

WISDOM OF JESHUA, SON OF ELEAZAR, SON OF SIRACH

PROLOGUE

Many and great *teachings* have been given to us through the Law and the Prophets, and the others who followed them; *and* for these, we should praise Israel for education and wisdom. **2** And those who read them must, not only themselves understand them, *but* instead must also, as lovers-of-learning, be able to help the outsiders by speaking¹ and writing *things*. **3** My grandfather Jeshua, who had devoted himself especially to the reading of both the Law and the Prophets, and the other books of our fathers, and had acquired considerable proficiency in them, was himself also led to write down something pertaining to education and wisdom, **4** so that by also becoming familiar with his book, those who are lovers-of-learning might make even greater progress in living according to the law.

5 Therefore, you are invited to read it with goodwill and attention, *and* to be indulgent in cases where, despite our love-of-labor in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. **6** For what was originally said in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. **7** Now *this is true*, not only *with* this book; *but* instead, even the Law itself, and the Prophecies, and the rest of the books, differ not a little when spoken in the original.

8 For when I arrived in Egypt, in the 38th year of King *Ptolemaios* the Benefactor, and spent some time *there*, I found opportunity for² no little education. **9** *Therefore*, it seemed highly necessary that I myself should also devote some diligence and love-of-labor to the translation of this book. **10** During that time I have applied my skill day and night to complete and publish the book for those in the sojourning who wish to be lovers-of-learning and are predisposed to live according to the law.

CHAPTER 1

- 1** All wisdom comes from Yahweh
and with him it remains forever.
- 2** The sand of the seashore, and the drops of rain,
and the days of eternity: who can number these?
- 3** Heaven's height, earth's breadth,
the depths of the abyss:³ who can explore these?
- 4** Before all other things wisdom was created;
and prudent understanding, from eternity.
- 5** The wellspring of wisdom is the word of God in the heights,
and her runlets are the eternal commandments.⁴
- 6** To whom has wisdom's root been revealed?
Who knows her subtleties?
- 7** An understanding of wisdom; to whom was it disclosed?
And her resourcefulness; who has understood it?⁵
- 8** There is but one, wise and truly awe-inspiring,
seated upon his throne:
- 9** it is Yahweh; he created her,
has seen her and taken note of her.
- 10** He has poured her forth upon all his works,
upon every living thing according to his bounty;
he has lavished her upon his friends.⁶
Love of the Lord is ennobling wisdom;

¹ literally "saying"

² [Sir0:8] some / most "I found the reproduction of"

³ [Sir1:3] Lat, Copt, Eth / LXX "breadth, the abyss and wisdom" / Syr "breadth, the great ocean"

⁴ [Sir1:4] LXX(II) adds

⁵ [Sir1:6] LXX(II) adds

⁶ [Sir1:10] few Greek, Syr "upon those who fear him"

to those to whom he appears he apportions her,
that they may see him.¹

- 11 Fear of Yahweh is glory and splendor,
gladness and a festive crown.
- 12 Fear of Yahweh warms the heart,
giving gladness and joy and length of days.²
The fear of the Lord is a gift from the Lord;
also for love he makes firm paths.³
- 13 He who fears Yahweh will have a happy end;
even on the day of his death he will be blessed.⁴
- 14 The beginning of wisdom is fear of Yahweh
which is formed with the faithful in the womb.
- 15 With devoted men was she created from of old,
and with their children her beneficence abides.
- 16 Fullness of wisdom is fear of Yahweh;
she inebriates men with her fruits.
- 17 She fills her⁵ entire house with choice foods,
her⁶ granaries with her harvest.
- 18 Wisdom's garland is fear of Yahweh,
with blossoms of peace and perfect health.
Both are gifts of God for peace;
glory opens out for those who love him.
He saw her and took her measure.⁷
- 19 Knowledge and full understanding she showers down;
she heightens the glory of those who possess her.
- 20 The root of wisdom is fear of Yahweh;
her branches are length of days.⁸
- 21 The fear of Yahweh drives away sins;
and where it abides, it will turn away all wrath.⁹
- 22 One cannot justify unrighteous anger;
anger plunges a man to his downfall.
- 23 A patient man need stand firm but for a time,
and then contentment comes back to him.
- 24 For a while he holds back his words,
then the lips of many herald his wisdom.
- 25 Among wisdom's treasures is the paragon of prudence;
but fear of Yahweh is an abomination to the sinner.
- 26 If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments,

¹ [Sir1:10] some LXX(II), Lat adds

² [Sir1:12] Syr "joy and eternal life"

³ [Sir1:12] LXX(II) adds

⁴ [Sir1:13] some LXX "will find grace"

⁵ [Sir1:17] most LXX, Lat, Syr / some LXX "their"

⁶ [Sir1:17] most LXX, Lat, Syr / LXX "their"

⁷ [Sir1:18-19] some LXX, most Lat, most Sah adds / some LXX, some Lat, some Sah only add "Both are gifts...love him."

⁸ [Sir1:20] Syr "Her roots are eternal life, and her flowers are length of days."

⁹ [Sir1:21] LXX(II) / LXX(I) omits "The fear of Yahweh...all wrath"

- and Yahweh will bestow her upon you;
- 27 For fear of Yahweh is wisdom and culture;
loyal humility is his delight.
- 28 Do not be faithless to the fear of Yahweh,
nor approach it with duplicity of heart.
- 29 Do not play the hypocrite before men;¹
keep watch over your lips.
- 30 Do not exalt yourself lest you fall
and bring upon you dishonor;
- 31 for then Yahweh will reveal your secrets
and publicly cast you down,
- 32 because you approached not² the fear of Yahweh
with your heart full of guile.

CHAPTER 2

- 1 My son, when you come to serve Yahweh,³
prepare your soul for trials.
- 2 Be sincere of heart and steadfast,
undisturbed in time of adversity.
- 3 Cling to him, do not forsake him;
thus your future will be great.⁴
- 4 Accept whatever befalls you,
in crushing misfortune⁵ be patient;
- 5 for in fire gold is tested,
and worthy men in the crucible of humiliation.
In sickness and poverty put your trust in him.⁶
- 6 Trust God and he will help you;
make straight your ways and hope in him.⁷
- 7 You who fear Yahweh, wait for his mercy,
do not turn away lest you fall.
- 8 You who fear Yahweh, trust him,
and your reward will not be lost.⁸
- 9 You who fear Yahweh, hope for good things,
for lasting joy and mercy.⁹
for his reward is an everlasting gift with joy.¹⁰
- 10 Study the generations long past and understand:
Has anyone hoped in Yahweh and been disappointed?
Has anyone persevered in his fear and been forsaken?
Has anyone called upon him and been rebuffed?
- 11 Compassionate and merciful is Yahweh;

¹ [Sir1:29] hexaplaric, Lat, Syr "hypocrite in the mouths of men"

² [Sir1:30] some LXX add

³ [Sir2:1] Syr "come to the fear of God"

⁴ [Sir2:3] Syr "; so that you may be wise in your ways"

⁵ [Sir2:4] Syr "in disease and poverty"

⁶ [Sir2:5] LXX(O) adds

⁷ [Sir2:6] LXX(O), Syr "; hope in him, and he will make straight your ways"

⁸ [Sir2:8] Syr "and he will not hold back your wages"

⁹ [Sir2:9] Syr "salvation"

¹⁰ [Sir2:9] LXX(II) adds

he forgives sins, he saves in time of trouble.

- 12 Woe to craven hearts and drooping hands,
to the sinner who treads a double path!
- 13 Woe to the faint of heart who do not trust,
who therefore will have no shelter!
- 14 Woe to you who have lost hope!
What will you do at Yahweh's visitation?
- 15 Those who fear Yahweh do not disobey his words;
those who love him keep his ways.
- 16 Those who fear Yahweh seek to please him,
those who love him are filled with his law.
- 17 Those who fear Yahweh prepare their hearts
and humble themselves before him.
- 18 Let us fall into the hands of Yahweh
and not into the hands of men,
- 19 for equal to his majesty is the mercy that he shows
and equal to his name are his works.¹

CHAPTER 3

The children of wisdom are the congregation of the righteous;
obedience and love are what they beget.²

- 1 Children, pay heed to a father's right;
do so that you may live the life that is forever and ever.³
- 2 For Yahweh sets a father in honor over his children;
a mother's authority he confirms over her sons.
- 3 He who honors his father atones for sins;
- 4 he who reveres his mother stores up riches.
- 5 He who honors his father is gladdened by children,
and when he prays he is heard.
- 6 He who reveres his father will live a long life;
he who brings honor⁴ to his mother is obeying Yahweh.
- 7 He who fears Yahweh honors his father,⁵
and serves his parents as rulers.⁶
- 8 My son,⁷ Honor your father in word and deed
that his blessing may come upon you;⁸
- 9 for a father's blessing gives a family firm roots,
but a mother's curse uproots the growing plant.
- 10 Do not glory in your father's shame,
for his shame is no glory to you!
- 11 A man's glory is his father's honor;
a mother's shame is disgrace for her children.

¹ [Sir2:18] Syr / all others omit "and equal to his name are his works"

² [Sir3:1] Lat adds

³ [Sir3:1] Syr adds

⁴ [Sir3:6] Heb / LXX "comfort"

⁵ [Sir3:7] LXX(II), Lat / LXX(I), Heb(A), Syr omit "He who fears Yahweh honors his father"

⁶ [Sir3:7] LXX / Heb(A), Syr omit "and serves his parents as rulers"

⁷ [Sir3:8] LXX / Heb(A), Syr adds

⁸ [Sir3:9] LXX / Heb(A), Syr "that all blessings may light upon you"

- 12 My son, take care of your father when he is old;
do not grieve him as long as he lives.¹
- 13 Even if his mind fail, be considerate with him;
do not revile him in the fullness of your strength.²
- 14 For kindness to a father will not be forgotten,³
it will serve as a sin offering—it will take lasting root.
- 15 In time of tribulation it will be recalled to your advantage,
like warmth upon frost it will melt away your sins.
- 16 A blasphemer is he who neglects⁴ his father;
accursed of his Creator *is* he who angers his mother.
- 17 My son, conduct your affairs with humility,⁵
and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts.
- 18 Humble yourself the more, the greater you are,
and you will find favor with the Lord.
- 19 Many are lofty and the noble.
But it is to the humble that he reveals his plans.⁶
- 20 For great is the power of the Lord;
he is glorified by the humble.
- 21 What is too sublime for you, do not seek,
into things beyond your strength, do not search.
- 22 What is committed to you, attend to;
for what is hidden is not your concern.
- 23 With what is too much for you, do not meddle,
when shown things beyond human understanding.
- 24 For their own opinion has misled many,
and false reasoning unbalanced their judgment.
- 25 Where the pupil of the eye is missing, there is no light,
and where there is no knowledge, there is no wisdom.⁷
- 26 A stubborn man will fare badly in the end,
and he who loves danger will perish in it.⁸
- 27 A stubborn man will be burdened with sorrow;
a sinner⁹ will heap up sin upon sin.
- 28 For the affliction of the proud man there is no cure;
he is the offshoot of an evil plant.
- 29 The mind of a sage appreciates proverbs of the wise,¹⁰
and an attentive ear is the wise man's joy.
- 30 Water quenches a flaming fire,
and alms atone for sins.
- 31 He who does a kindness is remembered afterward;¹¹
when he falls, he finds a support.

¹ [Sir3:12] LXX(I) / Heb(A), Syr "him all the days of your life"

² [Sir3:13] LXX / Heb(A), Syr "him all the days of his/your life"

³ [Sir3:14] Heb(C), LXX, Syr / Heb(A) "be blotted out"

⁴ [Sir3:16] Heb(C), LXX / Heb(A) "despises"

⁵ [Sir3:17] LXX "meekness"

⁶ [Sir3:19] LXX(II) adds

⁷ [Sir3:25] Heb(A), LXX(II), Syr [LXX(II) " , make no claims" / Syr " , do not give persuasive advice"] / LXX(I) omits "Where the pupil...no wisdom."

⁸ [Sir3:26] Heb(A) "and he who loves what is good will be brought along by it"

⁹ [Sir3:27] LXX / Heb(A) "madman" / Syr "impudent"

¹⁰ [Sir3:29] LXX / Heb(A), Syr add

¹¹ [Sir3:31] LXX / Heb(A) "The kindness a person does crossed his path as he goes"

CHAPTER 4

- 1 My son, do not rob the poor man of his livelihood;¹
nor force the eyes of the needy to turn away.
- 2 Do not grieve² a hungry man,
nor anger one who is a needy.
- 3 Do not exasperate the downtrodden;
nor delay to give to the needy.
- 4 Do not reject a beggar in distress;
nor avert your face from the poor.
- 5 Do not turn your eyes from the needy,³
give no man reason to curse you;
- 6 for if in the bitterness of his soul he curse you,⁴
his Maker⁵ will hear his prayer.

- 7 Endear yourself to the assembly of the poor;⁶
before a ruler⁷ bow your head.
- 8 Give a hearing to the poor man,
and return his greeting with courtesy.⁸
- 9 Deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor;
do not let justice be repugnant to you;
- 10 To the fatherless be as a father,
and help their mother as a husband would;
thus will you be like a son to the Most High,
and he will be more tender to you than a mother.⁹

- 11 Wisdom instructs¹⁰ her children
and admonishes those who seek her.
- 12 He who loves her loves life;
those who seek her out win her favor.
- 13 He who holds her fast inherits glory;
wherever he dwells, Yahweh bestows blessings.
- 14 Those who serve her serve the Holy One;
those who love her¹¹ Yahweh loves.

- 15 He who obeys her judges nations;¹²
he who listens to her dwells in her inmost chambers.
- 16 If one trusts her, he will possess her;
his descendants too will inherit her.¹³

- 17 She walks with him as a stranger,
and at first she puts him to the test;
fear and dread she brings upon him¹⁴

¹ [Sir4:1] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “do not mock the life of the poor man”

² [Sir4:2] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “scom”

³ [Sir4:4-5] LXX / Heb(A), Syr omit “do not avert your face...needy”

⁴ [Sir4:3] Heb(A) / LXX “; do not add more trouble to a heart that is provoked to anger”

⁵ [Sir4:6] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “Rock”

⁶ [Sir4:7] Lat adds

⁷ [Sir4:7] most LXX / some LXX “before rulers” / Heb(A) “before the city’s ruler” / Syr “before the city’s rulers”

⁸ [Sir4:8] Heb / LXX “and answer him with peaceable words”

⁹ [Sir4:10] Heb(A) “would; and he will be kindly to you, and will deliver you from the pit”

¹⁰ [Sir4:11] Heb(A), Syr / LXX “exalts”

¹¹ [Sir4:14] LXX / Syr “; his tent”

¹² [Sir4:15] LXX / Heb(A), Syr “truly”

¹³ [Sir4:16] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) omits “If one trusts her...inherit her.”

¹⁴ [Sir4:17] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) omits “Fear and dread she brings upon him”

- and tries him with her discipline;
with her precepts she puts him to the proof,
until his heart is fully with her.
- 18 Then she comes back to bring him happiness
and reveal her secrets to him.
- 19 But if he fails her, she will abandon him
and deliver him into the hands of despoilers.¹
- 20 My son,² use your time well; guard yourself from evil,
and bring no shame upon yourself.
- 21 There is a sense of shame laden with guilt,
and a shame that merits honor and respect.
- 22 Show no favoritism to your own discredit;
let no one intimidate you to your own downfall.
- 23 Do not refrain from speaking at the proper time,³
and do not hide away your wisdom;⁴
- 24 for it is through speech that wisdom becomes known,
and knowledge through the tongue's rejoinder.
- 25 Never gainsay the truth,⁵
but rather be ashamed of your ignorance.⁶
- 26 Do not be ashamed to acknowledge your guilt,⁷
and do not struggle against the rushing stream.
- 27 Do not abase yourself before an impious man,
nor refuse to do so before rulers.
- 28 Even to the death fight for truth,⁸
and Yahweh your God will battle for you.
- 29 Do not be surly in your speech,
nor lazy and slack in your deeds.
- 30 Do not be a lion⁹ at home,
nor sly and suspicious at work.¹⁰
- 31 Do not let your hand be open to receive,
but clenched when it is time to give.

CHAPTER 5

- 1 Do not rely on your wealth;
do not say: "I have the power."
- 2 Do not rely on your mind and¹¹ strength
in following the desires of your heart.
Do not walk after your heart or your eyes,
by walking in evil desires.¹²
- 3 Do not say: "Who can prevail against me?"

¹ [Sir4:11~19] LXX / Heb(A), Syr has the segment from "He who obeys...despoilers" in first person.

² [Sir4:20] Heb(A), Lat / LXX, Syr omit "My son"

³ [Sir4:23] Heb(A) / LXX "at a time of salvation"

⁴ [Sir4:23] some LXX, Heb, Syr, Lat / most LXX omit "and do not hide away your wisdom"

⁵ [Sir4:25] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) "gainsay God"

⁶ [Sir4:25] LXX / Heb(A) "rather humble yourself before God" / Syr "rather keep yourself away from your own folly"

⁷ [Sir4:26] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) "to draw back from guilt"

⁸ [Sir4:28] LXX, Syr / Heb(A), Lat "righteousness"

⁹ [Sir4:30] Heb(C), LXX / Heb(A), Syr "dog"

¹⁰ [Sir4:30] Heb(A) / LXX "nor a faultfinder with your servants"

¹¹ [Sir5:2] Heb(A) / LXX adds

¹² [Sir5:2] Heb(A) adds

for Yahweh will exact the punishment.¹

- 4 Do not say: “I have sinned, yet what has befallen me?”
for Yahweh² bides his time.
Do not say: “Yahweh is merciful,
and all my sins he will blot out.”³
- 5 Do not be overconfident of forgiveness,⁴
adding sin upon sin.
- 6 Do not say: “Great is his mercy;
he will forgive⁵ my many sins.”
For mercy and anger alike are with him;
upon the wicked alights his wrath.
- 7 Do not delay your conversion to Yahweh,
do not put it off from day to day;
for suddenly his wrath flames forth;
at the time⁶ of vengeance, you will be destroyed.
- 8 Do not rely upon deceitful wealth,
for it will be no help on the day of wrath.⁷
- 9 Do not winnow in every wind,
and do not start off in every direction.
so it is with the double-tongued sinner.⁸
- 10 Be consistent in your thoughts;
steadfast be your words.
- 11 Be swift to hear,
and let your life be in truth,⁹
but slow to answer.
- 12 If you have the knowledge, answer your neighbor;
if not, put your hand over your mouth.
- 13 Honor and dishonor through talking!¹⁰
A man’s tongue can be his downfall.
- 14 Do not be called a detractor;¹¹
do not use your tongue for slandering a neighbor;¹²
for shame has been created for the thief,
and the reproach of his neighbor¹³ for the double-tongued.
- 15 Do not say anything harmful,¹⁴ in small or great matters;
- 6.1 do not be a foe instead of a friend;
a bad name and disgrace you will acquire:

¹ [Sir5:3] Heb(A) / LXX “for the Lord will surely avenge you” / some Greek, Lat “for the Lord will surely avenge” / other Greek “for the Lord will surely avenge your pride”

² [Sir5:4] Heb(C) / Heb(A), Syr “God” / most Greek “the Lord” / LXX(O), Lat “the Most High”

³ [Sir5:4] Heb(A) adds

⁴ [Sir5:5] Heb / LXX “atonement”

⁵ [Sir5:6] Heb / LXX “he (or “it”) will atone for”

⁶ [Sir5:7] Heb(C), LXX, Syr / Heb(A) “; on the day”

⁷ [Sir5:8] LXX “calamity”

⁸ [Sir5:9] LXX adds

⁹ [Sir5:11] some Greek add

¹⁰ [Sir5:13] Heb(A) / LXX, Syr “through one who talks”

¹¹ [Sir5:14] Heb (or “double-tongued”) / LXX “slanderer”

¹² [Sir5:14] LXX / Heb(A) adds

¹³ [Sir5:14] Heb(A) / LXX, Syr “and harsh reproach”

¹⁴ [Sir5:15] Heb, Syr / LXX “Do not remain ignorant”

“That for the evil man with double tongue!”

CHAPTER 6

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

- 5 Pleasant speech multiplies friends and soothes enemies,¹
and gracious lips prompt friendly greetings.
- 6 Let your acquaintances be many,
but one in a thousand your confidant.

- 7 When you gain a friend, first test him,
and do not be too ready to trust him.
- 8 For one sort of friend is a friend when it suits him,
but he will not be with you in time of distress.
- 9 Another is a friend who becomes an enemy,
and tells of the quarrel to your shame.

- 10 Another is a friend, a boon companion,
who will not be with you when sorrow comes.
- 11 When things go well, he is your other self,
and lords it over your servants;²
- 12 but if you are brought low,
he turns against you and avoids meeting you.

- 13 Keep away from your enemies;
be on your guard with your friends.
- 14 A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter;³
he who finds one finds a treasure.
- 15 A faithful friend is beyond price,
no sum can balance his worth.
- 16 A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy,⁴
such as he who fears the Lord finds;
- 17 for he who fears the Lord behaves accordingly,⁵
and his friend will be like himself.
and as his name, so are his deeds.⁶

- 18 My son, from your youth embrace discipline;
thus will you find wisdom with graying hair.⁷
- 19 As though plowing and sowing,⁸ draw close to her;
then await her bountiful crops.
For in cultivating her you will labor but little,

¹ [Sir6:5] Lat adds

² [Sir6:11] LXX/ Heb(A), Syr “, when things go badly, he will depart from you”

³ [Sir6:14] LXX/ Heb(A), Syr “friend”

⁴ [Sir6:16] LXX, Syr (lit. “is medicine of life”) / Heb(A) “is a bundle of life”

⁵ [Sir6:17] Heb(A) omits “for he who fears the Lord behaves accordingly”

⁶ [Sir6:17] Heb(A) adds

⁷ [Sir6:18] Heb(C) (fragmented), LXX/ Heb(A) omits “My son... graying hair.”

⁸ [Sir6:19] LXX/ Heb(A,C) “Asthough glowing and reaping” / Syr “Like the sower and like the reaper”

and soon you will eat of her fruits.

- 20** How irksome she is to the unruly!
the fool cannot abide her.
- 21** She will be like a burdensome stone to test him,
and he will not delay in casting her aside.
- 22** For discipline is like her name,
she is not accessible to many.
- 23** Listen, my son, and heed my advice;
do not refuse my counsel.
- 24** Put your feet into her fetters,
and your neck under her yoke.¹
- 25** Stoop your shoulders and carry her
and do not be irked at her bonds.
- 26** With all your soul² draw close to her;
with all your strength keep her ways.³
- 27** Search her out, discover her;
seek her and you will find her.
Then when you have her,
do not let her go;
- 28** thus afterward you will find rest in her,
and she will become your joy.
- 29** Her fetters will become for you a strong protection,
and her collar a golden robe.
- 30** Her yoke⁴ is a golden ornament,
and her bonds are a cord of purple.
- 31** You will wear her like a golden robe,
and carry her like a splendid crown.⁵
- 32** My son, if you wish, you can be taught;
if you apply yourself, you will be shrewd.
- 33** If you are willing to listen, you will learn;
if you give heed, you will be wise.
- 34** Frequent the company of the elders;
whoever is wise, stay close to him.⁶
- 35** Be eager to hear every godly⁷ discourse;
let no wise saying escape you.
- 36** If you see a man of prudence, seek him out;
let your feet wear away his doorstep!
- 37** Reflect on the precepts of Yahweh,
and let his commandments be your constant meditation;
- 38** Then he will enlighten¹ your mind,

¹ [Sir6:23-24] LXX / Heb(A) omits "Listen, my son...yoke."

² [Sir6:26] Syr "heart"

³ [Sir6:26] LXX / Heb(A) omits "With all your soul...ways."

⁴ [Sir6:30] DSS / LXX "Upon her"

⁵ [Sir6:31] DSS / LXX "a crown of gladness"

⁶ [Sir6:34] LXX / Heb(A) omits "Frequent...to him."

⁷ [Sir6:35] LXX / Heb(A) omits "godly"

and he will grant the wisdom you desire.

