
Σοφία Σιραχ (*Ecclesiasticus*) ▫ THE WISDOM OF SIRACH (*ECCLESIASTICUS*)

INTRODUCTION

The *Wisdom of Sirach* is also known as *Ecclesiasticus* and *The Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sira* (in the Clementine Vulgate, its title is *Ecclesiasticus Jesu, filii Sirach*); the former suggests its use as a ‘church book’ in the early Christian community, which accepted it into its canon. The Jewish community, followed by the Reformers, excluded it from the canon. This explains the extraordinary history of its text. The original Hebrew text was lost to the western world from ~400 CE to 1900; the book survived in Greek, Latin, Syriac, and other translations. Since 1900, extensive sections of the Hebrew text have been discovered in various MSS: those of the *Cairo Genizah*, the *Qumran Scrolls*, and the *Masada Corpus*, so that now [two thirds of that exists](#).

The translation here given, drawing on the *NJB*, the *NRSV*, and the *New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS)*, for the most part follows the Septuagint, with significant differences from other texts addressed in the footnotes. We also include some additional verses included in the manuscript known as Greek 248 (a 14th Century MS held in the Vatican Library).[§]

The composition is a collection of proverbs and teachings, written in poetry, within the well-known and widespread ancient Middle Eastern tradition of wisdom literature; its closest analogue within the biblical canon is the *Book of Proverbs*, from which Ben Sira draws much of its inspiration. The work was known to the rabbinic tradition and, indeed, Ben Sira is cited in the Talmud and related literature on about a dozen occasions.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

Ben Sira signs his name (50:27), describes his profession (39:1–11) and invites students to his school (51:23). Sometime before 180 BCE and the ensuing Maccabean revolt, he committed his wisdom to writing, probably in Jerusalem (see his description in 50:1–24 of Simeon II, who was High Priest from 219–196). Sometime after 132 BCE (see the Prologue), his grandson translated the original Hebrew into Greek. The grandson rightly stresses the profound knowledge that Ben Sira had of Hebrew traditions (‘the Law and the Prophets and the other books’ – already the threefold division of the Hebrew Bible was in the process of formation).

—| XVIII-XI-MMXXV |—

[§] The excerpts of the Greek text of this MS are taken from: *Hart, J.H.A., ed. “Ecclesiasticus: The Greek Text of Codex 248: Edited with a Textual Commentary and Prolegomena.” Cambridge University Press, 2012.*

Σοφία Σιραχ - Προλογος

¹ Πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων ἡμῖν διὰ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν ² καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν κατ' αὐτοὺς ἠκολουθηκότων δεδομένων, ³ ὑπὲρ ὧν θεὸν ἐστὶν ἐπαινεῖν τὸν Ἰσραηλ παιδείας καὶ σοφίας, ⁴ καὶ ὡς οὐ μόνον αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀναγινώσκοντας θεὸν ἐστὶν ἐπιστήμονας γίνεσθαι, ⁵ ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἐκτὸς δύνασθαι τοὺς φιλομαθοῦντας χρη σίμους εἶναι ⁶ καὶ λέγοντας καὶ γράφοντας, ⁷ ὁ πάππος μου Ἰησοῦς ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἑαυτὸν δοῦς ⁸ εἷς τε τὴν τοῦ νόμου ⁹ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν ¹⁰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πατρίων βιβλίων ἀνάγνωσιν ¹¹ καὶ ἐν τούτοις ἱκανὴν ἔξιν περιποιησάμενος ¹² προήχθη καὶ αὐτὸς συγγράψαι τι τῶν εἰς παιδείαν καὶ σοφίαν ἀνηκόντων, ¹³ ὅπως οἱ

WISDOM OF SIRACH - PROLOGUE

¹ Many and great lessons have been passed on to us by the Law, the Prophets, ² and the other writers succeeding them, ³ in consequence of which Israel must be commended for learning and wisdom. ⁴ Furthermore, it is a duty, not only to acquire learning by reading, ⁵ but also, once having acquired it, to make oneself of use to those who are outside ⁶ by what one can say or write. ⁷ My grandfather Jesus, having long devoted himself to the reading ⁸ of the Law, ⁹ and the Prophets ¹⁰ and other books of the Fathers ¹¹ and, having become very learned in them, ¹² himself decided to write something on learning and wisdom, ¹³ so that people who

WISDOM OF SIRACH PROLOGUE

- ¹ This foreword by the Greek translator is not strictly a part of the book and is not usually considered canonical. On the 3 divisions of the Hebrew Bible, see #1M 12:9.
- ² At the end of this verse, the NJB includes the words, "have passed on to us great lessons," from the beginning of v. 1.
- ³ The WEBBE has 'given praise' in place of 'commended'.
- ⁴ In place of 'acquire learning', the WEBBE has 'become skilful'.
- ⁵ The NJB has 'people' in place of 'those who are'.
- ⁶ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "both by speaking and writing."
- ⁷ 'Jesus' here refers to Jesus ben Sira, the author of the book.
- ⁸ An exact English translation for this short verse is difficult.
- ⁹ The NJB lacks the opening 'and'.
- ¹⁰ The WEBBE has 'our fathers' in place of 'the Fathers'.
- ¹¹ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "and having gained great familiarity with them."
- ¹² Before 'learning', the NJB adds 'the subjects of'.
- ¹³ The NJB has 'wanted to learn' in place of 'love learning', here following the WEBBE.

φιλομαθεῖς καὶ τούτων ἔνοχοι γενόμενοι ¹⁴ πολλῶ ἄλλον ἐπιπροσθῶσιν διὰ τῆς ἐννόμου βιώσεως.

¹⁵ Παρακέκλησθε οὖν ¹⁶ μετ' εὐνοίας καὶ προσοχῆς ¹⁷ τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν ποιῆσθαι ¹⁸ καὶ συγγνώμην ἔχειν ¹⁹ ἐφ' οἷς ἂν δοκῶμεν ²⁰ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν πεφιλοπονημένων τισὶν τῶν λέξεων ἀδυναμεῖν· ²¹ οὐ γὰρ ἰσοδυναμεῖ ²² αὐτὰ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς Εβραϊστὶ λεγόμενα καὶ ὅταν μεταχθῆ εἰς ἑτέραν γλῶσσαν· ²³ οὐ μόνον δὲ ταῦτα, ²⁴ ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ νόμος καὶ αἱ προφητεῖαι ²⁵ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν βιβλίων ²⁶ οὐ μικρὰν ἔχει τὴν διαφορὰν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς λεγόμενα.

²⁷ Ἐν γὰρ τῷ ὀγδόῳ καὶ τριακοστῷ ἔτει ἐπὶ τοῦ Εὐεργέτου βασιλείως ²⁸ παραγενηθεὶς εἰς Αἴγυπτον καὶ συγχρονίσας

love learning might, by accepting these disciplines, ¹⁴ learn how better to live according to the Law.

¹⁵ Pray then, ¹⁶ with favour and care, ¹⁷ read this book ¹⁸ and pardon us ¹⁹ in those places where, despite our efforts to translate, we may seem ²⁰ to fail to give a good rendering of some phrases; ²¹ for, there is no equivalent ²² for things originally written in Hebrew when translating them into another language; ²³ not only this, ²⁴ but the Law itself and the Prophets ²⁵ and the rest of books ²⁶ differ considerably in translation from what appears in the original text.

²⁷ It was in the thirty-eighth year of the late King Euergetes ²⁸ that, coming to Egypt and remaining here for some time,

¹⁴ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "might make progress much more by living according to the law."

¹⁵ For this verse, here (literally) following the LXX, the NJB has, "You are therefore asked."

¹⁶ The NJB swaps the translations for vv. 16 & 17.

¹⁷ A more literal translation of 'this book' is 'what is written'.

¹⁸ The NJB has 'show indulgence' in place of 'pardon us'.

¹⁹ In place of 'despite', the NJB has 'notwithstanding'.

²⁰ The NJB splits this verse, ending, "of this ²¹ or that expression."

²¹ The NJB includes this verse as part of v. 22 (but cf. #20).

²² Before 'translating', the NJB adds 'it is a question of'.

²³ The literal translation of 'this' is 'these'.

²⁴ The NJB lacks the opening 'but', which here follows the Greek text (ἀλλὰ).

²⁵ In place of 'rest of', the NJB has 'other'.

²⁶ For 'differ considerably', the WEBBE has 'have no small difference'.

²⁷ This king was probably Ptolemy VII Euergetes Physcon (170–117 BCE); the date would therefore be 123 BCE.

²⁸ The WEBBE has 'coming to Egypt' at the start of v. 27.

²⁹ εὐρών οὐ μικρᾶς παιδείας ἀφόμοιον ³⁰ ἀναγκαιότατον ἐδέμην καὶ αὐτός τινα προσενέγκασθαι σπουδὴν καὶ φιλοπονίαν τοῦ μεθερμηνεῦσαι τήνδε τὴν βίβλον ³¹ πολλὴν ἀγρυπνίαν καὶ ἐπιστήμην προσενεγκάμενος ³² ἐν τῷ διαστήματι τοῦ χρόνου ³³ πρὸς τὸ ἐπὶ πέρας ἀγαγόντα τὸ βιβλίον ἐκδόσθαι ³⁴ καὶ τοῖς ἐν τῇ παροικίᾳ βουλομένοις φιλομαθεῖν ³⁵ προκατασκευαζομένους τὰ ἤδη ³⁶ ἐνόμως βιοτεύειν.

²⁹ and finding a copy for no little instruction, ³⁰ I became convinced of an immediate duty to apply myself in my turn with labour and diligence to translate this book; ³¹ and I spent much time and learning on it ³² in the course of this period, ³³ to complete the work and to publish the book ³⁴ for the benefit of those too who, domiciled abroad, desire to study, ³⁵ to reform their behaviour in advance, ³⁶ to live as the Law requires.

²⁹ According to the translation used here (others have ‘*opportunity*’ in place of ‘*copy*’), Ben Sira, in offering his grandfather’s book to the Greek public, intends to please a community already cultivated and worthy of enrichment.

³⁰ The NJB has ‘*the book that follows*’ in place of ‘*this book*’.

³¹ In place of ‘*time and learning*’, the WEBBE has ‘*watchfulness and skill*’.

³² For ‘*in the course of this period*’, the WEBBE has ‘*in that space of time*’.

³³ The WEBBE has ‘*bring the book to an end*’ in place of ‘*complete the book*’.

³⁴ In place of ‘*domiciled abroad*’, the WEBBE has ‘*in the land of their travels*’.

³⁵ The NJB lacks ‘*in advance*’, here following the WEBBE.

³⁶ The NJB includes this verse as part of v. 35.

Σοφία Σιραχ Ι

- 1** Πᾶσα σοφία παρὰ κυρίου καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
- 2** ἄμμον θαλασσῶν καὶ σταγόνας ὑετοῦ καὶ ἡμέρας αἰῶνος τίς ἐξαριθμήσει;
- 3** ὕψος οὐρανοῦ καὶ πλάτος γῆς καὶ ἄβυσσον καὶ σοφίαν τίς ἐξιχνιάσει;
- 4** προτέρα πάντων ἔκτισται σοφία καὶ σύνεσις φρονήσεως ἐξ αἰῶνος.
- 5** πηγὴ σοφίας λόγος θεοῦ ἐν ὑψίστοις· καὶ αἱ πορεῖαι αὐτῆς ἐντολαὶ αἰώνιοι.
- 6** ῥίζα σοφίας τίνι ἀπεκαλύφθη; καὶ τὰ πανουργεύματα αὐτῆς τίς ἔγνω;
- 7** *Disciplina sapientiae cui revelata est et manifestata? Et multiplicationem ingressus illius quis intellexit?*
- 8** εἷς ἐστὶν σοφός, φοβερός σφόδρα, καθήμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου αὐτοῦ.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 1

- 1** All wisdom comes from the Lord and she is with him forever.
- 2** The sands of the sea, the drops of rain and the days of eternity – who can count them?
- 3** The height of the sky, the breadth of the earth and the abyss and wisdom – who can explore them?
- 4** Wisdom was created before everything prudent understanding from remotest ages.
- 5** *The source of wisdom is the word of God on high; and her paths are the eternal commandments.*
- 6** To whom has the root of wisdom been revealed? Her resourceful ways, who knows them?
- 7** *To whom was the knowledge of wisdom manifested? And who has understood the abundance of her ways?*
- 8** One only is wise, terrible indeed, seated on his throne.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 1

- 1** This first chapter is a series of variations on the themes enunciated at the beginning of Proverbs. The term 'Lord' (*Kyrios*) is commonly used in the *LXX* to render the name *Yahweh*. Ben Sira's translator uses it very frequently, even to render the other divine names.
- 2** Vv. 2-3 illustrate the impossibility of fathoming the depths of divine wisdom (18:4-7, Rm 11:33).
- 3** In place of 'the abyss and wisdom' (here following the *LXX* and *NRSV*), the *NJB*, following the *Vg* (*profundum abyssi*), has 'the depth of the abyss'.
- 4** Compare Pr 8:22-31.
- 5** This verse, in the *WEBBE* & *NJB* only as footnotes, is not in the *LXX*; it is, however, in the *Vg* and the *MSS* known as *Greek 248*.
- 6** Only with God is wisdom to be found, yet God has bestowed her upon all the living – especially upon those who love him (Israel, v. 10)
- 7** This verse follows the *Vulgate*, *Syro-Hexaplar*, and (partly) *Greek 248* (καὶ τὰ πανουργεῦματα αὐτῆς τίς ἔγνω;); it is in the *NJB* only as a footnote.
- 8** The author emphasises the uniqueness and transcendence of God.

- ⁹ κύριος αὐτὸς ἔκτισεν αὐτὴν
καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐξερίθμησεν αὐτὴν
καὶ ἐξέχεεν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ,
¹⁰ μετὰ πάσης σαρκὸς κατὰ τὴν δόσιν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἐχορήγησεν αὐτὴν τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.
- ¹¹ Φόβος κυρίου δόξα καὶ καύχημα
καὶ εὐφροσύνη καὶ στέφανος ἀγαλλιήματος.
- ¹² φόβος κυρίου τέρψει καρδίαν
καὶ δώσει εὐφροσύνην καὶ χαρὰν καὶ μακροημέρευσιν.
- ¹³ τῷ φοβουμένῳ τὸν κύριον εὖ ἔσται ἐπ' ἐσχάτων,
καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τελευτῆς αὐτοῦ εὐλογηθήσεται.
- ^{13a} *Dilectio Dei honorabilis sapientia:
quibus autem apparuerit in visu diligunt eam in visione,
et in agnitione magnalium suorum.*
- ¹⁴ Ἀρχὴ σοφίας φοβεῖσθαι τὸν κύριον,
καὶ μετὰ πιστῶν ἐν μήτρᾳ συνεκτίσθη αὐτοῖς.
- ¹⁵ μετὰ ἀνθρώπων θεμέλιον αἰῶνος ἐνόσσευσεν
καὶ μετὰ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῶν ἐμπιστευθήσεται.

- ⁹ It was he who created,
inspected and weighed her up,
and then poured her out on all his works –
¹⁰ as much to each living creature as he chose –
bestowing her on those who love him.
- ¹¹ The fear of the Lord is glory and exultation,
happiness and a crown of joyfulness.
- ¹² The fear of Lord gladdens the heart,
giving happiness, joy, and long life.
- ¹³ For those who fear the Lord, all will end well:
on their dying day, they will be blessed.
- ^{13a} *The love of God is a wisdom worthy of honour,
but those to whom he has appeared love him
and contemplate him by proclaiming his great works.*
- ¹⁴ The basis of wisdom is to fear the Lord;
she was created with the faithful in the womb.
- ¹⁵ She has made a nest in men, an age-old foundation,
and to their descendants will she faithfully cling.

⁹ After 'created', the Vg adds 'in the Holy Spirit' (*in Spiritu Sancto*), which is a Christian interpolation.

¹⁰ At the end of this verse, some MSS add, "Love of the Lord is glorious wisdom; to those to whom he appears he apportions her, that they may see him."

¹¹ The 'fear of the Lord', for a Jew, merely means religion or piety.

¹² After this verse, some MSS add: "The fear of the Lord is a gift from the Lord; also, for love he makes firm paths."

¹³ For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "Whoever fears the Lord, it will go well with him at the last."

^{13a} The text of this verse follows the Vg, wherein it comprises vv. 14–15.

¹⁴ Compare Pr 1:7, 9:10, Job 28:28, Ps 111:10.

¹⁵ The WEBBE has 'eternal' in place of 'age-old'.

¹⁶ πλησμονή σοφίας φοβεῖσθαι τὸν κύριον
καὶ μεθύσκει αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν αὐτῆς·
¹⁷ πάντα τὸν οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐμπλήσει ἐπιθυμημάτων
καὶ τὰ ἀποδοχεῖα ἀπὸ τῶν γεννημάτων αὐτῆς.
¹⁸ στέφανος σοφίας φόβος κυρίου
ἀναθάλλων εἰρήνην καὶ ὑγίειαν ἰάσεως.
¹⁹ καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἐξηρίθμησεν αὐτήν,
ἐπιστήμην καὶ γνῶσιν συνέσεως ἐξώμβρησεν
καὶ δόξαν κρατούντων αὐτῆς ἀνύψωσεν.
²⁰ ῥίζα σοφίας φοβεῖσθαι τὸν κύριον,
καὶ οἱ κλάδοι αὐτῆς μακροσημέρευσις.
²¹ φόβος Κυρίου ἀπωθεῖται ἁμαρτήματα,
^{21a} *In thesauris sapientiæ intellectus
et scientiæ religiositas:
execratio autem peccatoribus sapientia.*
²² Οὐ δυνήσεται θυμὸς ἄδικος δικαιωθῆναι·
ἢ γὰρ ῥοπή τοῦ θυμοῦ αὐτοῦ πτώσις αὐτῶ.
²³ ἕως καιροῦ ἀνδέξεται μακρόθυμος,
καὶ ὕστερον αὐτῶ ἀναδώσει εὐφροσύνη·

¹⁶ The fullness of wisdom is to fear the Lord;
she intoxicates them with her fruits.
¹⁷ She fills their entire house with treasures
and their storerooms with her produce.
¹⁸ The crown of wisdom is to fear the Lord:
she makes peace and health flourish.
¹⁹ The Lord has seen and assessed her,
he has showered down knowledge and intelligence
and exalted the renown of those who possess her.
²⁰ The root of wisdom is to fear the Lord
and her branches are longevity.
²¹ *The fear of the Lord drives away sin:*
^{21a} *In the treasures of wisdom is understanding
and piety of knowledge.
but wisdom is abhorred by sinners.*
²² Unjust anger cannot be justified;
for, his rage tips the scales to his downfall.
²³ A patient man puts up with things for a season
but his joy will break out in the end.

¹⁶ In place of ‘intoxicates them’, the WEBBE has ‘inebriates men’.

¹⁷ Some MSS have ‘her’ in place of both occurrences of ‘their’.

¹⁸ After this verse, some MSS add: “Both are gifts of God for peace; glory opens out for those who love him. He saw her and took her measure.”

¹⁹ The WEBBE has ‘honour’ in place of ‘renown’.

²⁰ In place of ‘longevity’, the NJB has ‘long life’ and the WEBBE has ‘length of days’.

²¹ This verse follows the Syro-Hexaplar, Vg (²⁵ *Timor Domini expellit peccatum:*), and Greek 248; it is given in the WEBBE & NJB only as footnotes.

^{21a} This verse follows the Vg, wherein it is v. 26.

²² The NJB lacks the 1st instance of ‘his’ and, in place of the 2nd, has ‘one’s’.

²³ In place of ‘for a season’, the NJB has ‘until the time is right’.

²⁴ ἕως καιροῦ κρύψει τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ,
καὶ χεὶλη πολλῶν ἐκδιηγῆσεται σύνεσιν αὐτοῦ.
²⁵ Ἐν θησαυροῖς σοφίας παραβολαὶ ἐπιστήμης,
βδέλυγμα δὲ ἁμαρτωλῶ ἡθεοσέβεια.
²⁶ ἐπιθυμήσας σοφίαν διατήρησον ἐντολάς,
καὶ κύριος χορηγήσει σοὶ αὐτήν.
²⁷ σοφία γὰρ καὶ παιδεία φόβος κυρίου,
καὶ ἡ εὐδοκία αὐτοῦ πίστις καὶ πραότης.
²⁸ μὴ ἀπειθήσης φόβῳ κυρίου
καὶ μὴ προσέλθῃς αὐτῷ ἐν καρδίᾳ δισσῆ.
²⁹ μὴ ὑποκριθῆς ἐν στόμασιν ἀνθρώπων
καὶ ἐν τοῖς χείλεσίν σου πρόσεχε.
³⁰ μὴ ἐξύψου σεαυτόν, ἵνα μὴ πέσης
καὶ ἐπαγάγῃς τῇ ψυχῇ σου ἀτιμίαν,
καὶ ἀποκαλύψει κύριος τὰ κρυπτά σου
καὶ ἐν μέσῳ συναγωγῆς καταβαλεῖ σε,
ὅτι οὐ προσῆλθες φόβῳ κυρίου
καὶ ἡ καρδία σου πλήρης δόλου.

²⁴ He will hide his words until the right moment,
and many a lip will affirm how wise he is.
²⁵ In Wisdom's treasures are maxims of knowledge;
but the sinner holds piety in abhorrence.
²⁶ If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments,
and the Lord will bestow it on you.
²⁷ For, the fear of the Lord is wisdom and instruction
and what pleases him is faith and humility.
²⁸ Do not stand out against fear of the Lord;
do not come to him with a double heart.
²⁹ Do not be a hypocrite before others;
keep watch over your lips.
³⁰ Do not exalt yourself, for fear you fall
and cover yourself in disgrace.
For, the Lord would then reveal you secrets
and overthrow you before the whole community,
for not having practised fear of the Lord
and for having a heart full of deceit.

²⁴ The NJB has 'keeps his thoughts to himself' in place of 'will hide his words'.

²⁵ The WEBBE has 'wise sayings' in place of 'maxims of knowledge'.

²⁶ For Ben Sira, wisdom and observance of the Law go together (19:20, cf. Qo 12:13). Here, wisdom is the reward of observance.

²⁷ For 'faith and humility', the NJB has 'faithfulness and gentleness'.

²⁸ The NJB has 'practice it' in place of 'come to him'.

²⁹ The literal translation of 'others' is 'human beings' (following the *Textus Receptus*); the LXX has 'in the mouth (of the world)'.

³⁰ In place of 'exalt yourself', the NJB has 'grow too high and mighty'.

Σοφια Σιραχ 2

- 1 Τέκνον, εἰ προσέρχῃ δουλεύειν κυρίῳ,
ἑτοίμασον τὴν ψυχὴν σου εἰς πειρασμόν·
- 2 εὐθυνοῦ τὴν καρδίαν σου καὶ καρτέρησον
καὶ μὴ σπεύσῃς ἐν καιρῷ ἐπαγωγῆς·
- 3 κολλήθητι αὐτῷ καὶ μὴ ἀποστῆς,
ἵνα ἀυξηθῆς ἐπ' ἐσχάτων σου.
- 4 πᾶν, ὃ ἐὰν ἐπαχθῇ σοι, δέξαι
καὶ ἐν ἀλλάγμασιν ταπεινώσεώς σου μακροθύμησον·
- 5 ὅτι ἐν πυρὶ δοκιμάζεται χρυσὸς
καὶ ἄνθρωποι δεκτοὶ ἐν καμίνῳ ταπεινώσεως.
- 6 πίστευσον αὐτῷ, καὶ ἀντιλήμψεταιί σου·
εὐθυνοῦ τὰς ὁδοὺς σου καὶ ἔλπισον ἐπ' αὐτόν.
- 7 Οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον, ἀναμείνατε τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ
καὶ μὴ ἐκκλίνητε, ἵνα μὴ πέσητε.
- 8 οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον, πιστεύσατε αὐτῷ,
καὶ οὐ μὴ πταιίσῃ ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 2

- 1 My child, if you aspire to serve the Lord,
prepare yourself for an ordeal.
- 2 Be sincere of heart, be steadfast,
and don't make haste in time of calamity.
- 3 Cling to him and do not leave him,
so that you may be honoured at the end of your days.
- 4 Accept whatever happens to you
and be patient when you suffer humiliation.
- 5 For, gold is tested in the fire,
and the chosen in the furnace of humiliation.
- 6 Trust him and he will uphold you,
follow a straight path and hope in him.
- 7 You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy;
do not turn aside, lest you fall.
- 8 You who fear the Lord, trust him,
and you will not be robbed of your reward.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 2

- 1 The NRSV has 'testing' in place of 'an ordeal'. The fear of God in times of ordeal is a recurrent OT theme, particularly in the Psalms.
- 2 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NRSV has, "and do not be alarmed when disaster comes."
- 3 The WEBBE has 'increased' in place of 'honoured'.
- 4 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NRSV has, "and in the uncertainties of your humble state, be patient."
- 5 Some MSS add: "in sickness and poverty, put your trust in him."
- 6 The WEBBE has 'acceptable men' place of 'the chosen'.
- 7 In place of 'lest', the NRSV has 'for fear'.
- 8 Note that the Greek text lacks the word τὸν before κύριον in the 1st line, here; cf. v. 7.

9 οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον, ἐλπίσατε εἰς ἀγαθὰ
καὶ εἰς εὐφροσύνην αἰῶνος καὶ ἔλεος.
10 ἐμβλέψατε εἰς ἀρχαίας γενεάς καὶ ἴδετε·
τίς ἐνεπίστευσεν κυρίῳ καὶ κατησχύνθη;
ἢ τίς ἐνέμεινεν τῷ φόβῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐγκατελείφθη;
ἢ τίς ἐπεκαλέσατο αὐτόν, καὶ ὑπερεῖδεν αὐτόν;
11 διότι οἰκτίρων καὶ ἐλεήμων ὁ κύριος
καὶ ἀφίησιν ἁμαρτίας καὶ σώζει ἐν καιρῷ θλίψεως.
12 Οὐαὶ καρδίαις δειλαῖς καὶ χερσὶν παρειμέναις
καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶ ἐπιβαίνοντι ἐπὶ δύο τρίβους.
13 οὐαὶ καρδίᾳ παρειμένῃ, ὅτι οὐ πιστεύει·
διὰ τοῦτο οὐ σκεπασθήσεται.
14 οὐαὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς ἀπολωλεκόσιν τὴν ὑπομονήν·
καὶ τί ποιήσετε ὅταν ἐπισκέπτηται ὁ κύριος;
15 οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον οὐκ ἀπειθήσουσιν ῥημάτων αὐτοῦ,
καὶ οἱ ἀγαπῶντες αὐτόν
συντηρήσουσιν τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ.

9 You who fear the Lord, hope for his good gifts,
everlasting joy and mercy.
10 Look at the generations of old and see:
who ever trusted in the Lord and was put to shame?
Or who ever, steadfastly fearing him, was forsaken?
Or who ever was called to him and was ignored?
11 For, the Lord is compassionate and merciful,
he forgives sins and saves in the time of affliction.
12 Woe to fearful hearts and listless hands,
and to the sinner who treads two paths.
13 Woe to the faint heart! For, it doesn't believe;
therefore, it won't be defended.
14 Woe to you who have lost the strength to endure;
what will you do at the Lord's visitation?
15 Those who fear the Lord do not disdain his words,
and those who love him
will keep his ways.

9 'Joy' here means in this life, not in the next. Some MSS add: "For his reward is an everlasting gift with joy."

10 Israel's history shows the efficacy of trust in God, who is 'compassionate and merciful' (v. 11, see Ex 34:6-7, Ps 103:8-9, Jon 4:2). In the 3rd line, the NRSV has 'the Lord' in place of 'him', here following the LXX (and the NJB).

11 The NRSV has 'distress' in place of 'affliction'.

12 The author is seemingly commending resistance under persecution; he is condemning apostasy, even if only outward (2nd line and v. 15; cf. 2M 6:21-28).

13 For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NRSV reads, "Woe to the listless heart that has no faith; for such will have no protection."

14 The WEBBE has 'your patience' in place of 'the strength to endure'.

15 A more literal translation for 'words' is 'speech'.

¹⁶ οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον ζητήσουσιν εὐδοκίαν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ οἱ ἀγαπῶντες αὐτὸν ἐμπλησθήσονται τοῦ νόμου.
¹⁷ οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον ἐτοιμάσουσιν καρδίας αὐτῶν
καὶ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ταπεινώσουσιν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν.
¹⁸ ἐμπεσούμεθα εἰς χεῖρας κυρίου
καὶ οὐκ εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων·
ὡς γὰρ ἡ μεγαλωσύνη αὐτοῦ,
οὕτως καὶ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ.

¹⁶ Those who fear the Lord do their best to please him,
and those who love him will be satisfied in the Law.
¹⁷ Those who fear the Lord keep their hearts prepared
and humble themselves in his presence.
¹⁸ Let us fall into the hands of the Lord,
but not into the hands of mortals;
For, as great as his majesty is,
so also is his mercy,
and equal to his name are his works.

¹⁶ Ben Sira does not oppose love to obedience; he identifies them. Love is disinterested; hope of reward is merely a secondary consideration. This attitude is characteristic of Ben Sira but is found elsewhere in Jewish thought. See, for example, *Pirke Abot*, 1:3: “Do not be like slaves who serve their master for the sake of the reward. Be like slaves who serve their master without looking for reward.”

¹⁷ See 1S 24:14 and 1Ch 21:13.

¹⁸ The last line in the English text follows the *Peshitta* and *NRSV*; it is not present in the *LXX*, *Vg*, the *WEBBE*, or the *NJB*.

Σοφία Σιραχ 3

- 1 Ἐμοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀκούσατε, τέκνα,
καὶ οὕτως ποιήσατε, ἵνα σωθῆτε·
- 2 ὁ γὰρ κύριος ἐδόξασεν πατέρα ἐπὶ τέκνοις
καὶ κρίσιν μητρὸς ἐστερέωσεν ἐφ' υἱοῖς.
- 3 ὁ τιμῶν πατέρα ἐξιλάσεται ἁμαρτίας,
4 καὶ ὡς ὁ ἀποδησαυρίζων ὁ δοξάζων
μητέρα αὐτοῦ.
- 5 ὁ τιμῶν πατέρα εὐφρανθήσεται ὑπὸ τέκνων
καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ προσευχῆς αὐτοῦ εἰσακουσθήσεται.
- 6 ὁ δοξάζων πατέρα μακροημερεύσει,
καὶ ὁ εἰσακούων κυρίου ἀναπαύσει μητέρα αὐτοῦ·
- 7 καὶ ὡς δεσπότηαις δουλεύσει ἐν τοῖς γεννήσασιν αὐτόν.
- 8 ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου,
ἵνα ἐπέλθῃ σοι εὐλογία παρ' αὐτοῦ·
- 9 εὐλογία γὰρ πατρὸς στηρίζει οἶκους τέκνων,
κατάρρα δὲ μητρὸς ἐκρίζοι θεμέλια.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 3

- 1 Children, listen to me; for, I am your father;
do what I tell you and so be safe.
- 2 For, the Lord honours a father above his children
and confirms the rights of a mother over her sons.
- 3 Whoever respects his father atones for sins,
4 and whoever respects his mother is as one
amassing treasure.
- 5 He who respects his father will have joy with children;
and the day he prays for help, he will be heard.
- 6 Long life comes to anyone who honours his father;
and those who honour their mother obey the Lord.
- 7 Such a one serves parents as also his masters.
- 8 Respect your father in deed as well as word,
so a blessing may come on you from him.
- 9 For, a father's blessing makes his children's house firm,
while a mother's curse uproots its foundations.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 3

- 1 Ben Sira teaches that the keeping of the commandment to honour one's parents (Ex 20:12) atones for sins (vv. 3, 14-15).
- 2 In place of 'confirms the rights', the WEBBE has 'has confirmed the judgement'.
- 3 For this verse, the WEBBE has a separate sentence, "He who honours his father will make atonement for sins."
- 4 For 'respects', the WEBBE has 'gives glory to'.
- 5 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has "He will be heard in the day of his prayer." The NJB lacks the opening conjunction.
- 6 Some MSS have 'comfort' in place of 'honour' in the 2nd line.
- 7 Some MSS precede this verse with: "He who fears the Lord honours his father." The NJB has the conjectural 'the Lord' in place of 'his masters'.
- 8 The WEBBE opens with 'Honour' in place of 'Respect'.
- 9 For 'uproots', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'tears down'.

10 μὴ δοξάζου ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ πατρὸς σου,
 οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν σοι δόξα πατρὸς ἀτιμίας·
11 ἢ γὰρ δόξα ἀνθρώπου ἐκ τιμῆς πατρὸς αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ ὄνειδος τέκνοις μήτηρ ἐν ἀδοξίᾳ.
12 τέκνον, ἀντιλαβοῦ ἐν γῆρα πατρὸς σου
 καὶ μὴ λυπήσῃς αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ·
13 κὰν ἀπολείπῃ σύνεσιν, συγγνώμην ἔχε
 καὶ μὴ ἀτιμάσῃς αὐτὸν ἐν πάσῃ ἰσχύϊ σου.
14 ἔλεημοσύνη γὰρ πατρὸς οὐκ ἐπιλησθήσεται
 καὶ ἀντὶ ἁμαρτιῶν προσανοικοδομηθήσεται σοι.
15 ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεώς σου ἀναμνησθήσεταιί σου·
 ὡς εὐδία ἐπὶ παγετῶ,
 οὕτως ἀναλυθήσονται σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι.
16 ὡς βλάσφημος ὁ ἐγκαταλιπὼν πατέρα,
 καὶ κεκατηραμένος ὑπὸ κυρίου ὁ παροργίζων
 μητέρα αὐτοῦ.
17 Τέκνον, ἐν πραύτητι τὰ ἔργα σου διέξαγε,
 καὶ ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπου δεκτοῦ ἀγαπηθήσῃ.

10 Do not glorify yourself in your father's dishonour;
 for, your father's dishonour is no glory to you.
11 For, the glory of a man is from the honour of his father
 and a mother in dishonour is a disgrace to her children.
12 My child, support your father in his old age;
 do not grieve him during his life.
13 Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy;
 do not despise him in your health and strength.
14 For, kindness to a father will not be forgotten
 but will serve as reparation for your sins.
15 On your own day of ordeal, God will remember you;
 like frost in sunshine,
 so your sins will also melt away.
16 Whoever deserts a father is just like a blasphemer,
 and whoever angers a mother is
 accursed of the Lord.
17 My child, be gentle in carrying out your business,
 and you will be better loved than a lavish giver.

10 In place of 'in your father's dishonour', the NJB has 'by dishonouring your father'.

11 For the 1st line, the NJB reads, "One's own honour derives from the respect shown to his father."

12 The WEBBE has 'son' in place of 'child', here following the Greek (τέκνον) and the NJB.

13 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads 'do not dishonour him all the days of his life' (ואל תכלים אותו כל ימי חייו).

14 'Kindness' literally translates as 'righteousness', which came to be centred in almsgiving as the characteristic sign (3:10-4:6, 7:10, 29:8-13, Tb 14:10-11).

15 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' ends, 'as heat upon frost, to put an end to your iniquity' (כחס על כפור להשבית עוניך).

16 The NJB has 'distresses' in place of 'angers'. For 'accursed of the Lord', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'angers his Creator'.

17 For 'gentle', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'humble' (); 'lavish giver' (literally, 'giver of presents') follows the Cairo Genizah; the LXX has 'agreeable'.

18 ὅσω μέγας εἶ, τοσούτῳ ταπεινῶν σεαυτὸν,
καὶ ἔναντι κυρίου εὐρήσεις χάριν·
19 πολλοὶ εἰσὶν ὑψηλοὶ καὶ ἐπίδοξοι·
ἀλλὰ πράξεσιν ἀποκαλύπτεται μυστήρια.
20 ὅτι μεγάλη ἡ δυναστεία τοῦ κυρίου
καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ταπεινῶν δοξάζεται.
21 χαλεπώτερά σου μὴ ζήτει
καὶ ἰσχυρότερά σου μὴ ἐξέταξε·
22 ἃ προσετάγη σοι, ταῦτα διανοοῦ,
οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν σοι χρεία τῶν κρυπτῶν.
23 ἐν τοῖς περισσοῖς τῶν ἔργων σου μὴ περιεργάζου·
πλείονα γὰρ συνέσεως ἀνθρώπων ὑπεδείχθη σοι.
24 πολλοὺς γὰρ ἐπλάνησεν ἡ ὑπόληψις αὐτῶν,
καὶ ὑπόνοια πονηρὰ ὠλίσθησεν διανοίας αὐτῶν.
25 κόρας μὴ ἔχων ἀπορήσεις φωτός,
γνώσεως δὲ ἀμοιρῶν μὴ ἐπαγγέλλου.

18 The greater you are, humble yourself more,
and then you will find favour with the Lord.
19 *Many are the arrogant and renowned;*
but, to the humble, he reveals his secrets.
20 For, great though the power of the Lord is,
he accepts the homage of the humble.
21 Don't seek things that are too hard for you,
or try to discover what is beyond your strength.
22 Concentrate on what has been assigned you;
you have no need to worry over mysteries.
23 Do not meddle with matters that are beyond you,
for more than you can understand has been shown you.
24 For, their own notions have misled many,
wicked presumption having warped their judgement.
25 *When the eye has no pupil, there is no light;*
and, without wisdom, there is no knowledge.

18 The NJB ends the 1st line, "the more humbly you should behave."

19 This verse, present in the NRSV, WEBBE & NJB only as footnotes, is not part of the 'canonical' Greek text and neither is it present in *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'*; it is, however, present in the *Peshitta* and in the *Greek 248 MS*.

20 The emphasis here (where the text follows the LXX) is on God's condescension in putting himself within the reach of the humblest. However, the *Genizah MS 'A'* reads, "For great is the mercy of God; he reveals his secrets to the humble," expresses an idea much more frequent in the Old Testament: God showers his favours on those who behave with humility (Ps 25:14, Pr 3:34, cf. Mt 11:25, Lk 1:52).

21 Vv. 21-24 preach against curiosity: the Law is a sufficient study for the wise. Perhaps, Ben Sira is preaching against Greek learning.

22 For the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* reads, 'Think on what you are permitted' (במה שהורשית התבונן).

23 'Matters that are beyond you' *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'*; the LXX has 'your unnecessary works'.

24 The 1st line here follows the LXX; *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* has 'for, many are the conceits of the sons of men' (כי רבים עשתוני בני אדם).

25 This verse is present only in *Greek 248* and *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* (באין אישון יחסר אור ובאין דעת תחסר חכמה), where it follows v. 27.

- 26 καρδία σκληρὰ κακωθήσεται ἐπ' ἐσχάτων,
καὶ ὁ ἀγαπῶν κίνδυνον ἐν αὐτῷ ἀπολεῖται.
- 27 καρδία σκληρὰ βαρυνθήσεται πόνοις,
καὶ ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς προσθήσει ἁμαρτίαν ἐφ' ἁμαρτίαις.
- 28 ἐπαγωγῆ ὑπερηφάνου οὐκ ἔστιν ἴασις·
φυτὸν γὰρ πονηρίας ἐρρίζωκεν ἐν αὐτῷ.
- 29 καρδία συνετοῦ διανοηθήσεται παραβολήν,
καὶ οὗς ἀκροατοῦ ἐπιθυμία σοφοῦ.
- 30 πῦρ φλογιζόμενον ἀποσβέσει ὕδωρ,
καὶ ἐλεημοσύνη ἐξιλάσεται ἁμαρτίας.
- 31 ὁ ἀνταποδιδούς χάριτας μέμνηται εἰς τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα
καὶ ἐν καιρῷ πτώσεως αὐτοῦ εὐρήσει στήριγμα.

- 26 A stubborn heart will come to a bad end,
and whoever dallies with danger will perish in it.
- 27 A stubborn heart is weighed down with troubles;
and the sinner heaps sin on sin.
- 28 For the disease of the proud there is no cure,
since an evil weed has taken root in him.
- 29 The heart of the sensible will reflect on proverbs;
an attentive ear is the sage's dream.
- 30 As water puts out a blazing fire,
so almsgiving atones for sin.
- 31 He who gives favours in return is mindful of the future;
at the time of his falling, he will find support.

26 The 2nd line here follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has, 'and he who loves good things will be led by them' (ואוהב טובות ינהג בהם).

27 Abegg translates the 2nd line (Cairo Genizah MS 'A' – ומתחולל מוסיף עון על עון) as, "and the one who heaps sin upon sin is a raving lunatic."

28 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (אל תרוץ לרפאות מכת לץ כי אין לה רפואה כי מנטע כי רע נטעו) reads, "Do not hasten to heal the wound of a scoffer. For, there is no healing it; for, he is a plant of evil planting."

29 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (לב חכם יבין משלי חכמים ואזן מקשבת לחכמה תשמח) reads, "A wise heart will understand the proverbs of the wise; and the ear that listens to wisdom shall rejoice."

30 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'justice' (צדקה) in place of 'almsgiving'.

31 The text of the 1st line does not make it clear whether it means returning good for good or good for evil.

Σοφία Σιραχ 4

- 1 Τέκνον, τὴν ζωὴν τοῦ πτωχοῦ μὴ ἀποστερήσης
καὶ μὴ παρελκύσης ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπιδεεῖς.
- 2 ψυχὴν πεινῶσαν μὴ λυπήσης
καὶ μὴ παροργίσης ἄνδρα ἐν ἀπορίᾳ αὐτοῦ.
- 3 καρδίαν παρωργισμένην μὴ προσταράξεις
καὶ μὴ παρελκύσης δόσιν προσδεομένου.
- 4 ἰκέτην θλιβόμενον μὴ ἀπαναίνου
καὶ μὴ ἀποστρέψῃς τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀπὸ πτωχοῦ.
- 5 ἀπὸ δεομένου μὴ ἀποστρέψῃς ὀφθαλμόν
καὶ μὴ δῶς τόπον ἀνθρώπῳ καταράσασθαι σε·
- 6 καταρωμένου γάρ σε ἐν πικρίᾳ ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ
τῆς δεήσεως αὐτοῦ ἐπακούσεται ὁ ποιήσας αὐτόν.
- 7 προσφιλεῖ συναγωγῇ σεαυτὸν ποίει
καὶ μεγιστᾶνι ταπεινοῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν σου.
- 8 κλῖνον πτωχῷ τὸ οὖς σου
καὶ ἀποκρίθητι αὐτῷ εἰρηνικὰ ἐν πραύτητι.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 4

- 1 My child, do not refuse the poor a livelihood;
do not tantalise the needy.
- 2 Do not add to the sufferings of the hungry;
do not bait anyone in distress.
- 3 Do not aggravate a heart already angry,
nor keep the destitute waiting for your alms.
- 4 Do not reject a hard-pressed beggar,
nor turn your face from the poor.
- 5 Do not avert your eyes from the needy;
give no one occasion to curse you.
- 6 For if, in distress, someone curses you,
his Maker will give ear to his prayer.
- 7 Gain the love of the community;
in the presence of the great, bow your head.
- 8 To the poor, lend an ear,
and answer him with peaceful words in humility.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 4

- 1 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' opens with '(My) Son' (בני) in place of 'My child', here following the LXX (Τέκνον).
- 2 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (נפש חסירה אל תפוח ואל תתעלם ממדכדך נפש) reads, "Do not speak harshly to he who is hungry and do not hide from one he who is oppressed." (Note the pointing on the word, ממדכדך, which doesn't occur elsewhere in this section of the MS.)
- 3 In Cairo Genizah MS 'A', there is a large stain where the word for 'aggravate' (תחמיר) is written, making it effectively illegible.
- 4 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads 'nor despise the requests of the needy' (ולא תבזה שאולות דל).
- 5 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' appears to omit the 1st line of this verse, reading just 'lest you give him cause to curse you' (ולא תתן לו מקום לקללך).
- 6 In place of 'his Maker', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'his Rock' (צור).
- 7 Another reading for 'community' is 'congregation'.
- 8 For the 2nd line, the NJB (possibly following Cairo Genizah MS 'A' - והשיבהו שלום בענוה) has 'and courteously return the greeting'.

9 ἔξελοῦ ἀδικούμενον ἐκ χειρὸς ἀδικοῦντος
 καὶ μὴ ὀλιγοψυχῆσης ἐν τῷ κρίνειν σε.
 10 γίνου ὀρφανοῖς ὡς πατήρ
 καὶ ἀντὶ ἀνδρὸς τῇ μητρὶ αὐτῶν·
 καὶ ἔσῃ ὡς υἱὸς ὑψίστου,
 καὶ ἀγαπήσει σε μᾶλλον ἢ μήτηρ σου.
 11 Ἡ σοφία υἱοὺς αὐτῆς ἀνύψωσεν
 καὶ ἐπιλαμβάνεται τῶν ζητοῦντων αὐτήν.
 12 ὁ ἀγαπῶν αὐτήν ἀγαπᾷ ζωὴν,
 καὶ οἱ ὀρῶντες πρὸς αὐτήν
 ἐμπλησθήσονται εὐφροσύνης.
 13 ὁ κρατῶν αὐτῆς κληρονομήσει δόξαν,
 καὶ οὗ εἰσπορεύεται, εὐλογεῖ κύριος.
 14 οἱ λατρεύοντες αὐτῇ λειτουργήσουσιν ἀγίῳ,
 καὶ τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας αὐτήν ἀγαπᾷ ὁ κύριος.
 15 ὁ ὑπακούων αὐτῆς κρινεῖ ἔθνη,
 καὶ ὁ προσέχων αὐτῇ κατασκηνώσει πεποιθώς.

9 Save the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor,
 and do not be short-tempered in your judgements.
 10 Be like a father to the fatherless
 and as good as a husband to their mothers.
 You will then be like a son to the Most High,
 who will love you more than your own mother does.
 11 Wisdom teaches her own children
 and cares for those who seek her.
 12 Whoever loves her loves life;
 those who seek her early
 will be filled with joy.
 13 Whoever possesses her will inherit honour,
 and wherever he enters, the Lord will bless.
 14 Those who serve her minister to the Holy One,
 and the Lord loves those who love her.
 15 Whoever obeys her rules the nations;
 whoever pays attention to her dwells secure.

9 For 'short-tempered', the NJB has 'mean-spirited' and the WEBBE has 'hesitant'.

10 In place of 'mothers' (in the 2nd line), here following the LXX, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* has 'widows' (לאלמנות) and has the word on a line of its own, at the left-hand end of the line. This may be more acceptable: widows and orphans being typical of those to whom charity is enjoined (see Dt 10:18, 14:29, 24:19, et cetera, Ps 68:5, 146:9, Ezk 22:7).

11 The NJB has 'brings up' in place of 'teaches', here following *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* (למדה) and the *Peshitta* (and the NRSV); the LXX has 'exalts'. In vv. 11–19, Wisdom is personified (cf. Pr 1:23–25, 8:12–21, 9:1–6); her children are those who pursue wisdom and put it into practice (Lk 7:35).

12 For the 2nd line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* reads 'And those who seek her shall obtain favour from Yahweh' (ומבקשיה יפיקו רצון מיהו); the 3 *yod* characters in a triangular arrangement represent the Divine Name in this manuscript (and in some others from the *Cairo Genizah*).

13 Another reading for 'he enters' is 'she enters' (referring to Wisdom).

14 Service of wisdom is service of God, and God will love those who love her (Pr 8:17).

15 In *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'*, vv. 15–19, in the first-person singular, are presented as a 'discourse of Wisdom', in imitation of Pr 1:22ff, 8:1ff.

¹⁶ ἔὰν ἐμπιστεύσῃ, κατακληρονομήσει αὐτήν,
καὶ ἐν κατασχέσει ἔσονται αἱ γενεαὶ αὐτοῦ.
¹⁷ ὅτι διεστραμμένως πορεύεται μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐν πρώτοις,
φόβον καὶ δειλίαν ἐπάξει ἐπ' αὐτὸν
καὶ βασανίσει αὐτὸν ἐν παιδείᾳ αὐτῆς,
ἕως οὗ ἐμπιστεύσῃ τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτοῦ,
καὶ πειράσει αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς δικαιώμασιν αὐτῆς.
¹⁸ καὶ πάλιν ἐπανήξει κατ' εὐθείαν πρὸς αὐτὸν
καὶ εὐφρανεῖ αὐτὸν
καὶ ἀποκαλύψει αὐτῷ τὰ κρυπτὰ αὐτῆς.
¹⁹ ἔὰν ἀποπλανηθῇ, ἐγκαταλείψει αὐτὸν
καὶ παραδώσει αὐτὸν εἰς χεῖρας πτώσεως αὐτοῦ.
²⁰ Συντήρησον καιρὸν καὶ φύλαξαι ἀπὸ πονηροῦ
καὶ περὶ τῆς ψυχῆς σου μὴ αἰσχυνθῆς.
²¹ ἔστιν γὰρ αἰσχύνῃ ἐπάγουσα ἁμαρτίαν,
καὶ ἔστιν αἰσχύνῃ δόξα καὶ χάρις.
²² μὴ λάβῃς πρόσωπον κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς σου
καὶ μὴ ἐντραπῆς εἰς πτώσιν σου.

¹⁶ If he trusts himself to her, he will inherit her,
and his descendants will remain in possession of her.
¹⁷ For, at first, she will take him through winding ways;
bringing fear and faintness on him,
testing him with her discipline,
until she can trust him,
and she will test him with her ordeals.
¹⁸ Then she will come back to him on the straight road,
and making him happy
and revealing her secrets to him.
¹⁹ If he goes astray, however, she will abandon him
and leave him to his own destruction.
²⁰ Take circumstances into account and beware of evil,
and have no cause to be ashamed of yourself.
²¹ For, there is a shame that leads to sin
and a shame that is honourable and gracious.
²² Do not show partiality, discrediting your soul;
and do not revere any man to your falling.

¹⁶ Cairo Genizah MS 'A' lacks this verse and this section is not extant in any other Hebrew witness.

¹⁷ Cairo Genizah MS 'A' opens 'For, I will go with him, making myself strange' (כי בהתנכר אלך עמו) (and cf. #15).

¹⁸ For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'until his heart is filled with me'.

¹⁹ For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'and hand him over to robbers' (ואסגירנו לשדדים).

²⁰ Vv. 20–31 probably allude to the temptation to which Jews were exposed under the impact of Hellenism, (see 1M 1:12–15, 2M 4:11–16).

²¹ In place of 'honourable and gracious', the NRSV has 'glory and favour'.

²² For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "Do not be too severe on yourself; do not let shame lead you to ruin." Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' and 'C' read 'Do not respect your own person and do not stumble at your own shortcomings' (אל תשא פניך על נפשך ואל תכשל למכשולִיך); note that MS 'C' has תל למכשולִיך in place of תל למכשולִיך and, immediately before this verse, inserts the text of 20:22–23.

23 μὴ κωλύσης λόγον ἐν καιρῷ χρειᾶς·
καὶ μὴ κρύψῃς τὴν σοφίαν σου εἰς καλλονήν.
24 ἐν γὰρ λόγῳ γνωσθήσεται σοφία
καὶ παιδεία ἐν ῥήματι γλώσσης.
25 μὴ ἀντίλεγε τῇ ἀληθείᾳ
καὶ περὶ τῆς ἀπαιδευσίας σου ἐντράπηδι.
26 μὴ αἰσχυνθῆς ὁμολογήσαι ἐφ' ἁμαρτίαις σου
καὶ μὴ βιάζου ῥοῦν ποταμοῦ.
27 καὶ μὴ ὑποστρώσης ἀνθρώπῳ μωρῷ σεαυτὸν
καὶ μὴ λάβῃς πρόσωπον δυνάστου.
28 ἕως θανάτου ἀγωνίσαι περὶ τῆς ἀληθείας,
καὶ κύριος ὁ θεὸς πολεμήσει ὑπὲρ σοῦ.
29 μὴ γίνου δρασύς ἐν γλώσση σου
καὶ νωθρὸς καὶ παρειμένος ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις σου.
30 μὴ ἴσθι ὡς λέων ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ σου
καὶ φαντασιοκοπῶν ἐν τοῖς οἰκέταις σου.
31 μὴ ἔστω ἡ χεὶρ σου ἐκτεταμένη εἰς τὸ λαβεῖν
καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀποδιδόναι συνεσταλμένη.

23 Do not refrain from speaking at the proper moment,
and do not hide your wisdom.
24 For, your wisdom is made known by what you say,
your erudition by the word of the tongue.
25 Do not contradict the truth;
rather be shamed for your own ignorance.
26 Do not be ashamed to confess your sins;
do not try to stop the current of the river.
27 Do not grovel to the foolish;
do not show partiality to the mighty.
28 Fight to the death for truth,
and the Lord God will fight on your side.
29 Do not be hasty with your tongue
and slack and negligent in your deeds.
30 Do not be like a lion at home
and cowardly towards your servants.
31 Do not let your hands be outstretched to receive,
yet clenched when the time comes to give back.

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- 23 'At the proper moment' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'C' (בְּעִתּוֹ – the LXX has 'at a time of salvation' and the NJB has 'when it will do good') as does the 2nd line (דְּתַמְכַח תֵּא רְפוּת לְאִו), which is also in Greek 248.
24 In place of 'the word of the tongue', the NJB has 'the word you utter'.
25 The NJB has 'blush' in place of 'be shamed', here following the WEBBE.
26 It is as futile to hide one's sins from God as to try to stop a river from flowing.
27 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'and do not refute rulers to their face' (וְאֵל תִּמְאַן לְפָנַי מוֹשְׁלִים).
28 Before this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' inserts the text of 8:14.
29 For this verse, here loosely following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "Do not be bold of tongue, yet idle and slack in deed."
30 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'dog' (כְּכֹלֵב) in place of 'lion' (לָאוֹן), which makes the two lines synonymous rather than antithetical.
31 The NJB has 'tight-fisted' in place of 'clenched'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 5

- ¹ Μὴ ἔπεχε ἐπὶ τοῖς χρήμασίν σου
καὶ μὴ εἴπῃς Αὐτάρκη μοί ἐστιν.
- ² μὴ ἐξακολούθῃ τῇ ψυχῇ σου καὶ τῇ ἰσχύϊ σου
πορεύεσθαι ἐν ἐπιθυμίαις καρδίας σου·
- ³ καὶ μὴ εἴπῃς Τίς με δυναστεύσει;
ὁ γὰρ κύριος ἐκδικῶν ἐκδικήσει.
- ⁴ μὴ εἴπῃς Ἥμαρτον, καὶ τί μοι ἐγένετο;
ὁ γὰρ κύριός ἐστιν μακρόθυμος.
- ⁵ περὶ ἐξιλασμοῦ μὴ ἄφοβος γίνου
προσθεῖναι ἁμαρτίαν ἐφ' ἁμαρτίαις·
- ⁶ καὶ μὴ εἴπῃς Ὁ οἰκτιρμὸς αὐτοῦ πολὺς,
τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου ἐξιλάσεται·
ἔλεος γὰρ καὶ ὀργὴ παρ' αὐτῶ,
καὶ ἐπὶ ἁμαρτωλοὺς καταπαύσει ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ.
- ⁷ μὴ ἀνάμενε ἐπιστρέψαι πρὸς κύριον
καὶ μὴ ὑπερβάλλου ἡμέραν ἐξ ἡμέρας·
ἐξάπινα γὰρ ἐξελεύσεται ὀργὴ κυρίου,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 5

- ¹ Do not put your confidence in your money
or say, "With this, I am self-sufficient."
- ² Do not be led by your appetites and energy
to follow the passions of your heart.
- ³ Do not say, "Who has authority over me?"
For, the Lord will certainly give you your deserts.
- ⁴ Do not say, "I sinned, and what happened to me?"
For, the Lord is slow to anger.
- ⁵ Do not be so sure of forgiveness
that you add sin to sin.
- ⁶ Do not say, "His compassion is great,
he will forgive me my many sins."
For, both mercy and anger are with him,
and his indignation will rest on sinners.
- ⁷ Do not delay your return to the Lord;
do not put it off day after day;
For, suddenly the Lord's wrath will blaze out

WISDOM OF SIRACH 5

- ¹ Vv. 1-7 form a poem against presumption.
- ² Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (הע) (אל תלך אחרי לבך ועיניך ללכת בחמודות רעה) reads, "Do not follow your heart and your eyes, to walk in evil desires."
- ³ This verse speaks of the 'fool' who, even if he does not deny the existence of God, at least denies his providence (Ps 53:1).
- ⁴ The sceptic defies divine justice when it is apparently inactive.
- ⁵ 'Forgiveness' follows Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' (סליחה); the LXX has 'atonement' (ἐξιλασμοῦ). The added sin of the 2nd line is presumption.
- ⁶ The NJB has 'retribution' in place of 'anger' and 'anger' in place of 'indignation'.
- ⁷ Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' have 'to him' in place of 'to the Lord'.

καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἐκδικήσεως ἐξολῆ.
⁸ Μὴ ἔπεχε ἐπὶ χρήμασιν ἀδίκους·
οὐδὲν γὰρ ὠφελήσει σε ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπαγωγῆς.
⁹ μὴ λίκμα ἐν παντὶ ἀνέμῳ
καὶ μὴ πορεύου ἐν πάσῃ ἀτραπῷ·
οὕτως ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς ὁ δίγλωσσος.
¹⁰ ἴσθι ἐστηριγμένος ἐν συνέσει σου,
καὶ εἷς ἔστω σου ὁ λόγος.
¹¹ Γίνου ταχὺς ἐν ἀκροάσει σου
καὶ ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ φθέγγου ἀπόκρισιν.
¹² εἰ ἔστιν σοι σύνεσις, ἀποκρίθητι τῷ πλησίον·
εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἡ χεὶρ σου ἔστω ἐπὶ τῷ στόματί σου.
¹³ δόξα καὶ ἀτιμία ἐν λαλιᾷ,
καὶ γλῶσσα ἀνθρώπου πτώσις αὐτῷ.
¹⁴ Μὴ κληθῆς ψίδυρος
καὶ τῇ γλώσσῃ σου μὴ ἐνέδρευε
ἐπὶ γὰρ τῷ κλέπτῃ ἐστὶν αἰσχύνῃ
καὶ κατάγνωσις πονηρὰ ἐπὶ διγλώσσου.
¹⁵ ἐν μεγάλῳ καὶ ἐν μικρῷ μὴ ἀγνόει
καὶ ἀντὶ φίλου μὴ γίνου ἐχθρὸς·

and, on the day of punishment, you will perish.
⁸ Do not set your heart on dishonest wealth;
for, it will not benefit you on the day of disaster.
⁹ Do not winnow in every wind,
or walk along by every by-way,
as the double-talking sinner does.
¹⁰ Be steady in your convictions,
and be a person of your word.
¹¹ Be quick to listen
and patient when giving an answer.
¹² If you understand a matter, answer your neighbour;
if not, keep your hand over your mouth.
¹³ Both honour and disgrace come from talking;
the tongue is its owner's downfall.
¹⁴ Do not be called a double-dealer;
do not set traps with your tongue.
For, as shame lies in store for the thief,
so harsh condemnation awaits the deceitful.
¹⁵ Do not act corruptly in great or small matters,
and do not exchange friendship for enmity.

⁸ Cairo Genizah MS 'C' omits this verse, though it is included in MS 'A' (אל תבטח על נכסי שקר כי לא יועילו ביום עברה).
⁹ The NJB parenthesises the 3rd line, here following the LXX, and the NRSV includes it only as a footnote; it is not present the Cairo Genizah MSS.
¹⁰ For this verse, Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' read, 'Be sure of your knowledge and then speak' (היה סמוך על דברך ואחר יהיה דבריך).
¹¹ For 'patient', Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' have 'slow of spirit'.
¹² Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (אם יש אתך ענה ריעיד ואם אין שים ידך על פיד) and MS 'C' (אם יש אתך ענה ריעיד ואם אין שים ידך על פיד) differ slightly.
¹³ Ben Sira takes up the topic of the tongue (use and abuse) frequently: 19:6-17, 20:16-20, 22:7-23:15, 28:12-26.
¹⁴ 'Double-dealer' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (בעל שתים); the LXX has 'slanderer' (ψίδυρος).
¹⁵ 'Do not act corruptly' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (אל תשחת) and the Peshitta; the LXX has 'do not be ignorant'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 6

- 1 ὄνομα γὰρ πονηρὸν αἰσχύνῃ καὶ ὄνειδος κληρονομῆσει·
οὕτως ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς ὁ δίγλωσσος.
- 2 Μὴ ἐπάρεθς σεαυτὸν ἐν βουλῇ ψυχῆς σου,
ἵνα μὴ διαρπαγῇ ὡς ταῦρος ἡ ψυχὴ σου·
- 3 τὰ φύλλα σου καταφάγεσαι
καὶ τοὺς καρπούς σου ἀπολέσεις
καὶ ἀφήσεις σεαυτὸν ὡς ξύλον ξηρόν.
- 4 ψυχὴ πονηρὰ ἀπολεῖ τὸν κτησάμενον αὐτήν
καὶ ἐπίχαρμα ἐχθρῶν ποιήσει αὐτόν.
- 5 Λάρυγξ γλυκὺς πληθυνεῖ φίλους αὐτοῦ,
καὶ γλῶσσα εὐλαλὸς πληθυνεῖ εὐπροσήγορα.
- 6 οἱ εἰρηνεύοντές σοι ἔστωσαν πολλοί,
οἱ δὲ σύμβουλοί σου εἷς ἀπὸ χιλίων.
- 7 εἰ κτᾶσαι φίλον, ἐν πειρασμῷ κτῆσαι αὐτόν
καὶ μὴ ταχὺ ἐμπιστεύσης αὐτῷ.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 6

- 1 For, a bad name will earn you shame and reproach,
as happens to the double-talking sinner.
- 2 Do not exalt yourself in the counsel of your soul,
for fear your strength tears itself apart like a bull.
- 3 You will devour your leaves
and your destroy fruit,
and you will be left like a withered tree.
- 4 An evil temper destroys the person who has it
and makes him the laughing stock of his enemies.
- 5 A kindly turn of speech attracts new friends;
a courteous tongue invites many a friendly response.
- 6 Let your acquaintances be many
but, for advisers, choose one out of a thousand.
- 7 If you want to make a friend, take him on trial,
and do not be in a hurry to trust him.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 6

- 1 In the *Rahlfs-Hanhart* text, this verse is included as part of 5:15; and, in that text, this chapter begins at v. 2.
- 2 For the 1st line, the *NJB* has ‘Do not get carried aloft on the wings of passion’, claiming to follow the ‘Hebrew text’; however, *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* (which is the only extant Hebrew text for this verse) reads much the same as the translation presented here (אל תפול ביד נפשך), which follows that of the *WEBBE*. The *NRSV* has ‘Do not fall into the grip of passion’.
- 3 For ‘destroy’, here following the *LXX* (ἀπολέσεις), *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* reads ‘uproot’ (שרת).
- 4 In place of ‘evil temper’, here following the *NJB*, the *WEBBE* has ‘wicked soul’.
- 5 Vv. 5–17 discuss true and false friendship – a frequent topic (see 11:29–12:18, 22:19–26, 37:1–6).
- 6 The literal translation of ‘acquaintances’ is ‘those who are at peace with you’, or possibly, ‘those who wish peace to you’.
- 7 Friends are to be tested, lest they turn out to be ‘fair-weather friends’ (vv. 5 –12); true friends are a treasure, a gift from God (vv. 13–17).

8 ἔστιν γὰρ φίλος ἐν καιρῶ αὐτοῦ
καὶ οὐ μὴ παραμείνη ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεώς σου.
9 καὶ ἔστιν φίλος μετατιθέμενος εἰς ἔχθραν
καὶ μάχην ὀνειδισμοῦ σου ἀποκαλύψει.
10 καὶ ἔστιν φίλος κοινωνὸς τραπεζῶν
καὶ οὐ μὴ παραμείνη ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεώς σου·
11 καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς σου ἔσται ὡς σὺ
καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς οἰκέτας σου παρρησιάσεται·
12 ἐὰν ταπεινωθῆς, ἔσται κατὰ σοῦ
καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου κρυβήσεται.
13 ἀπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν σου διαχωρίσθητι
καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν φίλων σου πρόσεχε.
14 φίλος πιστὸς σκέπη κραταιά,
ὁ δὲ εὐρῶν αὐτὸν εὗρεν θησαυρόν.
15 φίλου πιστοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντάλλαγμα,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν σταθμὸς τῆς καλλονῆς αὐτοῦ.
16 φίλος πιστὸς φάρμακον ζωῆς,
καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον εὐρήσουσιν αὐτόν.

8 For, one kind of friend is so only on occasions
but will not stand by you in your day of trouble.
9 Another kind of friend will fall out with you
and, will expose the quarrel, to your shame.
10 A third kind of friend will sit at your table
but will not remain in your day of trouble.
11 When you are doing well, he will be your second self,
and he will order your servants about;
12 but, if disaster befalls you, he will recoil from you
and will hide himself from your face.
13 Keep well clear of your enemies
and be wary of your friends.
14 A faithful friend is a powerful defence:
whoever finds one has found a treasure.
15 A faithful friend is something beyond price
and there is no measuring his value.
16 A faithful friend is the elixir of life,
and those who fear the Lord will find one.

8 In place of 'on occasions', the NJB has 'when it suits him'. Cairo Genizah MS 'C' omits this verse.

9 In place of 'exposes', here following the LXX (ἀποκαλύψει) and Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (יחשוך), Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has 'withholds' (יחשוך).

10 For 'but (and) will not remain', here following the LXX (καὶ οὐ μὴ παραμείνη), Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' have 'but not be found' (ולא ימצא).

11 For the 2nd line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'and in your adversity he will turn away' (וברעתך יתגדה ממך).

12 For the 2nd line, the NJB has, "and keep out of your way."

13 Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' have near identical text for this verse (which is generally concordant with that of the LXX); the one difference is that MS 'A' (מאבהבך) lacks the conjunction at the start of the 2nd line but MS 'C' (ומאזהבך) includes it.

14 The NJB has 'loyal' in place of 'faithful', here following the WEBBE (as also in vv. 15 & 16).

15 The WEBBE has 'excellency' in place of 'value'.

16 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'God' in place of 'the Lord' and MS 'C' omits this verse (and v. 7).

17 ὁ φοβούμενος κύριον εὐθυνεῖ φιλίαν αὐτοῦ,
 ὅτι κατ' αὐτὸν οὕτως καὶ ὁ πλησίον αὐτοῦ.
 18 Τέκνον, ἐκ νεότητός σου ἐπίλεξαι παιδείαν,
 καὶ ἕως πολιῶν εὐρήσεις σοφίαν.
 19 ὡς ὁ ἀροτριῶν καὶ ὁ σπείρων πρόσελθε αὐτῇ
 καὶ ἀνάμενε τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς καρποὺς αὐτῆς·
 ἐν γὰρ τῇ ἐργασίᾳ αὐτῆς ὀλίγον κοπιάσεις
 καὶ ταχὺ φάγεσαι τῶν γεννημάτων αὐτῆς.
 20 ὡς τραχεῖά ἐστιν σφόδρα τοῖς ἀπαιδευτοῖς,
 καὶ οὐκ ἐμμενεῖ ἐν αὐτῇ ἀκάροδις·
 21 ὡς λίθος δοκιμασίας ἰσχυρὸς ἔσται ἐπ' αὐτῷ,
 καὶ οὐ χρονιεῖ ἀπορριῖψαι αὐτήν.
 22 σοφία γὰρ κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς ἐστιν
 καὶ οὐ πολλοῖς ἐστιν φανερά.
 23 Ἄκουσον, τέκνον, καὶ ἐκδεξαι γνώμην μου
 καὶ μὴ ἀπαναίνου τὴν συμβουλίαν μου·
 24 καὶ εἰσένεγκον τοὺς πόδας σου εἰς τὰς πέδας αὐτῆς
 καὶ εἰς τὸν κλοιὸν αὐτῆς τὸν τράχηλόν σου·

17 Whoever fears the Lord makes true friends,
 for, as a person is, so is his friend too.
 18 My child, from your earliest youth, choose instruction,
 and, until your hair is white, you will find wisdom.
 19 Like one who ploughs and sows, approach her
 and wait for her fine harvest;
 for, in tilling her, you will toil a little while,
 but, very soon, you will be eating her crops.
 20 How very harsh she is to the fool!
 The senseless does not stay with her for long.
 21 She will rest on the senseless like a heavy stone
 and such a person will lose no time in throwing her off.
 22 For, Wisdom is true to her name
 and she is not accessible to many.
 23 Listen, my child, and take my advice,
 do not reject my counsel.
 24 Put your feet into her fetters
 and your neck into her collar.

