens  
eyes,  
gives healing of life and blessing.  
21 When one sacrifices from someone unjust, it  
is a blameworthy offering,  
22 and the gifts of lawless persons are not  
for approval.  
23 The Most High is not pleased with the  
offerings of impious persons,  
nor by a multitude of sacrifices does he  
forgive sins.  
24 One who slaughters a son in front of his  
father  
is he who brings a sacrifice from the  
property of the needy.  
25 Bread is life for the poor when they are  
destitute;  
he who withholds it<sup>c</sup> is a person of  
blood.  
26 One who murders his fellow is he who takes  
away a way of living,  
27 and one who pours out blood is he who  
deprives the wages of a hired  
worker.  
28 One builds, and one tears down—  
what did they gain more than hard  
labors?  
29 One prays, and one curses—  
to whose voice will the master listen?  
30 When one bathes due to a corpse and when  
one touches it again—  
what did he gain by his washing?  
31 So is a person when he fasts for his sins  
and goes again and does the same  
things;  
who will listen to his prayer,  
and what did he gain by humbling  
himself?

**35** (32).<sup>1</sup>He who keeps the Law multiplies  
offerings.  
2 One who makes a sacrifice for deliverance  
is he who pays heed to the  
commandments.  
3 One who repays a kindness is one who  
offers the finest flour,  
4 and he who does an act of charity is one  
who makes a sacrifice of praise.  
5 A good pleasure to the Lord it is to  
withdraw from wickedness,  
and it is atonement to withdraw from  
injustice.  
6 Do not be seen empty in the presence of the  
Lord,  
7 for all these things are for the sake of a  
commandment.

<sup>a</sup>Possibly a reflection <sup>b</sup>I.e. God <sup>c</sup>I.e. life

8 An offering of a righteous person enriches  
the altar,  
and its pleasing odor is before the Most  
High.

9 A righteous man's sacrifice is acceptable,  
and its memorial will not be forgotten.

10 With <sup>a</sup>a good eye<sup>a</sup> glorify the Lord,  
and do not belittle the first fruit of your  
hands.

11 With every act of giving brighten your face,  
and with gladness consecrate a tithe.

12 Give to the Most High according to his  
giving  
and with <sup>a</sup>a good eye<sup>a</sup> according to that  
found at hand,

13 because the Lord is the one who repays,  
and he will repay you sevenfold.

14 Do not offer a bribe, for he will not accept  
it,  
and do not be intent on an unrighteous  
sacrifice,  
because the Lord is judge,  
and with him there is no reputation of  
person<sup>b</sup>.

16 He will not <sup>c</sup>receive a person<sup>b</sup> against a poor  
person<sup>c</sup>,  
and he will listen to the petition of one  
who is wronged.

17 He will never ignore an orphan's  
supplication,  
nor a widow, if she pours out speech.

18 Do not a widow's tears run down upon her  
cheek,  
and is not her cry against the one who  
drew them down?

20 One who serves with goodwill will be  
accepted,  
and his petition will reach to the clouds.

21 A humble person's prayer passed through  
the clouds,  
and until it draws near, it will never  
relent,  
and it will never desist until the Most High  
takes notice.

22 And he will adjudicate for righteous  
persons and will execute judgment.  
And the Lord will never be slow,  
nor will he ever be patient regarding  
them  
until he crushes the loins of unmerciful  
persons  
and will repay vengeance upon the  
nations,  
until he removes the multitude of insolent  
persons  
and will shatter the scepters of  
unrighteous persons,

24 until he repays a person according to his  
deeds  
and the works of human beings  
according to their notions,  
25 until he judges the case of his people

and will gladden them with his mercy.  
26 Timely is his mercy in a time of distress,  
as are clouds of rain in a time of drought.

**36** <sup>(33)</sup>.<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on us, O Master, the god  
of all,  
2 and cast the fear of you upon all the  
nations.

3 Lift up your hand against foreign nations,  
and let them see your dominance.

4 Just as in their presence you have been  
made holy in us,  
so in our presence may you be magnified  
in them.

5 And let them know you, just as also we have  
known  
that there is no god except you, O Lord.

6 Renew signs, and change wonders;  
7 glorify hand and right arm.

8 Raise up anger, and pour out wrath;  
9 destroy an adversary, and crush an enemy.

10 Hasten the time, and remember your  
determination,  
and let them recount your mighty acts.

11 In wrath of fire let him who survives be  
consumed,  
and may those who harm your people  
find destruction.

12 Crush the heads of hostile rulers  
who say, "There is no one except us!"  
<sup>(33)</sup>.<sup>13</sup>Gather all the tribes of Iakob,  
<sup>(36)</sup>.<sup>16</sup>and give them an inheritance, as from the  
beginning.

17 Have mercy on a people, O Lord, who have  
been called by your name,  
and on Israel, whom you likened to a  
first born.

18 Have pity on the city of your holy precinct,  
Ierousalem the place of your rest.

19 Fill Sion with a celebration of your mighty  
acts,  
and your shrine with your glory.

20 Give testimony to your creations in the  
beginning,  
and raise up prophecies that were in your  
name.

21 Give a reward to those who wait for you,  
and let your prophets be found  
trustworthy.

22 Hear, O Lord, a petition of your domestics  
according to your good will concerning  
your people,  
and all who are upon the earth will know  
that you are the Lord, the God of the  
ages.

23 Any food will the stomach eat,  
but there exists food finer than food.

24 The throat makes proof of foods from a  
hunt;  
so an intelligent heart of false words.

25 A perverse heart will give grief,

<sup>a</sup>I.e. generosity <sup>b</sup>Or face <sup>c</sup>I.e. favor anyone over the poor