CHAPTER 7

- 1 Do no evil, and evil will not overtake you;
- 2 avoid wickedness, and it will turn aside from you.
- 3 My son,² do not sow in the furrows of injustice,
lest you harvest it sevenfold.
- 4 Do not seek authority from Yahweh,
nor from the king a place of honor.
- 5 Do not parade your righteousness before the Lord,³
and do not flaunt your wisdom before the king.
- 6 Do not seek to become a judge if you do not have strength to root out crime,
or you will show favor to the ruler and mar your integrity.
- 7 Do not be guilty of any evil before the city's populace,
nor disgrace yourself before the assembly.
- 8 Do not plot to repeat a sin;
not even for one will you go unpunished.
- 9 Do not say: "He will appreciate my many gifts;
the Most High will accept my offerings."⁴
- 10 Do not be impatient in prayers,
and do not neglect the giving of alms.
- 11 Do not laugh at an embittered man;
be mindful of him who exalts and humbles.
- 12 Do not plot⁵ mischief against your brother,
nor against your friend and companion.
- 13 Do not delight in telling lie after lie,
for it never results in good.
- 14 Do not thrust yourself into the deliberations of princes,⁶
and do not repeat the words of your prayer.
- 15 Do not hate laborious tasks, nor farming,
which was ordained by the Most High.⁷
- 16 Do not esteem yourself better than your fellows;⁸
remember, his wrath will not delay.
- 17 More and more, humble your pride;
what awaits man is fire and worms.⁹
Do not hasten to say: "Disaster!"
Rely on God and be content with his way.¹⁰
- 18 Do not barter a friend for money,
nor a dear brother for the gold of Ophir.
- 19 Do not dismiss¹¹ a sensible wife;
a gracious wife is more precious than corals.¹²
- 20 Do not mistreat a servant who faithfully serves,

¹ [Sir6:37] DSS / LXX "will confirm"

² [Sir7:3] LXX adds

³ [Sir7:5] LXX / Heb(A) "king"

⁴ [Sir7:9] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) omits "Do not say: "He will appreciate...offerings."

⁵ [Sir7:12] Heb(A) / LXX (translating the alternate meaning of the same Hebrew word) "plow"

⁶ [Sir7:14] Heb(A), Syr / LXX "elders"

⁷ [Sir7:15] LXX / Heb(A) places "Do not hate...Most High" between "...accept my offerings." & "Do not be impatient..." / Syr omits it altogether

⁸ [Sir7:16] Syr / LXX "Do not number yourself among the multitude of sinners"

⁹ [Sir7:17] Heb / LXX "the punishment of the ungodly is fire and worms"

¹⁰ [Sir7:17] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) adds

¹¹ [Sir7:19] Heb / LXX "not deprive yourself of"

¹² [Sir7:19] Heb / LXX "gold"

nor a laborer who devotes himself to his task.

- 21 Let a wise servant be dear to you as your own self;
do not refuse him his freedom.
- 22 If you have livestock, look after them;
if they are dependable, keep them.
- 23 If you have sons, chastise them;
bend their necks from childhood.¹
- 24 If you have daughters, keep them chaste,
and do not be indulgent to them.
- 25 Giving your daughter in marriage ends a great task;
but give her to a worthy man.
- 26 If you have a wife who pleases you,² do not let her seem odious to you;
but where there is ill-feeling, do not trust her.
- 27 With all your heart honor your father;
do not forget your mother's birthpangs.
- 28 Remember, of these parents you were born;
what can you give them for all they gave you?
- 29 With all your soul,³ fear God,
revere his priests.
- 30 With all your strength, love your Creator,
do not forsake his ministers.
- 31 Honor God and respect the priest;
give him his portion as you have been commanded:
First fruits and contributions,
due sacrifices and holy offerings.
- 32 To the poor man also extend your hand,
that your blessing may be complete.
- 33 Be generous to all the living,
and do not withhold your kindness from the dead.
- 34 Do not avoid those who weep,
but mourn with those who mourn.
- 35 Do not neglect to care for the sick—
for these things you will be loved.
- 36 In whatever you do, remember your last days,
and you will never sin.

CHAPTER 8

- 1 Do not contend with an influential man,⁴
lest you fall into his power.
- 2 Do not quarrel with a rich man,
lest he pay out the price of your downfall;
for gold has dazzled many,
and perverts the character of princes.

¹ [Sir7:23] LXX / Heb(A,C), Syr“; choose wives for them while they are young.”

² [Sir7:26] Heb, Syr / LXX adds

³ [Sir7:27~28] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) omits“honor your father...your soul?” probably due to scribal error

⁴ [Sir7:1] LXX / Heb(A), Syr“ contend with one more mighty than you”

- 3 Do not dispute with a man of railing speech,
do not heap wood upon his fire.
- 4 Do not be too familiar with an unruly man,
lest he speak ill of your ancestors.
- 5 Do not shame a man who is turning away from a sin;
remember, we all are guilty.
- 6 Do not insult any man when he is old,
for some of us, too, will grow old.
- 7 Do not rejoice when a man dies;
remember, we are all to die.
- 8 Do not spurn the discourse of the wise,
but acquaint yourself with their proverbs;
from them you will acquire the training
to serve in the presence of princes.
- 9 Do not reject the tradition of elders
which they have learned from their fathers;
from it you will obtain the knowledge
how to answer in time of need.
- 10 Do not kindle the coals of a sinner,
lest you be consumed in his flaming fire.
- 11 Do not let the impious man intimidate you;
it will set him in ambush against you.
- 12 Do not lend to one more powerful than yourself;
and whatever you lend, count it as lost.
- 13 Do not go surety beyond your means;
think any pledge a debt you must pay.
- 14 Do not contend at law with a judge,
for he will settle it according to his whim.¹
- 15 Do not travel with a ruthless man,
lest he weigh you down with calamity;
for he will go his own way straight,
and through his folly you will perish with him.
- 16 Do not provoke a quarrel with a quick-tempered man,
nor ride with him through the desert,
for bloodshed is nothing to him;
when there is no one to help you, he will destroy you.
- 17 Do not take counsel with a fool,
for he can keep nothing to himself.
- 18 Do not do anything before a stranger that should be kept secret,
for you know not what it will engender.
- 19 Open your heart to no man,
and do not banish your happiness.²

¹ [Sir7:14] Heb(A) / LXX "Do not . . . , for they will judge him according to his opinion" / Syr "Do not sit with a wicked judge in lawsuit, lest you give judgment with him according to his whim" /

² [Sir8:19] Heb / LXX "and do not let him return a favor to you"

CHAPTER 9

- 1 Do not be jealous of the wife of your bosom,
lest you teach her to do evil against you.
- 2 Give no woman power over you
to trample upon your dignity.
- 3 Do not be intimate with a strange woman,
lest you fall into her snares.
- 4 Do not dally with a female singer,
lest you be caught in her wiles.¹
- 5 Do not entertain any thoughts against a virgin,
lest you be enmeshed in damages for her.
- 6 Do not give yourself to prostitutes,
lest you surrender your inheritance.
- 7 Do not gaze about the lanes of the city
and do not wander through its squares;
- 8 avert your eyes from a comely woman;
do not gaze upon the beauty of another's wife—
through woman's beauty many perish,
for lust for it burns like fire.
- 9 Do not dine with a married woman;
do not recline at table to drink by her side,
lest your heart be drawn to her
and you go down in blood² to the grave.

- 10 Do not discard an old friend,
for the new one cannot equal him.
A new friend is like new wine which you drink
with pleasure only when it has aged.
- 11 Do not envy a sinner's fame,
for you do not know what disaster awaits him.
- 12 Do not rejoice at a proud man's success;
remember he will not reach the Netherworld unpunished.

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

- 14 As best you can, take your neighbors' measure,
and associate with the wise.
- 15 Be intimate with the learned;
let all your conversation be about the law of Yahweh.
- 16 Have righteous men for your table companions;
let your glory be in the fear of God.

CHAPTER 10

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

¹ [Sir9:4] Syr "lest she destroy you by association with her"

² [Sir9:9] Heb / LXX "down by your spirit"

- 18 Feared in the city is the man of railing speech,
and he who talks rashly is hated.
- 10.1 A wise magistrate lends stability to¹ his people,
and *the* leadership of a prudent *man* is well ordered.
- 2 As the people's judge, so are his ministers;
as the head of a city, its inhabitants.
- 3 A wanton king destroys his people,²
but a city grows through the wisdom of its princes.
- 4 Sovereignty over the earth is in the hand of the Lord,
who raises up on it the man of the hour.
- 5 Sovereignty over every man is in the hand of the Lord,
who imparts his majesty to the ruler.^{3 4}
- 6 No matter the wrong, do no violence to your neighbor,
and do not walk the path of arrogance.
- 7 Odious to Yahweh and to men is arrogance,
and the sin of oppression they both hate.
- 8 Dominion is transferred from one people to another
because of violence and arrogance and wealth.⁵
Nothing is more wicked than one who loves money,
for such a person puts his own soul up for sale.⁶
- 9 Why are dust and ashes proud?
even during life man's body decays;
- 10 a slight illness—the doctor jests,
a king today—tomorrow he is dead.
- 11 When a man dies, he inherits corruption;
worms and gnats⁷ and maggots.
- 12 The beginning of pride is man's stubbornness
in withdrawing his heart from his Maker;
- 13 for pride is the reservoir of sin,
a source which runs over with vice;
because of it God sends unheard-of afflictions
and brings men to utter ruin.
- 14 The thrones of the arrogant God overturns
and establishes the lowly in their stead.
- 15 The roots of the proud⁸ nations God plucks up,⁹
to plant the humble in their place:
- 16 He breaks down their stem to the level of the ground,
then digs their roots from the earth.
- 17 God sweeps away the traces of the proud
and effaces the memory of them from the earth.
- 18 Insolence is not allotted to a man,
nor stubborn anger to one born of woman.

¹ [Sir10:1] LXX "magistrate instructs"

² [Sir10:3] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) "destroys the city"

³ [Sir10:5] Heb / LXX "scribe"

⁴ [Sir10:2~5] Heb(A) places these verses in a different order: "A wanton..." / "As the people's..." / "Sovereignty over every man..." / "Sovereignty over the earth..."

⁵ [Sir10:8] LXX adds

⁶ [Sir10:8] some LXX adds here (or after verse 9a)

⁷ [Sir10:11] Heb / LXX "wild animals"

⁸ [Sir10:15] others omit "proud"

⁹ [Sir10:15] LXX, Syr / Heb(A) omits "The roots... plucks up"

- 19 Whose offspring can be in honor?
 Those of men.
 Which offspring are in honor?
 Those who fear the Lord.¹
 Whose offspring can be in disgrace?
 Those of men.
 Which offspring are in disgrace?
 Those who transgress the commandments.²
- 20 Among brothers their leader is in honor;
 he who fears the Lord is in honor among his people.
- 21 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance;
effrontery and pride are the beginning of rejection.³
- 22 Be it tenant or wayfarer, alien or pauper,
 his glory is the fear of Yahweh.
- 23 It is not right to despise a man who is wise but poor,
 nor proper to honor any sinner.
- 24 The prince, the ruler, the judge are in honor;
 but none is greater than he who fears the Lord.
- 25 When free men serve a prudent slave,
 the wise man does not complain.
- 26 Do not flaunt your wisdom in managing your affairs,⁴
 and do not boast in your time of need.
- 27 Better the worker who has plenty of everything
 than the boaster who is without bread.
- 28 My son, with humility have self-esteem;
 prize yourself as you deserve.
- 29 Who will acquit him who condemns⁵ himself?
 who will honor him who discredits himself?⁶
- 30 The poor man is honored for his wisdom
 as the rich man is honored for his wealth;
- 31 honored in poverty, how much more so in wealth!
 dishonored in wealth, in poverty how much the more!

CHAPTER 11

- 1 The poor man's wisdom lifts his head high
 and sets him among princes.
- 2 Do not praise a man for his looks;
 do not despise an ugly⁷ man for his appearance.
- 3 Least is the bee among winged things,
 but she reaps the choicest of all harvests.
- 4 Do not mock the worn cloak
 and do not jibe at any man's bitter day:
 for strange are the works of Yahweh,
 his deeds hidden from men.
- 5 The oppressed often rise to a throne,

¹ [Sir10:19] Heb(A) omits "Whose offspring are in honor...Lord"

² [Sir10:19] LXX Syr, Lat / Heb "commandment"

³ [Sir10:21] Heb(A), LXX(I), Syr, Lat / LXX(II) adds

⁴ [Sir10:26] Heb(A), LXX / Heb(B) "make"

⁵ [Sir10:29] Heb / LXX "who sins against"

⁶ [Sir10:29] Heb, Lat / LXX "discredits his own life"

⁷ [Sir11:2] Heb(A,B) adds

- and some that none would consider wear a crown.
- 6 The exalted often fall into utter disgrace;
the honored are given into enemy hands.
- 7 Before investigating, find no fault;
examine first, then criticize.
- 8 Before hearing, answer not,
and interrupt no one in the middle of his speech.
- 9 Do not dispute about what is not your concern;
take no part in the strife of the arrogant.
- 10 My son, why increase your cares,
since he who is avid for wealth will not be blameless?
Even if you chase after it, you will never overtake it;
however you seek it, you will not find it.
- 11 One may toil and struggle and drive,
and fall short all the more.
- 12 Another goes his way a weakling and a failure,
with little strength and great misery—
yet the eyes of Yahweh look favorably upon him;
he raises him free of the vile dust,
- 13 lifts up his head and exalts him
to the amazement of the many.
- 14 Good and evil, life and death,
poverty and riches, are from Yahweh.
- 15 Wisdom and understanding and knowledge of affairs are from Yahweh,
love and virtuous paths are from Yahweh.
- 16 Error and darkness were made for sinners at their birth,
and evil abides with evildoers.¹
- 17 Yahweh's gift remains with the pious;
his favor brings continued success.
- 18 A man may become rich through a miser's life,
and this is his allotted reward:
- 19 when he says: "I have found rest,
now I will feast on my possessions,"
he does not know how long it will be
till he dies and leaves them to others.
- 20 My son,² hold fast to your duty,³ busy yourself with it,
grow old while doing your task.
- 21 Do not admire how sinners live,
but trust in Yahweh and wait for his light;⁴
for it is easy in the eyes of Yahweh,
suddenly, in an instant, to make a poor man rich.

¹ [Sir11:15-16] LXX(I), Heb(B), most Lat / Heb(A), LXX(II), Syr, late Lat adds verse here [[reading according to LXX(II) / Heb(A) reads "Wisdom and understanding and knowing how to speak are from Yahweh, sin and virtuous paths are from Yahweh, folly and darkness were made for sinners [LXX(II) adds "at their birth], and evil abides [LXX(II) "grows old"] with evildoers"]]

² [Sir11:20] Heb(A), Syr / LXX, Lat omits "My son"

³ [Sir11:20] Heb(A) / LXX, Lat "covenant"

⁴ [Sir11:21] Heb(A), some Lat / LXX, most Lat "for your labor"

- 22 The blessing of the Lord is in¹ the lot of the pious man,
and in due time his hopes bear fruit.
- 23 Do not say: “What do I need?
What further pleasure can be mine?”
- 24 Do not say: “I am self-sufficient.
What harm can come to me now?”
- 25 The day of prosperity makes one forget adversity;
the day of adversity makes one forget prosperity.
- 26 For it is easy with Yahweh on the day of death
to repay man according to his deeds.²
- 27 A moment’s affliction brings forgetfulness of past delights;
when a man dies, his life is revealed.
- 28 Call no man happy before his death,
for by how he ends,³ a man is known.
- 29 Do not bring every man into your house,
for many are the snares⁴ of the crafty one;
- 30 though he seem like a bird confined in a cage,
yet like a spy he will observe your weakness,⁵
like a wolf in ambush for prey.
The peddler waits in ambush like a bear,
for the house of scoundrels.⁶
- 31 The talebearer turns good into evil;
with a spark he sets many coals afire.
- 32 The worthless man lies in wait for blood,
and plots against your choicest possessions.
- 33 Avoid a wicked man, for he breeds only evil,
lest you incur a lasting stain.
- 34 Lodge a stranger with you, and he will subvert your course,⁷
and estrange you from your own household.

CHAPTER 12

- 1 If you do good, know for whom you are doing it,
and your kindness will have its effect.
- 2 Do good to the righteous man and reward will be yours,
if not from him, from Yahweh.⁸
- 3 No good comes to him who gives comfort to the wicked,
nor is it an act of mercy that he does.
- 4 Give to the good man,
refuse the sinner.
- 5 Refresh the downtrodden,
give nothing to the proud.
Do not give him arms for combat,
lest he use them against yourself;
for you will receive twice as much evil in time of need¹

¹ [Sir11:22] Heb / LXX adds

² [Sir11:26] Heb(A) omits “For it is wasy . . . deeds.” / Syr omits “The blessing of the Lord . . . his deeds.”

³ [Sir11:28] Heb / LXX “death, and through his children”

⁴ [Sir11:29] LXX / Heb(A) “wounds”

⁵ [Sir11:30] Heb / LXX “downfall”

⁶ [Sir11:30] Heb(A) adds

⁷ [Sir11:34] Heb(A) / LXX “will upset you with commotion”

⁸ [Sir12:2] most LXX “from the Most High” / LXX(O), Lat “from the Lord” / Syr “from his Lord”

for every good deed you do for him.

- 6 The Most High² himself hates sinners,
and he inflicts punishment upon the wicked.
and he keeps them for the day of vengeance.³

Give to the pious man,
but refuse the sinner.⁴

- 8 A friend is not known in prosperity;⁵
in adversity an enemy will not remain concealed.
- 9 When a man is successful even his enemy is friendly;⁶
in adversity even his friend disappears.
- 10 Never trust your enemy,
for his wickedness is like corrosion in bronze.
- 11 Even though he acts humbly and peaceably toward you,
take care to be on your guard against him.
Rub him as one polishes a brazen mirror,
and you will find that there is still corrosion.⁷
- 12 Do not let him stand near you,
lest he oust you and take your place.
Do not let him sit at your right hand,
lest he then demand your seat,
and in the end you appreciate my advice,
when you groan with regret, as I warned you.
- 13 Who pities a snake charmer when he is bitten,
or anyone who goes near a wild beast?
- 14 So is it with the companion of the proud man,
who is involved in his sins:
- 15 While you stand firm, he makes no bold move;
but if you slip, he cannot hold back.
- 16 An enemy speaks sweetly with his lips,
but in his heart he schemes to plunge you into the abyss.
Though your enemy has tears in his eyes,
if given the chance, he will never have enough of your blood.
- 17 If evil comes upon you, you will find him at hand;
feigning to help, he will trip you up,
- 18 then he will nod his head and clap his hands
and hiss repeatedly, and show his true face.

CHAPTER 13

- 1 He who touches pitch blackens his hand;
he who associates with an impious man learns his ways.
- 2 Bear no burden too heavy for you;
go with no one greater or wealthier than yourself.
How can the earthen pot go with the metal cauldron?
When they knock together, the pot will be smashed.

¹ [Sir12:5] LXX / Heb(A), Syr add

² [Sir12:6] LXX / Heb(A) “. God”

³ [Sir12:6] LXX(II) adds

⁴ [Sir12:7] LXX adds

⁵ [Sir12:8] others (LXX) “punished”

⁶ [Sir12:9] Heb / LXX “grieved”

⁷ [Sir12:11] LXX / Heb(A) “Treat him as one who would breach a confidence, // so that he may not be able to harm you, // and be sure that in the end envy will still be there.”

Or why should the rich man associate with the poor man?¹

- 3 The rich man does wrong and boasts of it,
the poor man is wronged and begs forgiveness.
- 4 As long as the rich man can use you, he will enslave you,
but when you are exhausted, he will abandon you.
- 5 As long as you own anything he will be part of your household,
then without regret he will impoverish you.
- 6 When he needs something from you he will cajole you,
and with smiles he will win your confidence;
he will speak fair words to you and ask what you need,
and embarrass you with gifts of delicacies.
- 7 Then twice or three times he will terrify you,
and finally laugh you to scorn.
When later he sees you he will pass you by,
and shake his head over you.
- 8 Guard against being presumptuous;
do not be humiliated when you are enjoying yourself.²
- 9 When invited by a man of influence, keep your distance;
then he will urge you all the more.
- 10 Do not be bold with him lest you be rebuffed,
but do not keep too far away lest you be forgotten.
- 11 Do not engage freely in discussion with him,
do not trust his many words;
for by prolonged talk he will test you,
and though smiling he will probe you.
- 12 Mercilessly he will make a laughingstock of you,³
and will not refrain from injury or chains.
- 13 Be on your guard and take care
never to accompany men of violence.
- 14 If you hear these things in your sleep, wake up!
With your whole life, love the Lord,
and call on him for your salvation.⁴
- 15 Every living thing loves its own kind,
every man a man like himself.
- 16 Every being is drawn to its own kind;
every man associates with his own kind.
- 17 Is a wolf ever allied with a lamb?
So it is with the sinner and the pious.
And so for the rich man keeping close to the poor man.⁵
- 18 Can there be peace between the hyena and the dog?
Or can there be peace between the rich and the poor?
- 19 Lion's prey are the wild asses of the desert;
so too the poor are feeding grounds for the rich.
- 20 A proud man⁶ abhors lowliness;
so does the rich man abhor the poor.

¹ [Sir13:2] LXX / Heb(A), Syr add

² [Sir13:8] others "humiliated in your folly"

³ [Sir13:12] Heb(A) / LXX(I) "Cruel is he who does not keep words to himself" / LXX(II), Origen, Lat(similar) "Mercilessly he will store up your words as a threat against your life"

⁴ [Sir13:13] some LXX adds

⁵ [Sir13:17] Heb(A) adds

⁶ [Sir13:20] LXX / Heb(A) "Pride" / Syr omits "A proud man...abhor the poor."

- 21 When a rich man stumbles he is supported by a friend;
when a poor man trips he is pushed down by a friend.¹
- 22 Many are the supporters for a rich man when he speaks;
though what he says is odious, it wins approval.
When a poor² man speaks they make sport of him;
he speaks wisely and no attention is paid him.
- 23 A rich man speaks and all are silent,
his wisdom they extol to the clouds.
A poor man speaks and they say: "Who is that?"
If he slips they cast him down.
- 24 Wealth is good when there is no sin;
but poverty is evil by the standards of the proud.
- 25 The heart of a man changes his countenance,
either for good or for evil.
and a glad heart makes a cheerful countenance.³
- 26 The sign of a good heart is a cheerful countenance;
the toiling schemer is withdrawn and perplexed.⁴
- 14.1 Happy the man whose mouth brings him no grief,
who is not stung by remorse for sin.
- 2 Happy the man whose conscience does not reproach him,
who has not lost hope.

CHAPTER 14

- 3 Wealth ill becomes the mean man;
and of what use is gold to the miser?
- 4 What he denies himself, he collects for someone else,
and in his possessions a stranger will revel.
- 5 To whom will he be generous who is stingy with himself
and does not enjoy what is his own?
- 6 No man is more stingy than he who is stingy with himself;
he punishes his own miserliness.
- 7 If ever he is generous, it is by mistake;⁵
and in the end he displays his greed.
- 8 The miser is an evil man;
he refuses his neighbor and brings ruin on himself.⁶
- 9 In the miser's opinion his share is insufficient;
but his stinginess withers his appetite.
- 10 The miser's eye is rapacious for bread,
but on his own table he sets it stale.
- 11 My son, if you have anything, do good to yourself,⁷
and enjoy it as best you can.
- 12 Remember that death does not tarry,
nor has the decree⁸ of the Netherworld been shown to you.
- 13 Before you die, be good to your friend,

¹ [Sir13:21] LXX / Heb(A) "pushed off from friend to friend"

² [Sir13:21] LXX "humble"

³ [Sir13:26] Heb, LXX / others add

⁴ [Sir13:26] Heb(A) / LXX "and the finding of parables is a wearisome toil of the mind" / Syr "and a multitude of discourses are the thoughts of sinners"

⁵ [Sir14:7] Syr / LXX "it is through forgetfulness"

⁶ [Sir14:7-8] LXX / Heb(A) omits "If ever he is generous...ruin on himself." / Syr omits "In the miser's opinion...ruin on himself."