17 The 2nd line is usually read, 'for his friend is as dear to him as himself' but equally probable is 'for his friend will be inevitably like himself', god-fearing. True piety is the guarantee of friendship.

18 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' lacks this verse but it is included in MS 'C'.

19 The NJB has 'cultivate' in place of 'approach' but this is not supported by either the LXX or Cairo Genizah MSS.

20 In place of 'fool', the NJB has 'undisciplined' and the WEBBE has 'unlearned'.

21 For the 1st line, the NJB reads, "She will weigh as heavily on the senseless as a touchstone."

22 The Cairo Genizah MS 'A' text for this verse (כי המוסר כמשה כן הוא ולא לרבים היא נכונה) is not easy to translated precisely; Abegg has, "For, she and discipline are one and the same, and not many are willing to accept her as the right way of life."

23 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has the text of 27:5.

24 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has the text of 27:6.

25 ὑπόθες τὸν ὤμῳ σου καὶ βάσταξον αὐτήν
καὶ μὴ προσοχθίσῃς τοῖς δεσμοῖς αὐτῆς·

26 ἐν πάσῃ ψυχῇ σου πρόσελθε αὐτῇ
καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ δυνάμει σου συντήρησον τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῆς·

27 ἐξίχνευσον καὶ ζήτησον, καὶ γνωσθήσεται σοι,
καὶ ἐγκρατῆς γενόμενος μὴ ἀφῆς αὐτήν·

28 ἐπ' ἐσχάτων γὰρ εὐρήσεις τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν αὐτῆς,
καὶ στραφήσεται σοι εἰς εὐφροσύνην·

29 καὶ ἔσονται σοι αἱ πέδαι εἰς σκέπην ἰσχύος
καὶ οἱ κλοιοὶ αὐτῆς εἰς στολὴν δόξης.

30 κόσμος γὰρ χρύσεός ἐστιν ἐπ' αὐτῆς,
καὶ οἱ δεσμοὶ αὐτῆς κλῶσμα ὑακίνθινον·

31 στολὴν δόξης ἐνδύσει αὐτήν
καὶ στέφανον ἀγαλλιάματος περιθήσεις σεαυτῷ.

32 Ἐὰν θέλῃς, τέκνον, παιδευθήσῃ,
καὶ ἐὰν ἐπιθῶς τὴν ψυχὴν σου, πανοῦργος ἔσῃ·

33 ἐὰν ἀγαπήσῃς ἀκούειν, ἐκδέξῃ,
καὶ ἐὰν κλίνῃς τὸ οὖς σου, σοφὸς ἔσῃ.

25 Offer your shoulder to her burden;
do not be impatient of her bonds.

26 Court her with all your soul
and, with all your might, keep in her ways.

27 Search for her, track her down; she will reveal herself;
and, holding her fast, do not let her go.

28 For, in the end, you will find rest in her
and she will be turned for you into joy.

29 Her fetters you will find a mighty defence,
her locks a robe of glory.

30 Her yoke will be a golden ornament,
and her bonds will be purple ribbons.

31 You will wear her like a robe of honour;
you will put her on like a crown of joy.

32 If you wish it, my child, you can be taught;
and, if you apply yourself, you will be prudent.

33 If you love listening, you will learn;
and, if you pay attention, you will become wise.

25 The meaning of 'her bonds' here is uncertain; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has *ואל תקץ בתחבולתיה*, which may refer to 'her cords' or 'her counsel'.

26 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' lacks this verse.

27 The NJB opens the 2nd line, "once you hold her."

28 For the 2nd line, here (loosely) following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "and she will take the form of joy for you."

29 In place of 'robe of glory', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'golden garment' (בגדי כהם).

30 'Her yoke' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (עלי); the LXX has 'on her' – probably a misreading by the original translator; on the 'purple ribbons'.

31 The NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (ועטרת תפארת תעטרנה), has 'splendid crown' in place of 'crown of joy', here following the LXX (and NJB). The last part of this verse is the only substantial text of the book found in Qumran Scroll 2Q18 (2QSir), reading, *ת תפארת תעטרנה*[...].

32 The NJB has 'become intelligent' in place of 'be prudent'.

33 The literal translation of 'pay attention' is 'incline your ear'.

34 ἐν πλήθει πρεσβυτέρων στῆθι·
καὶ τίς σοφός; αὐτῷ προσκολληθήσῃτι.
35 πᾶσαν διήγησιν θεῖαν θέλε ἀκροᾶσθαι,
καὶ παροιμίαι συνέσεως μὴ ἐκφευγέτωσάν σε.
36 ἐὰν ἴδῃς συνετόν, ὄρῃριζε πρὸς αὐτόν,
καὶ βαθμοὺς θυρῶν αὐτοῦ ἐκτριβέτω ὁ πούς σου.
37 διανοῦ ἐν τοῖς προστάγμασιν κυρίου
καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς αὐτοῦ μελέτα διὰ παντός·
αὐτὸς στηριεῖ τὴν καρδίαν σου,
καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σοφίας δοθήσεται σοι.

34 Attend the gathering of elders;
if there is a wise man there, attach yourself to him.
35 Listen willingly to any divine discourse;
and do not let wise proverbs escape you.
36 If you see a man of understanding, visit him early;
let your feet wear out his doorsteps.
37 Reflect on the injunctions of the Lord;
busy yourself at all times with his commandments.
He will strengthen your mind
and the wisdom you desire will be granted you.

34 One way of becoming wise is to seek out the intelligent and frequent their company (vv. 34–36). *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* lacks this verse.

35 In place of 'divine discourse', the NJB has 'discourse coming from God'; *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* lacks the adjective,

36 The NJB has the singular, 'doorstep'; a more literal translation is 'the steps of his doors'.

37 Attaining wisdom means fidelity to the Law (see also 15:1, 19:20, 23:27, 24:33). In place of 'the Lord' (*κυρίου*), *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* has 'the Most High (God)' (*יְיָ*).

Σοφία Σιραχ 7

- 1 Μὴ ποίει κακά, καὶ οὐ μὴ σε καταλάβῃ κακόν·
- 2 ἀπόστηθι ἀπὸ ἀδίκου, καὶ ἐκκλινεῖ ἀπὸ σοῦ.
- 3 υἱέ, μὴ σπεῖρε ἐπ' αὐλακας ἀδικίας,
καὶ οὐ μὴ θερίσῃς αὐτὰ ἐπταπλασίως.
- 4 μὴ ζῆτει παρὰ κυρίου ἡγεμονίαν
μηδὲ παρὰ βασιλέως καθεδρὰν δόξης.
- 5 μὴ δικαιοῦ ἔναντι κυρίου
καὶ παρὰ βασιλεῖ μὴ σοφίζου.
- 6 μὴ ζῆτει γενέσθαι κριτῆς,
μὴ οὐκ ἰσχύσεις ἐξᾶραι ἀδικίας,
μήποτε εὐλαβηθῆς ἀπὸ προσώπου δυνάστου
καὶ θήσεις σκάνδαλον ἐν εὐθύτητί σου.
- 7 μὴ ἀμάρτανε εἰς πλῆθος πόλεως
καὶ μὴ καταβάλλῃς σεαυτὸν ἐν ὄχλῳ.
- 8 μὴ καταδεσμεύσῃς δις ἁμαρτίαν·
ἐν γὰρ τῇ μιᾷ οὐκ ἀδῶος ἔσῃ.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 7

- 1 Do no evil and evil will not overtake you;
- 2 depart from wrong and it will avoid you.
- 3 My son, do not sow in the furrows of wickedness,
for fear you have to reap them seven times over.
- 4 Do not ask the Lord for the highest place,
or the king for a seat of honour.
- 5 Do not justify yourself before the Lord,
or parade your wisdom before the king.
- 6 Do not scheme to be a judge,
for fear you should be unable to stamp out injustice,
for fear of being swayed by someone influential
and so of risk of losing your integrity.
- 7 Do not wrong the general body of citizens
and so lower yourself in popular esteem.
- 8 Do not commit a sin twice;
for, you will not go unpunished even once.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 7

- 1 In place of 'overtake', here following the LXX and Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C', and the WEBBE, the NJB has 'befall'.
- 2 Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' have 'stay away' in place of 'depart'.
- 3 The NRSV, following the Cairo Genizah MS 'A', lacks 'My son', here following the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'C' omits this verse.
- 4 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'dominion' (ממשלה) in place of 'the highest place'.
- 5 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'king' (מלך) in place of 'the Lord'.
- 6 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'ruler' (מושל) in place of 'judge'.
- 7 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads, "Do not condemn yourself in the congregation at the gates (?) and do not cast yourself down in the assembly."
(אל תרשיעך בעדת שערי אל אל תפילך בקהלה)
- 8 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "Do not be drawn to sin twice over."

- 9 μὴ εἴπῃς Ἐὖ πλῆθει τῶν δώρων μου ἐπόψεται
καὶ ἐν τῷ προσενέγκαι με θεῷ ὑψίστῳ προσδέξεται.
- 10 μὴ ὀλιγοψυχῆσης ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ σου
καὶ ἐλεημοσύνην ποιῆσαι μὴ παρίδῃς.
- 11 μὴ καταγέλα ἄνθρωπον ὄντα ἐν πικρίᾳ ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ·
ἔστιν γὰρ ὁ ταπεινῶν καὶ ἄνυψῶν.
- 12 μὴ ἀροτρία ψεῦδος ἐπ’ ἀδελφῷ σου
μηδὲ φίλῳ τὸ ὅμοιον ποίει.
- 13 μὴ θέλε ψεύδουσαι πᾶν ψεῦδος·
ὁ γὰρ ἐνδελεισμὸς αὐτοῦ οὐκ εἰς ἀγαθόν.
- 14 μὴ ἀδολέσχει ἐν πλῆθει πρεσβυτέρων
καὶ μὴ δευτερώσης λόγον ἐν προσευχῇ σου.
- 15 μὴ μισήσης ἐπίπονον ἐργασίαν
καὶ γεωργίαν ὑπὸ ὑψίστου ἐκτισμένην.
- 16 μὴ προσλογίζου σεαυτὸν ἐν πλῆθει ἀμαρτωλῶν·
μνήσθητι ὅτι ὀργὴ οὐ χρονεῖ.

- 9 Do not say, “He will look on the multitude of my gifts;
when I sacrifice to God Most High, he will accept.”
- 10 Do not be hesitant in prayer
and do not neglect to give alms.
- 11 Do not laugh at someone who is sad of heart,
for he who brings low can lift up high.
- 12 Do not devise lies against your brother,
nor against a friend either.
- 13 Mind you tell no lies,
for no good can come of it.
- 14 Do not babble at the gathering of elders
and do not repeat yourself at your prayers.
- 15 Do not shirk tiring jobs
or farm work, ordained by the Most High.
- 16 Do not swell the ranks of sinners;
remember that the retribution will not delay.

9 For this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* has the text of v. 15.

10 The *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* text for the 2nd line (ובצדקה אל תתעבר) is uncertain and Abegg translates it as, “lest righteousness be neglected.” Note that the Hebrew text ends with a (very) wide *resh*.

11 This role of God is emphasised also in 1S 2:8.

12 ‘Devise’ follows *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* (שיחור); the LXX has ‘plough’ (ἀροτρία).

13 The literal translation of the 2nd line (here following the LXX and NJB) is ‘its continuity is not good’ (the NRSV has ‘for it is a habit that results in no good’). The meaning is uncertain but confirmed by *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’*: ‘for, the result is not good’ (כי תקותו לא תנעם).

14 In place of ‘babble’, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has ‘talk too much’.

15 See #9. The (misplaced) text of *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* is: אל תאיץ בצבא מלאכת עבדה הי כאל נחלקה. (“Do not rush through a laborious task when you do your service; it has been apportioned to you by God.”)

16 In the context of v. 15, this verse talks of considering oneself better than others.

17 ταπεινώσον σφόδρα τὴν ψυχὴν σου,
ὅτι ἐκδίκησις ἀσεβοῦς πῦρ καὶ σκώληξ.

18 Μὴ ἀλλάξης φίλον ἕνεκεν διαφόρου
μηδὲ ἀδελφὸν γνήσιον ἐν χρυσίῳ Σουφίρ.

19 μὴ ἀστόχει γυναικὸς σοφῆς καὶ ἀγαθῆς·
ἡ γὰρ χάρις αὐτῆς ὑπὲρ τὸ χρυσίον.

20 μὴ κακώσης οἰκέτην ἐργαζόμενον ἐν ἀληθείᾳ
μηδὲ μίσθιον διδόντα τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ·

21 οἰκέτην συνετὸν ἀγαπάτω σου ἡ ψυχὴ,
μὴ στέρησῃς αὐτὸν ἐλευθερίας.

22 κτήνη σοὶ ἐστίν; ἐπισκέπτου αὐτά·
καὶ εἰ ἔστιν σοι χρήσιμα, ἐμμενέτω σοι.

23 τέκνα σοὶ ἐστίν; παιδεύσον αὐτὰ
καὶ κάμψον ἐκ νεότητος τὸν τράχηλον αὐτῶν.

24 θυγατέρες σοὶ εἰσίν; πρόσεχε τῷ σώματι αὐτῶν
καὶ μὴ ἰλαρώσης πρὸς αὐτὰς τὸ πρόσωπόν σου.

17 Be very humble,
since the recompense for the godless is fire and worms.

18 Do not barter a friend away for the sake of profit,
nor a true brother for the gold of Ophir.

19 Do not dismiss a wise and good wife;
her gracious presence is worth more than gold.

20 Do not ill-treat a slave who is an honest worker,
or a wage earner who is devoted to you.

21 Love an intelligent slave with all your heart,
and do not deny such a slave his freedom.

22 Do you have cattle? Look after them;
if they are making you a profit, keep them.

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

24 Do you have daughters? Take care of their chastity
and don't be overly indulgent towards them.

17 For the 2nd line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' have *כי תקות אנוש [ל]רמה* ('for, the expectation of mortals is worms').

18 'Ophir', on the coast of southern Arabia or eastern Africa, was famous for its gold (1K 9:28).

19 In place of 'dismiss', here following Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (and NRSV), the LXX has 'deprive yourself of'; the NJB has 'turn against'. An alternative reading for the 1st line is, "Do not hesitate to marry a wise and good wife;" (see v. 26).

20 The 2 Cairo Genizah MSS differ slightly in this verse: MS 'A' has *אל תר[.] עבד עובד* whereas MS 'C' opens instead with (albeit in poorly preserved text) *אל תר[.] עבד עובד*.

21 The literal translation of the 1st line (following the LXX) is, "Let your soul love an intelligent slave." The has misunderstood the Hebrew: *עבד משכיל חבב כנפש* ('Love as your soul an intelligent slave.');

22 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' omits this verse but MS 'A' has it - *בהמה לך ראה עיניך ואם אמנה היא העמידה*; the text very similar to that of the LXX.

23 The NJB has 'educate' in place of 'discipline' and 'bow the neck' (LXX) in place of 'obedient' (Hebrew).

24 The NJB, following the LXX, has 'bodies' for 'chastity', here following Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'C' (and NRSV). On daughters, see 42:9-14.

25 ἔκδου θυγατέρα, καὶ ἔσῃ τετελεκὼς ἔργον μέγα,
καὶ ἀνδρὶ συνετῷ δώρησαι αὐτήν.
26 γυνή σοί ἐστὶν κατὰ ψυχὴν;
μὴ ἐκβάλῃς αὐτήν·
καὶ μισουμένη μὴ ἐμπιστεύσῃς σεαυτόν.
27 Ἐν ὅλῃ καρδίᾳ σου δόξασον τὸν πατέρα σου
καὶ μητρὸς ὠδῖνας μὴ ἐπιλάθῃ.
28 μνήσθητι ὅτι δι' αὐτῶν ἐγεννήθης,
καὶ τί ἀνταποδώσεις αὐτοῖς καθὼς αὐτοὶ σοί;
29 ἐν ὅλῃ ψυχῇ σου εὐλαβοῦ τὸν κύριον
καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς αὐτοῦ θαύμαζε.
30 ἐν ὅλῃ δυνάμει ἀγάπησον τὸν ποιήσαντά σε
καὶ τοὺς λειτουργοὺς αὐτοῦ μὴ ἐγκαταλίπῃς.
31 φοβοῦ τὸν κύριον καὶ δόξασον ἱερέα
καὶ δὸς τὴν μερίδα αὐτῷ, καθὼς ἐντέταλται σοι,
ἀπαρχὴν καὶ περὶ πλημμελείας καὶ δόσιν βραχιόνων
καὶ θυσίαν ἀγιασμοῦ καὶ ἀπαρχὴν ἁγίων.

25 Marry a daughter off and you have done a great work;
but give her to a man of understanding.
26 Do you have a wife who pleases you?
Don't turn her out;
but, if you do not love her, never trust her.
27 With all your heart, honour your father;
never forget the birth pangs of your mother.
28 Remember that you owe your birth to them;
how can you repay them for what they did for you?
29 With all your soul, fear the Lord
and revere his priests.
30 With all your might, love him who made you,
and do not abandon his ministers.
31 Fear the Lord and honour the priest
and give him the portion enjoined on you:
First fruits, sacrifice of reparation, shoulder gift,
sanctification sacrifice, and first fruits of holy things.

25 At the end of this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* adds 'a companion' (חברה).

26 *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* and the *Peshitta* lack 'who pleases you'. Many MSS omit the 2nd line.

27 *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* lacks vv. 27–28.

28 The *NJB* & *WEBBE* have 'have done' in place of 'did'.

29 Ben Sira reveres the liturgy and its ministers (see Ch. 50). Here, reverence for the priest is juxtaposed with worship of the Lord in the same spirit as those texts to which v. 31 alludes: Ex 29:27, Lv 5:6 (sacrifices of reparation, or 'for sin'), 7:32, Nb 18:11–18 (first fruits), Dt 18:3 (the 'shoulder gift' of v. 31).

30 A more literal reading of 'ministers' is 'servants'.

31 The 'sanctification sacrifice' (Hebrew 'of right behaviour') is probably the oblation of Lv 2:1–16.

³² Καὶ πτωχῶ ἔκτεινον τὴν χειρὰ σου,
ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ εὐλογία σου.
³³ χάρις δόματος ἔναντι παντὸς ζῶντος,
καὶ ἐπὶ νεκρῶ μὴ ἀποκωλύσης χάριν.
³⁴ μὴ ὑστέρει ἀπὸ κλαιόντων
καὶ μετὰ πενθούντων πένθησον.
³⁵ μὴ ὄκνει ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ἄρρωστον ἄνθρωπον·
ἐκ γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων ἀγαπηθήσῃ.
³⁶ ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις σου μιμνήσκου τὰ ἔσχατά σου,
καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα οὐχ ἁμαρτήσεις.

³² Also, give generously to the poor,
so that your blessing may lack nothing.
³³ Let your generosity extend to all the living;
do not withhold it even from the dead.
³⁴ Do not turn your back on those who weep
and mourn with those who mourn.
³⁵ Do not be slow in visiting the sick;
in this way, you will make yourself loved.
³⁶ In everything you do, remember your end,
and you will never sin.

³² The 'blessing' is that given by God.

³³ On the duty of giving decent burial to the dead, see 2S 21:10–14, Tb 1:17–18, 12:12, Is 34:3, Jr 22:19. At a later period, prayers and sacrifices were also offered for them (2M 12:38–46). However, the Law seems to have forbidden certain non-Jewish rites connected with the dead (Dt 26:14, cf. Si 30:18, Ba 6:26). Ben Sira does not go into details.

³⁴ For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "but share the grief of the grief-stricken."

³⁵ For the 1st line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads **אל תשא לב מאוהב** ('Do not withdraw your heart from a friend').

³⁶ In place of 'do' (here following Cairo Genizah MS 'A'), the LXX has 'say'. Even if Ben Sira does not yet have a sure and clear idea of retribution after death, he several times stresses the importance of the hour of death (see 11:26–28). There could also be an advance in the Greek translation of the Hebrew text, which merely says, 'In everything you do, consider the end' (בבכל מעשיך זכור אחרית); that is, be careful of the consequences of your actions. By the more precise 'your end', the LXX clearly envisages the last things.

Σοφία Σιραχ 8

- 1** Μὴ διαμάχου μετὰ ἀνθρώπου δυνάστου,
μήποτε ἐμπέσης εἰς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ.
- 2** μὴ ἔριξε μετὰ ἀνθρώπου πλουσίου,
μήποτε ἀντιστήσῃ σου τὴν ὀλκὴν·
πολλοὺς γὰρ ἀπώλεσεν τὸ χρυσίον
καὶ καρδίας βασιλέων ἐξέκλινεν.
- 3** μὴ διαμάχου μετὰ ἀνθρώπου γλωσσώδους
καὶ μὴ ἐπιστοιβάσῃς ἐπὶ τὸ πῦρ αὐτοῦ ξύλα.
- 4** μὴ πρόσπαιξε ἀπαιδεύτῳ,
ἵνα μὴ ἀτιμάζωνται οἱ πρόγονοί σου.
- 5** μὴ ὀνειδίξῃς ἄνθρωπον ἀποστρέφοντα ἀπὸ ἀμαρτίας·
μνήσθητι ὅτι πάντες ἐσμὲν ἐν ἐπιτίμοις.
- 6** μὴ ἀτιμάσῃς ἄνθρωπον ἐν γῆρα αὐτοῦ·
καὶ γὰρ ἐξ ἡμῶν γηράσκουσιν.
- 7** μὴ ἐπίχαιρε ἐπὶ νεκρῷ·
μνήσθητι ὅτι πάντες τελευτῶμεν.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 8

- 1** Do not contend with the powerful,
or you may fall into their hands.
- 2** Do not quarrel with the rich,
in case their resources outweigh yours.
For, gold has destroyed many,
and has swayed the hearts of kings.
- 3** Do not argue with a loudmouthed man
and do not heap wood on his fire.
- 4** Do not make fun of one who is ill bred,
or you may insult your ancestors.
- 5** Do not revile a repentant sinner;
remember that we are all guilty.
- 6** Do not despise anyone in old age;
after all, some of us too are growing old.
- 7** Do not gloat over anyone's death;
remember that we all end up dead.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 8

- 1** Cairo Genizah MS 'A' adds a 2nd part to this verse: אַל תִּרִיב עִם קֶשֶׁה מִ[.] לְמָה תִּפּוֹל בְּיָדוֹ ('Do not fight with one harder than you. Why fall by his hand?').
- 2** The gold of the rich can function as a bribe.
- 3** The NJB has 'the loud of mouth' in place of 'a loudmouthed man'.
- 4** Curses such as this were common in the East.
- 5** 'Guilty' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (and the NJB); the NRSV, following the LXX, has 'deserve punishment'.
- 6** In place of 'some of us', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'we are all'.
- 7** The NJB ends with 'have to die' in place of 'end up dead', here following the WEBBE.

- ⁸ μὴ παρίδῃς διήγημα σοφῶν
καὶ ἐν ταῖς παροιμίαις αὐτῶν ἀναστρέφου·
ὅτι παρ’ αὐτῶν μαθήσῃ παιδείαν
καὶ λειτουργῆσαι μεγιστᾶσιν.
- ⁹ μὴ ἀστόχει διηγήματος γερόντων,
καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἔμαθον παρὰ τῶν πατέρων αὐτῶν·
ὅτι παρ’ αὐτῶν μαθήσῃ σύνεσιν
καὶ ἐν καιρῷ χρείας δοῦναι ἀπόκρισιν.
- ¹⁰ μὴ ἔκκαιε ἄνδρακας ἀμαρτωλοῦ,
μὴ ἐμπυρισθῆς ἐν πυρὶ φλογὸς αὐτοῦ.
- ¹¹ μὴ ἐξαναστῆς ἀπὸ προσώπου ὑβριστοῦ,
ἵνα μὴ ἐγκαθίσῃ ὡς ἔνεδρον τῷ στόματί σου.
- ¹² μὴ δανείσῃς ἀνθρώπῳ ἰσχυροτέρῳ σου·
καὶ ἐὰν δανείσῃς, ὡς ἀπολωλεκῶς γίνου.
- ¹³ μὴ ἐγγυήσῃς ὑπὲρ δύναμίν σου·
καὶ ἐὰν ἐγγυήσῃς, ὡς ἀποτείσων φρόντιζε.
- ¹⁴ μὴ δικάζου μετὰ κριτοῦ·
κατὰ γὰρ τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ κρινοῦσιν αὐτῷ.

- ⁸ Do not scorn the discourse of the wise,
but make yourself familiar with their maxims;
for, from these you will learn the theory
and the art of serving the great.
- ⁹ Do not dismiss what the old men have to say,
for they too were taught by their fathers;
from them you will learn how to think,
and the art of the timely answer.
- ¹⁰ Do not kindle the coals of the sinner,
in case you scorch yourself in this blaze.
- ¹¹ Refuse to be provoked by the insolent,
for fear that such a one tries to trap you in your words.
- ¹² Do not lend to anyone who is stronger than you are;
if you do lend, resign yourself to loss.
- ¹³ Do not stand surety beyond your means;
if you do stand surety, be prepared to pay up.
- ¹⁴ Do not go to law with a judge,
since judgement will be given in his favour.

- ⁸ Ben Sira is aware that wisdom is a traditional matter and that, in earlier days, in Israel as in Egypt, it had been the qualification for being a government official, being the ‘art of serving the great’.
- ⁹ An alternative translation for ‘fathers’ is ‘ancestors’. The rabbis think highly of tradition, which they call ‘the oral law’ (see Dt 4:9, 11:19, Job 12:12, Ps 44:1, 78:3ff). Most books of the Bible formed part of this oral tradition before being committed to writing; this is notably true of the proverbs and maxims of the sages.
- ¹⁰ Lighting coals is an image for arousing passion.
- ¹¹ Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ reads: אַל תְּזוּחַ מִפְּנֵי לֶץ לְהוֹשִׁיבוֹ כְּאוֹרֵב לִפְנֵיךְ (‘Do not be friends with the mocker, lest he turn and ambush you.’).
- ¹² Ben Sira is cautious about loans and surety but not opposed to them (29:1–7), in contrast to Pr 6:1–5, 11:15.
- ¹³ Sefaria translates C.G. MS ‘A’ (אַל תַּעֲרֵב יֵתֵר מִמְּךָ וְאַם עֲרַבְתָּ כַּמְשָׁלִים) as, “Be not surety above your ability; if you are surety, set it aside as if paid.”
- ¹⁴ For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the WEBBE has, “for, according to his honour, they will give judgement for him.”

- 15** μετὰ τολμηροῦ μὴ πορεύου ἐν ὁδῷ,
ἵνα μὴ βαρύνηται κατὰ σοῦ·
αὐτὸς γὰρ κατὰ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιήσει,
καὶ τῇ ἀφροσύνῃ αὐτοῦ συναπολῆ.
- 16** μετὰ θυμώδους μὴ ποιήσης μάχην
καὶ μὴ διαπορεύου μετ' αὐτοῦ τὴν ἔρημον·
ὅτι ὡς οὐδὲν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ αἷμα,
καὶ ὅπου οὐκ ἔστιν βοήθεια, καταβαλεῖ σε.
- 17** μετὰ μωροῦ μὴ συμβουλεύου·
οὐ γὰρ δυνήσεται λόγον στέξαι.
- 18** ἐνώπιον ἀλλοτρίου μὴ ποιήσης κρυπτόν·
οὐ γὰρ γινώσκεις τί τέξεται.
- 19** παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ μὴ ἔκφαινε σὴν καρδίαν,
καὶ μὴ ἀναφερέτω σοι χάριν.

- 15** Do not go travelling with a reckless man,
for fear he becomes burdensome to you.
He will act as the whim takes him
and you will both be ruined by his folly.
- 16** Do not argue with a quick-tempered man;
do not travel with him into the desert,
since blood counts for nothing in his eyes,
and, where there is no help, he will strike you down.
- 17** Do not ask a fool for advice,
since he will not be able to keep a secret.
- 18** Do no secret thing in a stranger's presence,
since you cannot tell what he will divulge.
- 19** Do not open your heart to all comers,
or you may drive away your happiness.

15 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'cruel' (or 'heartless', אכזרי) in place of 'reckless', here following the LXX (τολμηροῦ).

16 For the 2nd line, the NJB has, "do not go with him where there are no other people."

17 The NJB has 'confidence' in place of 'secret'.

18 In place of 'they will divulge', here following the NRSV, the NJB has 'use they will make of it'.

19 The 2nd line here follows Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (ואל תדיח מעליך הטובה) and the NRSV; the LXX (and NJB) has, "nor let him return a favour to you."

Σοφία Σιραχ 9

- ¹ Μὴ ζήλου γυναῖκα τοῦ κόλπου σου
μηδὲ διδάξης ἐπὶ σεαυτὸν παιδείαν πονηράν.
- ² μὴ δῶς γυναικὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου
ἐπιβῆναι αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὴν ἰσχύν σου.
- ³ μὴ ὑπάντα γυναικὶ ἐταιριζομένη,
μήποτε ἐμπέσης εἰς τὰς παγίδας αὐτῆς.
- ⁴ μετὰ ψαλλούσης μὴ ἐνδελέχιζε,
μήποτε ἀλῶς ἐν τοῖς ἐπιχειρήμασιν αὐτῆς.
- ⁵ παρθένον μὴ καταμάνθανε,
μήποτε σκανδαλισθῆς ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτιμίοις αὐτῆς.
- ⁶ μὴ δῶς πόρναις τὴν ψυχὴν σου,
ἵνα μὴ ἀπολέσης τὴν κληρονομίαν σου.
- ⁷ μὴ περιβλέπου ἐν ὄμμαϊς πόλεως
καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις αὐτῆς μὴ πλανῶ.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 9

- ¹ Do not be jealous of the wife you love;
do not teach her lessons in how to harm you.
- ² Do not put yourself in a woman's hands
or she may come to dominate you completely.
- ³ Do not keep company with a prostitute,
in case you get entangled in her snares.
- ⁴ Do not dally with a singing girl,
in case you get caught by her wiles.
- ⁵ Do not stare at a virgin,
in case you and she incur the same punishment.
- ⁶ Do not give your soul to whores,
or you will ruin your inheritance.
- ⁷ Keep your eyes to yourself in the streets of a town;
do not prowl about its unfrequented quarters.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 9

- ¹ The reader is enjoined not to be jealous but to be firm (v. 2).
- ² Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads: **אל תקנא לאשה נפשך להדריכה על במותיך** ("Do not be jealous of the wife of your soul, lest she trample upon your sanctuary." – the word translated 'sanctuary' more literally means 'high place' or even 'funeral mound').
- ³ In place of 'prostitute', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'foreign woman' (**אִשָּׁה זָרָה**). The text of vv. 3–4 is pointed (has vowels and accents added) in the MS but other verses of this chapter (as with the majority of that MS) are not.
- ⁴ The prohibitions of vv. 4–9 have various motive clauses, mostly practical. Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'harlot' (**זוֹנָה**) in place of 'singing girl' (although it is possible that the word can have either meaning),
- ⁵ The NJB has 'pretty girl' in place of 'virgin'.
- ⁶ In place of 'soul', here following the LXX (*ψυχὴν*) and the WEBBE, the NJB has 'heart'.
- ⁷ Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads: **לעתנבל במראה עיניך ולשומם אחר ביתה**, "Your eyes will make a fool of you over a beautiful woman and your house will become desolate."

8 ἀπόστρεψον ὄφθαλμὸν ἀπὸ γυναικὸς εὐμόρφου
καὶ μὴ καταμάνθανε κάλλος ἀλλότριον·
ἐν κάλλει γυναικὸς πολλοὶ ἐπλανήθησαν,
καὶ ἐκ τούτου φιλία ὡς πῦρ ἀνακαίεται.

9 μετὰ ὑπάνδρου γυναικὸς μὴ κάθου τὸ σύνολον
καὶ μὴ συμβολοκοπήσης μετ' αὐτῆς ἐν οἴνῳ,
μήποτε ἐκκλίνη ἡ ψυχὴ σου ἐπ' αὐτήν
καὶ τῷ πνεύματί σου ὀλίσθῃς εἰς ἀπώλειαν.

10 Μὴ ἐγκαταλίπῃς φίλον ἀρχαῖον,
ὁ γὰρ πρόσφατος οὐκ ἔστιν ἔφισος αὐτῷ·
οἶνος νέος φίλος νέος·
ἐὰν παλαιωθῇ, μετ' εὐφροσύνης πίεσαι αὐτόν.

11 μὴ ζηλώσης δόξαν ἀμαρτωλοῦ·
οὐ γὰρ οἶδας τί ἔσται ἡ καταστροφή αὐτοῦ.

12 μὴ εὐδοκήσης ἐν εὐδοκίᾳ ἀσεβῶν·
μνήσθητι ὅτι ἕως ἄδου οὐ μὴ δικαιωθῶσιν.

13 μακρὰν ἄπεχε ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπου,
ὃς ἔχει ἐξουσίαν τοῦ φονεῦειν,
καὶ οὐ μὴ ὑποπτεύσης φόβον θανάτου·

8 Turn your eyes away from a handsome woman;
do not stare at beauty belonging to someone else.
Because of a woman's beauty, many have been undone;
this makes passion flare up like a fire.

9 Never sit down with a married woman,
or sit at table with her drinking wine,
in case you let your heart succumb to her
and you lose all self-control and slide to disaster.

10 Do not desert an old friend;
the new one will not be his match.
New friend, new wine;
when it grows old, you drink it with pleasure.

11 Do not envy the sinner his success;
for, you do not know what his end will be.

12 Do not take pleasure in what pleases the godless;
remember they will not go unpunished to hell.

13 Keep your distance from the strong man,
who has the power to kill,
and you will not be haunted by the fear of dying.

8 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads: $\text{חַן וְאֵל תְּבִיט לֹא יִפֵּי לָא לְאֵלֵיךָ}$, "Hide your eyes from a graceful woman, and do not ogle beauty not yours."

9 The best MSS omit the 1st line of this verse. For the last line, the NRSV reads: "and in blood (by your spirit) you may plunge to disaster."

10 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads $\text{וַיִּשְׁן אַחֲרָיָהוּ וַיִּשְׁן אַחֲרָיָהוּ וַיִּשְׁן אַחֲרָיָהוּ}$, with the word וַיִּשְׁן written in small characters outside the main text area.

11 The NJB ends, "how that will end."

12 The literal translation of 'to hell' is 'to Hades' (ἕως ἄδου); for the 2nd line, the NRSV has 'remember they will not be held guiltless all their lives'.

13 Walking on 'the battlements' makes one a target for the arrows of the enemy; but the text of the LXX is unclear and Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'a net' (תַּרְשָׁנָה). Another reading for 'power' is 'authority'.

κὰν προσέλθῃς, μὴ πλημμελήσῃς,
ἵνα μὴ ἀφέληται τὴν ζωὴν σου·
ἐπίγνωθι ὅτι ἐν μέσῳ παγίδων διαβαίνεις
καὶ ἐπὶ ἐπάλξεων πόλεως περιπατεῖς.

- 14** κατὰ τὴν ἰσχὺν σου στόχασαι τοὺς πλησίον
καὶ μετὰ σοφῶν συμβουλεύου.
- 15** μετὰ συνετῶν ἔστω ὁ διαλογισμὸς σου
καὶ πᾶσα διήγησίς σου ἐν νόμῳ ὑψίστου.
- 16** ἄνδρες δίκαιοι ἔστωσαν σύνδειπνοὶ σου,
καὶ ἐν φόβῳ κυρίου ἔστω τὸ καύχημά σου.
- 17** ἐν χειρὶ τεχνιτῶν ἔργον ἐπαινεσθήσεται,
καὶ ὁ ἡγούμενος λαοῦ σοφὸς ἐν λόγῳ αὐτοῦ.
- 18** φοβερὸς ἐν πόλει αὐτοῦ ἀνὴρ γλωσσώδης,
καὶ ὁ προπετὴς ἐν λόγῳ αὐτοῦ μισηθήσεται.

If you do approach him, make no false move,
or he may take your life.

Realise that you are treading among tripwires,
and that you are strolling on the battlements.

- 14** As well as you can, aim to know your neighbours,
and take counsel with the wise.
- 15** For conversation, seek the intelligent;
let all your discourse be on the Law of the Most High.
- 16** Have the upright for your table companions,
and let your pride be in fearing the Lord.
- 17** Work from skilled hands will earn its praise,
but a leader of the people must be skilful in words.
- 18** A loudmouthed man is dangerous in his city;
and he who is reckless in his speech will be hated.

14 For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, “Cultivate your neighbours to the best of your ability, and consult with the wise.”

15 Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ reads: עם נבון יהי חשבונך וכל סודך בינותם. (“With intelligent people should be your calculations, and all your secrets only between yourselves.”)

16 Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ has ‘God’ (אלהים) in place of ‘the Lord’.

17 This maxim draws a parallel between the workman, whose social value lies in his manual dexterity, and a head of state, who enforces his wishes by his eloquence. However, the text (here following the LXX) is uncertain: Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ has: “Right is esteemed by skilful people and the leader of the people is skilful in speaking.” (בחכמי ידים יחשך יושר ומוש [.] עמו חכם)

18 For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, “A chatterbox is a terror to his town; a loose talker is detested.”

Σοφία Σιραχ 10

- ¹ Κριτής σοφός παιδεύσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἡγεμονία συνετοῦ τεταγμένη ἔσται.
- ² κατὰ τὸν κριτὴν τοῦ λαοῦ οὕτως
καὶ οἱ λειτουργοὶ αὐτοῦ,
καὶ κατὰ τὸν ἡγούμενον
τῆς πόλεως πάντες οἱ κατοικοῦντες αὐτήν.
- ³ βασιλεὺς ἀπαιδευτος ἀπολεῖ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ πόλις οἰκισθήσεται ἐν συνέσει δυναστῶν.
- ⁴ ἐν χειρὶ κυρίου ἡ ἐξουσία τῆς γῆς,
καὶ τὸν χρήσιμον ἐγερεῖ εἰς καιρὸν ἐπ’ αὐτῆς.
- ⁵ ἐν χειρὶ κυρίου εὐοδία ἀνδρός,
καὶ προσώπῳ γραμματέως ἐπιθήσει δόξαν αὐτοῦ.
- ⁶ Ἐπὶ παντὶ ἀδικήματι μὴ μνηϊάσης τῷ πλησίον
καὶ μὴ προᾶσσε μηδὲν ἐν ἔργοις ὕβρεως.
- ⁷ μισητὴ ἔναντι κυρίου καὶ ἀνθρώπων ὑπερηφανία,
καὶ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων πλημμελῆς ἡ ἀδικία.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 10

- 1 A wise judge educates his people,
and he makes his subjects understand order.
- 2 As the magistrate is,
so will his officials be;
as the governor is,
so will be the inhabitants of his city.
- 3 An undisciplined king will be the ruin of his people;
a city owes its prosperity to the wisdom of its leaders.
- 4 The government of earth is in the hands of the Lord;
he sets the right leader over it at the right time.
- 5 Human success is in the hands of the Lord
and he invests the scribe with honour.
- 6 Do not resent you neighbour’s every offence,
and never act in a fit of passion.
- 7 Pride is hateful to God and to humanity,
and injustice is abhorrent to both.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 10

- ¹ The NJB has ‘sagacious ruler’ in place of ‘wise judge’ (see v. 2).
- ² Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ reverses the order of vv. 2 & 3.
- ³ In place of ‘undisciplined’, Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ has פרוץ (‘wild’ or ‘profligate’).
- ⁴ Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ reverses the order of vv. 4 & 5.
- ⁵ The NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’, has ‘lawgiver’ (מחוקק) in place of ‘scribe’, here following the LXX (γραμματέως) and NJB.
- ⁶ In vv. 6–18 (concerning arrogance and pride, especially in rulers), Ben Sira may have in mind certain Ptolemaic and Seleucid kings; but several verses (12, 18) apply to ordinary people.
- ⁷ The WEBBE has ‘arrogance’ in place of ‘injustice’.

- 8 βασιλεία ἀπὸ ἔθνους εἰς ἔθνος μετάγεται
διὰ ἀδικίας καὶ ὕβρεις καὶ χρήματα.
φιλαργύρου μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἀνομώτερον·
οὗτος γὰρ καὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν ἔκπρακτον ποιεῖ.
- 9 τί ὑπερηφανεύεται γῆ καὶ σποδός;
ὅτι ἐν ζωῇ ἔρριψα τὰ ἐνδόσθια αὐτοῦ.
- 10 μακρὸν ἀρρώστημα, σκώπτει ἰατρός·
καὶ βασιλεὺς σήμερον, καὶ αὔριον τελευτήσει.
- 11 ἐν γὰρ τῷ ἀποθανεῖν ἄνθρωπον
κληρονομήσει ἔρπετὰ καὶ θηρία καὶ σκώληκας.
- 12 Ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας ἀνθρώπου ἀφίστασθαι ἀπὸ κυρίου,
καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ποιήσαντος αὐτὸν ἀπέστη ἡ καρδιά αὐτοῦ.
- 13 ὅτι ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας ἀμαρτία,
καὶ ὁ κρατῶν αὐτῆς ἐξομβρήσει βδέλυγμα·
διὰ τοῦτο παρεδόξασεν κύριος τὰς ἐπαγωγὰς
καὶ κατέστρεψεν εἰς τέλος αὐτούς.
- 14 θρόνους ἀρχόντων καθεῖλεν ὁ κύριος
καὶ ἐκάθισεν πραεῖς ἀντ' αὐτῶν·

- 8 Sovereignty passes from nation to nation
because of injustice, arrogance, and money.
*Nothing is more wicked than one who loves money;
for, such a person also puts his own soul up for sale.*
- 9 Why are dust and ashes proud?
Even in life, their entrails are repellent.
- 10 “The smallest illness,” laments the doctor;
a king today is a corpse tomorrow.
- 11 For, in death, the portion of all alike will be
insects, vermin and worms.
- 12 The first stage of pride is to desert the Lord
and to turn one’s heart away from one’s Maker.
- 13 Since the first stage of pride is sin,
whoever clings to it will pour forth filth.
This is why the Lord inflicts strange calamities
on such people, utterly destroying them.
- 14 The Lord has turned mighty princes off their thrones
and seated the humble there instead.

- 8 The 3rd & 4th lines, following Greek 248, are not present in the NJB and, in the NRSV, only as a footnote.
- 9 The text of the 2nd line has been emended, following the Syro-Hexaplar text and commentaries; the LXX is obscure – ‘a being who, living, throws his intestines’ – and Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ is corrupt and unintelligible (אשר בחייו יורם גוי).)
- 10 The 1st line follows Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ (שמץ מחלה יצהיב רופא); the meaning of the LXX is uncertain. The verse seems to mean that it is useless to try to keep people alive, death being inevitable (but cf. Ch. 38).
- 11 The NJB, following the LXX, has ‘wild animals’ in place of ‘vermin’, here following Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ (ורמש).
- 12 CG MS ‘A’ reads: תחלת גאון אדם מועז ומעשהו יסור מלבו. (“The beginning of pride is impudence, and to those who made him he turns away his heart.”)
- 13 For ‘strange calamities’, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has ‘unexpected punishments’.
- 14 Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ has ‘God’ (אלהים) in place of ‘The Lord’ (ὁ κύριος).

- 15 ῥίζας ἐθνῶν ἐξέτιλεν ὁ κύριος
καὶ ἐφύτευσεν ταπεινοὺς ἀντ' αὐτῶν·
- 16 χώρας ἐθνῶν κατέστρεψεν ὁ κύριος
καὶ ἀπώλεσεν αὐτὰς ἕως θεμελίων γῆς·
- 17 ἐξῆρεν ἐξ αὐτῶν καὶ ἀπώλεσεν αὐτοὺς
καὶ κατέπαυσεν ἀπὸ γῆς τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτῶν.
- 18 οὐκ ἔκτισται ἀνθρώποις ὑπερηφανία
οὐδὲ ὀργὴ θυμοῦ γεννήμασιν γυναικῶν.
- 19 Σπέρμα ἔντιμον ποῖον;
σπέρμα ἀνθρώπου.
σπέρμα ἔντιμον ποῖον;
οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον.
σπέρμα ἄτιμον ποῖον;
σπέρμα ἀνθρώπου.
σπέρμα ἄτιμον ποῖον;
οἱ παραβαίνοντες ἐντολάς.
- 20 ἐν μέσῳ ἀδελφῶν ὁ ἠγούμενος αὐτῶν ἔντιμος,
καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ.

- 15 The Lord has uprooted the *proud* nations
and planted the lowly in their place.
- 16 The Lord has overthrown the lands of the nations
and destroyed them to the foundations of the earth.
- 17 Some, he has taken away and destroyed them
and blotted out their memory from the earth.
- 18 Pride was not created for men,
nor furious rage for those born of woman.
- 19 What race deserves honour?
The human race.
What race deserves honour?
Those who fear the Lord.
What race deserves contempt?
The human race.
What race deserves contempt?
Those who break the Law.
- 20 A leader is worthy of honour by his brothers,
and those who fear the Lord have honour in his eyes.

15 The NJB omits 'nations' and the NRSV omits 'proud'. The LXX has 'nations' (which is very similar to 'proud' in written Hebrew) but *Cairo Genizah* MS 'A' lacks this verse.

16 For the 2nd line, *Cairo Genizah* MS 'A' has 'and their roots to the earth's core he exterminated' (וּשְׂרַשְׁם עַד אֶרֶץ קַעֲקַע).

17 The NJB opens, "Sometimes he has taken them away;" here, we follow the WEBBE.

18 In place of 'men', the NJB has 'human beings'.

19 This key verse is developed in what follows. The surviving text of *Cairo Genizah* MS 'B' begins at this verse.

20 For the 2nd line, here following the LXX, *Cairo Genizah* MS 'A' has 'and he will see God with [his eyes]' ([...] וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים בְּעַיִן) and MS 'B' has 'and he will see God honoured more than himself' (וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים נִכְבַּד מִמֶּנּוּ).

- ²¹ *πρὸ λήξεως ἀρχὴ φόβος Κυρίου·
ἐκβολὴ δὲ ἀρχῆς σκληρισμὸς καὶ ὑπερηφανία.*
- ²² *πλούσιος καὶ ἔνδοξος καὶ πτωχός,
τὸ καύχημα αὐτῶν φόβος κυρίου.*
- ²³ *οὐ δίκαιον ἀτιμάσαι πτωχὸν συνετόν,
καὶ οὐ καθήκει δοξάσαι ἄνδρα ἀμαρτωλόν.*
- ²⁴ *μεγιστὰν καὶ κριτῆς καὶ δυνάστης δοξασθήσεται,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῶν
τις μείζων τοῦ φοβουμένου τὸν κύριον.*
- ²⁵ *οἰκέτη σοφῶ ἐλεύθεροι λειτουργήσουσιν,
καὶ ἀνὴρ ἐπιστήμων οὐ γογγύσει.*
- ²⁶ *Μὴ σοφίζου ποιῆσαι τὸ ἔργον σου
καὶ μὴ δοξάζου ἐν καιρῶ στενοχωρίας σου.*
- ²⁷ *κρείσσων ἐργαζόμενος καὶ περισσεύων ἐν πᾶσιν
ἢ περιπατῶν δοξαζόμενος καὶ ἀποροῶν ἄρτων.*
- ²⁸ *τέκνον, ἐν πραύτητι δόξασον τὴν ψυχὴν σου
καὶ δὸς αὐτῇ τιμὴν κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν αὐτῆς.*

- ²¹ *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of acceptance,
but the beginning of rejection is stubbornness and pride.*
- ²² *The rich, the noble and the poor:
let them pride themselves on fearing the Lord.*
- ²³ *It is not right to despise one who is poor but intelligent,
and it is not good to glorify a man who is a sinner.*
- ²⁴ *Magnate, and magistrate, and potentate:
all are worthy of honour,
but none is greater than the one who fears the Lord.*
- ²⁵ *A wise slave will have free men waiting on him,
and the enlightened will not complain.*
- ²⁶ *Do not try to be smart when you do your work;
do not put on airs when you are in difficulty.*
- ²⁷ *Better the hardworking who has plenty of everything
than he who boasts and lacks bread.*
- ²⁸ *My son, be modest in your self-esteem,
and value yourself at your proper worth.*

²¹ This verse follows the *Greek 248 MS*; it is present in the *NRSV*, *WEBBE* & *NJB* only as footnotes; *Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'B'* also lack the verse.

²² For the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' [& 'B']* read 'Sojourner and scoundrel [wayfarer], foreigner and poor man' (גר וזר [זר] נכרי ורש).

²³ In place of 'glorify a man', the *NJB* has 'honour one'.

²⁴ The text of the last line is missing from *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*, due to a tear in the parchment.

²⁵ Compare this verse with Paul's remarks on slavery (Ga 3:28, Col 3:11, Phm 16). After the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* inserts the text of 7:21 (reading עבד משכיל חביב כנפ ש) but in a smaller script.

²⁶ For the 2nd line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* has 'and do not extol yourself [in your time of need]' (גדול מירא אלהים [in...]).

²⁷ For the 2nd line, here following the *WEBBE*, the *NJB* has, "than the pretentious at a loss for a meal."

²⁸ Humility is not false grovelling.

²⁹ τὸν ἁμαρτάνοντα εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίς δικαιώσει;
καὶ τίς δοξάσει τὸν ἀτιμάζοντα τὴν ζωὴν αὐτοῦ;
³⁰ πτωχὸς δοξάζεται δι' ἐπιστήμην αὐτοῦ,
καὶ πλούσιος δοξάζεται διὰ τὸν πλοῦτον αὐτοῦ.
³¹ ὁ δεδοξασμένος ἐν πτωχείᾳ, καὶ ἐν πλούτῳ ποσαχῶς;
καὶ ὁ ἄδοξος ἐν πλούτῳ, καὶ ἐν πτωχείᾳ ποσαχῶς;

²⁹ Who can justify one who inflicts injuries on himself,
or respect one who is full of self-contempt?
³⁰ A poor man is honoured for his knowledge
and a rich man is honoured for his riches.
³¹ Honoured in poverty – how much more in wealth!
Dishonoured in wealth – how much more in poverty!

²⁹ At the start of this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* adds '(My) son' (cf. v. 28) but MS 'A' does not have this word (בני).

³⁰ The *NJB* has a rather shorter version of this verse: "The poor is honoured for wit, and the rich for wealth."

³¹ At the end of this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* adds the following line: 'He who is honoured in his poverty, in wealth he is further respected; and he who is humbled in his wealth, how much more is he humbled in poverty?' (המתכבד בדלותו בעשרו והנקלה יתר והנקלה בעשרו בדלותו נקלה יתר); the line is lacking a column divider (as the vast majority of the lines in that MS have). MS 'A' has a similar addition but the text is partially obscured.

Σοφία Σιραχ ΙΙ

- ¹ σοφία ταπεινοῦ ἀνυψώσει κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐν μέσῳ μεγιστάνων καθίσει αὐτόν.
- ² Μὴ αἰνέσης ἄνδρα ἐν κάλλει αὐτοῦ
καὶ μὴ βδελύξη ἄνθρωπον ἐν ὁράσει αὐτοῦ.
- ³ μικρὰ ἐν πετεινοῖς μέλισσα,
καὶ ἀρχὴ γλυκασμάτων ὁ καρπὸς αὐτῆς.
- ⁴ ἐν περιβολῇ ἱματίων μὴ καυχῆση
καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ δόξης μὴ ἐπαίρου·
ὅτι θαυμαστὰ τὰ ἔργα κυρίου,
καὶ κρυπτὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἀνθρώποις.
- ⁵ πολλοὶ τύραννοι ἐκάθισαν ἐπὶ ἐδάφους,
ὁ δὲ ἀνυπονόητος ἐφόρεσεν διάδημα.
- ⁶ πολλοὶ δυνάσται ἠτιμάσθησαν σφόδρα,
καὶ ἔνδοξοι παρεδόθησαν εἰς χεῖρας ἐτέρων.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 11

- ¹ The wisdom of the lowly will lift up his head,
and make him sit in the midst of great men.
- ² Do not praise anyone for good looks,
nor dislike a man for mere appearance.
- ³ Small among winged creatures is the bee
but her produce is the sweetest of the sweet.
- ⁴ Do not boast about wearing fine clothes,
and do not grow proud when people honour you;
For, the works of the Lord are wonderful
but hidden from human beings.
- ⁵ Many monarchs have been made to sit on the ground,
and the person nobody thought of has worn the crown.
- ⁶ Many influential people have been utterly disgraced,
and men of renown have fallen into the others' hands.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 11

- ¹ For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, “Wisdom enables the poor to lift their heads high, and gives to the poor a place with the great.”
- ² For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MSS ‘A’/‘B’ read, ואל תתעב אדם מכעזב במראה, (‘and do not loathe a man [who is] ugly in appearance’).
- ³ For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MSS ‘A’/‘B’ read, וראש תנובות פריה, (‘but first among fruit is her produce’); MS ‘B’ adds the following (which seems like a dittography): אליל בעוף דבורה וראש תנובות פריה.
- ⁴ The NJB lacks the 1st line, here following the LXX (and NRSV); for the first 2 lines, Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ has, ‘Do not jeer at anyone in rags, and do not mock anyone who is in trouble’ (בעטה אזור אל תהתל ואל תקלס במרירי יום). The meaning of ‘hidden’ in the last line is ‘unseen and unforeseeable’: one turn of the wheel and all conditions are reversed (cf. 1S 2:8, Job 12:17–19, Ps 113:7).
- ⁵ An alternative translation for ‘made to sit on the ground’ is ‘have been put on the pavement’ (having reigned), which would give an antithetic parallel, but Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’, רבים נדכאים ישבו על כסא, (‘many humbled persons have ascended thrones’) supports the reading adopted here. A more literal translation for ‘monarchs’ is ‘tyrants’.
- ⁶ For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has ‘and prominent people have fallen into the power of others’.

7 Πρὶν ἐξετάσης, μὴ μέμψη·
νόησον πρῶτον καὶ τότε ἐπιτίμα.
8 πρὶν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι μὴ ἀποκρίνου
καὶ ἐν μέσῳ λόγων μὴ παρεμβάλλου.
9 περὶ πράγματος, οὗ οὐκ ἔστιν σοι χρεία, μὴ ἔριζε
καὶ ἐν κρίσει ἀμαρτωλῶν μὴ συνέδρευε.
10 Τέκνον, μὴ περὶ πολλὰ ἔστωσαν αἱ πράξεις σου·
ἐὰν πληθύνῃς, οὐκ ἀδωθήσῃ·
καὶ ἐὰν διώκῃς, οὐ μὴ καταλάβῃς·
καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐκφύγῃς διαδράς.
11 ἔστιν κοπιῶν καὶ πονῶν καὶ σπεύδων,
καὶ τόσῳ μᾶλλον ὑστερεῖται.
12 ἔστιν νωθρὸς προσδεόμενος ἀντιλήμψεως,
ὑστερῶν ἰσχύι καὶ πτωχεῖα περισσεύει·
καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπέβλεψαν αὐτῷ εἰς ἀγαθά,
καὶ ἀνώρθωσεν αὐτὸν ἐκ ταπεινώσεως αὐτοῦ
13 καὶ ἀνύψωσεν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἀπεθαύμασαν ἐπ' αὐτῷ πολλοί.

7 Do not find fault before making thorough enquiry;
first understand, then give reprimand.
8 Listen before you answer,
and do not interrupt a speech before it is finished.
9 Don't argue about a matter that does not concern you;
don't interfere in the quarrels of sinners.
10 My son, do not take on a great amount of business;
for, if you meddle much, you will not be unpunished.
Hurry as fast as you can; yet you will never arrive,
nor will you escape by running away.
11 There is one who toils, labours, and hurries,
and is left even more behind.
12 There is the slow kind of person, needing help,
poor in possessions and rich in poverty;
and the Lord turns a favourable eye on him,
lifts him out of his wretched condition,
13 and lifts up his head,
so that many may marvel at him.

7 The NJB has 'reflect' in place of 'understand', here following the WEBBE.

8 At the opening of this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' adds '[My] son' (בְּנִי).

9 After this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has a blank line.

10 The 3rd & 4th lines here follow the LXX; Cairo Geniza MS 'A' has **בני אם לא תרוץ לא תגיע ואם לא תבקש לא תמצא** ('If you do not run you will not achieve; if you do not seek, you will not find'). The C.G. MS 'B' is damaged from here to 15:1 but what text remains seems to support MS 'A'.

11 For this verse, here following the WEBBE (and LXX), the NJB has, "Some people work very hard at top speed, only to find themselves falling further behind." Cairo Genizah MS 'A' broadly concurs with the LXX, here.

12 In place of 'wretched condition', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'dusty stench' (מעפר צחנה).

13 The NJB reads, "and enables him to hold his head high, thus causing general astonishment."

14 ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακά, ζωὴ καὶ θάνατος,
 πτωχεῖα καὶ πλοῦτος παρὰ κυρίου ἐστίν.
15 σοφία καὶ ἐπιστήμη καὶ γνῶσις νόμου παρὰ Κυρίου.
 ἀγάπησις καὶ ὁδοὶ καλῶν ἔργων παρ' αὐτοῦ εἰσί·
16 πλάνη καὶ σκότος ἀμαρτωλοῖς συνέκτισται,
 τοῖς δὲ γαυριῶσιν ἐπὶ κακὰ συγγηρα κακία.
17 δόσις κυρίου παραμένει εὐσεβέσιν,
 καὶ ἡ εὐδοκία αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα εὐδοωθήσεται.
18 ἔστιν πλουτῶν ἀπὸ προσοχῆς καὶ σφιγγίας αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ αὕτη ἡ μερὶς τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ·
19 ἐν τῷ εἰπεῖν αὐτόν Εὐρον ἀνάπαυσιν
 καὶ νῦν φάγομαι ἐκ τῶν ἀγαθῶν μου,
 καὶ οὐκ οἶδεν τίς καιρὸς παρελεύσεται
 καὶ καταλείψει αὐτὰ ἑτέροις καὶ ἀποθανεῖται.
20 Στήθῃ ἐν διαθήκῃ σου καὶ ὁμίλει ἐν αὐτῇ
 καὶ ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ σου παλαιώθητι.
21 μὴ θαύμαζε ἐν ἔργοις ἀμαρτωλοῦ,

14 Good and bad, life and death,
 poverty and wealth, all come from the Lord.
15 Wisdom, prudence, and perception come from the Lord,
 error and straight paths come from him.
16 Folly and darkness were created with sinners
 and those who do evil are with them.
17 To the devout, the Lord's gift remains constant,
 and his favour will be there to lead them forever.
18 Others grow rich by pinching and scraping,
 and here is the reward they receive for it:
19 Although they say, "Now I can sit back
 and enjoy the benefit of what I have got,"
 and do not know how long this will last
 and will have to leave their goods to others and die.
20 Be steadfast in your job and be doing it
 and grow old in your work.
21 Do not admire the achievements of sinners,

¹⁴ For 'from the Lord', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' uses a 'triple-yod triangle' (מיִי), as it does consistently when referring to the Divine Name.

¹⁵ V. 15, here following Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (:הוא: [כמה ושכל והבין דבר מיי הוא:]), the Peshitta, and the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NJB and NRSV only as footnotes.

¹⁶ See #15; for this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has: רעה ומרעים נוצרה ושכלות וח[.]. For the 2nd line, here following Abegg, the NJB has, "for those who take pleasure in evil, evil grows old."

¹⁷ In place of 'devout', here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'upright' (צדיק).

¹⁸ For the opening 'Others grow', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'There is one who grows'.

¹⁹ The NJB opens the last 2 lines with 'they' in place of 'and'.

²⁰ 'Your covenant' follows the LXX and the WEBBE; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' and the NJB have 'your job'.

²¹ For the last 2 lines, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "for, it is a trifle in the eyes of the Lord, in a moment, suddenly to make the poor rich."

πίστευε δὲ κυρίῳ καὶ ἔμμενε τῷ πόνῳ σου·
 ὅτι κοῦφον ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς κυρίου
 διὰ τάχους ἐξάπινα πλουτίσαι πένητα.
²² εὐλογία κυρίου ἐν μισθῷ εὐσεβοῦς,
 καὶ ἐν ὥρᾳ ταχινῇ ἀναθάλλει εὐλογίαν αὐτοῦ.
²³ μὴ εἴπῃς Τίς ἐστίν μου χρεία,
 καὶ τίνα ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἔσται μου τὰ ἀγαθὰ;
²⁴ μὴ εἴπῃς Αὐτάρκη μοί ἐστιν,
 καὶ τί ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν κακωθήσομαι;
²⁵ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἀγαθῶν ἀμνησία κακῶν,
 καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κακῶν οὐ μνησθήσεται ἀγαθῶν·
²⁶ ὅτι κοῦφον ἔναντι κυρίου ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τελευτῆς
 ἀποδοῦναι ἀνθρώπῳ κατὰ τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ.
²⁷ κάκωσις ὥρας ἐπιλησιμονὴν ποιεῖ τρυφῆς,
 καὶ ἐν συντελείᾳ ἀνθρώπου ἀποκάλυψις ἔργων αὐτοῦ.
²⁸ πρὸ τελευτῆς μὴ μακάριζε μηδένα,
 καὶ ἐν τέκνοις αὐτοῦ γνωσθήσεται ἀνὴρ.
²⁹ Μὴ πάντα ἄνθρωπον εἴσαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου·
 πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ ἔνεδρα τοῦ δολίου.

trust the Lord and mind your own business;
 for, it is an easy thing in the sight of the Lord
 to swiftly and suddenly make a poor man rich.
²² The blessing of the Lord is the reward of the devout;
 and, in a moment, God brings his blessing to flower.
²³ Do not say, "What use is there of me
 and what further good things can be mine?"
²⁴ Do not say, "I am self-sufficient,
 what disaster can affect me now?"
²⁵ In prosperous times, disasters are forgotten
 and, in times of disaster, no one remembers prosperity.
²⁶ For, it is a trifle for the Lord, on the day someone dies,
 to repay him as his conduct deserves.
²⁷ A moment's adversity, and pleasures are forgotten;
 in a person's last hour, his deeds will stand revealed.
²⁸ Call no one fortunate before his death;
 it is by his end that someone will be known.
²⁹ Do not bring everyone home with you;
 for, many are the traps of the crafty.

²² After 'is', the LXX adds 'in'; here, we follow Cairo Genizah MS 'A' in omitting the preposition.

²³ For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "Do not say, "What are my needs, how much shall I have in the future?""

²⁴ For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the WEBBE has, "What harm could happen to me now?"

²⁵ An alternative reading is, "Disasters (to come) are forgotten ... no one remembers (the possibility of future) prosperity." Envisaging the future, the verse would be more congruent with the context but the translation would be somewhat forced.

²⁶ The NJB opens with 'Yet' in place of 'For'.

²⁷ For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "The affliction of an hour causes delights to be forgotten."

²⁸ 'By his end' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'A'; the LXX has 'in his children' (ἐν τέκνοις αὐτοῦ).

²⁹ At the end of this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' adds ([...] *כּוּן בְּתֵיהֶם מִלְאִים [עוֹף]*) ('as a cage is filled with [birds], so are their houses filled with [...]').

30 *πέρδιξ θηρευτῆς ἐν καρτάλλῳ,
 οὕτως καρδία ὑπερηφάνου,
 καὶ ὡς ὁ κατάσκοπος ἐπιβλέπει πτώσιν·*
 31 *τὰ γὰρ ἀγαθὰ εἰς κακὰ μεταστρέφων ἐνεδρεύει
 καὶ ἐν τοῖς αἰρετοῖς ἐπιθήσει μῶμον.*
 32 *ἀπὸ σπινθήρος πυρὸς πληθύνεται ἀνθρακιά,
 καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς εἰς αἷμα ἐνεδρεύει.*
 33 *πρόσεχε ἀπὸ κακούργου, πονηρὰ γὰρ τεκταίνει,
 μήποτε μῶμον εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα δῶ σοι.*
 34 *ἐνοίκισον ἀλλότριον, καὶ διαστρέψει σε ἐν ταραχαῖς
 καὶ ἀπαλλοτριώσει σε τῶν ἰδίων σου.*

30 Like a captive partridge in a cage,
 so is the heart of the proud;
 and, like a spy, he watches for your downfall,
 31 ever on the lookout, turning good into bad
 and finding fault with what is praiseworthy.
 32 From a spark of fire, a heap of many coals is kindled
 and the sinner lurks for the chance to spill blood.
 33 Beware of a scoundrel and his evil contrivances,
 in case he puts a smear on you forever.
 34 Give a home to a stranger and he will start trouble
 and estrange you from your own family.

30 The 2nd line here follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'he is in ambush to tear him like a wolf' (כ[ב]זאב ארב לטרף). Like a decoy bird placed in a trap, the heart of the proud lures his fellow into the snares of sin.

31 C.G. MS 'A' reads 'from good to bad will he turn your crowds and, on your treasure, he will conspire' (טוב לרע יהפך [גר]גן ובמחמדיך יתן קשר).

32 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "A hearth full of glowing coals starts from a single spark."

33 The WEBBE has 'an evildoer' in place of 'a scoundrel', here following the NJB.

34 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' inserts the text of 12:1 (אם טוב תדיע למי תטיב ויהי תקוה לטובתך) between the 2 lines of this verse.

Σοφία Σιραχ 12

- 1 Ἐὰν εὖ ποιῆς, γνῶθι τίνι ποιεῖς,
καὶ ἔσται χάρις τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς σου.
- 2 εὖ ποιήσον εὐσεβεῖ, καὶ εὐρήσεις ἀνταπόδομα,
καὶ εἰ μὴ παρ' αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τοῦ ὑψίστου.
- 3 οὐκ ἔσται ἀγαθὰ τῷ ἐνδεδεχίζοντι εἰς κακὰ
καὶ τῷ ἐλεημοσύνην μὴ χαριζομένῳ.
- 4 δὸς τῷ εὐσεβεῖ καὶ μὴ ἀντιλάβη τοῦ ἀμαρτωλοῦ.
- 5 εὖ ποιήσον ταπεινῷ καὶ μὴ δῶς ἀσεβεῖ·
ἐμπόδισον τοὺς ἄρτους αὐτοῦ καὶ μὴ δῶς αὐτῷ,
ἵνα μὴ ἐν αὐτοῖς σε δυναστεύσῃ·
διπλάσια γὰρ κακὰ εὐρήσεις
ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς, οἷς ἂν ποιήσῃς αὐτῷ.
- 6 ὅτι καὶ ὁ ὑψιστος ἐμίσησεν ἀμαρτωλοὺς
καὶ τοῖς ἀσεβέσιν ἀποδώσει ἐκδίκησιν.
- 7 δὸς τῷ ἀγαθῷ καὶ μὴ ἀντιλάβη τοῦ ἀμαρτωλοῦ.
- 8 Οὐκ ἐκδικηθήσεται ἐν ἀγαθοῖς ὁ φίλος,
καὶ οὐ κρυβήσεται ἐν κακοῖς ὁ ἐχθρὸς.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 12

- 1 If you mean to do a kindness, choose the right person,
then your good deeds will not be wasted.
- 2 Do good to someone devout and you will be rewarded,
if not by that person, the certainly by the Most High.
- 3 No good will come to one who persists in evil,
or who refuses to give alms.
- 4 Give to the devout and do not go to the aid of a sinner.
- 5 Do good to the humble and give nothing to the godless.
Refuse him bread; do not give him any;
for, it might make him stronger than you are.
Then you would be repaid evil twice over
for all the good you had done him.
- 6 For the Most High himself detests sinners,
and will repay the wicked with what they deserve.
- 7 Give to the good, and do not go to the aid of a sinner.
- 8 In prosperity, a man's friend will not be fully tested
but, in adversity, you cannot mistake an enemy.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 12

- 1 While Ben Sira's advice in vv. 1-7 is positive, is also self-serving. The contrast between the sinners and the devout is sharply drawn.
- 2 In place of 'the Most High', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has the Divine Name (שׁי).
3 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads *אין טובה למנוח רשע וגם צדקה לא עשה* - "No good for he who comforts the wicked; he has not even done a good action."
4 At the end of this verse, the Vg adds, "for, on the godless and the sinful, he (God) will inflict a punishment, reserving them for the day of punishment."
5 The Vg begins, "Give to the man who is good and do not receive the sinner."
6 Some MSS add 'and he is keeping them for the day of their judgement'.
7 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' lacks this verse, which is a near repeat of v. 4.
8 Another, more literal, reading of 'fully tested' (as WEBBE) is 'punished'.