- but an experienced person will pay him<sup>a</sup>  
back.
- 26 A woman will accept any male,  
but there exists a daughter better than a  
daughter.
- 27 A woman's beauty brightens a face,  
and it surpasses a person's every desire.
- 28 If mercy and gentleness are upon her  
tongue,  
her husband is not like the sons of  
human beings.
- 29 He who acquires a wife makes a beginning  
of a possession,  
a helper corresponding to him and a  
pillar of rest.
- 30 Where there is no fence, property will be  
plundered,  
and where there is no wife, he will groan  
as he wanders.
- 31 For who will trust an unencumbered robber  
as he bounds from city to city?—  
likewise a person who does not have a nest  
and who lodges wherever night falls.
- 37** Every friend will say, "I, too, have been a  
friend,"  
but there is a friend who is a friend in  
name only.
- 2 Will not grief approach unto death,  
when companion and friend turns into  
an enemy?
- 3 O evil notion, how were you involved,  
to cover the dry land with deceit?
- 4 A friend's companion delights in gladness,  
and in a time of distress he will be  
opposite.
- 5 A companion suffers together with a friend  
for his stomach's sake,  
and in the face of battle he will take up a  
shield.
- 6 Do not forget a friend in your soul,  
and do not be unmindful of him in your  
money.
- 7 Every counselor exalts advice,  
but there is one who counsels for himself.
- 8 Against a counselor guard your soul,  
and know beforehand what is his need,  
for he, too, will give advice for himself—  
lest he cast a lot against you
- 9 and say to you, "Your way is fair,"  
and he will stand aside to see what will  
happen to you.
- 10 Do not consult with him who views you  
with suspicion,  
and from those who are envious of you  
hide deliberation:
- 11 with a woman about her rival  
and with a cowardly person about war,  
with a merchant about business  
and with one who buys about a sale,  
with a slanderer about gratitude
- and with an unmerciful person about  
generosity of heart,  
with an idle person about any work  
and with an annual laborer about  
finishing,  
with an idle domestic about a large task.  
Do not pay heed to these for any advice.
- 12 But rather persevere with a pious man  
whom you know to be one who keeps  
commandments,  
who in his soul is like your soul,  
and if you stumble, he will suffer with  
you.
- 13 And stand by your heart's counsel,  
for there is nothing more faithful to you  
than it.
- 14 For a man's soul is accustomed to inform at  
times  
more than seven sentinels sitting high up  
on a lookout.
- 15 And above all these, beseech the Most  
High  
so that he may make straight your way in  
truth.
- 16 The beginning of every deed is discourse,  
and before every action is counsel.
- 17 The track of change is the heart.
- 18 Four destinies appear,  
good and evil, life and death,  
and that which continually is lord over  
them is the tongue.
- 19 There exists a clever man who is an  
instructor of many,  
and to his own soul he is useless.
- 20 There exists a person skilled in words who is  
hated;  
this one will be lacking any luxury.
- 21 For charm has not been granted to him by  
the Lord,  
because he is deprived of any wisdom.
- 22 There exists a person wise in his own soul,  
and the fruits of his good sense are <sup>bon</sup>  
the body<sup>b</sup>.
- 23 A wise man will instruct his own people,  
and the fruits of his understanding are  
reliable.
- 24 A wise man will be full of blessing,  
and all who see him will deem him  
happy.
- 25 A man's life is in a number of days,  
and the days of Israel are without  
number.
- 26 The wise person among his people will  
inherit honor,  
and his name will live forever.
- 27 Child, during your life test your soul,  
and see what is bad for it, and do not  
give<sup>c</sup> to it.
- 28 For not everything confers benefit to  
everyone,

<sup>a</sup>Or it; antecedent unclear <sup>b</sup>I.e. evident to all to see <sup>c</sup>I.e. what is bad

and every soul is not pleased by everything.

29 Do not be greedy for every delicacy, and do not give yourself up to foods.

30 For in much food there is illness, and gluttony will bring one near to cholera.

31 Because of gluttony, many have died, but he who pays attention will add to life.

**38** Honor a physician for his services, for indeed the Lord created him.

2 For healing is from the Most High, and he will receive a gift from a king.

3 A physician's skill will put up his head, and in the presence of nobles he will be admired.

4 The Lord created remedies out of the earth, and a prudent man will not ignore them.

5 Was not water made sweet from wood in order that his<sup>a</sup> strength might be known?

6 And it was he that gave skill to human beings in order to be glorified in his marvelous deeds.

7 By them he<sup>b</sup> cured and took away his<sup>c</sup> pain.

8 He who prepares unguents will make a compound with them, and his works will never be finished, and peace from him is upon the surface of the earth.

9 Child, in your illness do not look elsewhere, but pray to the Lord, and he will heal you.

10 Withdraw from error, and direct your hands, and from all sin cleanse your heart.

11 Give a sweet-smell and a memorial of fine flour, and enrich an offering <sup>d</sup>. . . .<sup>d</sup>.

12 And give a physician a place, for indeed the Lord created him, and do not let him withdraw from you, for indeed there is need of him.

13 There is a time when success is in their hands as well.

14 For they will also petition the Lord, that he might grant them success with rest and healing for the maintenance of life.

15 He who sins before him who made him, may he fall into a physician's hands.

16 Child, let your tears fall over a corpse, and as one suffering terribly begin a lament, but in accordance with his decision lay out his body, and do not neglect his<sup>e</sup> burial.

17 Make the weeping bitter and the beating fervent, and make mourning according to his dignity, for one day and two <sup>f</sup>for the purpose of slander, and be comforted for the sake of grief.

18 For from grief issues death, and grief of the heart will cripple strength.

19 In misery<sup>g</sup> grief too endures, and a poor person's life is a curse of the heart.

20 Do not give your heart over to grief; withdraw from it, when you remember the end.

21 Do not forget, for there is no return, and him you will not benefit, and yourself you will harm.

22 Remember his judgment, because so is yours also.  
For me yesterday; for you today!

23 In the resting of the corpse, put to rest his memorial, and be comforted by it in the departure of his spirit.

24 A scribe's wisdom is in the opportunity for leisure, and he who does less business, it is he who will become wise.

25 How shall he who takes hold of a plow and boasts in the shaft of a goad become wise, when he drives cattle and is engaged in their tasks and his talk is about the offspring of bulls?

26 He will give his heart to producing furrows, and his sleeplessness is regarding fodder for heifers.

27 So every artisan and master-artisan, who keeps going by night as by day, those who cut signets of seals, and his patience is to diversify ornamentation; he will give his heart to making a painting lifelike, and his sleeplessness is to complete the work.

28 So a smith sitting near an anvil and examining closely works of iron; the vapor of the fire will melt his flesh, and with the heat of a furnace he will struggle; a hammer's sound will renew<sup>h</sup> his ear, and his eyes are against<sup>i</sup> the pattern of the object; he will give his heart to completing works, and his sleeplessness is to decorate upon completion.

<sup>a</sup>Possibly *its* <sup>b</sup>I.e. *the physician* <sup>c</sup>I.e. *the patient* <sup>d</sup>Gk uncertain <sup>e</sup>Or *its* <sup>f</sup>Possibly *to prevent* <sup>g</sup>I.e. *Perhaps a process of reasoning* <sup>h</sup>Perhaps *hit again and again* <sup>i</sup>Perhaps *right on*