⁷ [Sir14:11] LXX / Heb(A) "if you have anything, do good to yourself" / Syr "if you have anything, do good to yourself"

⁸ [Sir14:12] Heb, Syr / LXX "covenant"

- and give him a share in what you possess.
- 14 Do not deprive yourself of present good things,
let no choice portion escape you.
- 15 Will you not leave your riches to others,
and your earnings to be divided by lot?
- 16 Give, take, and treat yourself well,
for there are no joys to seek in the Netherworld.
- 17 All flesh grows old, like a garment;
the age-old decree¹ is: All must die.
- 18 As with the leaves that grow on a vigorous tree:
one falls off and another sprouts—
So with the generations of flesh and blood:
one dies and another is born.
- 19 All man's works will perish in decay,
and his handiwork will follow after him.
- 20 Happy the man who meditates on² wisdom,
and reflects on knowledge;
- 21 who ponders her ways in his heart,
and understands her paths;
- 22 who pursues her like a scout,
and lies in wait at all³ her entryways;
- 23 who peeps through her windows,
and listens at her doors;
- 24 who encamps near her house,
and fastens his tent pegs next to her walls;
- 25 who pitches his tent beside her,
and lives as her welcome neighbor;
- 26 who builds his nest in her leafage,
and lodges in her branches;
- 27 who takes shelter with her from the heat,
and dwells in her home.

CHAPTER 15

- 1 He who fears Yahweh will do this;
he who is practiced in the law will come to wisdom.
- 2 She will meet him like a mother,
like a young bride she will embrace him,
- 3 nourish him with the bread of understanding,
and give him the water of learning to drink.
- 4 He will lean upon her and not fall,
he will trust in her and not be put to shame.
- 5 She will exalt him above his fellows;
and she will open his mouth in the midst of the assembly.
- 6 He will find gladness and joy,
and she will endow him with an everlasting name.
- 7 Worthless men will not attain to her,
haughty men will not behold her.
- 8 She is far from the impious,

¹ [Sir14:17] Heb / LXX "covenant"

² [Sir14:20] others "who dies in"

³ [Sir14:22] LXX, Lat, Syr / Heb(A) adds

not to be spoken of by liars.

- 9 Unseemly is praise on a sinner's lips,
for it is not accorded to him by God.
- 10 But praise is offered by the wise man's tongue;
its rightful steward will proclaim it.
- 11 Do not say: "It was God's doing that I fell away";
for he does not do¹ what he hates.
- 12 Do not say: "It was he who made me stumble";
for he has no need of wicked man.
- 13 Yahweh hates abominable wickedness,²
he does not let it befall those who fear him.
- 14 When God, in the beginning,³ created man,
he made him subject to his own free choice.
and he puts him into the hand of his kidnapers.⁴
- 15 If you choose you can keep his commandment;⁵
it is loyalty⁶ to do his⁷ will.
and if you believe in him you too will live.⁸
- 16 Fire and water are set before you;
to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand.
- 17 Life and death are before man,
whichever he chooses shall be given him.
- 18 Immense is the wisdom of Yahweh;
he is mighty in power, and all-seeing.
- 19 The eyes of God see all he has made;
he understands man's every deed.
- 20 He commands no man to sin;
to no one does he give strength for lies.

CHAPTER 16

- 1 Do not desire a brood of worthless⁹ children,
nor rejoice in wicked offspring.
- 2 Although they be many, do not exult them
if they do not have the fear of Yahweh.
- 3 Do not count on their length of life,
do not have hope in their future.
For you will groan in untimely mourning,
and will know of their sudden end.¹⁰
For one can be better than a thousand;¹¹
rather die childless than have godless children!
- 4 Through one wise man¹² a city can be filled with people;
through a clan of rebels it becomes desolate.

¹ [Sir15:11] Heb(A) / LXX "for you ought not do"

² [Sir15:13] Heb(A) / LXX "hates all abominations"

³ [Sir15:14] Heb(A,B[mg]), LXX / Heb(B) ". It was he, from the first"

⁴ [Sir15:14] LXX / Heb(A,B) add

⁵ [Sir15:15] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr "keep the commandments"

⁶ [Sir15:15] Heb(B) / Heb(A,B[mg]) "understanding"

⁷ [Sir15:15] Heb(A,B[mg]) / Heb(B) "God's"

⁸ [Sir15:15] LXX / Heb(A,B) add / Syr adds and also omits "it is loyalty to do his will"

⁹ [Sir16:1] Heb / LXX "unprofitable"

¹⁰ [Sir16:3] some LXX adds

¹¹ [Sir16:3] Heb(A,B) "For one who does the will [B adds "of God"] is better than a thousand."

¹² [Sir16:4] Heb(B), LXX / Heb(A) "Through one childless person who fears Yahweh"

- 5 Many such things has my eye seen,
even more than these has my ear heard.
- 6 Against a sinful band fire is enkindled,
upon a godless people wrath flames out.
- 7 He did not forgive the leaders of old¹
who rebelled long ago in their might;
- 8 he did not spare the neighbors of Lot
whom he detested for their pride;
- 9 nor did he spare the doomed people
who were uprooted because of their sin;
All these things he did to the hard-hearted nations,
and he was not appeased by the multitude of his holy ones.²
- 10 nor the 600,000 foot soldiers
who perished for the impiety of their hearts.
Chastising, sparing, striking, healing,
the Lord persisted in mercy and discipline.³
- 11 And if there had been but one stiff-necked man,
it were a wonder had he gone unpunished.
For mercy and anger alike are with him who remits and forgives,
though his wrath alights upon the wicked.
- 12 Great as his mercy is his punishment;
he judges men, each according to his deeds.
- 13 A criminal does not escape with his plunder;
God does not leave a pious man's hope unfulfilled.
- 14 Whoever does good has his reward,
which each receives according to his deeds.
- 15 The Lord hardened Pharaoh so that he did not recognize him,
in order that his works might be known under heaven.
- 16 His mercy is manifest to the whole of creation,
and he divided his light and darkness with a plumb line.⁴
- 17 Do not say: "I am hidden from God;
in heaven who remembers me?
Among so many people I cannot be known;
what am I in the world of spirits of all men?"⁵
- 18 Behold, the heavens, the heaven of heavens,
the earth and the abyss tremble at his visitation;
the whole world past and present is in his will.⁶
- 19 the roots of the mountains, the earth's foundations,
at his mere glance, quiver and quake.
- 20 Therefore, of me, he will take no thought;
who will concern himself with my ways?
- 21 If I sin, no eye will see me;
if all in secret I am disloyal, who is to know?⁷
- 22 Who tells him about righteous deeds
and who will await them? For the decree⁸ is far off.

¹ [Sir16:7] Heb(A,B) / LXX "the ancient giants"

² [Sir16:9] some LXX adds

³ [Sir16:10] LXX(II) adds

⁴ [Sir16:15-16] LXX(I), Lat / Heb(A), LXX(II), Syr add

⁵ [Sir16:17] LXX, Saadia / Heb(A), Syr add

⁶ [Sir16:18] LXX(II) adds

⁷ [Sir16:21] Heb, Syr / LXX (uncertain) "Like a tempest that no one can see, so most of his works are concealed."

⁸ [Sir16:22] Heb / LXX "covenant"

and a scrutiny for all comes at the end.”¹

- 23 Such are the thoughts of senseless men,
which only the foolish knave will think.
- 24 Listen to me, my son,² take my advice,
apply your mind to my words,
- 25 while I propose measured wisdom,
and impart accurate knowledge.³
- 26 When at the first the Lord⁴ created⁵ his works and,
as he made them, assigned their tasks,⁶
- 27 he ordered for all time what they were to do
and their domains from generation to generation.
They were not to hunger, nor grow weary,
nor ever cease from their tasks.
- 28 Not one should ever crowd its neighbor,
nor should they ever disobey his word.
- 29 Then Yahweh looked upon the earth,
and filled it with his blessings.
- 30 Its surface he covered with all manner of life
which must return into it again.

CHAPTER 17

- 1 From the earth Yahweh created man,
and made him in his own image.
- 2 He gives him limited days of life
and makes him return to earth⁷ again.
- 3 He endows man with a strength of his own,⁸
and with power over all things else on earth.
- 4 He puts the fear of him in all flesh,⁹
and gives him rule over beasts and birds.
- 5 They received the use of the five faculties of the Lord;
as sixth he distributed to them the gift of mind,
and as seventh, reason, the interpreter of one's faculties.¹⁰
- 6 He forms men's tongues and eyes and ears,
and imparts to them an understanding heart.
- 7 With wisdom and knowledge he fills them;
good and evil he shows them.
- 8 He sets his eye upon¹¹ their hearts,
and shows them his glorious works,
and he gave them to boast of his marvels throughout the ages.¹²
- 9 that they may describe the wonders of his deeds
- 10 and praise his holy name.
- 11 He has set before them knowledge,

¹ [Sir16:22] LXX(II) adds

² [Sir16:24] Heb(A), Syr omit "my son"

³ [Sir16:25] LXX / Heb(A) "words, I will pour out by measure the spirit that I have, and impart knowledge in a careful way"

⁴ [Sir16:26] LXX / Heb(A), Syr "first God"

⁵ [Sir16:26] Heb(A) / LXX "judged"

⁶ [Sir16:26] Syr / LXX "allotments"

⁷ [Sir17:2] Lat / LXX "it"

⁸ [Sir17:3] Lat / LXX "strength proper to them"

⁹ [Sir17:4] most LXX, Syr [Syr "them" instead of "him"] / some LXX "He puts his eye on their hearts"

¹⁰ [Sir17:4] LXX(II) adds

¹¹ [Sir17:8] LXX "He put the fear of him into" // Syr omits "With wisdom and knowledge...upon their hearts."

¹² [Sir17:8] LXX(II) adds

- a law of life as their inheritance;
so that they may know that they who are alive are now mortal.¹
- 12 He has made an everlasting covenant with them,
 he has revealed his commandments to them.
- 13 Their eyes beheld his majestic glory,
 their ears heard his glorious voice.
- 14 He says to them, "Avoid all evil";
 each of them he gives precepts about his fellow men.
- 15 Their ways are ever known to him,
 they cannot be hidden from his eyes.
- 16 Their ways are directed toward evil from their youth,
and they are unable to make their hearts fleshly
in place of their stony hearts.
For in the division of the nations of the whole earth,²
- 17 Over every nation he places a ruler,
 but Israel is Yahweh's own portion.
- 18 Whom, being his firstborn, he cares for with chastisement,
and allotting him the light of his love, he does not neglect him.³
- 19 All their actions are clear as the sun to him,
 his eyes are ever upon their ways.
- 20 Their wickedness cannot be hidden from him;
 all of their sins are before Yahweh.
- 21 But the Lord, who is good and knowing how they are formed,
has neither neglected them nor abandoned them, but has spared them.⁴
- 22 The Lord cherishes a man's almsgiving like a signet ring,
 a man's virtue, like the apple of his eye,
apportioning a change-of-mind to his sons and daughters.⁵
- 23 Later he will rise up and repay them,
 and requite each one of them as they deserve.
- 24 But to the one who changes *his* mind, he provides a way back,
 he encourages those who are losing hope!
- 25 Return to Yahweh and give up sin,
 pray to him and make your offenses few.
- 26 Turn again to the Most High and away from sin,
 hate intensely what he loathes;
for he will lead out of darkness into the light of life.⁶
- 27 Who in the Netherworld can glorify the Most High
 in place of the living who offer their praise?
- 28 No more can the dead give praise than those who have never lived;⁷
 those who are alive and well are the ones who glorify Yahweh.
- 29 How great the mercy of Yahweh,
 his forgiveness of those who return to him!
- 30 The like cannot be found in men,
 for none of the sons of men are immortal.
- 31 Is anything brighter than the sun? Yet it can be eclipsed.
 How obscure then the thoughts of flesh and blood!

¹ [Sir17:11] LXX(II) adds

² [Sir17:15] LXX(II) adds

³ [Sir17:18] LXX(II) adds

⁴ [Sir17:21] LXX(II) adds

⁵ [Sir17:22] LXX(II) adds

⁶ [Sir17:26] LXX(II) adds

⁷ [Sir18:28] Syr omits "No more can the dead...never lived"

32 God watches over the hosts of highest heaven,
while all men are dust and ashes.

CHAPTER 18

- 1 The Eternal is the judge of all things without exception;
2 Yahweh alone is righteous,
and there is no other beside him.
3 He steers the world with the span of his hand,
and all things obey his will;
for he is king of all things by his power,
separating among them the holy things from the profane.¹
4 Whom has he made² equal to describing his works,
and who can probe his mighty deeds?
5 Who can measure his majestic power,
or exhaust the tale of his mercies?
6 One cannot lessen, nor increase,
nor penetrate the wonders of Yahweh.
7 When a man ends he is only beginning,
and when he stops he is still bewildered.
8 What is man, of what worth is he?
the good, the evil in him, what are these?
9 The sum of a man's days is great
if it reaches a hundred years:
but the death of each one is beyond the calculation of all.³
10 Like a drop of sea water, like a grain of sand,
so are these few years among the days of eternity.
11 That is why Yahweh is patient with men
and showers upon them his mercy.
12 He sees and understands that their death is grievous,
and so he forgives them all the more.
13 Man may be merciful to his fellow man,
but Yahweh's mercy reaches all flesh,
reproving, admonishing, teaching,
as a shepherd guides his flock;
14 merciful to those who accept his guidance,
who are diligent in his precepts.

15 My son, add no reproach to your charity,
nor spoil any gift by harsh words.
16 Like dew that abates a burning wind,
so does a word improve a gift.
17 Sometimes the word means more than the gift;
both are offered by a kindly man.
18 Only a fool upbraids before giving;
a grudging gift wears out the expectant eyes.

19 Be informed before speaking;
before sickness prepare the cure.
20 Before you are judged, seek merit for yourself,

¹ [Sir18:2-3] LXX(II) adds

² [Sir18:4] LXX(II), Lat, Syr / LXX(I) "He has made no one"

³ [Sir18:9] LXX(II) adds

- and at the time of visitation you will have a ransom.
- 21 Before you have fallen,¹ humble yourself;
when you have sinned, show a change-of-mind.
Do not delay to forsake sins,
do not neglect it till you are in distress.
Do not set a time for abandoning sin;
remember that death will not delay.²
- 22 Let nothing prevent the prompt payment of your vows;
do not wait to fulfill them when you are dying.³
- 23 Before making a vow have the means to fulfill it;
do not be one who puts Yahweh to the test.
- 24 Think of wrath and the day of death,
the time of vengeance when he will hide his face.
- 25 Remember the time of hunger in the time of plenty,
poverty and want in the day of wealth.
- 26 Between morning and evening the weather changes;
before Yahweh all things are fleeting.
- 27 A wise man is circumspect in all things;
when sin is rife he keeps himself from wrongdoing.
- 28 Any learned man should make wisdom known,
and he who attains to her should declare her praise;
- 29 those trained in her words must show their wisdom,
dispensing sound proverbs like life-giving waters.
Better is confidence in the one Lord,
than clinging with a dead heart to a dead idol.⁴
- 30 Do not go after your lusts,
but keep your desires in check.
- 31 If you satisfy your lustful appetites
they will make you the sport of your enemies.
- 32 Have no joy in the pleasures of a moment
which bring on poverty redoubled.
- 33 Do not become a glutton and a winebibber⁵
with nothing in your purse,
for you will be plotting against your own life.⁶
- 19.1 He who does so⁷ grows no richer;
he who wastes the little he has will be stripped bare.
- 2 Wine and women make the mind giddy,
and the companion of prostitutes becomes reckless.⁸
- 3 He who lightly trusts in them⁹ has no sense,
and he who strays¹⁰ after them sins against his own life.¹¹
- 4 Rottenness and worms will possess him,
for contumacious desire destroys its owner.¹

¹ [Sir18:21] Syr / LXX "before you get sick"

² [Sir18:21] Syr / all others omits "Do not delay to forsake...will not delay."

³ [Sir18:22] Syr omits "Let nothing prevent...you are dying."

⁴ [Sir18:29] LXX(II) adds

⁵ [Sir18:33] (?) others "become a beggar by feasting with borrowed money"

⁶ [Sir18:33] LXX(II) adds

⁷ [Sir19:1] Heb / LXX "A worker who is a drunkard"

⁸ [Sir19:2] Heb(C) omits "and the companion of prostitutes becomes reckless"

⁹ [Sir19:4] LXX, Syr omits "in them"

¹⁰ [Sir19:4] two LXX(II) "and the incontinent man"

¹¹ [Sir19:4] Syr "sense. // The one who condemns himself, who will acquit?"

CHAPTER 19

- 5 He who gloats in wickedness² will be condemned,
but one who resists pleasures crowns his life.
He who controls his tongue will live without strife,³
- 6 and he who repeats⁴ an evil report has no sense.
- 7 Never repeat gossip,
and you will not be reviled.
- 8 Do not tell anything accusing to friend or foe;
unless withholding it would be sinful,⁵ do not reveal it.
- 9 For he who hears it will hold it against you,
and in time become your enemy.
- 10 Let anything you hear die within you;
be assured it will not make you burst.
- 11 When a fool hears something, he is in labor,
like a woman giving birth to a child.
- 12 Like an arrow lodged in a man's thigh
is gossip in the breast of a fool.
- 13 Admonish your friend—he may not have done it;
and if he did, that he may not do it again.
- 14 Admonish your neighbor—he may not have said it;
and if he did, that he may not say it again.
- 15 Admonish your friend—often it may be slander;
every story you must not believe.
- 16 Then, too, a man can slip and not mean it;
who has not sinned with his tongue?
- 17 Admonish your neighbor before you break with him;
and let the law of the Most High take its course and do not be angry.⁶
- 18 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance,
and wisdom from him obtains love.
- 19 Knowledge of the Lord's commandments is life-giving instruction;
those who do what is pleasing to him will harvest the fruit of the tree of immortality.⁷
- 20 All wisdom is fear of Yahweh;
perfect wisdom is the fulfillment of the law,
and the awareness of his omnipotence.
- 21 The slave who says to his master, "What pleases you I will not do,"
even if afterward he does it, provokes the one who supports him.⁸
- 22 The knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom,
nor is there prudence in the counsel of sinners.
- 23 There is a shrewdness that is detestable,
while the simple man may be free from sin.⁹
- 24 There are those with little understanding who fear God,
and those of great intelligence who violate the law.

¹ [Sir19:3] Heb(C) omits "rotteness and worms will possess him" / Syr omits "Rotteness and worms...its owner"

² [Sir19:5] LXX "heart"

³ [Sir19:5-6] LXX(II), ClemAlex add

⁴ [Sir19:6] Syr / LXX(I) "hates"

⁵ [Sir19:8] LXX / Syr, Lat "; if you have a fault"

⁶ [Sir19:17] some add

⁷ [Sir19:18-19] LXX(II) adds

⁸ [Sir19:20] LXX(II) adds

⁹ [Sir19:23] Syr / LXX "be lacking in wisdom"

- 25 There is a shrewdness keen but dishonest,
and there is one who by duplicity wins a judgment.
and there is the wise who judges justly.¹
- 26 There is the wicked man who is bowed in grief,
but is full of guile within;
- 27 he bows his head and feigns to not hear,
but when not observed, he will take advantage of you:
- 28 Even though his lack of strength keeps him from sinning,
when he finds the opportunity, he will do harm.
- 29 One can tell a man by his appearance;
a wise man is known as such when first met.
- 30 A man's attire, his hearty laughter and his gait,
proclaim him for what he is.

CHAPTER 20

- 1 An admonition can be inopportune,
and a man may be wise to hold his peace.
- 2 It is much better to admonish than to lose one's temper,
- 3 for one who admits his fault will be kept from disgrace.
- 4 Like a eunuch longing for intimacy with a virgin
is he who does right under compulsion.
- 5 One man is silent and is thought wise,
another is talkative and is disliked.
- 6 One man is silent because he has nothing to say;
another is silent, biding his time.
- 7 A wise man is silent until the right time comes,
but a boasting fool ignores the proper time.
- 8 He who talks too much is detested;
he who usurps authority is hated.
- How good it is to have a change-of-mind when rebuked,
for this is how you will flee deliberate sin!²
- 9 Some misfortunes bring success;
some things gained are a man's loss.
- 10 Some gifts do one no good,
and some must be paid back double.
- 11 Humiliation can follow fame,
while from obscurity a man can lift up his head.
- 12 A man may buy much for little,
but pay for it seven times over.
- 13 A wise man makes himself popular by a few³ words,
but fools pour out their blandishments in vain.
- 14 A gift from a rogue will do you no good,
and likewise with the envious who give under compulsion,⁴
for in his eyes his one gift is equal to seven.⁵
- 15 He gives little and criticizes often,
and like a crier he shouts aloud.
He lends today, he asks it back tomorrow;

¹ [Sir19:25] LXX(II) adds

² [Sir20:8] LXX(II) adds

³ [Sir20:13] Heb(C) / LXX omits "a few"

⁴ [Sir20:14] LXX(II) adds

⁵ [Sir20:14] Syr, Lat / LXX "for he has many eyes instead of one"

- hateful indeed is such a man to God and men.¹
- 16 A fool has no friends,
nor thanks for his generosity;
those who eat his bread have an evil tongue.
- 17 How many times they laugh him to scorn!
for he has not honestly received what he has,
and what he does not have is unimportant to him.²
- 18 A fall to the ground is less sudden than a slip of the tongue;
that is why the downfall of the wicked comes so quickly.
- 19 Insipid food is the untimely tale;
the unruly are always ready to offer it.³
- 20 A proverb when spoken by a fool is unwelcome,
for he does not utter it at the proper time.
- 21 A man through want may be unable to sin,
yet in this tranquility he cannot rest.
- 22 One may lose his life through shame,
or perish because of man's respect.⁴
- 23 A man makes a promise to a friend out of shame,
and needlessly has him for his enemy.
- 24 A lie is a foul blot in a man,
yet it is constantly on the lips of the unruly.
- 25 Better a thief than an inveterate liar,
yet both will suffer disgrace;
- 26 a liar's way leads to dishonor,
his shame remains ever with him.
- 27 A wise man advances himself by his words,
a prudent man pleases the great.
- 28 He who works his land has abundant crops,
he who pleases the great is pardoned his faults.
- 29 Favors and gifts blind the eyes of the wise;⁵
like a muzzle over the mouth they silence reproof.
- 30 Hidden wisdom and unseen treasure—
of what value is either?
- 31 Better the man who hides his folly
than the one who hides his wisdom.
- 32 Unwearied endurance in seeking the Lord,
is better than a masterless charioteer of one's own life.⁶

CHAPTER 21

- 1 My son, if you have sinned, do so no more,
and pray to be forgiven for your past sins.
- 2 Flee from sin as from a serpent
that will bite you if you go near it;

¹ [Sir20:15] LXX / others add

² [Sir20:17] LXX(II) adds

³ [Sir20:19] LXX / Syr omits "the unruly are always ready to offer it"

⁴ [Sir20:22] others "because of his foolish posturing"

⁵ [Sir20:29] Syr / LXX(I) adds "of the wise" / Lat, Bohairic add "of judges"

⁶ [Sir20:32] some LXX adds

- its teeth are lion's teeth,
destroying the souls of men.
- 3** Every offense is a two-edged sword;
when it cuts, there can be no healing.
- 4** Violence and arrogance wipe out wealth;
so too a proud man's home is destroyed.¹
- 5** Prayer from a poor man's lips is heard at once,
and justice is quickly granted him.
- 6** He who hates correction walks the sinner's path,
but he who fears Yahweh turns back in his heart.
- 7** Widely known is the boastful speaker
but the wise man knows his own faults.
- 8** He who builds his house with another's money
is collecting stones for his burial mound.²
- 9** A band of criminals is like a bundle of tow;
they will end in a flaming fire.
- 10** The path of sinners is smooth stones
that end in the depths of the Netherworld.
- 11** He who keeps the law controls his impulses;
he who is perfect in fear of Yahweh has wisdom.
- 12** He who is not shrewd can never be taught,
but one form of shrewdness is thoroughly bitter.
- 13** A wise man's knowledge wells up in a flood,
and his counsel, like a living spring;
- 14** A fool's mind³ is like a broken cistern⁴—
no knowledge at all can it hold.
- 15** When an intelligent man hears words of wisdom,
he approves them and adds to them;
when the wanton⁵ hears them, he dislikes⁶ them,
and casts them behind his back.
- 16** A fool's chatter is like a load on a journey,
but there is charm to be found upon the lips of the wise.
- 17** The views of a prudent man are sought in an assembly,
and his words are considered with care.
- 18** Like a house in ruins⁷ is wisdom to a fool;
the stupid man knows it only as incomprehensible chatter.⁸
- 19** Like fetters on the legs is learning to a fool,
like a manacle on his right hand.
- 20** A fool raises his voice in laughter,
but the prudent⁹ man at the most smiles gently.