9 ἐν ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδρὸς οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ ἐν λύπῃ,
καὶ ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ φίλος διαχωρισθήσεται.

10 μὴ πιστεύσης τῷ ἐχθρῷ σου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα·
ὥς γὰρ ὁ χαλκὸς ἰοῦται, οὕτως ἡ πονηρία αὐτοῦ·

11 καὶ ἐὰν ταπεινωθῇ καὶ πορεύηται συγκεκυφώς,
ἐπίστησον τὴν ψυχὴν σου καὶ φύλαξαι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἔση αὐτῷ ὡς ἐκμεμαχὼς ἔσοπτρον
καὶ γνώση ὅτι οὐκ εἰς τέλος κατίωσεν.

12 μὴ στήσης αὐτὸν παρὰ σεαυτῶ,
μὴ ἀνατρέψας σε στῆ ἐπὶ τὸν τόπον σου·
μὴ καθίσσης αὐτὸν ἐκ δεξιῶν σου,
μήποτε ζητήσῃ τὴν καθεδρὰν σου
καὶ ἐπ' ἔσχατων ἐπιγνώσῃ τοὺς λόγους μου
καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ῥημάτων μου κατανυγήσῃ.

13 τίς ἐλέησει ἐπαιδὸν ὀφιοῦθηκτον
καὶ πάντας τοὺς προσάγοντας θηρίοις;

14 οὕτως τὸν προσπορευόμενον ἀνδρὶ ἀμαρτωλῷ
καὶ συμφυρόμενον ἐν ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις αὐτοῦ.

15 ὥραν μετὰ σοῦ διαμενεῖ,
καὶ ἐὰν ἐκκλίνῃς, οὐ μὴ καρτερήσῃ.

9 In a man's prosperity, his enemies are grieved;
and, in his adversity, even a friend will disappear.

10 Do not ever trust an enemy;
as bronze tarnishes, so does an enemy's malice.

11 Though he humbles himself and walks bowed down,
still be careful and beware of him;
and be to him as one who has wiped a mirror
and you will find that his tarnish cannot last.

12 Do not stand him beside you
in case he thrusts you out and takes your place.
Do not seat him on your right,
or he will be after your position,
and then you will remember what I have said
and sadly admit that I was right.

13 Who feels sorry for a snake charmer bitten by a snake,
or for those who come near to savage animals?

14 It is just so for one who consorts with a sinner,
and becomes an accomplice in his sins.

15 He will stay with you for a while
and, if you once give way, he will press his advantage.

9 The text of the 1st line follows the LXX; the C. G. MS 'A' ending, **ע גם שונא ריע** ('even the man who hates him is his friend'), is apter for the parallelism.

10 For 'bronze', here following the NJB, the WEBBE has 'copper'; another option is to read 'brass'.

11 The 3rd & 4th lines here follow the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (היה לו כמגלה רז ולא ימצא להשחיתך ודע אחרית קנאה) reads, "Behave towards him as (towards) someone who reveals a secret; he will not be able to hurt you, and remember the consequences of jealousy."

12 For the 1st line, the WEBBE has, "Do not set him next to you."

13 In place of 'come near to', the NJB has 'take risks with'.

14 For 'sinner' Abegg has 'proud woman', though the text of Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'violent man' (אשת זדון).

15 The NJB opens the 2nd line with 'but' in place of 'and'.

16 καὶ ἐν τοῖς χεῖλεσιν αὐτοῦ γλυκανεῖ ὁ ἐχθρὸς
καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ
βουλεύσεται ἀνατρέψαι σε εἰς βόθρον·
ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ δακρύσει ὁ ἐχθρὸς,
καὶ ἐὰν εὖρη καιρὸν, οὐκ ἐμπλησθήσεται ἀφ' αἵματος.
17 κακὰ ἐὰν ὑπαντήσῃ σοι,
εὐρήσεις αὐτὸν πρότερον ἐκεῖ σου,
καὶ ὡς βοηθῶν ὑποσχάσει πτέρναν σου·
18 τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ κινήσει
καὶ ἐπικροτήσῃ ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ
καὶ πολλὰ διαψιθυρίσει
καὶ ἀλλοιώσει τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ.

16 And, an enemy may have sweetness of his lips,
and, in his heart,
a scheme to throw you into the ditch.
An enemy may have tears in his eyes
but, if he gets a chance, he will want more blood.
17 If you meet with adversity,
you will find him there before you
and, pretending to help you, he will trip you up.
18 He will wag his head
and he will clap his hands;
he will whisper a lot
and his expression will change.

16 The NJB ends, “there will never be enough blood for him.”

17 In place of ‘adversity’, the NJB has ‘misfortune’.

18 Wagging the head was a gesture of derision (Job 16:4, Ps 22:7, 109:25, see Mt 27:39). For ‘clapping hands’, see Lm 2:15, Ezk 25:6, Na 3:19.

Σοφία Σιραχ 13

- 1 Ὁ ἀπτόμενος πίσεως μολυνθήσεται,
καὶ ὁ κοινωνῶν ὑπερηφάνῳ ὁμοιωθήσεται αὐτῷ.
- 2 βάρος ὑπὲρ σέ μὴ ἄρης
καὶ ἰσχυρότερω σου καὶ πλουσιώτερω μὴ κοινωνῶναι.
τί κοινωνήσῃ χύτρα πρὸς λέβητα;
αὕτη προσκρούσει, καὶ αὕτη συντριβήσεται.
- 3 πλούσιος ἠδίκησεν, καὶ αὐτὸς προσε νεβριμήσατο·
πτωχὸς ἠδικηται, καὶ αὐτὸς προσδεηθήσεται.
- 4 ἐὰν χρησιμεύσης, ἐργᾶται ἐν σοί·
καὶ ἐὰν ὑστερήσης, καταλείψει σε.
- 5 ἐὰν ἔχῃς, συμβιώσεταιί σοι
καὶ ἀποκενώσει σε, καὶ αὐτὸς οὐ πονέσει.
- 6 χρεῖαν ἔσχηκέν σου, καὶ ἀποπλανήσῃ σε
καὶ προσγελάσεταιί σοι καὶ δώσει σοι ἐλπίδα·
λαλήσῃ σοι καλὰ καὶ ἐρεῖ Τίς ἡ χρεῖα σου;
- 7 καὶ αἰσχυνεῖ σε ἐν τοῖς βρώμασιν αὐτοῦ,
ἕως οὗ ἀποκενώσῃ σε δις ἢ τρίς,
καὶ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων καταμωκῆσεταιί σου·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 13

- 1 He who touches pitch gets dirty
and he who associates with the proud becomes as him.
- 2 Do not try to carry a burden too heavy for you;
do not associate with one mightier and richer than you.
Why put the clay pot next to the iron cauldron?
It will only break when they bang against each other.
- 3 The rich man does wrong and takes a high line;
the poor is wronged and apologises.
- 4 If you are useful, the rich will exploit you;
if you go bankrupt, he will desert you.
- 5 If you are well off, he will live with you;
he will clean you out without a single qualm.
- 6 He will come to you, greet you and give you hope;
he will speak politely to you
and say, "Is there anything you need?"
- 7 He will make you feel small at his dinner parties
and, having cleaned you out two or three times over,
will end by laughing at you.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 13

- 1 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has a 'paragraph break' after this verse – the next verse starts on a new line with a small indentation (~ 4 letters wide).
- 2 The comparison between the 'clay pot' and the 'iron cauldron' is classic, found earlier in Aesop.
- 3 In place of 'apologises', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'has to beg for pardon'.
- 4 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads *אם תכשר לו יעבד בך ואם תכרע יחמל עליך* ('If you seem fit to him, he will make you serve him; but, if you become worn out, he will take pity on you').
- 5 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads *ולא יכאב לו וירשעך* ('but if you become poor, it will not grieve him at all').
- 6 At the start of this verse, the WEBBE (following Cairo Genizah MS 'A' – *צריך לו עמד*) adds, "Does he need you?"
- 7 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' lacks 'two or', here following the LXX.

μετὰ ταῦτα ὄψεταιί σε καὶ καταλείψει σε
καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ κινήσει ἐπὶ σοί.
8 πρόσεχε μὴ ἀποπλανηθῆς
καὶ μὴ ταπεινωθῆς ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ σου.
9 Προσκαλεσαμένου σε δυνάστου ὑποχωρῶν γίνου,
καὶ τόσω μᾶλλον σε προσκαλέσεται·
10 μὴ ἔμπιπτε, μὴ ἀπωσθῆς,
καὶ μὴ μακρὰν ἀφίστω, ἵνα μὴ ἐπιλησθῆς.
11 μὴ ἔπεχε ἰσηγορεῖσθαι μετ' αὐτοῦ
καὶ μὴ πίστευε τοῖς πλείοσιν λόγοις αὐτοῦ·
ἐκ πολλῆς γὰρ λαλιᾶς πειράσει σε
καὶ ὡς προσγελῶν ἐξετάσει σε.
12 ἀνελεήμων ὁ μὴ συντηρῶν λόγους
καὶ οὐ μὴ φείσεται περὶ κακώσεως καὶ δεσμῶν.
13 συντήρησον καὶ πρόσεχε σφοδρῶς,
ὅτι μετὰ τῆς πτώσεώς σου περιπατεῖς.
14 ἀκούων ταῦτα ἐν ὕπνῳ σου γρηγόρησον
πάσῃ ζωῇ ἀγάπα τὸν κύριον
καὶ ἐπικαλοῦ αὐτὸν εἰς σωτηρίαν σου.

Afterwards, when he sees you, he will avoid you
and shake his head about you.
8 Take care you are not hoodwinked
and thus humiliated while you are enjoying yourself.
9 When a mighty man invites you, show reluctance,
and he will press his invitation all the more.
10 Do not press him, in case you are pushed aside,
and do not stand aloof, or you will be overlooked.
11 Do not affect to treat him as an equal;
do not trust his flow of words.
All his talking is expressly meant to test you;
under cover of geniality, he will be weighing you up.
12 Pitiless is anyone who retails gossip;
he will not spare you either blows or chains.
13 Be wary! Take very great care,
because you are walking with your own downfall.
14 *When you hear that in your sleep, wake up!
Love the Lord through all your life,
and pray to him for your salvation.*

-
- 8 'While you are enjoying yourself' follows the LXX (and NRSV); the NJB, following the Peshitta and Vg, has, 'through your own stupidity'. Cairo Genizah MS 'A', for this verse, "Beware of being too insolent; do not imitate fools." (השמר אל תרהב מאד ואל תדמה בְּחִסְרֵי מַדְע) (ע)
- 9 The NJB has 'an influential person' in place of 'a mighty man', here following the WEBBE.
- 10 This verse is a good example of Ben Sira's moderation and irony.
- 11 For the last line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads 'he laughs while probing you' (ושחק לך וחקרך) (ו).
- 12 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has, "He won't hesitate to harm and to bind."
- 13 The WEBBE ends, "you walk in danger of falling."
- 14 This verse, here following Greek 248, is included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' also lacks the verse.

15 Πᾶν ζῶον ἀγαπᾷ τὸ ὅμοιον αὐτῷ
καὶ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ.
16 πᾶσα σὰρξ κατὰ γένος συνάγεται,
καὶ τῷ ὁμοίῳ αὐτοῦ προσκολληθήσεται ἀνήρ.
17 τί κοινωνήσει λύκος ἀμνῷ;
οὕτως ἁμαρτωλὸς πρὸς εὐσεβῆ.
18 τίς εἰρήνη ὑαῖνη πρὸς κύνα;
καὶ τίς εἰρήνη πλουσίῳ πρὸς πένητα;
19 κυνήγια λεόντων ὄναγροι ἐν ἐρήμῳ.
οὕτως νομαὶ πλουσίων πτωχοί.
20 βδέλυγμα ὑπερηφάνῳ ταπεινότης.
οὕτως βδέλυγμα πλουσίῳ πτωχός.
21 πλούσιος σαλευόμενος στηρίζεται ὑπὸ φίλων,
ταπεινὸς δὲ πεσὼν προσαπωδεῖται ὑπὸ φίλων.
22 πλουσίου σφαλέντος πολλοὶ ἀντιλήμπτορες.
ἐλάλησεν ἀπόρητα, καὶ ἐδिकाίωσαν αὐτόν.

15 Every living thing loves its own sort,
and every man his neighbour.
16 Every creature mixes with its kind,
and a man will stick to people like himself.
17 What does a wolf have in common with a lamb?
It is just so with sinner and devout.
18 What peace can there be between hyena and dog?
And what peace between rich and poor?
19 Wild desert donkeys are the prey of lions;
so too, the poor is the quarry of the rich.
20 The proud thinks humility abhorrent;
so too, the rich man abominates a poor man.
21 When the rich stumbles, he is supported by friends;
when the poor falls, his friends push him away.
22 When the rich slips, there are many hands to catch him;
if he talks nonsense, he is congratulated.

15 The NJB has 'fellow' in place of 'neighbour', here following the WEBBE.

16 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "and human beings stick to their own sort."

17 At the end of this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* adds **לְאִישׁ אֶחָד מֵעֲשִׂירֵי וְכֵן** ('and so is the rich to a man that is destitute').

18 For Ben Sira, the precept to frequent only one's equals is an extension of the harmony of nature, and therefore congruent with the divine will. His condemnation of wealth is not absolute (see v. 24); his intention is to prevent the poor from being led astray by the wealthy and thus incurring the risk of being crushed.

19 For 'desert donkeys', the WEBBE has 'donkeys ... in the wilderness'.

20 In place of 'a poor man', the NJB has 'the poor'.

21 The NRSV has 'humble' in place of 'poor'. This verse is presumably to be understood metaphorically; 'stumbles' can mean 'say silly things' (Hebrew 'speaks', cf. 14:1), and what follows shows that talking is the topic in hand.

22 For 'but no room is made for him', here following the NJB, the WEBBE has 'but no one listens to him'.

ταπεινὸς ἔσφαλεν, καὶ προσεπετίμησαν αὐτῷ·
 ἐφθέγγατο σύνεσιν, καὶ οὐκ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ τόπος.
²³ πλούσιος ἐλάλησεν, καὶ πάντες ἐσίγησαν
 καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἀνύψωσαν ἕως τῶν νεφελῶν.
 πτωχὸς ἐλάλησεν καὶ εἶπαν Τίς οὗτος;
 κὰν προσκόψῃ, προσανατρέψουσιν αὐτόν.
²⁴ ἀγαθὸς ὁ πλοῦτος, ᾧ μὴ ἐστὶν ἁμαρτία,
 καὶ πονηρὰ ἡ πτωχεία ἐν στόματι ἀσεβοῦς.
²⁵ Καρδία ἀνθρώπου ἀλλοιοῖ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ,
 εἴαν τε εἰς ἀγαθὰ εἴαν τε εἰς κακά.
 ...
²⁶ Ἰχνος καρδίας ἐν ἀγαθοῖς πρόσωπον ἰλαρόν,
 καὶ εὐρεσις παραβολῶν διαλογισμοὶ μετὰ κόπων.

The poor slips and is blamed for it;
 he may talk good sense, but no room is made for him.
²³ The rich speaks and everyone stops talking,
 and then they praise his discourse to the skies.
 The poor speaks and people say, "Who is this?"
 And, if he stumbles, they trip him up yet more.
²⁴ Wealth is good where there is no sin;
 poverty is evil, the godless say.
²⁵ A man's heart moulds his expression,
 whether for better or worse:
 ...
²⁶ Happy heart, cheerful expression;
 but wearisome work, inventing proverbs.

²³ For the last line, the WEBBE reads, "If he stumbles, they will help to overthrow him."

²⁴ Perhaps for 'is evil' (following the LXX), we should read, 'is commensurate with impiety'; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'is commensurate with insolence'. Wealth is not in itself bad, but merely dangerous.

²⁵ The last part of this verse is omitted in the best MSS.

²⁶ It is not easy to see the connexion between the 2 lines of this verse but the text is uncertain. For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads, 'meditations and preoccupations: sad thoughts' (ושיג ישיח מחשבת עמל).

Σοφία Σιραχ 14

- ¹ μακάριος ἀνὴρ,
ὃς οὐκ ὠλίσθησεν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ
καὶ οὐ κατενύγη ἐν λύπῃ ἁμαρτιῶν·
- ² μακάριος οὗ οὐ κατέγνω ἢ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ὃς οὐκ ἔπεσεν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐλπίδος αὐτοῦ.
- ³ Ἄνδρὶ μικρολόγῳ οὐ καλὸς ὁ πλοῦτος,
καὶ ἀνδρώπῳ βασκάνῳ ἵνα τί χρήματα;
- ⁴ ὁ συνάγων ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ συνάγει ἄλλοις,
καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς αὐτοῦ τρυφήσουσιν ἕτεροι.
- ⁵ ὁ πονηρὸς ἐαυτῷ τίνι ἀγαθὸς ἔσται;
καὶ οὐ μὴ εὐφρανθήσεται ἐν τοῖς χρήμασιν αὐτοῦ.
- ⁶ τοῦ βασκαίνοντος ἐαυτὸν οὐκ ἔστιν πονηρότερος,
καὶ τοῦτο ἀνταπόδομα τῆς κακίας αὐτοῦ·
- ⁷ κὰν εὖ ποιῇ, ἐν λήθῃ ποιεῖ,
καὶ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων ἐκφαίνει τὴν κακίαν αὐτοῦ.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 14

- ¹ Blessed is the man
who has not sinned in speech
and who feels no remorse for sins.
- ² Blessed is he whose soul does not reproach him
and who has never given up hope.
- ³ Wealth is not the right thing for the niggardly,
and what use are possessions to the covetous?
- ⁴ He who hoards by stinting himself hoards for others,
and others will live sumptuously on his riches.
- ⁵ If someone is mean to himself, whom does he benefit?
He does not even enjoy what is his own.
- ⁶ No one is meaner than he who is mean to himself;
this is punishment for his wickedness.
- ⁷ If he does any good, he does it unintentionally
and, in the end, he himself reveals his wickedness.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 14

- ¹ The literal translation for 'sinned' is 'slipped'; the NRSV has 'blundered'. Many Psalms similarly celebrate the happiness of the pure in heart (e.g. Ps 1, 32, 119), of the wise (e.g. Ps 41), and of the devout (e.g. Ps 128) as opposed to those who are happy by the world's standards. This passage anticipates the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:1-12).
- ² The NJB has 'conscience' in place of 'soul', here following the WEBBE.
- ³ Vv. 3-10 describe the miser and his gate.
- ⁴ For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'and a stranger shall revel in his goods' (ובטובתו יתבעבע זר).
- ⁵ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "He won't enjoy his possessions."
- ⁶ For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "this is how his wickedness repays him."
- ⁷ Cairo Genizah MS 'A' lacks vv. 7-8.

8 πονηρὸς ὁ βασκαίνων ὀφθαλμῶ,
ἀποστρέφων πρόσωπον καὶ ὑπερορῶν ψυχάς.
9 πλεονέκτου ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ ἐμπίπλαται μερίδι,
καὶ ἀδικία πονηρὰ ἀναξηραίνει ψυχὴν.
10 ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρὸς φθονερός ἐπ' ἄρτω
καὶ ἐλλιπὴς ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης αὐτοῦ.
11 Τέκνον, καθὼς εἰς ἔχης, εὖ ποιεῖ σεαυτὸν
καὶ προσφορὰς κυρίῳ ἀξίως πρόσαγε·
12 μνήσθητι ὅτι θάνατος οὐ χρονιεῖ
καὶ διαθήκη ἄδου οὐχ ὑπεδείχθη σοι·
13 πρὶν σε τελευτῆσαι εὖ ποιεῖ φίλῳ
καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἰσχύν σου ἔκτεινον καὶ δὸς αὐτῷ.
14 μὴ ἀφυστερήσῃς ἀπὸ ἀγαθῆς ἡμέρας,
καὶ μερὶς ἐπιθυμίας ἀγαθῆς μὴ σε παρελθάτω.
15 οὐχὶ ἐτέρῳ καταλείψεις τοὺς πόνους σου
καὶ τοὺς κόπους σου εἰς διαίρεσιν κλήρου;

8 Wicked is the person who has an envious eye,
averting his face and careless of others' lives.
9 The eye of the grasping is not content with what he has;
greed shrivels up the soul.
10 The miser is grudging of bread;
there is famine at his table.
11 My son, treat yourself as well as you can afford,
and bring worthy offerings to the Lord.
12 Remember that death will not delay,
and that you have never seen Sheol's contract.
13 Be kind to your friend before you die;
and, within your means, reach out and give to him.
14 Do not refuse yourself the good things of today;
do not let your share of a desired good pass you by.
15 Will you not have to leave your fortune to another,
and your toils to be divided by lot?

8 The miser 'averts his face' from those who need his help.

9 'Greed' (the NRSV has 'greedy injustice') translates the conjectural 'the evil eye'; the LXX has 'bad iniquity' (possible orthographic confusion by the Greek translator; however, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' is different: חלקו ולוקח חלק רעהו מאבד חלקו - 'In the eye of the greedy, his portion is small; but he who takes his neighbour's portion wastes his own').

10 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' adds the following: עין טובה מרבה הלחם ומעין יבש יזל מים על השלחן ('the generous multiplies bread; even a dry well flows on his table').

11 In contrast to vv. 3-10, vv. 11-19 teach that riches are to be used generously, because there will be no opportunity after death (vv. 12,16).

12 The NRSV has 'decree of Hades' in place of 'Sheol's contract'; this probably refers to the decree assigning the date of death (Is 28:15,18).

13 For the 2nd line, here loosely following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "treat him as generously as you can afford."

14 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' reads the 2nd line very differently: ובהלקח אח אל תעבר וחמוד רע אל תחמוד. ("But do not encroach on a brother's portion (?) and do not covet the desirable things of a neighbour.")

15 In place of 'your toils', the NJB has 'the fruit of your labour'.

16 δὸς καὶ λαβὲ καὶ ἀπάτησον τὴν ψυχὴν σου,
ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἄδου ζητῆσαι τρυφήν.

17 πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιοῦται·
ἢ γὰρ διαθήκη ἀπ’ αἰῶνος Θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ.

18 ὡς φύλλον θάλλον ἐπὶ δένδρου δασέος,
τὰ μὲν καταβάλλει, ἄλλα δὲ φύει,
οὕτως γενεὰ σαρκὸς καὶ αἵματος,
ἢ μὲν τελευτᾷ, ἑτέρα δὲ γεννᾶται.

19 πᾶν ἔργον σηπόμενον ἐκλείπει,
καὶ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος αὐτὸ μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἀπελεύσεται.

20 Μακάριος ἀνὴρ, ὃς ἐν σοφίᾳ μελετήσῃ
καὶ ὃς ἐν συνέσει αὐτοῦ διαλεχθήσεται,

21 ὁ διανοούμενος τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῆς ἐν καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀποκρύφοις αὐτῆς ἐννοηθήσεται.

22 ἔξελθε ὀπίσω αὐτῆς ὡς ἰχνευτῆς
καὶ ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτῆς ἐνέδρευε.

16 Give and receive, enjoy yourself –
there are no pleasures to be found in Sheol.

17 Like clothes, all flesh will wear out;
the age-old law is, “Everyone must die.”

18 Like foliage growing on a bushy tree,
some leaves falling, others growing,
so are the generations of flesh and blood;
one dies, another is born.

19 Every achievement rots away and perishes,
and with it goes its author.

20 Happy is anyone who meditates on wisdom
and reasons with intelligence.

21 He studies her ways in his heart
and ponders her secrets.

22 He pursues her like a hunter
and lies in wait by her path.

-
- 16 At the end of this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* adds *עשה אלהים עשה (לפני) וכל דבר שיפה לעשות* (“*and whatever is seemly to do, do it before God*”).
- 17 The 2nd line here follows the LXX (and NJB); *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* (and the NRSV) has *והוק עולם גוע יגועו*, “*for the decree from of old is, “You must die!”*”
- 18 In place of ‘*dies*’, the WEBBE has ‘*comes to an end*’.
- 19 For this verse (here following the LXX), *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* reads, “*All men’s deeds are destined to perish and the works of his hands will follow him.*” (כל מעשיו רקוב ירקבו ופעל ידיו ימשך אחריו) Rv 14:13 transforms this notion; a person’s works will follow him into the glory of a new life. Whereas Qoheleth finds this perplexing and even outrageous, Ben Sira treats it as a lesson in detachment.
- 20 Vv. 20–27 teach that one should pursue Wisdom as a beloved, with intensity and resolution. In place of ‘*meditates on*’, some MSS have ‘*dies in*’.
- 21 Cf. Ps 119, especially vv. 15, 23 & 148, on the happiness derived from meditating on the Law. Here, the object of study is wisdom, which is to be found notably in the proverbs and maxims of the sages.
- 22 For the 2nd line, *Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’* has ‘*and lurking at her entrances*’ (וכל מבואיה ירצד).

²³ ὁ παρακύπτων διὰ τῶν θυρίδων αὐτῆς
καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν θυρωμάτων αὐτῆς ἀκροάσεται,
²⁴ ὁ καταλύων σύνεγγυς τοῦ οἴκου αὐτῆς
καὶ πῆξει πάσσαλον ἐν τοῖς τοίχοις αὐτῆς,
²⁵ στήσει τὴν σκηνην αὐτοῦ κατὰ χειρᾶς αὐτῆς
καὶ καταλύσει ἐν καταλύματι ἀγαθῶν,
²⁶ θήσει τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ σκέπη αὐτῆς
καὶ ὑπὸ τοὺς κλάδους αὐτῆς αὐλισθήσεται,
²⁷ σκεπασθήσεται ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἀπὸ καύματος
καὶ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτῆς καταλύσει.

²³ He peeps in at her windows
and listens at her doors.
²⁴ He lodges close to her house
and fixes his peg in her wall.
²⁵ He pitches her tent at her side
and will lodge in a lodging where good things are.
²⁶ He sets his children in her shade
and camps beneath her branches.
²⁷ He is sheltered by her from the heat,
and, in her glory, he makes his home.

²³ Compare the 2nd line with the *Cairo Genizah* addition to v. 22.

²⁴ Several images are used in this passage for the search for wisdom: the hunter who pursues her (v. 22), the spy who tries to overhear what she is saying (v. 23) and the nomad who camps in her shadow (vv. 24–27).

²⁵ For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, “and occupies an excellent lodging.”

²⁶ For the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah* MS ‘A’ reads, ‘and he will set his nest on her bough’ (וישים קנו בעופיה).

²⁷ The ‘glory’ (*Cairo Genizah* MS ‘A’ has ‘in her habitations’ – ובמענותיה) possibly refers to the Cloud that manifested the presence of Yahweh (cf. Ex 16:10 and #Ex 24:16), the *Shekinah* (Presence) of Rabbinical writings.

Σοφία Σιραχ 15

- 1 Ὁ φοβούμενος κύριον ποιήσει αὐτό,
καὶ ὁ ἐγκρατὴς τοῦ νόμου καταλήμψεται αὐτήν·
- 2 καὶ ὑπαντήσεται αὐτῷ ὡς μήτηρ
καὶ ὡς γυνὴ παρθενίας προσδέξεται αὐτόν·
- 3 ψωμιεῖ αὐτὸν ἄρτον συνέσεως
καὶ ὕδωρ σοφίας ποτίσει αὐτόν·
- 4 στηριχθήσεται ἐπ' αὐτήν καὶ οὐ μὴ κλιθῆ,
καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῆς ἐφέξει καὶ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνηθῆ·
- 5 καὶ ὑψώσει αὐτὸν παρὰ τοὺς πλησίον αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ἀνοίξει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ·
- 6 εὐφροσύνην καὶ στέφανον ἀγαλλιάματος εὕρησει
καὶ ὄνομα αἰῶνος κατακληρονομήσει.
- 7 οὐ μὴ καταλήμψονται αὐτήν ἄνθρωποι ἀσύνητοι,
καὶ ἄνδρες ἀμαρτωλοὶ οὐ μὴ ἴδωσιν αὐτήν·
- 8 μακρὰν ἐστὶν ὑπερηφανίας,
καὶ ἄνδρες ψεῦσται οὐ μὴ μνησθήσονται αὐτῆς.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 15

- 1 Whoever fears the Lord will act like this,
and whoever grasps the Law will receive wisdom.
- 2 She will come to meet him like a mother,
and receive him like a virgin bride.
- 3 She will give him the bread of understanding to eat
and the water of wisdom to drink.
- 4 He will lean on her and will not fall;
and he will rely on her and not be put to shame.
- 5 And she will raise him high above his neighbours,
and, in full assembly, she will open his mouth.
- 6 He will find happiness and a crown of joy;
and he will inherit an everlasting name.
- 7 Fools will not gain possession of her,
nor will sinners set eyes on her.
- 8 She stands remote from pride
and liars cannot remember her.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 15

- 1 The LXX has 'her' in place of 'wisdom'. Jr 2:8 speaks of four official functions: priest, lawyer, prince and prophet. The 'man who grasps the Law' belongs to the second of these classes: he is the 'scribe' or 'doctor' of the Law, who became increasingly important in Judaism (see #Ezr 7:6).
- 2 In place of 'a virgin bride', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'a bride of (his) youth' (וכאשת נעורים תקבלנו).
- 3 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' swaps the placement of 'understanding' and 'wisdom'.
- 4 The WEBBE has 'confounded' (possibly following Cairo Genizah MS 'A') in place of 'put to shame'.
- 5 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction.
- 6 Cairo Genizah MS 'A' lacks 'crown of' before 'joy'.
- 7 In place of 'sinners', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'men of arrogance' (ואנשי זדון).
- 8 The NJB has 'call her to mind' in place of 'remember her'.

9 Οὐχ ὠραῖος αἴνος ἐν στόματι ἀμαρτωλοῦ,
 ὅτι οὐ παρὰ κυρίου ἀπεστάλη·
 10 ἐν γὰρ σοφίᾳ ῥηθῆσεται αἴνος,
 καὶ ὁ κύριος εὐοδώσει αὐτόν.
 11 μὴ εἴπῃς ὅτι Διὰ κύριον ἀπέστην·
 ἃ γὰρ ἐμίσησεν, οὐ ποιήσει.
 12 μὴ εἴπῃς ὅτι Αὐτός με ἐπλάνησεν·
 οὐ γὰρ χρεῖαν ἔχει ἀνδρὸς ἀμαρτωλοῦ.
 13 πᾶν βδέλυγμα ἐμίσησεν ὁ κύριος,
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγαπητὸν τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν.
 14 αὐτὸς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον
 καὶ ἀφῆκεν αὐτόν ἐν χειρὶ διαβουλίου αὐτοῦ.
 15 ἐὰν θέλῃς, συντηρήσεις ἐντολὰς
 καὶ πίστιν ποιῆσαι εὐδοκίας.
 16 παρέθηκεν σοι πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ·
 οὗ ἐὰν θέλῃς, ἐκτενεῖς τὴν χειρὰ σου.

9 Praise is unseemly in a sinner's mouth,
 since it has not been sent from the Lord.
 10 For, praise should be uttered only in wisdom,
 and the Lord himself then prompts it.
 11 Do not say, "The Lord was responsible for my sinning,"
 for he does not do what he hates.
 12 Do not say, "It was he who led me astray,"
 for he has no use for a sinner.
 13 The Lord hates all that is foul,
 and no one who fears him will love it either.
 14 He himself made human beings in the beginning,
 and left them free to make their own decisions.
 15 If you choose, you will keep the commandments
 and so be faithful to his will.
 16 He has set fire and water before you;
 put out your hand to whichever you prefer.

9 In *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'*, the text of this verse (לֹא נִאֲתָה תְהִלָּה בְּפִי רִשְׁעִי כִּי לֹא מֵאֵל נִחְלַקָּה לוֹ) is written in small letters between the preceding and following lines of the main text.

10 For the 2nd line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* reads 'and by her a proverb will be studied' (וּמִשָּׁל בָּהּ יִלְמַדְנָהּ).

11 'He does not do' follows *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* (לֹא עָשָׂה) and one Greek MS; the LXX has 'you ought not to do' (οὐ ποιήσεις).

12 God cannot be blamed for human sinfulness.

13 For 'The Lord', *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* has the 'triple-yod' (יהי) that represents the Divine Name.

14 This verse is often quoted in support of the doctrine of free will. The *Cairo Genizah* text, "he has handed him over to his enemy and left him to his own devices," (אֱלֹהִים מְבַרְאֵשׁטִית אֶבְרָא אֲדִיהֶם וּשְׁתִּיחוּ בִיד חוֹתְפּוֹ וּוִיתְנֵהוּ בִיד יִצְרוֹ) seems more applicable, however, to the origin of evil. V. 15, on the other hand, really does affirm the freedom of the will. The word, יִצַר, (used in v. 14) is a term meaning 'free choice', sometimes used in a good sense (Is 26:3, 1Ch 29:18) but usually referring to an evil inclination towards sin (Gn 6:5, 8:21, cf. 2Esd 4:30–31).

15 At the end of this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* adds 'if you trust in him, you will also live' (אִם תֹּאמִין בּוֹ גַם אֶתְּהִיָּה).

16 'Fire' and 'water' represent opposite extremes: fire here has no eschatological significance.

17 ἔναντι ἀνθρώπων ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ὁ θάνατος,
καὶ ὃ ἐὰν εὐδοκήσῃ, δοθήσεται αὐτῷ.
18 ὅτι πολλὴ ἡ σοφία τοῦ κυρίου·
ἰσχυρὸς ἐν δυναστείᾳ καὶ βλέπων τὰ πάντα,
19 καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τοὺς φοβουμένους αὐτόν,
καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπιγνώσεται πᾶν ἔργον ἀνθρώπου.
20 οὐκ ἐνετείλατο οὐδενὶ ἀσεβεῖν
καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἄνεσιν οὐδενὶ ἁμαρτάνειν.

17 A man has life and death before him;
whichever he prefers will be given him.
18 For vast is the wisdom of the Lord;
he is almighty and all seeing.
19 His eyes are on those who fear him
and he notes every act of man.
20 He never commanded anyone to be godless
and he has given no one permission to sin.

17 The NJB has 'human being' in place of 'man'.

18 The divine attributes mentioned here reaffirm the point of view of vv. 11-13.

19 In place of 'act of man', the NJB has 'human action'.

20 The Cairo Genizah MS 'A' text is longer, "He never commanded a man to sin and neither did he make men of falsehood to dream. And he has no mercy on him who works vanity and on him that discloses a secret." (לא צוה אנוש לחטא ולא החלים אנשי כזב: ולא מרחם על עושה שוא ועל מגלה סוד)

Σοφία Σιραχ 16

- ¹ Μὴ ἐπιθύμει τέκνων πλήθος ἀχρήστων
μηδὲ εὐφραίνου ἐπὶ υἱοῖς ἀσεβέσιν·
- ² ἔὰν πληθύνωσιν, μὴ εὐφραίνου ἐπ' αὐτοῖς,
εἰ μὴ ἐστὶν φόβος κυρίου μετ' αὐτῶν.
- ³ μὴ ἐμπιστεύσης τῇ ζωῇ αὐτῶν
καὶ μὴ ἔπεχε ἐπὶ τὸ πλήθος αὐτῶν·
κρείσσων γὰρ εἷς ἢ χίλιοι
καὶ ἀποθανεῖν ἄτεκνον ἢ ἔχειν τέκνα ἀσεβῆ.
- ⁴ ἀπὸ γὰρ ἐνὸς συνετοῦ συνοικισθήσεται πόλις,
φυλὴ δὲ ἀνόμων ἐρημωθήσεται.
- ⁵ Πολλὰ τοιαῦτα ἑώρακεν ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς μου,
καὶ ἰσχυρότερα τούτων ἀκήκοεν τὸ οὖς μου.
- ⁶ ἐν συναγωγῇ ἁμαρτωλῶν ἐκκαυθήσεται πῦρ,
καὶ ἐν ἔθνει ἀπειθεῖ ἐξεκαύθη ὀργή.
- ⁷ οὐκ ἐξιλάσατο περὶ τῶν ἀρχαίων γιγάντων,
οἱ ἀπέστησαν τῇ ἰσχύι αὐτῶν·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 16

- ¹ Do not long for a brood of worthless children,
and do not take pleasure in godless sons.
- ² If they multiply, take no pleasure in them,
unless the fear of the Lord lives among them.
- ³ Do not count on their having long life;
do not put too much faith in their number;
for, one can be better than a thousand,
and to die childless than to have godless children.
- ⁴ One person of sense can populate a city
but a race of lawless people will be destroyed.
- ⁵ My eyes have seen many such things;
me ears have heard things even more impressive.
- ⁶ Fire is kindled in a sinful society;
Retribution blazes in a rebellious nation.
- ⁷ God did not pardon the giants of old
who, confident in their strength, had rebelled.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 16

- ¹ In place of 'unprofitable', here following the LXX (ἀχρήστων), the NJB, following *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'*, has 'worthless' (שוא).
- ² The NJB opens, "However many you have."
- ³ After 'number', *Cairo Genizah MS 'A'* adds 'for, they will not have a happy future' (כי לא תהיה להם אחרית טובה); and, after 'one', it adds 'doing good-will' (עושה רצון).
- ⁴ In place of 'person of sense', here following the LXX, *Cairo Genizah MSS 'A' & 'B'* have 'who fears the LORD' (ירא יי').
- ⁵ In *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*, an entire line has been erased after this verse.
- ⁶ Ben Sira here refers to the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Nb 16).
- ⁷ On the 'giants', see Gn 6:4 (v. 7).

8 οὐκ ἐφείσατο περὶ τῆς παροικίας Λωτ,
οὐς ἐβδελύξατο διὰ τὴν ὑπερηφανίαν αὐτῶν·

9 οὐκ ἠλέησεν ἔθνος ἀπωλείας
τοὺς ἐξηρμένους ἐν ἀμαρτίαις αὐτῶν

10 καὶ οὕτως ἑξακοσίας χιλιάδας πεζῶν
τοὺς ἐπισυναχθέντας ἐν σκληροκαρδία αὐτῶν.

11 *Κὰν ἢ εἷς σκληροστράχηλος,
θαυμαστὸν τοῦτο εἰ ἀθωωθήσεται·
ἔλεος γὰρ καὶ ὀργὴ παρ' αὐτῶ,
δυναστικῆς ἐξίλασμων καὶ ἐκχέων ὀργήν.*

12 κατὰ τὸ πολὺ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ,
οὕτως καὶ πολὺς ὁ ἔλεγχος αὐτοῦ·
ἄνδρα κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ κρινεῖ.

13 οὐκ ἐκφεύζεται ἐν ἀρπάγματι ἀμαρτωλός,
καὶ οὐ μὴ καθυστερήσει ὑπομονὴ εὐσεβοῦς.

14 πάσῃ ἐλεημοσύνῃ ποιήσει τόπον,
ἕκαστος κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ εὐρήσει.

15 *Κύριος ἐσκλήρυνε Φαραὼ μὴ εἰδέναι αὐτόν,
ὅπως ἂν γνωσθῇ ἐνεργήματα αὐτοῦ τῇ ὑπ' οὐρανόν.*

8 He did not spare the people with whom Lot lived;
he abhorred them, rather, for their pride.

9 He was pitiless to the nation of perdition –
those people who gloried in their sins –

10 as also to the six hundred thousand men on the march,
who had banded together in their obstinacy.

11 Even if there had been only one stubborn man,
it would be a marvel if he escaped unpunished;
for, mercy and wrath alike belong to the Lord,
who is mighty to forgive and to pour out wrath.

12 As great as is his mercy,
so also is his severity;
he judges a man as his deeds deserve.

13 The sinner will not escape with his ill-gotten gains,
nor the patience of the devout go for nothing.

14 He takes note of every charitable action,
and everyone is treated as he deserves.

15 *The Lord hardened Pharaoh so he did not recognise him,
to make his works known under heaven.*

8 Here, Ben Sira talks of the people of Sodom (see Ezk 16:49–50, Gn 19).

9 This verse speaks of the former people of Canaan.

10 The 'six hundred thousand' are the Israelites in the desert (Ex 12:37, Nb 11:21); they died in the desert and did not reach Canaan (Nb 14:20–33).

11 The NJB opens the 2nd line, "it would have been amazing."

12 In place of 'a man', the NJB has 'each person'.

13 The WEBBE has 'perseverance' in place of 'patience'.

14 The 1st line here follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'Whoever does right, there is a wage for him' (כל העושה צדקה יש לו שכר).

15 Vv. 15–16, here following Cairo Genizah MS 'A' (:מגולין תחת השמים ~ שמעשיו ~ לא ידעו: אשר לא לא ידעו: שמעשיו ~ מגולין תחת השמים), the Peshitta, and the Greek 248 MS, are included in the NJB & NRSV only as footnotes.

¹⁶ *πάση τῇ κτίσει τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ φανερόν·
καὶ τὸ φῶς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ σκότος ἐμέρισε τῷ ἀδάμαντι.*

¹⁷ *Μὴ εἴπῃς ὅτι Ἀπὸ κυρίου κρυβήσομαι,
καὶ ἐξ ὕψους τίς μου μνησθήσεται;
ἐν λαῶ πλείονι οὐ μὴ γνωσθῶ,*

τίς γὰρ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν ἀμετροῦ κτίσει;

¹⁸ *Ἴδου ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ,
ἄβυσσος καὶ γῆ ἐν τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ αὐτοῦ σαλευθήσονται·*

¹⁹ *ἅμα τὰ ὄρη καὶ τὰ θεμέλια τῆς γῆς
ἐν τῷ ἐπιβλέψαι εἰς αὐτὰ τρόμφ συσσειόνται.*

²⁰ *καὶ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς οὐ διανοηθήσεται καρδία,
καὶ τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ τίς ἐνδυμηθήσεται;*

²¹ *καὶ καταιγίς, ἣν οὐκ ὄψεται ἄνθρωπος,
τὰ δὲ πλείονα τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀποκρύφοις.*

²² *ἔργα δικαιοσύνης τίς ἀναγγελεῖ;
ἢ τίς ὑπομενεῖ; μακρὰν γὰρ ἡ διαθήκη.*

²³ *ἐλαττούμενος καρδίᾳ διανοεῖται ταῦτα,
καὶ ἀνὴρ ἄφρων καὶ πλανώμενος διανοεῖται μωρά.*

¹⁶ *His mercy shows itself to all Creation;
and he divided his light and his darkness with a plumb line.*

¹⁷ *Do not say, "I shall hide from the Lord;
who is going to remember me up there?
I shall not be noticed among so many people;
what am I in the immensity of Creation?"*

¹⁸ *For see, the sky and the heavens above the sky,
the abyss and the earth shake at his visitation.*

¹⁹ *The mountains and earth's foundations alike
quail and tremble when he looks at them.*

²⁰ *But no human mind can grasp this.
Who keeps his movements in mind?*

²¹ *The storm wind itself is invisible,
and most of what he does goes undetected.*

²² *"Who will report whether justice has been done?
Who will be watching? The covenant is remote!"*

²³ *Such are the thoughts of the person of little sense,
stupid, misguided, cherishing his folly.*

¹⁶ An alternative for 'with a plumb line' is 'among men'. Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has: רחמיו יראו לכל בריותיו ואורו ושבחו חלק לבני אדם: (see #15).

¹⁷ Ben Sira here alludes to the stories of Adam and Cain trying to hide from the sight of God (Gn 3:10, 4:9).

¹⁸ An alternative reading for the 1st line is, "Look at the heavens and the heaven of heavens."

¹⁹ In place of 'when he looks at them', Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has 'under the gaze of God' (בהביטו אליהם).

²⁰ Vv. 20–21 follow the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has, "Nor does he take notice of me; who is concerned about my ways? Should I sin, no eye sees me; if I tell a hidden lie, who knows of it?" (גם עלי לא ישים לב ובדרכי מי יתבונן: אם חטאתי לא תראני עין או אם אכזב בכל סתר מי יודע) (ע)

²¹ Literally translated, the verse ends, "is amongst hidden things."

²² The objection here seems to be that retribution delays and is not certain. On the meaning of 'covenant' here, see #14:2. For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'A' has, "What hope is there? For, the decree is far away ..." (יגידנו ותקות מה כי אצוק חוק) (י)

²³ In this verse, Ben Sira expresses his judgement on the ideas expressed in vv. 17–22. The literal translation of 'sense' is 'heart'.

24 Ἄκουσόν μου, τέκνον, καὶ μάθε ἐπιστήμην
καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων μου πρόσεχε τῇ καρδίᾳ σου·

25 ἐκφανῶ ἐν σταθμῶ παιδείαν
καὶ ἐν ἀκριβείᾳ ἀπαγγελῶ ἐπιστήμην.

26 Ἐν κρίσει κυρίου τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς,
καὶ ἀπὸ ποιήσεως αὐτῶν διέστειλεν μερίδας αὐτῶν.

27 ἐκόσμησεν εἰς αἰῶνα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ
καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν·
οὔτε ἐπείνασαν οὔτε ἐκοπίασαν
καὶ οὐκ ἐξέλιπον ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν·

28 ἕκαστος τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐξέθλιψεν,
καὶ ἕως αἰῶνος οὐκ ἀπειθήσουσιν τοῦ ῥήματος αὐτοῦ.

29 καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα κύριος εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐπέβλεψεν
καὶ ἐνέπλησεν αὐτὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν αὐτοῦ·

30 ψυχῇ παντὸς ζώου ἐκάλυψεν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς,
καὶ εἰς αὐτὴν ἢ ἀποστροφὴ αὐτῶν.

24 Listen to me, my child, and learn knowledge,
and give your whole mind to my words.

25 I shall expound discipline methodically
and proclaim knowledge with precision.

26 When God created his works in the beginning,
he assigned their boundaries from their making.

27 He determined his works for all time,
from their origins to their distant generations.
They know neither hunger nor weariness,
and they never desert their duties.

28 Not one has ever got in the way of another,
and they will never disobey his word.

29 Then the Lord looked upon the earth
and filled it with his blessings.

30 He covered its surface with every kind of animal
and, to it, they will return.

24 The scribe is speaking here, not wisdom personified.

25 The WEBBE reads, “I will impart instruction with precision, and declare knowledge exactly.”

26 ‘(God) created’ is conjectural, following Cairo Genizah MS ‘A’ (כברא אל); the LXX has ‘judged’. MS ‘A’ ends in the middle of this verse, finishing with an upper bar about 4 or 5 letters wide after the last word (—יהםח).

27 For the first 2 lines, here following the NJB, the NRSV has, “He arranged his works in an eternal order, and their dominion (elements) for all generations.”

28 Ben Sira is here referring to the regular motions of the heavenly bodies.

29 The NJB has ‘good things’ in place of ‘blessings’.

30 The WEBBE has the verb in the 2nd line in the present tense.

Σοφία Σιραχ 17

- 1 Κύριος ἔκτισεν ἐκ γῆς ἄνθρωπον
καὶ πάλιν ἀπέστρεψεν αὐτὸν εἰς αὐτήν.
2 ἡμέρας ἀριθμοῦ καὶ καιρὸν ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τῶν ἐπ’ αὐτῆς.
3 καθ’ ἑαυτὸν ἐνέδυσεν αὐτοὺς ἰσχὺν
καὶ κατ’ εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς.
4 ἔθηκεν τὸν φόβον αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πάσης σαρκὸς
καὶ κατακυριεύειν θηρίων καὶ πετεινῶν.
5 ...
ἔκτον δὲ νοῦν αὐτοῖς ἐδωρήσατο μερίζων,
καὶ τὸν ἑβδομὸν λόγον ἐρμενέα τῶν ἐνεργημάτων αὐτοῦ.
6 διαβούλιον καὶ γλῶσσαν καὶ ὀφθαλμούς,
ᾧτα καὶ καρδίαν ἔδωκεν διανοεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς.
7 ἐπιστήμην συνέσεως ἐπέπλησεν αὐτοὺς
καὶ ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακὰ ὑπέδειξεν αὐτοῖς.
8 ἔθηκεν τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν
δειῖσαι αὐτοῖς τὸ μεγαλεῖον τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 17

- 1 The Lord fashioned human beings from the earth,
to consign them back to it.
2 He gave them so many days and so much time;
he gave them authority over everything on earth.
3 He clothed them in strength, like himself,
and made them in his own image.
4 He filled all living things with dread of them,
making them masters over beasts and birds.
5 *They received the use of the five powers from the Lord;
a share of intelligence was given to them as a sixth
and, as a seventh, reason – interpreter of his powers.*
6 Discretion, tongue, eyes and ears,
and a heart to think with he gave them.
7 He filled them with knowledge and intelligence,
and showed them what was good and what was evil.
8 He put his own light in their hearts
to show them the magnificence of his works,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 17

- 1 In vv. 1-14, the author follows the order of Gn 1: creation of stars, plants and animals, human beings.
2 ‘Earth’ follows the Vg; the LXX has ‘it’.
3 ‘Like himself’ follows the Vg; the LXX has ‘proper to them’.
4 ‘Them’ follows the Peshitta (& NRSV); the LXX has ‘him’ and the NJB has ‘human beings’.
5 This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes.
6 In place of ‘discretion’, here following the NRSV, the NJB has ‘he made them’. The Israelites believed the heart to be the seat of reason.
7 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has, “and showed them good and evil.”
8 The NRSV opens, “He put the fear of him into their hearts,” offering ‘He set his eyes upon their hearts’ as an alternative.

9 ...
 10 καὶ ὄνομα ἁγιασμοῦ αἰνέσουσιν,
 ἵνα διηγῶνται τὰ μεγαλεῖα τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ.
 11 προσέθηκεν αὐτοῖς ἐπιστήμην
 καὶ νόμον ζωῆς ἐκληροδότησεν αὐτοῖς.
 12 διαθήκην αἰῶνος ἔστησεν μετ' αὐτῶν
 καὶ τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ ὑπέδειξεν αὐτοῖς.
 13 μεγαλεῖον δόξης εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν,
 καὶ δόξαν φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἤκουσεν τὸ οὖς αὐτῶν.
 14 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Προσέχετε ἀπὸ παντὸς ἀδίκου·
 καὶ ἐνετείλατο αὐτοῖς ἐκάστω περὶ τοῦ πλησίον.
 15 Αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτῶν ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ διὰ παντός,
 οὐ κρυβήσονται ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ.
 16 πᾶς δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ νεότητος ἐπὶ τὰ πονηρά·
 καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσαν τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν
 ἀντὶ λιθίνων ποιῆσαι σαρκίνας.
 17 ἐκάστω ἔθνει κατέστησεν ἡγούμενον,
 καὶ μερὶς κυρίου Ἰσραηλ ἐστίν.

9 *and privileged them to proclaim his marvels forever,*
 10 so that they would praise his holy name
 as they told of his magnificent works.
 11 He set knowledge before them;
 he endowed them with the law of life.
 12 He established an eternal covenant with them,
 and revealed his judgements to them.
 13 Their eyes saw the majesty of his glory
 and their ears heard the glory of his voice.
 14 He said to them, "Beware of all wrongdoing;"
 he gave each a commandment about his neighbour.
 15 Their ways are always under his eye;
 they cannot be hidden from his sight.
 16 *From their youth, their ways lead to evil
 and they cannot change their hearts
 to be of flesh instead of stone.*
 17 Over each nation, he has set a governor,
 but Israel is the Lord's own portion,

9 This verse, following the Greek 248 MS (?), is included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes.

10 The NRSV includes the 2nd line as a displaced v. 9.

11 At the end of this verse, some MSS add, "so that they may know that those who are alive now are mortal."

12 The 'judgements' are the Mosaic Law; the following verses refer to the revelation at Sinai.

13 The WEBBE lacks the conjunction at the start of the 2nd line.

14 In place of 'wrongdoing', the WEBBE has 'unrighteousness'.

15 For the 1st line, the WEBBE has, "Their ways are ever before him."

16 This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes.

17 In Ben Sira's time, Israel had no king; opposition to a monarchy, already marked in ancient times (1S 8), revived in the Maccabean period.

¹⁸ ὃν πρωτόγονον ὄντα τιθηνεῖ παιδεία,
καὶ μερίζων φῶς ἀγαπήσεως οὐκ ἀνίησιν αὐτόν.
¹⁹ ἅπαντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν ὡς ὁ ἥλιος ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ,
καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐνδεδεχεῖς ἐπὶ τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῶν.
²⁰ οὐκ ἐκρύβησαν αἱ ἀδικίαι αὐτῶν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ,
καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῶν ἔναντι κυρίου.
²¹ Κύριος δὲ χρηστός ὢν καὶ εἰδὼς τὸ πλάσμα αὐτοῦ
οὔτε ἀνῆκεν αὐτούς οὔτε ἐγκατέλιπε φειδόμενος αὐτῶν·
²² ἐλεημοσύνη ἀνδρὸς ὡς σφραγὶς μετ' αὐτοῦ,
καὶ χάριν ἀνθρώπου ὡς κόρην συντηρήσει
μερίζων υἱοῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ θυγατράσι μετάνοιαν
²³ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐξαναστήσεται καὶ ἀνταποδώσει αὐτοῖς
καὶ τὸ ἀνταπόδομα αὐτῶν
εἰς κεφαλὴν αὐτῶν ἀποδώσει·
²⁴ πλὴν μετανοοῦσιν ἔδωκεν ἐπάνοδον
καὶ παρεκάλεσεν ἐκλείποντας ὑπομονήν.
²⁵ Ἐπίστρεφε ἐπὶ κύριον καὶ ἀπόλειπε ἁμαρτίας,
δεήθητι κατὰ πρόσωπον καὶ σμίκρυνον πρόσκομμα·
αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁδηγήσει ἐκ σκότους εἰς φωτισμὸν ὑγείας.

¹⁸ *his first-born, whom he rears with discipline,
bestowing on him the light of his love, not deserting him.*
¹⁹ Their actions are all as plain as the sun to him
and his eyes rest constantly on their conduct.
²⁰ Their iniquities are not hidden from him;
all their sins are before the Lord.
²¹ *But the Lord is good and knows his creatures;
he does not destroy them; but rather, he spares them.*
²² Almsgiving is like a signet ring to him;
he cherishes kindness in a man like the pupil of an eye,
granting repentance to his sons and daughters.
²³ One day, he will rise and reward them;
and he will repay their desserts
on their own heads.
²⁴ But to those who repent, he permits return,
and he encourages those who have lost hope.
²⁵ Return to the Lord and renounce your sins;
plead before his face and stop offending him,
for, he will lead you darkness to the light of salvation.

¹⁸ This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes.

¹⁹ In place of 'conduct', the WEBBE has 'ways'.

²⁰ The NRSV & WEBBE have identical texts for this verse.

²¹ This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes.

²² The last line, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NJB only as a footnote.

²³ It is not clear when and what the retribution will be.

²⁴ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has, "He comforts those who are losing hope."

²⁵ The last line, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes.

²⁶ ἐπάναγε ἐπὶ ὑψιστον καὶ ἀπόστρεφε ἀπὸ ἀδικίας
καὶ σφόδρα μίσησον βδέλυγμα.
²⁷ ὑψίστω τίς αἰνέσει ἐν ᾄδου
ἀντὶ ζώντων καὶ διδόντων ἀνθομολόγησιν;
²⁸ ἀπὸ νεκροῦ ὡς μηδὲ ὄντος ἀπόλλυται ἐξομολόγησις·
ζῶν καὶ ὑγιῆς αἰνέσει τὸν κύριον.
²⁹ ὡς μεγάλη ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη τοῦ κυρίου
καὶ ἐξιλασμός τοῖς ἐπιστρέφουσιν ἐπ’ αὐτόν.
³⁰ οὐ γὰρ δύναται πάντα εἶναι ἐν ἀνθρώποις,
ὅτι οὐκ ἀθάνατος υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου.
³¹ τί φωτεινότερον ἡλίου; καὶ τοῦτο ἐκλείπει·
καὶ πονηρὸν ἐνθυμηθήσεται σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα.
³² δύνάμιν ὑψους οὐρανοῦ αὐτὸς ἐπισκέπτεται,
καὶ ἄνθρωποι πάντες γῆ καὶ σποδός.

²⁶ Return to the Most High and turn away from iniquity
and hold all that is foul in abhorrence.
²⁷ Who is going to praise the Most High in Sheol,
if we do not glorify him while we are alive?
²⁸ The dead praise no more than one who does not exist;
only those with life and health can praise the Lord.
²⁹ How great is the mercy of the Lord,
his forgiveness for those who turn to him!
³⁰ For, we cannot have everything:
the sons of men are not immortal.
³¹ What is brighter than the sun? Yet it can be eclipsed.
Flesh and blood think of nothing but evil.
³² He surveys the armies of the lofty sky,
and all of us are only dust and ashes.

²⁶ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, “Greatly hate the abominable thing.”

²⁷ One reason for repentance is that there is no loving contact with God in Sheol; see Ps 6:5, 30:9, 88:5, 115:17–18, Is 38:18–19, Ba 2:17. By repentance, one can be alive and sing the Lord’s praises (v. 28).

²⁸ For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, “Thanksgiving perishes from the dead, as from one who doesn’t exist.”

²⁹ The NJB has ‘pardon’ in place of ‘forgiveness’, here following the WEBBE & NRSV.

³⁰ For ‘the sons of men’, here following the LXX (υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου) and WEBBE, the NJB & NRSV have ‘human beings’.

³¹ If the sun can suffer an eclipse, a mere human can also fail.

³² The ‘armies of the lofty sky’ probably means the stars.

Σοφία Σιραχ 18

- 1 Ὁ ζῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἔκτισεν τὰ πάντα κοινῇ·
2 κύριος μόνος δικαιωθήσεται.
3 οἰακίζων τὸν κόσμον ἐν σπιδαμῇ χειρὸς αὐτοῦ,
καὶ πάντα ὑπακούει τῷ θελήματι αὐτοῦ·
αὐτὸς γὰρ βασιλεὺς πάντων ἐν κράτει αὐτοῦ
διαστέλλων ἐν αὐτοῖς ἅγια ἀπὸ βεβήλων.
4 οὐδενὶ ἐξεποίησεν ἐξαγγεῖλαι τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ·
καὶ τίς ἐξιχνεύσει τὰ μεγαλεῖα αὐτοῦ;
5 κράτος μεγαλωσύνης αὐτοῦ τίς ἐξαριθμῆσεται;
καὶ τίς προσθήσει ἐκδιηγῆσασθαι τὰ ἔλεη αὐτοῦ;
6 οὐκ ἔστιν ἐλαττώσαι οὐδὲ προσθεῖναι,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξιχνιάσαι τὰ θαυμάσια τοῦ κυρίου·
7 ὅταν συντελέσῃ ἄνθρωπος, τότε ἄρχεται·
καὶ ὅταν παύσῃται, τότε ἀπορηθήσεται.
8 Τί ἄνθρωπος, καὶ τί ἢ χρῆσις αὐτοῦ;
τί τὸ ἀγαθὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ τί τὸ κακὸν αὐτοῦ;

WISDOM OF SIRACH 18

- 1 He who lives forever has created the sum of things.
2 The Lord alone will be found just.
3 *He guides the world with a turn of the hand;
and all things obey his will;
for, he is king of all things by his power,
separating sacred things from profane.*
4 He has given power to declare his works to no one;
and who can fathom his magnificent deeds?
5 Who can assess his magnificent strength?
And who can go further and tell of all his mercies?
6 Nothing can be added to them, nothing subtracted;
it is impossible to fathom the marvels of the Lord.
7 When someone finishes, he is only beginning,
and, when he stops, he is as puzzled as ever.
8 What is a man? What purpose does he serve?
What is good and what is bad for him?

WISDOM OF SIRACH 18

- 1 For 'the sum of things', the WEBBE has, 'the whole universe'; another, more literal reading is 'all things together'.
2 In place of 'will be found', the WEBBE has just 'is'.
3 This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes.
4 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "He has given no one the power to proclaim his works to the end."
5 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "Who could measure the strength of his majesty?"
6 At the start of this verse, the WEBBE adds, "As for the wondrous works of the Lord."
7 When a man has exhausted his efforts to know God and his wonders, he has not even started to understand. These thoughts recall Qoheleth, but the conclusion drawn is entirely different: for Ben Sira, the weakness of a man serves only to emphasise the greatness of God.
8 The WEBBE has 'mankind' in place of 'man' and has the pronouns in the verse as plurals.

⁹ ἀριθμὸς ἡμερῶν ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ ἔτη ἑκατόν·
ἀλογίστω δὲ ἐκάστου πᾶσιν ἡ κοίμησις.

¹⁰ ὡς σταγῶν ὕδατος ἀπὸ θαλάσσης καὶ ψῆφος ἄμμου,
οὕτως ὀλίγα ἔτη ἐν ἡμέρᾳ αἰῶνος.

¹¹ διὰ τοῦτο ἐμακροθύμησεν κύριος ἐπ' αὐτοῖς
καὶ ἐξέχεεν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ.

¹² εἶδεν καὶ ἐπέγνω τὴν καταστροφὴν αὐτῶν ὅτι πονηρά·
διὰ τοῦτο ἐπλήθυνεν τὸν ἐξίλασμον αὐτοῦ.

¹³ ἔλεος ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ,
ἔλεος δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα·
ἐλέγχων καὶ παιδεύων καὶ διδάσκων
καὶ ἐπιστρέφων ὡς ποιμὴν τὸ ποίμνιον αὐτοῦ.

¹⁴ τοὺς ἐκδεχομένους παιδείαν ἐλεᾷ
καὶ τοὺς κατασπεύδοντας ἐπὶ τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ.

¹⁵ Τέκνον, ἐν ἀγαθοῖς μὴ δῶς μῶμον
καὶ ἐν πάσῃ δόσει λύπην λόγων.

¹⁶ οὐχὶ καύσωνα ἀναπαύσει δρόσος;
οὕτως κρείσσων λόγος ἢ δόσις.

⁹ The length of his life is a hundred years at most,
but the death of each one is beyond the measure of all.

¹⁰ Like a drop of water from the sea, or a grain of sand,
such are these few years compared with eternity.

¹¹ This is why the Lord was patient with them
and poured out his mercy on them.

¹² He saw and recognised how wretched their end is,
so he made his forgiveness the greater.

¹³ Human compassion extends to neighbours,
but the Lord's compassion extends to everyone.
He rebukes, corrects, and teaches them,
bringing them back as a shepherd brings his flock.

¹⁴ He has compassion on those who accept correction,
and who diligently search for his judgements.

¹⁵ My child, do not temper your favours with blame,
nor any of your gifts with harsh words.

¹⁶ Does not dew relieve the scorching heat?
So, a word is worth more than a gift.

⁹ The 2nd line, here following Greek 248, is not present in the NJB and is included in the NRSV only as a footnote.

¹⁰ For 'grain of sand', the WEBBE has 'pebble from the sand'.

¹¹ The NJB has the verbs in vv. 11-12 in the present tense.

¹² For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "He saw and perceived their end, that it is evil."

¹³ Cf. 2M 6:13-16, Ws 12:19-22: Later Judaism was concerned to justify instances of divine punishment.

¹⁴ In place of 'diligently', the NJB has 'feroently'.

¹⁵ At this point, the discourse on good behaviour is resumed.

¹⁶ The NJB lacks the word 'scorching'.

17 οὐκ ἰδοὺ λόγος ὑπὲρ δόμα ἀγαθόν;
καὶ ἀμφοτέρω παρὰ ἀνδρὶ κεχαριτωμένῳ.

18 μωρὸς ἀχαρίστως ὀνειδιεῖ,
καὶ δόσις βασκάνου ἐκτῆκει ὀφθαλμούς.

19 Πρὶν ἢ λαλῆσαι μάνθανε
καὶ πρὸ ἀρρωστίας θεραπεύου.

20 πρὸ κρίσεως ἐξέταζε σεαυτὸν,
καὶ ἐν ὥρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς εὐρήσεις ἐξιλασμόν.

21 πρὶν ἀρρωστῆσαι σε ταπεινώθητι
καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἀμαρτημάτων δεῖξον ἐπιστροφὴν.

22 μὴ ἐμποδισθῆς τοῦ ἀποδοῦναι εὐχὴν εὐκαιρῶς
καὶ μὴ μείνης ἕως θανάτου δικαιωθῆναι.

23 πρὶν εὐξασθαι ἐτοίμασον σεαυτὸν
καὶ μὴ γίνου ὡς ἄνθρωπος πειράζων τὸν κύριον.

24 μνήσθητι θυμοῦ ἐν ἡμέραις τελευτῆς
καὶ καιρὸν ἐκδικήσεως ἐν ἀποστροφῇ προσώπου.

25 μνήσθητι καιρὸν λιμοῦ ἐν καιρῷ πλησμονῆς,
πτωχεῖαν καὶ ἔνδειαν ἐν ἡμέραις πλούτου.

17 Behold! Isn't a word worth more than a gift?
But a gracious person is ready with both.

18 A fool will offer nothing but insult,
and a grudging gift makes the eyes dim.

19 Learn before you speak;
and take care of yourself before you fall ill.

20 Before judgement, examine yourself
and, in the hour of scrutiny, you will find forgiveness.

21 Humble yourself before you fall ill
and repent as soon as the sin is committed.

22 Let nothing prevent you paying a vow in good time,
and do not wait until death to set matters right.

23 Prepare yourself before making a vow,
and do not be like someone who tests the Lord.

24 Bear in mind the retribution of the last days,
the time of vengeance, when God averts his face.

25 In a time of plenty, remember times of famine;
think of poverty and lack when you are rich.

17 The NJB does not phrase the 1st line as a question but reads, "Why surely, a word is worth more than a good present."

18 The literal translation of 'makes the eyes dim' is 'consumes the eyes'.

19 In place of 'yourself', the WEBBE has 'your health'.

20 For 'in the hour of scrutiny', the NJB has 'on the day of visitation'.

21 Sickness is often represented as punishment for sin, amendment and repentances as a means of preventing illness.

22 For 'set matters right', the WEBBE has 'be released'.

23 The NJB has 'tempts' in place of 'tests'.

24 The 2nd line refers to the time of death (cf. 1:13) rather than the day of judgement. Ben Sira is not much preoccupied with eschatology.

25 The WEBBE has 'hunger' in place of 'famine'.

²⁶ ἀπὸ πρωΐθεν ἕως ἑσπέρας μεταβάλλει καιρός,
καὶ πάντα ἐστὶν ταχινὰ ἔναντι κυρίου.
²⁷ Ἄνθρωπος σοφὸς ἐν παντὶ εὐλαβηθήσεται
καὶ ἐν ἡμέραις ἁμαρτιῶν προσέξει ἀπὸ πλημμελείας.

²⁸ πᾶς συνετὸς ἔγνω σοφίαν
καὶ τῷ εὐρόντι αὐτὴν δώσει ἑξομολόγησιν.
²⁹ συνετοὶ ἐν λόγοις καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐσοφίσαντο
καὶ ἀνώμβρησαν παροιμίας ἀκριβεῖς.
κρείσσων παρρησία ἐν δεσπότῃ μόνῳ·
εἴπερ νεκρὰ καρδία νεκρῷ ἀντέχεσθαι.