- 29 So a potter sitting at his work  
and turning a wheel with his feet,  
who always lies down in anxiety about his  
work,  
and every work of his is taken into  
account.
- 30 With his arm he will mold clay  
and in front of his feet he will <sup>a</sup>bend its  
strength<sup>a</sup>;  
he will give over his heart to completing the  
glazing<sup>b</sup>,  
and his sleeplessness is about cleaning  
the kiln.
- 31 All of these relied on their hands,  
and each is skilled in his work.
- 32 Without them a city will not be inhabited,  
and they will neither sojourn nor walk  
about,  
but they will not be sought for a council of  
the people.
- 33 And they will not <sup>c</sup>leap up<sup>c</sup> in the  
assembly.  
On the judge's seat they will not sit,  
and disposition of a legal decision they  
will not understand,  
and they will never shed light on instruction  
and judgment,  
and in illustrations<sup>d</sup> they will not be  
found,
- 34 but they will support the foundation of an  
age,  
and their need is in the execution of a  
craft.
- Save for him who devotes his soul  
and who thinks about the law of the  
Most High!
- 39** He will seek out the wisdom of all the  
ancients,  
and he will be occupied with prophecies.
- 2 He will preserve the narrative of famous  
men,  
and he will penetrate into the twists of  
illustrations.
- 3 He will seek out the obscurities of proverbs,  
and he will be engaged with the riddles  
of illustrations.
- 4 He will serve among nobles,  
and he will appear in front of rulers.  
He will travel in the land of foreign nations,  
for he has tested the good and bad things  
in people.
- 5 He will devote his heart to rise early  
towards the Lord who made him,  
and he will petition in front of the Most  
High,  
and he will open his mouth in prayer,  
and concerning his sins he will petition.
- 6 If the great Lord wants,
- he will be filled with a spirit of  
understanding.  
He will pour forth words of his wisdom,  
and in prayer he will acknowledge the  
Lord.
- 7 He will direct counsel and knowledge,  
and on his hidden things he will think.
- 8 He will illuminate the instruction of his  
teaching,  
and in the law of the Lord's covenant he  
will boast.
- 9 Many will praise his understanding,  
and it will never be blotted out;  
his memorial will not depart,  
and his name will live for generations of  
generations.
- 10 Nations will narrate his wisdom,  
and an assembly will proclaim his praise.
- 11 If he abides, he will leave behind a name  
greater than a thousand,  
and if he rests, it will be favorable for him.
- 12 Yet being so disposed, I will tell in detail,  
and I was filled like the full moon.
- 13 Listen to me, O devout sons, and blossom  
like a rose growing by a watery stream.
- 14 Like incense send out a sweet fragrance,  
and send forth a blossom like a lily.  
Spread abroad a voice, and praise together,  
and bless the Lord for all his works.
- 15 Give majesty to his name,  
and acknowledge with praise of him,  
with songs on the lips and with cinyras<sup>e</sup>,  
and in this manner you will speak with  
acknowledgement.
- 16 "All the works of the Lord, that they are very  
good,  
and every ordinance will occur in its  
time.
- 17 It is not possible to say, 'What is this? To  
what end is this?'  
For everything will be sought out in its  
time.  
By his word water stood as a heap,  
and by an utterance of his mouth,  
reservoirs of water.
- 18 By his ordinance is all good pleasure,  
and there is no one who will diminish  
his salvation.
- 19 The works of all flesh are before him,  
and it is not possible to hide from his  
eyes.
- 20 From age to age he watched,  
and nothing is a wonder before him.
- 21 It is not possible to say, 'What is this? To  
what end is this?'  
For all things have been created for their  
uses.
- 22 "His blessing has covered over like a river,  
and like a flood it has drenched dry land.

<sup>a</sup>Possibly *make it pliable*   <sup>b</sup>Or *color wash*   <sup>c</sup>I.e. *gain prominence*   <sup>d</sup>Possibly *legal precedents*   <sup>e</sup> = Heb *kinnor* = *lyre*

23 Thus his anger will inherit nations  
as when he changed waters into salt  
water.

24 His ways are straight for the devout;  
so for the lawless there are pitfalls.

25 Good things have been created from the  
beginning for the good;  
so for sinners, evil things.

26 The beginning of every necessity for a  
human being's life  
is water and fire and iron and salt  
and fine wheat flour and milk and honey,  
blood of a grape and oil and clothing.

27 All these things belong to the pious for  
good;  
so for sinners they will be turned into  
evil.

28 "There exist winds<sup>a</sup> that have been created  
for vengeance,  
and in their wrath they made firm their  
scourges;  
at a time of consummation they will pour  
out strength,  
and the wrath of him who made them  
they will abate.

29 Fire and hail and famine and death,  
all these have been created for vengeance.

30 Teeth of wild beasts and scorpions and  
vipers  
and a sword taking vengeance on  
impious people for destruction.

31 In his commandment they will be  
gladdened,  
and they will be prepared for service on  
the earth,  
and at their times they will not transgress  
a word."

32 Therefore from the beginning I was  
determined,  
and I thought, and I left it in writing.

33 The works of the Lord, all are good,  
and every need he will supply in its hour.

34 And it is not possible to say, "This is worse  
than this,"  
for all things will be highly esteemed at a  
right time.

35 And now with a whole heart and mouth  
sing hymns,  
and bless the name of the Lord.

**40** A great engagement was created for every  
person,  
and a heavy yoke is on Adam's sons  
from the day of their exit from their  
mother's womb  
until the day of return to the mother of  
all:  
2 their considerations and fear of heart—  
thought of apprehension, day of death.  
3 From the one sitting on a splendid throne,

4 even to one humbled in earth and ashes,  
from one wearing blue and a garland,  
even to the one clothed in coarse linen—  
5 there are wrath and envy and confusion and  
unrest  
and fear of death and fury and strife.  
Even at the moment of rest upon a bed,  
sleep at night confuses his knowledge.

6 There is as little as nothing in rest,  
and he grows weary of that in his sleep as  
he does in the day,  
having been troubled by a vision of his  
heart,  
like one who has escaped from before  
war.

7 At the moment of his need, he awoke,  
even marveling at fear for nothing.

8 With all flesh, from human to animal,  
and upon sinners seven times more than  
these

9 are death and blood and strife and sword,  
calamities, famine and ruin and scourge.