¹ [Sir21:4] LXX "uprooted"

² [Sir21:8] LXX(II), Syr / LXX(I) "for the winter"

³ [Sir21:14] Syr, Lat / LXX "entrails"

⁴ [Sir21:14] Lat "jar"

⁵ [Sir21:15] LXX / Syr "fool"

⁶ [Sir21:15] LXX / Syr "laughs at"

⁷ [Sir21:18] LXX / Syr "like a prison"

⁸ [Sir21:18] LXX / Syr "only like fiery coals"

⁹ [Sir21:20] LXX / Syr, Lat "wise"

- 21 Like a chain¹ of gold is learning to a wise man,
like a bracelet on his right arm.
- 22 The fool steps boldly into a house,
while the well-bred man remains outside.
- 23 A boor peeps through the doorway of a house,
but a tactful man keeps his glance cast down.
- 24 It is rude for one to listen at a door;
a cultured man would be overwhelmed by the disgrace of it.
- 25 The lips of the impious speak of what is not their concern,²
but the words of the prudent are carefully weighed.
- 26 Fools' thoughts are in their mouths,
wise men's words are in³ their hearts.
- 27 When a godless man curses his adversary,
he really curses himself.
- 28 A slanderer besmirches himself,
and is hated by his neighbors.

CHAPTER 22

- 1 The sluggard is like a stone in the mud;
everyone hisses at his disgrace.⁴
- 2 The sluggard is like a lump of dung;
whoever touches him wipes his hands.
- 3 An unruly child is a disgrace to its father;
if it be a daughter, she brings him to poverty.
- 4 A thoughtful daughter becomes a treasure to her husband,
a shameless one is her father's grief.⁵
- 5 A hussy shames her father and her husband;
by both she is despised.
- 6 Like a song in time of mourning is inopportune talk,
but lashes and discipline are at all times wisdom.
- 7 Children who are brought up in a good life,
veil over the ignoble birth of their own parents.
- 8 Children who are disdainfully and boorishly haughty
besmirch the nobility of their own kindred.⁶
- 9 Teaching a fool is like gluing a broken pot,
or like disturbing a man in the depths of sleep;
- 10 he talks with a slumberer who talks with a fool,
for when it is over, he will say, "What was that?"
- 11 Weep over the dead man, for his light has gone out;
weep over the fool, for sense has left him.
Weep but a little over the dead man, for he is at rest;

¹ [Sir21:21] LXX / Syr "bracelet"

² [Sir21:25] LXX(II) / LXX(I) "lips of strangers speaks of these things" / Syr "lips of the wicked man speak according to his whim"

³ [Sir21:26] LXX omits "in"

⁴ [Sir21:1] LXX / Syr "everyone flees from its stench"

⁵ [Sir22:4] LXX / Syr omits "A thoughtful daughter...grief."

⁶ [Sir22:7-8] LXX(II) adds

- but worse than death is the life of a fool.
- 12** Seven days of mourning for the dead,
but for the wicked fool a whole lifetime.
- 13** Speak but seldom with the stupid man,
do not be the companion of a brute,
for he will treat you with total and callous disregard;¹
beware of him lest you have trouble
and be spattered when he shakes himself;
turn away from him and you will find rest
and not be wearied by his lack of sense.
- 14** What is heavier than lead,
and what is its name but “Fool”?
- 15** Sand and salt and an iron mass
are easier to bear than a stupid man.
- 16** Masonry bonded with wooden beams
is not loosened by an earthquake;
neither is a resolve constructed with careful deliberation
shaken in a moment of fear.
- 17** A resolve that is backed by prudent understanding
is like the polished surface of a smooth wall.
- 18** Pebbles² set on an open height
will not remain when the wind blows;
neither can a timid resolve based on foolish plans
withstand fear of any kind.
- 19** One who jabs the eye brings tears:
he who pierces the heart bares its feelings.
- 20** He who throws stones at birds drives them away,
and he who insults a friend breaks up the friendship.
- 21** Should you draw a sword against a friend,
do not despair, it can be undone.
- 22** Should you speak sharply to a friend,
do not fear, you can be reconciled.
But a contemptuous insult, a confidence broken,
or a treacherous attack will drive away any friend.
- 23** Make fast friends with a man while he is poor;
thus will you enjoy his prosperity with him;
for there should never be any despising of a man’s appearance
or admiration of a rich man who is stupid.³
in time of trouble remain true to him,
so as to share in his inheritance when it comes.
- 24** Before flames burst forth an oven smokes;⁴
so does abuse come before bloodshed.
- 25** From a friend in need of support,
no one need hide in shame;
- 26** but from him who brings harm to his friend,

¹ [Sir22:13] LXX(II) adds

² [Sir22:18] LXX / others “Fences”

³ [Sir22:23] some LXX adds

⁴ [Sir22:24] LXX / Syr “forth comes billowing smoke”

all who hear of it will stand aloof *from him*.

CHAPTER 23

- 27 Who will set a guard over my mouth,
and upon my lips an effective seal,
that I may not fail through them,
that my tongue may not destroy me?
- 23.1 Yahweh, Father and Master of my life,
permit me to not fall by them!
- 2 Who will apply the lash to my thoughts,
the rod of discipline to my mind,
that my failings may not be spared,
nor the sins of their heart overlooked;
- 3 lest my failings increase,
and my sins be multiplied;
lest I succumb to my foes,
and my enemy rejoice over me?
For these things, the hope of your mercy is remote.¹
- 4 Yahweh, Father and God of my life,
do not abandon me into their control!²
- 5 Do not allow me a brazen look;
always remove vain hopes from your servant.
ward off passion from my heart,
and always sustain him who wishes to serve you.³
- 6 Do not let the lustful cravings of the flesh master me,
do not surrender me to shameless desires.
- 7 Give heed, my children, to the instruction that I pronounce,⁴
for he who keeps it will not be enslaved.
- 8 Through his *own* lips is the sinner ensnared;
the railer and the arrogant man fall by them.
- 9 Do not let your mouth form the habit of swearing,
or becoming too familiar with the holy Name.
- 10 Just as a slave who is constantly under scrutiny
will not be without welts,
so one who swears continually by the holy Name
will not remain cleansed⁵ from sin.
- 11 A man who swears often heaps up obligations;
the scourge will never be far from his house.
If he swears in error,⁶ he incurs guilt;
if he neglects his obligation, his sin is doubly great.
If he swears without reason he cannot be found righteous,
and all his house will suffer affliction.
- 12 There are words which merit death,⁷
may they never be heard among Jacob's heirs.

¹ [Sir23:3] LXX(II) adds

² [Sir23:4] Syr, Lat / LXX places "do not abandon me into their control" before "permit me to not fall by them!" (23:1b)

³ [Sir23:5] LXX(II), Clement of Alexandria add and read "always remove...servant, and turn aside improper desires from me, and always...serve you."

⁴ [Sir23:7] one LXX, Syr (lit. "the instruction of my mouth") / most LXX, Lat "the instruction of the mouth"

⁵ [Sir23:10] LXX / Syr "free"

⁶ [Sir23:11] Syr / LXX "if he offends"

⁷ [Sir23:12] LXX / others "words clothed about with death"

- For all such words are foreign to the devout,
 who do not wallow in sin.
- 13** Do not let your mouth become used to coarse talk,
 for in it lies sinful matter.
- 14** Keep your father and mother in mind
 when you sit among the mighty,
 lest in their presence you commit a blunder
 and disgrace your upbringing,
 by wishing you had never been born
 or cursing the day of your birth.
- 15** A man who has the habit of abusive language
 will never mature in character as long as he lives.
- 16** Two types of men multiply sins,
 a third draws down wrath;
 for burning passion is a blazing fire,
 not to be quenched until it burns itself out:
 the man given to sins of the flesh,
 who never stops until the fire breaks forth;
- 17** the rake to whom all bread is sweet
 and who is never through until he dies.
- 18** And the man who dishonors his marriage bed
 and says to himself “Who can see me?
 Darkness surrounds me, walls hide me;
 no one sees me; why should I fear to sin?”¹
 He is not mindful of the Most High,²
- 19** fearing only the eyes of men.³
 He does not understand that the eyes of Yahweh,
 ten thousand times brighter than the sun,
 observe every step a man takes
 and peer into hidden corners.
- 20** The One who knows all things before they exist
 still knows them all after they are made.
- 21** Such a man will be punished in the streets of the city;
 when he least expects it, he will be apprehended.
- 22** So also with the woman who leaves⁴ her husband
 and offers as heir her son by a stranger.
- 23** First, she has disobeyed the law of the Most High.
 Secondly, she has wronged her husband.
 Thirdly, in her wanton adultery
 she has borne children by another man.
- 24** Such a woman will be dragged before the assembly,
 and her punishment will extend to her children.
- 25** Her children will not take root;
 her branches will not bring forth fruit.
- 26** She will leave an accursed memory;
 her disgrace will never be blotted out.

¹ [Sir23:18] Syr / LXX “why should I be afraid?”

² [Sir23:18] Emendation based on Syr’s omission / LXX “The Most High will not be mindful of my sin.”

³ [Sir23:18~19] Syr omits “He is not mindful of the Most High, fearing only the eyes of men”

⁴ [Sir23:22] LXX / Syr “who sins against”

27 Thus all who dwell on the earth shall know,
and all who inhabit the world shall understand,
that nothing is better than the fear of Yahweh,
nothing more salutary than to obey his commandments.
It is a great glory to follow after God,
and for you to be received by him is length of days.¹

CHAPTER 24

- 1 Wisdom sings her own praises,
before her own people she proclaims her glory;
- 2 in the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth,
in the presence of his hosts she declares her worth:
- 3 “From the mouth of the Most High I came forth,
and mist-like covered the earth.
- 4 In the highest heavens did I dwell,
my throne on a pillar of cloud.
- 5 The vault of heaven I compassed alone,
through the deep abyss I wandered.
- 6 Over waves of the sea, over all the land,
over every people and nation I held sway.²
- 7 Among all these I sought a resting place;
in whose inheritance should I abide?
- 8 “Then the Creator of all gave me his command,
and he who formed me chose the spot for my tent,
Saying, ‘In Jacob make your dwelling,
in Israel your inheritance.’”
- 9 Before all ages, in the beginning, he created me,
and through all ages I shall not cease to be.
- 10 I ministered before him in the holy tent,
and I fixed my abode in Zion.
- 11 Thus he had given me rest in the chosen city,
my domain is in Jerusalem.
- 12 I have struck root among the glorious people,
in the portion of Yahweh, his³ heritage.
- 13 “Like a cedar in Lebanon I am raised aloft,
like a cypress on Mount Hermon,
- 14 like a palm tree in En-gedi,⁴
like a rosebush in Jericho,
like a fair olive tree in the field,
like a plane tree growing beside the water.⁵
- 15 Like cinnamon, or fragrant balm I give forth a perfume,⁶
or precious myrrh, I give forth perfume;
like galbanum and onycha and sweet spices,

¹ [Sir23:27] LXX(II), Lat adds [two LXX(II), many Lat have “the Lord” instead of “God”]

² [Sir24:6] LXX / others “I have acquired a possession”

³ [Sir24:12] LXX / Syr “my”

⁴ [Sir24:14] LXX / others “tree on the beaches”

⁵ [Sir24:14] LXX(II), Syr / LXX(I) omits “beside the water”

⁶ [Sir24:15] some LXX adds

like the odor of incense in the holy place.

- 16** “I spread out my branches like a terebinth,
my branches so bright and so graceful.
- 17** I bud forth delights like the vine,
my blossoms become fruit fair and rich.
- 18** I am the mother of beautiful love, of fear,
of knowledge, and of holy hope;
Being eternal, I am given to all my children,
to those who are named by him.¹
In me is every gift of life and truth,
in me is all hope of life and of virtue.²
- 19** Come to me, all you who yearn for me,
and be filled with my fruits;
- 20** you will remember me as sweeter than honey,
better to have than the honeycomb.
- 21** He who eats of me will hunger still,
he who drinks of me will thirst for more;
- 22** he who obeys me will not be put to shame,
he who serves me will never fail.”
- 23** All this is true of the book of the Most High’s covenant,
the law which Moses commanded us
as an inheritance for the community of Jacob.
- 24** “Do not grow weary of striving with the Lord’s help,
but cling to him so that he may reinforce you;
the Lord Almighty alone is God,
and apart from him there is no savior.³
- 25** It overflows, like the Pishon, with wisdom—
like the Hiddekel in the days of the new fruits.
- 26** It runs over, like the Euphrates,⁴ with understanding,
like the Jordan at harvest time.⁵
- 27** It sparkles, like the Nile, with knowledge,⁶
and⁷ like the Gihon at vintage time.
- 28** The first man never finished comprehending wisdom,
nor will the last succeed in fathoming her.
- 29** For deeper than the sea are her thoughts;
her counsels, than the great abyss.
- 30** Now I, like a rivulet from her stream,
channeling the waters into a garden,
- 31** said to myself, “I will water my plants,
my flower bed I will drench”;
and suddenly this rivulet of mine became a river,
then this stream of mine, a sea.
- 32** Thus do I send my teachings forth shining like the dawn,
to become known afar off.

¹ [Sir24:18] LXX(II) adds / Lat adds only “I am the mother...holy hope”

² [Sir24:18] Lat adds “In me...of virtue.”

³ [Sir24:24] LXX(II) adds

⁴ [Sir24:26] Greek / from Persian “Ufratu” / Hebrew “Furat”

⁵ [Sir24:26] LXX / Syr “Jordan in the days of Nisan”

⁶ [Sir24:27] Syr / LXX “It makes knowledge shine forth like light”

⁷ [Sir24:27] LXX(I) / LXX(II), Syr adds

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

CHAPTER 25

- 1 With three things I am delighted,
for they are beautiful to God and to men:¹
harmony among brothers, friendship among neighbors,
and the mutual love of husband and wife.
- 2 Three kinds of men I hate;
their manner of life I loathe indeed:
a proud pauper, a rich dissembler,
and an old man lecherous in his dotage.
- 3 What you have not saved in your youth,
how will you acquire in your old age?
- 4 How becoming to the gray-haired is judgment,
and a knowledge of counsel to those on in years!
- 5 How becoming to the aged is wisdom,
understanding and prudence to the venerable!
- 6 The crown of old men is wide experience;
their glory, the fear of Yahweh.
- 7 There are nine who come to my mind as blessed,
a tenth whom my tongue proclaims:
the man who finds joy in his children,
and he who lives to see his enemies' downfall.
- 8 Happy is he who dwells with a sensible wife,
and he who does not plow like a donkey yoked with an ox.²
Happy is he who does not sin with his tongue,
and he who does not serve his inferior.
- 9 Happy is he who finds a friend³
and he who speaks to attentive ears.
- 10 He who finds wisdom is great indeed,
but not greater than he who fears Yahweh.
- 11 Fear of Yahweh surpasses all else.
its possessor is beyond compare.
- 12 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of loving him,
and fidelity is the beginning of clinging to him.⁴
- 13 Worst of all wounds is that of the heart,
worst of all evils is that of a woman.
- 14 Worst of all sufferings is that from one's foes,
worst of all vengeance is that of one's enemies:
- 15 No poison⁵ worse than a serpent's poison,⁶
no venom greater than a woman's⁷ venom.
- 16 With a dragon or a lion I would rather dwell
than live with an evil woman.

¹ [Sir25:1] Syr, Lat / LXX "In three things I was beautiful and I stood in beauty before the Lord and men"

² [Sir25:8] Heb(C), Syr / LXX omits "and he who does not plow...ox"

³ [Sir25:9] Lat, Syr / LXX "finds knowledge"

⁴ [Sir25:12] LXX(II) adds

⁵ [Sir25:15] Syr / LXX "head"

⁶ [Sir25:15] Syr / LXX "head"

⁷ [Sir25:15] LXX / others "an enemy's"

- 17 Wickedness changes a woman's looks,¹
and makes her sullen as a female bear.²
- 18 When her husband sits³ among his neighbors,
a bitter sigh escapes him unawares.⁴
- 19 There is scarce any evil like that in a woman;
may she fall to the lot of the sinner!
- 20 Like a sandy hill to aged feet
is a railing wife to a quiet man.
- 21 Do not stumble through woman's beauty,
nor be greedy for her wealth;⁵
- 22 harsh is the slavery, great⁶ the shame,
when a wife supports her husband.
- 23 Depressed mind, saddened face, broken heart—
this from an evil wife.
Feeble hands and quaking knees—
from a wife who brings no happiness to her husband.
- 24 In woman was sin's beginning,
and because of her we all die.
- 25 Allow water no outlet,
and do not be indulgent to an erring wife.
- 26 If she walks not by your side,
cut her away from you with a bill of divorce.⁷

CHAPTER 26

- 1 Happy the husband of a good wife,
twice-lengthened are his days;
- 2 a worthy wife brings joy to her husband,
peaceful and full is his life.
- 3 A good wife is a generous gift
bestowed upon him who fears Yahweh;
- 4 be he rich or poor, his heart is content,
and a smile is ever on his face.
- 5 There are three things at which my heart quakes,
a fourth before which I quail:
Though slanders in public, trial before all the people,
and lying testimony are harder to bear than death,
- 6 a jealous wife is heartache and mourning,
and a scourging tongue like the other three.
- 7 A bad wife is a chafing yoke;
he who marries her seizes a scorpion.
- 8 A drunken wife arouses great anger,
for she does not hide her shame.
- 9 By her eyelids and her haughty stare

¹ [Sir25:17] Syr "The wickedness of a woman turns her husband's face green"

² [Sir25:17] Heb(C), most LXX / one LXX "as sackcloth" / Syr "as the color of sackcloth" / Lat "as a bear and as sackcloth"

³ [Sir25:18] Heb, Syr / LXX "husband loses heart"

⁴ [Sir25:18] LXX / others "and listening he bitterly sighs"

⁵ [Sir25:21] Heb, Syr / other LXX "beauty"

⁶ [Sir25:22] LXX / Syr "dire"

⁷ [Sir25:26] LXX(I) / LXX(II), Syr adds

an unchaste wife can be recognized.

- 10 Keep a strict watch over an unruly wife,¹
lest, finding an opportunity, she makes use of it;
- 11 follow close if her eyes are bold,
and be not surprised if she betrays you:
- 12 as a thirsty traveler with eager mouth
drinks from any water that he finds,
so she settles down before every tent peg,
and opens her quiver for every arrow.
- 13 A gracious wife delights her husband,
her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones;
- 14 a gift from Yahweh is her governed speech,
and her firm virtue is of surpassing worth.
- 15 A modest and faithful² wife is the choicest of blessings,
her chaste soul is priceless.
- 16 Like the sun rising in Yahweh's heavens,
the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.
- 17 Like the light which shines above the holy lampstand,
are her beauty of face and graceful figure.
- 18 Golden columns on silver bases
are her shapely limbs and steady feet.³
- 19 My son, keep intact in the prime of your life,
by not surrendering your strength to strangers:
- 20 single out from the land a fertile field,
and there with confidence sow the seed of your increase;
- 21 so shall you have your offspring around you,
and they shall grow up in confidence.
- 22 A prostitute is thought of as spittle,
and a married woman is a tower of death to those who embrace her.
- 23 An impious woman will be given as a portion to the lawless man,
but a devout wife will be given to the man who fears the Lord.
- 24 A shameless hussy wears out reproach,
but an exemplary daughter will be modest even before her husband.
- 25 The unruly wife will be thought of as a bitch,
but the one with a sense of shame fears the Lord.
- 26 The woman who respects her husband will be seen as wise by everyone,
but the one who proudly scorns her spouse will be known as impious by all.
Happy is the man of a good wife;
each year of his life counts for two.
<Complaint by a wife should be made in meekness,
and show itself in a slight flush.>⁴
- 27 But a loud-mouthed, scolding wife
is a battle trumpet signaling attack;
and any man who answers that challenge
will spend his life amid the turbulence of war.¹

¹ [Sir26:10] Syr / LXX "daughter"

² [Sir26:15] one LXX "A modest and faithful" / Lat "A holy and modest"

³ [Sir26:18] Syr, Lat / most LXX "chest" (as in the seat of affections, "heart")

⁴ [Sir26:26] Syr adds "Complaint...slight flush."

28 These two bring grief to my heart,
and the third arouses my horror:
A noble man² reduced to want;
illustrious men held in contempt;
and the man who passes from righteousness to sin,
for whom Yahweh makes ready the sword.

CHAPTER 27

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

4 When a sieve is shaken, the husks appear;
so do a man's faults when he speaks.
5 As the test of what the potter molds is in the furnace,
so in his conversation is the test of a man.
6 The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had;
so too does a man's speech disclose the bent of his mind.
7 Praise no man before he speaks,
for it is then that men are tested.

8 If you strive after righteousness you will attain it,
and put it on like a splendid robe.
9 Birds nest with their own kind,
and fidelity comes to those who live by it.
10 As a lion crouches in wait for prey,
so do sins for evildoers.
11 Ever wise are the discourses of the pious,
but the godless man, like the moon, is inconstant.
12 Limit the time you spend among fools,
but frequent the company of thoughtful men.
13 The conversation of fools⁴ is offensive,
their laughter is wanton guilt.
14 Their oath-filled talk makes the hair stand on end,
their brawls make one stop one's ears.
15 Wrangling among the haughty ends in bloodshed,
their cursing is painful to hear.

16 He who betrays a secret cannot be trusted,
he will never find an intimate friend.
17 Cherish your friend, keep faith with him;
but if you betray his confidence, do not follow him;
18 for as an enemy might kill a man,

¹ [Sir26:18~27] LXX(II), Syr, Clement of Alexandria adds

² [Sir26:28] Syr / LXX "A warrior"

³ [Sir27:1] LXX / others "for a trifle"

⁴ [Sir27:13] LXX, Syr / Lat "sinners"

- you have killed your neighbor's friendship.
- 19 Like a bird released from the hand,
you have let your friend go and cannot recapture him;
- 20 do not follow him, for he is far away,
he has fled like a gazelle from the trap.
- 21 A wound can be bound up, and an insult forgiven,
but he who betrays secrets does hopeless damage.
- 22 He who has shifty eyes plots mischief,
and no one can ward him off.¹
- 23 In your presence he uses honeyed talk,
and admires your every word,
but later he changes his tone
and twists your words to your ruin.
- 24 There is nothing that I hate so much,
and Yahweh hates him as well.²
- 25 As a stone falls back on him who throws it up,
so a blow struck in treachery injures more than one.³
- 26 As he who digs a pit falls into it,
and he who lays a snare is caught in it,
- 27 whoever does harm will be involved in it
without knowing how it came upon him.
- 28 Mockery and abuse will be the lot of the proud,
and vengeance lies in wait for them like a lion.
- 29 The trap seizes those who rejoice in pitfalls,⁴
and pain will consume them before they die.
- 30 Wrath and anger are hateful things,
yet the sinner hugs them tight.
- 28.1 The vengeful will suffer Yahweh's vengeance,
for he keeps a strict account of⁵ their sins.

CHAPTER 28

- 2 Forgive your neighbor's injustice;
then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.
- 3 Should a man nourish anger against his fellows
and expect healing from Yahweh?
- 4 Should a man refuse mercy to his fellows,
yet seek pardon for his own sins?
- 5 If he who is but flesh cherishes wrath,
who will forgive his sins?
- 6 Remember your last days, set enmity aside;
remember death and decay, and cease from sin!⁶
- 7 Think of the commandments, do not hate your neighbor;
of the Most High's covenant, and overlook faults.
- 8 Avoid strife and your sins will be fewer,

¹ [Sir27:22] most LXX / LXX(II) " , whoever knows him will give him a wide berth."