Ἐγκράτεια ψυχῆς.

³⁰ Ὅπισω τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν σου μὴ πορεύου
καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρέξεών σου κωλύου·
³¹ εἰὰν χορηγήσης τῇ ψυχῇ σου εὐδοκίαν ἐπιθυμίας,
ποιήσῃ σε ἐπίχαρμα τῶν ἐχθρῶν σου.
³² μὴ εὐφραίνου ἐπὶ πολλῇ τρυφῇ,
μὴ προσδεθῆς συμβολῇ αὐτῆς.

²⁶ The time slips by between dawn and dusk;
everything passes quickly for the Lord.
²⁷ The wise will be cautious in everything;
and, in sinful times, one will take care not to offend.

...

²⁸ Every man of sense recognises wisdom
and will respect anyone who has found her.
²⁹ Those who know wise words become wise
and have poured out accurate maxims.
*Better is confidence in a single master
than clinging with a dead heart to a dead one.*

SELF-CONTROL

³⁰ Do not be governed by your passions;
restrain your desires.
³¹ If you allow yourself to satisfy your desires,
this will make you the laughing-stock of your enemies.
³² Do not indulge in luxurious living;
do not get involved in such society.

²⁶ For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "From morning until evening, the time changes."

²⁷ 'Sinful times' are when sin appeals even to the wise. A footnote to the WEBBE says 'the remainder of this verse is omitted' by the best MSS.

²⁸ The WEBBE has 'give thanks to' in place of 'respect'.

²⁹ The last two lines, here following the Greek 248 MS, are included in the NRSV and NJB only as a footnote.

³⁰ The subtitle before this verse follows the NJB and the NETS, with the Greek taken from Greek 248.

³¹ Another reading for 'the laughing-stock' is 'a rejoicing'.

³² The text here follows the LXX (and NJB); Cairo Genizah MS 'C' reads, "Do not rejoice in a valueless well-being, for fear of becoming twice as poor." (אֵל תִּשְׂמַח אֶל שְׂמַחַת עַמְּךָ וְעַמְּךָ לֹא יִשְׂמַח בְּפִי שְׂנִים רִישׁוֹ) The NRSV seems to blend the two texts and the WEBBE reads, "Don't make merry in much luxury,

³³ μὴ γίνου πτωχὸς συμβολοκοπῶν ἐκ δανεισμοῦ,
καὶ οὐδέν σοί ἐστιν ἐν μαρσιππίῳ.
ἔση γὰρ ἐπίβουλος τῆς ἰδίας ζωῆς λαλητὸς.

³³ Do not beggar yourself by banqueting on credit
when there is nothing in your pocket;
for, you will be plotting against your own life.

and don't be tied to its expense."

³³ For this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'C'* reads אין בכיס [.] אל תהי זולל וסובא ומאומ [.] (Do not be a drunken glutton with nothing in your purse.) The last line, following Greek 248, is not present in the *NJB* or *WEBBE* and is included in the *NRSV* only as a footnote.

Σοφία Σιραχ 19

- 1 ἐργάτης μέθυσος οὐ πλουτισθήσεται·
ὁ ἐξουθενῶν τὰ ὀλίγα κατὰ μικρὸν πεσεῖται.
- 2 οἶνος καὶ γυναῖκες ἀποστήσουσιν συνετούς,
καὶ ὁ κολλώμενος πόρναις τολμηρότερος ἔσται·
- 3 σήπη καὶ σκώληκες κληρονομήσουσιν αὐτόν,
καὶ ψυχὴ τολμηρὰ ἐξαρθήσεται.
- 4 Ὁ ταχὺ ἐμπιστεύων κοῦφος καρδία,
καὶ ὁ ἁμαρτάνων εἰς ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ πλημμελήσει.
- 5 ὁ εὐφραινόμενος καρδία καταγνωσθήσεται,
ὁ δὲ ἀντοφθαλμῶν ἠδοναῖς στεφανοῖ τὴν ζωὴν αὐτοῦ.
- 6 ὁ ἐγκρατευόμενος γλώσση ἀμάχῳ συμβιώσεται
καὶ ὁ μισῶν λαλιὰν ἐλαττονοῦται κακία.
- 7 μηδέποτε δευτερώσης λόγον,
καὶ οὐθέν σοι οὐ μὴ ἐλαττονωθῆ.
- 8 ἐν φίλῳ καὶ ἐχθρῷ μὴ διηγοῦ,
καὶ εἰ μὴ ἐστὶν σοι ἁμαρτία, μὴ ἀποκάλυπτε·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 19

- 1 A drunken workman will never grow rich;
he who ignores small matters will gradually sink.
- 2 Wine and women corrupt intelligent men;
the customer of whores loses all sense of shame.
- 3 Grubs and worms will have him as their legacy,
and a reckless soul will be taken away.
- 4 He who is hasty to trust is shallow-hearted.
And he who sins offends against his own soul.
- 5 He who takes pleasure in evil earns condemnation
but he who hates evil crowns his own life.
- 6 *He who holds his tongue will live in peace;*
and, by hating gossip, one avoids evil.
- 7 Never repeat what you are told
and you will not lose anything.
- 8 Whether to friend or foe, do not talk about it;
and, unless it would be sinful not to, do not reveal it.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 19

- 1 'A drunken workman' follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has 'The one who does this' (פועל זאת).
- 2 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' lacks the 2nd line.
- 3 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' lacks the 1st line and, for the 2nd, reads *היה בעליה [.] ונפש עזה* ('and an insolent soul will destroy its owner').
- 4 For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "Being too ready to trust shows shallowness of mind, and sinning harms the sinner."
- 5 'In evil' follows the LXX and Codex Sinaiticus; the Textus Receptus has 'in his heart'. The 2nd line of this verse and the 1st of v. 6, here following the Greek 248 MS, are included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes.
- 6 See #5.
- 7 For the 2nd line, the NJB has 'and you will come to no harm'; here, we (loosely) follow the WEBBE.
- 8 A more literal translation of 'unless it would be sinful not to' is 'unless it is a sin to you'.

- 9 ἀκήκοεν γάρ σου καὶ ἐφυλάξατό σε,
καὶ ἐν καιρῷ μισήσει σε.
- 10 ἀκήκοας λόγον; συναποθανέτω σοι·
θάρασει, οὐ μὴ σε ῥήξει.
- 11 ἀπὸ προσώπου λόγου ὠδινήσει μωρὸς
ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου βρέφους ἢ τίκτουσα.
- 12 βέλος πεπηγὸς ἐν μηρῷ σαρκός,
οὕτως λόγος ἐν κοιλίᾳ μωροῦ.
- 13 Ἐλεγξον φίλον, μήποτε οὐκ ἐποίησεν,
καὶ εἴ τι ἐποίησεν, μήποτε προσῆλθῃ.
- 14 Ἐλεγξον τὸν πλησίον, μήποτε οὐκ εἶπεν,
καὶ εἰ εἶρηκεν, ἵνα μὴ δευτερώσῃ.
- 15 Ἐλεγξον φίλον, πολλάκις γὰρ γίνεται διαβολή,
καὶ μὴ παντὶ λόγῳ πιστεue.
- 16 ἔστιν ὀλισθάνων καὶ οὐκ ἀπὸ ψυχῆς,
καὶ τίς οὐχ ἥμαρτεν ἐν τῇ γλώσσῃ αὐτοῦ;
- 17 Ἐλεγξον τὸν πλησίον σου πρὶν ἢ ἀπειλησῆσαι
καὶ δὸς τόπον νόμῳ ὑψίστου.

- 9 For, he has heard you and observed you;
and, when the time comes, he will hate you.
- 10 Have you heard something? Let it die with you.
Be brave! It will not burst you!
- 11 A fool will suffer birth pangs over a piece of news,
like a woman labouring with a child.
- 12 Like an arrow stuck in the flesh of the thigh,
so is gossip inside a fool.
- 13 Question your friend: he may have not done it;
and, if he has done anything, he will not do it again.
- 14 Question your neighbour: he may have not said it;
and, if he has said anything, he will not say it again.
- 15 Question your friend; for, slander is very common;
do not believe in every word.
- 16 There is one who slips, and not from the heart;
and which of us has never sinned by speech?
- 17 Question your neighbour before you threaten him;
defer to the Law of the Most High.

9 For this verse, here following the LXX, the NJB has, "You would be heard out, then mistrusted and, in due course, you would be hated."

10 In place of 'Be brave', the NJB has 'Courage'.

11 For 'birth pangs', the WEBBE has 'pain'.

12 The NJB has 'a piece of news' in place of 'gossip', here following the WEBBE.

13 The NJB ends the 1st line with, "have done nothing at all."

14 The NJB ends the 1st line with, "have said nothing at all."

15 A more literal translation for the end of the 1st line is, "for, many times there is slander."

16 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "People sometimes make a slip, without meaning what they say."

17 At the end of this verse, the NJB adds 'and do not be angry'.

¹⁸ φόβος Κυρίου ἀρχὴ προσλήψεως,
σοφία δὲ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀγάπησιν περιποιεῖ.

¹⁹ γνῶσις ἐντολῶν Κυρίου παιδεία ζωῆς,
οἱ δὲ ποιῶντες τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ
ἀθανασίας δένδρον καρποῦνται.

²⁰ Πᾶσα σοφία φόβος κυρίου,
καὶ ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ ποιήσις νόμου·
καὶ γνῶσις τῆς παντοκρατορίας αὐτοῦ.

²¹ οἰκέτης λέγων τῷ δεσπότῃ· ὡς ἀρέσκει οὐ ποιήσω, ἐὰν
μετὰ ταῦτα ποιήσῃ, παροργίζει τὸν τρέφοντα αὐτόν.

²² καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν σοφία πονηρίας ἐπιστήμη,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπου βουλή ἁμαρτωλῶν φρόνησις.

²³ ἔστιν πανουργία καὶ αὕτη βδέλυγμα,
καὶ ἔστιν ἄφρων ἐλαττούμενος σοφία·

²⁴ κρείττων ἠττώμενος ἐν συνέσει ἔμφοβος
ἢ περισσεύων ἐν φρονήσει καὶ παραβαίνων νόμον.

²⁵ ἔστιν πανουργία ἀκριβῆς καὶ αὕτη ἄδικος,
καὶ ἔστιν διαστρέφων χάριν τοῦ ἐκφᾶναι κρίμα,

¹⁸ Fear of the Lord is the beginning of his clemency
but wisdom wins affection from him.

¹⁹ Knowledge of the Lord's commands is life-giving discipline;
those who please him gather
from the tree of immortality.

²⁰ Wisdom consists entirely of fearing the Lord,
and in all wisdom there is fulfilment of the Law,
and the knowledge of his omnipotence.

²¹ When a slave says to his master, "I will not do as you wish,"
even if he does it later, he angers the one who supports him.

²² And being learned in evil is not wisdom;
and there is no prudence in the advice of sinners.

²³ There is a cunning that is an abomination;
and whoever has no wisdom is a fool.

²⁴ It is better to be short of sense and full of fear,
than to abound in shrewdness and violate the Law.

²⁵ There is an exquisite subtlety and it is unjust;
and there is one who misuses kindness to win his case,

¹⁸ Vv. 18–19, here following the Greek 248 MS, are included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes.

¹⁹ See #18.

²⁰ See #21.

²¹ This verse (and the last line of v. 21), here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes.

²² The NJB opens, "Being learned in evil, however."

²³ For the 1st line, the NJB reads, "There is a cleverness that is detestable."

²⁴ Not all intelligence is wisdom: there is vitiated intellect and sinister shrewdness.

²⁵ The last line, here following Greek 248 and the NETS, is not present in the NJB, NRSV, or WEBBE.

καὶ ἔστι δικαιοῦν κρίσει σοφός.

- ²⁶ ἔστιν πονηρευόμενος συγκεκυφὸς μελανία,
καὶ τὰ ἐντὸς αὐτοῦ πλήρη δόλου·
- ²⁷ συγκρύφων πρόσωπον καὶ ἐφελοκωφῶν,
ὅπου οὐκ ἐπεγνώσθη, προφθάσει σε·
- ²⁸ καὶ ἐὰν ὑπὸ ἐλαττώματος ἰσχύος κωλυθῇ ἁμαρτεῖν,
ἐὰν εὔρη καιρόν, κακοποιήσει.
- ²⁹ ἀπὸ ὀράσεως ἐπιγνωσθήσεται ἀνὴρ,
καὶ ἀπὸ ἀπαντήσεως προσώπου
ἐπιγνωσθήσεται νοήμων·
- ³⁰ στολισμὸς ἀνδρὸς καὶ γέλωσ ὀδόντων
καὶ βήματα ἀνθρώπου ἀναγγελεῖ τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ.

and he who deems righteous is wise in judgement.

- ²⁶ There is one who will walk bowed down with grief,
when inwardly this is nothing but deceit.
- ²⁷ He hides his face and turns a deaf ear;
if he is not unmasked, he will take advantage of you.
- ²⁸ And if, for lack of power, he is hindered from sinning,
if he finds opportunity, he will do mischief.
- ²⁹ You can tell a person by his appearance;
and one who has understanding will be known
by his face when you meet him.
- ³⁰ The way a person dresses, the way he laughs,
and the way he walks, tell you what he is.

²⁶ In place of 'will walk', here following the NJB and some MSS, the *Textus Receptus* has 'does evil'; the NRSV has, "There is the villain bowed down in grief..."

²⁷ For 'turns a deaf ear', the NJB has 'pretends to be deaf' and the WEBBE has 'pretending to be deaf in one ear'.

²⁸ For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "There is the person whose lack of strength prevents him from sinning, yet he will do wrong when he gets the chance."

²⁹ Appearances can be both deceptive (vv. 26–27) and revealing (vv. 29–30).

³⁰ The NJB lacks the conjunction at the start of the 2nd line.

Σοφία Σιραχ 20

- 1 Ἔστιν ἔλεγχος ὃς οὐκ ἔστιν ὠραῖος,
καὶ ἔστιν σιωπῶν καὶ αὐτὸς φρόνιμος.
2 ὡς καλὸν ἐλέγξαι ἢ θυμοῦσθαι,
3 καὶ ὁ ἀνδομολογούμενος ἀπὸ
ἐλαττώσεως κωλυθήσεται.
4 ἐπιθυμία εὐνούχου ἀποπαρθενῶσαι νεάνιδα,
οὕτως ὁ ποιῶν ἐν βία κρίματα.
5 ἔστιν σιωπῶν εὐρισκόμενος σοφός,
καὶ ἔστιν μισητὸς ἀπὸ πολλῆς λαλιᾶς.
6 ἔστιν σιωπῶν, οὐ γὰρ ἔχει ἀπόκρισιν,
καὶ ἔστιν σιωπῶν εἰδὼς καιρόν.
7 ἄνθρωπος σοφὸς σιγήσει ἕως καιροῦ,
ὁ δὲ λαπιστῆς καὶ ἄφρων ὑπερβήσεται καιρόν.
8 ὁ πλεονάζων λόγῳ βδελυχθήσεται, καὶ ὁ
ἐνεξουσιαζόμενος μισηθήσεται.
ὡς καλὸν ἐλεχθέντα φανερῶσαι μετάνοιαν,
οὕτως γὰρ φεύξῃ ἐκούσιον ἀμάρτημα.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 20

- 1 There is the rebuke that is untimely,
and there is he who is wise enough to keep silent.
2 How much better it is to rebuke than to fume!
3 The person who acknowledges a fault
wards off punishment.
4 Like a eunuch trying to take a girl's virginity
is someone who tries to impose justice by force.
5 He who keeps quiet is considered wise;
another incurs hatred for talking too much.
6 There is he who keeps quiet, having no answer;
another keeps quiet, knowing when to speak.
7 The wise will keep quiet until the right moment,
but a garrulous fool will always misjudge it.
8 Someone who talks too much will earn dislike,
and someone who usurps authority will earn hatred.
*How good it is to show repentance when you are reproved;
for, so you will escape deliberate sin.*

WISDOM OF SIRACH 20

- 1 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "and there is the person who keeps quiet, and he is the shrewd one."
2 The WEBBE includes the 1st line of v.3 as part of this verse, reading, "He who confesses will be kept back from harm."
3 This verse is omitted in the best MSS (and the WEBBE but see #2).
4 The point of this comparison is that one cannot be compelled to do what is right.
5 Compare the 1st line with v. 1b.
6 For the 1st line, the WEBBE has, "There is one who keeps silent, for he has no answer to make."
7 After this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'C' inserts vv. 37:19, 37:22, 37:24, and 37:26, and then skips to v. 20:13.
8 The last 2 lines, following Greek 248, are not present in the NJB and are included in the NRSV only as a footnote.

9 Ἔστιν εὐοδία ἐν κακοῖς ἀνδρί,
καὶ ἔστιν εὐρεμα εἰς ἐλάττωσιν.
10 ἔστιν δόσις, ἣ οὐ λυσιτελήσει σοι,
καὶ ἔστιν δόσις, ἥς τὸ ἀνταπόδομα διπλοῦν.
11 ἔστιν ἐλάττωσις ἔνεκεν δόξης,
καὶ ἔστιν ὅς ἀπὸ ταπεινώσεως ἤρην κεφαλῆν.
12 ἔστιν ἀγοράζων πολλὰ ὀλίγου
καὶ ἀποτινύων αὐτὰ ἑπταπλάσιον.
13 ὁ σοφὸς ἐν λόγοις ἑαυτὸν προσφιλεῖ ποιήσει,
χάριτες δὲ μωρῶν ἐκχυθήσονται.
14 δόσις ἄφρονος οὐ λυσιτελήσει σοι,
οἱ γὰρ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἀνδ' ἐνὸς πολλοί
15 ὀλίγα δώσει καὶ πολλὰ ὀνειδίσει
καὶ ἀνοίξει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ ὡς κῆρυξ·
σήμερον δανιεῖ καὶ αὔριον ἀπαιτήσει,
μισητὸς ἀνθρώπος ὁ τοιοῦτος.
16 μωρὸς ἐρεῖ Οὐχ ὑπάρχει μοι φίλος,

9 There is he who finds misfortunes a boon,
and the piece of luck that turns to loss.
10 There is the gift that affords you no profit,
and the gift that repays you double.
11 There is the honour that leads to humiliation,
and one in a low estate who raises his head.
12 There is he who buys much for little,
yet pays for it seven times over.
13 The wise wins love with only few words,
while fools may shower favours in vain.
14 The gift of the stupid will bring you no advantage;
his eyes look for seven times as much in return.
15 He gives little and reviles much;
he opens his mouth like the town crier.
He lends today and demands payment tomorrow;
he is a detestable fellow to God and to humans.
16 The fool will say, "I have no friend;

9 The WEBBE reads, "There is a prosperity that a man finds in misfortunes; and there is a gain that turns to loss."

10 Not all gifts are of equal value.

11 The meaning of the 2nd line is uncertain but this interpretation seems to fit the context and expounds the reciprocity of opposites: honour produces humiliation, abasement produces exaltation; cf. the Magnificat: "He has pulled down princes from their thrones and raised up the lowly."

12 The literal translation of 'yet' is 'and' (καί).

13 'Only few' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'C' (טמעב) and the NRSV; the words are not present in the LXX or NJB.

14 The 2nd line here follows the Peshitta and Vg; the LXX has, "for he has many eyes instead of one." After the 1st line, some MSS add, "So it is with the envious, who gives under compulsion."

15 The NJB lacks 'to God and to humans', here following the NRSV.

16 The NJB lacks the conjunction at the start of the 2nd line.

- καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν χάρις τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς μου·
17 οἱ ἔσθοντες τὸν ἄρτον αὐτοῦ φαῦλοι γλώσση,
 ποσάκις καὶ ὅσοι καταγελάσσονται αὐτοῦ;
 οὔτε γὰρ τὸ ἔχειν ἐν ὀρθῇ αἰσθήσει εἴληφε,
 καὶ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν ὁμοίως ἀδιάφορον αὐτῷ.
- 18** Ὀλίσημα ἀπὸ ἐδάφους μᾶλλον ἢ ἀπὸ γλώσσης,
 οὕτως πτώσις κακῶν κατὰ σπουδὴν ἤξει.
- 19** ἄνθρωπος ἄχαρις, μῦθος ἄκαιρος·
 ἐν στόματι ἀπαιδύτων ἐνδελεισθήσεται.
- 20** ἀπὸ στόματος μωροῦ ἀποδοκιμασθήσεται παραβολή·
 οὐ γὰρ μὴ εἶπη αὐτὴν ἐν καιρῷ αὐτῆς.
- 21** Ἔστιν κωλύμενος ἀμαρτάνειν ἀπὸ ἐνδείας,
 καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀναπαύσει αὐτοῦ οὐ κατανυγήσεται.
- 22** ἔστιν ἀπολλύων τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ δι' αἰσχύνην,
 καὶ ἀπὸ ἄφρονος προσώπου ἀπολεῖ αὐτήν.
- 23** ἔστιν χάριν αἰσχύνης ἐπαγγελλόμενος φίλῳ,
 καὶ ἐκτήσατο αὐτὸν ἐχθρὸν δωρεάν.
- 24** Μῶμος πονηρὸς ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ ψεῦδος,

- and I get no gratitude for my good deeds.
17 Those who eat my bread have malicious tongues.”
 How often he will be laughed at, and by how many.
*For, he has not honestly received what he has,
 and what he does not have is unimportant to him.*
- 18** A slip on a pavement is better than a slip of the tongue;
 this is how ruin takes the wicked by surprise.
- 19** A coarse-grained person is like an indiscreet story,
 endlessly retold by the ignorant.
- 20** A maxim is rejected when coming from a fool,
 since the fool does not utter it on the apt occasion.
- 21** There is he who is prevented from sinning by poverty;
 and, when he rests, he will not be troubled.
- 22** There is he who courts destruction out of false shame,
 who courts destruction for the sake of a fool’s opinion.
- 23** There is he who, out of false shame, promises a friend,
 and so makes an enemy for nothing.
- 24** Lying is an ugly blot on anyone,

17 The NJB lacks the last 2 lines (following Greek 248) and they are included in the NRSV (whence the translation) only as a footnote.

18 The WEBBE has ‘with the tongue’ in place of ‘of the tongue’.

19 The text and translation of this verse are both uncertain; perhaps the Peshitta is preferable: “Like a fat sheep’s tail without salt, so is an unseasonable word.” (Cf. Ex 29:22.) The WEBBE reads, “A man without grace is a tale out of season. It will be continually in the mouth of the ignorant.”

20 In place of ‘maxim’, the WEBBE has ‘parable’.

21 For the 2nd line, here loosely following the WEBBE, the NJB has, “no qualms of conscience disturb that person’s rest.”

22 Here, we follow the NJB; the NRSV reads: “One may lose his life through shame, or lose it because of human respect.”

23 The ‘promises’ are either insincere or impossible. Cairo Genizah MS ‘C’ transposes vv. 22–23 to after 4:21.

24 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has, “It will be continually in the mouth of the ignorant.”

ἐν στόματι ἀπαιδευτῶν ἐνδεδεχισθήσεται.
²⁵ αἰρετὸν κλέπτῃς ἢ ὁ ἐνδεδεχίζων ψεύδει,
ἀμφοτέρω δὲ ἀπώλειαν κληρονομήσουσιν.
²⁶ ἡθὸς ἀνθρώπου ψευδοῦς ἀτιμία,
καὶ ἡ αἰσχύνη αὐτοῦ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐνδεδεχῶς.

Λόγοι παραβολῶν

²⁷ Ὁ σοφὸς ἐν λόγοις προάξει ἑαυτὸν,
καὶ ἄνθρωπος φρόνιμος ἀρέσει μεγιστᾶσιν.
²⁸ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος γῆν ἀνυψώσει θιμωنيὰν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ὁ ἀρέσκων μεγιστᾶσιν ἐξιλάσεται ἀδικίαν.
²⁹ ξένια καὶ δῶρα ἀποτυφλοῖ ὀφθαλμοὺς σοφῶν
καὶ ὡς φιμὸς ἐν στόματι ἀποτρέπει ἐλεγμούς.
³⁰ σοφία κεκρυμμένη καὶ θησαυρὸς ἀφανής,
τίς ὠφέλεια ἐν ἀμφοτέροις;
³¹ κρείσσω ἀνθρώπος ἀποκρύπτων τὴν μωρίαν αὐτοῦ
ἢ ἀνθρώπος ἀποκρύπτων τὴν σοφίαν αὐτοῦ.
³² κρείσσω ὑπομονὴ ἀπαραίτητος ἐν ζητήσῃ Κυρίου,
ἢ ἀδέσποτος τροχηλάτης τῆς ἰδίας ζωῆς.

and ever on the lips of the undisciplined.
²⁵ A thief is preferable to an inveterate liar,
but both will inherit destruction.
²⁶ The destination of a liar is dishonour
and his shame is with him continually.

ILLUSTRATIVE SAYINGS

²⁷ The wise gains advancement by words;
the shrewd wins favour from the great.
²⁸ He who tills the soil will have a full harvest;
and those who please the great atone for injustice.
²⁹ Presents and gifts blind the eyes of the wise
and stifle rebukes like a muzzle on the mouth.
³⁰ Wisdom concealed, and treasure undiscovered:
what use is either of these?
³¹ Better is one who conceals his folly
than one who conceals his wisdom.
³² *Better is implacable endurance in seeking the Lord
than a spurious chariot of one's own life.*

²⁵ For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "but both are heading for ruin."

²⁶ For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "Lying is an abominable habit; the liar's disgrace lasts forever."

²⁷ The subtitle before this verse follows Greek 248, the NJB and the NETS.

²⁸ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "He who pleases great men will get pardon for iniquity."

²⁹ In place of 'stifle rebukes', the WEBBE has 'turn away reproofs'.

³⁰ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "What profit is in either of them?"

³¹ Wisdom was created to shine and to enlighten people; to conceal her is to fall short of one's calling.

³² This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes.

Σοφία Σιραχ 21

- 1 Τέκνον, ἤμαρτες; μὴ προσθῆς μηκέτι
καὶ περὶ τῶν προτέρων σου δεήσῃτι.
- 2 ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου ὄφεως φεῦγε ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας·
ἐὰν γὰρ προσέλθῃς, δήξεταιί σε·
ὀδόντες λέοντος οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτῆς
ἀναιροῦντες ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων.
- 3 ὡς ῥομφαία δίστομος πᾶσα ἀνομία,
τῇ πληγῇ αὐτῆς οὐκ ἔστιν ἴασις.
- 4 καταπληγμὸς καὶ ὕβρις ἐρημώσουσιν πλοῦτον·
οὕτως οἶκος ὑπερηφάνου ἐρημωθήσεται.
- 5 δέησις πτωχοῦ ἐκ στόματος ἕως ὠτίων αὐτοῦ,
καὶ τὸ κρίμα αὐτοῦ κατὰ σπουδὴν ἔρχεται.
- 6 μισῶν ἐλεγμὸν ἐν ἴχνει ἁμαρτωλοῦ,
καὶ ὁ φοβούμενος κύριον ἐπιστρέψει ἐν καρδίᾳ.
- 7 γνωστὸς μακρόθεν ὁ δυνατὸς ἐν γλώσσει,
ὁ δὲ νοήμων οἶδεν ἐν τῷ ὀλισθάνειν αὐτόν.
- 8 ὁ οἰκοδομῶν τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ ἐν χρήμασιν ἀλλοτρίοις

WISDOM OF SIRACH 21

- 1 My child, have you sinned? Do so no more,
and ask forgiveness for your previous faults.
- 2 Flee from sin as from the face of a snake;
if you approach it, it will bite you.
Its teeth are lion's teeth:
they take human life away.
- 3 All iniquity is like a two-edged sword:
the wounds it inflicts are beyond cure.
- 4 Terror and violence waste away riches;
similarly, desolation overtakes the house of the proud.
- 5 Pleas from a poor man's mouth reach the ear of God,
whose judgement comes without delay.
- 6 He who resents reproof walks the sinner's path;
but he who fears the Lord is repentant of heart.
- 7 The glib speaker is known far and wide,
but the wary detects every slip.
- 8 To build your house with other people's money

WISDOM OF SIRACH 21

- 1 The WEBBE has 'past sins' in place of 'previous faults'.
- 2 The NJB lacks 'the face of', here following the LXX & WEBBE.
- 3 In place of 'iniquity', the NJB has 'law breaking'.
- 4 The NJB has 'makes havoc of' in place of 'waste away'.
- 5 In place of 'the ear of God', the LXX has 'his ears'.
- 6 The literal translation of 'but' is 'and' (καί).
- 7 The 2nd line is an ironic comment on the 'glib speaker', who is unaware of his errors.
- 8 'For your own tomb' follows the Peshitta and the Greek 248 MS; the LXX has 'for the winter'.

ὡς συνάγων αὐτοῦ τοὺς λίθους εἰς χειμῶνα.
9 στιππύον συνηγμένον συναγωγή ἀνόμων,
καὶ ἡ συντέλεια αὐτῶν φλόξ πυρός.
10 ὁδὸς ἀμαρτωλῶν ὠμαλισμένη ἐκ λίθων,
καὶ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων αὐτῆς βόθρος ἄδου.
11 Ὁ φυλάσσω νόμον κατακρατεῖ τοῦ ἐννοήματος αὐτοῦ,
καὶ συντέλεια τοῦ φόβου κυρίου σοφία.
12 οὐ παιδευθήσεται ὃς οὐκ ἔστιν πανοῦργος,
ἔστιν δὲ πανουργία πληθύνουσα πικρίαν.
13 γνῶσις σοφοῦ ὡς κατακλυσμός πληθυνθήσεται
καὶ ἡ βουλή αὐτοῦ ὡς πηγὴ ζωῆς.
14 ἔγκατα μωροῦ ὡς ἀγγεῖον συντετριμμένον
καὶ πᾶσαν γνῶσιν οὐ κρατήσῃ.
15 λόγον σοφὸν ἐὰν ἀκούσῃ ἐπιστήμων,
αἰνέσει αὐτὸν καὶ ἐπ' αὐτὸν προσθήσῃ·
ἤκουσεν ὁ σπαταλῶν, καὶ ἀπήρεσεν αὐτῷ,
καὶ ἀπέστρεψεν αὐτὸν ὀπίσω τοῦ νότου αὐτοῦ.

is like collecting stones for your own tomb.
9 A meeting of the lawless is like a heap of tow:
they will end in a blazing fire.
10 The sinner's road is smoothly paved,
but it ends at the pit of Sheol.
11 Whoever keeps the Law controls his instincts;
the fear of the Lord is made perfect in wisdom.
12 No one who lacks aptitude can be taught,
but certain aptitudes give rise to bitterness.
13 The sage's knowledge is as rich as the abyss
and his advice is like a living spring.
14 The heart of a fool is like a broken jar:
it will not hold any knowledge.
15 If the educated hears a wise saying,
he praises it and caps it with another.
If a debauchee hears it, he does not like it
and tosses it behind his back.

9 The image of fire is meant to suggest punishment in this life (but cf. v. 10).

10 Vv. 9–10 express a clear belief in retribution, with a strong suggestion of hellfire to follow for sinners (cf. also Is 50:11, 66:24). The Vg (wherein this is verse 11) adopts a similar interpretation: “... but the end will be hell, darkness, and torments” (¹¹ ... et in fine illorum inferi, et tenebræ, et pœnæ).

11 ‘Instincts’ follows the Peshitta; the LXX has ‘understanding’ (of the Law).

12 For this verse, the WEBBE reads, “He who is not clever will not be instructed. There is a cleverness which makes bitterness abound.”

13 The contrast in vv. 13–14 is between a spring and a broken jar (or cistern, see Jr 2:13), which holds no water. All the comparisons that follow are in favour of the wise: increasing wisdom (v. 15), courtesy (vv. 22–24) and careful words (vv. 25–26).

14 In place of ‘heart’, here following the Peshitta, the LXX has ‘entrails’.

15 The NRSV, following the Peshitta, has ‘fool’ in place of ‘debauchee’ and ‘laughs at’ in place of ‘dislikes’ (here following the LXX & NJB).

¹⁶ ἐξήγησις μωροῦ ὡς ἐν ὁδῷ φορτίον,
ἐπὶ δὲ χειλῶν συνετοῦ εὐρεθήσεται χάρις.
¹⁷ στόμα φρονίμου ζητηθήσεται ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ,
καὶ τοὺς λόγους αὐτοῦ διανοηθήσονται ἐν καρδίᾳ.
¹⁸ Ὡς οἶκος ἠφανισμένος οὕτως μωροῦ σοφία,
καὶ γνῶσις ἀσυνέτου ἀδιεξέταστοι λόγοι.
¹⁹ πέδαι ἐν ποσὶν ἀνοήτου παιδεία
καὶ ὡς χειροπέδαι ἐπὶ χειρὸς δεξιᾶς.
²⁰ μωρὸς ἐν γέλῳτι ἀνυψοῖ φωνὴν αὐτοῦ,
ἀνὴρ δὲ πανοῦργος μόλις ἠσυχῆ μειδιάσει.
²¹ ὡς κόσμος χρυσοῦς φρονίμῳ παιδεία
καὶ ὡς χλιδῶν ἐπὶ βραχίονι δεξιῶ.
²² πούς μωροῦ ταχὺς εἰς οἰκίαν,
ἄνθρωπος δὲ πολύπειρος αἰσχυνθήσεται ἀπὸ προσώπου.
²³ ἄφρων ἀπὸ θύρας παρακύπτει εἰς οἰκίαν,
ἀνὴρ δὲ πεπαιδευμένος ἔξω στήσεται.
²⁴ ἀπαιδευσία ἀνθρώπου ἀκροᾶσθαι παρὰ θύραν,
ὁ δὲ φρόνιμος βαρυνθήσεται ἀτιμία.

¹⁶ The talk of a fool is like a load on a journey,
but grace will be found on the lips of the wise.
¹⁷ The words of the shrewd are sought in the assembly;
what he says will be given serious consideration.
¹⁸ The wisdom of a fool is like the wreckage of a house;
the knowledge of a dolt is incoherent talk.
¹⁹ To a foolish man, instruction is like fetters on the feet,
like manacles on the right hand.
²⁰ A fool laughs at the top of his voice,
but the intelligent quietly smiles.
²¹ To the shrewd, instruction is like a golden ornament,
like a bracelet on the right arm.
²² The step of a fool goes straight into a house,
but an experienced man has a respectful approach.
²³ The stupid peeps inside through the door;
a well-educated man waits outside.
²⁴ Listening at doors is a sign of bad upbringing;
the perceptive would be ashamed to do so.

¹⁶ For the 2nd line, here following the LXX & WEBBE, the NJB reads, “but it is a pleasure to listen to the intelligent.”

¹⁷ In place of ‘assembly’, the WEBBE has ‘congregation’.

¹⁸ The literal translation of ‘incoherent talk’ is ‘unexamined words’.

¹⁹ For ‘foolish man’, the NJB has ‘senseless fellow’.

²⁰ The NRSV, following the Peshitta, has ‘wise’ in place of ‘intelligent’ (here following the LXX and NJB).

²¹ This verse is the parallel of v. 19; v. 20, coming in between, is misplaced.

²² ‘Has a respectful approach’ follows Cairo Genizah MS ‘C’ (יעמוד [] באיש [] בית וכבוד לאיש בח []); the LXX has ‘is abashed before a face’.

²³ The NJB has ‘well-bred person’ in place of ‘well-educated man’ (but cf. v. 24).

²⁴ The WEBBE reads, “It is rude for someone to listen at a door, but a prudent person will be grieved with the disgrace.”

²⁵ χεῖλη ἀλλοτρίων ἐν τούτοις διηγήσονται,
λόγοι δὲ φρονίμων ἐν ζυγῷ σταθῆσονται.
²⁶ ἐν στόματι μωρῶν ἡ καρδία αὐτῶν,
καρδία δὲ σοφῶν στόμα αὐτῶν.
²⁷ ἐν τῷ καταρᾶσθαι ἀσεβῆ τὸν σατανᾶν
αὐτὸς καταρᾶται τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν.
²⁸ μολύνει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν ὁ ψιθυρίζων
καὶ ἐν παροικήσει μισηθῆσεται.

²⁵ The lips of gossips repeat the words of others;
the words of the wise are carefully weighed.
²⁶ The heart of fools is in their mouth,
but the mouth of the wise is in their heart.
²⁷ When the godless curses Satan,
he is cursing himself.
²⁸ The scandalmonger sullies himself
and earns the hatred of the neighbourhood.

²⁵ The text here follows the *Greek 248 MS*; the *Textus Receptus* has, “*The lips of strangers are grieved at them...*”

²⁶ For the 2nd line, the *WEBBE* reads, “*but the mouth of wise men is their heart.*”

²⁷ The author identifies Satan (the tempter, see Job 1–2, and particularly #1:6) with an individual’s own bad instincts. In cursing some being external to himself, the individual is in fact cursing his own wicked nature and impulses.

²⁸ For ‘*scandalmonger*’, here following the *NJB*, the *WEBBE* has ‘*whisperer*’.

Σοφία Σιραχ 22

- ¹ Λίθω ἠρδαλωμένω συνεβλήθη ὀκνηρός,
καὶ πᾶς ἐκσυριεῖ ἐπὶ τῇ ἀτιμίᾳ αὐτοῦ.
- ² βολβίτω κοπρίων συνεβλήθη ὀκνηρός,
πᾶς ὁ ἀναιρούμενος αὐτὸν ἐκτινάξει χεῖρα.
- ³ αἰσχύνη πατρός ἐν γεννήσει ἀπαιδεύτου,
θυγάτηρ δὲ ἐπ' ἐλαττώσει γίνεται.
- ⁴ θυγάτηρ φρονίμη κληρονομήσει ἄνδρα αὐτῆς,
καὶ ἡ καταισχύνουσα εἰς λύπην γεννήσαντος·
- ⁵ πατέρα καὶ ἄνδρα καταισχύνει ἡ δρασεῖα
καὶ ὑπὸ ἀμφοτέρων ἀτιμασθήσεται.
- ⁶ μουσικὰ ἐν πένθει ἄκαιρος διήγησις,
μάστιγες δὲ καὶ παιδεία ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ σοφίας.
- ⁷ τέκνα ἐν ἀγαθῇ ζωῇ τὴν τροφὴν ἔχοντα
τῶν ἰδίων γεννητόρων κρύψουσι δυσγένειαν·
- ⁸ τέκνα ἐν καταφρονήσει καὶ ἀπαιδευσίᾳ
γεγαυριωμένα συγγενείας ἑαυτῶν μολύνουσι τὴν εὐγένειαν.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 22

- ¹ An idler is like a filthy stone:
everyone whistles at his disgrace.
- ² An idler is like a lump of dung:
anyone picking it up shakes it off his hand.
- ³ An undisciplined son is his father's disgrace,
but the birth of a daughter is a loss.
- ⁴ A sensible daughter will find a husband,
but a shameless one is a grief to her father.
- ⁵ An arrogant daughter shames her father and mother
and will be disowned by both.
- ⁶ Ill-timed conversation is like music in mourning,
but a thrashing and correction are wisdom at all times.
- ⁷ *Children who live a good life, without shortcomings,
make one forget their parents' humble origin.*
- ⁸ *Children who take pride in contempt and lack of discipline
sully the good birth of their own family.*

WISDOM OF SIRACH 22

- ¹ The 'filthy stone' would have been used *in lieu* of toilet paper.
- ² In place of 'idler', the WEBBE has 'slothful man'.
- ³ The 2nd line reflects the misogyny of the age – the WEBBE adds 'foolish' before 'daughter'.
- ⁴ The WEBBE has 'prudent' in place of 'sensible'.
- ⁵ The NJB has 'brazen' in place of 'arrogant'.
- ⁶ The sages advocate corporal punishment in education (Pr 13:24, 19:18, 22:15, 23:13–14, 29:15,17); it is always effective, whereas the time for verbal rebuke must be carefully chosen.
- ⁷ Vv. 7–8, here following the Greek 248 MS, are included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes.
- ⁸ See #7.

- 9 συγκαλλῶν ὄστρακον ὁ διδάσκων μωρόν,
ἐξεγείρων καθεύδοντα ἐκ βαθέος ὕπνου.
- 10 διηγούμενος νυστάζοντι ὁ διηγούμενος μωρῶ,
καὶ ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ ἐρεῖ Τί ἐστίν;
- 11 ἐπὶ νεκρῶ κλαῦσον, ἐξέλιπεν γὰρ φῶς,
καὶ ἐπὶ μωρῶ κλαῦσον, ἐξέλιπεν γὰρ σύνεσιν·
ἥδιον κλαῦσον ἐπὶ νεκρῶ, ὅτι ἀνεπαύσατο,
τοῦ δὲ μωροῦ ὑπὲρ θάνατον ἢ ζωὴ πονηρά.
- 12 πένθος νεκροῦ ἑπτὰ ἡμέραι,
μωροῦ δὲ καὶ ἀσεβοῦς πᾶσαι
αἱ ἡμέραι τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ.
- 13 μετὰ ἄφρονος μὴ πληθύνῃς λόγον
καὶ πρὸς ἀσύνητον μὴ πορεύου·
φύλαξαι ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ, ἵνα μὴ κόπον ἔχῃς
καὶ οὐ μὴ μολυνθῆς ἐν τῷ ἐντιναγμῶ αὐτοῦ·
ἔκκλινον ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εὐρήσεις ἀνάπαυσιν
καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀκηδίασῃς ἐν τῇ ἀπονοίᾳ αὐτοῦ.
- 14 ὑπὲρ μόλιβον τί βαρυνθήσεται;
καὶ τί αὐτῷ ὄνομα ἀλλ’ ἢ μωρός;
- 15 ἄμμον καὶ ἄλα καὶ βῶλον σιδήρου

- 9 Teaching a fool is like gluing bits of pottery together:
you are rousing someone who is besotted with sleep.
- 10 You might as well talk to someone sound asleep:
when you have finished, the fool will say, “What’s up?”
- 11 Shed tears for the dead, for he has left the light behind;
shed tears for the fool, for he has left his wits behind.
Shed quieter tears for the dead, for he is at rest;
for the fool, life is worse than death.
- 12 Mourning for the dead lasts seven days;
for the foolish and ungodly,
it lasts all the days of their lives.
- 13 Do speak much to the stupid or visit the dolt;
for, being senseless, he will despise all you do.
Beware of him, or you will have trouble
and be soiled by contact with him.
Keep away from him, and you will have peace of mind
and not be exasperated by his folly.
- 14 What is heavier than lead?
And what is its name, if not ‘fool’?
- 15 Sand and salt and a lump of iron

9 Vv. 9–10 are included as vv. 7–8 in the WEBBE.

10 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, “In the end he will say, “What is it?””

11 The ‘fool’ is someone not simply without wits but obstinate, sceptical, and licentious.

12 ‘Seven days’ was the usual period of mourning (Gn 50:10).

13 The 2nd line, not present in the NJB, is included in the NRSV only as a footnote.

14 The NJB has this verse as a single sentence/question.

15 For ‘man without reasoning’, the NJB has ‘dolt’.

- εὐκοπον ὑπενεγκεῖν ἢ ἄνθρωπον ἀσύνετον.
- 16** Ἰμάντῳσις ξυλίνῃ ἐνδεδεμένη εἰς οἰκοδομήν
ἐν συσσεισμῶ οὐ διαλυθήσεται·
οὕτως καρδία ἐστηριγμένη ἐπὶ διανοήματος βουλήs
ἐν καιρῶ οὐ δειλιάσει.
- 17** καρδία ἠδρασμένη ἐπὶ διανοίας συνέσεως
ὡς κόσμος ψαμμωτὸς τοίχου ξυστοῦ.
- 18** χάρακες ἐπὶ μετεώρου κείμενοι
κατέναντι ἀνέμου οὐ μὴ ὑπομείνωσιν·
οὕτως καρδία δειλή ἐπὶ διανοήματος μωροῦ
κατέναντι παντὸς φόβου οὐ μὴ ὑπομείνη.
- 19** Ὁ νύσσων ὀφθαλμὸν κατὰξει δάκρυα,
καὶ νύσσων καρδίαν ἐκφαίνει αἰσθησιν.
- 20** βάλλων λίθον ἐπὶ πετεινὰ ἀποσοβεῖ αὐτά,
καὶ ὁ ὄνειδίζων φίλον διαλύσει φιλίαν.
- 21** ἐπὶ φίλον ἐὰν σπάσης ῥομφαίαν,
μὴ ἀφελπίσης, ἔστιν γὰρ ἐπάνοδος·
- 22** ἐπὶ φίλον ἐὰν ἀνοιξῆς στόμα,

are a lighter burden than a man without reasoning.

- 16** A tie beam bonded into a building
will not be dislodged by an earthquake.
So too, a heart resolved after due reflection
will not flinch at the critical moment.
- 17** A heart founded on intelligent reflection
is like a stucco decoration on a smooth wall.
- 18** Pebbles placed on top of a wall
will not stand up to the wind.
No more can the heart of a fool frightened
at its own thoughts stand up to fear.
- 19** Prick an eye and you will draw a tear;
and prick a heart and you reveal its feelings.
- 20** Throw stones at birds and you scare them away;
insult a friend and you dissolve friendship.
- 21** If you have drawn your sword on a friend,
do not despair; there is a way back.
- 22** If you have opened your mouth against your friend,

16 For the first 2 lines, the WEBBE reads, “Timber girded and bound into a building will not be released with shaking.”

17 The literal translation of ‘stucco decoration’ is ‘decoration of sand’; the meaning is uncertain.

18 ‘Pebbles’ follows the LXX (and NJB); the NRSV, following the *Textus Receptus*, has ‘fences’ – perhaps an allusion to the Palestinian practice of putting stones on the tops of walls surrounding vineyards. Jackals, scrambling over, dislodge the stones and the noise alerts the watchman.

19 The WEBBE opens, “He who pricks the eye will make tears fall.”

20 For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, “reproach a friend and you destroy a friendship.”

21 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS ‘C’ reads *גור כי יש כופר אל [.] תשלוף חרב אל [.] אל* (“... poor man all the days of his life. Against [a] friend, do not draw a sword; do not [f]ret; for, there is atonement”).

22 Cairo Genizah MS ‘C’ has: *אל אוהב אל תפתח פה אל תדאג כי יש תשובה אל* (“To a friend, don’t open your mouth; don’t worry – there is repentance”).

μὴ εὐλαβηθῆς, ἔστιν γὰρ διαλλαγή·
πλὴν ὀνειδισμοῦ καὶ ὑπερηφανίας καὶ μυστηρίου
ἀποκαλύψεως καὶ πληγῆς δολίας,
ἐν τούτοις ἀποφεύξεται πᾶς φίλος.

²³ πίστιν κτῆσαι ἐν πτωχείᾳ μετὰ τοῦ πλησίον,
ἵνα ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς αὐτοῦ ὁμοῦ πλησθῆς·
ἐν καιρῷ θλίψεως διάμενε αὐτῷ,
ἵνα ἐν τῇ κληρονομίᾳ αὐτοῦ συγκληρονομήσης.

*οὐ καταφρονητέον γὰρ αἰεὶ τῆς περιγραφῆς,
οὐδὲ θαυμαστός πλούσιος νοῦν οὐκ ἔχων.*

²⁴ πρὸ πυρὸς ἀτμίς καμίνου καὶ καπνός·
οὕτως πρὸ αἱμάτων λοιδορίαί.

²⁵ φίλον σκεπάσαι οὐκ αἰσχυνθήσομαι
καὶ ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ κρυβῶ,

²⁶ καὶ εἰ κακὰ μοι συμβήσεται δι' αὐτόν,
πᾶς ὁ ἀκούων φυλάσσεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.

²⁷ Τίς δώσει ἐπὶ στόμα μου φυλακὴν
καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν χειλέων μου σφραγίδα πανοῦργον,
ἵνα μὴ πέσω ἀπ' αὐτῆς
καὶ ἡ γλῶσσά μου ἀπολέσῃ με;

do not worry; there is hope for reconciliation.

But insult, arrogance, betrayal of secrets
and the stab in the back –
in these cases, any friend is lost.

²³ Win your neighbour's confidence when he is poor,
so that you may enjoy his later good fortune with him.
Stand by him in times of trouble,
that you may be heir with him in his inheritance.

*For, one should not always despise restricted circumstances,
or admire a rich person when he has no purpose.*

²⁴ Fire is heralded by the reek of the furnace and smoke;
so insults proceed bloodshed.

²⁵ I shall not be ashamed to shelter a friend,
and I shall not hide from his face.

²⁶ But, if harm should come to me through him,
everyone who hears about it will beware of him.

²⁷ Who will set a guard on my mouth,
and a seal of shrewdness on my lips,
to keep me from falling,
and my tongue from causing my ruin?

²³ The last 2 lines, not present in the NJB, are included in the NRSV only as a footnote, in which 'when he has no purpose' (here following the NETS) is replaced with 'who is stupid'.

²⁴ For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "so too, bloodshed by insults."

²⁵ In place of 'his face', the NJB has just 'him'.

²⁶ The WEBBE has 'evil' in place of 'harm'.

²⁷ For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "and an efficient seal on my lips."

Σοφία Σιραχ 23

- 1** κύριε πάτερ και δέσποτα ζωῆς μου,
μη ἐγκαταλίπῃς με ἐν βουλή αὐτῶν,
μη ἀφῆς με πεσεῖν ἐν αὐτοῖς.
- 2** τίς ἐπιστήσει ἐπὶ τοῦ διανοήματός μου μάστιγας
και ἐπὶ τῆς καρδίας μου παιδείαν σοφίας,
ἵνα ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀγνοήμασίν μου μη φείσωνται
και οὐ μη παρῆ τὰ ἀμαρτήματα αὐτῶν,
- 3** ὅπως μη πληθυνθῶσιν αἱ ἄγνοιαί μου
και αἱ ἀμαρτίαι μου πλεονάσωσιν
και πεσοῦμαι ἔναντι τῶν ὑπεναντίων
και ἐπιχαρεῖταιί μοι ὁ ἐχθρός μου;
- 4** κύριε πάτερ και θεὸ ζωῆς μου,
μετεωρισμὸν ὀφθαλμῶν μη δῶς μοι
- 5** και ἐπιθυμίαν ἀπόστρεψον ἀπ' ἐμοῦ·
- 6** κοιλίας ὄρεξις και συνουσιασμὸς
μη καταλαβέτωσάν με,
και ψυχῆ ἀναιδεῖ μη παραδῶς με.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 23

- 1** Lord, father and master of my life;
do not abandon me to their whims;
do not let me fall because of them.
- 2** Who will set whips over my thoughts,
and the discipline of wisdom to my heart.,
to be merciless to my errors
and not let my sins go unchecked.
- 3** Otherwise, my errors may multiply
and my sins may abound,
and I may fall before my adversaries,
and my enemy may gloat over me.
- 4** Lord, father and God of my life,
do not let my eyes be proud,
and turn envy away from me.
- 5** Let neither gluttony
nor lust overcome me;
- 6** do not leave me a prey to shameless desire.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 23

- 1** Note the deeply religious quality of this passage: each good resolution concludes with a prayer.
- 2** The LXX has 'their sins' in place of 'my sins', here following both the NJB and NRSV.
- 3** At the end of this verse, some MSS add, "From them the hope of your mercy is remote."
- 4** A note to the WEBBE suggests that some MSS add extra text at the end of this verse.
- 5** A note to the WEBBE suggests that some MSS add extra text at the end of this verse.
- 6** For the 2nd line, here following the NJB, the WEBBE reads, "Don't give me over to a shameless mind."

Παιδεία στόματος.

- 7 Παιδείαν στόματος ἀκούσατε, τέκνα,
καὶ ὁ φυλάσσων οὐ μὴ ἀλῶ.
8 ἐν τοῖς χεῖλεσιν αὐτοῦ καταληφθήσεται ἁμαρτωλός,
καὶ λοιδόρος καὶ ὑπερήφανος σκανδαλισθήσονται
ἐν αὐτοῖς.
9 ὄρκῳ μὴ ἐδίσης τὸ στόμα σου
καὶ ὀνομασίᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου μὴ συνεισθῆς·
10 ὥσπερ γὰρ οἰκέτης ἐξεταζόμενος ἐνδελεχῶς
ἀπὸ μώλωπος οὐκ ἐλαττωθήσεται,
οὕτως καὶ ὁ ὀμνύων καὶ ὀνομάζων διὰ παντὸς
ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας οὐ μὴ καθαρισθῆ.
11 ἄνθρωπος πολυὸρκος πλησθήσεται ἀνομίας,
καὶ οὐκ ἀποστήσεται ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ μάστιξ·
ἐὰν πλημμελήσῃ, ἁμαρτία αὐτοῦ ἐπ' αὐτῷ,
κὰν ὑπερίδῃ, ἥμαρτεν δισσωῶς·
καὶ εἰ διὰ κενῆς ὤμοσεν, οὐ δικαιωθήσεται,
πλησθήσεται γὰρ ἐπαγωγῶν ὁ οἶκος αὐτοῦ.
12 Ἔστιν λέξις ἀντιπαραβεβλημένη θανάτῳ,
μὴ εὐρεθήτω ἐν κληρονομίᾳ Ἰακωβ·

DISCIPLINE OF THE MOUTH

- 7 Children, listen to what I teach:
no one who keeps it will be caught out.
8 The sinner is ensnared by his own lips;
both the abusive and the proud are tripped
by them.
9 Do not get into the habit of swearing;
do not make a habit of naming the Holy One.
10 For, just as a slave who is constantly overseen
will never be without bruises,
so he who is swears continually and utters the Name
will not be exempt from sin.
11 A man forever swearing is full of iniquity,
and the scourge will not depart from his house.
If he offends, his sin will be on him;
if he did it unheedingly, he has doubly sinned.
If he swears a false oath, he will not be justified;
for, his house will be filled with calamities.
12 One way of talking is like death;
let it not be found in the heritage of Jacob,

7 The subtitle before this verse follows Greek 248, the NJB and the NETS.

8 'Ensnared by' follows the LXX (and NJB); the *Textus Receptus* has 'abandoned to' and the NRSV has 'overtaken by'.

9 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "Don't accustom your mouth to an oath."

10 The translation of the first 2 lines is uncertain; they could also mean, "A servant forever questioned under torture will inevitably show the effects of this." In the last line, the NRSV & WEBBE, following the *Peshitta*, have 'cleansed' in place of 'exempt', here following the LXX and NJB.

11 The first 2 lines (in *Cairo Genizah MS 'C'* - *עַשׂוּת שְׁבוּעוֹת יְמֵלָא אַשְׁמָה וְלֹא יְמוֹשׁ מִבֵּיתוֹ הַגִּנּוּ*) are the only part of the chapter preserved in Hebrew.

12 In place of 'like', some MSS have 'clothed about with'; the reference is to blasphemy (Lv 24:11-16).

- ἀπὸ γὰρ εὐσεβῶν ταῦτα πάντα ἀποστήσεται,
καὶ ἐν ἀμαρτίαις οὐκ ἐγκυλισθήσονται.
- 13** ἀπαιδευσίαν ἀσυρῆ μὴ συνεδίσης τὸ στόμα σου·
ἔστιν γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ λόγος ἀμαρτίας.
- 14** μνήσθητι πατρός καὶ μητρός σου,
ἀνὰ μέσον γὰρ μεγιστάνων συνεδρεύεις,
μήποτε ἐπιλάβῃ ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν
καὶ τῷ ἐδισμῷ σου μωρανθῆς
καὶ θελήσεις εἰ μὴ ἐγεννήθης
καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ τοκετοῦ σου καταράσῃ.
- 15** ἄνθρωπος συνεδιζόμενος λόγοις ὀνειδισμοῦ
ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ παιδευθῆ.
- 16** Δύο εἶδη πληθύνουσιν ἀμαρτίας,
καὶ τὸ τρίτον ἐπάξει ὀργήν·
- 17** ψυχὴ θερμὴ ὡς πῦρ καιόμενον,
οὐ μὴ σβεσθῆ ἕως ἂν καταποθῆ·
ἄνθρωπος πόρνος ἐν σώματι σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ,
οὐ μὴ παύσῃται ἕως ἂν ἐκκαύσῃ πῦρ·
ἄνθρωπῳ πόρῳ πᾶς ἄρτος ἡδύς,
οὐ μὴ κοπάσῃ ἕως ἂν τελευτήσῃ.

since devout people have nothing to do with that:
they will not wallow in sin.

- 13** Do not accustom your mouth to gross rudeness,
since this involves sinful words.
- 14** Remember your father and mother
when you are sitting with the great,
for fear you forget yourself in their presence
and behave like a fool,
and then wish you had not been born
and curse the day of your birth.
- 15** A man in the habit of using shameful language
will not break himself of it as long as he lives.
- 16** There are two types of people who commit sin after sin,
and a third who attracts wrath.
- 17** Hot passion that blazes like a fire
will not be quenched until it burns itself out.
One who commits fornication with his near kin
will never cease until the fire burns him up.
To a fornicator, all bread is sweet;
he will never weary until he dies.

13 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, “Do not get into the habit of using coarse and foul language.”

14 ‘When’ of the 2nd line is conjectural; the LXX has ‘because’. ‘You forget yourself’ follows the Peshitta; the LXX has ‘you forget (him)’ and the Vg has ‘God forgets you’.

15 The NJB opens with ‘No one’ in place of ‘A man’.

16 The text and verse numbering here follow the NJB and Rahlfs; the NRSV includes the first 4 lines of v. 17 as part of this verse.

17 ‘All bread is sweet’ is a euphemism for the adulterer’s search for a partner.

18 ἄνθρωπος παραβαίνων ἀπὸ τῆς κλίνης αὐτοῦ
λέγων ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτοῦ Τίς με ὄρα;
σκότος κύκλω μου, καὶ οἱ τοῖχοί με καλύπτουσιν,
καὶ οὐδεὶς με ὄρα· τί εὐλαβοῦμαι;
τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου οὐ μὴ μνησθήσεται ὁ ὕψιστος.
19 καὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἀνθρώπων ὁ φόβος αὐτοῦ,
καὶ οὐκ ἔγνω ὅτι ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου
μυριοπλασίως ἡλίου φωτεινότεροι
ἐπιβλέποντες πάσας ὁδοὺς ἀνθρώπων
καὶ κατανοοῦντες εἰς ἀπόκρυφα μέρη.
20 πρὶν ἢ κτισθῆναι τὰ πάντα ἔγνωσται αὐτῷ,
οὕτως καὶ μετὰ τὸ συντελεσθῆναι.
21 οὗτος ἐν πλατείαις πόλεως ἐκδικηθήσεται,
καὶ οὗ οὐχ ὑπενόησεν, πιασθήσεται.
22 Οὕτως καὶ γυνὴ καταλιποῦσα τὸν ἄνδρα
καὶ παριστῶσα κληρονόμον ἐξ ἄλλοτρίου.
23 πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ἐν νόμῳ ὑψίστου ἠπειθήσεν,
καὶ δεύτερον εἰς ἄνδρα αὐτῆς ἐπλημμέλησεν,
καὶ τὸ τρίτον ἐν πορνείᾳ ἐμοιχεύθη
καὶ ἐξ ἄλλοτρίου ἀνδρὸς τέκνα παρέστησεν.

18 A man who goes astray from his own marriage bed
says to himself, "Who can see me?
"There is darkness all round me; the walls hide me;
no one can see me. Why should I worry?
The Most High will not remember my sins."
19 The eyes of men are his terror,
and he does not realise the eyes of the Lord
are ten thousand times brighter than the sun.
They observe every aspect of the ways of men,
seeing into the most secret corners.
20 Before the universe was created, it was known to him,
and is still, now that it is completed.
21 This man will be punished in the streets of the city,
and will be seized when he least expects it.
22 So also is a wife who leaves her husband,
and produces an heir by another man.
23 First, she has disobeyed the Law of the Most High;
secondly, she has been false to her husband;
and thirdly, she has gone whoring in adultery
and conceived children by another man.

18 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "The one who sins against the marriage bed."

19 For the 1st line, the NJB has 'What he fears are human eyes'.

20 God's knowledge, antecedent to Creation, is divine wisdom itself (see #Pr 8:22). Having created the universe, God continues to take care of it.

21 In place of 'in the streets of the city', the NJB has 'in view of the whole town'.

22 The NJB reads, "So it is with the woman unfaithful to her husband, who provides him with an heir by another man."

23 The title, 'Most High', translates ὑψίστου.

- ²⁴ αὕτη εἰς ἐκκλησίαν ἐξαχθήσεται,
καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς ἐπισκοπή ἔσται.
²⁵ οὐ διαδώσουσιν τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς εἰς ῥίζαν,
καὶ οἱ κλάδοι αὐτῆς οὐκ οἴσουσιν καρπόν.
²⁶ καταλείψει εἰς κατάραν τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτῆς,
καὶ τὸ ὄνειδος αὐτῆς οὐκ ἐξαλειφθήσεται,
²⁷ καὶ ἐπιγνώσονται οἱ καταλειφθέντες
ὅτι οὐδὲν κρεῖττον φόβου κυρίου
καὶ οὐδὲν γλυκύτερον τοῦ προσέχειν
ἐντολαῖς κυρίου.
²⁸ δόξα μεγάλη ἀκολουθεῖν Θεῷ,
μακρότης δὲ ἡμερῶν τὸ προσληφθῆναί σε ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

- ²⁴ She will be led before the assembly;
an enquiry will be held about her children.
²⁵ Her children will strike no root;
her branches will bear no fruit.
²⁶ She will leave an accursed memory behind her;
her shame will never be wiped out.
²⁷ Those who survive her will recognise
that nothing is better than fearing the Lord,
and nothing sweeter than heeding the
Lord's commandments.
²⁸ *It is a great glory to follow God,
and to be acceptable to him is to lengthen one's days.*

²⁴ The WEBBE has 'congregation' in place of 'assembly'.

²⁵ For 'will strike no root', the WEBBE has 'will not take root'.

²⁶ In place of 'shame', the WEBBE has 'reproach'.

²⁷ The NJB has 'adhering to' in place of 'heeding'.

²⁸ This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS and Vg, is included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes.

Σοφία Σιραχ 24

Σοφία αινέσεως.

- 1 Ἡ σοφία αἰνέσει ψυχὴν αὐτῆς
καὶ ἐν μέσῳ λαοῦ αὐτῆς καυχήσεται·
- 2 ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ὑψίστου στόμα αὐτῆς ἀνοίξει
καὶ ἔναντι δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ καυχήσεται
- 3 Ἐγὼ ἀπὸ στόματος ὑψίστου ἐξῆλθον
καὶ ὡς ὀμίχλη κατεκάλυψα γῆν·
- 4 ἐγὼ ἐν ὑψηλοῖς κατεσκηνώσα,
καὶ ὁ θρόνος μου ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης·
- 5 γῦρον οὐρανοῦ ἐκύκλωσα μόνη
καὶ ἐν βάθει ἀβύσσων περιεπάτησα·
- 6 ἐν κύμασιν θαλάσσης καὶ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ
καὶ ἐν παντὶ λαῷ καὶ ἔθνῃ ἐκτησάμην.
- 7 μετὰ τούτων πάντων ἀνάπαυσιν ἐζήτησα
καὶ ἐν κληρονομίᾳ τίνος αὐλισθήσομαι.
- 8 τότε ἐνετείλατό μοι ὁ κτίστης ἀπάντων,
καὶ ὁ κτίσας με κατέπαυσεν τὴν σκηνὴν μου

WISDOM OF SIRACH 24

PRAISE OF WISDOM

- 1 Wisdom speaks her own praises
and, in the midst of her people, she glorifies herself.
- 2 She opens her mouth in the assembly of the Most High
and, before power, she tells of her glory.
- 3 “I came forth from the house of the Most High,
and I covered the earth like mist.
- 4 I had my tent in the heights,
and my throne was a pillar of cloud.
- 5 Alone, I have made the circuit of the heavens
and walked through the depths of the abyss.
- 6 Over the waves of the sea and over the whole earth,
and over every people and nation, I have held sway.
- 7 Among all these, I searched for rest,
and in whose territory I might pitch camp.
- 8 Then the Creator of all things instructed me,
and he who created me fixed a place for my tent.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 24

- 1 The subtitle at the start of this chapter follows *Greek 248*, the *NJB* & *NETS*.
- 2 The *NJB* has ‘hosts’ in place of ‘power’.
- 3 Wisdom’s speech describes her divine origin and her search for a resting place, though she rules both in heaven (v. 5) and on the earth (v. 6).
- 4 The 2nd line refers to the pillar of cloud in the desert, which, in the oldest texts, was regarded as a manifestation of Yahweh’s presence.
- 5 For the 1st line, the *WEBBE* reads, “Alone I surrounded the circuit of heaven.”
- 6 ‘I have held sway’ follows one *Greek MS*, the *Peshitta* and the *Vg*; the *LXX* has ‘I have acquired’.
- 7 After the opening ‘and’ of the 2nd line, the *NJB* adds ‘looked to see’. The *WEBBE* has the 2nd line as a question.
- 8 The *WEBBE* lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

καὶ εἶπεν Ἐν Ιακωβ κατασκήνωσον
καὶ ἐν Ἰσραηλ κατακληρονομήηθι.
⁹ πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἔκτισέν με,
καὶ ἕως αἰῶνος οὐ μὴ ἐκλίπω.
¹⁰ ἐν σκηνῇ ἁγία ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐλειτούργησα
καὶ οὕτως ἐν Σιων ἐστηρίχθην.
¹¹ ἐν πόλει ἠγαπημένη ὁμοίως με κατέπαυσεν,
καὶ ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ ἡ ἐξουσία μου.
¹² καὶ ἐρρίζωσα ἐν λαῷ δεδοξαμένῳ,
ἐν μερίδι κυρίου, κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ.
¹³ ὡς κέδρος ἀνυψώθην ἐν τῷ Λιβάνῳ
καὶ ὡς κυπάρισσος ἐν ὄρεσιν Αερμων.
¹⁴ ὡς φοῖνιξ ἀνυψώθην ἐν Αιγγαδοῖς
καὶ ὡς φυτὰ ῥόδου ἐν Ἱεριχω,
ὡς ἐλαία εὐπρεπῆς ἐν πεδίῳ,
καὶ ἀνυψώθην ὡς πλάτανος.
¹⁵ ὡς κιννάμωμον καὶ ἀσπάλαθος
ἀρωμάτων δέδωκα ὄσμήν
καὶ ὡς σμύρνα ἐκλεκτὴ δίδωκα εὐωδίαν,

He said, "Pitch your tent in Jacob;
make Israel your inheritance."
⁹ From eternity, in the beginning, he created me,
and for eternity I shall remain.
¹⁰ In the Holy Tent, I ministered for him
and thus became established in Zion.
¹¹ In the beloved city, he has given me rest
and, in Jerusalem, I wield my authority.
¹² I have taken root in a privileged people,
in the Lord's prosperity, in his inheritance.
¹³ I have grown tall as a cedar of Lebanon,
as a cypress on Mount Hermon.
¹⁴ I have grown tall as a palm in En-Gedi,
as the rose bushes of Jericho;
like a fine olive tree in the plain;
as a plane tree beside water, I have grown tall.
¹⁵ Like cinnamon and acanthus,
I have yielded perfume;
like choice myrrh, I have breathed out a scent,

⁹ In place of the 2 instances of 'eternity', the WEBBE has 'the ages' and 'all ages', respectively.

¹⁰ For Ben Sira, the Temple worship in Jerusalem is one more achievement of Wisdom, either because it expresses the divine perfection in the same way as the order of the universe does, or else this worship is laid down in detail in the Law, which itself (vv. 23ff) is Wisdom.

¹¹ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "In Jerusalem was my domain."

¹² The WEBBE has 'honoured' in place of 'privileged'.

¹³ For 'Mount Hermon', the WEBBE has 'mountains of Hermon'.

¹⁴ 'In En-Gedi' follows two Greek MSS; the Textus Receptus has 'on the shores'. The NJB omits 'beside water', here following the NRSV.