10 For the lawless all these things were created,  
and because of them the flood occurred.

11 Everything that is of earth reverts to the  
earth,  
and everything<sup>b</sup> of water returns to the sea.

12 Every gift and injustice will be blotted out,  
but good faith will stand forever.

13 The money of the unjust will dry up like a  
river,  
and like loud thunder in a rain storm  
it will crash.

14 When he opens his<sup>b</sup> hands, he will be glad;  
so those who transgress will fail at the  
end.

15 The offspring of impious persons will not  
multiply branches,  
and they are foul roots upon a sheer rock.

16 A reed by any water and river bank  
will be plucked up before any grass.

17 Kindness is like an orchard with blessings,  
but an act of charity will endure forever.

18 The life of a self-reliant and a hard-working  
person will be sweet,  
and above both is he who finds a  
treasure.

19 Children and the building of a city firmly fix  
a name,  
and above both is a wife considered  
blameless.

20 Wine and music gladden a heart,  
and above both is love of wisdom.

21 Flute and harp make sweet melodies,  
and above both is a pleasant tongue.

22 Grace and beauty the eye will desire,  
and above both are the first shoots of  
seed.

23 Friend and companion meet at the right  
moment,

<sup>a</sup>Or *spirits*    <sup>b</sup>Lacking in Gk

- and above both is a wife with a husband.
- 24 Brothers and aid are for a time of distress,  
and more than both an act of charity will  
rescue.
- 25 Gold and silver make a foot firm,  
and above both counsel is highly  
esteemed.
- 26 Money and strength will lift up a heart,  
and above both is fear of the Lord;  
there is no want in the fear of the Lord,  
and with it there is no reason to seek aid.
- 27 Fear of the Lord is like an orchard of  
blessing,  
and more than any glory it covers him.
- 28 Child, a life of begging do not live;  
it is better to die than to beg.
- 29 When a man looks to a table belonging to  
another,  
his manner of living is not <sup>a</sup>by reckoning  
a life<sup>a</sup>;  
he will pollute his soul with food belonging  
to others,  
but a man who is intelligent and who has  
been instructed will be on guard.
- 30 In the mouth of a shameless person begging  
will be sweet,  
and in his belly a fire will burn.
- 41** O death, how bitter is the remembrance of  
you  
to a person at peace with his possessions,  
to a man undistracted and prospering in  
everything  
and still having strength to welcome a  
luxury.
- 2 O death, your judgment is good  
to a person who is needy and lacking  
strength,  
who is in extreme old age and is anxious  
about everything  
and who is disobedient and has lost  
hope.
- 3 Do not be wary of death's judgment;  
remember those before you and the last  
ones.
- 4 This is the judgment from the Lord for all  
flesh—  
and why should you reject the good  
pleasure of the Most High?  
Whether ten or a hundred or a thousand  
years,  
in Hades there is no reproving of life.
- 5 Abominable children are children of  
sinners,  
and living together in the enclaves of  
impious persons.
- 6 The inheritance of the children of sinners  
will perish,  
and disgrace will continually be with  
their seed.
- 7 Children will blame an impious father,  
because on his account they will be  
reproached.
- 8 Woe to you, impious men,  
who have forsaken the law of the Most  
High.
- 9 [*For if you multiply, it is for destruction,*]  
and if you are born, you will be born for  
a curse,  
and if you die, you will be apportioned a  
curse.
- 10 Everything that is from the earth will go  
back into the earth;  
so impious persons are from a curse to  
destruction.
- 11 The grief of human beings is in their bodies,  
but a no-good name of sinners will be  
blotted out.
- 12 Have regard for a name, for it will endure  
for you  
rather than a thousand great treasures of  
gold.
- 13 Of a good life there is a number of days,  
but a good name will endure forever.
- 14 Maintain instruction in peace, children,  
but hidden wisdom and invisible treasure—  
what profit is in either?
- 15 Better is a person who conceals his  
foolishness  
than a person who conceals his wisdom.
- 16 Therefore show respect for my judgment,  
for it is not good to guard against every  
shame,  
and not everything will be approved by  
all with confidence.
- 17 Be ashamed  
before father and mother, of sexual  
immorality,  
and before leader and dynast, of  
falsehood,
- 18 before judge and magistrate, of error,  
and before a gathering and people, of  
lawlessness,
- 19 before partner and friend, of injustice,  
and before a place where you sojourn, of  
theft,  
before divine truth and covenant  
and before planting an elbow for bread,  
before damning in receiving and giving  
and before people who greet, of silence,  
before a look at a female escort  
and before turning away from the face of a  
relative,
- 20 before taking away a portion and a gift  
and before ogling a married woman,  
before meddling with his servant girl—  
and do not come upon her bed—  
before friends, of words of reproach—  
and after giving, do not reproach,

<sup>a</sup>I.e. a good life

**42** before repeating a word of hearsay  
and before disclosing secret words,  
and you will be truly modest  
and finding favor before every human.

Do not be ashamed of these things,  
and do not receive a face<sup>a</sup> in order to  
sin:  
2 of the law of the Most High and covenant  
and of judgment so as to justify the  
impious,  
3 of an account of a partner or travelers  
and of giving an inheritance of others,  
4 of accuracy with scale and weights  
and of acquiring much or little,  
5 of profit from business of merchants  
and of much discipline of children  
and to draw blood from the side of a  
wicked domestic.  
6 In the case of a wicked wife, a seal is  
excellent,  
and where there are many hands, lock up.  
7 Whatever you hand over—by number and  
weight  
and giving or receiving—put everything  
in writing.  
8 <sup>b</sup>Do not be ashamed<sup>b</sup> of discipline for the  
stupid and foolish  
and for the aged guilty of sexual  
immorality,  
and you will have truly been trained  
and will have been approved before every  
living person.

9 A daughter is a hidden sleeplessness to a  
father,  
and anxiety about her takes away sleep—  
in her youth, lest she become past her  
prime,  
and having married, lest she be hated,  
10 in virginity, lest she be defiled  
and she become pregnant in her father's  
house,  
being with a man<sup>c</sup>, lest she transgress,  
and having married, lest she be barren.  
11 Over a wanton daughter keep strict guard,  
lest she make you a laughingstock to  
enemies,  
common talk in the city and summoned by  
the people,  
and she shame you in a multitude of  
many.  
12 Do not look at any person in terms of  
beauty,  
and in the midst of women do not  
deliberate.  
13 For from garments proceeds a moth,  
and from a woman, woman's wickedness.  
14 Better the wickedness of a man than a well-  
doing woman  
and a woman bringing shame to the  
point of reproach.

<sup>a</sup>I.e. show partiality <sup>b</sup>Lacking in Gk <sup>c</sup>Or husband

15 I will indeed remember the works of the Lord,  
and what I have seen, I will narrate;  
by the words of the Lord are his works,  
[and judgment happens by his good will.]  
16 The shining sun looked down upon  
everything,  
and its work is full of the glory of the  
Lord.  
17 He did not permit the holy ones of the Lord  
to recount all his wonders  
that the Lord the Almighty established  
so that the universe might stand firm in  
his glory.  
18 Abyss and heart he searched out,  
and he considered their wonderful feats;  
for the Most High knew all knowledge,  
and he saw into the sign of the age,  
19 relating the things that passed and the  
things that will be  
and revealing tracks of hidden things.  
20 No thought eluded him,  
and not one word was hidden from him.  
21 He set in order the splendors of his  
wisdom;  
since he is one before the age and forever,  
he was neither added to nor diminished,  
and he needed no one as a counselor.  
22 How desirable are all his works,  
and they are like a spark to behold.  
23 All these things live, and they remain forever,  
in all functions, and all obey.  
24 Everything is in pairs, one opposite one,  
and he did not make anything deficient.  
25 One firmed up the good things of the  
other—  
and who will be filled when he sees his  
glory?

**43** Exultation of height, firmament of  
elegance,  
the form of the sky in a vision of glory!  
2 The sun in an appearance proclaiming in  
going out,  
a wondrous object, a work of the Most  
High!  
3 At its noontide, it parches land—  
and before its burning heat who will  
endure?  
4 When one blows a furnace in works of  
burning heat,  
threefold is the sun when it burns up  
mountains.  
When it breathes out fiery vapors  
and when it shines forth rays, it blinds  
eyes.  
5 Great is the Lord who made it,  
and at his words it hastened on its  
journey.  
6 And the moon stands in its season,  
a proclamation of times and an  
everlasting sign.



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7 From the moon is a sign for a feast,  
a luminary that wanes upon completion.

8 A month is according to its name,  
increasing marvelously in changing,  
an object on high for armies,  
shining in the firmament of the sky.