² [Sir27:24] LXX / Syr "and God hates him and curses him"

³ [Sir27:25] LXX / Syr " , and he who strikes in secret will be given over to destruction"

⁴ [Sir27:29] Syr "Traps and snares seize those who delight in them"

⁵ [Sir28:1] LXX / others "for he firmly establishes"

⁶ [Sir28:6] Syr / LXX "and abide by the commandments!"

- for a quarrelsome man kindles disputes,
9 commits the sin of disrupting friendship
and sows discord among those at peace.
10 The more wood, the greater the fire,
the more underlying it, the more strife will increase;¹
the greater a man's strength, the sterner his anger,
the greater his power, the greater his wrath.
11 Pitch and resin make fires flare up,
and insistent quarrels provoke bloodshed.
- 12** If you blow upon a spark, it quickens into flame,
if you spit on it, it dies out;
yet both you do with your mouth!
13 Cursed be gossips and the double-tongued,
for they destroy the peace of many.
14 A meddling tongue subverts many,
and makes them refugees among the peoples;
it destroys walled cities,
and overthrows powerful dynasties.
15 A meddling tongue can drive virtuous women from their homes
and rob them of the fruit of their toil;
16 whoever heeds it has no rest,
nor can he dwell in peace.
- 17** A blow from a whip raises a welt,
but a blow from the tongue smashes bones;
18 many have fallen by the edge of the sword,
but not as many as by the tongue.
19 Happy he who is sheltered from it,
and has not endured its wrath;
who has not borne its yoke
nor been fettered with its chain;
20 for its yoke is a yoke of iron
and its chains are chains of bronze!
21 Dire is the death it inflicts,
besides which even the Netherworld is a gain;
22 it will not take hold among the pious
nor scorch them in its flame,
23 but those who forsake Yahweh will fall victims to it,
as it burns among them unquenchably!
It will hurl itself against them like a lion;
like a panther, it will tear them to pieces.
24 As you hedge round your vineyard with thorns,
set barred doors over your mouth;²
25 as you seal up your silver and gold,
so balance and weigh your words.
26 Take care not to slip by your tongue
and fall victim to your foe waiting in ambush
and your case will become incurable, leading to death.³

¹ [Sir28:10] LXX "bum"

² [Sir28:25] Vul "pieces. // And when they are hedged in when thorns, // lest they should receive words of envious detraction."

³ [Sir28:26] Lat adds

CHAPTER 29

- 1 He who lends to his neighbor does a kindness,
and he who holds out a helping hand fulfills the precepts.
- 2 Lend to your neighbor in his hour of need,
and pay back your neighbor when a loan falls due;
- 3 keep your promise, be honest with him,
and you will always come by what you need.
- 4 Many a man who asks for a loan¹
adds to the burdens of those who help him;
- 5 when he borrows, he kisses the lender's hand
and speaks with respect of his creditor's wealth;
but when payment is due he disappoints him
and says he is helpless to meet the claim.
- 6 If the lender is able to recover barely half,
he considers this an achievement;
if not, he is cheated of his wealth
and acquires an enemy at no extra charge;
with curses and insults the borrower pays him back,
with abuse instead of honor.
- 7 Therefore, Many refuse to lend, not out of meanness,
but from fear² of being cheated.
- 8 To a poor man, however, be generous;
do not keep him waiting for your alms;
- 9 because of the precept, help the needy,
and in their want, do not send them away empty-handed.³
- 10 Spend your money for your brother and friend,
and do not hide it under a stone to perish;
- 11 dispose of your treasure as the Most High commands,
for that will profit you more than the gold.
- 12 Store up almsgiving in your treasure house,
and it will save you from every evil;
- 13 better than a stout shield and a sturdy spear
it will fight for you against the foe.
- 14 A good man goes surety for his neighbor,
and only the shameless would play him false;
- 15 do not forget the kindness of your backer,
for he offers his very life for you.
- 16 The wicked turn a pledge on their behalf into misfortune,
17 and the ingrate abandons his protector;
- 18 going surety has ruined many prosperous men
and tossed them about like waves of the sea,
has exiled men of prominence
and sent them wandering through foreign lands.
- 19 Through surety, the sinner comes to grief,
and he who undertakes too much falls into lawsuits.
- 20 Go surety for⁴ your neighbor according to your means,

¹ [Sir29:4] Syr / LXX "Many a man consider a loan as a find"

² [Sir29:7] others "lend, because of such meanness; they are afraid"

³ [Sir29:9] LXX / Syr "and if there is a loss, do not bring it to mind"

⁴ [Sir29:20] Syr / LXX "Assist"

but take care lest you fall thereby.

- 21 Life's prime needs are water, bread, and clothing,
a house, too, for decent privacy.
- 22 Better a poor man's fare under the shadow of one's own roof
than sumptuous banquets among strangers.
- 23 Be it little or much, be content with what you have,
and you will hear no reproach from your family.¹
- 24 A miserable life it is to go from house to house,
for as a guest you dare not open your mouth.
- 25 The visitor has no thanks for filling the cups;
besides, you will hear these bitter words:
- 26 "Come here, stranger, set the table,
give me to eat the food you have!
- 27 Away, stranger, for one more worthy;
for my brother's visit I need the room!"
- 28 Painful things to a sensitive man
are abuse at home² and insults from his creditors.

CHAPTER 30

- 1 He who loves his son chastises him often,
that he may be his joy when he grows up.
- 2 He who disciplines his son will benefit from him,
and boast of him among his intimates.
- 3 He who educates his son makes his enemy jealous,
and shows his delight in him among his friends.
- 4 At the father's death, he will not seem dead,
since he leaves after him one like himself,
- 5 whom he looks upon through life with joy,
and even in death, without regret:
- 6 the avenger he leaves against his foes,
and the one to repay his friends with kindness.

- 7 He who spoils his son will have wounds to bandage,
and will quake inwardly at every outcry.
- 8 A colt untamed turns out stubborn;
a son left to himself grows up unruly.
- 9 Pamper your child and he will be a terror for you,
indulge him and he will bring you grief.
- 10 Do not share in his frivolity lest you share in his sorrow,
when finally your teeth are clenched in remorse.
- 11 Do not give him his own way in his youth,
and do not close your eyes to his follies.³
- 12 Bend him to the yoke when he is young,⁴
thrash his sides while he is still small,
lest he become stubborn, disobey you,
and leave you disconsolate.⁵
- 13 Discipline your son, make heavy his yoke,¹

¹ [Sir29:23] LXX / Lat "and you will hear your reproach for being a guest" / others omit this line

² [Sir29:28] two Lat "are rebuke as a parasite"

³ [Sir29:11] Heb(B), LXX(II), Lat, Syr / LXX(I) omits "and do not close your eyes to his follies"

⁴ [Sir30:12] LXX(II), Heb(B) / LXX(I), others omit "Bend him to the yoke when he is young."

⁵ [Sir30:12] LXX(II), Heb(B) / LXX(I), others omit "and leave you disconsolate"

lest his folly humiliate you.

- 14** Better a poor man strong and robust,
than a rich man with wasted frame.
- 15** More precious than gold is health and well-being,
contentment of spirit than coral.
- 16** No treasure greater than a healthy body;
no happiness, than a joyful heart!
- 17** Death is preferable to a bitter life,
and unending sleep² to constant illness.
- 18** Dainties set before one who cannot eat
are like the offerings placed before a tomb.³
- 19** What good is an offering to an idol
that can neither taste nor smell?
So it is with he who is punished by the Lord,
- 20** who groans at the good things his eyes behold;
like the eunuch,
who groans when embracing a girl!⁴
so is he who does right under compulsion;⁵
but Yahweh will require it at his hand.⁶
- 21** Do not give in to sadness,
do not torment yourself with brooding.
- 22** A glad heart is the very life of man,
cheerfulness prolongs his days.
- 23** Distract⁷ yourself, renew your courage,
drive resentment far away from you;
for worry has brought death to many,
nor is there anything to be gained from resentment.
- 24** Envy and anger shorten one's life,
worry brings on premature old age.
- 25** One who is cheerful and gay while at table
benefits from his food.

CHAPTER 31

- 1** Keeping watch over riches wastes the flesh,
and the care of wealth drives away rest.
- 2** Concern for one's livelihood banishes slumber;
and a serious illness carries off repose.⁸
A faithful comrade drives away reproach,
and the friend who keeps secrets is as dear as life.⁹
- 3** The rich man labors to pile up wealth,
and his only rest is wanton pleasure;
- 4** the poor man toils for a meager subsistence,
and if ever he rests, he finds himself in want.

¹ [Sir30:13] Heb / LXX "son, take pains with him"

² [Sir30:17] LXX / others omit "unending sleep"

³ [Sir30:18] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) "before an idol"

⁴ [Sir30:20] LXX(I), Lat, Syr, Heb(B) / LXX(II) omits "like the eunuch...girl!"

⁵ [Sir30:20] LXX(I) / LXX(II), Syr, Heb(B) adds

⁶ [Sir30:20] Heb(B), Syr adds

⁷ [Sir30:23] LXX "Beguile"

⁸ [Sir31:2] LXX / others "and repose carries off a serious illness"

⁹ [Sir31:2] Heb(B) / LXX omits "A faithful comrade...as life."

- 5 The lover of gold will not be free from sin,
for he who pursues wealth is led astray¹ by it.
- 6 Many have been ensnared by gold,
though destruction lay before their eyes;
but their possessions were unable to deliver them from disaster,
or to save them on the day of wrath.²
- 7 it is a stumbling block to those who are avid for it,
a snare for every fool.
- 8 Happy the rich man found without fault,
who does not turn aside after gain!
- 9 Who is he, that we may praise him?
He, of all his kindred, has done wonders,
- 10 for he has been tested by gold and come off safe,
and this remains his glory;
he could have sinned but did not,
could have done evil but would not,
- 11 so that his possessions are secure because of this,³
and the assembly recounts his praises.⁴
- 12 If you are seated at the table of the great,⁵
do not bring a greedy gullet to his table,
nor cry out, “How much food there is here!”
- 13 Remember that gluttony is evil.
No creature is greedier than the eye:
therefore it weeps for any cause.⁶
- 14 Recognize that your neighbor feels as you do,
and keep in mind your own dislikes:
- 15 toward what he eyes, do not put out a hand;
nor reach when he does for the same dish.⁷
- 16 Eat what is set before you like a well brought-up person,⁸
and do not be greedy, lest you be despised.
- 17 Be the first to stop, as befits good manners;
do not gorge yourself, lest you give offense.
- 18 If there are many with you at table,
do not be the first to reach out your hand.
- 19 Does not a little suffice for a well-bred man?
When he lies down, it is without discomfort.
- 20 Distress and anguish and loss of sleep,
and restless tossing for the glutton!
Moderate eating ensures sound slumber
and a clear mind next day on rising.
- 21 If perforce you have eaten too much,
once you have emptied your stomach, you will have relief.

¹ [Sir31:5] Heb, Syr / LXX “pursues destruction will be filled”

² [Sir31:6] Syr adds

³ [Sir31:11] LXX / others add

⁴ [Sir31:11] Heb(B) / LXX “his pious deeds”

⁵ [Sir31:12] Heb, Syr / LXX “at a great table”

⁶ [Sir31:13] Heb(B), Syr “. God hates the eye’s greed; was ever any creature greedier? That is why it shifts with everything it sees, and sends tears streaming down the face.”

⁷ [Sir31:14] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) “basket”

⁸ [Sir31:16] Heb / LXX “like a man”

- 22 Listen to me, my son, and do not scorn me;
later you will find my advice good.
In whatever you do, be moderate,¹
and no sickness will befall you.
- 23 On a man generous with food, blessings are invoked,
and this testimony to his goodness is lasting;
- 24 he who is miserly with food is denounced in public,
and this testimony² to his stinginess is lasting.
- 25 Do not let wine-drinking be the proof of your strength,
for wine has been the ruin of many.
- 26 As the furnace probes the work of the smith,³
so does wine the hearts of the insolent.
- 27 Wine is very life⁴ to man
if taken in moderation.
Does he really live who lacks the wine
which was created for his joy?
- 28 Joy of heart, good cheer and merriment
is wine drunk freely at the proper time.
- 29 Headache, bitterness⁵ and disgrace
is wine drunk amid anger and strife.
- 30 More and more wine is a snare for the fool;
it lessens his strength and multiplies his wounds.
- 31 Do not rebuke your neighbor when wine is served,
nor put him to shame while he is merry;
use no harsh words with him
and do not distress him in the presence of others.

CHAPTER 32

- 1 If you are chosen to preside at dinner, do not be puffed up,
and take no prominent place among the rich,⁶
but with the guests be as one of themselves;
take care of them first before you sit down;
- 2 when you have fulfilled your duty, then take your place,
to share in their joy
and win praise for your hospitality.
- 3 Being older, you may talk; that is only your right,
but temper your wisdom, not to disturb the singing.
- 4 When wine is present,⁷ do not pour out discourse,
and do not flaunt your wisdom at the wrong time.
- 5 Like a seal of carnelian in a setting of gold
is a concert when wine is served.
- 6 Like a gold mounting with an emerald seal
is string music with delicious wine.
- 7 Young man, speak only when necessary,
when they have asked you more than once;
- 8 be brief, but say much in those few words,
be like the wise man, taciturn.

¹ [Sir31:22] Heb, Syr / LXX “industrious”

² [Sir31:24] Heb(B[mgl]), LXX / Heb(B[txt]) “knowledge”

³ [Sir31:26] Heb / LXX “tests the hardening of steel by dipping”

⁴ [Sir31:27] Heb(B) / LXX “is like life” / Syr “is like the waters of life”

⁵ [Sir31:29] LXX / Syr “poverty”

⁶ [Sir31:1] Syr adds

⁷ [Sir32:4] Heb(B) / LXX “Where listening is in order”

- 9 When among your elders do not be forward,
and with officials do not be too insistent.
- 10 Like the lightning that flashes before a storm
is the esteem that shines on modesty.¹
- 11 When it is time to leave, do not tarry;
be off for home!
- 12 There take your ease, and there enjoy doing as you wish,
but without sin or words of pride.
- 13 Above all, give praise to your Creator,
who showers his favors upon you.
- 14 He who seeks God² must accept discipline;
and those who rise early to seek him³ will find favor.
- 15 He who studies the law masters it,
but the hypocrite finds it a trap.
- 16 He who fears Yahweh has sound judgment;
out of obscurity he draws forth a clear plan.
- 17 The sinner turns aside reproof
and distorts the law to suit his purpose.
- 18 The thoughtful man will not neglect direction;
the proud and insolent⁴ man is deterred by nothing.⁵
- 19 Do nothing without counsel,
and then you need have no regrets.
- 20 Do not go on a way that is set with snares,
and do not stumble on the same obstacle twice.⁶
- 21 Do not be overconfident even on smooth roads,
22 and be careful on all your paths.⁷
- 23 Guard⁸ yourself in whatever you do,
for in this way you will keep the commandments.⁹
- 24 He who keeps the law preserves himself,¹⁰
and he who trusts in Yahweh shall not be put to shame.

CHAPTER 33

- 1 No evil can harm the man who fears Yahweh;
through trials, again and again he is safe.
- 2 He who hates the law is without wisdom,
and is tossed about like a boat in a storm.
- 3 The prudent man trusts in the word of Yahweh,
and the law is dependable for him as a divine oracle.¹¹
- 4 Prepare your words and you will be listened to;
draw upon your training, and then give your answer.
- 5 Like the wheel of a cart is the mind of a fool;
his thoughts revolve in circles.
- 6 A fickle friend is like the stallion that neighs,

¹ [Sir32:10] Syr omits "Like the lightning...modesty."

² [Sir32:14] Heb / LXX "who fears the Lord"

³ [Sir32:14] LXX omits "to seek him"

⁴ [Sir32:18] Heb / LXX "alien"

⁵ [Sir32:18] others add "and after acting", "with him", "without counsel"

⁶ [Sir32:20] Heb / LXX "stumble on stony ground"

⁷ [Sir32:22] Heb, Syr / LXX "and beware of your children"

⁸ [Sir32:23] Heb, Syr / LXX "Trust"

⁹ [Sir32:23] Heb(B), LXX / Heb(C) omits "Guard yourself...commandments."

¹⁰ [Sir32:24] Heb / LXX "who believes the law heeds the commandments"

¹¹ [Sir33:2-3] LXX, Heb(B)(frag) / Heb(C) omits "The prudent man...oracle." / Syr omits "He who hates...oracle."

no matter who the rider.

- 7 Why is one day more important than another,
when it is the sun that lights up every day?
- 8 It is due to Yahweh's wisdom that they differ;
it is through him that the seasons and feasts come and go.
- 9 Some he dignifies and sanctifies,
and others he lists as ordinary days.
- 10 So too, all men are of clay,
for from earth Adam was formed;
- 11 yet with his great knowledge Yahweh makes men unlike;
in different paths he has them walk.
- 12 Some he blesses¹ and makes great,
some he sanctifies and draws to himself.
Others he curses and brings low,
and expels them from their place.
- 13 Like clay in the hands of a potter,
to be molded according to his pleasure,
so are men in the hands of their Creator,
to be assigned by him their function.²
- 14 As evil contrasts with good, and death with life,
so are sinners in contrast with the pious
and darkness with the light;³
- 15 see now all the works of the Most High:
they come in pairs, the one the opposite of the other.
- 16 Now I am the last to keep vigil,
like a gleaner after the vintage;
- 17 since by Yahweh's blessing I have made progress
until like a vintager I have filled my wine press,
- 18 I would inform you that I have not toiled only for myself,
but for every seeker after wisdom.
- 19 Listen to me, O leaders of the multitude;
O rulers of the assembly, give ear!
- 20 Let neither son nor wife, neither brother nor friend,
have power over you⁴ as long as you live.
- 21 While breath of life is still in you,
let no man have dominion over you.
Do not give to another your wealth,
lest then you have to plead with him;⁵
- 22 far better that your children plead with you
than that you should look to their generosity.
- 23 Keep control over all your affairs;
let no one tarnish your glory.
- 24 When your few days reach their limit,
at the time of death distribute your inheritance.

¹ [Sir33:9] Heb(E), Syr / LXX "exalts"

² [Sir33:13] Heb(E) / LXX "to be required according as he judges them" / Syr "to raise him up among all his works"

³ [Sir33:14] LXX / Heb(E) adds / Syr also adds, but omits "sinners in contrast with the pious"

⁴ [Sir33:20] Heb(E) omits "over you"

⁵ [Sir33:20] Heb(B), Syr / LXX places "Do not give...with him" after "as long as you live."

- 25 Fodder and whip and loads for an ass;
the yoke and harness and the rod of his master.¹
- 26 Food, correction and work for a slave;
and for a wicked slave, punishment in the stocks.
- 27 Make a slave work and he will look for his rest;²
let his hands be idle³ and he will seek to be free.
- 28 Force him to work that he be not idle,⁴
- 29 for idleness is an apt teacher of mischief.⁵
- 30 Put him to work, for that is what befits him;⁶
if he becomes unruly, load him with chains.
But never lord it over any human being,
and do nothing unjust.
- 31 If you have but one slave, treat him like yourself,
for you have acquired him with your life's blood.
- 32 If you have but one slave, deal with him as a brother,⁷
for you need him as you need your life.
- 33 If you mistreat him and he runs away,
in what direction will you look for him?

CHAPTER 34

- 1 Empty and false are the hopes of the senseless,
and fools are borne aloft by dreams.
- 2 Like a man who grasps for shadows or chases the wind,
is the one who puts trust⁸ in dreams.
- 3 What is seen in dreams is to reality
what the reflection of a face is to the face itself.
- 4 Can *something* unclean produce the clean?
can the liar ever speak the truth?
- 5 Divination, omens and dreams all are unreal;
what you already expect, the mind depicts.
- 6 Unless it be a vision specially sent by the Most High,
do not fix your heart on it;
- 7 for dreams have led many astray,
and those who believed in them have perished.
- 8 The law is fulfilled without fail,
and perfect wisdom is found in the mouth of the faithful man.
- 9 An educated man gains wide knowledge;
a man of experience speaks sense.
- 10 One never put to the proof knows little,
11 whereas with travel a man adds to his resourcefulness.
- 12 I have seen much in my travels,
learned more than ever I could say.
- 13 Often I was in danger of death,
but by these attainments I was saved.

¹ [Sir33:25] Heb(E) / LXX "harness are a cure for stubbornness"

² [Sir33:27] LXX(II) / LXX(I) "Work at discipline and you will find rest" / Heb(E), Syr "Make a slave work and give him no rest, that he may not seek rest"

³ [Sir33:27] LXX / Syr "if you lift up his head" / Heb(E) "if you lift up his head, he will play you false"

⁴ [Sir33:28] LXX / Heb(E), Syr "that he rebel not"

⁵ [Sir33:28] LXX / Heb(E), Syr "idleness does *much mischief*"

⁶ [Sir33:30] LXX / Syr "As may suit him, give him authority in your house"

⁷ [Sir33:31] most LXX / some LXX "as yourself"

⁸ [Sir34:2] Syr / LXX "who pays heed to"

- 14 Lively is the spirit of those who fear Yahweh,
 15 for they put their hope in their Savior;
 16 he who fears Yahweh is never alarmed, never afraid;
 for Yahweh is his hope.
- 17 Happy the soul that fears Yahweh!
 18 In whom does he trust, and who is his support?
 19 The eyes of Yahweh are upon those who love him;
 he is their mighty shield and strong support,
 a shelter from the heat, a shade from the noonday sun,
 a guard against stumbling, a help against falling.
- 20 He buoys up the spirits, brings a sparkle to the eyes,
 gives health and life and blessings.¹
- 21 If one sacrifices ill-gotten goods, the offering is tainted.²
 22 The presents³ from the lawless are not acceptable.
 23 The Most High does not approve the gifts of the godless,
 nor for their many sacrifices does he forgive their sins.
- 24 Like the man who slays a son in his father's presence
 is he who offers sacrifice from the possessions of the poor.
- 25 The bread of charity is life itself for the needy;
 he who withholds it is a man of blood.
- 26 He slays his neighbor who deprives him of his living:
 27 he sheds blood who denies the laborer his wages.
- 28 If one man builds up and another tears down,
 what do they gain but trouble?
- 29 If one man prays and another curses,
 whose voice will Yahweh hear?
- 30 If a man again touches a corpse after he has bathed,
 what did he gain by the purification?
- 31 So with a man who fasts for his sins,
 but then goes and commits them again:
 who will hear his prayer,
 and what has he gained by his mortification?

CHAPTER 35

- 1 To keep the law is a great oblation,
 and he who observes the commandments sacrifices a peace offering.
- 2 In works of charity one offers fine flour,
 and when he gives alms he presents his sacrifice of praise.
- 3 To refrain from evil pleases Yahweh,
 and to avoid unrighteousness is an atonement.
- 4 Do not appear before Yahweh empty-handed,
 for all that you offer is in fulfillment of the precepts.
- 5 The righteous man's offering enriches the altar
 and rises as a sweet odor before the Most High.
- 6 The righteous man's sacrifice is most pleasing,
 nor will it ever be forgotten.

¹ [Sir34:20] LXX / Syr "blessings"

² [Sir34:21] LXX / others "is made in mockery"

³ [Sir34:22] LXX(II), Lat, Syr / LXX(I) "mockeries"

- 7 In generous spirit pay homage to Yahweh,
do not be sparing of freewill gifts.
- 8 With each contribution¹ show a cheerful countenance,
and pay your tenths in a spirit of joy.
- 9 Give to the Most High² as he has given to you,
generously, according to your means.
He who gives to the poor makes the Lord his debtor,
and who is the source of recompenses if not he?³
- 10 For God⁴ is one who always repays,
and he will give back to you sevenfold.
- 11 But offer no bribes, these he does not accept!
Do not trust in sacrifice of the fruits of extortion,
- 12 for he is a God of justice,
who knows no favorites.
- 13 Though not unduly partial toward⁵ the weak,
yet he hears the cry of the oppressed.⁶
- 14 He is not deaf to the wail of the orphan,
nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint;
- 15 do not the tears that stream down her cheek
cry out against him who causes them to fall?⁷
- 16 He who serves God willingly is heard;
his petition reaches the heavens.
- 17 The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds;
it does not rest till it reaches its goal,⁸
nor will it withdraw till the Most High⁹ responds,
judges justly and affirms the right.
- 18 The Lord¹⁰ indeed will not delay,
and like a warrior,¹¹ will not be still
till he breaks the backs of the merciless
and wreaks vengeance upon the proud;
till he destroys the haughty root and branch,
and smashes the scepter of the wicked;
- 19 till he requites mankind according to its deeds,
and repays men according to their thoughts;
till he defends the cause of his people,
and gladdens them by his mercy.¹²
- 20 Welcome is his mercy in time of distress
as rain clouds in time of drought.