¹⁵ 'Galbanum' (see Ex 30:34) and 'labdanum' are aromatic, resinous gums like 'myrrh'; 'onycha' is the secretion of a type of shellfish.

ὡς χαλβάνη καὶ ὄνυξ καὶ στακτὴ
καὶ ὡς λιβάνου ἀτμίς ἐν σκηνῇ.
¹⁶ ἐγὼ ὡς τερέμινθος ἐξέτεινα κλάδους μου,
καὶ οἱ κλάδοι μου κλάδοι δόξης καὶ χάριτος.
¹⁷ ἐγὼ ὡς ἄμπελος ἐβλάστησα χάριν,
καὶ τὰ ἄνθη μου καρπὸς δόξης καὶ πλούτου.
¹⁸ ἐγὼ μήτηρ τῆς ἀγαπήσεως τῆς καλλῆς καὶ φόβου
καὶ γνώσεως καὶ τῆς ὀσίας ἐλπίδος,
δίδωμι δὲ σὺν πᾶσι τοῖς τέκνοις μου ἀειγενεῖς
τοῖς λεγομένοις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.
¹⁹ προσέλθετε πρὸς με, οἱ ἐπιθυμοῦντές μου,
καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν γενημάτων μου ἐμπλήσθητε·
²⁰ τὸ γὰρ μνημόσυνόν μου ὑπὲρ τὸ μέλι γλυκύ,
καὶ ἡ κληρονομία μου ὑπὲρ μέλιτος κηρίον.
²¹ οἱ ἐσθίωντές με ἔτι πεινάσουσιν,
καὶ οἱ πίνοντές με ἔτι διψήσουσιν.
²² ὁ ὑπακούων μου οὐκ αἰσχυνηθήσεται,
καὶ οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι ἐν ἐμοὶ οὐχ ἁμαρτήσουσιν.

like galbanum, onycha, labdanum,
like the smoke of incense in the Tent.
¹⁶ I have spread my branches like a terebinth,
and my branches are glorious and graceful.
¹⁷ Like the vine, I put forth grace;
and my blossoms bear the fruit of glory and wisdom.
¹⁸ *I am the mother of beautiful love, of fear,
and of knowledge and of worthy hope.
Being eternal, I am bestowed on all my children,
to those who are named by him.*
¹⁹ Approach me, you who desire me,
and take your fill of my fruits.
²⁰ For, the memory of me is sweeter than honey;
inheriting me is sweeter than the honeycomb.
²¹ They who eat me will hunger for more;
they who drink me will thirst for more.
²² No one who obeys me will ever have to blush;
no one who acts as I dictate will ever sin."

¹⁶ The WEBBE lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

¹⁷ For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "I am like a vine putting out graceful shoots."

¹⁸ This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS, is included in the NRSV and NJB only as footnotes. In place of the 2nd couplet, the Vg has, "In me is all grace of way and of truth, in me all hope of life and of strength" (²⁵ *In me gratia omnis viæ et veritatis: in me omnis spes vitæ et virtutis*), a Christian gloss alluding to Jn 14:6 and based on the identification of Wisdom with Christ.

¹⁹ Wisdom concludes her speech (vv. 19–22) with an invitation to her unusual meal, which increases one's hunger and keeps one from sin (see Pr 9:5, 8:35).

²⁰ The WEBBE reads, "For my memory is sweeter than honey, and my inheritance than the honeycomb."

²¹ Wisdom gained seeks more wisdom.

²² The speech by personified Wisdom ends here.

23 Ταῦτα πάντα βίβλος διαθήκης
 θεοῦ ὑψίστου,
 νόμον ὃν ἐνετείλατο ἡμῖν Μωϋσῆς κληρονομίαν
 συναγωγᾶς Ἰακωβ,
 24 μὴ ἐκλύεσθε ἰσχύειν ἐν Κυρίῳ,
 ἵνα κρακολλᾶσθε πρὸς αὐτόν·
 Κύριος παντοκράτωρ ὁ θεὸς μόνος ἐστί,
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἕτι πλὴν αὐτοῦ σωτήρ.
 25 ὁ πιμπλῶν ὡς Φισων σοφίαν
 καὶ ὡς Τίγρις ἐν ἡμέραις νέων,
 26 ὁ ἀναπληρῶν ὡς Εὐφράτης σύνεσι
 καὶ ὡς Ἰορδάνης ἐν ἡμέραις θερισμοῦ,
 27 ὁ ἐκφαίνων ὡς φῶς παιδείαν,
 ὡς Γηων ἐν ἡμέραις τρυγῆτου.
 28 οὐ συνετέλεσεν ὁ πρῶτος γινῶναι αὐτήν,
 καὶ οὕτως ὁ ἔσχατος οὐκ ἐξιχνίασεν αὐτήν·
 29 ἀπὸ γὰρ θαλάσσης ἐπληθύνθη διανόημα αὐτῆς
 καὶ ἡ βουλὴ αὐτῆς ἀπὸ ἀβύσσου μεγάλης.

23 All this is the Book of the Covenant of the
 Most High God,
 the Law that Moses enjoined on us
 as an inheritance for the communities of Jacob.
 24 *Do not cease to be strong in the Lord;*
cling to him that he may strengthen you.
The Lord Almighty alone is God
and there is no Saviour other than he.
 25 He makes Wisdom brim over like the Pishon,
 like the Tigris in the season of fruit.
 26 It runs over, like the Euphrates, with understanding
 and like the Jordan in the days of harvest.
 27 It pours forth instruction like the Nile,
 like the Gihon when the grapes are harvested.
 28 The first man did not finish discovering about her,
 nor has the most recent tracked her down.
 29 For, her thoughts are filled from the sea
 and her counsels from the great deep.

23 The author now develops his thesis on the identity of Wisdom with the Law.

24 This verse, here following the *Greek 248 MS*, is included in the *NRSV & NJB* only as footnotes.

25 Throughout this passage, the author is thinking of the earthly paradise and its four rivers (Gn 2:10ff), symbolic of fertility.

26 In place of 'in the days of harvest', the *NJB* has 'at harvest time'.

27 The 1st line here follows the *Peshitta* (and *NRSV*); the *LXX* has, "It makes instruction shine forth like light."

28 Just as the 'first man' (Adam) did not know her (since the Torah was given first to Moses), so the 'most recent' will never exhaust such profound wisdom.

29 For this verse, the *NJB* reads, "For, her thoughts are wider than the sea, and her designs more profound than the abyss."

30 *Κἀγὼ ὡς διῶρυξ ἀπὸ ποταμοῦ
καὶ ὡς ὑδραγωγὸς ἐξῆλθον εἰς παράδεισον·*
31 *εἶπα Ποτιῶ μου τὸν κῆπον
καὶ μεθύσω μου τὴν πρασιάν·
καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγένετό μοι ἡ διῶρυξ εἰς ποταμόν,
καὶ ὁ ποταμός μου ἐγένετο εἰς θάλασσαν.*
32 *ἔτι παιδείαν ὡς ὄρθρον φωτιῶ
καὶ ἐκφανῶ αὐτὰ ἕως εἰς μακράν·*
33 *ἔτι διδασκαλίαν ὡς προφητείαν ἐκχεῶ
καὶ καταλείψω αὐτήν εἰς γενεὰς αἰώνων.*
34 *ἴδετε ὅτι οὐκ ἐμοὶ μόνῳ ἐκοπίασα,
ἀλλ' ἅπασιν τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτήν.*

30 As for me, I was like a conduit from a river,
like a watercourse running into a garden.
31 I said, "I am going to water my orchard;
I intend to irrigate my flower beds."
And see, my conduit has grown into a river,
and my river has grown into a sea.
32 Making instruction shine forth from daybreak,
and I shall send its light far and wide.
33 I shall pour out teaching like prophecy,
and leave it to all generations.
34 See that I have not laboured for myself alone,
but for all who are seeking wisdom.

30 The author himself is speaking now, elaborating the imagery of the preceding verses. While Wisdom is a vast river, watering all Israel, he for his part is a canal, flowing from that river, and watering his own modest garden.

31 By the Lord's favour, the waters grew more and more abundant. The author is now transformed into a prophet, addressing his words to all generations to come (v. 33). He is probably drawing his inspiration from similar material in Is 11:9, Ezk 47:1–12. The Vg applies the whole passage to personified Wisdom, consistently identifying that with Christ, and adds, at the end of this verse, "*I shall penetrate the deepest recesses of the earth; I shall visit all those who are asleep. I shall illuminate all those who hope in the Lord.*"

32 The NJB has 'discipline' in place of 'instruction'.

33 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "*as a legacy to all future generations.*"

34 The NJB opens with 'Observe' in place of 'See that'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 25

- 1 Ἐν τρισὶν ὠραίσθη καὶ ἀνέστην ὠραία
ἐναντι κυρίου καὶ ἀνθρώπων·
ὁμόνοια ἀδελφῶν, καὶ φιλία τῶν πλησίων,
καὶ γυνή καὶ ἀνὴρ ἑαυτοῖς συμπεριφερόμενοι.
- 2 τρία δὲ εἶδη ἐμίσησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου
καὶ προσώχθισα σφόδρα τῇ ζωῇ αὐτῶν·
πτωχὸν ὑπερήφανον, καὶ πλούσιον ψεύστην,
γέροντα μοιχὸν ἐλαττούμενον συνέσει.
- 3 Ἐν νεότητι οὐ συναγείοχας,
καὶ πῶς ἂν εὗροισ ἐν τῷ γῆρα σου;
- 4 ὡς ὠραῖον πολιαῖς κρίσις
καὶ πρεσβυτέροις ἐπιγνῶναι βουλήν.
- 5 ὡς ὠραία γερόντων σοφία
καὶ δεδοξασμένοις διανόημα καὶ βουλή.
- 6 στέφανος γερόντων πολυπειρία,
καὶ τὸ καύχημα αὐτῶν φόβος κυρίου.
- 7 Ἐννέα ὑπονοήματα ἐμακάρισα ἐν καρδίᾳ

WISDOM OF SIRACH 25

- 1 There are three things my soul delights in,
and they are delightful to God and to all people:
the agreement of brothers, the friendship of neighbours,
and a wife and husband who live happily together.
- 2 There are three sorts of people my soul hates,
and whose existence I consider an outrage:
the poor swollen with pride, the rich who is a liar
and an adulterous old man who has no sense.
- 3 If you gathered nothing in your youth,
how can you find anything in your old age?
- 4 How fine a thing: sound judgement with grey hairs,
and for elders to know how to advise!
- 5 How fine a thing: wisdom in the aged,
and considered advice coming from men of distinction!
- 6 The crown of the aged is much experience;
their glory is the fear of the Lord.
- 7 There are nine things I think of that make me happy,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 25

- 1 This verse follows the *Peshitta* and *Vg*; the *LXX* opens with, “*In three things I was pre-eminent, and pre-eminent I remained before God,*” thus making the passage a discourse delivered by Wisdom.
- 2 For the 2nd line, here following the *NJB*, the *WEBBE* has, “*and I am greatly offended at their life.*”
- 3 Before ‘gathered’, the *NJB* adds ‘have’.
- 4 In place of ‘elders’, the *NJB* has ‘a greybeard’.
- 5 The *NJB* has ‘people’ in place of ‘men’.
- 6 The phrase, ‘much experience’ (the *NJB* has ‘ripe experience’) translates *πολυπειρία*.
- 7 In place of ‘can be proud of’, the *WEBBE* has ‘has joy with’.

καὶ τὸ δέκατον ἐρῶ ἐπὶ γλώσσης·
 ἄνθρωπος εὐφραϊνόμενος ἐπὶ τέκνοις,
 ζῶν καὶ βλέπων ἐπὶ πτώσει ἐχθρῶν·
 8 μακάριος ὁ συνοικῶν γυναικὶ συνετῇ,
 ...
 καὶ ὃς ἐν γλώσσει οὐκ ὠλίσθησεν,
 καὶ ὃς οὐκ ἐδούλευσεν ἀναξίῳ ἑαυτοῦ·
 9 μακάριος ὃς εὗρεν φρόνησιν,
 καὶ ὁ διηγούμενος εἰς ὠτα ἀκουόντων·
 10 ὡς μέγας ὁ εὐρῶν σοφίαν·
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστιν ὑπὲρ τὸν φοβούμενον τὸν κύριον·
 11 φόβος κυρίου ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὑπερέβαλεν,
 ὁ κρατῶν αὐτοῦ τίνι ὁμοιωθήσεται;
 16 φόβος Κυρίου ἀρχὴ ἀγαπήσεως αὐτοῦ·
 πίστις δὲ ἀρχὴ κολλησεως αὐτοῦ.
 13 Πᾶσαν πληγὴν καὶ μὴ πληγὴν καρδίας,
 καὶ πᾶσαν πονηρίαν καὶ μὴ πονηρίαν γυναικός·
 14 πᾶσαν ἐπαγωγὴν καὶ μὴ ἐπαγωγὴν μισούντων,
 καὶ πᾶσαν ἐκδίκησιν καὶ μὴ ἐκδίκησιν ἐχθρῶν.

and a tenth that is now on my tongue:
 the man who can be proud of his children,
 he who lives to see the downfall of his enemies.
 8 Happy is he who keeps house with a sensible wife,
he who does not toil with ox and donkey,
 he who has never sinned with his tongue,
 he who does not serve a man less worthy than himself.
 9 Happy is he who has acquired good sense
 and can find attentive ears for what he has to say.
 10 How great is he who has acquired wisdom,
 but unsurpassed is one who fears the Lord.
 11 The fear of the Lord surpasses everything.
 To whom shall he who holds it be likened?
 12 *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of loving him,*
but it is by faith that a man begins to cling to him.
 13 Any wound rather than a wound of the heart!
 Any spite rather than the spite of a woman!
 14 Any evil rather than an evil caused by an enemy!
 Any vengeance rather than the vengeance of a foe!

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- 8 The 2nd line could be interpreted literally (cf. Lv 19:19, Dt 22:10) or, metaphorically (cf. 2Co 6:14), as an ill-assorted couple. The line, omitted by the LXX, has been restored following the Peshitta, with some support from Cairo Genizah MS 'C' (ולא חורש כשור עם חמור).
- 9 The NRSV, following the Peshitta, has 'friend' in place of 'good sense', here following the LXX (and NJB).
- 10 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' lacks vv. 10–12.
- 11 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "What can compare with someone who has mastered that?"
- 12 This verse, here following the Greek 248 MS & Vg (*Timor Dei initium dilectionis ejus: fidei autem initium agglutinandum est ei.*), is included in the NRSV & NJB only as footnotes.
- 13 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' reads [...] לב כל רעה ולא כר [...] ("Not every wound is like [...] the heart; not every evil is like the [...]").
- 14 Vv. 14–16 are missing from Cairo Genizah MS 'C'.

15 οὐκ ἔστιν κεφαλὴ ὑπὲρ κεφαλὴν ὄφεως,
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν θυμὸς ὑπὲρ θυμὸν ἐχθροῦ.
16 συνοικῆσαι λέοντι καὶ δράκοντι εὐδοκῆσω
 ἢ συνοικῆσαι μετὰ γυναικὸς πονηραῖς.
17 πονηρία γυναικὸς ἀλλοιοῖ τὴν ὄρασιν αὐτῆς
 καὶ σκοτοῖ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς ὡς ἄρκος·
18 ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν πλησίων αὐτοῦ
 ἀναπυρεῖται ὁ ἀνηρ αὐτῆς
 καὶ ἀκουσίως ἀνεστέναξεν πικρά.
19 μικρὰ πᾶσα κακία πρὸς κακίαν γυναικὸς,
 κληῖρος ἀμαρτωλοῦ ἐπιπέσοι αὐτῇ.
20 ἀνάβασις ἀμμώδης ἐν ποσὶν πρεσβυτέρου,
 οὕτως γυνὴ γλωσσώδης ἀνδρὶ ἡσύχῳ.
21 μὴ προσπέσης ἐπὶ κάλλος γυναικὸς
 καὶ γυναῖκα μὴ ἐπιποθήσης.
22 ὀργὴ καὶ ἀναίδεια καὶ αἰσχύνη μεγάλη
 γυνὴ ἐὰν ἐπιχορηγῇ τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς.

15 There is no venom worse than the venom of a snake;
 there is no fury worse than the fury of an enemy.
16 I would sooner keep house with a lion or a dragon
 than keep house with a wicked wife.
17 A woman's spite changes her appearance
 and makes her face as grim as a bear's.
18 When her husband
 sits among his neighbours,
 he cannot help heaving bitter sighs.
19 No spite can approach the spite of a woman;
 may a sinner's lot be hers!
20 Like the climbing of a sand hill for elderly feet –
 such is a garrulous wife for a quiet husband.
21 Do not be taken in by a woman's beauty;
 never lose your head over a woman.
22 Bad temper, insolence, and shame hold sway
 where the wife supports the husband.

15 For 'venom' (following the Peshitta), the LXX & Vg have 'head' (the Hebrew word is the same). In place of 'enemy', the NRSV has 'woman'.

16 The NJB has 'spiteful' in place of 'wicked'.

17 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has רע אשה ישחיר מראה איש ויקדיר פ[...]. (‘A woman's evil blackens her husband's expression and darken his face like a bear's’).

18 'Sits' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'C' (ישב) and the Peshitta; the LXX has 'loses heart' (ἀναπυρεῖται); the last line follows one Greek MS, Cairo Genizah MS 'C' (ובלא טעמו יתאנח) and the Peshitta; the Textus Receptus has 'he sighs bitterly as he listens to them'.

19 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has מעט רעה כרעה אשה גורל חוטא יפול עליה (‘Scarcely any evil is like the evil of a woman; may she fall to the lot of a sinner’).

20 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has כמעלה חזק לאיש ישיש אשת לשון לאיש מך (‘Like a steep climb to an aged man is a nagging wife to a meek man’).

21 For the 2nd line, the NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS 'C' (ועל יש לה [..] לתמהר) and Peshitta, has, “and do not desire a woman for her possessions.”

22 For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has כי בעדה [...] בושת (‘for, in the congregation [there is] shame’).

- ²³ καρδία ταπεινή και πρόσωπον σκυθρωπὸν
καὶ πληγὴ καρδίας γυνὴ πονηρά·
χεῖρες παρειμέναι καὶ γόνατα παραλελυμένα
ἥτις οὐ μακαριεῖ τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς.
- ²⁴ ἀπὸ γυναικὸς ἀρχὴ ἁμαρτίας,
καὶ δι' αὐτὴν ἀποθνήσκομεν πάντες.
- ²⁵ μὴ δῶς ὕδατι διέξοδον
μηδὲ γυναικὶ πονηρᾷ παρρησίαν·
- ²⁶ εἰ μὴ πορεύεται κατὰ χεῖράς σου,
ἀπὸ τῶν σαρκῶν σου ἀπότμε αὐτήν.

- ²³ Low spirits, and a gloomy face,
and a stricken heart: such is a spiteful wife.
Slack hands and sagging knees:
such is the wife who does not please her husband.
- ²⁴ Sin began with a woman
and, thanks to her, we must all die.
- ²⁵ Do not let water find a leak
nor give a wicked woman freedom of speech.
- ²⁶ If she will not walk according to your hand,
separate her from your flesh.

²³ Cairo Genizah MS 'C' lacks the first 2 lines.

²⁴ This verse alludes to the first sin. Cairo Genizah MS 'C' is very similar: מאשה תחלת עון ובגללה גוענו יחד.

²⁵ For the 2nd line, here loosely following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "nor a spiteful woman give free rein to her tongue."

²⁶ The NJB interprets this verse (cf. Gn 2:24, Ep 5:31), "If she will not do as you tell her, get rid of her." The Mosaic Law (Dt 24:1-4) allowed divorce (see Mt 19:3-9ff). A footnote to the WEBBE suggests that some MSS (but not the best) have additional text at the end of this verse.

Σοφία Σιραχ 26

- ¹ Γυναικὸς ἀγαθῆς μακάριος ὁ ἀνὴρ,
καὶ ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἡμερῶν αὐτοῦ διπλάσιος.
- ² γυνὴ ἀνδρεία εὐφραίνει τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς,
καὶ τὰ ἔτη αὐτοῦ πληρώσει ἐν εἰρήνῃ.
- ³ γυνὴ ἀγαθὴ μερὶς ἀγαθῆς,
ἐν μερίδι φοβουμένων κύριον δοθήσεται.
- ⁴ πλουσίου δὲ καὶ πτωχοῦ καρδιά ἀγαθῆς,
ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ πρόσωπον ἰλαρόν.
- ⁵ Ἀπὸ τριῶν εὐλαβήθη ἡ καρδιά μου,
καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ τετάρτῳ προσώπῳ ἐδεήθην·
διαβολὴν πόλεως, καὶ ἐκκλησίαν ὄχλου,
καὶ καταψευσμόν, ὑπὲρ θάνατον πάντα μοχθηρά.
- ⁶ ἄλγος καρδίας καὶ πένθος γυνὴ ἀντίζηλος ἐπὶ γυναικί
καὶ μάστιξ γλώσσης πᾶσιν ἐπικοινωνοῦσα.
- ⁷ βροζύγιον σαλευόμενον γυνὴ πονηρά,
ὁ κρατῶν αὐτῆς ὡς ὁ δρασσόμενος σκορπίου.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 26

- ¹ How blessed is the husband of a really good wife;
and the number of his days will be doubled.
- ² A good wife is the joy of her husband;
and he will live out the years of his life in peace.
- ³ A good wife is the best of portions,
reserved for those who fear the Lord.
- ⁴ Whether a man is rich or poor, a good heart
always makes his face cheerful.
- ⁵ There are three things that I dread,
and a fourth that terrifies me:
slander by a whole town, the gathering of a mob
and a false accusation – these are all worse than death.
- ⁶ A woman jealous of a woman is heartbreak and sorrow,
and a tongue-lashing makes it known to all.
- ⁷ A bad wife is a badly fitting ox-yoke;
trying to master her is like grasping a scorpion.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 26

- ¹ Cairo Genizah MS 'C' is similar: אשה טובה אשרי בעלה ומספר ימיו כפלים. ("A good wife, happy is her husband; and the number of his days is doubled.")
- ² The translation of 'good' is uncertain; the Greek (ἀνδρεία) may mean 'valiant' – a reading supported by Cairo Genizah MS 'C' (אשת חיל).
- ³ For 'the Lord', Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has a 'triple-yod triangle' (יָי), representing the Divine Name.
- ⁴ For this verse, the NJB reads, "Whether rich or poor, their hearts will be glad and their faces cheerful, whatever the season."
- ⁵ The meaning of the 2nd line, here following some Greek MSS, is uncertain; the Peshitta and Vg have, "and faced with a fourth I fall to praying." The LXX appears to read, "and concerning the fourth countenance I made supplication."
- ⁶ The 2nd line here follows the LXX (and NRSV); the NJB, following the Peshitta, has, "and all this is the scourge of the tongue."
- ⁷ A 'badly fitting ox-yoke' rubs and slips back and forth on the creature's neck, causing galls and pain.

8 ὀργή μεγάλη γυνή μέδυσος
καὶ ἀσχημοσύνην αὐτῆς οὐ συγκαλύψει.

9 πορνεία γυναικὸς ἐν μετεωρισμοῖς ὀφθαλμῶν
καὶ ἐν τοῖς βλεφάροις αὐτῆς γνωσθήσεται.

10 ἐπὶ θυγατρὶ ἀδιατρέπτῳ στερέωσον φυλακὴν,
ἵνα μὴ εὐροῦσα ἄνεσιν ἑαυτῇ χρήσεται·

11 ὀπίσω ἀναιδοῦς ὀφθαλμοῦ φύλαξαι
καὶ μὴ δαυμάσης, εἰς σὲ πλημμελήσῃ·

12 ὡς διψῶν ὄδοιπόρος τὸ στόμα ἀνοίξει
καὶ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδατος τοῦ σύνεγγυς πίεται,
κατέναντι παντὸς πασσάλου καθήσεται
καὶ ἔναντι βέλους ἀνοίξει φαρέτραν.

13 Χάρις γυναικὸς τέριπει τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς,
καὶ τὰ ὀστᾶ αὐτοῦ πιανεῖ ἢ ἐπιστήμη αὐτῆς.

14 δόσις κυρίου γυνή σιγηρά,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντάλλαγμα πεπαιδευμένης ψυχῆς·

15 χάρις ἐπὶ χάριτι γυνή αἰσχυνηρά,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν σταθμὸς πᾶς ἄξιος ἐγκρατοῦς ψυχῆς.

8 A drunken wife will goad anyone to fury;
she cannot conceal her own degradation.

9 A woman's wantonness shows in her wide-eyed look;
her eyelashes leave no doubt.

10 Keep strict watch on a headstrong daughter,
lest she find liberty for herself, and use it.

11 Keep a strict watch on her shameless eye;
do not be surprised if she disgraces you.

12 Like a thirsty traveller, she will open her mouth
and drink any water she comes across.
She will sit down in front of every tent peg
and open her quiver to any arrow.

13 The grace of a wife will charm her husband;
her understanding will put flesh on his bones.

14 A silent wife is a gift from the Lord;
and no price can be put on a well-trained character.

15 A modest wife is born twice over;
a chaste character cannot be overvalued.

8 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "She will not cover her own shame."

9 The WEBBE has 'eyelids' in place of 'eyelashes'.

10 For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "Keep a headstrong daughter under firm control or, feeling free, she will take advantage of it."

11 For 'shameless', the WEBBE has 'impudent'.

12 The last 2 lines are very likely euphemistic – implying sexual promiscuity.

13 In place of 'put flesh on', the WEBBE has 'strengthen'; the literal translation is 'fatten'.

14 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "There is nothing worth so much as a well-instructed soul."

15 The WEBBE has 'self-controlled' in place of 'chaste'.

¹⁶ ἥλιος ἀνατέλλων ἐν ὑψίστοις κυρίου
καὶ κάλλος ἀγαθῆς γυναικὸς ἐν κόσμῳ οἰκίας αὐτῆς·
¹⁷ λύχνος ἐκλάμπων ἐπὶ λυχνίας ἀγίας
καὶ κάλλος προσώπου ἐπὶ ἡλικία στασίμη·
¹⁸ στῦλοι χρύσει ἐπὶ βάσεως ἀργυρᾶς
καὶ πόδες ὠραῖοι ἐπὶ στέρνοις εὐσταθοῦς.
¹⁹ τέκνον, ἀκμὴν ἡλικίας σου συντήρησον ὑγιῆ,
καὶ μὴ δῶς ἀλλοτρίοις τὴν ἰσχύν σου.
²⁰ ἀναζητήσας παντὸς πεδίου εὐγεον κλῆρον,
σπεῖρε τὰ ἴδια σπέρματα πεποιθῶς τῇ εὐγενείᾳ σου·
²¹ οὕτως τὰ γεννήματά σου περιόντα
καὶ παρρησίαν εὐγενείας ἔχοντα μεγαλυνούσι.
²² γυνὴ μισθία ἴση σιάλῳ λογισθήσεται,
ὑπανδρὸς δὲ πύργος θανάτου τοῖς χρωμένοις λογισθήσεται.
²³ γυνὴ ἀσεβῆς ἀνόμῳ μερὶς δοθήσεται,
εὐσεβῆς δὲ δίδεται τῷ φοβουμένῳ τὸν κύριον.
²⁴ γυνὴ ἀσχήμων ἀτιμίαν κατατρίψει,
δυγάτηρ δὲ εὐσχήμων καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα ἐντραπήσεται.

¹⁶ Like the sun rising over the mountains of the Lord:
such is the beauty of a good wife in a well-run house.
¹⁷ Like a lamp shining on the sacred lampstand:
such is a beautiful face on a well-proportioned body.
¹⁸ Like golden pillars on a silver base:
such are shapely legs on firm-set heels.
¹⁹ *My child, keep sound the bloom of your youth
and do not give your strength to strangers.*
²⁰ *Seek a fertile field within the whole plain,
and sow it with your own seed, trusting in your fine stock.*
²¹ *Thus, your offspring will surround you
and, having confidence in their good descent, will grow great.*
²² *A prostitute is regarded as spittle,
and a married woman as a tower of death to her lovers.*
²³ *A godless wife is given as a portion to a lawless man,
but a pious wife is given to the man who fears the Lord.*
²⁴ *A shameless woman constantly acts disgracefully,
but a modest wife will be embarrassed before her husband.*

¹⁶ In place of 'well-run', the WEBBE has 'well-organised'.

¹⁷ This verse alludes to the seven-branched lampstand (1M 4:49–50).

¹⁸ The literal translation of 'heels' (here following the NJB) is 'breasts'.

¹⁹ Vv. 19–27, here following Greek 248, the Peshitta, and NRSV/NETS, are included in the NJB only as a footnote.

²⁰ For 'trusting in your fine stock', the NETS has 'confident in your excellent descent'.

²¹ The NRSV has 'prosper' in place of 'surround you', here (loosely) following the NETS.

²² The NETS has 'hired woman' in place of 'prostitute'.

²³ For 'godless wife', the NETS has 'impious woman'.

²⁴ The NRSV has 'daughter' in place of 'wife'.

- ²⁵ γυνή ἀδιάτρεπτος ὡς κύων λογισθήσεται,
ἢ δὲ ἔχουσα αἰσχύνην τὸν κύριον φοβηθήσεται.
- ²⁶ γυνή ἄνδρα ἴδιον τιμῶσα σοφὴ πᾶσι φανήσεται,
ἀτιμάζουσα δὲ ἀσεβῆς ἐν ὑπερηφανίᾳ πᾶσι γνωσθήσεται.
γυναικὸς ἀγαθῆς μακάριος ὁ ἀνὴρ,
ὁ γὰρ ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἐτῶν αὐτοῦ διπλάσιος ἔσται.
- ²⁷ γυνή μεγαλόφωνος καὶ γλωσσώδης
πολεμίων εἰς τροπὴν θεωρηθήσεται.
ἀνθρώπου δὲ παντὸς ψυχὴ ὁμοίότροπος τούτοις
πολέμου ἀκαταστασίαις τὴν ψυχὴν διατηθήσεται.
- ²⁸ Ἐπὶ δυσὶ λελύπηται ἡ καρδιά μου,
καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ τρίτῳ θυμὸς μοι ἐπήλθεν·
ἀνὴρ πολεμιστῆς ὑστερῶν δι' ἔνδειαν,
καὶ ἄνδρες συνετοὶ ἐὰν σκυβαλισθῶσιν,
ἐπανάγων ἀπὸ δικαιοσύνης ἐπὶ ἁμαρτίαν·
ὁ κύριος ἐτοιμάσει εἰς ῥομφαίαν αὐτόν.
- ²⁹ Μόλις ἐξελεῖται ἔμπορος ἀπὸ πλημμελείας,
καὶ οὐ δικαιωθήσεται κάπηλος ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας.

- ²⁵ A headstrong wife is regarded as a dog,
but one who has shame will fear the Lord.
- ²⁶ A wife honouring her husband will seem wise to all
but she who proudly despises will be known to all as impious.
Happy is the husband of a good wife;
for, the number of his years will be doubled.
- ²⁷ A loud, garrulous wife
is like a trumpet sounding the charge,
and the soul of every person who lives like this
will lead his life in the in the anarchy of war.
- ²⁸ There are two things that grieve my heart
and a third arouses my anger:
a warrior wasting away through poverty,
the intelligent treated with contempt,
someone turning back from virtue to sin –
the Lord marks out such a person for a violent death.
- ²⁹ It is difficult for a merchant to avoid doing wrong
and for a retailer to be innocent of sin.

²⁵ The NRSV adds 'a sense of' before 'shame'.

²⁶ For 'proudly despises', the NETS has 'dishonours him with arrogance'.

²⁷ The NETS has 'confusions' in place of 'anarchy'.

²⁸ In place of 'warrior', the Peshitta has 'wealthy man'.

²⁹ The NJB has 'trader' in place of 'retailer', here following the WEBBE & NETS.

Σοφία Σιραχ 27

- ¹ χάριν διαφόρου πολλοὶ ἤμαρτον,
καὶ ὁ ζητῶν πληθῦναι ἀποστρέψει ὀφθαλμόν.
- ² ἀνὰ μέσον ἀρμῶν λίθων παγήσεται πάσσαλος,
καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον πράσεως καὶ ἀγορασμοῦ
συντριβήσεται ἁμαρτία.
- ³ ἔαν μὴ ἐν φόβῳ κυρίου κρατήσῃ κατὰ σπουδὴν,
ἐν τάχει καταστραφήσεται αὐτοῦ ὁ οἶκος.
- ⁴ Ἐν σείσματι κοσκίνου διαμένει κοπρία,
οὕτως σκύβαλα ἀνθρώπου ἐν λογισμῶ αὐτοῦ.
- ⁵ σκεύη κεραμέως δοκιμάζει κάμινος,
καὶ πειρασμὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐν διαλογοῖ αὐτοῦ.
- ⁶ γεώργιον ξύλου ἐκφαίνει ὁ καρπὸς αὐτοῦ,
οὕτως λόγος ἐνδυμήματος καρδιάς ἀνθρώπου.
- ⁷ πρὸ λογιμοῦ μὴ ἐπαινέσῃς ἄνδρα·
οὗτος γὰρ πειρασμὸς ἀνθρώπων.
- ⁸ Ἐὰν διώκῃς τὸ δίκαιον, καταλήμιψῃ
καὶ ἐνδύσῃ αὐτὸ ὡς ποδήρη δόξης.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 27

- ¹ Many have sinned for the sake of profit;
one who hopes to be rich must avert his eyes.
- ² A peg will stick in the joint between two stones,
and, between selling and buying,
sin will wedge itself.
- ³ If a person does not firmly hold to the fear of the Lord,
his house will quickly be overthrown.
- ⁴ In a shaken sieve, the rubbish is left behind;
so does the filth of man in his thoughts.
- ⁵ The kiln tests the work of a potter;
the test of a man is his thought.
- ⁶ Its fruit discloses the cultivation of a tree;
so a man's speech discloses the cultivation of his mind.
- ⁷ Praise no man before you hear his thoughts,
since this is where people are tested.
- ⁸ If you pursue virtue, you will attain it
and put in on like a robe of glory.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 27

- ¹ 'For the sake of profit' follows Codex Sinaiticus; the Textus Receptus has 'for a trifle'.
- ² 'Wedge itself' is a conjectural translation (συντριβήσεται); the LXX has 'is crushed' (συντριβήσεται).
- ³ The NJB has 'soon' in place of 'quickly'.
- ⁴ For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "so too the defects of a person appear in speech."
- ⁵ In place of 'his thought', the NJB has 'conversation'.
- ⁶ The text of the 2nd line is emended; the LXX reads, "so the word comes from the feeling in the human heart."
- ⁷ For the 1st line, the NJB reads, "Do not praise anyone who has not yet spoken."
- ⁸ The NJB has 'festal gown' in place of 'robe of glory', here following the WEBBE.

- 9 πετεινὰ πρὸς τὰ ὅμοια αὐτοῖς καταλύσει,
καὶ ἀλήθεια πρὸς τοὺς ἐργαζομένους αὐτὴν ἐπανήξει.
- 10 λέων θήραν ἐνεδρεύει,
οὕτως ἁμαρτία ἐργαζομένους ἄδικα.
- 11 διήγησις εὐσεβοῦς διὰ παντὸς σοφία,
ὁ δὲ ἄφρων ὡς σελήνη ἀλλοιοῦται.
- 12 εἰς μέσον ἀσυνέτων συντήρησον καιρόν,
εἰς μέσον δὲ διανοουμένων ἐνδελέχιζε.
- 13 διήγησις μωρῶν προσόχθισμα,
καὶ ὁ γέλως αὐτῶν ἐν σπατάλῃ ἁμαρτίας.
- 14 λαλιὰ πολυόρκου ἀνορθώσει τρίχας,
καὶ ἡ μάχη αὐτῶν ἐμφραγμὸς ὠτίων.
- 15 ἔκχυσις αἵματος μάχη ὑπερηφάνων,
καὶ ἡ διαλοιδόρησις αὐτῶν ἀκοή μοχθηρά.
- 16 Ὁ ἀποκαλύπτων μυστήρια ἀπώλεσεν πίστιν
καὶ οὐ μὴ εὔρη φίλον πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ.
- 17 στέρξον φίλον καὶ πιστώθητι μετ' αὐτοῦ·
ἐὰν δὲ ἀποκαλύψῃς τὰ μυστήρια αὐτοῦ,

- 9 Birds will nest with their kind;
truth comes home to those who practise it.
- 10 The lion lies in wait for its prey,
so does sin for those who do wrong.
- 11 The conversation of the devout is wisdom at all times,
but the fool changes like the moon.
- 12 When visiting stupid people, choose the right moment,
but among the thoughtful, take your time.
- 13 The talk of fools is offensive,
their laughter is wantonly sinful.
- 14 Their constant swearing makes hair stand on end;
and their brawling makes others stop their ears.
- 15 A quarrel between the proud leads to bloodshed,
and their insults are grievous to hear.
- 16 A betrayer of secrets forfeits all trust
and will never find a friend for his soul.
- 17 Be fond of a friend and keep faith with him;
but, if you have betrayed his secrets,

9 In place of 'will nest with', here following the NETS, the NJB has 'consort with' and the WEBBE has 'will return to'.

10 The WEBBE has 'evil' in place of 'wrong'.

11 For the 2nd line, the NJB has, "but the fool is as changeable as the moon."

12 The translation of the 1st line is uncertain; it could also mean, "Among stupid people, look out for the moment," i.e. be on your guard.

13 The NJB reads, "The conversation of fools is disgusting, raucous their laughter in their sinful pleasures."

14 The NJB ends, "makes you stop your ears."

15 In place of 'grievous', the NJB has 'embarrassing'.

16 The NJB ends, "the kind of friend he wants."

17 The WEBBE opens with 'Love' in place of 'Be fond of'.

μὴ καταδιώξης ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ.
 18 καθὼς γὰρ ἀπόλεσεν ἄνθρωπος τὸν νεκρὸν αὐτοῦ,
 οὕτως ἀπόλεσας τὴν φιλίαν τοῦ πλησίον·
 19 καὶ ὡς πετεινὸν ἐκ χειρὸς σου ἀπέλυσας,
 οὕτως ἀφῆκας τὸν πλησίον καὶ οὐ θηρεύσεις αὐτόν.
 20 μὴ αὐτὸν διώξης, ὅτι μακρὰν ἀπέστη
 καὶ ἐξέφυγεν ὡς δορκὰς ἐκ παγίδος.
 21 ὅτι τραῦμα ἔστιν καταδῆσαι,
 καὶ λοιδορίας ἔστιν διαλλαγή,
 ὁ δὲ ἀποκαλύψας μυστήρια ἀφήλπισεν.
 22 Διανεύων ὀφθαλμῶν τεκταίνει κακά,
 καὶ οὐδεὶς αὐτὰ ἀποστήσει ἀπ' αὐτοῦ·
 23 ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν σου γλυκανεῖ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων σου ἐκθαυμάσει,
 ὕστερον δὲ διαστρέψει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σου δώσει σκάνδαλον.
 24 πολλὰ ἐμίσησα καὶ οὐχ ὡμοίωσα αὐτῷ,
 καὶ ὁ κύριος μισήσει αὐτόν.
 25 ὁ βάλλων λίθον εἰς ὕψος ἐπὶ κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ βάλλει,

you should not follow him.
 18 For, as one destroys a person by killing him,
 so you have killed your neighbour's friendship.
 19 And, as you let a bird slip through your fingers,
 so you have let your friend go, and will not catch him.
 20 Do not go after him – he is far away;
 he has fled like a gazelle from the snare.
 21 For, a wound can be bandaged
 and abuse can be forgiven,
 but for the betrayer of a secret there is no hope.
 22 Someone with a sly wink is plotting mischief;
 no one can dissuade him from it.
 23 When you are present, he will speak sweetly,
 lost in admiration at your words;
 but, behind your back, he has other things to say,
 and turns your words into a stumbling block.
 24 I have hated many things but nothing as much as him,
 and the Lord hates him too.
 25 He who throws up a stone throws it on his own head;

18 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "for as a man has destroyed his enemy."

19 At the end of this verse, the WEBBE adds 'again'.

20 In place of 'fled', the WEBBE has 'escaped'.

21 Another reading for 'abuse' could be 'ridicule'.

22 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "One who winks the eye contrives evil things."

23 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "Honey-tongued to your face."

24 The NJB opens, "I have found many things to hate."

25 For the 2nd line, the NJB has, "and a treacherous blow cuts both ways."

καὶ πληγὴ δολία διελεῖ τραύματα.
26 ὁ ὀρύσσων βόθρον εἰς αὐτὸν ἐμπεσεῖται,
καὶ ὁ ἰστῶν παγίδα ἐν αὐτῇ ἀλώσεται.
27 ὁ ποιῶν πονηρά, εἰς αὐτὸν κυλισθήσεται,
καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐπιγνῶ πόθεν ἦκει αὐτῷ.
28 ἐμπαιγμὸς καὶ ὀνειδισμὸς ὑπερηφάνῳ,
καὶ ἡ ἐκδίκησις ὡς λέων ἐνεδρεύσει αὐτόν.
29 παγίδι ἀλώσονται οἱ εὐφραϊνόμενοι πτώσει εὐσεβῶν,
καὶ ὀδύνη καταναλώσει αὐτοὺς
πρὸ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν.
30 Μῆνις καὶ ὀργή, καὶ ταῦτά ἐστιν βδελύγματα,
καὶ ἀνὴρ ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐγκρατῆς ἔσται αὐτῶν.

and a treacherous blow opens up many wounds.
26 The man who digs a pit will fall into it;
whoever sets a snare will be caught by it.
27 Evil will recoil on anyone who does evil,
and he will not know whence it comes.
28 Mockery and scorn are the mark of the arrogant,
but vengeance lies in wait like a lion for such a one.
29 The trap will close on all who rejoice
in the downfall of the devout,
and pain will eat them up before they die.
30 Resentment and anger, these are foul things too,
and a sinner is a master at them both.

26 The NJB has 'falls' in place of 'will fall'.

27 For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "without his knowing where it comes from."

28 In place of 'Mockery and scorn', the NJB opens with 'Sarcasm and reproach'.

29 This verse expounds temporal retribution as maintained by the traditional view (cf. Job 21:20–21).

30 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "A sinner will possess them."

Σοφία Σιραχ 28

- 1 ὁ ἐκδικῶν παρὰ κυρίου εὐρήσει ἐκδίκησιν,
καὶ τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτοῦ διατηρῶν διατηρήσει.
- 2 ἄφες ἀδίκημα τῷ πλησίον σου,
καὶ τότε δεηθέντος σου αἱ ἀμαρτίαι σου λυθῆσονται.
- 3 ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ συντηρεῖ ὀργήν,
καὶ παρὰ κυρίου ζητεῖ ἴασιν;
- 4 ἐπ' ἄνθρωπον ὅμοιον αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔχει ἔλεος,
καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν αὐτοῦ δεῖται;
- 5 αὐτὸς σὰρξ ὢν διατηρεῖ μῆνιν,
τίς ἐξιλάσεται τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτοῦ;
- 6 μνήσθητι τὰ ἔσχατα καὶ παῦσαι ἐχθραίνων,
καταφθορὰν καὶ θάνατον,
καὶ ἔμμενε ἐντολαῖς.
- 7 μνήσθητι ἐντολῶν
καὶ μὴ μνησίσης τῷ πλησίον,
καὶ διαθήκην ὑψίστου
καὶ πάριθε ἄγνοιαν.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 28

- 1 The vengeful will experience the Lord's vengeance;
for, he keeps a strict account of their sin.
- 2 Pardon your neighbour any wrongs done to you
and, when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.
- 3 Can anyone nurse anger against another
and then demand healing from the Lord?
- 4 Can a man show no pity for someone like himself
and then plead for his own sins?
- 5 If a mere mortal harbours anger,
who will make an atoning sacrifice for his?
- 6 Remember the last things and stop hating,
corruption and death,
and be true to the commandments.
- 7 Remember the commandments
and do not bear your fellow ill will;
remember the Covenant of the Most High
and ignore the offence.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 28

- 1 In place of 'keeps a strict account of', some MSS have 'firmly establishes'.
- 2 The WEBBE has 'Forgive' in place of 'Pardon' and 'pardoned' in place of 'forgiven'.
- 3 The NJB has 'compassion' in place of 'healing', here following the WEBBE.
- 4 For 'pity', the WEBBE has 'mercy'.
- 5 The literal translation of 'a mere mortal' (here following the NJB) is 'flesh'.
- 6 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "Remember your last end, and stop enmity."
- 7 The Greek text lacks the 2nd instance of the word, 'remember', here added following the NJB & NETS.

8 Ἀπόσχου ἀπὸ μάχης, καὶ ἐλαττώσεις ἁμαρτίας·
 ἄνθρωπος γὰρ θυμώδης ἐκκαύσει μάχην,
 9 καὶ ἀνὴρ ἁμαρτωλὸς ταράξει φίλους
 καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον εἰρηνευόντων ἐμβαλεῖ διαβολήν.
 10 κατὰ τὴν ὕλην τοῦ πυρὸς οὕτως ἐκκαυθήσεται,
 καὶ κατὰ τὴν στερέωσιν τῆς μάχης ἐκκαυθήσεται·
 κατὰ τὴν ἰσχύν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ ἔσται,
 καὶ κατὰ τὸν πλοῦτον ἀνυψώσει ὀργὴν αὐτοῦ.
 11 ἔρις κατασπευδομένη ἐκκαίει πῦρ,
 καὶ μάχη κατασπεύδουσα ἐκχέει αἷμα.
 12 ἐὰν φυσήσης εἰς σπινθήρα, ἐκκαήσεται,
 καὶ ἐὰν πτύσης ἐπ' αὐτόν, σβεσθήσεται·
 καὶ ἀμφοτέρω ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου ἐκπορεύεται.
 13 Ψίθυρον καὶ δίγλωσσον καταράσασθε·
 πολλοὺς γὰρ εἰρηνεύοντας ἀπώλεσεν.
 14 γλῶσσα τρίτη πολλοὺς ἐσάλειυσεν
 καὶ διέστησεν αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ ἔθνους εἰς ἔθνος
 καὶ πόλεις ὀχυρὰς καθεῖλεν
 καὶ οἰκίας μεγιστάνων κατέστρεψεν.

8 Avoid quarrelling and you will sin less;
 for, a hot-tempered man provokes quarrels.
 9 And a sinner sows troubles between friends
 and introduces discord among the peaceful.
 10 The way a fire burns depends on its fuel;
 and strife burns in proportion to its violence.
 A man's rage depends on his strength;
 and his fury grows fiercer in proportion to his wealth.
 11 A sudden quarrel kindles fire;
 and hasty fighting sheds blood.
 12 Blow on a spark and up it flares
 and spit on it and it goes out;
 and both come out of your mouth.
 13 A curse on the gossip and the double-talker:
 such a person has ruined many who lived in concord.
 14 A third tongue has shattered the peace of many
 and driven them from nation to nation,
 and has pulled down fortified cities,
 and overthrown the houses of the great.

8 In place of 'a hot-tempered man', the NJB has 'the hot-tempered'.

9 The NJB lacks the conjunctions at the start of each line.

10 For 'strife', the NJB has 'a quarrel'.

11 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'a hasty dispute leads to bloodshed'.

12 For the 3rd line, the NJB reads, "both are the effects of your mouth."

13 The WEBBE has 'whisperer' in place of 'gossip'.

14 The 'third tongue' is either the one that interferes in a quarrel, or the tongue that makes three victims: the slanderer himself, the listener and the person slandered (thus the *Talmud*); the NRSV uses 'the slanderer' in place of 'that third tongue'.

¹⁵ γλῶσσα τρίτη γυναῖκας ἀνδρείας ἐξέβαλεν
καὶ ἐστέρησεν αὐτὰς τῶν πόνων αὐτῶν.
¹⁶ ὁ προσέχων αὐτῇ οὐ μὴ εὖρη ἀνάπαυσιν
οὐδὲ κατασκηνώσει μεθ' ἡσυχίας.
¹⁷ πληγὴ μάστιγος ποιεῖ μῶλωπα,
πληγὴ δὲ γλώσσης συγκλάσει ὀστᾶ.
¹⁸ πολλοὶ ἔπεσαν ἐν στόματι μαχαίρας,
καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ πεπτωκότες διὰ γλῶσσαν.
¹⁹ μακάριος ὁ σκεπασθεὶς ἀπ' αὐτῆς,
ὃς οὐ διήλθεν ἐν τῷ θυμῷ αὐτῆς,
ὃς οὐκ εἴλκυσε τὸν ζυγὸν αὐτῆς
καὶ ἐν τοῖς δεσμοῖς αὐτῆς οὐκ ἐδέθη.
²⁰ ὁ γὰρ ζυγὸς αὐτῆς ζυγὸς σιδηροῦς,
καὶ οἱ δεσμοὶ αὐτῆς δεσμοὶ χάλκειοι.
²¹ θάνατος πονηρὸς ὁ θάνατος αὐτῆς,
καὶ λυσιτελεῖς μᾶλλον ὁ ἄδης αὐτῆς.
²² οὐ μὴ κρατήσῃ εὐσεβῶν,
καὶ ἐν τῇ φλογὶ αὐτῆς οὐ καήσονται.

¹⁵ A third tongue has cast out brave women
and deprived them of their labours.
¹⁶ He who listens to it will never find rest,
or will ever live in peace again.
¹⁷ A stroke of the whip raises a weal,
but a stroke of the tongue breaks bones.
¹⁸ Many have fallen by the edge of the sword,
but not so many as have fallen by the tongue.
¹⁹ Blessed is anyone who is sheltered from it,
and has not experienced its fury,
who has not dragged its yoke about
and been bound in its chains.
²⁰ For, its yoke is an iron yoke
and its fetters are bronze fetters.
²¹ The death it inflicts is a miserable death:
Sheol is preferable to it.
²² It cannot gain a hold over the devout
and they are not burnt by its flames.

¹⁵ For this verse, here following the NETS, the NJB has the last 2 lines of v. 14.

¹⁶ In place of 'find rest', the NJB has 'know peace of mind'.

¹⁷ For 'raises a weal', the WEBBE has 'makes a mark in the flesh'.

¹⁸ The NJB has 'many more' in place of 'not so many as'.

¹⁹ The NJB opens the 4th line with 'or' in place of 'and'.

²⁰ In place of 'fetters', here following the NETS (twice in this verse), the NJB has 'chains' and the WEBBE has 'bands'.

²¹ Sheol (Hades) is preferable to the living death inflicted by the evil tongue.

²² The comparison between the tongue and a fire is found again in Jm 3:5-6; but it may be asked whether Ben Sira, having launched into a description of personified Calumny, may not have lost the thread of his argument in his censures of the tongue as universal enemy.

²³ οἱ καταλείποντες κύριον ἐμπεσοῦνται εἰς αὐτήν,
καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐκκαήσεται καὶ οὐ μὴ σβεσθῆ·
ἐπαποσταλήσεται αὐτοῖς ὡς λέων
καὶ ὡς πάρδαλις λυμανεῖται αὐτούς.
²⁴ ἰδὲ περίφραξον τὸ κτήμιά σου ἀκάνθαις,
τὸ ἀργύριόν σου καὶ τὸ χρυσίον κατάδησον·
²⁵ καὶ τοῖς λόγοις σου ποίησον ζυγὸν καὶ σταθμὸν
καὶ τῷ στόματί σου ποίησον θύραν καὶ μοχλόν.
²⁶ πρόσεχε μήπως ὀλίσθῃς ἐν αὐτῇ,
μὴ πέσης κατέναντι ἐνεδρεύοντος.

²³ Those who desert the Lord will fall into it;
it will flare up inextinguishably among them.
It will be let loose among them like a lion;
it will tear them like a leopard.
²⁴ Be sure you put a thorn-hedge round your property;
lock away your silver and gold;
²⁵ and make scales and weights for your words,
and put a door with bolts across your mouth.
²⁶ Take care you take no false step through it,
in case you fall a prey to him who lies in wait.

²³ The subject of this verse is still the 'third tongue' of vv. 14 & 15.

²⁴ The NETS rearranges vv. 24–25, reading, “^{24a} See! Fence your property with thorns, ^{25b} and make for your mouth a door and a bolt. ^{24b} Lock up your silver and gold ^{25a} and make your words a balance and a weight.”

²⁵ Just as one protects valuables (v. 24), one should be careful about one's words.

²⁶ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, “lest you fall before one who lies in wait.”

Σοφία Σιραχ 29

- 1 Ὁ ποιῶν ἔλεος δανιεῖ τῷ πλησίον,
καὶ ὁ ἐπισχύων τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ τηρεῖ ἐντολάς.
- 2 δάνεισον τῷ πλησίον ἐν καιρῷ χρείας αὐτοῦ
καὶ πάλιν ἀπόδος τῷ πλησίον εἰς τὸν καιρὸν·
- 3 στερέωσον λόγον καὶ πιστώθητι μετ' αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ εὐρήσεις τὴν χρείαν σου.
- 4 πολλοὶ ὡς εὖρεμα ἐνόμισαν δάνος
καὶ παρέσχον κόπον τοῖς βοηθήσασιν αὐτοῖς.
- 5 ἕως οὗ λάβῃ, καταφιλήσει χεῖρας αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν χρημάτων τοῦ πλησίον ταπεινώσει φωνήν·
καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἀποδόσεως παρελκύσει χρόνον
καὶ ἀποδώσει λόγους ἀκηδίας
καὶ τὸν καιρὸν αἰτιάσεται.
- 6 εἰς ἰσχύση, μόλις κομίσεται τὸ ἥμισυ
καὶ λογιεῖται αὐτὸ ὡς εὖρεμα·
εἰ δὲ μή, ἀπεστέρησεν αὐτὸν τῶν χρημάτων αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἐκτήσατο αὐτὸν ἐχθρὸν δωρεάν·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 29

- 1 The merciful lend to their neighbours;
giving a helping hand is keeping the commandments.
- 2 Lend to your neighbour in his time of need
and, in your turn, repay your neighbour on time.
- 3 Be as good as your word and keep faith with him,
and you will find your needs met every time.
- 4 Many treat a loan as a windfall,
and embarrass those who have come to their rescue.
- 5 Until he receives it, he will kiss his hands,
and refer diffidently to his wealth;
and, when the loan falls due, he puts this off
and repays with offhand words,
and pleads the inconvenience of the time.
- 6 Even if he can pay, he will recover barely half
and consider even that a windfall;
But, otherwise, he will be cheated of his money,
and undeservedly gain himself an enemy.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 29

- 1 The 1st line here follows the LXX (& NRSV); the NJB, following the Peshitta, has, “*Making your neighbour a loan is an act of mercy.*”
- 2 Lending (without interest) to fellow Israelites is enjoined in the Law (Ex 22:24–25, Lv 25:35–37, Dt 15:7–11, cf. Ps 37:21,26, Mt 5:42); interest was allowed if one loaned to a Gentile (Dt 23:20–21).
- 3 If a loan is repaid on time, one can count on receiving a future loan.
- 4 The literal translation of ‘windfall’ is ‘something found’.
- 5 For the 1st line, here following the NETS, the NJB has, “*Until he gets something, a man will kiss his neighbour’s hand.*”
- 6 In place of ‘undeservedly’, here following the LXX and Peshitta and Vg, the Textus Receptus has ‘needlessly’.

κατάρας καὶ λοιδορίας ἀποδώσει αὐτῷ
καὶ ἀντὶ δόξης ἀποδώσει αὐτῷ ἀτιμίαν.
7 πολλοὶ οὐ χάριν πονηρίας ἀπέστρεψαν,
ἀποστέρηθῆναι δωρεὰν εὐλαβήθησαν.
8 Πλὴν ἐπὶ ταπεινῷ μακροθύμησον
καὶ ἐπ’ ἐλεημοσύνη μὴ παρελκύσης αὐτόν.
9 χάριν ἐντολῆς ἀντιλαβοῦ πένητος
καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἔνδειαν αὐτοῦ μὴ
ἀποστρέψῃς αὐτὸν κενόν.
10 ἀπόλεσον ἀργύριον δι’ ἀδελφὸν καὶ φίλον,
καὶ μὴ ἰωθῆτω ὑπὸ τὸν λίθον εἰς ἀπώλειαν.
11 θὺς τὸν θησαυρόν σου κατ’ ἐντολὰς ὑψίστου,
καὶ λυσιτελήσει σοι μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ χρυσίον.
12 σύγκλεισον ἐλεημοσύνην ἐν τοῖς ταμειείοις σου,
καὶ αὕτη ἐξελεῖταί σε ἐκ πάσης κακώσεως·
13 ὑπὲρ ἀσπίδα κράτους καὶ ὑπὲρ δόρυ ὀλκῆς
κατέναντι ἐχθροῦ πολεμήσει ὑπὲρ σοῦ.
14 Ἄνθρωπος ἀγαθὸς ἐγγυήσεται τὸν πλησίον,
καὶ ὁ ἀπολωλεκὼς αἰσχύνῃ ἐγκαταλείψει αὐτόν.

The man will pay him back in curses and abuse,
and with insults instead of honour.

- 7 Many, not out of malice, refuse to lend;
they are merely anxious not to be cheated for nothing.
- 8 However, be patient with he who is badly off:
do not keep him waiting on your generosity.
- 9 In obedience to the commandment, help the poor;
and, according to his need,
don’t send him empty away.
- 10 Spend your money on your brother or your friend;
and do not leave it under a stone to rust away.
- 11 Use your wealth as the Most High has decreed
and you will find that more profitable than gold.
- 12 Stock your storerooms with almsgiving
and it will save you from all misfortune.
- 13 Better than sturdy shield or weighty spear,
this will fight for you against the enemy.
- 14 A good man will go surety for his neighbour;
and a shameless wretch would desert him.

7 In place of ‘not out of malice’, here following the LXX and Peshitta and Vg, the *Textus Receptus* has ‘because of the wickedness (of those who borrow)’.

8 The NJB has ‘those who are’ in place of ‘he who is’.

9 The NJB ends, “do not turn the poor away empty-handed in their need.”

10 The idea of money rusting is strange.

11 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

12 For the 1st line, the NETS reads, “Store up charity in your treasuries.”

13 The WEBBE inverts the order of the 2 lines of this verse.

14 The NJB opens the 2nd line with ‘only’ in place of ‘and’.

15 χάριτας ἐγγύου μὴ ἐπιλάβῃ·
 ἔδωκεν γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ὑπὲρ σοῦ.
 16 ἀγαθὰ ἐγγύου ἀνατρέψει ἀμαρτωλός,
 καὶ ἀχάριστος ἐν διανοίᾳ ἐγκαταλείψει ῥυσάμενον.
 17 ἐγγύη πολλοὺς ἀπώλεσεν κατευθύνοντας
 καὶ ἐσάλευσεν αὐτοὺς ὡς κύμα θαλάσσης·
 18 ἄνδρας δυνατοὺς ἀπώκισεν,
 καὶ ἐπλανήθησαν ἐν ἔθνεσιν ἀλλοτρίοις.
 19 ἀμαρτωλὸς ἐμπεσὼν εἰς ἐγγύην
 καὶ διώκων ἐργολαβίας ἐμπεσεῖται εἰς κρίσεις.
 20 ἀντιλαβοῦ τοῦ πλησίον κατὰ δύνάμιν σου
 καὶ πρόσεχε σεαυτῷ μὴ ἐμπέσης.
 21 Ἄρχὴ ζωῆς ὕδωρ καὶ ἄρτος καὶ ἱμάτιον
 καὶ οἶκος καλύπτων ἀσχημοσύνην.
 22 κρείσσων βίος πτωχοῦ ὑπὸ σκέπην δοκῶν
 ἢ ἐδέσματα λαμπρὰ ἐν ἀλλοτρίοις.
 23 ἐπὶ μικρῷ καὶ μεγάλῳ εὐδοκίαν ἔχε,
 καὶ ὄνειδισμὸν παροικίας οὐ μὴ ἀκούσης.

15 Do not forget the favour of your guarantor;
 for, he has given his life for you.
 16 A sinner is careless of his guarantor's prosperity
 and the ungrateful forgets his deliverer.
 17 Going surety has ruined many who were prosperous,
 and tossed them about in a heavy sea.
 18 It has driven mighty men from home
 to wander among foreign nations.
 19 A wicked man in a hurry to stand guarantor,
 in the hope of profit, will fall into lawsuits.
 20 Come to your neighbour's help as far as you can,
 and take care not to fall into the same plight.
 21 The necessities of life are water, bread, and clothing,
 and a house for the sake of privacy.
 22 Better the life of the poor under a shelter of logs,
 than lavish fare in somebody else's house.
 23 Whether you have little or much, be content with it,
 and you will not hear your household complaining.

15 The NJB lacks the opening 'for' of the 2nd line.

16 The WEBBE & NETS include the 2nd line as v. 17; here, we follow Rahlf's verse divisions.

17 The WEBBE & NETS include this verse as part of v. 18.

18 In place of 'mighty men', the NJB has 'the powerful'.

19 The NJB ends with 'is hurrying to be sentenced' in place of 'will fall into lawsuits'.

20 The NJB opens the 2nd line with 'but' in place of 'and'.

21 These basic necessities are expanded in 39:26.

22 In place of 'shelter of logs', the NJB has 'roof of planks'.

23 An alternative reading for the 2nd line (lacking in some MSS and the WEBBE) is, "and do not let yourself be treated as a stranger."

24 ζωή πονηρὰ ἐξ οἰκίας εἰς οἰκίαν,
καὶ οὐ παροικήσεις, οὐκ ἀνοίξεις στόμα·
25 ξενιεῖς καὶ ποτιεῖς εἰς ἀχάριστα
καὶ πρὸς ἐπὶ τούτοις πικρὰ ἀκούσῃ
26 Πάρελθε, πάροικε, κόσμησον τράπεζαν,
καὶ εἴ τι ἐν τῇ χειρὶ σου, ψώμισόν με·
27 ἔξελθε, πάροικε, ἀπὸ προσώπου δόξης,
ἐπεξένωταί μοι ὁ ἀδελφός, χρεῖα τῆς οἰκίας.
28 βαρέα ταῦτα ἀνθρώπῳ ἔχοντι φρόνησιν,
ἐπιτίμησις οἰκίας καὶ ὄνειδισμὸς δανειστοῦ.

24 It is a miserable life, *going* from house to house;
and where you stay, you dare not open your mouth.
25 You will entertain and provide drink without thanks
and, besides this, you will hear rude words like these:
26 “Come along, stranger, lay the table;
and, with what you have in your hand, feed me!”
27 “Go away, stranger, make room for someone important;
my brother is coming to stay: I need the house!”
28 It is hard for the reasonable
to be begrudged hospitality, shamed like a debtor.

24 The Greek text lacks the verb, ‘going’, but it is implied.

25 In place of ‘entertain’, the NJB has ‘play the host’.

26 For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, “What have you got ready? Give me something to eat!”

27 A more literal translation of ‘stranger’ is ‘sojourner’.

28 The literal translation of the 2nd line is ‘to hear himself reproached as not belonging’ (following the Vg) or ‘to hear the house reproach him’ (following the LXX).

Σοφία Σιραχ 30

Περὶ τέκνων.

- 1 Ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐνδεδεχθήσεται
μάστιγας αὐτῷ,
ἵνα εὐφρανθῇ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων αὐτοῦ.
- 2 ὁ παιδεύων τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ὀνήσεται ἐπ' αὐτῷ
καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον γνωρίμων ἐπ' αὐτῷ καυχήσεται.
- 3 ὁ διδάσκων τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ παραζηλώσει τὸν ἐχθρὸν
καὶ ἔναντι φίλων ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἀγαλλιάσεται.
- 4 τελεύτησεν αὐτοῦ ὁ πατήρ, καὶ ὥς οὐκ ἀπέθανεν.
ὅμοιον γὰρ αὐτῷ κατέλιπεν μετ' αὐτόν.
- 5 ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ εἶδεν καὶ εὐφράνθη
καὶ ἐν τῇ τελευτῇ αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔλυπηθη.
- 6 ἐναντίον ἐχθρῶν κατέλιπεν ἔκδικον
καὶ τοῖς φίλοις ἀνταποδιδόντα χάριν.
- 7 περιψύχων υἱὸν καταδεσμεύσει τραύματα αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἐπὶ πάσῃ βοῇ ταραχθήσεται σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 30

CONCERNING CHILDREN

- 1 He who loves his own son will
beat him frequently,
so that in after years the son may be his comfort.
- 2 He who chastises his son will reap the benefit,
and will brag of him to his acquaintances.
- 3 He who educates his son will be the envy of his enemy,
and will be proud of him among his friends.
- 4 Even when the father dies, he might well not be dead,
since he leaves his likeness behind him.
- 5 In life, he has had the joy of his company;
and, dying, he has no anxiety.
- 6 He leaves an avenger against his enemies,
and one to repay the kindness of his friends.
- 7 Whoever spoils his son will bandage his wounds;
his heart will turn over at every cry.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 30

- 1 The heading at the start of this chapter follows *Greek* 248, the *NJB* & *NETS*.
- 2 In place of 'will brag', the *NJB* has 'be able to boast'.
- 3 For 'be proud of', the *NETS* has 'exalt'.
- 4 The child is the image of the father (see *Tb* 9:6).
- 5 The *NJB* lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 6 The 'avenger' here is in the one who has a right of redemption (*Ps* 127:5, *#Rt* 2:20), but also someone who is the defender of the oppressed.
- 7 The meaning of 'wounds' is uncertain - either those that the child sustains in the course of an ill-disciplined life, or those that the father sustains from his ungrateful child.

8 ἵππος ἀδάμαστος ἐκβαίνει σκληρός,
καὶ υἱὸς ἀνεμένος ἐκβαίνει προαλής.
9 τιθῆνησον τέκνον, καὶ ἐκθαμβήσει σε·
σύμπαιξον αὐτῷ, καὶ λυπήσει σε.
10 μὴ συγγελάσῃς αὐτῷ, ἵνα μὴ συνοδυνηθῆς,
καὶ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων γομφιάσεις τοὺς ὀδόντας σου.
11 μὴ δῶς αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν ἐν νεότητι·
καὶ μὴ παρίδῃς τὰς ἀγνοίας αὐτοῦ·
12 κάμψον τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ ἐν νεότητι,
καὶ θλάσον τὰς πλευρὰς αὐτοῦ, ὡς ἔστιν νήπιος,
μήποτε σκληρυνθεὶς ἀπειθήσῃ σοι,
καὶ ἔσται σοι ὀδύνη ψυχῆς.
13 παίδευσον τὸν υἱόν σου καὶ ἔργασαι ἐν αὐτῷ,
ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῇ ἀσχημοσύνῃ αὐτοῦ προσκόψῃς.
14 Κρείσσων πτωχὸς ὑγιῆς καὶ ἰσχύων τῇ ἔξει
ἢ πλούσιος μεμαστιγωμένος εἰς σῶμα αὐτοῦ.
15 ὑγίεια καὶ εὐεξία βελτίων παντὸς χρυσίου,
καὶ σῶμα εὖρωστον ἢ ὄλβος ἀμέτρητος.

8 A badly broken-in horse turns out stubborn;
and a son left to himself turns out headstrong.
9 Pamper your child and he will terrorise you;
play along with him and he will grieve you.
10 Do not laugh with him, lest you suffer with him
and end up gnashing your teeth.
11 While he is young, do not allow him his freedom
and do not overlook his ignorance.
12 Bend his neck in youth
and bruise his ribs while he is a child,
or else he will grow stubborn and disobedient,
and he will cause you distress of soul.
13 Be strict with your son, and persevere with him,
or you will rue his insolence.
14 Better be poor if healthy and fit
than rich if tormented in body.
15 Health and strength are better than any gold,
and a robust body than untold wealth.

8 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "An unrestrained son becomes headstrong."