9 The glory of the stars is the beauty of the  
sky,  
an ornament giving light in the heights of  
the Lord.

10 By words of the Holy One they will stand  
according to decree,  
and they will never fail in their watches.

11 See the rainbow, and bless him who made it  
exceedingly beautiful in its brightness.

12 It ringed the sky in a circle of glory;  
the hands of the Most High stretched it  
out.

13 By his ordinance he urges on snow  
and speeds the lightnings of his  
judgment.

14 Therefore storehouses were opened,  
and clouds flew out like birds.

15 In his majesty he made clouds strong,  
and stones of hail were broken apart.

17a The voice of his thunder caused the earth to  
be in travail,

16 and at his appearance mountains will be  
shaken.

By his will the south wind will blow,  
17b also a storm from the north and a  
whirlwind.  
Like birds flying down he sprinkles snow,  
and like a locust alighting is its descent.

18 An eye will marvel at the beauty of its  
whiteness,  
and a heart will be amazed by its rain.

19 And frost, like salt, he pours upon the earth,  
and when it freezes, points of thorns  
occur.

20 A cold north wind will blow,  
and ice will freeze on water;  
upon every gathering of water it will settle,  
and like a breastplate the water will put it  
on.

21 He will consume mountains and will burn  
up wilderness,  
and he will extinguish grass like fire.

22 A mist hastens healing for all things;  
a dew that comes out will refresh from  
the heat.

23 By his reasoning he abated the abyss,  
and he planted islands in it.

24 Those who sail the sea describe its danger,  
and we marvel at the reports of our ears.

25 The incredible and amazing works are  
there,  
a variety of every living thing, a creation  
of sea monsters.

26 Because of him, his messenger succeeds,  
and by his word all things hold together.

27 Many things we might say, and we would  
never arrive,  
and the consummation of words is "He is  
the all."

28 Where shall we find the strength to glorify?  
For he is the great one, beyond all of his  
works.

29 Awesome is the Lord and very great,  
and marvelous is his dominance.

30 Glorify the Lord, and exalt him  
as much as you can, for he will surpass  
even still,  
and exalt him, and increase in strength;  
do not grow weary, for you will never  
arrive.

31 Who has seen him and will describe him?  
And who will magnify him as he is?

32 Many things hidden are greater than these,  
for few of his works we have seen.

33 For the Lord made all things,  
and to the pious he gave wisdom.

## A HYMN TO THE FATHERS

**44** Let us now praise famous men  
and our fathers by descent.

2 The Lord created much glory,  
his majesty from eternity.

3 When they ruled in their kingdoms,  
men also became noteworthy through  
power;  
when they counseled with their  
intelligence,  
when they announced through  
prophecies,

4 when they led people by deliberations  
and with understanding of a people's  
scribal art—  
wise words there are in their  
instruction—

5 when they searched out musical tunes  
and set out verses in writing—  
rich men well endowed with strength,  
being at peace in their dwelling-places—

7 all of these were glorified in generations  
and in their days were a boast.

8 There were some of them who left behind a  
name  
so that their praises might be told in  
detail.

9 And of others there is no memorial,  
and they perished as though they had not  
existed,  
and they became as those who had not been  
born,  
and their children after them.

10 These, on the other hand, were men of  
compassion,  
whose righteous deeds were not  
forgotten.

11 With their seed it will remain;  
a good inheritance is their offspring.

12 In the covenants their seed stood,  
and their children for their sake.

13 Forever will their seed remain,

## SIRACH 44-45

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and their glory will not be blotted out.  
 14 Their bodies were buried in peace,  
 and their name lives for generations.  
 15 Peoples will recount their wisdom,  
 and an assembly will proclaim their  
 praise.

16 Henoah pleased God, and he was changed,  
 an example of repentance for generations.  
 17 Noe was found perfect, righteous;  
 in a time of anger he became an  
 exchange;  
 because of him, there was a remnant for the  
 earth,  
 when a flood occurred.

18 Covenants of eternity were added to him  
 lest all flesh be blotted out by a flood.

19 Abraam was a great father of a multitude of  
 nations,  
 and no blemish was found on his glory,  
 20 who kept the law of the Most High,  
 and he entered in a covenant with him;  
 in his flesh he established a covenant,  
 and in a trial he was found faithful.

21 Therefore he<sup>a</sup> established by means of an  
 oath with him  
 that nations would be blessed by his  
 seed,  
 that he would multiply him as the dust of  
 the earth  
 and like the stars to exalt his seed  
 and to give them an inheritance from sea to  
 sea  
 and from the river to the end of the earth.

22 And with Isaak he likewise established,  
 on account of Abraam his father.  
 A blessing for all humankind and a  
 covenant

23 he put down upon the head of Iakob;  
 he acknowledged him with his blessings,  
 and he gave to him by an inheritance,  
 and he divided his portions,  
 and he allotted among twelve tribes.

And he brought out of him a man of mercy,  
 who found favor in the eyes of all flesh,

**45** who was loved by God and human beings,  
 Moyses, whose memorial is accompanied  
 by blessings.

2 He made him equal to the glory of holy  
 ones,  
 and he made him great by terror for  
 enemies.

3 By his words he hastened signs;  
 he<sup>a</sup> glorified him in front of kings;  
 he gave him commands for his people,  
 and he showed him his glory.

4 In faithfulness and meekness he consecrated  
 him;  
 he chose him out of all flesh.

5 He caused him to hear his voice,  
 and he led him into the deep darkness,  
 and he gave him commandments face-to-  
 face,  
 a law of life and knowledge,  
 to teach Iakob a covenant  
 and Israel his judgments.

6 He exalted Aaron, a holy person like him<sup>b</sup>,  
 his brother from the tribe of Leui.

7 He <sup>c</sup>established him as an everlasting  
 covenant<sup>d</sup>  
 and gave him a priesthood of the people;  
 he pronounced him happy with decorum,  
 and he girded him with a cloak of glory.

8 He clothed him with perfection of boasting,  
 and he crowned him with the  
 implements of strength,  
 drawers and a full-length robe and  
 shoulder-strap.

9 And he encircled him with pomegranates,  
 with very many golden bells all around,  
 to send forth a sound at his steps,  
 to make an audible sound in the shrine  
 for a memorial for the sons of his people,  
 10 with the sacred vestment, with gold and  
 blue  
 and purple, a work of an embroiderer,  
 with the oracle of judgment, for  
 manifestations of truth,  
 11 with twisted scarlet, a work of an artisan,  
 with costly stones of an engraved seal  
 in a setting of gold, a work of a jeweler,  
 for a memorial in inscribed writing  
 according to the number of the tribes of  
 Israel,

12 a crown of gold upon a turban,  
 a carving of a seal of holiness,  
 a boast of honor, a work of strength,  
 objects of desire for the eyes, adorned.

13 Before him such beautiful things did not  
 exist.  
 Until eternity, no alien put them on  
 except his sons alone  
 and his descendants in perpetuity.

14 His sacrifices shall be wholly burned,  
 twice each day continually.

15 Moyses filled his hands  
 and anointed him with holy oil;  
 it became for him an everlasting covenant  
 and in his seed for the days of the sky,  
 to minister to him<sup>a</sup> and at the same time to  
 be a priest  
 and to bless his people in the name.

16 He chose him out of everyone alive  
 to offer a fruit sacrifice to the Lord,  
 incense and a pleasing odor for a memorial,  
 to make atonement for the people.