CHAPTER 36

1 Come to our aid, O Sovereign¹ God of the universe,

¹ [Sir35:11] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) "With all that you do"

² [Sir35:12] LXX / Heb(B) "to him"

³ [Sir35:13] LXX / Heb(B), Syr adds

⁴ [Sir35:13] Heb(B) / LXX "For the Lord"

⁵ [Sir35:16] Heb(B) / LXX "against"

⁶ [Sir35:16] Heb(B), LXX / Syr omits "Though not unduly...oppressed."

⁷ [Sir35:19] LXX / Heb(B) "against her homelessness"

⁸ [Sir35:17~20] Instead of "Do not the tears...goal" Syr has "he hears the bitter feelings of the poor, and their prayer tilts the clouds downward. The prayer of the poor ascends above the clouds, and enters before the Lord of majesty."

⁹ [Sir35:21] LXX / Heb(B) "till God"

¹⁰ [Sir35:22] LXX, Syr, Heb(B-margin) / Heb(B) "God"

¹¹ [Sir35:22] Heb(B) / LXX "and with them"

¹² [Sir35:25] LXX / Heb(B) "his saving help" / Syr "his recompense"

- 2 and put all the nations in dread of you!
- 3 Raise your hand² against the heathen,
that they may realize your power.
- 4 As you have used us to show them your holiness,
so now use them³ to show us your glory.
- 5 Thus they will know you,⁴ as we know,
that there is no God but you, O Lord.⁵
- 6 Give new signs and work new wonders;
show forth the splendor of your right hand and arm;⁶
- 7 rouse your anger, pour out wrath,
humble the enemy, scatter the foe.
- 8 Hasten the day, and remember the appointed time;⁷
when your mighty deeds are to be proclaimed.
- 9 Let raging fire consume the fugitive,
and your people's oppressors meet destruction;⁸
- 10 crush the heads of the hostile rulers,
who say, "There is no one besides me!"⁹
- 11 Gather all the tribes of Jacob,
that they may inherit the land as of old,
- 12 show mercy, O Lord,¹⁰ to the people called by your name;
Israel, whom you have named¹¹ your first-born.
- 13 Take pity on your holy city,
Jerusalem, your dwelling place.¹²
- 14 Fill Zion with your majesty,¹³
your temple with your glory.¹⁴
- 15 Give a testimony of your deeds of old;
fulfill the prophecies spoken in your name,
- 16 reward those who have hoped in you,
and let your prophets be proved true.
- 17 Hear, O Lord,¹⁵ the prayer of your servants,
according to your goodwill toward¹⁶ your people;
thus it will be known to the very ends of the earth
that you are the Lord,¹⁷ the God of the ages.
- 18 The throat¹⁸ can swallow any food,
yet some foods are more agreeable than others;

¹ [Sir36:1] Heb(B) / LXX adds

² [Sir36:3] LXX, Syr, Heb(B-margin) / Heb(B) omits "your hand"

³ [Sir36:4] LXX, Syr, Heb(B-margin) / Heb(B) "us"

⁴ [Sir36:5] Heb(B) / LXX "And let them know you"

⁵ [Sir36:5] Heb(B) / LXX adds

⁶ [Sir36:7] LXX, Syr, Heb(B-margin) / Heb(B) "show forth the splendor of your hand and strengthen your arm and your hand."

⁷ [Sir36:10] others "remember your oath"

⁸ [Sir36:11] LXX / Syr "In anger and in fire destroy the enemy, and all the rulers and princes of the nations." / Heb(B) omits altogether ("Let...destruction")

⁹ [Sir36:12] LXX / Syr "put an end to the crown of the enemy, who says, 'There is none like me!'" / Heb(B) "Put an end to the head of the temples of Moab [B-margin 'enemy'], who says 'There is none like me!'"

¹⁰ [Sir36:17] Heb(B), Syr / LXX adds

¹¹ [Sir36:17] others "have likened to"

¹² [Sir36:18] Heb / LXX "your rest"

¹³ [Sir36:19] Heb, Syr / LXX "with the celebration of your wondrous deeds"

¹⁴ [Sir36:19] Heb, Syr / LXX, Lat "people"

¹⁵ [Sir36:22] Heb(B), Syr / LXX adds

¹⁶ [Sir36:22] Heb, two LXX / Lat, most LXX "according to the blessing of Aaron for"

¹⁷ [Sir36:22] Heb(B), Syr / LXX adds

¹⁸ [Sir36:23] Heb(B) / LXX "belly"

- 19 as the palate tests meat by its savor,
so does a keen mind insincere words.
- 20 A deceitful character causes grief,
but an experienced man can turn the tables on him.
- 21 Though any man may be accepted as a husband,
yet one girl will be more suitable than another.¹
- 22 A woman's beauty makes her husband's face light up,
for it surpasses all else that charms the eye;
- 23 and if, in addition, her speech is soothing,²
his lot is beyond that of mortal men.
- 24 He who acquires a wife gets his best possession,³
a helpmate⁴ and a pillar of support.⁵
- 25 A vineyard with no hedge will be overrun;
a man with no wife becomes a homeless wanderer.⁶
- 26 Who will trust an armed band
that shifts from city to city?
Or a man who has no nest,
but lodges where night overtakes him?

CHAPTER 37

- 1 Every friend declares his friendship,
but there are friends who are friends in name only.
- 2 Is it not a sorrow unto death
when your bosom companion becomes your enemy?
- 3 "Alas, my companion! he says⁷ Why were you created⁸
to blanket the earth with deceit?"
- 4 A false friend will share your joys,
but in time of trouble he stands afar off.
- 5 A true friend will fight with you against the foe,
against your enemies he will be your shield-bearer.
- 6 Do not forget your comrade during the battle,⁹
and do not neglect him when you distribute your spoils.¹⁰
- 7 Every counselor points out a way,¹¹
but some counsel ways of their own;
- 8 be on the alert when one proffers advice,
find out first of all what he wants.
For he may be thinking of himself alone;
why should the profit fall to him?¹²
- 9 He may tell you how good your way will be,
and then stand by to watch your misfortune.
- 10 Seek no advice from one who regards you with hostility;¹³

¹ [Sir36:26] LXX / Syr omits "Though any man... than another."

² [Sir36:28] Heb(B) (lit. "there is healing of tongue") / LXX "If there is on her tongue mercy and meekness [LXX(II) adds "and healing"]"

³ [Sir36:29] Heb / LXX "wife enters upon a possession"

⁴ [Sir36:29] LXX / Heb "a fortified city"

⁵ [Sir36:29] Heb / LXX "rest"

⁶ [Sir36:30] Heb / LXX "wife wanders about and sighs"

⁷ [Sir37:3] Heb(D) adds "he says" / Heb(B) adds "that he should have said"

⁸ [Sir37:3] LXX / Heb(B,D) "your enemy? ... Why was I created" / Syr "the enemy and the wicked, why were they created?"

⁹ [Sir37:6] Heb / LXX "comrade in your heart"

¹⁰ [Sir37:6] Heb / LXX "him in your wealth"

¹¹ [Sir37:7] Heb(B) / Heb(B[mg], D) "counselor says, 'Look!'" / LXX "counselor praises counsel"

¹² [Sir37:8] Heb / LXX "lest he take chances against your interest"

¹³ [Sir37:10] LXX / Lat "from your father-in-law"

from those who envy you, keep your intentions hidden.

- 11** Do not speak to a woman about her rival,
nor to a coward about war,
to a merchant about business,
to a buyer about value,
to a miser about generosity,¹
to a cruel man about mercy,
to a lazy man about work,
to a seasonal laborer about the harvest,
to an idle slave about a great task:
pay no attention to any advice they give.²
- 12** Instead, associate with a religious man,
who you are sure keeps the commandments;
who is like-minded with yourself
and will feel for you if you fall.
- 13** Then, too, heed³ your own heart's counsel;
for what have you that you can depend on more?
- 14** A man's conscience can tell him his situation
better than seven watchmen in a lofty tower.
- 15** Most important of all, pray to God
to set your feet in the path of truth.
- 16** A word is the source of every deed;
a thought, of every act.
- 17** The root of all conduct is the mind;
- 18** four branches it shoots forth:⁴
Good and evil, death and life,
their absolute mistress is the tongue.
- 19** A man may be wise and benefit many,
yet be of no use to himself.
- 20** Though a man be wise, if his words are rejected,
he will be deprived of all enjoyment,⁵
- 21** for the Lord has withheld the gift of grace,
since he is lacking in all wisdom.⁶
- 22** When a man is wise to his own advantage,
the fruits of his knowledge will be praiseworthy;⁷
- 23** when a man is wise to his people's advantage,
the fruits of his knowledge are enduring:
- 24** limited are the days of one man's life,
but the life of Israel is days without number.⁸
- 25** One wise for himself has full enjoyment,
and all who see him praise him;⁹
- 26** one wise for his people wins a heritage of honor,¹⁰
and his name endures forever.

¹ [Sir37:11] Heb / LXX "gratitude"

² [Sir37:11] LXX / Heb omits "to an idle slave...they give."

³ [Sir37:13] Heb / LXX "establish"

⁴ [Sir37:17] Heb / LXX "As a clue to changes of heart, four kinds of destiny appear"

⁵ [Sir37:20] Heb(D) / LXX "Though a skillful speaker may be hated, he will be deprived of all food"

⁶ [Sir37:21] LXX / Heb(D), Syr omits "for the Lord...wisdom."

⁷ [Sir37:22] others "trustworthy"

⁸ [Sir37:25] Heb(B, D), LXX / Syr omits "limited are the days...without number."

⁹ [Sir37:24] Heb(B, C, D) / LXX places "One wise...praise him" after "knowledge are enduring"

¹⁰ [Sir37:26] others "confidence"

- 27 My son, while you are well, govern your appetite
so that you allow it not what is bad for you;
- 28 for not every food is good for everyone,
nor is everything suited to every taste.
- 29 Do not be drawn after every enjoyment,
neither become a glutton for choice foods,
- 30 for sickness comes with overeating,
and gluttony brings on biliousness.
- 31 Through lack of self-control many have died,
but the abstemious man prolongs his life.

CHAPTER 38

- 1 Hold the physician in honor, for he is essential to you,
and God it was who established his profession.
- 2 From God the physician has his wisdom,
and the king provides for his sustenance.
- 3 His knowledge makes the doctor distinguished,
and lets him stand before princes.¹
- 4 The Lord makes the earth yield healing herbs
which the prudent man should not neglect.
- 5 Was not the water sweetened by a twig
that men might learn his power?
- 6 He endows men with the knowledge
to glory in his mighty works,²
- 7 through which the physician³ eases pain
- 8 and the druggist prepares his medicines;
thus his creative work continues without cease
in its efficacy on the surface of the earth.
- 9 My son, when you are ill, do not delay,
but pray to God, who will heal you:
- 10 Flee wickedness; let your hands be just,
cleanse your heart of every sin;
- 11 offer your sweet-smelling sacrifice and a memorial,
a portion of choice flour, as much as you can afford.⁴
- 12 Then give the physician his place for the Lord created him;
do not let him leave; for you need him too.
- 13 There are times when recovery lies in his hands,
14 and he too beseeches the Lord
that his diagnosis⁵ may be correct
and his treatment bring about a cure.
- 15 He who is a sinner toward his Maker
will be defiant toward the physician.⁶
- 16 My son, shed tears for one who is dead
with wailing and bitter lament;

¹ [Sir37:3] Heb(B) / Heb(B[mg]) “kings” / LXX “nobles”

² [Sir37:6] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) “his might”

³ [Sir38:7] Heb / LXX “which he”

⁴ [Sir38:11] Heb, LXX(?) / Lat omits “as much as you can afford”

⁵ [Sir38:14] Heb / LXX “rest”

⁶ [Sir38:15] Heb(B) / Heb(B[mg]) “will be delivered into the hands of the doctor” / LXX “may he fall into the hands of the doctor” / Syr “he will be given into the hands of the doctor”

- as is only proper, prepare the body,
do not absent yourself from his burial:
- 17** Weeping bitterly, mourning fully,
pay your tribute of sorrow, as he deserves,
one or two days, to prevent slander;
then compose yourself after your grief,
- 18** for grief can bring on an extremity¹
and heartache destroy one's health.
- 19** In affliction, grief persists;
the curse that rankles makes for a wretched life.²
- 20** Do not turn your thoughts to him again;
cease to recall him; think rather of the end.
- 21** Do not recall him, for there is no hope of his return;
it will not help him, but will do you harm.³
- 22** Remember that his⁴ fate will also be yours;
for him⁵ it was yesterday, for you today.
- 23** With the departed dead, let memory fade;
rally your courage, once his spirit has left.
- 24** The scribe's profession increases his wisdom for himself;⁶
whoever is free from toil can become a wise man.
- 25** How can he become learned who guides the plow,
who thrills in wielding the goad like a lance,
who guides the ox and urges on the bullock,
and whose every concern is for cattle?
- 26** His care is for plowing furrows,
and he keeps a watch on the beasts in the stalls.
- 27** So with every engraver and designer who,
laboring night and day,
fashions carved seals,
and whose concern is to vary the pattern.
His care is to produce a vivid impression,
and he keeps watch till he finishes his design.
- 28** So with the smith standing near his anvil,⁷
forging crude iron.
The heat⁸ from the fire sears⁹ his flesh,
yet he toils away in the furnace heat.
The clang of the hammer deafens¹⁰ his ears,
his eyes are fixed on the tool he is shaping.
His care is to finish his work,
and he keeps watch till he perfects it in detail.

¹ [Sir38:18] Heb(B) / LXX "on death"

² [Sir38:19] LXX "In affliction...life." / Syr "For thus the sad heart, rather than death, breaks the poor with cares and brings grief; because the life of the poor becomes the heart's curse" / Heb(B) omits altogether

³ [Sir38:21~22] LXX / Heb(B) places "Do not recall...harm" after "Remember...for you today."

⁴ [Sir38:22] Heb / LXX "my"

⁵ [Sir38:22] Heb / LXX "me"

⁶ [Sir38:24] Heb(B) Syr [Syr adds "for himself"] / LXX "The scribe's wisdom *is acquired* in the opportunity of leisure"

⁷ [Sir38:28] LXX / Syr "furnace"

⁸ [Sir38:28] LXX (lit. "breath") / Syr "flame"

⁹ [Sir38:28] Lat / LXX "melts"

¹⁰ [Sir38:28] Emendation / LXX "renews"

- 29 So with the potter sitting at his labor,
 revolving the wheel with his feet.
 He is always concerned for his products,
 and turns them out in quantity.
- 30 With his hands he molds the clay,
 and with his feet softens it.
 His care is for proper coloring,
 and he keeps watch on the fire of his kiln.
- 31 All these men are skilled with their hands,
 each one an expert at his own task;
 32 without them no city could be lived in,
 and wherever they stay, they need not hunger.¹
 But they are not sought out for the council of the people,
 33 nor are they prominent in the assembly;²
 they do not occupy the judge's bench,
 nor can they set forth decisions or judgments,
 they cannot expound the instruction of wisdom,³
 nor are they found among the rulers.⁴
- 34 Yet they maintain God's ancient handiwork,
 and their concern is for⁵ the exercise of their skill.

CHAPTER 39

How different the man who devotes himself to the fear of God,
and⁶ to the study of the law of the Most High!

- 1 He explores the wisdom of the men of old
 and occupies himself with the prophecies;
 2 he treasures the discourses of famous men,
 and goes to the heart of involved sayings;
 3 he studies obscure parables,
 and is busied with the hidden meanings of the sages.
- 4 He is in attendance on the great,
 and has entrance to the ruler.
 He travels among the peoples of foreign lands
 to learn what is good and evil among men.
- 5 His care is to rise early to seek Yahweh, his Maker,
 to petition the Most High,
 to open his lips in prayer,
 to ask pardon for his sins.
- 6 Then, if it pleases Yahweh Almighty,
 he will be filled with a spirit of understanding;
 he will pour forth his words of wisdom
 and in prayer give thanks to Yahweh,
 7 who will direct his knowledge and his counsel,

¹ [Sir38:32] Syr / LXX "and they neither sojourn nor walk around"

² [Sir38:32] some LXX, Syr / most LXX omits "But they are not sought...assembly"

³ [Sir38:33] Syr / LXX "instruction and justice"

⁴ [Sir38:33] LXX "found using parables"

⁵ [Sir38:34] Heb / LXX "their prayer is in"

⁶ [Sir38:34] LXX / Syr adds

- as he meditates upon his mysteries.
- 8** He will show the wisdom of what he has learned
and glory in the law of Yahweh's covenant.
- 9** Many will praise his understanding;
his fame¹ can never be effaced;
unfading will be his memory,
through all generations his name will live;
- 10** the congregation² will speak of his wisdom,
and the assembly will sing his praises.
- 11** While he lives he is one out of a thousand,
and when he dies his renown will not cease.
- 12** Once more I will set forth my theme
to shine like the moon in its fullness!
- 13** Listen, my faithful children: open up your petals,
like roses planted near running waters;
- 14** send up the sweet odor of incense,
break forth in blossoms like the lily.
Raise your voices in a hymn of praise;
bless Yahweh for all he has done!
- 15** Proclaim the greatness of his name,
loudly sing his praises,
with music on the harp and all stringed instruments;
sing out with joy as you proclaim:
- 16** All of the works of God are good;
in its own time every need is supplied.
No cause to say, "What is the purpose of this?"
for in God's time all things will be sought after.³
- 17** At his word the waters become still as in a flask;
he had but to speak and the reservoirs were made.
- 18** He has but to command and his will is done;
nothing can limit his achievement.
- 19** The works of all men are present to him;
not a thing escapes his eye.
- 20** His gaze spans all the ages;
is there any counting what he achieves?
To him there is nothing small or insignificant,
and nothing resists or surprises him.⁴
- 21** No cause *then* to say, "What is the purpose of this?"
Everything is chosen to satisfy a need.
- 22** His blessing overflows like the Nile;
like the Euphrates⁵ it enriches the surface of the earth.
- 23** Again, his wrath expels the nations
and turns a fertile land into a salt marsh.⁶

¹ [Sir39:9] Syr / LXX omits "his fame"

² [Sir39:10] Heb(B) / LXX "nations"

³ [Sir39:17] LXX / Syr is different here / Heb(B) omits "NO one can say...sought after" altogether

⁴ [Sir39:20] Heb(B) / LXX omits "is there any count...insignificant" / Syr omits "His gaze...ages" & "and nothing resists...him"

⁵ [Sir39:22] Greek / from Persian "Ufratu" / Hebrew "Furat"

⁶ [Sir39:23] Heb(B) (erroneously) "into salt"

- 24 For the virtuous his paths are level,
to the haughty they are steep;
- 25 from the beginning, he provided good things for the good,
but for the wicked good things and bad.¹
- 26 Chief of all needs for human life
are water and fire, iron and salt,
the heart of the wheat, milk and honey,
the blood of the grape, and oil, and cloth;
- 27 for the good all these are good,
but for the wicked they turn out evil.
- 28 There are storm winds created to punish,
which in their fury can dislodge mountains;²
when destruction must be, they hurl all their force
and appease the anger of their Maker.
- 29 Fire and hail, famine, disease;
these too were created for punishment;³
- 30 ravenous beasts, scorpions, vipers,
and the avenging sword to exterminate the wicked:
all these were created to meet a need,
and are kept in his storehouse for the proper time;⁴
- 31 in doing his bidding they rejoice,
in their assignments they do not disobey his command.
- 32 So from the first I took my stand,
and wrote down as my theme:
- 33 the works of the Lord are all of them good;
every need when it comes he fills.
- 34 No cause then to say, “This is not as good as that”;
for each shows its worth at the proper time.
- 35 So now with full joy of heart proclaim
and bless the name of the Holy One.⁵

CHAPTER 40

- 1 Hard work was created for everyone,
and a heavy yoke, to the sons of Adam;
from the day one leaves his mother’s womb
to the day he returns to⁶ the mother of all the living,⁷
- 2 his thoughts, the fear in his heart,
and his troubled forebodings until the day he dies—⁸
- 3 whether he sits on a lofty throne
or grovels in dust and ashes,
- 4 whether he bears a crown and head ornament⁹
or is wrapped in the coarsest of cloaks—¹⁰
- 5 are of wrath and envy, trouble and dread,

¹ [Sir39:25] Heb, Lat / LXX “sinners bad things”

² [Sir39:28] Heb, Syr / LXX “can scourge mightily”

³ [Sir39:29] DSS(frag), Heb(B) / LXX “. Also in his storehouse, kept for the proper time, are fire and hail, famine, disease”

⁴ [Sir39:30] DSS(frag), Heb(B) / LXX omits “all these were... proper time”

⁵ [Sir39:35] Heb(B) / LXX “of the Lord”

⁶ [Sir40:1] other LXX, Lat “they are buried in”

⁷ [Sir40:1] Heb / LXX omits “the living”

⁸ [Sir40:2] Heb(B) omits “his thoughts... he dies”

⁹ [Sir40:4] Heb(B) / LXX “bears purple and a crown” / Syr “bears a crown”

¹⁰ [Sir40:4] Heb(B) (lit. “a garment of hair”) / Syr “a garment of poverty”

- terror of death, fury and strife.
 Even when he lies on his bed to rest,
 his cares at night disturb his sleep.
- 6** So short is his rest it seems like none,
 till in his dreams he struggles as he did by day,
 terrified by what his mind's eye sees,
 like a fugitive being pursued;
- 7** as he reaches safety,¹ he wakes up astonished
 that there was nothing to fear.
- 8** So it is with all flesh, with man and with beast,
 but for sinners seven times more.
- 9** Plague and bloodshed, fiery heat and drought,²
 plunder and ruin, famine³ and death:
- 10** for the wicked, these were created evil,
 and because of them destruction hastens.⁴
- 11** All that is of earth returns to earth,
 and what is from above returns above.⁵
- 12** All that comes from bribes or injustice will be wiped out,
 but loyalty remains for ages.⁶
- 13** Wealth out of wickedness is like a wadi in spate:
 like a mighty stream with lightning and thunder,
- 14** which, in its rising, rolls along the stones,
 but suddenly, once and for all, comes to an end.
- 15** The offshoot of violence will not flourish,
 for the root of unclean *men* is on a sheer rock;⁷
- 16** or they are like reeds on the riverbank,
 withered before all other plants;
- 17** but goodness will never be cut off,
 and righteousness endures forever.
- 18** Wealth or wages can make life sweet,⁸
 but better than either is finding a treasure.
- 19** A child or a city will preserve one's name,
 but better than either, attaining wisdom.
 Sheepfolds and orchards bring flourishing health;⁹
 but better than either, a devoted wife.
- 20** Wine and music¹⁰ delight the soul,
 but better than either, the love of friends.¹¹
- 21** The flute and the harp offer sweet melody,
 but better than either, a pure¹² tongue.
- 22** Charm and beauty delight the eye,
 but better than either, the flowers of the field.

¹ [Sir40:7] Heb(B) (lit. "in the time of his deliverance") / LXX "in the time of his need"

² [Sir40:4] Heb(B) / LXX "bloodshed, wrath and the sword"

³ [Sir40:9] LXX / Heb(B) "evil"

⁴ [Sir40:9~10] Heb(B), LXX have these verses / Syr omits "Plague...destruction." / LXX "evil, and because of him the flood came"

⁵ [Sir40:11] Heb, Syr / LXX, Lat in " , and what is from the waters returns to the sea"

⁶ [Sir40:12] DSS(frag), LXX / Heb(B) omits "All that comes...for ages."