9 In place of 'grieve you', the NJB has 'bring you sorrow'.

10 The NJB ends the 1st line, "or one day you will weep with him."

11 The LXX lacks the 2nd line, here following the Greek 248 MS, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ואל תשא לשחיתותיו), and the Peshitta.

12 The LXX lacks the 1st & 4th lines of this verse, here following Greek 248 & Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ובקע מתניו כשהוא קטן ... כפתן על חי תפגע).

13 In place of 'persevere with him', here following the LXX & NJB, the NRSV & Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (יסר בנד והכבד עליו), has 'make his yoke heavy'.

14 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads very similarly: טוב מסכן וחי בעצמו מעשיר ונגע בבשרו ("Better he who is poor and healthy in his body than a rich man plagued in his flesh.")

15 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads: חיי שר אויתי מפז ורוח טובה מפנינים ("Health of flesh I desire more than fine gold and a joyful spirit more than rubies.")

- 16 οὐκ ἔστιν πλοῦτος βελτίων ὑγείας σώματος,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν εὐφροσύνη ὑπὲρ χαρὰν καρδίας.
17 κρείσσω θάνατος ὑπὲρ ζωὴν πικρὰν
καὶ ἀνάπαυσις αἰῶνος ἢ ἀρρώστημα ἔμμονον.

Περὶ βρωμάτων

- 18 ἀγαθὰ ἐκκεχυμένα ἐπὶ στόματι κεκλεισμένῳ
δέματα βρωμάτων παρακείμενα ἐπὶ τάφῳ.
19 τί συμφέρει κάρπωσις εἰδώλῳ;
οὔτε γὰρ ἔδεται οὔτε μὴ ὀσφρανθῆι.
οὔτως ὁ ἐκδιωκόμενος ὑπὸ κυρίου.
20 βλέπων ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ στενάζων
ὥσπερ εὐνοῦχος περιλαμβάνων παρθένον καὶ στενάζων.
21 Μὴ δῶς εἰς λύπην τὴν ψυχὴν σου
καὶ μὴ θλίψῃς σεαυτὸν ἐν βουλήῃ σου.
22 εὐφροσύνη καρδίας ζωὴ ἀνθρώπου,

- 16 No riches can outweigh a healthy body
and no enjoyment surpasses a cheerful heart.
17 Better death than a wretched life,
and everlasting rest than chronic illness.

CONCERNING FOODS

- 18 Good things lavished on a closed mouth
are like food offerings put on a grave.
19 What use is an offering to an idol,
which can neither eat nor smell?
So is the one punished by the Lord:
20 He sees with his eyes and groans
like a eunuch embracing a pretty girl – how he groans.
21 Do not abandon yourself to sorrow
and do not torment yourself with brooding.
22 Gladness of heart is the life of a man

- 16 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads: אין עושר על עושר שר עצם ואין טובה על טוב לבב ("There is no wealth above the wealth of sound belly and no good above goodness of one's heart.")
17 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' adds a couplet: טוב למות מחיי שוא ונוחת עולם מכאב נאמן טוב למות מחיים רעים ולירד שאול מכאב עומד ("Better is death than a life of vanity, and eternal rest than continual pain. Better is death than life that is evil, and to go down to Sheol than lasting pain.")
18 The heading before this verse here follows Greek 248 and the NJB; some MSS (and the NETS) place it before v. 16. In place of 'on a grave', here following Rahlfs' Greek text (ἐπὶ τάφῳ), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (לפני גלול) and some LXX MSS have 'in front of an idol'.
19 The last line refers to the sick, who can take no food. Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "Thus it is with [he who has] wealth and cannot enjoy it," but the text (לו עושר ואין נהנה ממנו בעינו) [...] מי (כן) is probably corrupt; in that MS, the entire verse is written in the margin, in vertical text.
20 At the end of this verse, some MSS add, 'So is the person who does right under compulsion' and Cairo Genizah MS 'B' adds 'And the Lord will require it from his hand' (ויי מבקש מידו).
21 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads: אל תתן לדין נפשך ואל תכשל בעונך ("Do not give your soul to sorrow and do not stumble by your iniquity.")
22 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads: שמחת לבב הם חיי איש וגיל אדם האריך אפו ("Joy of heart is the life of a man and a man's joy makes him slow to anger.")

καὶ ἀγαλλίαμα ἀνδρὸς μακροημέρευσις.
23 ἀπάτα τὴν ψυχὴν σου καὶ παρακάλει τὴν καρδίαν σου
καὶ λύπην μακρὰν ἀπόστησον ἀπὸ σοῦ·
πολλοὺς γὰρ ἀπώλεσεν ἡ λύπη,
καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὠφέλεια ἐν αὐτῇ.
24 ζῆλος καὶ θυμὸς ἐλαττοῦσιν ἡμέρας,
καὶ πρὸ καιροῦ γῆρας ἄγει μέριμνα.
25 λαμπρὰ καρδία καὶ ἀγαθὴ ἐπὶ ἐδέσμασιν
τῶν βρωμάτων αὐτῆς ἐπιμελήσεται.

and joy gives length to a man's days.
23 Beguile your soul and console your heart,
and chase sorrow far away;
for sorrow has been the ruin of many,
and is no use to anybody.
24 Jealousy and anger shorten your days,
and worry brings premature old age.
25 He who is cheerful of heart and merry,
will enjoy his good meal.

23 In place of 'Beguile your soul', here following the LXX (ἀπάτα τὴν ψυχὴν σου), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'Relax your soul' (פת נפשך) and the NRSV has 'indulge yourself'; the NJB has 'give your cares the slip'.

24 The LXX places 33:16–36:10 after this verse; the Peshitta and Vg preserve the original order, which is also attested by Cairo Genizah MS 'B'.

25 For the 2nd line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'and his food will rise above him' (ומאכלו יעלה עליו).

Σοφία Σιραχ 31

- ¹ Ἀγρυπνία πλούτου ἐκτῆκει σάρκας,
καὶ ἡ μέριμνα αὐτοῦ ἀφιστᾷ ὕπνον.
- ² μέριμνα ἀγρυπνίας ἀποστήσει νυσταγμόν,
καὶ ἀρρώστημα βαρὺ ἐκνήψει ὕπνον.
- ³ ἐκοπίασεν πλούσιος ἐν συναγωγῇ χρημάτων
καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀναπαύσει
ἐμπίμπλαται τῶν τρυφημάτων αὐτοῦ.
- ⁴ ἐκοπίασεν πτωχὸς ἐν ἐλαττώσει βίου
καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀναπαύσει
ἐπιθεῆς γίνεται.
- ⁵ Ὁ ἀγαπῶν χρυσίον οὐ δικαιωθήσεται,
καὶ ὁ διώκων διάφορα ἐν αὐτοῖς πλανηθήσεται.
- ⁶ πολλοὶ ἐδόθησαν εἰς πτώμα χάριν χρυσίου,
καὶ ἐγενήθη ἡ ἀπώλεια αὐτῶν κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 31

- ¹ Sleeplessness over wealth consumes the flesh;
and anxiety about it drives away sleep.
- ² Anxiety over wakefulness prevents you from sleeping;
like a serious illness, it keeps sleep at bay.
- ³ The rich forever toils, piling up money,
and then, leaving off,
he is gorged with luxuries.
- ⁴ The poor forever toils, barely making a living,
and then, leaving off,
he is poorer than ever.
- ⁵ No one who loves money can easily avoid sinning;
and he who pursues profits will be led astray by them.
- ⁶ Gold has been the ruin of many;
their coming destruction was self-evident.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 31

- ¹ For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads slightly differently: דאגת מחיה תפריע נומה (*'anxiety about life disturbs sleep'*).
- ² 'Prevent you from sleeping' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (דאגת מחיה תפריג נומה); the LXX has 'summon sleep'. For the 2nd line, some MSS read, "sleep carries off a severe illness."
- ³ For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads: ואם ינוח לקבל תענוג (*'and, if he rests, it is to take pleasure'*).
- ⁴ For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads: יגע עני לחסר ביתו (*'The poor toils for the lack of his house'*) and adds the following couplet at the end of the verse: עמל עני לחסר כחו ואם ינוח לא נחה לו (*'The poor toils to the detriment of his strength; and, if he rests, it will be no respite.'*)
- ⁵ For the 2nd line, here following the LXX and NETS, the NJB, following Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ואוהב מחיר בו ישגה) has, "whoever pursues profit will be corrupted by it."
- ⁶ For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "They have put their trust in pearls, they have not succeeded in escaping from disaster, nor in being saved on the day of retribution." (רבים היו חבולי זהב והבוטח על פנינים: ולא מצאו להנצל מרעה וגם להושע ביום עברה)

7 ξύλον προσκόμματός ἐστὶν τοῖς ἐνθουσιάζουσιν αὐτῷ,
καὶ πᾶς ἄφρων ἀλώσεται ἐν αὐτῷ.
8 μακάριος πλούσιος, ὃς εὐρέθη ἄμωμος
καὶ ὃς ὀπίσω χρυσίου οὐκ ἐπορεύθη.
9 τίς ἐστίν; καὶ μακαριοῦμεν αὐτόν.
ἐποίησεν γὰρ θαυμάσια ἐν λαῷ αὐτοῦ.
10 τίς ἐδοκιμάσθη ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐτελειώθη;
καὶ ἔσται αὐτῷ εἰς καύχησιν.
τίς ἐδύνατο παραβῆναι καὶ οὐ παρέβη,
καὶ ποιῆσαι κακὰ καὶ οὐκ ἐποίησεν;
11 στερεωθήσεται τὰ ἀγαθὰ αὐτοῦ,
καὶ τὰς ἐλεημοσύνας αὐτοῦ ἐκδιηγῆσεται ἐκκλησία.

ידחי ייןי וסחל רמוז

12 Ἐπὶ τραπέζης μεγάλης ἐκάθισας;
μὴ ἀνοιξῆς ἐπ' αὐτῆς φάρυγγά σου
καὶ μὴ εἴπῃς Πολλὰ γε τὰ ἐπ' αὐτῆς.
13 μνήσθητι ὅτι κακὸν ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρός.

7 It is a stumbling block for those who sacrifice to it
and stupid people all get caught in it.
8 Happy is the rich who is found to be blameless
and does not go chasing after gold.
9 Who is he, so that we can congratulate him?
For, he has achieved marvels among his fellows.
10 Who has been through this test and emerged perfect?
He may well be proud of that!
Who has had the chance to sin and has not sinned,
and to do wrong and has not done it?
11 His fortune will be firmly based
and the assembly will acclaim his generosity.

DISCIPLINE – BREAD AND WINE TOGETHER

12 If you are sitting down to a lavish table,
do not display your greed,
do not say, “What a lot to eat!”
13 Remember, it is bad to have a greedy eye.

-
- 7 The NJB has ‘snare’ in place of ‘stumbling block’, here following the NRSV. Grammatically, this refers back to the gold of v. 6, but the author is perhaps thinking of an idol, which would justify the reading ‘those who sacrifice to it’ (the *Textus Receptus* has ‘those who are mad’).
- 8 ‘Gold’ translates the Hebrew word רַמּוּז (*riches*), a word of Aramaic origin often used in rabbinical literature, and see Mt 6:24, Lk 16:9,11,13.
- 9 Ben Sira has strict views concerning the rich, and the implication of vv. 9–11 is that few rich people are also just.
- 10 After the opening ‘and’ of the last line, the NJB repeats ‘had the chance’ from the previous line.
- 11 The 2nd line is probably an allusion to the practice of proclaiming the names of benefactors to the community, in the synagogue. The Vg reads, “and the entire assembly of holy people will publish his good works.” (*et eleemosynas illius enarrabit omnis ecclesia sanctorum*)
- 12 The subtitle, here following Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’, does not appear in the LXX. In place of ‘a lavish table’, here following the LXX and NJB, the NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ and the Peshitta, has ‘the table of the great’.
- 13 In place of ‘on every face’, Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ has ‘always’ and the NRSV has ‘for any reason’.

πονηρότερον ὀφθαλμοῦ τί ἔκτισται;
 διὰ τοῦτο ἀπὸ παντὸς προσώπου δακρῦει.
14 οὐδ' ἐὰν ἐπιβλέψῃ, μὴ ἐκτείνῃς χεῖρα
 καὶ μὴ συνθλίβῃς αὐτῷ ἐν τρυβλίῳ.
15 νόει τὰ τοῦ πλησίον ἐκ σεαυτοῦ
 καὶ ἐπὶ παντὶ πράγματι διανοοῦ.
16 φάγε ὡς ἄνθρωπος τὰ παρακειμένα σοι
 καὶ μὴ διαμασῶ, μὴ μισηθῆς.
17 παῦσαι πρῶτος χάριν παιδείας
 καὶ μὴ ἀπληστεύου, μήποτε προσκόψῃς.
18 καὶ εἰ ἀνὰ μέσον πλειόνων ἐκάθισας,
 πρότερος αὐτῶν μὴ ἐκτείνῃς τὴν χεῖρά σου.
19 Ὡς ἱκανὸν ἀνθρώπῳ πεπαιδευμένῳ τὸ ὀλίγον,
 καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς κοίτης αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἀσθμαίνει.
20 ὕπνος ὑγιείας ἐπὶ ἐντέρῳ μετρίῳ·
 ἀνέστη πρωί, καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ μετ' αὐτοῦ.
 πόνος ἀγρυπνίας καὶ χολέρας
 καὶ στρόφος μετὰ ἀνδρὸς ἀπλήστου·
21 καὶ εἰ ἐβιάσθῃς ἐν ἐδέσμασιν,

Is any creature greedier than the eye?
 That is why it is weeping on every face!
14 Do not stretch your hand wherever it looks
 and do not jostle him at the dish.
15 Judge your fellow guest's needs by your own;
 be thoughtful in every way.
16 Eat what if offered you like a man;
 do not wolf your food or you will earn dislike.
17 For politeness' sake, be the first to stop;
 do not act the glutton, lest you give offence.
18 If you are sitting with a large party,
 do not help yourself before the others do.
19 A little is quite enough for a well-bred person;
 his breathing is easy when he lies in bed.
20 A moderate diet ensures sound sleep:
 one gets up early, in the best of spirits.
 Sleeplessness, biliousness, and gripe
 are what the glutton has to endure.
21 And, if you are forced to eat too much,

14 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'and do not put your hand in the same basket as his' (וואל דיחד עמו בטנא).

15 For the 2nd line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has, "and think of what you yourself dislike." (ובכל ששנאת התבונן).

16 In place of 'man', here following the LXX (ἄνθρωπος), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'well bought-up person' (הסב כאיש אשר נבחר).

17 For 'lest you give offence', Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'lest you be abhorred by others'.

18 The literal translation of 'help yourself' is 'reach out your hand'.

19 The WEBBE has 'well-mannered' in place of 'well-bred'. In Cairo Genizah MS 'B', the 1st line of this verse appears in the middle of v. 22.

20 The NETS gives alternate numbers for this verse (in parentheses): 24 for the first 2 lines and 23 for the last 2.

21 In place of 'in the middle of it', here following the LXX, the NETS has 'and vomit'.

ἀνάστα ἔμεσον πόρρω, καὶ ἀναπαύσῃ.
 22 ἄκουσόν μου, τέκνον, καὶ μὴ ἐξουθενήσῃς με,
 καὶ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων εὐρήσεις τοὺς λόγους μου·
 ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις σου γίνου ἐντρεχής,
 καὶ πᾶν ἀρρώστημα οὐ μὴ σοι ἀπαντήσῃ.
 23 λαμπρὸν ἐπ' ἄρτοις εὐλογήσῃ χειρὶ,
 καὶ ἡ μαρτυρία τῆς καλλονῆς αὐτοῦ πιστή.
 24 πονηρῶ ἐπ' ἄρτω διαγογγύσει πόλις,
 καὶ ἡ μαρτυρία τῆς πονηρίας αὐτοῦ ἀκριβής.
 25 Ἐν οἴνῳ μὴ ἀνδρίζου·
 πολλοὺς γὰρ ἀπώλεσεν ὁ οἶνος.
 26 κάμινος δοκιμάζει στόμωμα ἐν βαφῇ,
 οὕτως οἶνος καρδίας ἐν μάχῃ ὑπερηφάνων.
 27 ἔφισον ζωῆς οἶνος ἀνθρώποις,
 ἐὰν πίνῃς αὐτὸν ἐν μέτρῳ αὐτοῦ.
 τίς ζωὴ ἐλασσομένῳ οἴνῳ;
 καὶ αὐτὸς ἔκτισται εἰς εὐφροσύνην ἀνθρώποις.
 28 ἀγαλλίαμα καρδίας καὶ εὐφροσύνη ψυχῆς
 οἶνος πινόμενος ἐν καιρῶ αὐτάρκειας·

get up in the middle of it and you will feel better.
 22 Listen to me, my child, do not disregard me;
 eventually, you will see the force of my words.
 Be diligent in all your activities
 and illness will never overtake you.
 23 People praise the person who keeps a splendid table,
 and the testimony of his excellence will be believed.
 24 A niggardly host provokes universal resentment
 and the testimony of his stinginess will be accurate.
 25 Do not play the valiant at your wine;
 for, wine has been the undoing of many.
 26 As the furnace tests the hardness of steel,
 wine proves hearts in the drinking bouts of braggarts.
 27 Wine is as life for men
 if it is drunk in moderation.
 What is life worth without wine?
 And it came into being to make men happy.
 28 Joy of heart and gladness of soul
 is wine drunk in season and in moderation.

22 In place of 'diligent', here following the LXX (ἐντρεχής), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'discrete' (צנוע).

23 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "and their opinion of his munificence is sound."

24 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "and people will retail instances of his meanness."

25 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'for, drink is an immense stumbling-block' (כי רבים הכשיל תירוש).

26 In place of 'hardness of steel', here following the LXX & NJB, the NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (מעשה לוטש), has 'work of the smith'.

27 Wine is a staple food in Mediterranean countries (Ps 104:15).

28 For the 2nd line, the translation of the Cairo Genizah MS 'B' text (יין נשתה [..] תו [בעת] וראי) is unclear; a possible reading is 'wine drunk in its [right] time and appearance'; MS 'F' includes this verse but the text of the 2nd line is mostly missing due to a torn page.

- ²⁹ πικρία ψυχῆς οἴνος πινόμενος πολὺς
ἐν ἐρεθισμῶ καὶ ἀντιπτώματι.
- ³⁰ πληθύνει μέθῃ θυμὸν ἄφρονος εἰς πρόσκομμα
ἐλαττῶν ἰσχὺν καὶ προσποιῶν τραύματα.
- ³¹ ἐν συμποσίῳ οἴνου μὴ ἐλέγξης τὸν πλησίον
καὶ μὴ ἐξουθενήσης αὐτὸν ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ αὐτοῦ·
λόγον ὀνειδισμοῦ μὴ εἴπῃς αὐτῶ
καὶ μὴ αὐτὸν θλίψῃς ἐν ἀπαιτήσει.

- ²⁹ Bitterness of soul comes of wine drunk to excess
out of temper or bravado.
- ³⁰ Drunkenness excites the fool to a fury, to his harm;
it reduces his strength and adds wounds.
- ³¹ Do not provoke your fellow guest at a wine feast;
and do not make fun of him in his mirth;
do not take him to task
and do not annoy him by demanding payment.

²⁹ The 2nd line, the translation of which is uncertain, here follows the *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (יין נשתה בתחרה וכעס) and NJB; the *NRSV*, following the *LXX*, has 'to quarrels and stumbling'.

³⁰ In place of 'and adds wounds', the NJB has 'while leading to blows'. For the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah MSS 'F' & 'B'* have 'Red wine is often a snare to a fool' (מרבה חמר לכסיל נוקש).

³¹ At the end of this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'F'* adds ואל תקמיעהו בנגשה ואל תריב עמו לעיני כל ארם ('and do not contend with him in the sight of all the people present').

Σοφία Σιραχ 32

- ¹ Ἡγούμενον σε κατέστησαν; μὴ ἐπαίρου·
γίνου ἐν αὐτοῖς ὡς εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν,
φρόντισον αὐτῶν καὶ οὕτω κάθισον·
- ² καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν χρεῖαν σου ποιήσας ἀνάπεσε,
ἵνα εὐφρανθῆς δι' αὐτοὺς
καὶ εὐκοσμίας χάριν λάβῃς στέφανον.
- ³ Λάλησον, πρεσβύτερε, πρέπει γάρ σοι,
ἐν ἀκριβεῖ ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ μὴ ἐμποδίσῃς μουσικά.
- ⁴ ὅπου ἀκρόαμα, μὴ ἐκχέῃς λαλιὰν
καὶ ἀκαίρως μὴ σοφίζου.
- ⁵ σφραγὶς ἄνδρακος ἐπὶ κόσμῳ χρυσῷ
σύγκριμα μουσικῶν ἐν συμποσίῳ οἴνου·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 32

- ¹ Did they make you feast master? Do not exalt yourself;
behave like everyone else in the party,
see that they are happy, then sit down yourself.
- ² Having discharged your duties, take your place,
so your joy may be through theirs,
and you may receive the crown for your competence.
- ³ Speak, old man – it is proper that you should –
but with discretion: do not spoil the music.
- ⁴ If someone is singing, do not ramble on,
and do not play the sage at the wrong moment.
- ⁵ An amber seal on a precious stone:
such is a concert of music at a wine feast.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 32

- ¹ The 1st line of this verse is illegible in *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* and, in the margin preceding the 2nd line, there is a 'Persian gloss', stating that "This half of the verse is found with the verse in the other MSS." MS 'F' has a much longer text, reading, "If you are appointed as head of a banquet, do not be puffed up; and do not take a prominent place among the rich but conduct yourself as one of the guests among them. Take care of them and go around after them." (ראש סמוך אל תותר. ובראש עשירים אל תסתורה והיה לך כאחד מהם דאג להם ואחר תסוב. הבו צרכם ובכן תרביץ:)
- ² On festal crowns, see *Ws* 2:8, *Is* 28:1–4.
- ³ The term here translated as 'music' can mean music, singing or any artistic performance, recited poetry, or dramatic interlude.
- ⁴ For this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads, "Do not drone on in the banquet-hall; for, what is the use of stopping the music in order to drone on? What is the use of showing your wisdom when it is not the right time to do it?" (במקום היין אל תשפך שיח ובלא מזמר מה תשפך שיח ובל עת מה תתחכם:) and *Cairo Genizah MS 'F'* has a shorter version, "Do not drone on in the hall of understanding and there should be no stopping of a psalm – do not drone on." (במקום שכל אל תשפך שיח. ובלא מזמור אל שיח תשפך:)
- ⁵ *Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'F'* read rather longer versions of this verse; MS 'B' reads, "Like a seal on a purse full of gold is a hymn at a banquet; like a ruby jewel in a clasp is the right song at a banquet." (כחותם על כיס זהב שיר אל על משתה היין: כומז אודם על ניב זהב משפט שיר על משתה היין:)

6 ἐν κατασκευάσματι χρυσῷ σφραγὶς σμαράγδου
μέλος μουσικῶν ἐφ' ἠδεῖ οἴνω.

7 Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, εἰ χρεία σου,
μόλις δις ἂν ἐπερωτηθῆς·

8 κεφαλαίωσον λόγον, ἐν ὀλίγοις πολλά·
γίνου ὡς γινώσκων καὶ ἅμα σιωπῶν.

9 ἐν μέσῳ μεγιστάνων μὴ ἐξισάζου
καὶ ἑτέρου λέγοντος μὴ πολλά ἀδολέσχει.

10 πρὸ βροντῆς κατασπεύδει ἀστραπή,
καὶ πρὸ αἰσχυνηροῦ προελεύσεται χάρις.

11 ἐν ὥρᾳ ἐξεγείρου καὶ μὴ οὐράγει,
ἀπότρεχε εἰς οἶκον καὶ μὴ ῥαδύμει·

12 ἐκεῖ παῖζε καὶ ποίει τὰ ἐνθυμήματά σου
καὶ μὴ ἀμάρτης λόγῳ ὑπερηφάνῳ.

13 καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις εὐλόγησον τὸν ποιήσαντά σε
καὶ μεθύσκοντά σε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀγαθῶν αὐτοῦ.

6 An emerald seal in a golden setting,
such are strains of music with a sweet wine.

7 Speak, young man, when you must,
but twice at most, and then only if asked.

8 Keep to the point, say much in few words;
be as one who knows and yet holds his tongue.

9 Among the great, do not act as their equal;
and do not babble when another is speaking.

10 Lightning comes before the thunder
and favour goes ahead of a modest person.

11 Leave in good time and do not be last,
and hurry home without loitering.

12 There amuse yourself, and do what you have a mind to,
but do not sin by arrogant talk.

13 Above all, bless the One who made you,
and intoxicates you with his favours.

and MS 'F' has, "Like a seal on a purse full of gold is singing to God at a banquet. Like a ruby jewel on a platter of gold is the right song at a banquet."
(כחותם על כיס זהב. שירת אל על משתה היין: כומו אדם על טס זהוב. משפט שיר על משתה היין:)

- 6 In place of 'sweet wine', Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'F' have 'new wine' (רירוש in MS 'B' and תירוש, raised and in small letters, in MS 'F').
- 7 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'F' reads, 'if someone asks you two or three times' (פעמים ושלוש אם ישאלך) and MS 'B' has 'if pressed, twice or if someone asks you three times' (בחזק פעמים ושלוש אם ישאלך).
- 8 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads 'be like the learned – reticent as they are' (ודמה ליודע ומחריש יחדו). Vv. 8–11 are missing in MS 'F'.
- 9 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads 'and do not lift yourself up as a nuisance to princes' (ושרים אל תרב לטרד).
- 10 The NJB & WEBBE lack the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 11 In place of 'be last', the NJB has 'bring up the rear'.
- 12 The 2nd line here follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' has, "in the fear of God and not in poverty." (ביראת אל ולא בחסר כל)
- 13 In place of 'the One who made you', here following the NETS, the NJB has 'your Creator'.

14 Ὁ φοβούμενος κύριον ἐκδέξεται παιδείαν,
καὶ οἱ ὀρδρίζοντες εὐρήσουσιν εὐδοκίαν.
15 ὁ ζητῶν νόμον ἐμπλησθήσεται αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ὁ ὑποκρινόμενος σκανδαλισθήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ.
16 οἱ φοβούμενοι κύριον εὐρήσουσιν κρίμα
καὶ δικαιώματα ὡς φῶς ἐξάψουσιν.
17 ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐκκλινεῖ ἐλεγμὸν
καὶ κατὰ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ εὐρήσει σύγκριμα.
18 Ἄνηρ βουλῆς οὐ μὴ παρίδῃ διανόημα,
ἀλλότριος καὶ ὑπερήφανος οὐ καταπτῆξει φόβον.
19 ἄνευ βουλῆς μηδὲν ποιήσης
καὶ ἐν τῷ ποιῆσαί σε μὴ μεταμελοῦ.
20 ἐν ὁδῷ ἀντιπτώματος μὴ πορεύου
καὶ μὴ προσκόψης ἐν λιθώδεσιν.
21 μὴ πιστεύσης ἐν ὁδῷ ἀπροσκόπῳ

14 He who fears the Lord will accept his discipline
and those who seek him will win his favour.
15 He who seeks the Law will be nourished by it
and the hypocrite will find it a stumbling block.
16 Those who fear the Lord win his approval,
their good deeds shining like a light.
17 The sinner waves reproof aside:
he finds an excuse for headstrong behaviour.
18 A sensible person never scorns a warning;
the insolent and proud do not know about fear.
19 Never act without reflection,
and you will not regret your actions.
20 Do not venture on a rough road,
for fear of stumbling over the stones.
21 Do not be over-confident on an even road

14 Discipline (*παιδείαν*, Hebrew מוסר) is a frequent topic for Ben Sira (cf. 6:18).

15 Cairo Genizah MS 'F' omits this verse (but it is present in MS 'B'). MS 'E' begins at this point, with the 1st column of the initial 6 lines ending with what appear to be strophe markers (vaguely resembling the *ole* cantillation mark); in [our Hebrew text](#), we have followed Bentjees in representing these as ‹ characters (Abegg ignores them). [This note is based on an answer posted on [Biblical Hermeneutics](#).]

16 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'F' read, 'and will bring forth counsel from darkness' (ותחבולות מנשה יוצי).

17 The 2nd line here follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'he does violence to the Law'.

18 This verse follows the LXX (but using 'insolent' in place of 'alien') Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'F' read, "The wise does not conceal wisdom; the proud and the godless do not guard their tongues." (איש לא יכסה חכמה. ולץ לא ישמור לשונו)

19 An alternative reading for this verse is, "Do not change your mind once you are actually doing something."

20 For 'over the stones', here following the LXX, the NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS 'B', has 'at an offence twice' (ואל תתקל בנגף פעמים).

21 An alternative translation for 'even' is 'unexplored'.

²² καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν τέκνων σου φύλαξαι.
²³ ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ πίστευε τῇ ψυχῇ σου·
καὶ γὰρ τοῦτό ἐστιν τήρησις ἐντολῶν.
²⁴ ὁ πιστεύων νόμῳ προσέχει ἐντολαῖς,
καὶ ὁ πεποιθὼς κυρίῳ οὐκ ἐλαττωθήσεται.

²² and beware of your children.
²³ Watch yourself in everything you do;
this is also the way to keep the commandments.
²⁴ Anyone who trusts in the Law preserves himself;
and no one who trusts the Lord will come to harm.

²² This verse follows the LXX (and NJB); the NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS 'F' has, 'and give good heed to your paths' (ובאחריתך היה זהיר) – and alternative translation is 'and be wary of your latter end'.
²³ 'Watch yourself' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (שמור נפשך) and the Peshitta; the LXX has 'rely on yourself'.
²⁴ In place of 'preserves himself', here following the Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (שומר נפשו) and NRSV, the NJB, following the LXX, has 'obeys its precepts'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 33

- 1 Τῷ φοβουμένῳ κύριον οὐκ ἀπαντήσῃ κακόν,
ἀλλ' ἐν πειρασμῶ καὶ πάλιν ἐξελεῖται.
- 2 ἀνὴρ σοφὸς οὐ μισήσῃ νόμον,
ὁ δὲ ὑποκρινόμενος ἐν αὐτῷ ὡς ἐν καταιγίδι πλοῖον.
- 3 ἄνθρωπος συνετὸς ἐμπιστεύσει νόμῳ,
καὶ ὁ νόμος αὐτῷ πιστὸς ὡς ἐρώτημα δήλων.
- 4 ἐτοίμασον λόγον καὶ οὕτως ἀκουσθήσῃ,
σύνδησον παιδείαν καὶ ἀποκρίθητι.
- 5 τροχὸς ἀμάξης σπλάγχνα μωροῦ,
καὶ ὡς ἄξων στρεφόμενος ὁ διαλογισμὸς αὐτοῦ.
- 6 ἵππος εἰς ὀχείαν ὡς φίλος μωκός,
ὑποκάτω παντὸς ἐπικαθημένου χρεμετίζει.
- 7 Διὰ τί ἡμέρα ἡμέρας ὑπερέχει,
καὶ πᾶν φῶς ἡμέρας ἐνιαυτοῦ ἀφ' ἡλίου;

WISDOM OF SIRACH 33

- 1 No evil will befall he who fears the Lord;
but he will be rescued even in the ordeal.
- 2 A wise man will not hate the Law;
but he who is a hypocrite with it is a storm-tossed ship.
- 3 An intelligent person will put faith in the Law;
for such a one, the Law is as dependable as prophecy.
- 4 Prepare your speech and you will get a hearing;
marshal your information before you answer.
- 5 The feelings of a fool are like a cartwheel;
and a fool's thought revolves like a turning axle.
- 6 A willing horse is like a sarcastic friend;
he neighs, whoever rides him.
- 7 Why is one day better than another,
if the sun gives the same light for all days of the year?

WISDOM OF SIRACH 33

- 1 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MSS 'B', 'E' & 'F' read 'for, though often in flight, he will always escape' (כִּי אִם בְּנִסּוּי יִשׁוּב וְנִמְלֵט). In MS 'E', the 1st column of the initial 7 lines of this chapter (and some other lines) end with what appear to be strophe markers (vaguely resembling the *ole* cantillation mark); in [our Hebrew text](#), we have followed Bentjees in representing these as < characters (Abegg ignores them). [This note is based on an answer posted on [Biblical Hermeneutics](#).]
- 2 The 1st line here follows the LXX & NRSV; Cairo Genizah MSS 'B', & 'F' read, 'He who hates the Law does not act wisely' (לֹא יִחְכַּם שׁוֹנֵא תוֹרָה).
- 3 After this verse, there are several pages missing from Cairo Genizah MS 'B', with the text taking up at 35:11; MS 'E' & 'F' omit this verse.
- 4 In place of 'you will get a hearing', here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'F' has 'then act' (וְאַחַר תַּעֲשֶׂה).
- 5 Cairo Genizah MSS 'F' has 'wheel' in place of 'axle'.
- 6 The NJB has 'rutting stallion' in place of 'willing horse'.
- 7 This is not a question about the variable length of daylight but one about the differing dignity of feast days and ordinary days (see v. 9).

8 ἐν γνώσει κυρίου διεχωρίσθησαν,
καὶ ἡλλοίωσεν καιροὺς καὶ ἑορτάς·

9 ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀνύψωσεν καὶ ἡγίασεν
καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἔδηκεν εἰς ἀριθμὸν ἡμερῶν.

10 καὶ ἄνθρωποι πάντες ἀπὸ ἐδάφους,
καὶ ἐκ γῆς ἐκτίσθη Ἀδαμ·

11 ἐν πλήθει ἐπιστήμης κύριος διεχώρισεν αὐτοὺς
καὶ ἡλλοίωσεν τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῶν·

12 ἐξ αὐτῶν εὐλόγησεν καὶ ἀνύψωσεν
καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἡγίασεν καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡγγισεν·
ἀπ' αὐτῶν κατηράσατο καὶ ἔταπείνωσεν
καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ στάσεως αὐτῶν.

13 ὡς πηλὸς κεραμέως ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ
– πᾶσαι αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν αὐτοῦ – ,
οὕτως ἄνθρωποι ἐν χειρὶ τοῦ ποιήσαντος αὐτοὺς
ἀποδοῦναι αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὴν κρίσιν αὐτοῦ.

14 ἀπέναντι τοῦ κακοῦ τὸ ἀγαθόν,
καὶ ἀπέναντι τοῦ θανάτου ἢ ζωῆς,
οὕτως ἀπέναντι εὐσεβοῦς ἀμαρτωλός·

...

8 They have been differentiated in the mind of the Lord,
who has diversified the seasons and feasts.

9 Some he has exalted and hallowed
and others he has made ordinary days.

10 And men come from the ground;
and Adam himself was formed out of earth.

11 In the fullness of his wisdom, the Lord separated them,
and diversified their conditions.

12 Some of them he has blessed and exalted
and some he made holy, setting them near him;
others he has cursed and humiliated
and degraded them from their positions.

13 Like clay in the hands of the potter,
to mould as it pleases him,
so are all human beings in the hands of their Maker,
to reward as he judges right.

14 Opposite evil stands good,
opposite death, life;
so too, opposite the devout stands the sinner,
so too, opposite light, stands darkness.

8 Cairo Genizah MSS 'E' & 'F' read 'But in the wisdom of the Lord they are judged and some are festivals' ([...] מועד ויש מהם מועד...]).

9 For the 2nd line, the NETS reads, "and some of them he established for a number of days."

10 In place of 'Adam himself', here following the LXX (and NJB), Cairo Genizah MS 'E' (& NRSV) has 'humankind' (ומהם שם לימי מספר).

11 'Wisdom' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'E' (and NJB) text; the NRSV, following the LXX, has 'knowledge'.

12 The text of Cairo Genizah MS 'E' for this verse is fragmented but appears to concur with that of the LXX.

13 'To mould as' follows the Vg and one Greek MS; the LXX has 'all his ways (are) as'.

14 The last line, here following Cairo Genizah MS 'E' ([...] ונוכח האור) and the Peshitta, is not present in the LXX (& NRSV) and is included in the NJB only as a footnote.

¹⁵ καὶ οὕτως ἔμβλεψον εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔργα τοῦ ὑψίστου,
 δύο δύο, ἐν κατέναντι τοῦ ἐνός.
¹⁶ Καὶ γὰρ ἔσχατος ἠγρούπησα
 ὡς καλαμώμενος ὀπίσω τρυγητῶν.
¹⁷ ἐν εὐλογίᾳ κυρίου ἔφθασα
 καὶ ὡς τρυγῶν ἐπλήρωσα ληνόν.
¹⁸ κατανοήσατε ὅτι οὐκ ἐμοὶ μόνῳ ἐκοπίασα,
 ἀλλὰ πᾶσιν τοῖς ζητοῦσιν παιδείαν.
¹⁹ ἀκούσατέ μου, μεγιστᾶνες λαοῦ,
 καὶ οἱ ἠγούμενοι ἐκκλησίας, ἐνωτίσασθε.
²⁰ Τίϛ καὶ γυναικί, ἀδελφῶ καὶ φίλῳ
 μὴ δῶς ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ σὲ ἐν ζωῇ σου.
 καὶ μὴ δῶς ἑτέρῳ τὰ χρήματά σου,
 ἵνα μὴ μεταμεληθεῖς δέῃ περὶ αὐτῶν.
²¹ ἕως ἔτι ζῆς καὶ πνοὴ ἐν σοί,
 μὴ ἀλλάξης σεαυτὸν ἐν πάσῃ σαρκί.
²² κρεῖσσον γὰρ ἐστὶν τὰ τέκνα δεηθῆναί σου
 ἢ σὲ ἐμβλέπειν εἰς χεῖρας υἱῶν σου.

¹⁵ Contemplate all the words of the Most High;
 you will find they go in pairs, by opposites.
¹⁶ As a last one, it was I who kept vigil,
 like he who gleans what the grape-pickers have left.
¹⁷ By the blessing of the Lord, I arrived first,
 and, like a grape-picker, I have filled my winepress.
¹⁸ Consider also, I have not laboured for myself alone,
 but for all who seek instruction.
¹⁹ Listen to me, important public figures;
 presidents of the assembly, give ear!
²⁰ Neither to son nor wife, brother nor friend,
 give power over yourself while you live.
 And do not give your property to anyone else,
 in case you regret it and have to ask for it back.
²¹ As long as you live and there is breath in your body,
 do not yield power over yourself to anyone.
²² Better for your children to come begging to you
 than for you to look to the hands of your children.

¹⁵ The literal translation of 'in pairs' is 'two by two'.

¹⁶ For the 1st line, here following the NETS, the NJB reads, "Although the last to come, I have kept my eyes open."

¹⁷ The NJB adds 'true' before 'grape-picker'.

¹⁸ The NJB ends the 1st line, "been working merely for myself."

¹⁹ The 'assembly' refers to the synagogue, where devout Jews assembled to be taught.

²⁰ The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 3rd line.

²¹ Cairo Genizah MS 'E' has this verse in the middle of v. 20.

²² The NJB ends, "to have to go begging to them."

23 ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις σου γίνου ὑπεράγων,
μὴ δῶς μῶμον ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου.
24 ἐν ἡμέρᾳ συντελείας ἡμερῶν ζωῆς σου
καὶ ἐν καιρῷ τελευτῆς διαδόσ κληρονομίαν.
25 Χορτάσματα καὶ ῥάβδος καὶ φορτία ὄνω,
ἄρτος καὶ παιδεία καὶ ἔργον οἰκέτη.
26 ἔργασαι ἐν παιδί, καὶ εὐρήσεις ἀνάπαυσιν·
ἄνες χειρᾶς αὐτῷ, καὶ ζητήσῃ ἐλευθερίαν.
27 ζυγὸς καὶ ἰμάς τράχηλον κάμψουσιν,
καὶ οἰκέτη κακούργω στρέβλαι καὶ βάσανοι·
28 ἔμβαλε αὐτὸν εἰς ἐργασίαν, ἵνα μὴ ἀργῇ,
πολλὴν γὰρ κακίαν ἐδίδαξεν ἡ ἀργία·
29 εἰς ἔργα κατάστησον, καθὼς πρέπει αὐτῷ,
κἂν μὴ πειθαρχῇ, βάρυνον τὰς πέδας αὐτοῦ.
30 καὶ μὴ περισσεύσης ἐπὶ πάσῃ σαρκί
καὶ ἄνευ κρίσεως μὴ ποιήσης μηδέν.

23 In all you do, be the master,
and leave a reputation unstained.
24 In the day your life draws to a close
and, at the hour of death, distribute your heritage.
25 Fodder, the stick and burdens for a donkey;
bread, discipline, and work for a slave.
26 Work your slave hard and you will have peace of mind;
leave his hands idle and he will ask for his freedom.
27 Yoke and harness will bow the neck;
and, for a bad servant, torments and the rack.
28 Set him to work, so that he will not be idle;
idleness teaches every kind of mischief.
29 Keep him at his duties where he should be;
and, if he is disobedient, clap him in irons.
30 And do not be over-exacting with anyone,
and do nothing contrary to justice.

23 For this verse, here following the NJB, the WEBBE reads, “Excel in all your works. Don’t bring a stain on your honour.”

24 For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS ‘E’ reads, ‘When your time comes and your few days have reached their number’ (בעת מספר מצער ימִיד).

25 Slavery is taken for granted as a feature of society. Although Ben Sira’s words are strong, especially for the lazy (vv. 25–29), he urges justice (v. 30). On the strict treatment of slaves, see Ex 21:20–21 and Mt 18:34, Lk 12:46. Nevertheless, slaves were not entirely at the mercy of their masters; their rights were laid down in detail by the Law (Ex 21:1–6, 26–27, Lv 25:46, Dt 15:12–18).

26 For ‘you will have peace of mind’, Cairo Genizah MS ‘E’ has ‘lest he demand rest’ and, for ‘leave his hands idle’, it has ‘if he raises his head’.

27 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

28 In place of ‘so that he will not be idle’, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS ‘E’ has ‘lest he rebel’.

29 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

30 The NJB opens with ‘However’ in place of ‘And’.

- 31** *Εἰ ἔστιν σοι οἰκέτης, ἔστω ὡς σύ,
ὅτι ἐν αἵματι ἐκτήσω αὐτόν·*
- 32** *εἰ ἔστιν σοι οἰκέτης, ἄγε αὐτόν ὡς ἀδελφόν,
ὅτι ὡς ἡ ψυχὴ σου ἐπιδεήσεις αὐτῷ·*
- 33** *ἐὰν κακώσης αὐτόν καὶ ἀπάρας ἀποδρᾷ,
ἐν ποίᾳ ὁδῷ ζητήσεις αὐτόν;*

- 31** If you have only one slave, treat him like yourself,
since you have acquired him with blood.
- 32** If you have only one slave, treat him as a brother,
since you need him as you need yourself.
- 33** If you ill-treat him and he runs away,
which way will you go to look for him?

31 The meaning of the 2nd line is uncertain – possibly, it means ‘you have acquired him with your hard-earned money’.

32 For the 1st line, the *WEBBE* repeats that of v. 31.

33 *Cairo Genizah MS ‘E’* has only part of this verse, reading, [... ...] **ד** **כי אם עניתו יצא ואבד באיזה ד**: “For, if you mistreat him, he will run away and be lost; ... in which road.”

Σοφία Σιραχ 34

- ¹ Κεναὶ ἐλπίδες καὶ ψευδεῖς ἀσυνέτω ἀνδρί,
καὶ ἐνύπνια ἀναπτεροῦσιν ἄφρονας.
- ² ὡς δρασσόμενος σκιᾶς καὶ διώκων ἄνεμον
οὕτως ὁ ἐπέχων ἐνυπνίοις·
- ³ τοῦτο κατὰ τούτου ὄρασις ἐνυπνίων,
κατέναντι προσώπου ὁμοίωμα προσώπου.
- ⁴ ἀπὸ ἀκαθάρτου τί καθαρισθήσεται;
καὶ ἀπὸ ψευδοῦς τί ἀληθεύσει;
- ⁵ μαντεῖαι καὶ οἰωνισμοὶ καὶ ἐνύπνια μάταιά ἐστιν,
καὶ ὡς ὠδινούσης φαντάζεται καρδιά·
- ⁶ ἐὰν μὴ παρὰ ὑψίστου ἀποσταλῆ ἐν ἐπισκοπῇ,
μὴ δῶς εἰς αὐτὰ τὴν καρδίαν σου·
- ⁷ πολλοὺς γὰρ ἐπλάνησεν τὰ ἐνύπνια,
καὶ ἐξέπεσον ἐλπίζοντες ἐπ' αὐτοῖς.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 34

- ¹ Vain and deceptive hopes are for a foolish man
and dreams lend wings to fools.
- ² As well clutch at shadows and chase the wind
as put any faith in dreams.
- ³ Dreams are no different from mirrors;
confronting a face is the reflection of that face.
- ⁴ What can be cleansed by uncleanness?
And what can be verified by falsehood?
- ⁵ Divinations, auguries, and dreams are nonsense,
and, like a woman in labour, the mind has fantasies.
- ⁶ Unless sent as emissaries for the Most High,
do not give them a thought.
- ⁷ For, dreams have led many astray
and those who relied on them have come to grief.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 34

- ¹ In place of 'a foolish man', the WEBBE has 'a man void of understanding'.
- ² The image of 'chasing the wind' is often used in the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Ho 12:1, Qo 1:14).
- ³ The 1st line is a conjectural translation following the NJB (the NRSV has 'what is seen in dreams is but a reflection'); the LXX has 'visions of dreams are no different'. The dream, like the mirror, only presents an image; or, the dream reflects only what someone already has in mind, adding nothing nor providing any assurance (v. 5).
- ⁴ The NJB & WEBBE lack the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- ⁵ The 2nd line here follows the NRSV & LXX; the NJB has 'like the fantasies of a pregnant woman'.
- ⁶ In the Hebrew Bible, God sometimes uses dreams to carry his instructions to human beings (Gn 28:10-17, 31:10-13,24, 37:5-11, 41:1-36, Jg 7:13ff, Job 33:15-18, *et cetera*, cf. Nb 12:6. See also Mt 1:20-23, 2:13,22. However, recourse to dreams as an ordinary method of divination is censured by the Law and the Prophets: Lv 19:26, Dt 13:2-6, 18:9-14, Qo 5:6, Jr 29:8, as also by Ben Sira, though here he admits the possibility of dreams of authentically divine origin.
- ⁷ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "They have failed by putting their hope in them."

8 ἄνευ ψεύδους συντελεσθήσεται νόμος,
καὶ σοφία στόματι πιστῶ τελείωσις.

9 Ἄνηρ πεπλανημένος ἔγνω πολλά,
καὶ ὁ πολύπειρος ἐκδιηγῆσεται σύνεσιν·

10 ὃς οὐκ ἐπειράθη, ὀλίγα οἶδεν,
ὁ δὲ πεπλανημένος πληθυνεῖ πανουργίαν.

11 πολλὰ ἐώρακα ἐν τῇ ἀποπλανήσει μου,
καὶ πλείονα τῶν λόγων μου σύνεσίς μου·

12 πλεονάκις ἕως θανάτου ἐκινδύνευσα
καὶ διεσώθην τούτων χάριν.

13 πνεῦμα φοβουμένων κύριον ζήσεται·
ἡ γὰρ ἐλπίς αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸν σῶζοντα αὐτούς.

14 ὁ φοβούμενος κύριον οὐδὲν εὐλαβηθήσεται
καὶ οὐ μὴ δειλιάσῃ, ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐλπίς αὐτοῦ.

15 φοβουμένου τὸν κύριον μακαρία ἡ ψυχὴ·
τίνι ἐπέχει; καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ στήριγμα;

16 οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας αὐτόν,
ὑπερασπισμὸς δυναστείας καὶ στήριγμα ἰσχύος,

8 Fulfilling the Law requires no such falsehood,
and wisdom is perfected in veracity.

9 A much-travelled man knows many things,
and a man of great experience will talk sound sense.

10 Someone who has never had his trials knows little;
but the travelled man is master of every situation.

11 I have seen many things on my travels
and my understanding is more than my words.

12 I have often been in danger of death,
but I have been spared, and this is why:

13 The spirit of those who fear the Lord can survive,
for their hope is on someone with power to save them.

14 No one who fears the Lord need ever hesitate,
or ever be daunted, since the Lord is his hope.

15 Happy is the soul of one who fears the Lord.
On whom does he rely? Who support him?

16 The eyes of the Lord watch over those who love him;
he is their powerful protection and strong support,

8 Ben Sira contrasts dreams, which deceive, with the Law and Wisdom, which do not.

9 In place of 'much-travelled', the NRSV has 'educated'.

10 In the NRSV, the 2nd line is included as v. 11; therein, the numbers of vv. 11–13 are accordingly incremented.

11 For the 2nd line, here (loosely) following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "I have understood more than I can put into words."

12 The literal translation of 'but' is 'and' (καί).

13 In the NRSV, the 2nd line is included as v. 15 (see #10); therein, vv. 14–15 are numbered 16–18 (and see #15).

14 The literal translation of 'or' is 'and' (καί).

15 In the NRSV, the 2nd line is included as v. 18.

16 In the NRSV, vv. 16–18 are numbered 19–22.

σκέπη ἀπὸ καύσωνος καὶ σκέπη ἀπὸ μεσημβρίας,
φυλακὴ ἀπὸ προσκόμματος καὶ βοήθεια ἀπὸ πτώσεως,
¹⁷ ἀνυψῶν ψυχὴν καὶ φωτίζων ὀφθαλμούς,
ἴασιν διδούς, ζωὴν καὶ εὐλογίαν.

¹⁸ Θυσιάζων ἐξ ἀδίκου προσφορὰ μεμωμημένη,
καὶ οὐκ εἰς εὐδοκίαν δωρήματα ἀνόμων.

¹⁹ οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ὁ ὕψιστος ἐν προσφοραῖς ἀσεβῶν
οὐδὲ ἐν πλήθει θυσιῶν ἐξιλάσεται ἁμαρτίας.

²⁰ θύων υἱὸν ἔναντι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ
ὁ προσάγων θυσίαν ἐκ χρημάτων πενήτων.

²¹ ἄρτος ἐπιδομένων ζωὴ πτωχῶν,
ὁ ἀποστερῶν αὐτὴν ἄνθρωπος αἱμάτων.

²² φονεύων τὸν πλησίον ὁ ἀφαιρούμενος ἐμβίωσιν,
καὶ ἐκχέων αἷμα ὁ ἀποστερῶν μισθὸν μισθίου.

²³ εἷς οἰκοδομῶν, καὶ εἷς καταρῶν·
τί ὠφέλησαν πλεῖον ἢ κόπους;

²⁴ εἷς εὐχόμενος, καὶ εἷς καταρῶμενος·
τίνος φωνῆς εἰσακούσεται ὁ δεσπότης;

a cover from the hot wind, a shade from the noon sun,
a guard against stumbling and a help against a fall.
¹⁷ He revives the spirit and brightens the eyes;
he gives health, life, and blessing.

¹⁸ The sacrifice of offerings unjustly gained is mockery
and the gifts of the impious are unacceptable.

¹⁹ The Most High is not pleased by the godless' offerings;
multiplying sacrifices will not gain pardon for sin.

²⁰ Offering sacrifice from the property of the poor
is as bad as slaughtering a son before his father's eyes.

²¹ A meagre diet is the very life of the poor;
he who deprives them of it is a man of blood.

²² To take away a fellow man's livelihood is to kill him;
to deprive an employee of his wages is to shed blood.

²³ If one person builds while another pulls down,
what will they get out of it but trouble?

²⁴ If one person prays and another calls down a curse,
to which one's voice is the Master going to listen?

¹⁷ In place of 'health, life', the NETS has 'healing of life'.

¹⁸ In place of 'a mockery', the NRSV has 'blemished'; some MSS have 'mockeries' in place of 'gifts'.

¹⁹ The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 22.

²⁰ In the NRSV, vv. 19–22 are numbered 23–27.

²¹ For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "to deprive them of it is to commit murder."

²² The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 27.

²³ The person who 'builds' is the poor person victimised by the rich man, who 'tears down'; both of them lose.

²⁴ The rich man prays hypocritically and the poor curses him; but it is clear that God will listen to the voice of the poor (35:20–21).

²⁵ βαπτίζόμενος ἀπὸ νεκροῦ καὶ πάλιν ἀπτόμενος αὐτοῦ,
τί ὠφέλησεν ἐν τῷ λουτρῷ αὐτοῦ;
²⁶ οὕτως ἄνθρωπος νηστεύων ἐπὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτοῦ
καὶ πάλιν πορευόμενος καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ ποιῶν·
τῆς προσευχῆς αὐτοῦ τίς εἰσακούσεται;
καὶ τί ὠφέλησεν ἐν τῷ ταπεινωθῆναι αὐτόν;

²⁵ If a man washes due to a corpse and touches it again,
what is the good of his washing?
²⁶ Just so with a man who fasts for sin
and then goes and commits it again.
Who is going to hear his prayer?
And what is the good of the self-abasement?

²⁵ Vv. 25–26 concern the futility of acts of purification by unrepentant sinners.

²⁶ In the NRSV, vv. 23–26 are numbered 28–31.

Σοφία Σιραχ 35

- 1** Ὁ συντηρῶν νόμον πλεονάζει προσφοράς,
δυσιάζων σωτηρίου ὁ προσέχων ἐντολαῖς.
- 2** ἀνταποδιδούς χάριν προσφέρων σεμίδαλιν,
καὶ ὁ ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνην δυσιάζων αἰνέσεως.
- 3** εὐδοκία κυρίου ἀποστῆναι ἀπὸ πονηρίας,
καὶ ἐξιλασμός ἀποστῆναι ἀπὸ ἀδικίας.
- 4** μὴ ὀφθῆς ἐν προσώπῳ κυρίου κενός·
πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα χάριν ἐντολῆς.
- 5** προσφορὰ δικαίου λιπαίνει θυσιαστήριον,
καὶ ἡ εὐωδία αὐτῆς ἔναντι ὑψίστου.
- 6** θυσία ἀνδρὸς δικαίου δεκτὴ,
καὶ τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτῆς οὐκ ἐπιλησθήσεται.
- 7** ἐν ἀγαθῷ ὀφθαλμῷ δόξασον τὸν κύριον
καὶ μὴ σμικρύνῃς ἀπαρχὴν χειρῶν σου.
- 8** ἐν πάσῃ δόσει ἰλάρωσον τὸ πρόσωπόν σου
καὶ ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ ἀγίασον δεκάτην.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 35

- 1** He who keeps the Law multiplies offerings;
he who heeds the commandments makes offerings.
- 2** Proof of gratitude is an offering of fine flour,
almsgiving a sacrifice of praise.
- 3** To abandon wickedness is what pleases the Lord;
and to give up wrongdoing is a sacrifice of atonement.
- 4** Do not appear empty-handed in the Lord's presence;
for all these things are due under the commandments.
- 5** The offering of the upright enriches the altar
and its pleasing odour rises before the Most High.
- 6** The sacrifice of the upright is acceptable
and its memorial will not be forgotten.
- 7** Honour the Lord with generosity
and do not stint the first fruits you bring.
- 8** Add a smiling face to all your gifts,
and be cheerful as you dedicate your tithes.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 35

- 1** The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 2.
- 2** The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 4.
- 3** The NJB & WEBBE lack the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 4** The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 7.
- 5** Vv. 5-11 are numbered 8-14 in the NRSV. The literal translation of 'enriches' is 'greases'.
- 6** The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 7** The NJB & WEBBE lack the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 8** This is v. 10 in the NETS.

9 δὸς ὑψίστῳ κατὰ τὴν δόσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν ἀγαθῷ ὀφθαλμῷ καὶ εὐρέμα χειρὸς·
 10 ὅτι κύριος ἀνταποδιδούς ἐστὶν καὶ ἑπταπλάσια ἀνταποδώσει σοι.
 11 Μὴ δωροκόπει, οὐ γὰρ προσδέξεται, καὶ μὴ ἔπεχε θυσία ἀδίκῳ·
 12 ὅτι κύριος κριτὴς ἐστὶν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν παρ' αὐτῷ δόξα προσώπου.
 13 οὐ λήμψεται πρόσωπον ἐπὶ πτωχοῦ καὶ δέησιν ἠδικημένου εἰσακούσεται·
 14 οὐ μὴ ὑπερίδῃ ἰκετεῖαν ὀρφανοῦ καὶ χήραν, ἐὰν ἐκχέῃ λαλιάν·
 15 οὐχὶ δάκρυα χήρας ἐπὶ σιαγόνα καταβαίνει καὶ ἡ καταβόησις ἐπὶ τῷ καταγαγόντι αὐτά·
 16 θραπέυων ἐν εὐδοκίᾳ δεχθήσεται, καὶ ἡ δέησις αὐτοῦ ἕως νεφελῶν συνάψει·
 17 προσευχὴ ταπεινοῦ νεφέλας διήλθεν, καὶ ἕως συνεγγίσῃ, οὐ μὴ παρακληθῆι.

9 Give to the Most High as he has given to you, as generously as your means can afford.
 10 For, the Lord is the one who repays and he will reward you seven times over.
 11 Don't try to bribe him with gifts: he will not take them; and do not offer unrighteous sacrifices.
 12 For, the Lord is the judge and, with him, there is no partiality.
 13 He never shows partiality to the detriment of the poor and he listens to the plea of the injured party.
 14 He does not ignore the orphan's supplication, nor the widow's as she pours out her complaint.
 15 Do the widows tears not run down her cheeks, and does she not accuse the man who caused of them?
 16 Whoever wholeheartedly serves God will be accepted and his petitions will carry to the clouds.
 17 The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds; and, until it does, he is not consoled.

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- 9 After the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* adds the following as a marginal note: "He who gives to the poor lends to Yahweh; who will repay him, if not he?" (מלזה ייי נותן לאביון ומי בעל גמולות כי אם הוא).
 10 For the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads, 'For, he is the God of rewards' (כי אלוה תשלומות הוא). This is v. 13 in the *NRSV* & *NETS*.
 11 The *WEBBE* merges this with the following verse and, therein, it is v. 12.
 12 Vv. 12-16 are numbered 15-19 in the *NRSV*.
 13 The *NJB* lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
 14 The 'orphan' and the 'widow' in particular need help, since there is no one to plead their cause (except God).
 15 *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads, "Do not tears roll down her cheeks and lament against her oppressors?" (הלא דמעה על לחי תרד ואנחה על מרודית).
 16 An alternative reading for 'serves God' is 'does a service (for his neighbour)'.
 17 For the 2nd line, the *WEBBE* reads, "until it comes near, he will not be comforted."

¹⁸ καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀποστῆ, ἕως ἐπισκέψηται ὁ ὑψιστος
καὶ κρινεῖ δικαίους καὶ ποιήσει κρίσιν.
¹⁹ καὶ ὁ κύριος οὐ μὴ βραδύνη
οὐδὲ μὴ μακροθυμήσῃ ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς,
²⁰ ἕως ἂν συντρίψῃ ὄσφυν ἀνελεημόνων
καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀνταποδώσει ἐκδίκησιν,
²¹ ἕως ἐξάρῃ πλήθος ὑβριστῶν
καὶ σκῆπτρα ἀδίκων συντρίψει,
²² ἕως ἀνταποδῶ ἀνθρώπῳ κατὰ τὰς πράξεις αὐτοῦ
καὶ τὰ ἔργα τῶν ἀνθρώπων
κατὰ τὰ ἐνθυμήματα αὐτῶν,
²³ ἕως κρίνῃ τὴν κρίσιν τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ
καὶ εὐφρανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ ἐλέει αὐτοῦ.
²⁴ ὥραϊον ἔλεος ἐν καιρῷ θλίψεως αὐτοῦ
ὡς νεφέλαι ὑετοῦ ἐν καιρῷ ἀβροχίας.

¹⁸ He will not desist until the Most High visits,
and acquits the upright and delivers judgement.
¹⁹ And the Lord will not be slow,
and, nor will he be patient with them,
²⁰ until he has crushed the loins of the merciless
and exalted vengeance on the nations,
²¹ until he has eliminated the hordes of the arrogant
and broken the sceptres of the wicked,
²² until he has repaid all the people as their deeds deserve
and the works of men
according to their intentions merit,
²³ until he has judged the case of his people
and made them rejoice in his mercy.
²⁴ His mercy is welcome in time of trouble,
like rain clouds in time of drought.

¹⁸ The WEBBE includes this as part of v. 17.

¹⁹ In the NRSV, vv. 19–20 comprise a single verse (v. 22). In place of ‘with them’, Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ has ‘like a warrior’ (וכגבור לא (מה) יתאפק). The remainder of this chapter serves as an introduction to the prayer of 36:1–17; Ben Sira has in mind the oppression of the chosen people by pagan oppressors.

²⁰ In the WEBBE, vv. 20–21 are included as part of the previous verse (which therein is v. 18).

²¹ In the NRSV, vv. 21–22 comprise a single verse (v. 23).

²² The NJB opens the 2nd line with ‘and human actions’.

²³ In the NRSV, vv. 23–24 are numbered 25–26.

²⁴ The WEBBE lacks ‘His’ before ‘mercy’.

Σοφία Σιραχ 36

- 1** Ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, δέσποτα ὁ θεὸς πάντων, καὶ ἐπίβλεψον καὶ ἐπίβαλε τὸν φόβον σου ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη·
- 2** ἔπαρον τὴν χειρὰ σου ἐπὶ ἔθνη ἀλλότρια, καὶ ἰδέτωσαν τὴν δυναστείαν σου.
- 3** ὡσπερ ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν ἡγιασθῆς ἐν ἡμῖν, οὕτως ἐνώπιον ἡμῶν μεγαλυνθῆις ἐν αὐτοῖς·
- 4** καὶ ἐπιγνώτωσάν σε, καθάπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐπέγνωμεν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν σοῦ, κύριε.
- 5** ἐγκαίνισον σημεῖα καὶ ἀλλοίωσον θαυμάσια, δόξασον χεῖρα καὶ βραχίονα δεξιόν·
- 6** ἔγειρον θυμὸν καὶ ἔκχεον ὀργήν, ἔξαρον ἀντίδικον καὶ ἔκτριψον ἐχθρόν.
- 7** σπεῦσον καιρὸν καὶ μνήσθητι ὀρκισμοῦ, καὶ ἐκδιηγῆσάσθωσαν τὰ μεγαλεῖά σου.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 36

- 1** Take pity on us, Master, Lord of all, and look at us; and spread fear of you throughout all other nations.
- 2** Raise your hand against the foreign nations and let them see your mighty power.
- 3** As, in their sight, you have proved yourself holy to us, so now, in our sight, prove yourself great to them.
- 4** Let them know you, just as we have known that there is no God but you, Lord.
- 5** Send new portents, do fresh wonders, win glory for your hand and your right arm.
- 6** Rouse your fury, pour out your rage, destroy the opponent and annihilate the enemy.
- 7** Hasten the day, remember the oath, and let your people tell of your mighty deeds.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 36

- 1** The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 2. In place of ‘Master, Lord’, here following the LXX (and NJB), *Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’* (הושיענו אלהי הכל) and the NRSV have ‘O God’. This prayer reveals the sentiment of pious Jews about the year 190 BCE, just before the Maccabean revolt. ‘All nations’ refers particularly to the Seleucids, who had power over Palestine after 198 BCE. A messianic note, rare in this book, is struck here, as also in the psalm with which the *Hebrew* text ends (51:12a-12p).
- 2** Vv. 2-5 are numbered 3-6 in the NRSV. The 2nd line is omitted by some MSS.
- 3** As God showed his holiness by punishing Israel (Ezk 20:41, 28:25), so now he shows his glory by punishing the Gentiles.
- 4** The NJB has ‘acknowledge(d)’ in place of ‘know(n)’.
- 5** The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 7. A footnote to the WEBBE suggests that some MSS have additional text at the end of this verse.
- 6** The NRSV includes the 2nd line as v. 9.
- 7** In the NRSV, vv. 7-10 are numbered 10-13. The text here follows the LXX (and NJB); *Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’* reads, “Hasten the end, remember the appointed time. For, who is going to say to you: What are you doing?” (החיש קץ ופקוד מועד כי מי יאמר לך מה תעשה?)

8 ἐν ὀργῇ πυρὸς καταβρωθήτω ὁ σφζόμενος,
καὶ οἱ κακοῦντες τὸν λαόν σου εὕροισαν ἀπώλειαν.
9 σύντριψον κεφαλὰς ἀρχόντων ἐχθρῶν
λεγόντων Οὐκ ἔστιν πλὴν ἡμῶν.
10 συνάγαγε πάσας φυλὰς Ἰακωβ
καὶ κατακληρονόμησον αὐτοὺς καθὼς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς.
11 ἐλέησον λαόν, κύριε, κεκλημένον ἐπ' ὄνοματί σου
καὶ Ἰσραηλ, ὃν πρωτογόνῳ ὠμοίωσας.
12 οἰκτίρησον πόλιν ἀγιάσματος σου,
Ἱερουσαλημ τόπον καταπαύματός σου·
13 πλήσον Σιων ἀρεταλογίας σου
καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης σου τὸν λαόν σου.
14 δὸς μαρτύριον τοῖς ἐν ἀρχῇ κτίσμασίν σου
καὶ ἔγειρον προφητείας τὰς ἐπ' ὄνοματί σου·
15 δὸς μισθὸν τοῖς ὑπομένουσίν σε,

8 Let fiery wrath swallow up the survivor,
and those who harm your people find destruction.
9 Crush the heads of hostile rulers
who say, "There is no one else but us!"
10 Gather together all the tribes of Jacob;
restore them their heritage as at the beginning.
11 Take pity, Lord, on the people called by your name,
on Israel whom you have made as a first-born.
12 Have compassion on your holy city,
on Jerusalem, the place where you rest.
13 Fill Zion with your majesty
and your sanctuary with your glory.
14 Vindicate those whom you created first;
fulfil what has been prophesied in your name.
15 Give those who wait for you their reward;

8 For the 2nd line, here loosely following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "and destruction overtake those who oppress your people."

9 This is v. 10 in the WEBBE.

10 The hope of 'ingathering', particularly strong during the Exile, remained a characteristic of Judaism long after the exiles had returned. The Jews always regarded their dispersion abroad as a passing and unfortunate phase, to which the coming of the Messiah would put an end. For 'restore them their heritage', the LXX reads 'I took them for my inheritance' but the Greek text is here very confused.

11 In the NRSV, vv. 11-16 are numbered 17-22.

12 'Where you rest' follows the LXX (and NJB); Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ירושלם מכון שבתך) and the NRSV have 'of your dwelling'.

13 'Your majesty' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' ([מהדרין] את הודך מלא ציון) and the Peshitta; the LXX has 'the celebration of your wondrous deeds'. 'Sanctuary' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ναόν); the LXX has 'people' (λαόν).

14 The exact meaning of 'those whom you created first' is uncertain. The author may mean Israel as a whole, or the Patriarchs who, according to ancient Midrash, were among the seven things created before the world, or else created Wisdom, the first fruit of Creation (Pr 8:22). Or perhaps he believes that the Messiah or the messianic kingdom 'created before all things' is shortly to appear on earth.