17 By his commandments he gave him  
 authority in covenants of judgments,  
 to teach Iakob the testimonies  
 and with his law to enlighten Israel.

<sup>a</sup>I.e. God <sup>b</sup>I.e. Moyses <sup>c</sup>Possibly established with him an everlasting covenant <sup>d</sup>Gk is plural

- 18 Strangers conspired against him,  
and they envied him in the wilderness,  
the men with Dathan and Abiron  
and the gathering of Kore in wrath and  
anger.
- 19 The Lord saw and was not well pleased,  
and they were destroyed by wrath of  
anger;  
he performed wonders among them,  
to consume them in the fire of his flame.
- 20 And he added glory to Aaron,  
and he gave him an inheritance;  
the first fruits of first products he allotted to  
him;  
bread with the first things he prepared in  
abundance.
- 21 For also they shall eat sacrifices of the Lord,  
which he gave both to him and to his  
seed.
- 22 But in the land of the people he will have  
no inheritance,  
and he has no portion for him among  
the people,  
for he<sup>a</sup> is your portion and inheritance.
- 23 And Phinees son of Eleazar is third in  
glory,  
since he was zealous in the fear of the  
Lord  
and since he stood firm in the turning of the  
people,  
in the goodness of the eagerness of his  
soul;  
he also made atonement for Israel.
- 24 Therefore there was established with him a  
covenant of peace  
to be in charge of holy things and of his  
people  
so that he and his seed might have  
the magnificence of the priesthood  
forever.
- 25 Also a covenant with Dauid  
son of Iessai from the tribe of Iouda,  
an inheritance of the king for son from son  
only;  
Aaron's inheritance is also for his seed.
- 26 May he<sup>a</sup> grant to you<sup>b</sup> wisdom in your  
heart,  
to judge his people in righteousness  
so that their good things might not vanish  
and their glory be to their generations.
- 46** Mighty in war was Iesus son of Naeu  
and a successor of Moyses in prophecies,  
who was, like his name,  
great for the salvation of his<sup>c</sup> elect,  
to take vengeance on enemies when  
stirred up,  
so that he might give Israel an  
inheritance.
- 2 How he was glorified when he lifted up his  
hands  
and when he extended a sword against  
cities!
- 3 Who before him stood so?  
For it was he who led the wars of the  
Lord.
- 4 Was it not by his hand that the sun was  
shackled,  
and one day became as two?
- 5 He called upon the Most High, mighty one,  
when enemies pressed him all around,  
and the great Lord heard him  
with stones of hail of mighty power.
- 6 He rushed down upon a nation in battle,  
and on a slope he destroyed those who  
resisted  
so that nations might know his armament,  
because their battle was against the Lord,  
for indeed he followed after a mighty  
one.
- 7 And in the days of Moyses he did mercy,  
he and Chaleb son of Iephonne,  
to oppose an assembly,  
to restrain people from sin  
and to still grumbling of wickedness.
- 8 And these were the two that escaped  
out of the six hundred thousand infantry  
to lead them<sup>d</sup> into an inheritance,  
into a land flowing with milk and honey.
- 9 And the Lord gave Chaleb strength,  
and until old age it remained with him  
so that he went up to the height of the land  
and his seed obtained an inheritance  
in order that all the sons of Israel might see  
that it is good to walk behind the Lord.
- 11 And the judges, each with his own name,  
whose heart did not commit fornication  
and who did not turn away from the Lord,  
may their memorial be for blessings.
- 12 May their bones sprout anew out of their  
plot  
and their name be traded;  
may it<sup>e</sup> be renowned <sup>f</sup>among the sons of  
humankind.
- 13 Having received glory of human beings,  
beloved by his Lord was Samouel<sup>f</sup>;  
a prophet of the Lord, he established a  
kingdom  
and anointed rulers over his people.
- 14 By the law of the Lord he judged a  
gathering,  
and the Lord watched over Iakob.
- 15 By his faithfulness he was made accurate as  
a prophet,  
and the trustworthiness of his vision was  
known in his words.
- 16 And he called upon the Lord, a mighty one,  
when his enemies pressed all around,

<sup>a</sup>i.e. God <sup>b</sup>Gk is plural <sup>c</sup>i.e. God's <sup>d</sup>i.e. the Israelites <sup>e</sup>i.e. their plot <sup>f</sup>Perhaps among the sons of humankind, having received glory of human beings. Beloved by his Lord was Samouel

with an offering of a suckling lamb.  
 17 And the Lord thundered from the sky,  
 and with a great sound he made his voice  
 heard.  
 18 And he wiped out leaders of the Tyrians  
 and all rulers of the Phylistiim.  
 19 And before the time of eternal sleep he bore  
 witness  
 before the Lord and his anointed one,  
 "No property, not even a pair shoes,  
 have I taken from any flesh."  
 And no person accused him.  
 20 And after he fell asleep, he prophesied,  
 and he showed the king his end,  
 and he raised up his voice out of the  
 ground  
 in prophecy to blot out the lawlessness of  
 the people.

**47** And after this one Nathan rose up  
 to prophecy in the days of Daudid.  
 2 Just as fat set apart from deliverance<sup>a</sup>,  
 so was Daudid from Israel's sons.  
 3 He played with lions as with young goats  
 and with bears as with lambs of the  
 flocks.  
 4 In his youth, did he not kill a giant  
 and take away reproach from the people  
 by raising his hand with a sling's stone  
 and by striking down the arrogance of  
 Goliath?  
 5 For he called upon the Lord, the Most  
 High,  
 and he gave strength by his right arm,  
 to remove a person able in war,  
 to exalt his people's horn.  
 6 So among the tens of thousands they  
 glorified him,  
 and they praised him with blessings of  
 the Lord  
 by bringing to him a diadem of glory.  
 7 For he wiped out enemies all around,  
 and he treated with contempt the  
 Phylistiim, his adversaries,  
 and he broke their horn until this day.  
 8 In every deed of his he gave  
 acknowledgement  
 to the Holy One, the Most High, with a  
 word of glory;  
 with his whole heart he sang hymns,  
 and he loved him who made him.  
 9 He established harp-singers before the altar  
 also to make sweet melodies with their  
 ringing sounds,  
 [and every day they will praise with their  
 songs.]  
 10 He gave dignity at the feasts,  
 and he arranged seasons until  
 completion,  
 when they were praising his holy name,  
 and from early morning the holy precinct  
 was resounding.