⁷ [Sir40:15] DSS, Heb(B[mgl]) / B[txt] "on a rocky crag"

⁸ [Sir40:18] Heb / LXX "Life is sweet for the self-reliant worker"

⁹ [Sir40:19] DSS, Heb(B), Syr / LXX omits "but better...health" (possibly by scribal error)

¹⁰ [Sir40:20] LXX / Heb(B) "Wine and strong drink" / Syr "Old wine"

¹¹ [Sir40:20] Heb / LXX "wisdom"

¹² [Sir40:21] Heb(B) / LXX "pleasant"

- 23 A friend, a neighbor, are timely guides,
but better than either, a prudent wife.¹
- 24 A brother, a helper, for times of stress;
but better than either, charity that rescues.
- 25 Gold and silver make one's way secure,
but better than either, sound judgment.
- 26 Wealth and vigor build up confidence,
but better than either, fear of God.
The fear of Yahweh leaves nothing wanting;
he who has it need seek no other support.
- 27 The fear of God is a garden of blessings;
its canopy, all that is glorious.
- 28 My son, do not live the life of a beggar,
better to die than to beg;
- 29 when one has to look to another's table,
his life is not really a life.
His neighbor's delicacies bring revulsion of spirit
to one who understands inward feelings.
- 30 In the mouth of the shameless man begging is sweet,
but within him it burns like fire.

CHAPTER 41

- 1 O death! how bitter the thought of you
for the man living at peace in his home,²
for the man unruffled and always successful,
who still can enjoy life's pleasures.³
- 2 O death! how welcome your sentence
to the weak⁴ man who is failing in strength,
the man who is tottering and always rebuffed,
devoid of sight, and with vanished hope.
- 3 Do not fear death's decree for you;⁵
remember, it embraces those before you, and those after.
- 4 This is the end⁶ for all flesh from God;
why then should you reject the will of the Most High?
Whether one has lived ten years, a hundred, or a thousand,⁷
in the Netherworld he has no claim on life.
- 5 A reprobate line are the children of sinners,
and witless offspring are in the homes of the wicked.
- 6 Their dominion is lost to sinners' children,
and reproach abides with their descendants.
- 7 Children curse their wicked father,
for they suffer disgrace through him.
- 8 Woe to you, O sinful men,
who forsake the law of the Most High.
- 9 If you have children, calamity will seize them;

¹ [Sir40:23] Heb, Syr / LXX "a wife with her husband"

² [Sir41:1] DSS, Heb(B) / LXX, Syr "amid his possessions"

³ [Sir41:1] DSS, Heb(B) / LXX "enjoy food"

⁴ [Sir41:2] Heb(B) "sorrowful"

⁵ [Sir41:3] DSS, LXX / Syr "Do not fear death, for it is your portion"

⁶ [Sir41:4] DSS, Syr / LXX "decree" / Heb(B) "portion"

⁷ [Sir41:4] DSS, LXX / Heb(B) reverses "ten" & "a thousand"

- you will beget them only for groaning.
 When you stumble, there is lasting joy;
 at death, you become a curse.¹
- 10 Whatever is of nothing returns to nothing,
 so too the godless from void to void.
- 11 Man's body is a fleeting thing,
 but a virtuous name will never be blotted out.²
- 12 Have a care for your name, for it will stand by you
 better than precious treasures³ in the thousands;
- 13 the boon of life is for limited days,
 but a good name, for days without number.
- 14 ⁴Hidden wisdom and unseen treasure—
 of what use is either?
- 15 Better is the man who hides his folly
 than the man who hides his wisdom.
- 16 My children, listen to instruction concerning shame
 and be ashamed according to my judgment.
Therefore, show respect for my words,⁵
 For not every kind of shame becomes shameful, nor is every kind of reproach to be preferred.⁶
- 17 Be ashamed of sexual immortality before father and mother,
 and of falsehood before prince and ruler;
- 18 of flattery before master and mistress;
 and of crime before the public assembly;
 of disloyalty before friend and companion,
- 19 and of theft from the place where you settle.
 Be ashamed of breaking an oath or agreement,⁷
 and of stretching out your elbow when you dine;
- 20 of refusing to give when asked;
 and of turning away the face of your relative;
- 21 of defrauding another of his appointed share;
 and of failing to return a greeting;
 of gazing upon a man's wife;
 and of entertaining thoughts about a prostitute;
- 22 of trifling with your servant girl,
 and of violating her bed;
 of speaking words of reproach before friends,
 and of following up your gifts with insults;
- 42.1 of repeating what you hear,
 and of betraying secrets—
 these are the things you should rightly avoid as shameful
 and you will find favor in the sight of everyone.

CHAPTER 42

But do not be ashamed of the following things,

¹ [Sir41:9] LXX [some LXX] "If you multiply, it is for destruction] and if you are born, you will be born for a curse, and if you die, you will be apportioned a curse."

² [Sir41:11] Heb / LXX "People grieve over the death of the body, but the bad name of sinners will be blotted out"

³ [Sir41:12] Heb(B[mg]), one Lat (lit. "treasures of desire") / Heb(B[txt]) "treasures of wisdom" / LXX "great treasures of gold" / Syr "treasures of deceit"

⁴ [Sir41:13-22] follows DSS verse order (13,14b,15,14a,16b,17,18,19,21a,21b,20,21,20b,22a,22b,22c,22c) / Syr omits 41:13-42:8, except for parts of 41:19-20

⁵ [Sir41:16] DSS / others add

⁶ [Sir41:16] DSS / LXX "and not everything is confidently esteemed by everyone"

⁷ [Sir41:19] DSS / LXX "and before the truth of God and the covenant"

lest you sin through human partiality:
2 *Do not be ashamed* of the law of the Most High and his precepts,
 or of rendering judgment to acquit the wicked;
3 of sharing the expenses of a business or a journey,
 or of dividing an inheritance or property;
4 of accuracy of scales and balances,
 or of tested measures and weights;¹
 of acquiring much or little,
5 or of bargaining in dealing with a merchant;
 of constant training of children,
 or of beating the sides of a disloyal servant;²
6 of a seal to keep an erring wife at home,
 or of a key placed where there are many hands;
7 of numbering every deposit,
 or of recording all that is given or received;
8 of chastisement of the silly and the foolish,
 or of the tottering old gray-beard occupied with sexual immorality.
 Thus you will be truly refined,
 and recognized by all men as discreet.

9 A daughter is a treasure that keeps her father wakeful,
 and worry over her drives away rest:
 lest she pass her prime unmarried,³
 or when she is married, lest she be disliked;
10 while unmarried, lest she be seduced,
 or, as a wife, lest she prove unfaithful;
 lest she conceive in her father's home,
 or be sterile in that of her husband.
11 My son, keep a close watch on your daughter,
 lest she make you the sport of your enemies,⁴
 a byword in the city, a reproach among the people,
 an object of derision in public gatherings.⁵
 See that there is no lattice in her room,
 no place that overlooks the approaches to the house.⁶
12 Do not let her parade her beauty before any man,
 or spend her time with married women;
13 for just as moths come from garments,
 so a woman's wickedness comes from *another* woman.
14 Better a man's harshness than a woman's indulgence,
 and a frightened daughter than any disgrace.
15 Now will I recall the works of God;⁷
 and I will describe what I have seen.
 At the word of the Lord were his works brought into being;
 and an act of his grace is his doctrine.⁸
16 As the rising sun is clear to all,

¹ [Sir42:4] DSS / LXX omits "or of tested measures and weights"

² [Sir42:5] DSS / Heb(B) omits "of constant training...servant"

³ [Sir42:9] DSS / Heb(B) "lest she commit adultery"

⁴ [Sir42:11] LXX / Syr "lest you make a bad name for yourself" / DSS, Heb(B) are too fragmentary

⁵ [Sir42:11] Heb / LXX "to shame before the great multitude"

⁶ [Sir42:11] Heb / LXX omits "See that...house."

⁷ [Sir42:15] Heb / LXX omits "the Lord"

⁸ [Sir42:15] DSS / Syr "and all his creatures do his will" / some LXX "and judgment happens by his good will" / most LXX omits

- so the glory of the Lord fills all his works;
17 yet even God's holy ones must fail
in recounting all his marvelous works,¹
though the Lord has given his hosts,
the strength to stand firm before his glory.
18 He plumbs the abyss and penetrates the heart;
he understands their secrets.
The Most High possesses all knowledge,
and sees *in advance* what is to come upon the age:²
19 he makes known the past and the future,
and reveals the deepest secrets.
20 No understanding does he lack;
no single thing escapes him.
21 Perennial is his almighty wisdom;
he is one and the same from all eternity,
with nothing added, nothing taken away;
no need of a counselor for him!
22 How beautiful are all his works!
even to the spark and the fleeting vision!
23 All of them live and abide³ forever;
and each one is preserved to meet a particular need.⁴
24 All of them come in pairs, one from another,⁵
yet none of them has he made in vain,
25 for each in turn, as it comes, is good;
can one ever see enough of their splendor?

CHAPTER 43

- 1** The beauty of the celestial heights and the pure firmament,
the firm heavens manifest its glory.
2 The orb of the sun, resplendent at its rising:
what a wonderful work of the Most High!
3 At noon it seethes the surface of the earth,
and who can bear its scorching heat?
4 Like a blazing furnace of solid metal,
it sets the mountains aflame with its rays;⁶
by its fiery darts the land is consumed;
the eyes are dazzled by its light.
5 Great indeed is the Lord who made it,
at whose orders it urges on its steeds.
6 The moon, too, that marks the changing times,
governing the seasons, their lasting sign;
7 by it⁷ *we know* the appointed seasons, and from it the feast days;⁸
this light-giver which wanes in its course.
8 The new moon, as its name suggests, renews itself;⁹
how wondrous in this change!¹

¹ [Sir42:17] DSS, LXX / Heb(B[mg]) "recounting the marvels of his mighty words" / Syr "recounting the mighty works of his marvels"

² [Sir42:18] DSS / LXX "he sees the sign of the age"

³ [Sir42:23] DSS, LXX, (Syr similar) / Heb(B) "God lives and abides"

⁴ [Sir42:23] DSS / LXX "forever for every need, and all are obedient" / Heb(B) also has "obedient" at the end

⁵ [Sir42:24] DSS, Syr / LXX "All things come in pairs, one opposite the other" / Heb(B) "all things are different, one from the other"

⁶ [Sir43:4] NRS translates "A man tending a furnace works in burning heat, but three times as hot is the sun scorching the mountains" (other manuscripts replace "tending" with "blowing upon")

⁷ [Sir43:7] DSS / Heb(B) "them" / LXX, Syr "the moon"

⁸ [Sir43:7] DSS / Heb(B) "the appointed season and prescribed times" / LXX "the sign of the feast day" / Syr "the signs of the feast days"

⁹ [Sir43:8] DSS / LXX "The month is named after the moon"

- A signal for the host of the waterskins in the heights,
it paves the firmament with its brilliance.
- 9 The beauty of the heavens are the glory of the stars;
sparkling adornments in the heights of God.
- 10 At the orders² of the Lord³ they keep their appointed place
and never relax in their watch.⁴
- 11 Behold the rainbow! Then bless its Maker,
for majestic indeed is its splendor;
- 12 it spans the heavens with its glory,
this bow bent by the mighty⁵ hands of God.⁶
- 13 His rebuke marks out the path for the lightning,⁷
and speeds the arrows of his judgment to their goal.
- 14 At it the storehouse is opened,
and the clouds hurry forth like vultures.
- 15 In his majesty he gives the clouds their power
and breaks off the hailstones.
- 16 The thunder of his voice makes the earth writhe;
before his might the mountains quake.
- 17 A word from him drives on the south wind,
the angry north wind, the hurricane and the storm.
He sprinkles the snow like fluttering birds;
it comes to settle like swarms of locusts.
- 18 Its shining whiteness blinds the eyes,
the mind is baffled by its steady fall.
- 19 He scatters frost like salt;
it shines like blossoms on the thornbush.
- 20 He sends the cold blasts of the northern wind,
that turn the ponds to lumps of ice.
He freezes over every body of water,
and clothes each pool with a coat of mail.
- 21 When the mountain growth is scorched with heat,
and the flowering meadows as though by flames,
- 22 the dripping clouds restore them all,
and the scattered dew enriches the parched land.
- 23 His is the plan that calms the deep,
and plants the islands in the sea.
- 24 Those who go down to the sea tell part of its story,
and when we hear them we are thunderstruck;
- 25 in it are his creatures, stupendous, amazing,
all kinds of life, and the might of Rahab.
- 26 For him each *heavenly* messenger succeeds,
and at his bidding accomplishes his will.
- 27 More than this we need not add;
let the last word be, he is all in all!
- 28 Let us praise him the more, since we cannot fathom him,

¹ [Sir43:8] Heb(B[txt]) / LXX, Syr“; it increases marvelously in its changing”

² [Sir43:10] DSS / LXX, Syr “orders”

³ [Sir43:10] DSS / LXX, Syr “the Holy One”

⁴ [Sir43:10] LXX “they... watch” / DSS, Heb(B) “it keeps its appointed place, and it never relaxes in their watches”

⁵ [Sir43:12] DSS / LXX omits “mighty”

⁶ [Sir43:12] DSS / LXX “hands of the Most High”

⁷ [Sir43:13] DSS, Heb(B) / LXX “By his command he sends the driving snow”

- for greater is he than all his works;
- 29 Yahweh is awesome indeed,
and wonderful is his power.
- 30 Lift up your voices to glorify Yahweh,
though he is still beyond your power to praise;
extol him with renewed strength, and weary not,
though you cannot reach the end.
- 31 For who can see him and describe him?
or who can praise him as he is?¹
- 32 Beyond these, many things lie hid;
only a few of his works have I² seen.
- 33 It is Yahweh who has made all things,
and he gives wisdom to those who fear him.³

CHAPTER 44

- 1 Let me now sing the praises of pious men,⁴
our ancestors, each in his own time:
- 2 The Most High⁵ apportioned to them⁶ great glory,
and his greatness from the days of old.
- 3 Subduers of the land in kingly fashion,
men of renown for their might,
or counselors in their prudence,
or seers of all things in prophecy;
- 4 resolute princes of the folk,
and governors with their staves;
authors skilled in composition,
and framers of epigrams and pointed maxims;⁷
- 5 composers of melodious psalms,
or discourses on lyric themes;
- 6 stalwart men, solidly established
and at peace in their own estates—
- 7 all these were glorious in their time,
each illustrious in his day.
- 8 Some of them have left behind a name
and men recount their praiseworthy deeds;
- 9 but of others there is no memory,
for when they ceased, they ceased,
and they are as though they had not lived,
they and their children after them.
- 10 Yet these also were godly men
whose virtues have not been forgotten;
- 11 their wealth remains in their families,
their heritage with their descendants;
- 12 through God's covenant with them their family endures,
their posterity, for their sake.
- 13 And for all time their progeny will endure,
their glory¹ will never be blotted out;

¹ [Sir43:31] LXX / Heb(B) omits "For you can see...as he is?"

² [Sir43:32] Heb(B) / LXX "we"

³ [Sir43:11~33] DSS, Heb(B) ["to the pious"], LXX / Syr omits "Behold the rainbow!...fear him."

⁴ [Sir44:1] DSS / others "Let us now praise famous men"

⁵ [Sir44:2] DSS / others "the Lord"

⁶ [Sir44:2] DSS / LXX "created"

⁷ [Sir44:4] DSS / LXX omits "and framers...maxims"

- 14 their bodies are peacefully laid away,
but their name lives on and on.
- 15 The assembly declares² their wisdom,
and the congregation proclaims their praise.
- 16 ENOCH walked with Yahweh and was taken up,
that succeeding generations might learn by his example.³
- 17 NOAH, was found righteous and perfect;
in the time of devastation he kept the race alive.⁴
Because of his worth there were survivors,
and with a sign to him the deluge ended;
- 18 a lasting agreement was made with him,
that all flesh shall never be destroyed.
- 19 ABRAHAM, father of many peoples,
kept his glory without stain:
- 20 he observed the precepts of the Most High,
and entered into an agreement with him;
in his own flesh he incised the ordinance,
and when tested he was found loyal.
- 21 For this reason, God promised him with an oath
that in his seed the nations of the earth⁵ would be blessed,
that he would make him⁶ numerous as the grains of dust,⁷
and exalt his seed like the stars;⁸
that he would give them an inheritance from sea to sea,
and from the River⁹ to the ends of the earth.
- 22 And he renewed the same promise¹⁰ for ISAAC,
because of his father Abraham.
The covenant with all his ancestors was confirmed,
- 23 and the blessing rested upon the head of JACOB.
God acknowledged him as the firstborn,¹¹
and gave him his inheritance.
He fixed the boundaries for his tribes,
and their division into twelve.
From him was to spring the man¹²
who won the favor of all:

CHAPTER 45

- 1 Dear to God and men, MOSES,
whose memory is held in benediction.¹³

¹ [Sir44:13] DSS, LXX, Syr / Heb(B) "righteousness"

² [Sir44:15] DSS / LXX "Peoples declare"

³ [Sir44:16] Heb(B) / LXX "...taken up, an example of a change-of-mind to all generations" / Syr omits "Enoch....example." / DSS also omits, but contains a blank line here instead.

⁴ [Sir44:17] Heb / LXX "was taken in exchange"

⁵ [Sir44:21] Heb(B), LXX / Syr adds

⁶ [Sir44:21] Heb(B), LXX / Syr "make his seed"

⁷ [Sir44:21] Heb(B) / LXX "as the dust of the earth" / Syr "as the sands of the seashore"

⁸ [Sir44:21] Heb(B), LXX / Syr "and that he would set his seed above all other nations"

⁹ [Sir44:21] Heb(B), LXX / Syr "Euphrates"

¹⁰ [Sir44:22] Heb(B[mg]), LXX / Heb(B[txt]) "And he raised up a son"

¹¹ [Sir44:23] Heb(B[mg]) / Heb(B[txt]), LXX "him with a blessing."

¹² [Sir44:23] Heb(B), LXX / Lat, Syr, Eth "men"

¹³ [Sir45:1] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr "memory is a blessing"

- 2 He made him equal in honor to the holy ones,
and the Lord strengthened him with fearful powers;¹
- 3 by his words he wrought swift miracles²
and sustained him in the king's presence.
He gave him the commandments for his people,
and revealed to him his glory.
- 4 For his trustworthiness and meekness
God selected him from all men.
- 5 He permitted him to hear his voice,
and led him into the cloud,
where, face to face, he gave him the commandments,
the law of life and understanding,
that he might teach his precepts to Jacob,
his judgments and decrees to Israel.
- 6 He raised up also, like Moses in holiness,
his brother AARON, of the tribe of Levi.
- 7 He made him perpetual in his office
when he bestowed on him the priesthood of his people;
he established him in honor³
and crowned him with lofty majesty.
- 8 He clothed him with splendid apparel,
and adorned him with the glorious vestments:
breeches and tunic and robe
- 9 with pomegranates around the hem,
and a rustle of bells round about,⁴
through whose pleasing sound at each step
he would be heard within the inner-sanctum,
and the children of his race would be remembered;
- 10 the sacred vestments of gold, of violet,
and of crimson, wrought with embroidery;
the breastpiece for decision, the ephod and cincture
- 11 with scarlet yarn, the work of the weaver;
precious stones with seal engravings on the breastpiece
in golden settings, every precious stone,⁵ the work of the jeweler,
to commemorate in incised letters
each of the tribes of Israel;
- 12 on his turban the diadem of gold,
its plate wrought with the insignia of holiness,
majestic, glorious, renowned for splendor,
a delight to the eyes, beauty supreme.
- 13 Before him, no one was adorned with these,
nor may they ever be worn by any
except his sons and them alone,
generation after generation, for all time.
- 14 His cereal offering is wholly burnt
with the established sacrifice twice each day;⁶

¹ [Sir45:2] Heb(B[img]), LXX, Syr / Heb(B[txt]) "him in the heights"

² [Sir45:3] Heb / LXX "he caused signsto cease"

³ [Sir45:7] LXX / Heb(B) "he ministered to him in his glory"

⁴ [Sir45:9] LXX / Heb(B) places "and a rustle of bells around about" before "with pomegranates..."

⁵ [Sir45:11] LXX / Heb(B) adds "on the breastpiece" & "every precious stone"

⁶ [Sir45:9~14] Heb(B), LXX / Syr omits "with pomegranates around...each day"

- 15 for Moses ordained him
 and anointed him with the holy oil,
 in a lasting covenant with him and with his family,
 as permanent as the heavens,
 that he should serve God in his priesthood
 and bless his people in his name.
- 16 He chose him from all men
 to offer holocausts and choice offerings,
 to burn sacrifices of sweet odor for a memorial,
 and to atone for the¹ people of Israel.
- 17 He gave to him his laws,
 and authority and² judgments:
 to teach the testimonies to his people,
 and the ritual to the descendants of Israel.
- 18 Men of other families were inflamed against him,
 were jealous of him in the desert,
 the followers of Dathan and Abiram,
 and the band of Korah in their defiance.
- 19 But Yahweh saw this and became angry,
 he destroyed them in his burning wrath.
 He brought down upon them a miracle,
 and consumed them with his flaming fire.
- 20 Then he increased the glory of Aaron
 and bestowed upon him his inheritance:
 the sacred offerings he allotted to him,
 with the showbread as his portion;
- 21 the oblations of Yahweh are his food,
 a gift to him and his descendants.
- 22 But he holds no land among the people
 nor shares with them their heritage;
 for Yahweh himself is his³ portion,
 his inheritance in the midst of Israel.
- 23 PHINEHAS too, the son of Eleazar,
 was the courageous third of his line
 when, zealous for the God of all,
 he met the crisis of his people
 and, at the prompting of his noble heart,
 atoned for the children of Israel.
- 24 Therefore on him, God again conferred the right,
 in a covenant of friendship, to provide for the inner-sanctum and of his people,⁴
 so that he and his descendants should possess
 the chief-priesthood forever.
- 25 For even his covenant with David,
 the son of Jesse of the tribe of Judah,
 was an individual heritage through one son alone;
 but the heritage of Aaron is for all his descendants.

And now bless Yahweh

¹ [Sir45:16] others "his" / others "your"

² [Sir45:17] Heb / LXX "authority in covenants of"

³ [Sir45:22] others "your"

⁴ [Sir45:24] Heb(B) / LXX adds

who has crowned you with glory!¹

- 26** May he grant you wisdom of heart
to govern his people in righteousness,
lest their welfare should ever be forgotten,
or your authority, throughout all time.

CHAPTER 46

- 1** JOSHUA, son of Nun, was a valiant leader,
assistant to Moses in the prophetic office,
formed to be, as his name implies,²
the great savior of God's chosen ones,
to wreak vengeance upon the enemy
and to win the inheritance for Israel.
- 2** What glory was his when he raised his arm,
to brandish his javelin against the city!
- 3** And who could withstand him
when he fought the battles of Yahweh?
- 4** Did he not stop the sun by his power,
so that one day became two?
- 5** He called upon the Most High God
when his enemies beset him on all sides,
and God Most High gave answer to him
in hailstones of tremendous power,
- 6** which he rained down upon the hostile army
until on the slope he destroyed the foe;
that all the doomed nations might know
that Yahweh was watching over his people's battles.

And because he was a devoted follower of God

- 7** and in Moses' lifetime showed himself loyal,
he and CALEB, son of Jephunneh,
when they opposed the congregation,³
averted God's anger from the people
and suppressed the wicked complaint—
- 8** because of this, they were the only two spared
from the 600,000 infantry,
to lead the people into their inheritance,
the land flowing with milk and honey.
- 9** And the strength he gave to Caleb
remained with him even in his old age
until he won his way onto the summits of the land;
his family too received an inheritance,
- 10** that all the people of Jacob might know
how good it is to be a devoted follower of Yahweh.

- 11** The JUDGES, too, each one of them,
whose hearts were not deceived,
who did not abandon God:
may their memory be ever blessed,

¹ [Sir45:26] Heb / LXX omits "And now...glory"

² [Sir46:1] LXX / Heb(B) "be in histime"

³ [Sir46:7] others "enemy"

12 their bones return to life from their resting place,
and their names receive fresh luster in their children!

13 Beloved of his people, dear to his Maker,¹
dedicated from his mother's womb,
consecrated to Yahweh as a prophet,²
was SAMUEL, the judge and priest.³
At God's word he established the kingdom
and anointed princes to rule the people.