15 The WEBBE reads, "16 Reward those who wait for you, and men will put their trust in your prophets."

καὶ οἱ προφῆταί σου ἐμπιστευθήτωσαν.
16 εἰσάκουσον, κύριε, δεήσεως τῶν ἰκετῶν σου
κατὰ τὴν εὐλογίαὶν Ααρων περὶ τοῦ λαοῦ σου,
17 καὶ γνώσονται πάντες οἱ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς
ὅτι κύριος εἶ ὁ θεὸς τῶν αἰώνων.
18 Πᾶν βρῶμα φάγεται κοιλία,
ἔστιν δὲ βρῶμα βρώματος κάλλιον.
19 φάρυγξ γεύεται βρώματα θήρας,
οὕτως καρδία συνετὴ λόγους ψευδεῖς.
20 καρδία στρεβλή δώσει λύπην,
καὶ ἄνθρωπος πολυπειρὸς ἀνταποδώσει αὐτῷ.
21 πάντα ἄρρενα ἐπιδέξεται γυνή,
ἔστιν δὲ θυγάτηρ θυγατρὸς κρείσσων.
22 κάλλος γυναικὸς ἰλαρύνει πρόσωπον
καὶ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν ἀνθρώπου ὑπεράγει·
23 εἰ ἔστιν ἐπὶ γλώσσης αὐτῆς ἔλεος καὶ πραύτης,
οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς καθ' υἱοὺς ἀνθρώπων.

let your prophets be proved true.
16 Grant, Lord, the prayer of your servants,
in the terms of Aaron's blessing on your people,
17 so that all the earth's inhabitants may acknowledge
that you are the Lord, the eternal God.
18 The stomach takes in all kinds of food,
but some foods are better than others.
19 As the palate discerns the flavour of game,
so a shrewd listener detects lying words.
20 A contrary heart will cause heaviness
and a man of experience will pay him back.
21 A woman will accept any husband,
but some daughters are better than others.
22 A woman's beauty delights the beholder
and a man likes nothing better.
23 If her tongue is kind and gentle,
her husband is not like other sons of men.

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- 16** 'Your servants' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (and some Greek MSS); the *Textus Receptus* has 'those who pray to you'. For the 2nd line, here following the LXX (and NJB), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ךמע לע דבצונג) and the NRSV have, "according to your goodwill toward your people."
17 The literal translation of 'eternal God' is 'God of the ages'.
18 In the NRSV, vv. 18–26 are numbered 23–31.
19 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "The mouth tastes meats taken in hunting."
20 For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "A perverse character causes depression in others; it needs experience to know how to repay such a one."
21 To restore a hypothetical parallelism here, an alternative reading has been proposed: "A husband can take any woman but..." However, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' gives the same construction as the LXX (followed here).
22 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
23 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "her husband is the happiest of men."

²⁴ ὁ κτώμενος γυναῖκα ἐνάρχεται κτήσεως,
βοηθὸν κατ' αὐτὸν καὶ στῦλον ἀναπαύσεως.
²⁵ οὐδ' οὐκ ἔστιν φραγμός, διαρπαγήσεται κτήμα·
καὶ οὐδ' οὐκ ἔστιν γυνή, στενάξει πλανώμενος.
²⁶ τίς γὰρ πιστεύσει εὐζώνῳ ληστῇ
ἀφαλλομένῳ ἐκ πόλεως εἰς πόλιν;
²⁷ οὕτως ἀνθρώπῳ μὴ ἔχοντι νοσσιᾶν
καὶ καταλύοντι οὐδ' εἰς ὄψιση.

²⁴ The man who takes a wife has the makings of a fortune,
a helper to match himself, a pillar of support.
²⁵ When property has no fence, it is open to plunder;
when a man has no wife, he is aimless and querulous.
²⁶ Will anyone trust an armed thief
who flits from town to town?
²⁷ So it is with the man who has no nest,
and lodges wherever night overtakes him.

²⁴ In place of 'a helper to match himself', here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'a fortified town' (עיר מבצר).

²⁵ The WEBBE has 'hedge' in place of 'fence'.

²⁶ The WEBBE reads, "For who would trust a nimble robber who skips from city to city?"

²⁷ The NRSV & WEBBE include this verse as part of the previous one.

Σοφία Σιραχ 37

- ¹ Πᾶς φίλος ἐρεῖ Ἐφιλίασα ἀγάγῳ·
ἀλλ' ἔστιν φίλος ὀνόματι μόνον φίλος.
- ² οὐχὶ λύπη ἐνὶ ἔως θανάτου
ἔταῖρος καὶ φίλος τρεπόμενος εἰς ἔχθραν;
- ³ ὦ πονηρὸν ἐνδύμημα, πόθεν ἐνεκυλίσθης
καλύψαι τὴν ξηρὰν ἐν δολιότητι;
- ⁴ ἔταῖρος φίλου ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ ἤδεται
καὶ ἐν καιρῷ θλίψεως ἔσται ἀπέναντι·
- ⁵ ἔταῖρος φίλῳ συμπονεῖ χάριν γαστρούς,
ἐναντι πολέμου λήμψεται ἀσπίδα.
- ⁶ μὴ ἐπιλάθῃ φίλου ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ σου
καὶ μὴ ἀμνημονήσῃς αὐτοῦ ἐν χρημασίῳ σου.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 37

- ¹ Any friend will say, "I am your friend too,"
but some friends are friends only in name.
- ² Is it not a deadly sorrow
when a comrade or a friend turns enemy?
- ³ O evil inclination, why were you created,
to cover the earth with deceit?
- ⁴ A friends' companion rejoices in times of gladness
but, in time of trouble, appears on the other side.
- ⁵ A companion helps a friend for his stomach's sake
and, when it comes to a fight, springs to arms.
- ⁶ Do not forget the genuine friend;
do not push him out of mind once you are rich.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 37

- ¹ This verse is significantly truncated in the main text of *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (כל אומר אמר אהבתי) but a marginal note therein (written vertically) gives a fuller version (כל אוהב אומר אהבתי אך יש אוהב שם אוהב) – text that is essentially identical to that of *MS 'D'*.
- ² *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* includes this verse only as a marginal note (written vertically): הלא דין מגיע על מות רע כנפש נהפך לצר; the text of *MS 'D'* is nearly identical: הלא דין מגיע עד מות ריע כנפש נהפך לצר (note the *yod* in the 6th word).
- ³ The literal translation of 'created' is 'rolled' (in something); the word, whether badly transcribed or emended for theological considerations, is here interpreted in accordance with *Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'D'*, "Woe to the wicked man who says, "Why have I been created?" The 'evil inclination' leading human beings to sin is an important element of rabbinical theology.
- ⁴ This verse follows the *LXX*; *Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'D'* have, "Evil is the friend who takes advantage of your table and in times of adversity keeps his distance." (מרע אוהב מביט על שחת ובעת צוקה מנוב יעמוד)
- ⁵ Vv. 4-5 contrast two kinds of friend; in danger, one runs away, the other remains loyal. The Hebrew text of this verse makes this contrast clearer: "The good friend fights the enemy and takes up arms against foes." (אוהב טוב נלחם עם זר ונגד ערים יחזיק צנה:) The verse is present in *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* only as a marginal note; that given here is from *MS 'D'*.
- ⁶ For this verse, here following the *LXX*, *Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'D'* read "Do not forget a friend during the battle; and do not push him out when you distribute your spoils." (אל תשכח חבר בקרב ואל תעזבהו בשלל:)

7 Πᾶς σύμβουλος ἐξαίρει βουλήν,
 ἀλλ' ἔστιν συμβουλεύων εἰς ἑαυτόν.
 8 ἀπὸ συμβούλου φύλαξον τὴν ψυχὴν σου
 καὶ γνῶθι πρότερον τίς αὐτοῦ χρεία
 – καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ βουλεύσεται – ,
 μήποτε βάλῃ ἐπὶ σοὶ κλήρον
 9 καὶ εἴπῃ σοὶ Καλὴ ἢ ὁδὸς σου,
 καὶ στήσεται ἐξ ἀναντίας ἰδεῖν τὸ συμβησόμενον σοι.
 10 μὴ βουλεύου μετὰ τοῦ ὑποβλεπομένου σε
 καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ζηλούντων σε κρύψον βουλήν,
 11 μετὰ γυναικὸς περὶ τῆς ἀντιζήλου αὐτῆς
 καὶ μετὰ δειλοῦ περὶ πολέμου,
 μετὰ ἐμπόρου περὶ μεταβολίας
 καὶ μετὰ ἀγοράζοντος περὶ πράσεως,
 μετὰ βασκάνου περὶ εὐχαριστίας
 καὶ μετὰ ἀνελεήμονος περὶ χρηστοτηθείας,
 μετὰ ὀκνηροῦ περὶ παντὸς ἔργου
 καὶ μετὰ μισθίου ἐφετίου περὶ συντελείας,
 οἰκέτη ἀργῶ περὶ πολλῆς ἐργασίας,
 μὴ ἔπεχε ἐπὶ τούτοις περὶ πάσης συμβουλίας·

7 Any counsellor will offer advice,
 but some are governed by self-interest.
 8 Beware of someone who offers advice;
 first find out what he wants himself –
 since his advice coincides with his own interest –
 in case he has designs on you
 9 and tells you, “You are on the right road,”
 and stands well clear to see what will happen to you.
 10 Do not consult anyone who looks at you askance;
 conceal your plans from people jealous of you.
 11 Do not consult a woman about her rival,
 or a coward about war,
 a merchant about prices,
 or a buyer about selling,
 anyone mean about gratitude,
 or anyone selfish about kindness,
 a lazy fellow about any kind of work,
 or a casual worker about finishing a job,
 an idle servant about a major undertaking –
 do not rely on these for any advice.

7 The WEBBE has, “Every counsellor extols counsel, but some give counsel in their own interest.”

8 The text of the last line is uncertain; Cairo Genizah MSS ‘B’ & ‘D’ have ‘why should that fall to him’ (למה זה אליו יפול) and the NRSV has ‘he may cast the lot against you’.

9 In place of ‘and stands well clear’, the WEBBE has, ‘Then he will stand near you’.

10 The WEBBE has ‘hide your counsel’ in place of ‘conceal your plans’.

11 In place of ‘gratitude’ (here following the LXX and NJB), Cairo Genizah MSS ‘B’ & ‘D’ (וממקנה א על ממכר) and the NRSV have ‘generosity’.

12 ἀλλ' ἢ μετὰ ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβοῦς ἐνδελέχιζε,
ὃν ἂν ἐπιγνῶς συντηροῦντα ἐντολάς,
ὃς ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν σου,
καὶ ἐὰν πταισῆς, συναλγήσει σοι.

13 καὶ βουλὴν καρδίας στῆσον,
οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν σοι πιστότερος αὐτῆς·

14 ψυχὴ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀπαγγέλλειν ἐνίοτε εἴωθεν
ἢ ἑπτὰ σκοποὶ ἐπὶ μετεώρου καλῆμενοι ἐπὶ σκοπῆς.

15 καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσι τούτοις δεήθητι ὑψίστου,
ἵνα εὐθύνη ἐν ἀληθείᾳ τὴν ὁδὸν σου.

16 Ἀρχὴ παντὸς ἔργου λόγος,
καὶ πρὸ πάσης πράξεως βουλή.

17 Ἴχνος ἀλλοιώσεως καρδίας
τέσσαρα μέρη ἀνατέλλει,

18 ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακόν, ζωὴ καὶ θάνατος,
καὶ ἡ κυριεύουσα ἐνδελεχῶς αὐτῶν γλῶσσά ἐστιν.

19 ἔστιν ἀνὴρ πανοῦργος πολλῶν παιδευτής,
καὶ τῇ ἰδίᾳ ψυχῇ ἐστιν ἄχρηστος.

12 But have constant recourse to some devout person,
whom you know to be a keeper of the commandments,
whose soul matches your own,
and who, if you go wrong, will be sympathetic.

13 Finally, heed to the advice that your heart gives you;
no one can be truer to you than that,

14 since a person's soul often gives a clearer warning
than seven sentinels perched on a watchtower.

15 Above all, beg the Most High
to guide your steps into the truth.

16 Reason should be the basis for every activity;
reflection must come before any undertaking.

17 Thoughts are rooted in the heart,
four parts appear:

18 Good and evil, life and death,
and the tongue is always mistress of them.

19 One kind of person is clever at teaching others,
yet is no good whatever to himself.

12 In place of 'some devout person' (here following the LXX), the Cairo Genizah MSS have 'he who is in the fear (of God)' (cf. #Pr 1:7).

13 In place of 'heed' (following the NRSV) the NJB has 'stick to'.

14 The 'sentinels' are probably astrologers.

15 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "that he may direct your way in truth."

16 The literal translation for 'Reason' is 'word' (λόγος) (the NRSV has 'discussion'); but, in this context, the word is the expression of creative wisdom.

17 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' has 'sending out four branches' (אַרבעה שבטים יפריח); MS 'F', along with a marginal note in 'B' have 'sceptres' (שרביטים) in place of 'branches' (שבטים).

18 The WEBBE includes the 2nd line of v. 17 as part of this verse.

19 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has this verse after 20:7.

20 ἔστιν σοφιζόμενος ἐν λόγοις μισητός,
 οὗτος πάσης τροφῆς καθυστερήσει·
 21 οὐ γὰρ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ παρὰ κυρίου χάρις,
 ὅτι πάσης σοφίας ἐστερήθη.
 22 ἔστιν σοφὸς τῇ ἰδίᾳ ψυχῇ,
 καὶ οἱ καρποὶ τῆς συνέσεως αὐτοῦ
 ἐπὶ στόματος πιστοί.
 23 ἀνὴρ σοφὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λαὸν παιδεύσει,
 καὶ οἱ καρποὶ τῆς συνέσεως αὐτοῦ πιστοί.
 24 ἀνὴρ σοφὸς πλησθήσεται εὐλογίας,
 καὶ μακαριοῦσιν αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ ὀρθῶντες.
 25 ζωὴ ἀνδρὸς ἐν ἀριθμῷ ἡμερῶν,
 καὶ αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἀναρίθμητοι.
 26 ὁ σοφὸς ἐν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ κληρονομήσει πίστιν,
 καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
 27 Τέκνον, ἐν ζωῇ σου πείρασον τὴν ψυχὴν σου
 καὶ ἰδὲ τί πονηρὸν αὐτῇ καὶ μὴ δῶς αὐτῇ·

20 Another, very eloquent, is detested
 and ends by starving to death,
 21 not having won the favour of the Lord,
 and being destitute of all wisdom.
 22 Another considers himself wise
 and proclaims his intellectual conclusions
 as trustworthy.
 23 But the truly wise instructs his people
 and his intellectual conclusions are certainties.
 24 The wise is showered with blessings,
 and all who see him will call him happy.
 25 A man's life lasts a number of days,
 but the days of Israel are innumerable.
 26 The wise will earn confidence among the people;
 his name will live forever.
 27 My child, test your soul in your life;
 do not give it what you find is evil for it.

20 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'D' have *ויש חכם בדברו נמאס ומכל מאכל תענוג נבצר*. ("Another is wise and disliked for what he says; he will be deprived of all agreeable food.")

21 Cairo Genizah MSS 'B' & 'D' omit this verse.

22 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has this verse after 20:7.

23 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'D' has *ויש חכם לעמו יכחם פרי דעתו בגויתם*. ("A truly wise man is wise for the people of his nation, and the fruits of his intellect are theirs.")

24 Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has this verse after 20:7.

25 The NJB opens with 'Human' in place of 'A man's'.

26 In place of 'confidence', the NRSV has 'honour'. Cairo Genizah MS 'C' has this verse after 20:7.

27 For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "My child, during your life, see what suits your constitution."

²⁸ οὐ γὰρ πάντα πᾶσιν συμφέρει,
καὶ οὐ πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐν παντὶ εὐδοκεῖ.
²⁹ μὴ ἀπληστεύου ἐν πάσῃ τρυφῇ
καὶ μὴ ἐκχυθῆς ἐπὶ ἐδεσμάτων·
³⁰ ἐν πολλοῖς γὰρ βρώμασιν ἔσται νόσος,
καὶ ἡ ἀπληστία ἐγγιεῖ ἕως χολέρας·
³¹ δι' ἀπληστίαν πολλοὶ ἐτελεύτησαν,
ὁ δὲ προσέχων προσθήσει ζωὴν.

²⁸ For, not everything is good for everybody,
and nor does everybody like everything.
²⁹ Do not be insatiable for any delicacy;
do not be greedy for food.
³⁰ For, over-eating leads to illness
and gluttony causes nausea.
³¹ Because of gluttony, many have perished,
but he who takes heed shall prolong his life.

²⁸ In place of 'good', the WEBBE has 'profitable'.

²⁹ The WEBBE has 'luxury' in place of 'delicacy'.

³⁰ For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "and excess leads to liver attacks."

³¹ For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "Many people have died from over-eating; control yourself and so prolong your life."

Σοφία Σιραχ 38

- ¹ Τίμα ἰατρὸν πρὸς τὰς χρείας αὐτοῦ τιμαῖς αὐτοῦ,
καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἔκτισεν κύριος·
- ² παρὰ γὰρ ὑψίστου ἐστὶν ἴασις,
καὶ παρὰ βασιλέως λήμψεται δόμα.
- ³ ἐπιστήμη ἰατροῦ ἀνυψώσει κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἔναντι μεγιστάνων θαυμασθήσεται.
- ⁴ κύριος ἔκτισεν ἐκ γῆς φάρμακα,
καὶ ἀνὴρ φρόνιμος οὐ προσοχθιεῖ αὐτοῖς.
- ⁵ οὐκ ἀπὸ ξύλου ἐγλυκάνθη ὕδωρ
εἰς τὸ γνωσθῆναι τὴν ἰσχὺν αὐτοῦ;
- ⁶ καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν ἀνθρώποις ἐπιστήμην
ἐνδοξάζεσθαι ἐν τοῖς θαυμασίοις αὐτοῦ·
- ⁷ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐθεράπευσε καὶ ἤρεν τὸν πόνον αὐτοῦ,
μυρεψὸς ἐν τούτοις ποιήσει μεῖγμα,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 38

- ¹ Honour the doctor in consideration of his services;
for, the Lord has created him too.
- ² Healing itself comes from the Most High,
like a gift received from a king.
- ³ The doctor's learning keeps his head high,
and great men reward him with awe.
- ⁴ The Lord created medicines out of the earth
and no one sensible will despise them.
- ⁵ Did not a piece of wood once sweeten the water,
thus giving proof of its power?
- ⁶ And he gave men the knowledge,
so that they may draw credit from his mighty works.
- ⁷ He uses these for healing and relieving pain;
the pharmacist makes up mixtures from them.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 38

- ¹ Possibly, some devout Jews thought consulting the doctor showed lack of faith in God (cf. 2Ch 16:12). Ben Sira corrects this view. The 'honour' here perhaps refers to the 'honorarium'; *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* has 'be friendly with a doctor' (רעי רופא לפני צרכן).
- ² The literal translation of the 2nd line (following the LXX) is 'when he receives from the king'; it is not clear whether this means the sick person or the doctor (v. 1) as intermediary, but, for this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads, 'The doctor has his art from God, and receives presents from the king.' (מאת אל יחכם רופא ומאת מלך ישא משאות)
- ³ In place of 'great men', the NJB has 'the great'.
- ⁴ For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "The Lord has brought forth medicinal herbs from the ground."
- ⁵ The text of the LXX suggests that the author is giving a natural explanation for the miracle at Marah; however, in place of 'its power', *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* has 'his (God's) power' (בעבור להודיע כל אנוש כחו).
- ⁶ The NJB opens, "He has also given some people."
- ⁷ 'These' refers to the 'herbs' of v. 4 (vv. 5–6 are parenthetical).

8 καὶ οὐ μὴ συντελεσθῆ ἔργα αὐτοῦ,
καὶ εἰρήνη παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἐπὶ προσώπου τῆς γῆς.

9 Τέκνον, ἐν ἀρρωστήματί σου μὴ παράβλεπε,
ἀλλ' εὕξαι κυρίῳ, καὶ αὐτὸς ἰάσεταιί σε·

10 ἀπόστησον πλημμέλειαν καὶ εὐδυνον χειῖρας
καὶ ἀπὸ πάσης ἁμαρτίας καθάρισον καρδίαν·

11 δὸς εὐωδίαν καὶ μνημόσυνον σεμιδάλεως
καὶ λίπανον προσφορὰν ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχων.

12 καὶ ἰατρῷ δὸς τόπον,
καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἔκτισεν κύριος,
καὶ μὴ ἀποστήτω σου, καὶ γὰρ αὐτοῦ χρεία.

13 ἔστιν καιρὸς ὅτε καὶ ἐν χερσὶν αὐτῶν εὐοδία·

14 καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ κυρίου δεηθήσονται,
ἵνα εὐοδώσῃ αὐτοῖς ἀνάπαυσιν
καὶ ἴασιν χάριν ἐμβιώσεως.

15 ὁ ἁμαρτάνων ἐναντι τοῦ ποιήσαντος αὐτὸν
ἐμπέσοι εἰς χειῖρας ἰατροῦ.

8 Thus, there is no end to his activities;
thanks to him, health exists throughout the world.

9 My child, when you are ill, do not look elsewhere,
but pray to the Lord and he will heal you.

10 Renounce your faults, keep your hands unsoiled,
and cleanse your heart from all sin.

11 Offer incense and a memorial of fine flour
and make as rich an offering as you can afford.

12 And let the doctor take over
– for, the Lord created him too –
do not let him leave you, for you need him.

13 There is a time when in recovery is in their hands.

14 For they, in their turn, will pray to the Lord
to grant them the grace to relieve
and to heal, to so prolong your life.

15 Whoever sins in the eyes of his Maker,
let such a one come under the care of the doctor!

-
- 8 The activities of God do not cease with creation; to human beings and things he gives a share of his power, thus diffusing benefits to the whole world. An alternative translation for 'health' is 'peace'.
- 9 In place of 'look elsewhere', here following the NETS, the NJB has 'rebel' and the WEBBE has 'be negligent'.
- 10 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 11 The literal translation of the 2nd line is 'make an offering according to your means', following Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ודשן ערוך בכנפי הוניך); the LXX has 'and make an offering as not being' (?).
- 12 The literal translation of 'for' is 'and for'.
- 13 The translation here follows the WEBBE (& LXX); the NJB reads, "There are times when good health depends on doctors."
- 14 This verse may have inspired Jm 5:14ff, but the advice given in that letter has a different end in view.
- 15 The 2nd line here follows the LXX (and NJB); Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (יתגבר לפני רופא) and the NRSV have, "and will resist the physician."

16 Τέκνον, ἐπὶ νεκρῶ κατάγαγε δάκρυα
καὶ ὡς δεινὰ πάσχων ἔναρξαι θρήνου,
κατὰ δὲ τὴν κρίσιν αὐτοῦ περίστειλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ
καὶ μὴ ὑπερίδης τὴν ταφὴν αὐτοῦ.

17 πίκρανον κλαυθμὸν καὶ θέρμανον κοπετὸν
καὶ ποιήσον τὸ πένθος κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν αὐτοῦ
ἡμέραν μίαν καὶ δύο χάριν διαβολῆς
καὶ παρακλήθητι λύπης ἔνεκα·

18 ἀπὸ λύπης γὰρ ἐκβαίνει θάνατος,
καὶ λύπη καρδίας κάμψει ἰσχύν.

19 ἐν ἐπαγωγῇ παραμένει καὶ λύπη,
καὶ βίος πτωχοῦ κατὰ καρδίας.

20 μὴ δῶς εἰς λύπην τὴν καρδίαν σου,
ἀπόστησον αὐτὴν μνησθεῖς τὰ ἔσχατα·

21 μὴ ἐπιλάθῃ, οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐπάνοδος,
καὶ τοῦτον οὐκ ὠφελήσεις καὶ σεαυτὸν κακώσεις.

22 μνήσθητι τὸ κρίμα μου, ὅτι οὕτως καὶ τὸ σόν·
ἐμοὶ ἐχθὲς καὶ σοὶ σήμερον.

16 My child, shed tears over the dead;
lament for the dead to show your sorrow,
then bury the body with due ceremony
and do not fail to honour the grave.

17 Weep bitterly, beat your breast,
and observe the mourning the dead deserves
for a day or two, to avoid censorious comment,
and then be comforted in your sorrow.

18 For, grief can lead to death,
and a grief-stricken heart loses all energy.

19 In affliction, sorrow persists;
a poor man's life is hard to bear.

20 Do not abandon your heart to grief;
drive it away, bear your own end in mind.

21 Do not forget, there is no coming back;
you cannot help the dead, and you will harm yourself.

22 "Remember his doom, since it will be yours too;
I yesterday, you today!"

-
- 16 With Jews, as with Orientals generally, the funeral rites were spectacular and governed by detailed rules. For various features, see Jr 9:17–18, Ezk 24:15–24, Am 5:16, Mt 9:23, Mk 5:38. For the last line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads *ואל תתעלם בגייעתם* ("and do not go away when he dies").
- 17 The literal translation of 'beat your breast' (one of the signs of mourning) is 'make the blow burn'.
- 18 For the 1st line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads 'Calamity comes from judgement' (מרין יוצא אסון).
- 19 In place of 'a poor man's life', here following the NRSV, the NJB has the conjectural 'a life of grief'. *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* omits this verse.
- 20 An alternative translation for 'bear your own end in mind' is 'think of the future'; the expression, τὰ ἔσχατα (7:36, 48:24), is hard to translate.
- 21 *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* inverts the order of vv. 21 & 22.
- 22 'His doom' follows *Codex Vaticanus* and *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*; *Codex Sinaiticus* has 'the doom'. Whatever the reading adopted, it is the doom that condemns all human beings to die (Gn 2:17, 3:3–4).

²³ ἐν ἀναπαύσει νεκροῦ κατάπαυσον τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτοῦ
καὶ παρακλήθητι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐν ἐξόδῳ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ.

²⁴ Σοφία γραμματέως ἐν εὐκαιρίᾳ σχολῆς,
καὶ ὁ ἐλασσούμενος πράξει αὐτοῦ σοφισθήσεται.

²⁵ τί σοφισθήσεται ὁ κρατῶν ἀρότρου
καὶ καυχώμενος ἐν δόρατι κέντρου,
βόας ἐλαύνων καὶ ἀναστρεφόμενος ἐν ἔργοις αὐτῶν,
καὶ ἡ διήγησις αὐτοῦ ἐν υἰοῖς ταύρων;

²⁶ καρδίαν αὐτοῦ δώσει ἐκδοῦναι αὐλάκας,
καὶ ἡ ἀγρυπνία αὐτοῦ εἰς χορτάσματα δαμάλεων.

²⁷ οὕτως πᾶς τέκτων καὶ ἀρχιτέκτων,
ὅστις νύκτωρ ὡς ἡμέρας διάγει·
οἱ γλύφοντες γλύμματα σφραγίδων,
καὶ ἡ ἐπιμονὴ αὐτοῦ ἀλλοιῶσαι ποικιλίαν·
καρδίαν αὐτοῦ δώσει εἰς ὁμοιῶσαι ζωγραφίαν,
καὶ ἡ ἀγρυπνία αὐτοῦ τελέσαι ἔργον.

²⁸ οὕτως χαλκεὺς καθήμενος ἐγγὺς ἄκμονος
καὶ καταμανθάνων ἔργα σιδήρου·
ἀτμὶς πυρὸς τήξει σάρκας αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἐν θέρμῃ καμίνου διαμαχήσεται·

²³ Once the dead are laid to rest, let their memory rest;
do not fret for them, once their spirit departs.

²⁴ Leisure gives the scribe the chance to acquire wisdom;
a man with few commitments can grow wise.

²⁵ How can he become wise who holds the plough
and whose sole ambition is to wield the goad,
driving his oxen, engrossed in their work,
and his conversation limited to bullocks,

²⁶ his thoughts absorbed in the furrows he traces
and his long evenings spent in fattening heifers?

²⁷ Similarly with all workmen and craftsmen,
toiling day and night;
those who engrave seals,
forever trying to think of a new design,
concentrating on catching a good likeness
and staying up late to get the work done.

²⁸ Similarly with the blacksmith sitting by his anvil;
he considers what to do with the pig iron,
the breath of the fire scorches his skin,
as he contends with the heat of the furnace;

²³ Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has a blank line after this verse.

²⁴ The passage of vv. 24–34 is not unlike an ancient Egyptian text known as the *Satire on Trades*. Ben Sira limits his catalogue to Palestinian trades.

²⁵ The NJB reads 'How can the ploughman become wise' for the 1st line and lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

²⁶ The WEBBE has, "He will set his heart upon turning his furrows. His lack of sleep is to give his heifers their fodder."

²⁷ There are some leaves missing after this verse in Cairo Genizah MS 'B'; the next page takes up at 39:15.

²⁸ 'Pig iron' follows Codex Vaticanus; the Textus Receptus has 'work of iron'. 'Deafens' is a conjectural translation, assuming *resh/dalet* confusion.

φωνῇ σφύρης κλινεῖ τὸ οὖς αὐτοῦ,
καὶ κατέναντι ὁμοιώματος σκεύους οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ·
καρδίαν αὐτοῦ δώσει εἰς συντέλειαν ἔργων,
καὶ ἡ ἀγρυπνία αὐτοῦ κοσμηῆσαι ἐπὶ συντελείας.

²⁹ οὕτως κεραμεὺς καθήμενος ἐν ἔργῳ αὐτοῦ
καὶ συστρέφων ἐν ποσὶν αὐτοῦ τροχόν,
ὃς ἐν μερίμνῃ κεῖται διὰ παντὸς ἐπὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἐναρίθμιος πᾶσα ἡ ἐργασία αὐτοῦ·

³⁰ ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ τυπώσει πηλόν
καὶ πρὸ ποδῶν κάμψει ἰσχὺν αὐτοῦ·
καρδίαν ἐπιδώσει συντελέσαι τὸ χρῆσμα,
καὶ ἡ ἀγρυπνία αὐτοῦ καθαρίσαι κάμινον.

³¹ Πάντες οὗτοι εἰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν ἐνεπίστευσαν,
καὶ ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ αὐτοῦ σοφίζεται·

³² ἄνευ αὐτῶν οὐκ οἰκισθήσεται πόλις,
καὶ οὐ παροικήσουσιν οὐδὲ περιπατήσουσιν.

...

³³ ἀλλ' εἰς βουλήν λαοῦ οὐ ζητηθήσονται
καὶ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ οὐχ ὑπεραλοῦνται·

the noise of the hammer deafens him,
his eyes are fixed on the pattern;
he concentrates on getting the job done well
and stays up late to apply the finishing touches.

²⁹ Similarly with the potter, sitting at his work,
turning the wheel with his feet;
constantly on the alert over his products,
each flick of the finger premeditated.

³⁰ He fashions the clay with his arm
and with his feet he kneads it;
he concentrates on applying the glaze right
and stays up late to clean the kiln.

³¹ All these people rely on their hands
and each is skilled at his own craft.

³² A town could not be inhabited without them;
there would be no settling, no travelling;
yet they are not sought for the council of the people.

³³ But you will not find them in the parliament;
they do not hold high rank in the assembly.

²⁹ The translation of the last line is uncertain (the NRSV has 'as he produces them in quantity') – perhaps the meaning is that he has to turn out a fixed number of articles by the end of the day.

³⁰ In place of 'fashions', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'pummels'.

³¹ The literal translation of 'skilled' is 'wise'. Craftsmanship is an elementary form of wisdom (see Ex 35:30–36:1, 1K 5:20, 7:13–14; such wisdom, however, cannot be compared with that of the scribe (39:1–11).

³² For the 2nd line, here following the LXX (and NJB), the Peshitta (and NRSV) has, "and wherever they live, they will not go hungry." The NJB, like most ancient MSS, lacks the 3rd line, here following the NETS & NRSV; further, it does not appear to be present in the Greek 248 MS.

³³ The literal translation of 'Law' is 'covenant of the judgement'.

ἐπὶ δίφρον δικαστοῦ οὐ καθιοῦνται
καὶ διαθήκην κρίματος οὐ διανοηθήσονται.
³⁴ οὐδὲ μὴ ἐκφάνωσιν παιδείαν καὶ κρίμα
καὶ ἐν παραβολαῖς οὐχ εὐρεθήσονται,
ἀλλὰ κτίσμα αἰῶνος στηρίσουσιν,
καὶ ἡ δέησις αὐτῶν ἐν ἐργασίᾳ τέχνης.

They do not sit on the judicial bench,
and they do not meditate on the Law,
³⁴ nor show any culture or judgement,
and they are not found in parables.
They sustain the structure of the world,
and their prayer is concerned with their trade.

³⁴ The literal translation of 'philosophers' is 'inventors of maxims' (a conjectural interpretation of 'maxims').

Σοφία Σιραχ 39

- ¹ Πλήν τοῦ ἐπιδιδόντος τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ
καὶ διανοομένου ἐν νόμῳ ὑψίστου,
σοφίαν πάντων ἀρχαίων ἐκζητήσῃ
καὶ ἐν προφητείαις ἀσχοληθήσεται,
- ² διήγησιν ἀνδρῶν ὀνομαστῶν συντηρήσῃ
καὶ ἐν στροφαῖς παραβολῶν συνεισελεύσεται,
- ³ ἀπόκρυφα παροιμιῶν ἐκζητήσῃ
καὶ ἐν αἰνίγμασι παραβολῶν ἀναστραφήσεται.
- ⁴ ἀνὰ μέσον μεγιστάνων ὑπηρετήσῃ
καὶ ἔναντι ἡγουμένων ὀφθήσεται·
ἐν γῆ ἀλλοτρίων ἐθνῶν διελεύσεται,
ἀγαθὰ γὰρ καὶ κακὰ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐπέειρασεν.
- ⁵ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπιδώσῃ ὀρθρίσαι
πρὸς κύριον τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτὸν
καὶ ἔναντι ὑψίστου δεηθήσεται·
καὶ ἀνοίξει στόμα αὐτοῦ ἐν προσευχῇ
καὶ περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτοῦ δεηθήσεται.
- ⁶ εἰάν κύριος ὁ μέγας θελήσῃ,
πνεύματι συνέσεως ἐμπλησθήσεται·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 39

- ¹ Not so with he who concentrates his mind
and meditates on the Law of the Most High.
He seeks the Wisdom of all the Ancients;
and occupies his time with the Prophecies.
- ² He preserves the discourses of famous men;
he is at home with the niceties of the parables.
- ³ He seeks the hidden sense of proverbs;
and ponders the obscurities of parables.
- ⁴ He enters the service of princes;
he is seen in the presence of rulers.
He travels in foreign countries;
he has experiences human good and human evil.
- ⁵ He devotes his heart to rise early,
to turn to the Lord his Creator
and plead in the presence of the Most High;
and he opens his mouth in prayer
and makes entreaty for his sins.
- ⁶ If such is the will of the Great Lord,
he will be filled with the spirit of intelligence.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 39

- ¹ The terms 'Law', 'Wisdom' and 'Prophecies' refer to the three sections of the scriptures (see the translator's foreword, 1:8-10, 24-25).
- ² The scribe is primarily the custodian of the scriptures, but he also has the duty of explaining them to the people (see #Ezr 7:6).
- ³ The NJB opens the 2nd line with 'he' in place of 'and'.
- ⁴ The scribe is often also a court official, minister, or ambassador.
- ⁵ For the 1st line, the NJB reads, "At dawn, and with all his heart."
- ⁶ None of the major English translation capitalizes 'Great'.

αὐτὸς ἀνομβρήσει ῥήματα σοφίας αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἐν προσευχῇ ἑξομολογήσεται κυρίῳ·
 7 αὐτὸς κατευθυνεῖ βουλήν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπιστήμην
 καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀποκρύφοις αὐτοῦ διανοηθήσεται·
 8 αὐτὸς ἐκφανεῖ παιδείαν διδασκαλίας αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἐν νόμῳ διαθήκης κυρίου καυχήσεται.
 9 αἰνέσουσιν τὴν σύνεσιν αὐτοῦ πολλοί,
 καὶ ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ ἔξαλειφθήσεται·
 οὐκ ἀποστήσεται τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ζήσεται εἰς γενεὰς γενεῶν·
 10 τὴν σοφίαν αὐτοῦ διηγῶνται ἔθνη,
 καὶ τὸν ἔπαινον αὐτοῦ ἑξαγγελεῖ ἐκκλησία·
 11 ἔὰν ἐμμείνῃ, ὄνομα καταλείψει ἢ χίλιοι,
 καὶ ἔὰν ἀναπαύσῃται, ἐκποιεῖ αὐτῷ.
 12 Ἐπι διανοηθεῖς ἐκδιηγῶμαι
 καὶ ὡς διχομηνία ἐπληρώθην.
 13 εἰσακούσατέ μου, υἱοὶ ὅσοι, καὶ βλαστήσατε
 ὡς ῥόδον φυόμενον ἐπὶ ῥεύματος ὑγροῦ
 14 καὶ ὡς λίβανος εὐωδιάσατε ὀσμὴν
 καὶ ἀνθήσατε ἄνθος ὡς κρίνον.

He will shower forth words of wisdom,
 and in prayer give thanks to the Lord.
 7 He will grow upright in purpose and learning
 and he will ponder his hidden mysteries.
 8 He will display the instruction he has received,
 and take his pride in the Law of the Lord's Covenant.
 9 Many will praise his intelligence
 and it will never be forgotten.
 His memory will not disappear
 and, generation to generation, his name will live.
 10 Nations will proclaim his wisdom
 and the assembly will celebrate his praises.
 11 If he lives, his name will be greater than a thousand,
 and, if he dies, that is enough for him.
 12 Here are some more of my reflections:
 yes, I am filled like the moon at the full!
 13 Listen to me, devout sons, and blossom
 like the rose growing on the bank of a watercourse.
 14 And give off a sweet smell like incense
 and flower like the lily.

7 The NJB has 'the Lord's' in place of 'his' in the 2nd line.

8 In place of 'take his pride', the WEBBE has 'glory'.

9 The WEBBE has 'understanding' in place of 'intelligence'.

10 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

11 The phrase, 'that is enough for him' is a conjectural translation (ἐκποιεῖ αὐτῷ); the LXX reads 'he sells it to him' (ἐκποιεῖ αὐτῷ).

12 For the 1st line, the WEBBE has, "Yet more I will utter, which I have thought about."

13 The NJB has 'children' in place of 'sons' (υἱοὶ).

14 In place of 'Scatter a sweet smell', the NJB has 'spread your fragrance abroad'.

διάδοτε ὄσμην καὶ αἰνέσατε ᾄσμα,
 εὐλογήσατε κύριον ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔργοις,
 15 δότε τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μεγαλωσύνην
 καὶ ἐξομολογήσασθε ἐν αἰνέσει αὐτοῦ
 ἐν ὠδαῖς χειλέων καὶ ἐν κινύραις
 καὶ οὕτως ἐρεῖτε ἐν ἐξομολογήσει
 16 Τὰ ἔργα κυρίου πάντα ὅτι καλὰ σφόδρα,
 καὶ πᾶν πρόσταγμα ἐν καιρῷ αὐτοῦ ἔσται·
 οὐκ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν Τί τοῦτο; εἰς τί τοῦτο;
 πάντα γὰρ ἐν καιρῷ αὐτοῦ ζητηθήσεται.
 17 ἐν λόγῳ αὐτοῦ ἔστη ὡς θιμωνιὰ ὕδωρ
 καὶ ἐν ῥήματι στόματος αὐτοῦ ἀποδοχεῖα ὑδάτων.
 18 ἐν προστάγματι αὐτοῦ πᾶσα ἡ εὐδοκία,
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὃς ἐλαττώσει τὸ σωτήριον αὐτοῦ.
 19 ἔργα πάσης σαρκὸς ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν κρυβῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ·
 20 ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἐπέβλεψεν,
 καὶ οὐδέν ἐστιν θαυμάσιον ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ.

Scatter a sweet smell and sing a song of praise blessing the Lord for all his works.

- 15 Declare the greatness of his name; proclaim his praise with song and lyre, and this is how you must sing his praises:
- 16 “How wonderful, the actions of the Lord! Whatever he orders is done at the proper time! You must not say, “What is this? Why is that?” There is a proper time for every question.
- 17 At his word, the water stops and piles up high; and, at his voice, the watery reservoirs take shape.
- 18 At his command, whatever he wants is done and no one can stop him, if he intends to save.
- 19 The works of all flesh are before him and nothing can be hidden from his eye.
- 20 His gaze stretches from age to age, and nothing can astonish him.

15 After a gap of missing pages, Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ takes up at the 2nd half of this verse.

16 The last two lines, found only in the LXX, are in part a doublet of v. 21. It apparently means that premature enquiries about the ordering of this world are idle.

17 This verse alludes to the numerous miracles connected with water: Creation (Gn 1:9), the Flood (Gn 7:11–12), the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex 14:21–22) and of the Jordan (Jos 3:16), and possibly also to the mystery of the clouds as inexhaustible reservoirs of water (see Ps 104:6–13).

18 Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ reads ותועתו למעצור ואין יצליח רצונו יצליח תנ [...] (‘He arranges [...] and his storehouse is the words from his mouth’).

19 For the 1st line, the NJB reads, “He can see whatever human beings are doing.” The text of Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ concurs with that of the Greek MSS (מעשה כל בשר נגד עיניו).

20 In place of ‘age to age’, here following the LXX (ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα), the NJB has ‘eternity to eternity’.

21 οὐκ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν Τί τοῦτο;
εἰς τί τοῦτο; πάντα γὰρ εἰς χρείας αὐτῶν ἔκτισται.

22 Ἡ εὐλογία αὐτοῦ ὡς ποταμὸς ἐπεκάλυψεν
καὶ ὡς κατακλυσμὸς ξηρὰν ἐμέδυσεν·

23 οὕτως ὀργὴν αὐτοῦ ἔδνη κληρονομῆσει,
ὡς μετέστρεψεν ὕδατα εἰς ἄλμην.

24 αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ τοῖς ὀσίοις εὐθεῖαι,
οὕτως τοῖς ἀνόμοις προσκόμματα·

25 ἀγαθὰ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἔκτισται ἀπ' ἀρχῆς,
οὕτως τοῖς ἁμαρτωλοῖς κακά.

26 ἀρχὴ πάσης χρείας εἰς ζωὴν ἀνθρώπου,
ὔδωρ καὶ πῦρ καὶ σίδηρος καὶ ἄλας
καὶ σεμίδαλις πυροῦ καὶ γάλα καὶ μέλι,
αἶμα σταφυλῆς καὶ ἔλαιον καὶ ἱμάτιον·

27 ταῦτα πάντα τοῖς εὐσεβέσιν εἰς ἀγαθά,
οὕτως τοῖς ἁμαρτωλοῖς τραπήσεται εἰς κακά.

28 Ἔστιν πνεύματα, ἃ εἰς ἐκδίκησιν ἔκτισται
καὶ ἐν θυμῷ αὐτοῦ ἐστερέωσεν μάστιγας αὐτῶν·

21 You must not say, "What is this? Why is that?"
For, everything has been made for a purpose.

22 As his blessing covers the dry land like a river
and soaks it like a flood,

23 so retribution is his legacy to the nations,
just as he has turned fresh waters to salt.

24 His ways are as smooth for the devout
as they are full of obstacles for the wicked.

25 Good things are made from the beginning for the good,
as bad ones were for sinners.

26 The prime needs of human beings for living
are water and fire, and iron and salt,
and wheat-flour, milk and honey,
the juice of the grape, oil and clothing.

27 All these are good for those who are good,
but turn out bad for sinners.

28 Some winds have been created for punishing;
in his fury, he uses them as scourges.

21 For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (זה לאמר זה לממה זה) reads, "There is no reason to say, "Why is this so?"".

22 The author is thinking of the beneficial inundations of the Nile (Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'Nile' in place of 'river').

23 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has a marginal note for this verse but it is illegible.

24 In place of 'the wicked', Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'strangers'.

25 The 2nd line here follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (כן לרעים טוב ורע) and the Vg (*sic et impiis et peccatoribus in mala convertentur*); the LXX has 'sinners bad things'.

26 In Cairo Genizah MS 'B', the text of this verse is only partly legible but it seems to concur with that of the LXX.

27 It is possible that the 2nd line of v. 25 (in the Greek text) was originally the same as that here.

28 The 2nd line here follows the Greek 248 MS; Cairo Genizah MS 'B' ([. . .] יעתיקם [. . .]) has, "and in their anger, they can dislodge mountains."

ἐν καιρῷ συντελείας ἰσχὺν ἐκχεοῦσιν
 καὶ τὸν θυμὸν τοῦ ποιήσαντος αὐτοὺς κοπάσουσιν.
 29 πῦρ καὶ χάλαζα καὶ λιμὸς καὶ θάνατος,
 πάντα ταῦτα εἰς ἐκδίκησιν ἔκτισται·
 30 θηρίων ὀδόντες καὶ σκορπίοι καὶ ἔχεις
 καὶ ῥομφαία ἐκδικοῦσα εἰς ὄλεθρον ἀσεβεῖς·
 31 ἐν τῇ ἐντολῇ αὐτοῦ εὐφρανθήσονται
 καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἰς χρείας ἐτοιμασθήσονται
 καὶ ἐν καιροῖς αὐτῶν οὐ παραβήσονται λόγον.
 32 Διὰ τοῦτο ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐστηρίχθην
 καὶ διενόηθην καὶ ἐν γραφῇ ἀφῆκα
 33 Τὰ ἔργα κυρίου πάντα ἀγαθὰ
 καὶ πᾶσαν χρείαν ἐν ὥρᾳ αὐτῆς χορηγήσει,
 34 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν Τοῦτο τούτου πονηρότερον,
 πάντα γὰρ ἐν καιρῷ εὐδοκιμηθήσεται.
 35 καὶ νῦν ἐν πάσῃ καρδίᾳ καὶ στόματι ὑμνήσατε
 καὶ εὐλογήσατε τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου.

On the day of doom, they unleash their violence
 and appease the wrath of their Creator.
 29 Fire and hail, famine and death,
 have all been created for punishing.
 30 Wild animals' fangs, scorpions, vipers,
 and the avenging sword for the ruin of the godless:
 31 All of them exult in discharging his orders,
 and are ready on earth whenever the need arises
 and, when their time comes, won't disobey his word.
 32 That is why I was determined from the outset,
 why I have pondered and why I have written:
 33 "The works of the Lord are all good,
 and he will supply every need in its time.
 34 You must not say, "This is worse than that,"
 for, in its time, everything proves its worth.
 35 So now, sing with all your heart and voice,
 and bless the name of the Lord!"

29 This verse reflects part of the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*: "It (the lower heaven) holds fire, snow, and ice ready for the Day of Judgement, in the just punishment of God. For, it is there that the spirits of vengeance are, for the punishment of men." (Lv 3:2). Ben Sira, also, sees these scourges as held in reserve, but he does not seem to be thinking in terms of eschatology.

30 The WEBBE has 'ungodly' in place of 'godless'.

31 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has *יִמְרוּ לֹא יִבְחָקוּ אֶתְּךָ בְּצִוְתוֹ* ('They rejoice at his command and do not defy his bidding in their appointed task').

32 This verse is a solemn preface to an optimistic conclusion: all is willed by God for a specific purpose.

33 For the 2nd line, here (loosely) following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "when the time is right, he gives whatever is needed."

34 The NJB has 'sooner or later' in place of 'in its time'.

35 In place of 'the name of the Lord', Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'the Holy Name' (*וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת שֵׁם קְדֻשׁוֹ*).

Σοφία Σιραχ 40

- ¹ Ἀσχολία μεγάλη ἔκτισται παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ
καὶ ζυγὸς βαρὺς ἐπὶ υἱοὺς Ἀδάμ
ἀφ' ἡμέρας ἐξόδου ἐκ γαστροῦ μητρὸς αὐτῶν
ἕως ἡμέρας ἐπιστροφῆς εἰς μητέρα πάντων·
- ² τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς αὐτῶν καὶ φόβον καρδίας,
ἐπίνοια προσδοκίας, ἡμέρα τελευτῆς.
- ³ ἀπὸ καθημένου ἐπὶ θρόνου ἐνδόξου
καὶ ἕως τεταπεινωμένου ἐν γῆ καὶ σποδῶ,
- ⁴ ἀπὸ φοροῦντος ὑακίνθινον καὶ στέφανον
καὶ ἕως περιβαλλομένου ὠμόλινον
θυμὸς καὶ ζῆλος καὶ ταραχὴ καὶ σάλος
καὶ φόβος θανάτου καὶ μηνίαμα καὶ ἔρις.
- ⁵ καὶ ἐν καιρῷ ἀναπαύσεως ἐπὶ κοίτης
ὑπνος νυκτὸς ἀλλοιοῖ γνῶσιν αὐτοῦ·
- ⁶ ὀλίγον ὡς οὐδὲν ἐν ἀναπαύσει,
καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἐν ὑπνοῖς ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σκοπιᾶς
τεθορυβημένος ἐν ὄρασει καρδίας αὐτοῦ
ὡς ἐκπεφευγὼς ἀπὸ προσώπου πολέμου·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 40

- ¹ A hard lot has been created for human beings;
a heavy yoke lies on the children of Adam,
from the day they came out of their mother's womb,
until the day they are buried in the mother of them all.
- ² What fills them with dread and their hearts with fear
is anticipation of the day of death.
- ³ From the one who sits on a glorious throne
and the wretch in dust and ashes,
- ⁴ from the one who wears purple and a crown
and the one dressed in sacking,
all is fury and jealousy, turmoil and unrest,
fear of death, rivalry and strife.
- ⁵ And even at night while he rests on his bed,
his sleep only gives a new twist to his worries.
- ⁶ Scarcely has he lain down to rest
when, in his sleep, as if by day,
he is troubled with nightmares,
like one who has escaped from a battle.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 40

- ¹ This passage (vv. 1–11) on the wretchedness of the human state contrasts with the preceding chapter; but there is no inconsistency in the thought: misery has its explanation – it is the consequence of sin (v. 10).
- ² Cairo Genizah MS 'B' omits this verse.
- ³ The NJB has 'to' in place of the opening 'and' of the 2nd line (as also in v. 4).
- ⁴ Wearing 'purple' was a sign of royalty.
- ⁵ Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (for which the text is uncertain) and the context suggest that sleep brings thoughts no less painful (cf. Qo 2:22–23).
- ⁶ 'As if by day' follows the Armenian text (and NRSV); the LXX has 'as if on the day of watching'.

7 ἐν καιρῷ χρείας αὐτοῦ ἐξηγέρθη
καὶ ἀποθαυμάζων εἰς οὐδένα φόβον.
8 μετὰ πάσης σαρκὸς ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπου ἕως κτήνους,
καὶ ἐπὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν ἑπταπλάσια πρὸς ταῦτα·
9 θάνατος καὶ αἷμα καὶ ἔρις καὶ ῥομφαία,
ἐπαγωγαί, λιμὸς καὶ σύντριμμα καὶ μάστιξ.
10 ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀνόμους ἐκτίσθη ταῦτα πάντα,
καὶ δι' αὐτοὺς ἐγένετο ὁ κατακλυσμός.
11 πάντα, ὅσα ἀπὸ γῆς, εἰς γῆν ἀναστρέφει,
καὶ ἀπὸ ὑδάτων, εἰς θάλασσαν ἀνακάμπτει.
12 Πᾶν δῶρον καὶ ἀδικία ἐξαλειφθήσεται,
καὶ πίστις εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα στήσεται.
13 χρήματα ἀδίκων ὡς ποταμὸς ξηρανθήσεται
καὶ ὡς βροντὴ μεγάλη ἐν ὑετῷ ἐξηχήσει·
14 ἐν τῷ ἀνοῖξαι αὐτὸν χειρᾶς εὐφρανθήσεται,
οὕτως οἱ παραβαίνοντες εἰς συντέλειαν ἐκλείψουσιν.
15 ἔκγονα ἀσεβῶν οὐ πληθυνεῖ κλάδους,
καὶ ῥίζαι ἀκάθαρτοι ἐπ' ἀκροτόμου πέτρας·

7 At the moment of rescue, he wakes up,
and marvels that the fear is nothing!
8 To all flesh, men and animal –
and seven times more for sinners –
9 come death and blood and strife, and the sword,
disasters, famine, affliction and plague.
10 These things were all created for the wicked,
and the Flood came because of them.
11 All that comes from earth returns to earth,
and what comes from the water returns to the sea.
12 All bribery and injustice will be blotted out,
but good faith will stand forever.
13 The wealth of the unjust will vanish like a torrent
and like the single thunderclap that heralds rain.
14 When he opens his hand, he rejoices;
by the same token, sinners come to ruin.
15 The sprigs of the godless will not make many branches
and tainted roots find only hard rock.

7 For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, “amazed that there was nothing to be afraid of.”

8 In place of ‘flesh’ and ‘men’, the NJB has, respectively, ‘creatures’ and ‘human’.

9 The WEBBE reads, “come death, bloodshed, strife, sword, calamities, famine, suffering, and plague.”

10 This verse is a typical expression of the traditional view of retribution (39:29–31).

11 The 2nd line here follows the LXX (and NJB); Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ (ואשר ממרום אל מרום) and the Peshitta (and NRSV) have, “and what is from above returns above.” The reference is to the life-breath of God (Gn 2:7, Qo 12:7).

12 Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ omits this verse and only a small section of the beginning can be read from Masada Scroll ‘Mas1H’.

13 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ has ותלולת בחזית אדיר ומאפיק אדיר (‘and [like] a flooding channel during a thunderstorm’).

14 This verse presents a difficult text; possibly referring to the virtuous whose generosity spreads joy all around.

15 In place of ‘sprigs’, here following the NJB, the WEBBE has ‘children’ and the NETS has ‘offspring’.

- 16 ἄχι ἐπὶ παντὸς ὕδατος καὶ χεῖλους ποταμοῦ
πρὸ παντὸς χόρτου ἐκτιλήσεται.
- 17 χάρις ὡς παράδεισος ἐν εὐλογίαις,
καὶ ἐλεημοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διαμενεῖ.
- 18 Ζωὴ αὐτάρκους καὶ ἐργάτου γλυκανθήσεται,
καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφότερα ὁ εὐρίσκων θησαυρόν.
- 19 τέκνα καὶ οἰκοδομὴ πόλεως στηρίζουσιν ὄνομα,
...
- καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφότερα γυνὴ ἄμωμος λογίζεται.
- 20 οἶνος καὶ μουσικὰ εὐφραίνουσιν καρδίαν,
καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφότερα ἀγάπησις σοφίας.
- 21 αὐλὸς καὶ ψαλτήριον ἠδύνουσιν μέλη,
καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφότερα γλῶσσα ἠδεῖα.
- 22 χάριν καὶ κάλλος ἐπιθυμήσει ὀφθαλμὸς
καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφότερα χλόην σπόρου.
- 23 φίλος καὶ ἑταῖρος εἰς καιρὸν ἀπαντῶντες,
καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφότερα γυνὴ μετὰ ἀνδρός.

- 16 The reed that grows by every lake and river's edge
is uprooted before any plant.
- 17 Charity is a very paradise of blessing
and almsgiving endures forever.
- 18 The life of the self-reliant and hard-working is sweet;
but better than both is one who finds a treasure.
- 19 Children and the founding of a city perpetuate a name:
but better than either is the one who finds wisdom.
Cattle and orchards make one prosperous,
but better than both is a blameless wife.
- 20 Wine and music cheer the heart;
but the love of wisdom is better than either.
- 21 Flute and harp add sweetness to a song;
but better than both is a pleasant tongue.
- 22 The eye longs for grace and beauty;
but better than both is the green of spring corn.
- 23 A friend or comrade is always well met;
but better than both is a wife or husband.

16 The literal translation of 'before any plant' is 'before any rain'.

17 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "Faithful love will never be shaken and justice remains forever." (וחסד לעולם לא ימוט וצדקה לעד תכון)

18 For the 1st line, here following the LXX (and NETS), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (חיי יין ושכר ימתקן) has, "A life of wine and strong drink sweet."

19 The 2nd and 3rd lines, here following Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (שגור ונטע יפריחו שם) and the Peshitta (and the NRSV) are included in the NJB only as a footnote.

20 In place of 'wisdom', here following the LXX (and NJB), the Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (דודים) and the NRSV have 'friends'.

21 The NJB has 'melodious voice' in place of 'pleasant tongue'.

22 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has (ומשניהם צמחי שדה) ('but better than both is the produce of the field').

23 In place of 'wife or husband', here following the LXX (and NJB), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (אשה משכלת) and the NRSV have 'sensible wife'.

24 ἀδελφοὶ καὶ βοήθεια εἰς καιρὸν θλίψεως,
 καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφοτέρω ἐλεημοσύνη ῥύσεται.
 25 χρυσίον καὶ ἀργύριον ἐπιστήσουσιν πόδα,
 καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφοτέρω βουλή εὐδοκιμεῖται.
 26 χρήματα καὶ ἰσχύς ἀνυψώσουσιν καρδίαν,
 καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφοτέρω φόβος κυρίου·
 οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν φόβῳ κυρίου ἐλάττωσις,
 καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπιζητῆσαι ἐν αὐτῷ βοήθειαν·
 27 φόβος κυρίου ὡς παράδεισος εὐλογίας,
 καὶ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν δόξαν ἐκάλυψεν αὐτόν.
 28 Τέκνον, ζωὴν ἐπαιτήσεως μὴ βιώσης·
 κρεῖσσον ἀποθανεῖν ἢ ἐπαιτεῖν.
 29 ἀνὴρ βλέπων εἰς τράπεζαν ἀλλοτρίαν,
 οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ ὁ βίος ἐν λογισμῶ ζωῆς,
 ἀλισγήσει ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐδέσμασιν ἀλλοτρίοις·
 ἀνὴρ δὲ ἐπιστήμων καὶ πεπαιδευμένος φυλάσσεται.
 30 ἐν στόματι ἀναιδοῦς γλυκανθήσεται ἐπαίτησις,
 καὶ ἐν κοιλίᾳ αὐτοῦ πῦρ καήσεται.

24 Brothers and allies are good in times of trouble;
 but better than both is almsgiving to the rescue.
 25 Gold and silver will steady your feet;
 but better than both is good advice.
 26 Money and strength make a confident heart;
 but better than both is the fear of the Lord.
 With fear of the Lord, nothing is lacking
 and there is no need to seek for other help.
 27 Fear of the Lord is a paradise of blessing,
 protecting better than the highest reputation.
 28 My child, don't lead a beggar's life.
 It is better to die than to beg.
 29 A life spent in eyeing someone else's table
 cannot be accounted a life at all.
 Other people's food defiles the gullet;
 a wise, well brought-up man is aware of this.
 30 What a sponger says may sound very sweet
 but in his belly there burns a fire.

24 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "Relatives and helpers are for a time of affliction."

25 In place of 'better than both', the NJB has 'more esteemed than either'.

26 The NJB lacks the words, 'and there is' at the start of the last line.

27 The climax of the ten 'better' sayings (vv.18–26) is 'fear of the Lord' (see 1:11–30).

28 For this verse, here loosely following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "My child, do not live by sponging off others; it is better to be dead than a sponger."

29 For the 3rd line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "It is inward torture for the intelligent." (מעגל נפש מטעמו)

30 The literal translation of 'but' is 'and'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 41

- 1** Ὡ θάνατε, ὡς πικρὸν σου τὸ μνημόσυνόν ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπῳ εἰρηνεύοντι ἐν τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν αὐτοῦ, ἀνδρὶ ἀπερισπάστῳ καὶ εὐοδομένῳ ἐν πᾶσιν καὶ ἔτι ἰσχύοντι ἐπιδέξασθαι τροφήν.
- 2** Ὡ θάνατε, καλὸν σου τὸ κρίμα ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπῳ ἐπιδομένῳ καὶ ἐλασσομένῳ ἰσχύι, ἐσχατογήρῳ καὶ περισπωμένῳ περὶ πάντων καὶ ἀπειθοῦντι καὶ ἀπολωλεκότι ὑπομονήν.
- 3** ἢ εὐλαβοῦ κρίμα θανάτου, μνήσθητι προτέρων σου καὶ ἐσχάτων·
- 4** τοῦτο τὸ κρίμα παρὰ κυρίου πάση σαρκί, καὶ τί ἀπαναίνη ἐν εὐδοκίᾳ ὑψίστου; εἴτε δέκα εἴτε ἑκατὸν εἴτε χίλια ἔτη, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἄδου ἐλεγμὸς ζωῆς.
- 5** Τέκνα βδελυρὰ γίνεται τέκνα ἀμαρτωλῶν καὶ συναναστρεφόμενα παροικίαις ἀσεβῶν·
- 6** τέκνων ἀμαρτωλῶν ἀπολεῖται κληρονομία, καὶ μετὰ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῶν ἐνδεδελεχίει ὄνειδος.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 41

- 1** O death, how bitter it is to remember you for someone peacefully living with his possessions, for someone with no worries and everything going well and who can still enjoy the food!
- 2** O death, your sentence is welcome to one in want, whose strength is failing, to one worn out with age and a thousand worries, and is resentful and impatient!
- 3** Do not dread death's sentence; remember your past and your future.
- 4** This is the sentence passed on all flesh by the Lord, so why object to what seems good to the Most High? Whether ten or a hundred or a thousand years, its length will not be held against you in Sheol.
- 5** Hateful brats, such are the children of sinners, who gather in the haunts of the godless.
- 6** The inheritance of sinners' children will perish; their posterity will endure lasting reproach.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 41

- 1** An alternative translation for 'food' is 'pleasure'.
- 2** The NJB lacks 'and is' at the start of the 4th line.
- 3** Resignation to death is characteristic of Hebrew Bible thought (see 14:11–19, 17:25–28, 38:16–23).
- 4** In 'Sheol' (literally, 'Hades' – ἄδου), the longest of lives has come to an end and has therefore ceased to be a matter for envy.
- 5** For the 1st line, here following the NJB, the WEBBE has, "The children of sinners are abominable children."
- 6** The NJB has 'is doomed to perish' in place of 'will perish'.

7 πατρὶ ἀσεβεῖ μέμψεται τέκνα,
 ὅτι δι' αὐτὸν ὀνειδισθήσονται.
 8 οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, ἄνδρες ἀσεβεῖς,
 οἵτινες ἐγκατελίπετε νόμον θεοῦ ὑψίστου·
 9 καὶ ἐὰν γεννηθῆτε, εἰς κατάραν γεννηθήσεσθε,
 ...

καὶ ἐὰν ἀποθάνητε, εἰς κατάραν μερισθήσεσθε.
 10 πάντα, ὅσα ἐκ γῆς, εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσεται,
 οὕτως ἀσεβεῖς ἀπὸ κατάρως εἰς ἀπώλειαν.
 11 Πένθος ἀνθρώπων ἐν σώμασιν αὐτῶν,
 ὄνομα δὲ ἀμαρτωλῶν οὐκ ἀγαθὸν ἐξαλειφθήσεται.
 12 φρόντισον περὶ ὀνόματος, αὐτὸ γάρ σοι διαμενεῖ
 ἢ χίλιοι μεγάλοι θησαυροὶ χρυσοῦ.
 13 ἀγαθῆς ζωῆς ἀριθμὸς ἡμερῶν,
 καὶ ἀγαθὸν ὄνομα εἰς αἰῶνα διαμενεῖ.

7 Children will blame an ungodly father
 for the reproach he has brought on them.
 8 Woe to you, godless people,
 who have forsaken the Law of God Most High.
 9 When you were born, you were born to be accursed;
if you beget children, it is for affliction.
If you stumble, it is for everlasting joy,
 and, when you die, that curse will be your portion.
 10 All that comes from the earth returns to the earth,
 so too, the wicked proceed from curse to destruction.
 11 Mourning concerns only the bodies of the dead,
 but the worthless name of sinners will be blotted out.
 12 Be careful of your name; for, it will last you longer
 than a thousand great hoards of gold.
 13 A good life lasts a certain number of days,
 but a good name lasts forever.

7 The WEBBE has 'disgrace' in place of 'reproach'.

8 Vv. 8-10 show that Ben Sira has in mind those who abandon the Law for another, perhaps Greek, way of life. A footnote to the WEBBE suggests that some MSS have additional text at the end of this verse.

9 The 2nd & 3rd lines, here following the Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (עולםם תכשלו לשמחת עולם: [ולידו לאנחה: ...]) and the NRSV, are omitted by the LXX (and NJB). For the 3rd line, the Peshitta reads, "When you stumble, you give delight to others."

10 For this verse, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads 'All that comes from nothing return to nothing; so also, the corrupt go from emptiness to emptiness' (הו) כן חנף מתהו אל תהו) אפס אל אפס ישוב כן חנף מתהו אל תהו) and Masada Scroll 'Mas1H' has '... naught to naught returns; thus, the godless [who are] from a void to a void [return]' (הו) כן חנף מתהו אל תהו) אפס אל אפס ישוב כן חנף מתהו אל תהו).

11 The text here follows the LXX (and NJB); Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (הב) אדם בגויתו אך שם חסד לא יכרת) and the NRSV read, "The human body is a fleeting thing, but a virtuous name will never be blotted out."

12 In place of 'name', the NJB has 'reputation' (as also in v. 13).

13 For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'The good things of life are limited to a few days' (טובת חי ימי מספר).

14 παιδείαν ἐν εἰρήνῃ συντηρήσατε, τέκνα·
σοφία δὲ κεκρυμμένη καὶ θησαυρὸς ἀφανής,
τίς ὠφέλεια ἐν ἀμφοτέροις;

15 κρείσσων ἄνθρωπος ἀποκρύπτων τὴν μωρίαν αὐτοῦ
ἢ ἄνθρωπος ἀποκρύπτων τὴν σοφίαν αὐτοῦ.

16 Τοιγαροῦν ἐντρέπητε ἐπὶ τῷ ῥήματί μου·
οὐ γάρ ἐστιν πᾶσαν αἰσχύνῃν διαφυλάξαι καλόν,
καὶ οὐ πάντα πᾶσιν ἐν πίστει εὐδοκιμεῖται.

17 αἰσχύνεσθε ἀπὸ πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς περὶ πορνείας
καὶ ἀπὸ ἡγουμένου καὶ δυνάστου περὶ ψεύδους,

18 ἀπὸ κριτοῦ καὶ ἄρχοντος περὶ πλημμελείας
καὶ ἀπὸ συναγωγῆς καὶ λαοῦ περὶ ἀνομίας,

19 ἀπὸ κοινωνοῦ καὶ φίλου περὶ ἀδικίας
καὶ ἀπὸ τόπου, οὗ παροικεῖς, περὶ κλοπῆς,

20 ἀπὸ ἀληθείας θεοῦ καὶ διαθήκης
καὶ ἀπὸ πῆξεως ἀγκῶνος ἐπ’ ἄρτοις,

21 ἀπὸ σκορακισμοῦ λήμψεως καὶ δόσεως

14 Keep my instructions and be at peace, my children.
Wisdom hidden away and treasure unseen:
what use is either of these?

15 Better is a man who hides his folly
than a man who hides his wisdom.

16 Preserve a sense of shame in the following matters,
for not every kind of shame is right to harbour,
nor is every situation correctly appraised by all.

17 Be ashamed, before father and mother, of depravity,
and, before prince or potentate, of telling lies,

18 of wrongdoing before judge or magistrate
and of impiety before the assembly of the people,
and of unjust dealing before a partner and friend,

19 and of theft before the neighbourhood you live in.

20 Before the truth and Covenant of God,
be ashamed of leaning elbows on the table,

21 of being ungracious when giving or receiving,

14 For the last 2 lines, Masada Scroll ‘Mas1H’ has כמה טמונה ושימה מסותרת מה תעלה בשתייהם (‘hidden treasure and concealed wisdom – what profit (is) in these two things?’). The shin in the last word is written as a small, raised letter.

15 The NJB has ‘those’ in place of ‘a man’ (twice in this verse), with corresponding changes to the following verbs and pronouns.

16 The last line here follows the LXX (and NJB); Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ (לא כל בשת נאה לשמר ולא כל הכלם נבחר) and the NRSV read, “nor is every kind of abashment to be approved.”

17 In place of ‘depravity’, the NRSV has ‘sexual immorality’.

18 The WEBBE has ‘congregation’ in place of ‘assembly’.

19 The NRSV includes this verse as part of v. 18; subsequent verse numbers therein are accordingly decremented.

20 The literal translation of ‘on the table’ is ‘on the bits of bread’; if this is only a matter of etiquette, it accords ill with the context. The Hebrew text offers little insight: “to violate oath and covenant, to stretch your elbows over (towards) the bread.”