11 The Lord took away his sins,  
 and he exalted his horn forever,  
 and he gave him a covenant of kings  
 and a throne of glory in Israel.  
 12 After this one arose a knowledgeable son,  
 and because of him<sup>b</sup>, he lodged in  
 spaciousness.  
 13 Salomon reigned in days of peace,  
 to whom God gave rest all around  
 so that he might establish a house to his<sup>c</sup>  
 name  
 and prepare a holy precinct forever.  
 14 How wise were you in your youth,  
 and you were filled like a river with  
 understanding.  
 15 Your soul covered the earth,  
 and you were full with illustrations of  
 riddles.  
 16 To far-off islands did your name reach,  
 and you were beloved in your peace.  
 17 For songs and proverbs and illustrations  
 and for explanations countries marveled at  
 you.  
 18 In the name of the Lord God,  
 who is called God of Israel,  
 you gathered gold like tin  
 and amassed silver like lead.  
 19 You bent your flanks for women,  
 and you were brought into subjection by  
 your body.  
 20 You gave disgrace on your glory,  
 and you defiled your seed,  
 to bring wrath upon your children  
 and to cause bewilderment by your folly  
 so that sovereignty became divided,  
 and a disobedient kingdom originates  
 from Ephraim.  
 22 But the Lord will never abandon his mercy  
 and never caused any of his words to  
 perish,  
 and he will never blot out the descendants  
 of his chosen one,  
 and he will never take away the seed of  
 the one who loved him,  
 and he gave a remnant to Iakob,  
 and to Daudid a root out of him.  
 23 And Salomon rested with his fathers,  
 and he left behind himself some of his  
 seed,  
 folly of the people and one lacking  
 understanding,  
 Roboam, who caused the people to revolt  
 because of his plan,  
 and Ieroboam son of Nabat, who made  
 Israel sin,  
 also gave Ephraim a path of sin.  
 24 And their sins multiplied greatly  
 to remove them from their land.  
 25 And they sought out every wickedness  
 until vengeance came upon them.

<sup>a</sup>I.e. an offering of deliverance    <sup>b</sup>I.e. Daudid    <sup>c</sup>I.e. God's

**48** And Elias rose up, a prophet like fire,  
 and his word was burning like a torch,  
 who brought a famine upon them  
 and by his zeal made them few.  
 By a word of the Lord he shut up the sky;  
 he thus brought down fire three times.  
 How you were glorified, Elias, in your  
 wondrous deeds!  
 And who will boast as you can?  
 He who raised a corpse from death  
 and out of Hades by a word of the Most  
 High.  
 He who brought down kings to destruction  
 and those who had been glorified from  
 their bed.  
 He who heard a rebuke at Sina  
 and at Choreb judgments of vengeance.  
 He who anointed kings for the purpose of  
 retribution  
 and prophets as successors after him.  
 He who was taken up in a whirlwind of  
 fire  
 and in a chariot of fiery horses.  
 He who was recorded ready for the times,  
 to calm anger before wrath,  
 to turn the heart of a father to a son  
 and to restore the tribes of Iakob.  
 Happy are those who saw you  
 and those fallen asleep in loving<sup>a</sup>,  
 for we too shall live by life.  
 It was Elias who was enveloped in a  
 whirlwind,  
 and Elisaie was filled with his spirit,  
 and in his days he did not tremble before  
 any ruler,  
 and no one oppressed him.  
 No word surpassed him,  
 and in sleep<sup>b</sup> his body prophesied.  
 In his life he performed wonders,  
 and in death his deeds were marvelous.  
 In all these things, the people did not  
 repent,  
 and they did not withdraw from their  
 sins  
 until they were carried off from their land  
 and they were scattered in all the earth.  
 And the people were left few in number,  
 and a ruler in the house of Daud.  
 Some of them did what was pleasing,  
 but others multiplied sins.  
 Hezekias fortified his city,  
 and he brought water into its midst;  
 he tunneled a rock with iron,  
 and he built wells for water.  
 In his days Sennacherim came up,  
 and he sent Rapsakes and departed,  
 and he raised up his hand against Sion  
 and made great boasts in his arrogance.  
 Then their hearts and hands were shaken,

and they were in travail like women in  
 labor.  
**20** And they called upon the Lord who is  
 merciful,  
 spreading out their hands to him.  
 And the Holy One quickly heard them from  
 the sky,  
 and he redeemed them by the hand of  
 Esaias.  
**21** He struck down the camp of the Assyrians,  
 and his holy angel wiped them out.  
**22** For Hezekias did what was pleasing to the  
 Lord,  
 and he prevailed in the ways of Daud,  
 his father,  
 which Esaias the prophet commanded;  
 he was great and reliable in his vision.  
**23** In his days the sun stepped back,  
 and he added to life for the king.  
**24** By his great spirit he showed what would be,  
 forever,  
 and he comforted those who mourned in  
 Sion.  
**25** And to eternity he showed the things that  
 will be  
 and the hidden things before they even  
 happened.

**49** Iosias's memorial becomes a  
 compounding of incense,  
 prepared<sup>c</sup> by the work of a perfumer;  
 like honey in every mouth it will be sweet,  
 and like music at a banquet of wine.  
**2** He prospered in turning around the  
 people,  
 and he removed abominations of  
 lawlessness.  
**3** He directed his heart toward the Lord;  
 in days of lawless people he strengthened  
 piety.  
**4** Except for Daud and Hezekias and Iosias,  
 all committed error,  
 for they abandoned the law of the Most  
 High;  
 the kings of Iouda failed,  
**5** for they gave their horn<sup>d</sup> to others  
 and their glory to a foreign nation.  
**6** They set fire to the chosen city of the holy  
 sanctuary  
 and made desolate its streets  
<sup>e</sup>by the hand<sup>e</sup> of Ieremias.  
**7** For they mistreated him,  
 and he was hallowed a prophet in the  
 womb,  
 to uproot and to ruin and to destroy,  
 likewise to build and to plant.  
**8** There was Iezekiel who saw a vision of  
 glory  
 that he<sup>f</sup> showed to him upon the chariot  
 of Cheroubin.

<sup>a</sup>Possibly + you <sup>b</sup>I.e. death <sup>c</sup>I.e. memorial <sup>d</sup>I.e. power <sup>e</sup>Perhaps because <sup>f</sup>I.e. God

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## SIRACH 49-50

9 Indeed he<sup>a</sup> remembered his enemies in a  
thunderstorm,  
and to do good to those who make  
straight their ways.

10 And may the bones of the twelve prophets  
sprout anew out of their place,  
for they comforted Jakob  
and they redeemed them in confidence of  
hope.

11 How are we to magnify Zorobabel?  
He too was like a signet on the right  
hand,  
12 so Iesus son of Iosedek,  
who, in their days, built a house  
and raised a holy shrine to the Lord,  
prepared for everlasting glory.

13 And the memorial of Neemias is lasting,  
he who raised our walls, which had  
fallen,  
and set up gates and bars  
and raised up our buildings.

14 No one was created on the earth such as  
Henoch,  
for he too was taken up from the earth.

15 Nor has there been born a man like Ioseph,  
a leader of brothers, a support of the  
people,  
and they watched over his bones.

16 Sem and Seth were glorified among human  
beings,  
and above every living thing in creation  
was Adam.

**50** Simon son of Onias was the great priest,  
he who in his life repaired a house  
and in his days fortified a shrine.

2 And by him the height of the courtyard was  
founded,  
a high retaining structure of the temple  
enclosure.

3 In his days a cistern for water was quarried,  
a reservoir like the circumference of a sea.

4 He who gave heed to his people out of  
calamity  
and strengthened the city in a siege,  
5 how he was glorified as he spun around the  
shrine,  
as he exited from the house of the veil.