14 By the law of Yahweh he judged the nation,
when he visited the encampments of Jacob.⁴

15 As a trustworthy prophet he was sought out
and his words proved him a true seer.

16 He, too, called upon God, the Mighty One,⁵
when he was hard pressed with enemies on every side,
and offered him a suckling lamb;

17 then Yahweh thundered forth from heaven,
and the tremendous roar of his voice was heard.

18 He brought low the rulers of the enemy⁶
and destroyed all the lords of the Philistines.

19 When Samuel approached the end of his life,
he testified before Yahweh and his anointed prince,
"No bribe or secret gift have I taken from any man!"
and no one dared gainsay him,
and even to the time of his decease he was found prudent
in the sight of the Lord and of all the living.⁷

20 Even when he lay buried, his guidance was sought;
he made known to the king his fate,
And from the grave he raised his voice as a prophet,
to put an end to the wickedness of the people.⁸

CHAPTER 47

1 After him came NATHAN
who served in the presence of David.

2 Like the choice fat of the sacred offerings,
so was DAVID in Israel.

3 He made sport of lions as though they were kids,
and of bears, like lambs of the flock.⁹

4 As a youth he slew the giant
and wiped out the people's disgrace,
when his hand let fly the slingstone
that crushed the pride of Goliath.

5 Since he called upon the Most High God,
who gave strength to his right arm

¹ [Sir46:13] Heb(B) / LXX "Beloved of the Lord"

² [Sir46:13] Heb(B) / LXX omits "dedicated from...prophet"

³ [Sir46:13] Heb(B) / LXX "a prophet of the Lord"

⁴ [Sir46:14] Emendation / Heb(B), LXX, Syr "and the Lord watched over Jacob"

⁵ [Sir46:16] LXX adds

⁶ [Sir46:18] Heb / LXX "rulers of the people of Tyre"

⁷ [Sir46:19] LXX / Heb(B) adds

⁸ [Sir46:20] Emendation / LXX "to the wickedness of the people" / Syr "to sins"

⁹ [Sir47:3] LXX / Heb(B) "like bulls of Bashan"

- to defeat the skilled warrior
and raise up the might of his people,
6 therefore the women sang his praises
and ascribed to him tens of thousands.
When he assumed the royal crown, he battled
7 and subdued the enemy on every side.
He destroyed the hostile Philistines
and shattered their power till our own day.
8 With his every deed he offered thanks to the Holy One,
the Most High, proclaiming his glory;
he sang praise with all his heart, and loved his Maker
and daily had his praises sung;¹
9 he added beauty to the feasts
and solemnized the seasons of each year
10 with string music before the altar,
providing sweet melody for the psalms
so that when the Holy Name was praised,
before daybreak the inner-sanctum would resound.
11 Yahweh forgave him his sins
and exalted his strength forever;
he conferred on him the rights of royalty
and established his throne in Israel.²
- 12 Because of his merits he had as his successor
a wise son, who lived in security:³
13 SOLOMON reigned during an era of peace,
for God made tranquil all his borders.
He built a house to the name of God,
and established a lasting inner-sanctum.
14 How wise you were when you were young,
overflowing with instruction, like the Nile⁴ in flood!
15 Your understanding covered the whole earth,
and, like a sea, filled it with knowledge.
16 Your fame reached distant coasts,⁵
and their peoples came to hear you;⁶
17 with song and story and riddle,
and with your answers, you astounded the nations.
18 You were called by that glorious name
which was conferred upon Israel.
You gathered gold like so much iron,
you heaped up silver as though it were lead;
19 but you gave your loins to women
and gave them dominion over your body.
20 You brought dishonor upon your reputation,
shame upon your marriage,
wrath upon your descendants,
and they were⁷ grieved at your folly;

¹ [Sir47:9] LXX(II) / LXX(I) omits "and daily has his praises sung"

² [Sir47:11] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) "throne over Jerusalem"

³ [Sir47:12] Heb / LXX "in a broad place"

⁴ [Sir47:14] Heb / LXX "like a river"

⁵ [Sir47:16] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) omits "Your fame reached distant coasts"

⁶ [Sir47:16] Syr / LXX "and you were loved for your happy estate" / Heb(B) omits altogether

⁷ [Sir47:20] others "and I was"

21 thus two governments came into being,
when in Ephraim kingship was usurped.
22 But God does not withdraw his mercy,
nor permit even one of his promises to fail.
He does not uproot the posterity of his chosen one,
nor destroy the offspring of his friend.
So he gave to Jacob a remnant,
to David a root from his own family.

23 Solomon finally slept with his fathers,¹
and left behind him one of his sons,
expansive in² folly, limited in sense, REHOBOAM,
who by his policy made the people rebel;
until one arose who should not be remembered,
the sinner³ who led Israel into sin,
who brought ruin to Ephraim
24 and caused them to be exiled from their land.⁴

CHAPTER 48

25 Their sinfulness grew more and more,
and they lent themselves to every evil,⁵
48.1 till like a fire there appeared the prophet
whose words were as a flaming furnace.
2 Their staff of bread he shattered,⁶
in his zeal he reduced them to straits;
3 by God's word he shut up the heavens
and three times brought down fire.
4 How awesome are you, ELIJAH!
Whose glory is equal to yours?
5 You brought a dead man back to life
from the Netherworld, by the will of Yahweh.
6 You sent kings down to destruction,
and nobles, from their beds of sickness.
7 You heard threats at Sinai,
at Horeb, avenging judgments.
8 You anointed kings who should inflict vengeance,
and a prophet⁷ as your⁸ successor.
9 You were taken aloft in a whirlwind,
in a chariot with fiery horses.⁹
10 You are destined,¹⁰ it is written, in time to come
to put an end to wrath before the day of Yahweh,¹¹
to turn back the hearts of fathers toward their sons,
and to reestablish the tribes of Jacob.
11 Blessed is he who shall have seen you before he dies!¹

¹ [Sir47:23] LXX / Heb(B) "slept in despair"

² [Sir47:23] Heb(B), Syr / LXX "the people's"

³ [Sir47:23] Heb(B), Syr / LXX "rebel. Also Jeroboam the son of Nebat"

⁴ [Sir47:23] Heb(B), Syr / LXX omits "and caused them to be exiled from their land"

⁵ [Sir47:25] Heb(B) / LXX "till vengeance came upon them"

⁶ [Sir48:2] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr "furnace, who [Syr "furnance, and he"] brought down on them a famine"

⁷ [Sir48:8] Heb(B) / LXX "and prophets"

⁸ [Sir48:8] Heb / LXX "his"

⁹ [Sir48:9] LXX / Syr "by fiery captors, heavenward"

¹⁰ [Sir48:10] Heb / LXX "are for reproofs"

¹¹ [Sir48:10] Syr / LXX "to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury"s

for we too shall surely live.²

- 12** When Elijah was enveloped in the whirlwind,
ELISHA was filled with his spirit.
He wrought twice as many signs
and marvels with every utterance of his mouth.³
During his lifetime he feared no one,
nor was any man able to intimidate his will.
- 13** Nothing was beyond his power;
from where he lay buried, his dead body prophesied.
- 14** In life he performed wonders,
and after death, marvelous deeds.
- 15** Despite all this the people did not change *their* mind,
nor did they give up their sins,
until they were rooted out of their land
and scattered all over the earth.
- 15** But Judah remained, a tiny people,
with its rulers from the house of David.
- 16** Some of these did what was right,
but others were extremely sinful.
- 17** HEZEKIAH fortified his city
and had water brought into it;
with iron⁴ tools he cut through the rock
and he built reservoirs for water.⁵
- 18** During his reign Sennacherib led an invasion
and sent his adjutant from Lachish;⁶
He shook his fist at Zion
and blasphemed God in his pride.
- 19** The people's hearts melted within them,
and they were in anguish like that of childbirth.
- 20** But they called upon the Most High God⁷
and lifted up their hands to him;
he heard the prayer they uttered,⁸
and saved them through ISAIAH.
- 21** God struck the camp of the Assyrians
and routed them with a plague.⁹
- 22** For Hezekiah did what was right
and held fast to the paths of David,
as ordered by the illustrious prophet Isaiah,
who saw the truth in visions.
- 23** In his lifetime he turned back the sun
and prolonged the life of the king.
- 24** By his powerful spirit he looked into the future

¹ [Sir48:11] LXX "Blessed are those who saw you and were adomed with your love,"

² [Sir48:11] LXX / Syr " , but he shall not die, but shall certainly live" / Lat " , for we live our lives only, but after death our fame will not be such *as his*"

³ [Sir48:12] Heb, Syr / LXX omits "He wrought . . . mouth"

⁴ [Sir48:17] LXX / Heb(B) "bronze"

⁵ [Sir48:17] Syr omits "with iron tools . . . for water."

⁶ [Sir48:18] Heb(B), LXX / some others add

⁷ [Sir48:20] Heb(B) / LXX "upon the Lord who is Merciful"

⁸ [Sir48:20] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr " ; and the Holy One [Syr "and God"] quickly heard them from heaven"

⁹ [Sir48:21] Heb(B) / LXX "and his messenger wiped them out"

and consoled the mourners of Zion;
25 he foretold what should be till the end of time,
hidden things yet to be fulfilled.

CHAPTER 49

- 1 The name¹ of JOSIAH is like blended incense,
made lasting by a skilled perfumer.
Precious is his memory,² like honey to the taste,
like music at a banquet.
- 2 For he grieved over our betrayals,
and destroyed the abominable idols.
- 3 He turned to God with his whole heart,
and, though times were evil, he practiced virtue.
- 4 Except for David, Hezekiah and Josiah,
they all were wicked;
they abandoned the Law of the Most High,
these kings of Judah, right to the very end.
- 5 So he gave over their power to others,
their glory to a foolish³ foreign nation
- 6 who burned the holy city⁴
and left its streets desolate,
- 7 as JEREMIAH had foretold; for they had treated him badly
who even in the womb had been made a prophet,
to root out, pull down, and destroy,
and then to build and to plant.⁵
- 8 EZEKIEL beheld the vision of the Glory,
and described the different creatures of the chariot.⁶
- 9 He also referred to JOB,
who always persevered in the right path.⁷
- 10 Then, too, the TWELVE PROPHETS
(may their bones return to life from their resting place!)
gave new strength to Jacob
and saved him by their faith and hope.
- 11 How can we fittingly praise ZERUBBABEL,
who was like a signet ring on God's right hand;
- 12 and JESHUA, the son of Jozadak?
In their time they built the altar;⁸
and they erected the holy inner-sanctum,⁹
destined for everlasting glory.
- 13 Extolled be the memory of NEHEMIAH!

¹ [Sir49:1] Heb(B) / LXX "memory"

² [Sir49:1] Heb(B) / LXX "precious is it"

³ [Sir49:5] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr omit "foolish"

⁴ [Sir49:6] Heb(B) / LXX "the chosen city of the inner-sanctum"

⁵ [Sir49:7] Syr omits "to root out...to plant"

⁶ [Sir49:8] Heb(B) / LXX "vision of the Glory, which he showed him upon the chariot with the cherubs"

⁷ [Sir49:9] Heb(B) / LXX "For God remembered his enemies with storm, and did good to those who directed themselves in the right path."

⁸ [Sir49:12] Heb(B), Syr / LXX "house"

⁹ [Sir49:12] others "holy people"

He rebuilt our ruined walls,
restored our shattered defenses,
and set up gates and bars.¹

14 Few have² ever been created on earth like ENOCH,
for he was taken up bodily.

15 Was ever a man born like JOSEPH?
The leader of his brothers, the support of the people,³
even his dead body was provided for.

16 Glorious,⁴ too, were SHEM and SETH and ENOS;⁵
but beyond that of any living being was the splendor of ADAM.

CHAPTER 50

- 1 The greatest among his brothers, the glory of his people,⁶
was SIMON the priest, son of Johanan,
in whose time⁷ the house of God was renovated,
in whose days the inner-sanctum was reinforced.
- 2 In his time also the wall was built
with powerful turrets for the temple enclosures;⁸
- 3 in his time the reservoir was dug,
the pool with a vastness like the sea's.
- 4 He protected his people against brigands
and strengthened his city against the enemy.
- 5 How splendid he was as he appeared from the tent,⁹
as he came from within the veil!¹⁰
- 6 Like a star shining¹¹ among the clouds,
like the full moon at the holyday season;¹²
- 7 like the sun shining upon the inner-sanctum,
like the rainbow appearing in the cloudy sky;
- 8 like the blossoms¹³ on the branches in springtime,
like a lily on the banks of a stream;
like the trees of Lebanon in summer,
- 9 like the fire of incense at the sacrifice;
like a vessel of beaten gold,
studded with precious stones;
- 10 like a luxuriant olive tree thick with fruit,
a plant whose branches run with oil;¹⁴
- 11 vested in his magnificent robes,
and wearing his garments of splendor,
as he ascended the glorious altar

¹ [Sir49:13] Heb(B) / LXX places "and set up gates and bars" before "restored our..."

² [Sir49:14] Heb, Syr / LXX "No one has"

³ [Sir49:15] Heb, Syr / LXX adds

⁴ [Sir49:16] LXX / Heb(B) "Provided for" (instead of "Glorious")

⁵ [Sir49:16] Heb / LXX "Shem and Seth were honored by people"

⁶ [Sir50:1] Heb, Syr / LXX omits this line

⁷ [Sir50:1] Heb(B) / LXX "life"

⁸ [Sir50:2] Heb(B) / LXX "In his time the elevation for the courtyard was built, the lofty eminence for the sacred enclosure"

⁹ [Sir50:5] Heb(B) / Syr "when he appeared from the Temple" / LXX "when the people gathered around him"

¹⁰ [Sir50:5] Syr / Heb(B) "came from the house of the veil!" / LXX "came from the inner-sanctum!"

¹¹ [Sir50:6] Heb(B) / LXX "like the morning star"

¹² [Sir50:6] Heb(B) / LXX "moon when it is full"

¹³ [Sir50:8] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr "roses"

¹⁴ [Sir50:10] Heb(B), Syr / LXX "fruit, like a cypress towering in the clouds;"

- and lent majesty to the court of the inner-sanctum.
- 12** When he received the sundered victims
 from the priests while he stood before the sacrificial wood,
 his brothers ringed him about like a garland,
 like a stand of cedars on Lebanon;
- 13** all the sons of Aaron in their dignity
 clustered around him like poplars,
 with the offerings to Yahweh in their hands,
 in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel.
- 14** Once he had completed the services at the altars¹
 with the arranging of the sacrifices for the Most High,
- 15** and had stretched forth his hand for the cup,
 to offer blood of the grape,
 and poured it out at the foot of the altar,
 a sweet-smelling odor to the Most High God,²
- 16** the sons of Aaron would sound a blast,
 the priests, on their trumpets of beaten metal;
 a blast to resound mightily
 as a reminder before the Most High.
- 17** Then all the people with one accord
 would quickly fall prostrate to the ground
 in adoration before the Most High,
 before the Holy One of Israel.
- 18** Then hymns would re-echo,
 and over the throng sweet strains of praise resound.³
- 19** All the people of the land would shout for joy,
 praying to the Merciful One,
 as the chief-priest completed the services at the altar
 by presenting to God the sacrifice due;
- 20** then coming down he would raise his hands
 over all the congregation of Israel.
 The blessing of Yahweh would be upon his lips,
 the name of Yahweh would be his glory.
- 21** Then again the people would lie prostrate
 to receive from him the blessing of the Most High.
- 22** And now, bless the God of all,⁴
 who has done wondrous things on earth;
 who fosters men's growth from their mother's womb,
 and fashions them according to his will!
- 23** May he grant you⁵ wisdom⁶ of heart
 and may peace abide among you;
- 24** may his goodness toward Simeon be lasting;
 may he fulfill for him the covenant with Phinehas
 so that it may not be abrogated for him
 or for his descendants, as long as the heavens are above.¹

¹ [Sir50:14] others "altars"

² [Sir50:15] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) omits "and had stretched...Most High God" (by scribal error)

³ [Sir50:18] others "sweet melody throughout the house"

⁴ [Sir50:22] LXX / Heb(B) "blessed the Lord, the God of Israel"

⁵ [Sir50:23] Heb(B) / LXX "us"

⁶ [Sir50:23] Heb(B) / LXX "joy"

- 25 My whole being loathes two nations,
the third is not even a people:
26 those who live in Seir² and Philistia,
and the degenerate folk who dwell in Shechem.
- 27 Wise instruction, appropriate proverbs,³
I have written in this book,⁴
I, Jeshua, son of Eleazar, son of Sirach, of Jerusalem,⁵
as they gushed forth from my heart's understanding.
- 28 Happy the man who meditates upon these things,
wise the man who takes them to heart!
29 If he puts them into practice, he can cope with anything,
for the fear⁶ of Yahweh is his path.⁷

CHAPTER 51A

- 1 I give you thanks, O God of my father;⁸
I praise you, O God my savior!⁹
I will make known your name, refuge of my life;
you have been my helper against my adversaries.
- 2 You have saved me from death,
and kept back my body from the pit,
from the clutches of the Netherworld you have snatched my feet;
you have delivered me, in your great mercy
- 3 from the scourge of a slanderous tongue,
and from lips that went over to falsehood;
from the snare of those who watched for my downfall,
and from the power of those who sought my life.
- 4 From many a danger you have saved me,
from flames that hemmed me in on every side,
from the midst of unremitting fire,
from the deep belly of the Netherworld,
- 5 from an unclean tongue and painters of lies,
from the arrows of slanderous tongues.
- 6 I was at the point of death,
my soul was nearing the depths of the Netherworld;
- 7 I turned every way, but there was no one to help me,
I looked for one to sustain me, but could find no one.
- 8 But then I remembered the mercies of Yahweh,
his kindness¹⁰ through ages past;

¹ [Sir50:23~24] Heb(B) / LXX "heart//and may there be peace in our days//in Israel, as in the days of old//May his goodness remain constantly with us//and may he save us in our days."

² [Sir50:26] Heb, Lat / LXX "live on the mountain of Samaria"

³ [Sir50:27] Syr "All the proverbs of the wise and their riddles"

⁴ [Sir50:27] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) omits "I have written in this book"

⁵ [Sir50:27] LXX adds

⁶ [Sir50:29] Heb(B), LXX, Syr / others "light"

⁷ [Sir50:29] LXX / Heb(B) "life" / Syr "is exalted above everything" (Instead of "If...path", Syr reads "The height of the fear of the Lord is exalted above everything; hold on to it, my son, and do not let it go.")

⁸ [Sir51:1] Heb(B) / LXX "O Lord and King"

⁹ [Sir51:1] Heb(B), LXX / Syr "and I praise your name each day"

¹⁰ [Sir51:8] others "work"

for he saves those who take refuge in him,
and rescues them from every evil.

- 9 So I raised my voice from the very earth,
from the gates of the Netherworld, my cry.
10 I called out: "O Lord, you are my father,¹
you are my champion and my savior;
do not abandon me in time of trouble,
in the midst of storms and dangers.
11 I will ever praise your name
and be constant in my prayers to you."

Thereupon Yahweh heard my voice,²
he listened to my appeal;

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

CHAPTER 51B³

Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the God of glory,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the guardian of Israel,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the creator of the universe,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the redeemer of Israel,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to him who gathers the dispersed of Israel,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to him who builds his city and his inner-sanctum,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to him who makes a horn to sprout forth for the house of David,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to him who has chosen for his priests the sons of Zadok,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the shield of Abraham,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the rock of Isaac,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the mighty one of Jacob,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to him who has chosen Zion,
for his mercy endures forever.
Give thanks to the king over kings of kings,
for his mercy endures forever.
He has lifted up the horn of his people,

¹ [Sir51:10] Heb / LXX "the Father of my Lord"

² [Sir51:11] Heb(B) / LXX omits "Thereupon Yahweh heard my voice"

³ [Sir51:12b] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr omit this entire hymn

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

CHAPTER 51C¹

- 13** When I was still young and innocent,
I sought wisdom openly in my prayer,
facing the temple, I asked for her.²
- 14** She came to me in her beauty,³
and until the end I will seek her out.
- 15** As the blossoms yielded to ripening grapes,
the heart's joy,
my feet kept to the level path
because from earliest youth I was familiar with her.
- 16** In the short time I inclined my ear and received her,⁴
I met with great captivation.⁵
- 17** Since in this way I have profited;⁶
to my teacher I will give grateful praise.⁷
- 18** I became resolutely devoted to her—
I persistently strove for the good,
and I shall never be put to shame.⁸
- 19** I burned with desire for her,
never turning back.
I became preoccupied with her,
and never wearied extolling her.
- My hand spread her gate
and I came to know her secrets.⁹
- 20** For her I purified my hands;
in cleanness I attained to her.
- At first acquaintance with her, I gained understanding
such that I will never forsake her.
- 21** My whole being¹⁰ was stirred to seek her;¹¹
therefore I have made her my¹² prize possession.
- 22** Yahweh has granted me my lips as a reward,
and my tongue will declare his praises.
- 23** Come aside to me, you untutored,
and take up lodging in the¹ house of instruction.

¹ This Psalm was found amongst the DSS as a separate composition. Heb omits / LXX includes it. Additions here to the Greek text are underlined.

² [Sir51:13] DSS / LXX adds

³ [Sir51:14] DSS / LXX "Before the inner-sanctum I asked for her"

⁴ [Sir51:16] DSS / LXX adds

⁵ [Sir51:17] DSS / LXX "instruction"

⁶ [Sir51:17] DSS / LXX "I made progress in her" / Heb(B), Syr "I have taken her yoke"

⁷ [Sir51:18] DSS / LXX "to Him who gives wisdom I will give glory"

⁸ [Sir51:18] DSS / LXX adds

⁹ [Sir51:19] DSS / LXX (for this entire verse) "My soul grappled with wisdom, and in my conduct I was strict; I spread out my hands to the heavens, and lamented my ignorance of her."

¹⁰ [Sir51:21] Heb(B), Syr, most LXX (Lit. "my internal organs") / some LXX "My heart"

¹¹ [Sir51:21] LXX / Heb(B), Syr "to look upon her"

¹² [Sir51:21] Heb(B), Syr / LXX "made a"

- 24 How long will you be deprived of wisdom's food,²
how long will you endure such bitter thirst?
- 25 I open my mouth and speak of her:³
gain, at no cost, wisdom⁴ for yourselves.
- 26 Submit your neck to her⁵ yoke,
that your soul may accept her teaching.
For she is close to those who seek her,
and the one who is in earnest finds her.⁶
- 27 See for yourselves! I have labored only a little,
but have found much rest.⁷
- 28 Acquire but a little instruction;
you will win silver and gold⁸ through her.⁹
- 29 Let your spirits rejoice in the mercy of God,
and be not ashamed to give him praise.
- 30 Work at your tasks in due season,
and in his own time God will give you your reward.
Blessed be Yahweh forever,
and praised be his name from generation to generations.¹⁰

Thus far the words of Simeon, the son of Jeshua, who is called son of Sirach. The Wisdom of Simeon, the son of Jeshua, the son of Eleazar, the son of Sirach. May the name of Yahweh be blessed from now to eternity.¹¹

¹ [Sir51:23] LXX, Syr / Heb(B) "my"

² [Sir51:24] Heb(B) / LXX, Syr "of these things"

³ [Sir51:25] Heb(B), Syr / LXX omits "of her"

⁴ [Sir51:25] Heb(B), Syr / LXX omits "wisdom"

⁵ [Sir51:26] Heb / others "the"

⁶ [Sir51:26] Heb(B) / LXX omits "and the one who is in earnest finds her"

⁷ [Sir51:27] LXX adds

⁸ [Sir51:28] Heb(B), Syr / LXX "Acquire instruction with a large sum of silver, and you will gain much gold."

⁹ [Sir51:28] LXX / Heb(B), Syr "me"

¹⁰ [Sir51:30] LXX / Heb(B), Syr adds

¹¹ [Sir51:30] Heb(B) adds "Thus far... eternity." / LXX instead adds "Wisdom of Jeshua, son of Sirach" / oldest Syr instead adds "Thus far the words of Joshua, the son of Simeon, who is called the son of Sirach. The end of the writing of the Wisdom of the son of Sirach." / most Syr "The writing of the son of Sirach is finished. [one further adds "in the time of the Maccabees."]" (also, OL, two early Armenian omit chapters 44-51)