6 Like a morning star in the midst of a  
cloud,  
like the full moon in the days of a feast,  
7 like the sun shining on the shrine of the  
Most High,  
like the rainbow gleaming in clouds of  
glory,  
8 like a blossom of roses in days of <sup>b</sup>new  
things<sup>b</sup>,  
like lilies at exits of water,

like a new shoot of Lebanon in days of  
summer,

9 like fire and incense in a fire-pan,  
like a gold vessel of beaten metal,  
adorned with every precious stone,  
10 like an olive tree sprouting forth fruit  
and like a cypress towering in the clouds.

11 When he put on a robe of glory  
and when he put on himself with the  
perfection of a boast,  
in ascending the holy altar,  
he glorified the enclosure of the holy  
precinct.

12 But as he received portions from priests'  
hands  
and when he stood by the altar's<sup>c</sup> hearth,  
all around him was a garland of brothers  
like a growth of cedars on Lebanon,  
and they surrounded him like trunks of  
palm trees.

13 And all Aaron's sons were in their glory,  
and the Lord's offering was in their hands  
before the entire assembly of Israel,  
14 and as he was ministering a conclusion  
upon the altars,  
to arrange an offering for the Most High,  
the Almighty,

15 he stretched out his hand to a libation bowl  
and made a libation of grape blood;  
he poured at the foundations of the altar  
an odor of fragrance to the Most High,  
the King of All.

16 Then the sons of Aaron cheered;  
they sounded on trumpets of beaten  
metal;  
they made heard a great sound  
as a memorial before the Most High.

17 Then all the people hurried with one  
accord,  
and they fell face down on the ground,  
to do obeisance to their Lord,  
the Almighty, God Most High.

18 And the harp-singers sang praises with their  
voices;  
a melody was made sweet with a full  
tone.

19 And the people <sup>d</sup>petitioned the Lord Most  
High<sup>d</sup>  
with prayer before the Merciful One  
until the Lord's arrangement was  
completed  
and they finished his ministrations.

20 Then as he descended, he raised up his  
hands  
over the entire assembly of Israel's sons,  
to give a blessing of the Lord from his lips  
and to boast in his name.

21 And they repeated an act of obeisance,  
to receive the blessing from the Most  
High.

<sup>a</sup>I.e. God <sup>b</sup>I.e. spring <sup>c</sup>Gk = bōmos <sup>d</sup>Possibly of the Lord Most High petitioned

- 22 And now bless the God of all things,  
him who does great things everywhere,  
him who exalts our days from the womb  
and does with us according to his mercy.
- 23 May he give us gladness of heart,  
that there also be peace in our days  
in Israel according to the days of the age.
- 24 May he entrust with us his mercy,  
and in our days let him redeem us.
- 25 My soul was offended at two nations,  
and the third is not a nation:  
26 those who settled on Mount Samaria and  
Phylistim  
and the foolish people who live in  
Sikima.
- 27 Instruction of understanding and knowledge  
I have inscribed in this book,  
Iesous son of Sirach, Eleazar the  
Hierosolymite,  
who poured forth wisdom from his heart.
- 28 Happy is he who is engaged in these things,  
and when he has placed them on his  
heart, he will be wise.
- 29 For if he does them, he will have strength  
for anything,  
because his route is the fear of the Lord,  
[and to the pious he gave wisdom.]
- [Blessed be the Lord forever. May it be; may it  
be.]
- A PRAYER OF IESOUS SON OF SIRACH
- 51** I will acknowledge you, O Lord and King,  
and I will praise you as God my Savior.  
I acknowledge your name,
- 2 because you have been my protector and  
helper,  
and you have redeemed my body from  
destruction  
and from a trap of a slanderous tongue,  
from lips that fabricate a lie,  
and against those who stand by
- 3 you have been a help, and you have  
redeemed me,  
according to an abundance of mercy and  
your name,  
from nooses prepared for food,  
from the hand of persons seeking my  
soul,  
from rather many troubles, which I had,  
4 from a choking of a pyre all around  
and from the midst of fire, which I did  
not kindle,  
5 from the deep of Hades' belly  
and from an unclean tongue and a lying  
word
- 6 and a missile of a tongue of an unrighteous  
person.  
My soul drew near to death,  
and my life was on the brink of Hades  
below.
- 7 They surrounded me on every side,  
and there was no one who helped;  
I looked for assistance from human beings,  
and there was none.
- 8 And I remembered your mercy, O Lord,  
and your beneficence from of old,  
because you raise up those who wait for you  
and you save them from the hand of  
wicked persons.
- 9 And I raised up my supplication from the  
earth,  
and I begged for deliverance from  
death.
- 10 I called upon the Lord, Father of my lord,  
not to forsake me in days of affliction,  
in a time of helplessness from acts of  
arrogance.
- 11 "I will praise your name continually,  
and I will sing hymns with  
acknowledgement."  
And my petition was heard,
- 12 for you saved me from destruction  
and delivered me from an evil time.  
For this reason I will acknowledge and  
praise you,  
and I will bless the name of the Lord.
- 13 When I was still young, before I wandered,  
I sought wisdom plainly in my prayer.
- 14 Before the shrine I asked for her,  
and until the final things I will seek her.
- 15 When the grape was putting out flowers to  
the point of ripening,  
my heart was glad in her;  
my foot stepped in rectitude;  
from my youth I would track her.
- 16 I inclined my ear a little, and I received,  
and I found for myself much  
instruction.
- 17 I made progress in her;  
to him who gives me wisdom I will give  
glory.
- 18 For I intended to practice her,  
and I sought the good, and I will never  
be ashamed.
- 19 My soul has grappled with her,  
and in the performance of the law I was  
exacting.
- I spread out my hands on high,  
and I thought about ignorance of her.
- 20 I directed my soul to her,  
and in purification I found her.
- I acquired a heart with her from the  
beginning.  
For this reason I will never be forsaken,  
21 and my belly was stirred to seek her out;  
for this reason I gained a good  
possession.
- 22 The Lord gave a tongue to me as my wage,  
and with it I will praise him.

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- |                                                                                                       |                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 23 Draw near to me, you who are<br>uneducated,<br>and lodge in a house of instruction.                | 27 See with your eyes that I labored little,<br>and I found for myself much rest.                 |
| 24 Why are you still lacking in these things,<br>and your souls thirst greatly?                       | 28 Partake of instruction with a great sum of<br>silver,<br>and you will acquire much gold by it. |
| 25 I opened my mouth, and I said,<br>"Acquire for yourselves without money.                           | 29 May your soul be glad in his mercy,<br>and may you never be ashamed in his<br>praise.          |
| 26 Place your neck under a yoke,<br>and let your soul receive instruction.<br>It is near to find it." | 30 Accomplish your work in good time,<br>and he will give your wage in his time.                  |



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Published by Oxford University Press, Inc.  
198 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016  
www.oup.com

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Interior design and typesetting by Blue Heron Bookcraft, Battle Ground, WA.

Printed in the United States  
1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2