21 For the 2nd line, Masada Scroll ‘Mas1H’ has ‘and of requesting the salutation of the deaf’ (ומשאל שלום החריש).

καὶ ἀπὸ ἀσπαζομένων περὶ σιωπῆς,
22 ἀπὸ ὀράσεως γυναικὸς ἑταίρας
καὶ ἀπὸ ἀποστροφῆς προσώπου συγγενοῦς,
23 ἀπὸ ἀφαιρέσεως μερίδος καὶ δόσεως
καὶ ἀπὸ κατανοήσεως γυναικὸς ὑπάνδρου,
24 ἀπὸ περιεργίας παιδίσκης αὐτοῦ
καὶ μὴ ἐπιστῆς ἐπὶ τὴν κοίτην αὐτῆς,
25 ἀπὸ φίλων περὶ λόγων ὀνειδισμοῦ
καὶ μετὰ τὸ δοῦναι μὴ ὀνειδίξει,
26 ἀπὸ δευτερώσεως καὶ λόγου ἀκοῆς
καὶ ἀπὸ καλύψεως λόγων κρυφίων·
27 καὶ ἔσῃ αἰσχυνηρὸς ἀληθινῶς
καὶ εὐρίσκων χάριν ἔναντι παντὸς ἀνθρώπου.

of ignoring those who greet you,
22 of gazing at a loose woman,
of repulsing your fellow countryman,
23 of misappropriating another's portion or gift,
of paying court to another man's wife,
24 of making advances to his servant-girl
– do not go near her bed –
25 of saying disagreeable things to friends
– do not follow up a gift with a taunt –
26 of repeating everything you hear
and of betraying confidences.
27 Then you will know what true shame is,
and you will find yourself in everyone's graces.

22 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has 'of looking at a woman who is a prostitute' (wherein it is the 2nd line of v. 20).

23 The NRSV includes this verse as part of v. 22 (v. 21 therein).

24 The WEBBE reads, "of meddling with his maid – and don't come near her bed."

25 The NRSV includes this verse as part of v. 24 (v. 22 therein).

26 The NRSV includes vv. 26–27 as part of 42:1.

27 The WEBBE (wherein this is v. 24) reads, "So you will be ashamed of the right things and find favour in the sight of every man."

Σοφία Σιραχ 42

- 1 Μὴ περὶ τούτων αἰσχυνθῆς
καὶ μὴ λάβῃς πρόσωπον τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν·
- 2 περὶ νόμου ὑψίστου καὶ διαθήκης
καὶ περὶ κρίματος δικαιῶσαι τὸν ἀσεβῆ,
- 3 περὶ λόγου κοινωνοῦ καὶ ὁδοιπόρων
καὶ περὶ δόσεως κληρονομίας ἐταίρων,
- 4 περὶ ἀκριβείας ζυγοῦ καὶ σταθμῶν
καὶ περὶ κτήσεως πολλῶν καὶ ὀλίγων,
- 5 περὶ διαφόρου πράσεως ἐμπόρων
καὶ περὶ παιδείας τέκνων πολλῆς
καὶ οἰκέτη πονηρῶ πλευρὰν αἰμάξαι·
- 6 ἐπὶ γυναικὶ πονηρᾷ καλὸν σφραγίς,
καὶ ὅπου χεῖρες πολλαί, κλειῖσον·
- 7 ὃ ἐὰν παραδιδῶς, ἐν ἀριθμῶ καὶ σταθμῶ,
καὶ δόσις καὶ λῆψις, πάντα ἐν γραφῇ·
- 8 περὶ παιδείας ἀνοήτου καὶ μωροῦ
καὶ ἐσχατογῆρος κρινομένου πρὸς νέους·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 42

- 1 Of the following things do not be ashamed,
and do not sin to save face:
- 2 of the Law of the Most High or of the Covenant,
and of a verdict that acquits the godless,
- 3 of keeping accounts with a travelling companion,
and of settling property on your friends,
- 4 of being accurate over scales and weights,
and of making small and large profits,
- 5 of gaining from commercial transactions,
and of disciplining your children strictly,
and of lashing a wicked slave until you draw blood.
- 6 With an interfering wife, it is as well to use your seal
and, where there are many hands, lock things up.
- 7 Whatever you hand over, do it by number and weight;
and, giving or receiving, put all in writing.
- 8 Do not be ashamed to correct a stupid person or a fool,
or an old dotard who bickers with young people.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 42

- 1 Ben Sira shows how certain actions frowned on by public opinion or by prejudice are nevertheless permissible.
- 2 The 'godless' perhaps refers to foreigners; they should be treated as justly as Israelites.
- 3 'Keeping accounts' follows Masada Scroll 'Mas1H' (על חשבון שותף ודרך), reading *λόγιου* in place of *λόγου*; 'travelling companion' is conjectural – the LXX has 'a companion and travellers'.
- 4 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has 'of gaining much or little'.
- 5 Compare this verse, on the other hand, with 26:29 and 27:2: business dealings are lawful but full of temptation.
- 6 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' here continues the list of vv. 2-5, opening with על אשה רעה חותם ('of putting a seal on an unworthy wife').
- 7 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 8 This verse follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ושב כושל ועונה בזנות) has, for the 2nd line, "or the aged who is guilty of sexual immorality."

καὶ ἔσῃ πεπαιδευμένος ἀληθινῶς
καὶ δεδοκιμασμένος ἔναντι παντὸς ζῶντος.

- ⁹ Θυγάτηρ πατρὶ ἀπόκρυφος ἀγρυπνία,
καὶ ἡ μέριμνα αὐτῆς ἀφιστᾷ ὕπνον·
ἐν νεότητι αὐτῆς, μήποτε παρακμάσῃ,
καὶ συνωκηκυῖα, μήποτε μισηθῇ·
- ¹⁰ ἐν παρθενία, μήποτε βεβηλωθῇ
καὶ ἐν τοῖς πατρικοῖς αὐτῆς ἔγκυος γένηται·
μετὰ ἀνδρὸς οὖσα, μήποτε παραβῇ,
καὶ συνωκηκυῖα, μήποτε στειρωθῇ.
- ¹¹ ἐπὶ θυγατρὶ ἀδιατρέπτω στερέωσον φυλακὴν,
μήποτε ποιήσῃ σε ἐπίχαρμα ἐχθροῖς,
λαλιὰν ἐν πόλει καὶ ἔκκλητον λαοῦ,
καὶ καταισχύνη σε ἐν πλήθει πολλῶν.
...
- ¹² παντὶ ἀνδρῶπι μὴ ἔμβλεπε ἐν κάλλει
καὶ ἐν μέσῳ γυναικῶν μὴ συνέδρευε·
- ¹³ ἀπὸ γὰρ ἱματίων ἐκπορεύεται σῆς
καὶ ἀπὸ γυναικὸς πονηρία γυναικός.

Then you will show yourself really educated
and win the approval of everyone.

- ⁹ Unknown to her, a daughter keeps her father awake;
the worry she gives him drives away his sleep:
In her youth, in case she never marries,
when married, in case she is disliked;
- ¹⁰ As a virgin, in case she should be defiled
and found with child in her father's house;
having a husband, in case she goes astray,
and married, in case she should be sterile!
- ¹¹ Keep a strict watch over a headstrong daughter,
lest she makes you the laughing-stock of your enemies,
the talk of the town, the object of common gossip,
and put you to public shame.
*See that there is no lattice in her room,
no spot that overlooks the approach to the house.*
- ¹² Do not stare at any man for his good looks;
do not sit down with the women.
- ¹³ For, the moth comes out of the clothes
and woman's wickedness out of woman.

⁹ The 1st line here follows the LXX; Masada Scroll 'Mas1H' ([...] *לאב מטמון ש[.]* [בש[.]]) has, "A daughter [is] a secret anxiety for [her] father."

¹⁰ The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 4th line.

¹¹ The LXX lacks the last two lines, here following Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (*דבת עיר וק[.] ת[.] עם והושבתך [.] דת שער*).

¹² For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads *לכל זכר אל תתן תאר ובית נשים אל תסתוין*. ("Let her not show her beauty to any man; let her not gossip with married women.")

¹³ The NJB has 'spite' in place of 'wickedness'.

14 κρείσσων πονηρία ἀνδρὸς ἢ ἀγαθοποιὸς γυνή,
καὶ γυνή καταισχύνουσα εἰς ὄνειδισμὸν.

15 Μνησθήσομαι δὴ τὰ ἔργα κυρίου,
καὶ ἃ ἑώρακα, ἐκδιηγήσομαι·
ἐν λόγοις κυρίου τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.

16 ἥλιος φωτίζειν κατὰ πᾶν ἐπέβλεψεν,
καὶ τῆς δόξης κυρίου πλήρες τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ.

17 οὐκ ἐξεποίησεν τοῖς ἁγίοις κυρίου
ἐκδιηγῆσασθαι πάντα τὰ θαυμάσια αὐτοῦ,
ἃ ἐστερέωσεν κύριος ὁ παντοκράτωρ
στηρικθῆναι ἐν δόξῃ αὐτοῦ τὸ πᾶν.

18 ἄβυσσον καὶ καρδίαν ἐξίχνευσε
καὶ ἐν πανουργεύμασιν αὐτῶν διενόηθη·
ἔγνω γὰρ ὁ ὕψιστος πᾶσαν εἰδῆσιν
καὶ ἐνέβλεψεν εἰς σημεῖον αἰῶνος

19 ἀπαγγέλλων τὰ παρεληλυθότα καὶ τὰ ἐσόμενα
καὶ ἀποκαλύπτων ἴχνη ἀποκρύφων·

14 Better a man's spite than a woman's kindness:
women give rise to shame and reproach.

15 Next, I shall remind you of the works of the Lord,
and tell of what I have seen.
By the words of the Lord, his works came into being.

16 The shining sun looks down on all things,
and the work of the Lord is full of his glory.

17 The Lord has not granted the Holy Ones the power
to tell of all his marvels,
which the Almighty Lord has solidly constructed
for the universe to stand firm in his glory.

18 He has fathomed both the abyss and the human heart
and seen into their devious ways.
For, the Most High knows all there is to know
and sees the signs of the times.

19 He declares what is past and what will be,
and reveals the traces of hidden things.

14 Ben Sira is stricter than Proverbs, itself severe on women (cf. #Pr 5:15). Even when taking the paradox into account, it should be noted that later rabbinical thinking took the same line.

15 At the end of this verse, the *Peshitta* adds 'and all creation obeys his will'.

16 For the 1st line, here following the *NJB*, the *WEBBE* reads, "The sun that gives light looks at all things."

17 For the 2 two lines, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (אִמְךָ אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹ לְהַתְּחַזֵּק לְפָנַי כְּבוֹדוֹ) & *Masada Scroll 'Mas1H'* (אִמְךָ אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹ לְהַתְּחַזֵּק לְפָנַי כְּבוֹדוֹ) read, "God has given his armies the strength to subsist before his glory."

18 The stars are 'signs of the times' not only because they distinguish the seasons (43:6, Gn 1:14-18) but also because, according to widespread belief, the future was already written in the heavens (Jr 10:2). Here, there may be a more specific reference to the extraordinary signs expected to announce the coming of the Messiah (Mt 24:29-31).

19 The *NJB* has 'trend' in place of 'traces', here following the *WEBBE*.

- ²⁰ οὐ παρηῆλθεν αὐτὸν πᾶν διανόημα,
οὐκ ἐκρύβη ἀπ' αὐτοῦ οὐδὲ εἷς λόγος.
- ²¹ τὰ μεγαλεῖα τῆς σοφίας αὐτοῦ ἐκόσμησεν,
ὡς ἔστιν πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα·
οὔτε προσετέθη οὔτε ἠλαττώθη,
καὶ οὐ προσεδεήθη οὐδενὸς συμβούλου.
- ²² ὡς πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἐπιθυμητὰ
καὶ ὡς σπινθῆρός ἐστιν θεωρῆσαι·
- ²³ πάντα ταῦτα ζῆ καὶ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα
ἐν πάσαις χρείαις, καὶ πάντα ὑπακούει.
- ²⁴ πάντα δισσά, ἐν κατέναντι τοῦ ἐνός,
καὶ οὐκ ἐποίησεν οὐδὲν ἐλλείπον·
- ²⁵ ἐν τοῦ ἐνός ἐστερέωσεν τὰ ἀγαθά,
καὶ τίς πλησθήσεται ὁρῶν δόξαν αὐτοῦ;

- ²⁰ No thought escapes him,
no single word is hidden from him.
- ²¹ He has ordered the magnificent works of his wisdom;
he is from everlasting to everlasting.
Nothing can be added to him, nothing taken away;
he needs no one's advice.
- ²² How lovely all his works are,
and how dazzling to the eye!
- ²³ They all live and last forever;
in whatever circumstances, all obey.
- ²⁴ All things go in pairs, by opposites;
he has not made anything imperfect:
- ²⁵ One thing complements the excellence of another.
Who could ever see enough of his glory?

²⁰ The NJB opens both lines with 'not a' in place of 'no'.

²¹ In place of 'ordered', the NJB has 'embellished'.

²² For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "One may see this even in a spark."

²³ For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "They are all obedient."

²⁴ This verse here follows the LXX; Masada Scroll 'Mas1H' ([...]מ' עשה זה ולא לעמת זה [...] כלם) reads, "All things are different from one another, and nothing has been made in vain."

²⁵ In place of 'ever see enough of', the NJB has 'ever grow tires of gazing at'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 43

- 1 Γαυρίαμα ὕψους στερέωμα καθαριότητος,
εἶδος οὐρανοῦ ἐν ὄραματι δόξης.
- 2 ἥλιος ἐν ὀπτασίᾳ διαγγέλλων ἐν ἐξόδῳ
σκεῦος θαυμαστόν, ἔργον ὑψίστου·
- 3 ἐν μεσημβρία αὐτοῦ ἀναξηραίνει χώραν,
καὶ ἐναντίον καύματος αὐτοῦ τίς ὑποστήσεται;
- 4 κάμινον φυσῶν ἐν ἔργοις καύματος,
τριπλασίως ἥλιος ἐκκαίων ὄρη·
ἀτμίδας πυρώδεις ἐκφυσῶν
καὶ ἐκλάμπων ἀκτῖνας ἀμαυροῖ ὀφθαλμούς.
- 5 μέγας κύριος ὁ ποιήσας αὐτόν,
καὶ ἐν λόγοις αὐτοῦ κατέσπευσεν πορείαν.
- 6 Καὶ ἡ σελήνη ἐν πᾶσιν εἰς καιρὸν αὐτῆς,
ἀνάδειξιν χρόνων καὶ σημεῖον αἰῶνος·
- 7 ἀπὸ σελήνης σημεῖον ἑορτῆς,
φωστῆρ μειούμενος ἐπὶ συντελείας.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 43

- 1 Pride of the heights, a clear vault of the sky –
such is the beauty of the heavens, a glorious sight.
- 2 The sun, as he emerges, proclaims at his rising,
"How wonderful a thing, the work of the Most High!"
- 3 At his zenith, he parches the ground;
and who can withstand his blaze?
- 4 We have to blow the furnace to produce any heat,
but the sun burns the mountains three times as much.
He breaths out blasts of fire,
flashing his rays, he dazzles the eyes.
- 5 Great is the Lord who created him
and whose word speeds him on his course.
- 6 It is the moon that marks the changing seasons,
governing the times, an everlasting sign.
- 7 It is the moon that signals the feasts,
a luminary that wanes after being full.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 43

- 1 Compare this lyrical passage with those of Dn 3:52–90 and Ps 19:4ff, 136, 145, 148. The text is difficult and a *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* marginal note (הרהר על טהרה ועצם שמים מביט נהרה) and *Masada Scroll 'Mas1H'* ([... ...] שמים [עצם לטהר עצה] – 'The countenance of the [heavenly] height[s] and of the firmament [is] for purity'), having very different text, are of little help.
- 2 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "The sun, when it appears, bringing tidings as it rises."
- 3 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.
- 4 An alternative translation of the 1st line, following the NRSV, is, "A man tending a furnace works in burning heat."
- 5 The WEBBE ends the 1st line with 'it' in place of 'him'.
- 6 The 1st line here follows *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (ונם ירח ירח עתות שכות) and the NRSV; the meaning of the LXX is uncertain.
- 7 The two great Jewish feasts, Passover and Shelters (see #Ex 23:14) begin on the day of the full moon (14th of the month) and lasted for 8 days.

8 μὴν κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς ἐστὶν
 αὐξανόμενος θαυμαστῶς ἐν ἀλλοιώσει,
 σκεῦος παρεμβολῶν ἐν ὑψεῖ,
 ἐν στερεώματι οὐρανοῦ ἐκλάμπων.

9 κάλλος οὐρανοῦ δόξα ἄστρον,
 κόσμος φωτίζων ἐν ὑψίστοις κυρίου·

10 ἐν λόγοις ἁγίου στήσονται κατὰ κρίμα
 καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐκλυθῶσιν ἐν φυλακαῖς αὐτῶν.

11 ἰδὲ τόξον καὶ εὐλόγησον τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτὸ
 σφόδρα ὠραῖον ἐν τῷ αὐγάσματι αὐτοῦ·

12 ἐγύρωσεν οὐρανὸν ἐν κυκλώσει δόξης,
 χεῖρες ὑψίστου ἐτάνυσαν αὐτό.

13 Προστάγματι αὐτοῦ κατέσπευσεν χιόνα
 καὶ ταχύνει ἀστραπὰς κρίματος αὐτοῦ·

14 διὰ τοῦτο ἠνεώχθησαν θησαυροί,
 καὶ ἐξέπτησαν νεφέλαι ὡς πετεινά·

15 ἐν μεγαλείῳ αὐτοῦ ἴσχυσεν νεφέλας,
 καὶ διεθρύβησαν λίθοι χαλάζης·

8 The month derives its name from hers;
 she waxes wonderfully in her phases,
 a banner oh the hosts on high,
 shining in the vault of heaven.

9 The glory of the stars makes the beauty of the sky,
 a brilliant adornment of the Lord on High.

10 At the words of the Holy One, they stand as he decrees,
 and never grow slack at their watch.

11 See the rainbow and praise its Maker,
 so superbly beautiful in its splendour.

12 Across the sky, it forms a glorious arc
 drawn by the hands of the Most High.

13 By his command, he sends the snow
 and he speeds the lightning by his command.

14 Therefore, his treasures open
 and the clouds fly out like birds.

15 His great power solidifies the clouds,
 then pulverises them into hail.

8 The derivation of the name could either be because the Hebrew word (יָרֵךְ) means both ‘moon’ and ‘month’, or because the alternative word for ‘month’ means ‘newness’ (new moon). The 1st line here follows the LXX (and NJB); *Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’* (שְׁבַח בְּחַדְשׁוֹ הוּא מִתְחַדֵּשׁ) has, “*In its newness, as its name suggests, it renews itself.*”

9 The WEBBE has ‘heaven’ in place of ‘sky’.

10 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE has, “*They won’t faint in their watches.*”

11 In place of ‘splendour’, the WEBBE has ‘brightness’

12 The title, ‘Most High’, translates ὑψίστου.

13 The WEBBE reads, “*By his commandment, he makes the snow fall and swiftly sends the lightnings of his judgement.*”

14 The NJB opens with ‘*In the same way*’ in place of ‘*Therefore*’.

15 The text of this verse cannot be read from *Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’*, due to manuscript damage; *Masada Scroll ‘Mas1H’* concurs with the LXX.

¹⁶ καὶ ἐν ὄπτασίᾳ αὐτοῦ σαλευθήσεται ὄρη,
ἐν θελήματι αὐτοῦ πνεύσεται νότος.
¹⁷ φωνὴ βροντῆς αὐτοῦ ὠνειδίσει γῆν
καὶ καταιγὶς βορέου καὶ συστροφὴ πνεύματος.
¹⁸ ὡς πετεινὰ καδιπτάμενα πάσσει χιόνα,
καὶ ὡς ἀκρίδες καταλύουσα ἢ κατάβασις αὐτῆς·
κάλλος λευκότητος αὐτῆς ἐκθαυμάσει ὀφθαλμός,
καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ὑετοῦ αὐτῆς ἐκστήσεται καρδία.
¹⁹ καὶ πάχνην ὡς ἄλα ἐπὶ γῆς χέει,
καὶ παγεῖσα γίνεται σκολόπων ἄκρα.
²⁰ ψυχρὸς ἄνεμος βορέης πνεύσει,
καὶ παγήσεται κρύσταλλος ἐφ' ὕδατος·
ἐπὶ πᾶσαν συναγωγὴν ὕδατος καταλύσει,
καὶ ὡς θώρακα ἐνδύσεται τὸ ὕδωρ.
²¹ καταφάγεται ὄρη καὶ ἔρημον ἐκκαύσει
καὶ ἀποσβέσει χλόην ὡς πῦρ.
²² ἴασις πάντων κατὰ σπουδὴν ὁμίχλη,
θρόσος ἀπαντῶσα ἀπὸ καύσωνος ἰλαρώσει.
²³ Λογισμῶ αὐτοῦ ἐκόπασεν ἄβυσσον
καὶ ἐφύτευσεν ἐν αὐτῇ νήσους.

¹⁶ And, at the sight of him, the mountains quake;
at his will, the south wind blows.
¹⁷ At the roar of his thunder, the earth writhes in labour,
as also the storm from the north and the whirlwind.
¹⁸ He sprinkles snow like birds alighting
and it comes down like locusts settling.
The eye marvels at the beauty of its whiteness,
and the mind is amazed at its falling.
¹⁹ Over the earth, like salt, he pours hoarfrost
and, when it freezes, it bristles like thorns.
²⁰ The cold wind blows from the north,
and ice forms on the water.
It forms on every piece of standing water
and the water covers it like a breastplate.
²¹ It devours the mountains and scorches the desert;
and, like a fire, it consumes the vegetation.
²² A mist hastens healing for all things;
the falling dew gives refreshment from the heat.
²³ By his own resourcefulness, he has tamed the abyss,
and planted it with islands.

¹⁶ The WEBBE opens with, 'At his appearing'.

¹⁷ The NRSV & NJB, following the order of Masada Scroll 'Mas1H', split this verse in two, placing the first line before v. 16.

¹⁸ The NJB lacks the conjunction at the start of the 2nd line.

¹⁹ In place of 'bristles', the WEBBE has 'points'.

²⁰ The NJB omits 'the water' in the 4th line, here following the LXX (τὸ ὕδωρ).

²¹ The NJB opens with, 'The wind swallows up'.

²² For the 1st line, here following the NETS, the NJB has 'A mist heals all things' and the WEBBE has 'A mist coming speedily heals all things'.

²³ The 'abyss' occurs frequently in the Bible as the personified power of chaos with which Rahab and Leviathan are associated (Ps 104:24–26).

24 οἱ πλέοντες τὴν θάλασσαν
 διηγοῦνται τὸν κίνδυνον αὐτῆς,
 καὶ ἀκοαῖς ὠτίων ἡμῶν θαυμάζομεν.
 25 καὶ ἐκεῖ τὰ παράδοξα καὶ θαυμάσια ἔργα,
 ποικιλία παντὸς ζώου, κτίσις κητῶν.
 26 δι' αὐτὸν εὐδοοῖ ἄγγελος αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ ἐν λόγῳ αὐτοῦ σύγκειται τὰ πάντα.
 27 Πολλὰ ἐροῦμεν καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀφικώμεθα,
 καὶ συντέλεια λόγων τὸ πᾶν ἐστὶν αὐτός.
 28 δοξάζοντες ποῦ ἰσχύσομεν;
 αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ μέγας παρὰ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.
 29 φοβερὸς κύριος καὶ σφόδρα μέγας,
 καὶ θαυμαστὴ ἡ δυναστεία αὐτοῦ.
 30 δοξάζοντες κύριον ὑψώσατε
 καθ' ὅσον ἂν δύνησθε, ὑπερέξει γὰρ καὶ ἔτι·
 καὶ ὑψοῦντες αὐτὸν πληθύνετε ἐν ἰσχύι,
 μὴ κοπιᾶτε, οὐ γὰρ μὴ ἀφίκησθε.

24 Those who sail the sea
 tell of its dangers
 and we marvel at the reports of our ears.
 25 For, there also exist strange and wonderful works,
 animals of every kind and huge sea-creatures.
 26 Thanks to him, his messengers reach port
 and everything works out according to his word.
 27 We could say much more and still fall short;
 to put it concisely, "He is all."
 28 Where shall we find sufficient power to glorify him,
 since he is the Great One, above all his works?
 29 Awesome is the Lord and very great,
 and wonderful is his power.
 30 Exalt the Lord in your praises
 as high as you may – still he surpasses you.
 Exert all your strength when you exalt him;
 do not grow tired – you will never come to the end.

24 For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "their accounts fill our ears with amazement."

25 In place of 'and huge sea-creatures', Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'and the might of Rahab' (וגבורות רבה) – Masada Scroll 'Mas1H' has the 'correct' form of the final word – רבה).

26 The NJB opens with 'Thanks to God'; here, we follow the Greek text.

27 The final phrase is not meant, of course, in the parenthetic sense. For Ben Sira, everything comes from God, whose transcendence he constantly asserts (see, for example, v. 28) and everything belongs to him.

28 The title, 'the Great One', translates ὁ μέγας.

29 For the 1st line, the WEBBE reads, "The Lord is awesome and exceedingly great!"

30 In Cairo Genizah MS 'B', the beginning of this verse is illegible due to severe manuscript damage and the remainder of text, which can be read (רימו קול בכל תוכלו כי יש עוד מרומים תחליפו כח ואל תלאו כי לא ת), is difficult to understand.

- 31 τίς ἑώρακεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐκδιηγῆσεται;
καὶ τίς μεγαλυνεῖ αὐτὸν καθὼς ἔστιν;
- 32 πολλὰ ἀπόκρυφά ἐστιν μείζονα τούτων,
ὀλίγα γὰρ ἑώρακαμεν τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ·
- 33 πάντα γὰρ ἐποίησεν ὁ κύριος
καὶ τοῖς εὐσεβέσιν ἔδωκεν σοφίαν

- 31 Who has ever seen him to describe him?
And who can glorify him as he deserves?
- 32 Many mysteries remain even greater than these;
for, we have seen only a few of his works.
- 33 For, the Lord has made all things
and given wisdom to those who are devout.

31 The literal translation of 'glorify' (here following the NJB) is 'magnify' (μεγαλυνεῖ).

32 The WEBBE has 'things' in place of 'mysteries'.

33 After 'the Lord', the NJB adds 'himself'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 44

”ם לוג אבות בן

- ¹ Αἰνέσωμεν δὴ ἄνδρας ἐνδόξους
καὶ τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν τῇ γενέσει·
- ² πολλὴν δόξαν ἔκτισεν ὁ κύριος,
τὴν μεγαλωσύνην αὐτοῦ ἀπ’ αἰῶνος.
- ³ κυριεύοντες ἐν ταῖς βασιλείαις αὐτῶν
καὶ ἄνδρες ὀνομαστοὶ ἐν δυνάμει·
βουλευόντες ἐν συνέσει αὐτῶν,
ἀπηγγελκότες ἐν προφητεῖαις·
- ⁴ ἡγούμενοι λαοῦ ἐν διαβουλίῳ
καὶ συνέσει γραμματείας λαοῦ,
σοφοὶ λόγοι ἐν παιδείᾳ αὐτῶν·
- ⁵ ἐκζητοῦντες μέλη μουσικῶν
καὶ διηγούμενοι ἔπη ἐν γραφῇ·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 44

HYMN IN HONOUR OF THE PATRIARCHS

- ¹ Next, let us praise illustrious men,
our fathers in their successive generations.
- ² The Lord has created an abundance of glory,
and displayed his greatness from earliest times.
- ³ Some wielded authority as kings
and were renowned for their strength.
Others were intelligent advisers
and uttered prophetic sayings.
- ⁴ Others directed the people by their advice,
by their understanding of the popular mind,
and by the wise words of their teaching.
- ⁵ Others composed musical melodies
and set forth verses in writing.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 44

- ¹ The title of this chapter here follows *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*. In place of 'illustrious men', here following the LXX, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*, *Masada Scroll 'Mas1H'*, and the *Peshitta* have 'men of piety' (דסח, as in v. 10, giving rise to the term, 'Hasidim'). See also 1M 2:42, 7:13 – at the time of the Maccabean revolt, these Jews were remarkable for their loyalty to God and the Law; that the Greek translator has not given a strictly accurate rendering of the term may be because, at the time of writing, the connotations of the word were rather too precise.
- ² The 1st line here follows the LXX (and the NJB); *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (רב כבוד חלק עליון) and the NRSV read, "The Most High apportioned to them great glory." Vv. 2-9 may be either a description of 'human glory' as known outside Israel, with which the author contrasts (vv. 1 & 10ff) that of the ancestors of the Jews, or else a general survey of the glories of Israel preceding the more detailed account.
- ³ The NRSV has 'valour' in place of 'strength'.
- ⁴ The text here follows the LXX; for this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* has, "Rulers of nations in their planning, civil servants in their profound thoughts, learned sages in their books, preceptors in their traditions." (שרי גוים במזמתם ורוזנים במחקרותם חכמי שיה בספרתם ומושלים במשמרותם:)
- ⁵ For the 2nd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'and set down ballads'.

6 ἄνδρες πλούσιοι κεχορηγημένοι ἰσχύι,
εἰρηνεύοντες ἐν κατοικίαις αὐτῶν·
7 πάντες οὗτοι ἐν γενεαῖς ἐδοξάσθησαν,
καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν καύχημα.
8 εἰσὶν αὐτῶν οἱ κατέλιπον ὄνομα
τοῦ ἐκδιηγῆσασθαι ἐπαίνους·
9 καὶ εἰσὶν ὧν οὐκ ἔστιν μνημόσυνον
καὶ ἀπώλοντο ὡς οὐχ ὑπάρξαντες
καὶ ἐγένοντο ὡς οὐ γεγονότες
καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῶν μετ' αὐτούς.
10 ἀλλ' ἢ οὗτοι ἄνδρες ἐλέους,
ὧν αἱ δικαιοσύναι οὐκ ἐπελήσθησαν·
11 μετὰ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτῶν διαμενεῖ,
ἀγαθὴ κληρονομία ἔκγονα αὐτῶν·
12 ἐν ταῖς διαθήκαις ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα αὐτῶν
καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῶν δι' αὐτούς·
13 ἕως αἰῶνος μενεῖ σπέρμα αὐτῶν,
καὶ ἡ δόξα αὐτῶν οὐκ ἐξαλειφθήσεται·

6 Wealthy men endowed with ability,
living peaceably in their homes.
7 All these were honoured by their contemporaries
and were the glory of their day.
8 Some of them left a name behind them,
so that their praises are still sung.
9 While others have left no memory
and disappeared as though they had not existed.
They are now as though they had never been,
and so too, their children after them.
10 But here is a list of pious men
whose good works have not been forgotten.
11 In their seed they find
a rich inheritance, their posterity.
12 Their seed stand by the commandments
and with their children, for their sakes.
13 Their seed will last forever
and their glory will not fade.

-
- 6 For 'Wealthy men', here following the LXX (ἄνδρες πλούσιοι), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' & Masada Scroll 'Mas1H' have 'Men of valour' (לְאִישׁ חַיִּל).
7 The WEBBE ends, "and were outstanding in their days."
8 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "so that others declare their praises."
9 Some good people have left no memorial, but God will not forget them.
10 For the 2nd line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'their hope will [never be cut] off' (ת[...]^ל וְתִקְוָתָם), a reading that seems to imply a hope of immortality, which does not figure in the LXX.
11 In place of 'seed', here following the LXX (σπέρματος), the NJB has 'descendants' and the WEBBE has 'offspring' (as also in v. 12).
12 For the 2nd line, the NJB reads, "and, thanks to them, so do their children's children."
13 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

¹⁴ τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐτάφη,
καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῶν ζῆ εἰς γενεάς·

¹⁵ σοφίαν αὐτῶν διηγῆσονται λαοί,
καὶ τὸν ἔπαινον ἔξαγγέλλει ἐκκλησία.

¹⁶ Ἐνωχ εὐηρέστησεν κυρίῳ καὶ μετετέθη
ὑπόδειγμα μετανοίας ταῖς γενεαῖς.

¹⁷ Νωε εὐρέθη τέλειος δίκαιος,
ἐν καιρῷ ὀργῆς ἐγένετο ἀντάλλαγμα·
διὰ τοῦτον ἐγενήθη κατάλειμμα τῇ γῆ,
ὅτε ἐγένετο κατακλυσμός·

¹⁸ διαθήκαι αἰῶνος ἐτέθησαν πρὸς αὐτόν,
ἵνα μὴ ἔξαλειφθῆ κατακλυσμῷ πᾶσα σὰρξ.

¹⁹ Ἀβρααμ μέγας πατήρ πλήθους ἐθνῶν,
καὶ οὐχ εὐρέθη ὅμοιος ἐν τῇ δόξῃ·

²⁰ ὃς συνετήρησεν νόμον ὑψίστου
καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν διαθήκῃ μετ' αὐτοῦ·

¹⁴ Their bodies have been buried in peace
and their name lives on for all generations.

¹⁵ The peoples will proclaim their wisdom;
the assembly will celebrate their praises.

¹⁶ Enoch pleased the Lord and was transferred to heaven,
an example of repentance of all generations.

¹⁷ Noah was found perfectly upright;
in the time of retribution, he became the heir:
Because of him, a remnant was preserved for the earth
at the coming of the Flood.

¹⁸ Everlasting covenants were made with him
that, never again, should all flesh perish by flood.

¹⁹ Abraham, the great ancestor of a host of nations
and no one was ever his equal in glory.

²⁰ He observed the Law of the Most High,
and entered into a Covenant with him.

¹⁴ The WEBBE lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

¹⁵ Cairo Genizah MS 'B' includes this verse only as a marginal note (in vertical text).

¹⁶ The literal translation of 'an example of repentance' is 'a reason for conversion' (following the LXX). The reading of Cairo Genizah MS 'B', 'an example of understanding' (ורוד דעו דעו דעו דעו) possibly alludes to the mysteries that Enoch witnessed and revealed to mankind (in the "Book of the Secrets of Enoch"). The popularity of speculation about Enoch in Ben Sira's time may be the reason he heads the list (although the name is lacking in some MSS) and closes it in 49:14.

¹⁷ 'Heir' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (ἡλίχθ - rendering uncertain); the LXX has 'exchange' (ἀντάλλαγμα) and the Vg has 'reconciliation' (reconciliatio). For the last line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "because of his covenant, the Flood ceased." (ובבריתו חדל מבול)

¹⁸ In place of 'all flesh', the NJB has 'every living creature'.

¹⁹ The 2nd line here follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "did not soil his glory with a stain." (לא נתן בכבודו מום)

²⁰ On Abraham's faith, see Gn 12:1, 15:6, 22:1, Rm 4:1-25, Ga 3:6-14.

ἐν σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ ἔστησεν διαθήκην
καὶ ἐν πειρασμῷ εὐρέθη πιστός·
21 διὰ τοῦτο ἐν ὄρκῳ ἔστησεν αὐτῷ
ἐνευλογηθῆναι ἔθνη ἐν σπέρματι αὐτοῦ,
πληθῦναι αὐτὸν ὡς χοῦν τῆς γῆς
καὶ ὡς ἄστρα ἀνυψῶσαι τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ
καὶ κατακληρονομήσαι αὐτοὺς
ἀπὸ θαλάσσης ἕως θαλάσσης
καὶ ἀπὸ ποταμοῦ ἕως ἄκρου τῆς γῆς.
22 καὶ ἐν τῷ Ἰσαακ ἔστησεν οὕτως
δι' Ἀβρααμ τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ.
23 εὐλογίαν πάντων ἀνθρώπων καὶ διαθήκην
κατέπαυσεν ἐπὶ κεφαλὴν Ἰακωβ·
ἐπέγνω αὐτὸν ἐν εὐλογίαις αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ἐν κληρονομίᾳ·
καὶ διέστειλεν μερίδας αὐτοῦ,
ἐν φυλαῖς ἐμέρισεν δέκα δύο.

He confirmed the Covenant in his own flesh,
and proved himself faithful under ordeal.

21 The Lord therefore promised him on oath
to bless the nations through his descendants,
to multiply him like the dust on the ground,
to exalt his descendants like the stars,
and to give them land as their heritage,
from one sea to the other,
from the River to the ends of the earth.

22 And, in Isaac, he established it
for the sake of Abraham his father.

23 He assured the blessing of all men and the covenant
to rest on the head of Jacob.
He confirmed him in his blessings
and gave him the land as his inheritance.
And he divided it into portions,
sharing it out among the twelve tribes.

21 The NRSV has 'Euphrates' in place of 'River', here following the LXX (ποταμοῦ) and NJB.

22 The WEBBE somewhat expands the 1st line, reading, "In Isaac also, he established the same assurance for Abraham his father's sake."

23 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'Israel' in place of 'Jacob' (cf. Gn 32:28); a marginal note replaces the word 'blessings' (בברכה) by 'birthright' (בבכורה) – see Gn 25:29ff and 1Ch 5:1 (where the word 'birthright' in the MT text is read 'blessing' by the LXX).

Σοφία Σιραχ 45

- 1** Καὶ ἐξήγαγεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἄνδρα ἐλέους
εὐρίσκοντα χάριν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς πάσης σαρκός
ἠγαπημένον ὑπὸ θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων
Μωυσῆν, οὗ τὸ μνημόσυνον ἐν εὐλογίαις·
- 2** ὡμοίωσεν αὐτὸν δόξῃ ἁγίων
καὶ ἐμεγάλυνεν αὐτὸν ἐν φόβοις ἐχθρῶν·
- 3** ἐν λόγοις αὐτοῦ σημεῖα κατέπαυσεν,
ἐδόξασεν αὐτὸν κατὰ πρόσωπον βασιλέων·
ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ πρὸς λαὸν αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ·
- 4** ἐν πίστει καὶ πραύτητι αὐτὸν ἠγίασεν,
ἐξελέξατο αὐτὸν ἐκ πάσης σαρκός·
- 5** ἠκούτισεν αὐτὸν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ
καὶ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν γνόφον
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κατὰ πρόσωπον ἐντολάς,
νόμον ζωῆς καὶ ἐπιστήμης,
διδάξαι τὸν Ἰακωβ διαθήκην
καὶ κρίματα αὐτοῦ τὸν Ἰσραηλ.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 45

- 1** And, from his stock, he produced a generous man,
who found favour in the eyes of all humanity,
one who was loved by God and by men,
Moses, who is of blessed memory.
- 2** He made him the equal of the holy ones in glory
and made him strong, to the terror of his enemies.
- 3** By the word of Moses, he performed swift miracles
and raised him high in the respect of kings.
He gave him commandments for his people,
and showed him something of his glory.
- 4** For his loyalty and gentleness, he sanctified him,
choosing him alone out of all flesh.
- 5** He allowed him to hear his voice
and led him into the darkness
and gave him the commandments face to face,
the law of life and knowledge,
to teach Jacob his ordinances
and Israel his judgements.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 45

- 1** As preserved in this context, this verse applies very well to Moses but there is a possibility that originally it may have referred to Joseph, who is not otherwise mentioned except in the summing up of the eulogy (49:15); if so, then part of the original must have been lost.
- 2** The WEBBE has 'saints' in place of 'holy ones'.
- 3** 'Performed swift miracles' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (?) and the NRSV; the LXX (and NJB) has 'made prodigies cease'.
- 4** The NJB has 'human beings' in place of 'flesh'.
- 5** In place of 'judgements', the NJB has 'decrees'.

⁶ Ααρων ὑψωσεν ἅγιον ὅμοιον αὐτῶ
ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ φυλῆς Λευι·
⁷ ἔστησεν αὐτὸν διαθήκην αἰῶνος
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῶ ἱερατεῖαν λαοῦ·
ἐμακάρισεν αὐτὸν ἐν εὐκοσμίᾳ
καὶ περιέζωσεν αὐτὸν περιστολήν δόξης·
⁸ ἐνέδυσεν αὐτὸν συντέλειαν καυχήματος
καὶ ἐστερέωσεν αὐτὸν σκεύεσιν ἰσχύος,
περισκελῆ καὶ ποδήρη καὶ ἐπωμίδα·
⁹ καὶ ἐκύκλωσεν αὐτὸν ῥοίσκοις,
χρυσοῖς κώδωσιν πλείστοις κυκλόθεν,
ἠχῆσαι φωνὴν ἐν βήμασιν αὐτοῦ,
ἀκουστὸν ποιῆσαι ἦχον ἐν ναῶ
εἰς μνημόσυνον υἱοῖς λαοῦ αὐτοῦ·
¹⁰ στολῆ ἁγία, χρυσῶ καὶ ὑακίνθῳ
καὶ πορφύρᾳ, ἔργῳ ποικιλτοῦ,
λογεῖω κρίσεως, δῆλοις ἀληθείας,
κεκλωσμένη κόκκῳ, ἔργῳ τεχνίτου,
¹¹ λίθοις πολυτελέσιν γλύμματος σφραγίδος
ἐν δέσει χρυσοῦ, ἔργῳ λιθοουργοῦ,

⁶ He raised up Aaron, a holy man like Moses,
his brother, of the tribe of Levi.
⁷ He made an everlasting covenant with him,
and gave him the priesthood of the people.
He adorned him with impressive vestments;
he dressed him in a robe of glory.
⁸ He clothed him in glorious perfection
and invested him with rich ornaments,
the breeches, and the long robe and the ephod.
⁹ To surround the robe, he gave him pomegranates,
and many gold bells all round
to chime at every step,
for their sound to be heard in the Temple
as a reminder to the sons of his people;
¹⁰ and a sacred vestment of gold and aquamarine
and scarlet, the work of an embroiderer;
the pectoral of judgement, the Urim and Thummim,
of plaited crimson, the work of a craftsman;
¹¹ precious stones cut like seals
mounted in gold, the work of a jeweller,

⁶ The NJB includes the last 4 lines of v. 5 as part of this verse.

⁷ Ben Sira's love of liturgical pomp has already been noted (see 35:1–10, 50:1–21).

⁸ Another reading for 'long robe' is 'tunic'.

⁹ The NJB has 'children' in place of 'sons'.

¹⁰ The literal translation of 'Urim and Thummim' is 'the lots of truth', which is more or less how the LXX translates 'Urim and Thummim' in Ex 28:30. However, the text of Cairo Genizah MS 'B', **רֶאֱזוּד וְאֹזֶרֶת** ('the ephod and the belt') seems more appropriate, considering the following line.

¹¹ The WEBBE includes the last line of v. 10 as part of this verse.

- εἰς μνημόσυνον ἐν γραφῇ κεκολαμμένη
κατ' ἀριθμὸν φυλῶν Ἰσραηλ·
- 12** στέφανον χρυσοῦν ἐπάνω κιθάρεως,
ἐκτύπωμα σφραγίδος ἀγιάσματος,
καύχημα τιμῆς, ἔργον ἰσχύος,
ἐπιδυμήματα ὀφθαλμῶν κοσμούμενα·
- 13** ὥραϊα πρὸ αὐτοῦ οὐ γέγονεν τοιαῦτα,
ἕως αἰῶνος οὐκ ἐνεδύσατο ἀλλογενῆς
πλὴν τῶν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ μόνον
καὶ τὰ ἔκγονα αὐτοῦ διὰ παντός.
- 14** θυσίαι αὐτοῦ ὀλοκαρπωθήσονται
καθ' ἡμέραν ἐνδελεχῶς δῖς.
- 15** ἐπλήρωσεν Μωϋσῆς τὰς χεῖρας
καὶ ἔχρισεν αὐτὸν ἐν ἐλαίῳ ἀγίῳ·
ἐγενήθη αὐτῷ εἰς διαθήκην αἰῶνος
καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ ἐν ἡμέραις οὐρανοῦ
λειτουργεῖν αὐτῷ ἅμα καὶ ἱερατεύειν
καὶ εὐλογεῖν τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι.
- 16** ἐξέλεξατο αὐτὸν ἀπὸ παντὸς ζῶντος
προσαγαγεῖν κάρπωσιν κυρίῳ,
θυμίαμα καὶ εὐωδῖαν εἰς μνημόσυνον,
ἐξιλάσκεσθαι περὶ τοῦ λαοῦ σου.

- as a reminder of their engraved inscriptions
of the number of the tribes of Israel;
12 and a golden diadem on his turban,
engraved with the seal of holiness;
superb ornamentation, magnificent work,
adornment to delight the eye.
- 13** There had never been such lovely things before him,
and no one else has ever put them on,
but only his own sons
and all his descendants for all time.
- 14** His sacrifices were to be burnt entirely,
twice each day and forever.
- 15** Moses consecrated him
and anointed him with holy oil.
This was an everlasting covenant for him,
and for his seed as long as the heavens endure,
that he should preside over worship, act as priest,
and bless the people in the name of the Lord.
- 16** He chose him out of all the living
to offer sacrifices to the Lord,
incense and perfume as a memorial
to make atonement for the people.

12 For the first 2 lines, the WEBBE reads (as a single line), “with a crown of gold upon the mitre, having engraved on it, as on a signet, ‘HOLINESS’.”

13 Here, ‘descendants’ translates ἔκγονα.

14 The WEBBE reads, “His sacrifices shall be wholly burnt, twice every day continually.”

15 ‘As long as the heavens endure’ follows Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ (ולזרעו כימי שמים); the LXX has ‘in the days of the sky’.

16 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ reads להגיש עלה וחלבים (‘to bring the burnt offerings and fat’).

17 ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ἐν ἐντολαῖς αὐτοῦ
ἐξουσίαν ἐν διαθήκαις κριμάτων
διδάξαι τὸν Ἰακωβ τὰ μαρτύρια
καὶ ἐν νόμῳ αὐτοῦ φωτίσαι Ἰσραηλ.

18 ἐπισυνέστησαν αὐτῷ ἀλλότριοι
καὶ ἐζήλωσαν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ,
ἄνδρες οἱ περὶ Δαθὰν καὶ Ἀβιρων
καὶ ἡ συναγωγὴ Κορε ἐν θυμῷ καὶ ὀργῇ·

19 εἶδεν κύριος καὶ οὐκ εὐδόκησεν,
καὶ συνετελέσθησαν ἐν θυμῷ ὀργῆς·
ἐποίησεν αὐτοῖς τέρατα
καταναλῶσαι ἐν πυρὶ φλογὸς αὐτοῦ.

20 καὶ προσέθηκεν Ἀαρὼν δόξαν
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κληρονομίαν·
ἀπαρχὰς πρωτογεννημάτων ἐμέρισεν αὐτῷ,
ἄρτον πρώτοις ἡτοίμασεν πλησμονήν·

21 καὶ γὰρ θυσίας κυρίου φάγονται,
ἃς ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ τε καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ.

22 πλὴν ἐν γῆ λαοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσει,
καὶ μερίς οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ ἐν λαῷ·
αὐτὸς γὰρ μερίς σου καὶ κληρονομία.

17 He entrusted him with his commandments,
committed to him the statutes of the Law
for him to teach Jacob his decrees
and enlighten Israel on his Law.

18 Others plotted against him,
they were jealous of him in the desert,
Dathan and Abiram and their men,
and Korah and his crew in fury and rage.

19 The Lord saw it and was displeased,
and his raging fury made an end of them.
He worked miracles on them,
consuming them by his flaming fire.

20 And he added to Aaron's glory
and gave him an inheritance.
He allotted him the offerings of the first fruits,
before all else, as much bread as he could want.

21 Thus, they eat the sacrifices of the Lord,
which he gave to him and his seed.

22 But, of the people's territory, he inherits nothing,
and he alone, of all the people, has no share;
for, he is your share and heritage.

17 The literal translation of 'statutes of the Law' is 'the covenants of judgement'. For the translator, the 'covenants' always denote the 'statutes'.

18 One could take 'fury and rage' as a hendiadys and read 'furious rage'.

19 In place of the Divine Name, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (as ever) has a triple-yod ("").

20 The NJB lacks the opening conjunctions in the first 2 lines.

21 In place of 'seed' (σπέρματι), the NJB has 'posterity'.

22 For the 3rd line, the WEBBE reads, "for the Lord himself is your portion and inheritance."

²³ Καὶ Φινεες υἱὸς Ελεαζαρ τρίτος εἰς δόξαν
ἐν τῷ ζηλωσάει αὐτὸν ἐν φόβῳ κυρίου
καὶ στῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τροπῇ λαοῦ
ἐν ἀγαθότητι προθυμίας ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ·
καὶ ἐξιλάσατο περὶ τοῦ Ἰσραηλ.

²⁴ διὰ τοῦτο ἐστάθη αὐτῷ διαθήκη εἰρήνης
προστατεῖν ἁγίων καὶ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ,
ἵνα αὐτῷ ἦ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ
ἱερωσύνης μεγαλεῖον εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

²⁵ καὶ διαθήκη τῷ Δαυιδ
υἱῷ Ἰεσσαὶ ἐκ φυλῆς Ἰουδα
κληρονομία βασιλείως υἱοῦ ἐξ υἱοῦ μόνου·
κληρονομία Ααρων καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ.

²⁶ δώρη ὑμῖν σοφίαν ἐν καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν
κρίνειν τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ,
ἵνα μὴ ἀφανισθῇ τὰ ἀγαθὰ αὐτῶν
καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν.

²³ And Phinehas son of Eleazar is third in glory
because of was zealous in the fear of the Lord,
and stood firm when the people revolted,
with a staunch and courageous heart;
and, in this way, he made atonement for Israel.

²⁴ Hence, a covenant of peace was sealed with him,
making him governor of both Sanctuary and people,
and securing to him and his descendants
the High Priestly dignity forever.

²⁵ And there was a covenant with David
son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah,
a royal succession by exclusively linear descent,
but the succession of Aaron passes to all his seed.

²⁶ May he endow your hearts with wisdom
to judge his people uprightly,
so that the virtues of your ancestors may never fade,
and their glory may pass to all their descendants!

²³ The NJB & WEBBE lacks the opening conjunction.

²⁴ ‘Sanctuary’ follows Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ (שמדקד); the LXX has ‘saints’ (ἁγίων).

²⁵ The text of the 3rd line is obscure (literally, ‘succession of the king, of the son only from the son’); the NRSV has, ‘so that the king’s heritage passes only from son to son’ and Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ reads ‘was an inheritance of fire before his glory’ (נחלת אש לפני כבודו).

²⁶ The NRSV, very loosely following Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ (ועתה ברכו נא את יי הטוב), adds the following line at the start of this verse, “Now bless the Lord, who has crowned you with glory.”

Σοφία Σιραχ 46

- 1** Κραταιὸς ἐν πολέμῳ Ἰησοῦς Ναυη
καὶ διάδοχος Μωυσῆ ἐν προφητείαις,
ὃς ἐγένετο κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ
μέγας ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ ἐκλεκτῶν αὐτοῦ
ἐκδικῆσαι ἐπεχειρομένους ἐχθρούς,
ὅπως κατακληρονομήσῃ τὸν Ἰσραηλ.
2 ὡς ἐδοξάσθη ἐν τῷ ἐπάραι χειρᾶς αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐκτεῖναι ῥομφαίαν ἐπὶ πόλεις.
3 τίς πρότερος αὐτοῦ οὕτως ἔστη;
τοὺς γὰρ πολέμους κυρίου αὐτὸς ἐπήγαγεν.
4 οὐχὶ ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἐνεποδίσθη ὁ ἥλιος
καὶ μία ἡμέρα ἐγενήθη πρὸς δύο;
5 ἐπεκαλέσατο τὸν ὑψιστὸν δυνάστην
ἐν τῷ θλιῖψαι αὐτὸν ἐχθρούς κυκλόθεν,
καὶ ἐπήκουσεν αὐτοῦ μέγας κύριος
ἐν λίθοις χαλάζης δυνάμεως κραταιᾶς·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 46

- 1** Mighty in war was Joshua son of Nun,
successor to Moses in the prophetic office,
who well deserved his name,
and was a great saviour of his chosen people,
wreaking vengeance on the enemies who opposed him,
and so bringing Israel into its inheritance.
2 How splendid he was in lifting up his arms,
and in brandishing his sword against cities!
3 Who had ever shown such determination as his?
He himself led the battles of the Lord.
4 Was not the sun shackled by his hand,
and one day drawn out into two?
5 He called on the Most High, the Mighty One,
while pressing the enemies from all directions,
and the great Lord answered him
with hard and violent hailstones.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 46

- 1** 'Joshua son of Nun' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (יהושע בן נון); the LXX, conforming to its tradition, has 'Jesus son of Nave' (see Jos 1:1). An alternative translation for 'successor' is 'servant' (see Ex 33:11). Joshua (Yehoshua) means 'Yahweh saves'. For the 3rd & 4th lines, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has אשר נוצר להיות בימיו תשועה גדלה לבחיריו ('who was fashioned to be in his time a great salvation for his chosen ones').
2 The NJB reads, "How splendid he was when, arms uplifted, he brandished his sword against cities!"
3 The 2nd line follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' ([..]נל[.]) and Greek 248; the Textus Receptus has 'for the Lord himself delivered the enemies'.
4 In place of 'shackled' (ἐνεποδίσθη), Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'stood [still]' (עמד).
5 'Mighty One' is the translation of the Greek δυνάστην; it occurs 14 times in this book, from Ch 41 onwards. In the first part of the book, the titles 'God' and 'Yahweh' (κυρίου in the LXX) are used.

- 6 κατέρραξεν ἐπ' ἔθνος πόλεμον
καὶ ἐν καταβάσει ἀπώλεσεν ἀνδραγαθίας,
ἵνα γνῶσιν ἔθνη πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ
ὅτι ἐναντίον κυρίου ὁ πόλεμος αὐτοῦ.
- 7 Καὶ γὰρ ἐπηκολούθησεν ὀπίσω δυνάστου
καὶ ἐν ἡμέραις Μωυσέως ἐποίησεν ἔλεος
αὐτὸς καὶ Χαλεβ υἱὸς Ιεφοννη
ἀντιστῆναι ἔναντι ἐκκλησίας
κωλύσαι λαὸν ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας
καὶ κοπάσαι γογγυσμὸν πονηρίας.
- 8 καὶ αὐτοὶ δύο ὄντες διεσώθησαν
ἀπὸ ἑξακοσίων χιλιάδων πεζῶν
εἰσαγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς κληρονομίαν
εἰς γῆν ῥέουσαν γάλα καὶ μέλι.
- 9 καὶ ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος τῷ Χαλεβ ἰσχύν,
καὶ ἕως γήρους διέμεινε αὐτῷ,
ἐπιβῆναι αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ὕψος τῆς γῆς,
καὶ τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ κατέσχευε κληρονομίαν,
- 10 ὅπως ἴδωσιν πάντες οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ
ὅτι καλὸν τὸ πορεύεσθαι ὀπίσω κυρίου.

- 6 He made an attack against the enemy nation,
and at the Descent destroyed all resistance
to make the nations acknowledge his warlike prowess
and that he was waging war on behalf of the Lord.
- 7 For he was a follower of the Mighty One,
in the time of Moses, showing his devotion,
he and Caleb son of Jephunneh,
by opposing the whole community,
by preventing the people from sinning,
and by silencing the mutters of rebellion.
- 8 And these two alone were preserved
out of six hundred thousand men on the march,
and brought into their inheritance,
into a land where milk and honey flow.
- 9 The Lord conferred strength on Caleb, too,
which stayed by him into old age,
so that he could invade the highlands of the country,
which his descendants kept as their inheritance,
- 10 so that all the sons of Israel might see
that it is good to follow the Lord.

6 The text of the 1st line is emended following the Vg (*Impetum fecit contra gentem hostilem*); the LXX has 'he made war against the nation'. This is possibly an allusion to the victory over the Ammonites at Gibeon (Jos 10:10–15, cf. the 'slope' or the 'descent' of Beth-Horon, Jos 10:10–11.)

7 The NRSV includes the 1st line in v. 6. For the 5th line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, 'averting wrath from the assembly' (להשיב חרון מערה).

8 The NJB opens with 'Hence' in place of 'And'.

9 In place of 'invade', the WEBBE has 'enter'.

10 For 'all the sons of Israel' (πάντες οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ), the NJB has 'every Israelite'.

11 Καὶ οἱ κριταί, ἕκαστος τῷ αὐτοῦ ὀνόματι,
ὅσων οὐκ ἐξεπόρνευσεν ἡ καρδία
καὶ ὅσοι οὐκ ἀπεστράφησαν ἀπὸ κυρίου,
εἴη τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτῶν ἐν εὐλογίαις·

12 τὰ ὀστέα αὐτῶν ἀναθάλοι ἐκ τοῦ τόπου αὐτῶν
καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῶν ἀντικαταλλασσόμενον
ἐφ' υἱοῖς δεδοξασμένων αὐτῶν.

13 Ἠγαπημένος ὑπὸ κυρίου αὐτοῦ Σαμουηλ
προφήτης κυρίου κατέστησεν βασιλείαν
καὶ ἔχρισεν ἄρχοντας ἐπὶ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ·

14 ἐν νόμῳ κυρίου ἔκρινεν συναγωγὴν,
καὶ ἐπεσκέψατο κύριος τὸν Ἰακωβ·

15 ἐν πίστει αὐτοῦ ἠκριβάσθη προφήτης
καὶ ἐγνώσθη ἐν ῥήμασιν αὐτοῦ πιστὸς ὁράσεως.

16 καὶ ἐπεκαλέσατο τὸν κύριον δυνάστην
ἐν τῷ θλίψαι ἐχθρούς αὐτοῦ κυκλόθεν
ἐν προσφορᾷ ἀρνὸς γαλαθηνοῦ·

11 The Judges, too, each when he was called,
all men whose hearts were never disloyal,
who never turned their backs on the Lord –
may their memory be blessed!

12 May their bones flourish again from the tomb,
and may the names of those illustrious men
be worthily borne by their sons!

13 Samuel was the beloved of his Lord;
prophet of the Lord, he instituted the kingdom,
and appointed rulers over his people.

14 By the Law of the Lord, he judged the assembly,
and the Lord watched over Jacob.

15 By his loyalty, he was recognised as a prophet;
and, by his words, he was known as a trusted seer.

16 He called on the Lord, the Mighty One,
when his enemies pressed in from all directions,
by offering a suckling lamb.

11 For the first 2 lines, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, **והשופטים איש בשמו כל אשר לא נשא לבו** ('And the Judges, each man by name, who didn't glorify himself').

12 The 1st line is not so much an explicit witness to the doctrine of the resurrection as an aspiration that the Judges may have worthy successors in the days of Ben Sira, who was writing shortly before the Maccabaeen revolt. The last line of the verse supports this interpretation.

13 This verse follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "Beloved by the people and pleasing to his Creator was he who was dedicated from his mother's womb, a nazirite of Yahweh in the prophetic function, Samuel judge and priest; by the word of Yahweh, he instituted the kingdom." For the Divine name, the MS has a triple-yod (י״י).

14 The WEBBE has 'congregation' in place of 'assembly'.

15 For the 2nd line, the WEBBE reads, "By his words he was known to be faithful in vision."

16 See #5 on the title, 'Mighty One'.

¹⁷ καὶ ἐβρόντησεν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ὁ κύριος
καὶ ἐν ἤχῳ μεγάλῳ
ἀκουστὴν ἐποίησεν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ
¹⁸ καὶ ἐξέτριψεν ἡγούμενους Τυρίων
καὶ πάντας ἄρχοντας Φυλιστιμ.
¹⁹ καὶ πρὸ καιροῦ κοιμήσεως αἰῶνος
ἐπεμαρτύρατο ἔναντι κυρίου καὶ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ
Χρήματα καὶ ἕως ὑποδημάτων
ἀπὸ πάσης σαρκὸς οὐκ εἴληφα·
καὶ οὐκ ἐνεκάλεσεν αὐτῷ ἄνθρωπος.
²⁰ καὶ μετὰ τὸ ὑπνῶσαι αὐτὸν προεφήτευσεν
καὶ ὑπέδειξεν βασιλεῖ τὴν τελευτὴν αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἀνύψωσεν ἐκ γῆς τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ
ἐν προφητεῖᾳ ἐξαλειψαὶ ἀνομίαν λαοῦ.

¹⁷ Then the Lord thundered from heaven,
and, in a great echo,
he made his voice heard.
¹⁸ And he massacred the leaders of the enemy,
and all the rulers of the Philistines.
¹⁹ Before the time of his everlasting rest,
he bore witness to the Lord and his anointed.
“Of no property, not even a sandal,
have I ever deprived a soul.”
And nor did anyone accuse him.
²⁰ Even having fallen asleep, he prophesied again
and warned the king of his end.
And he spoke from the ground in prophecy,
to blot out the wickedness of his people.

¹⁷ The NJB ends, “and made his voice heard in a rolling peal.”

¹⁸ ‘The enemy’ follows Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ (רצ); the LXX has ‘Tyre’ (probable confusion of vowels).

¹⁹ In place of ‘a sandal’, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has ‘a pair of sandals’ and the NETS has ‘a pair of shoes’.

²⁰ This verse refers to the episode recounted in 1S 28.

Σοφία Σιραχ 47

- 1** Καὶ μετὰ τοῦτον ἀνέστη Ναθαν
προφητεύειν ἐν ἡμέραις Δαυιδ.
2 ὡσπερ στέαρ ἀφωρισμένον ἀπὸ σωτηρίου,
οὕτως Δαυιδ ἀπὸ τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραηλ.
3 ἐν λέουσιν ἔπαιξεν ὡς ἐν ἐρίφοις
καὶ ἐν ἄρκοις ὡς ἐν ἄρνασι προβάτων.
4 ἐν νεότητι αὐτοῦ οὐχὶ ἀπέκτεινεν γίγαντα
καὶ ἐξῆρεν ὀνειδισμόν ἐκ λαοῦ
ἐν τῷ ἐπάραι χειρὰ ἐν λίθῳ σφενδόνης
καὶ καταβαλεῖν γαυρίαμα τοῦ Γολιαθ;
5 ἐπεκαλέσατο γὰρ κύριον τὸν ὑψιστον,
καὶ ἔδωκεν ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ κράτος
ἐξῆραι ἄνθρωπον δυνατὸν ἐν πολέμῳ
ἀνυψῶσαι κέρασ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ.
6 οὕτως ἐν μυριάσιν ἐδόξασαν αὐτὸν
καὶ ἤνεσαν αὐτὸν ἐν εὐλογίαις κυρίου
ἐν τῷ φέρεσθαι αὐτῷ διάδημα δόξης·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 47

- 1** After him arose Nathan,
to prophesy in the time of David.
2 As the fat is set apart from the peace offering,
so was David chosen out of the Israelites.
3 He played with lions as though with kids,
and with bears as with lambs of the flock.
4 In his youth, did he not slay a giant
and take away the people's shame,
by hurling a stone from his sling
and cutting short the boasting of Goliath?
5 For he called on the Lord Most High,
who gave strength to his right arm
to put a mighty warrior to death,
asserting the strength of his own people.
6 Hence, they gave him credit for ten thousand,
and praised him while they blessed the Lord,
in that a glorious diadem was given to him.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 47

- 1** For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has **לפני דוד** ('to stand before David').
2 In place of 'peace offering', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'communion sacrifice'.
3 The NJB lacks 'of the flock'.
4 The NJB opens with 'While still a boy' in place of 'In his youth'.
5 The literal translation of 'strength' in the last line (*κέρας*) is 'horn' – a common biblical metaphor (especially in the Psalms) to express physical or moral power.
6 For the 3rd line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'by offering him a crown of glory'.

7 ἐξέτριψεν γὰρ ἐχθρούς κυκλόθεν
καὶ ἐξουδένωσεν Φυλιστιμ τοὺς ὑπεναντίους,
ἕως σήμερον συνέτριψεν αὐτῶν κέρασ.
8 ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ αὐτοῦ ἔδωκεν ἐξομολόγησιν
ἀγίῳ ὑψίστῳ ῥήματι δόξης·
ἐν πάσῃ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ὕμνησεν
καὶ ἠγάπησεν τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτόν.
9 καὶ ἔστησεν ψαλτωδοὺς κατέναντι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου
καὶ ἐξ ἠχοῦς αὐτῶν γλυκαίνειν μέλη·
καὶ καθ' ἡμέραν αἰνέσουσιν ἐν ᾠδαῖς αὐτῶν.
10 ἔδωκεν ἐν ἑορταῖς εὐπρέπειαν
καὶ ἐκόσμησεν καιροὺς μέχρι συντελείας
ἐν τῷ αἰνεῖν αὐτοὺς τὸ ἅγιον ὄνομα αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἀπὸ πρωίας ἤχεῖν τὸ ἀγίασμα.
11 κύριος ἀφεῖλεν τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἀνύψωσεν εἰς αἰῶνα τὸ κέρασ αὐτοῦ
καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ διαθήκην βασιλέων
καὶ θρόνον δόξης ἐν τῷ Ἰσραηλ.
12 Μετὰ τοῦτον ἀνέστη υἱὸς ἐπιστήμων
καὶ δι' αὐτὸν κατέλυσεν ἐν πλατυσμῷ·

7 For, he destroyed the enemies on every front
and annihilated his foes, the Philistines,
crushing their strength forever.
8 In all his activities, he gave thanks
to the Holy One Most High in words of glory.
He put all his heart into his songs
out of love for his Creator.
9 And he stationed harp-singers before the altar,
and they made sweet melody with their music;
and every day they will sing his praises.
10 He gave the feasts their splendour,
the festivals their solemn pomp,
causing the Lord's holy name to be praised
and the Sanctuary to resound from dawn.
11 The Lord took away his sins
and made his strength greater than ever;
and he gave him a covenant of kings,
and a glorious throne in Israel.
12 A wise son succeeded him,
who lived in security, thanks to him.

7 The translation here follows the LXX; Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "He set up towns among the Philistines and, to this very day, he broke their horn."
([...]ק[.] שב[.] ועד היום ערים ועד היום שב[.] ק[.]...)

8 This verse celebrates the Psalms (see 2S 23:1).

9 The last line, here following Greek 248, is included in the NRSV only as a footnote and is not present in the NJB.

10 The 2nd line here follows the NJB; the NRSV has, "and arranged their times throughout the year."

11 For the last line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads *וּכְסָאוֹ הַכִּין עַל יְרוּשָׁלַם* ("and he established his throne over Jerusalem").

12 'In security' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (חבטח); the LXX has 'in a broad place'.

13 Σαλωμων ἐβασίλευσεν ἐν ἡμέραις εἰρήνης,
 ᾧ ὁ θεὸς κατέπαυσεν κυκλόθεν,
 ἵνα στήσῃ οἶκον ἐπ' ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἐτοιμάσῃ ἅγίασμα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.
14 ὡς ἐσοφίσθης ἐν νεότητί σου
 καὶ ἐνεπλήσθης ὡς ποταμὸς συνέσεως.
15 γῆν ἐπεκάλυψεν ἡ ψυχὴ σου,
 καὶ ἐνέπλησας ἐν παραβολαῖς αἰνιγμάτων.
16 εἰς νήσους πόρρω ἀφίκετο τὸ ὄνομά σου,
 καὶ ἠγαπήθης ἐν τῇ εἰρήνῃ σου.
17 ἐν ᾠδαῖς καὶ παροιμίαις καὶ παραβολαῖς
 καὶ ἐν ἐρμηνείαις ἀπεθαύμασάν σε χῶραι.
18 ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ
 τοῦ ἐπικεκλημένου θεοῦ Ἰσραηλ
 συνήγαγες ὡς κασσίτερον τὸ χρυσίον
 καὶ ὡς μόλιβον ἐπλήθυνας ἀργύριον.
19 παρανέκλινας τὰς λαγόνας σου γυναιξίν
 καὶ ἐνεξουσιάσθης ἐν τῷ σώματί σου.
20 ἔδωκας μῶμον ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου
 καὶ ἐβεβήλωσας τὸ σπέρμα σου

13 Solomon reigned in a time of peace;
 God gave him peace all round
 so that he could raise a house to his name
 and prepare an everlasting Sanctuary.
14 How wise you were, despite your youth,
 like a river, brimming over with intelligence!
15 Your mind ranged the earth
 and you filled it with mysterious sayings.
16 Your name reached the distant islands,
 and you were loved for your peace.
17 Your songs, your proverbs, your sayings
 and your answers were the wonder of the world.
18 In the name of the Lord God,
 of him who is called the God of Israel,
 you massed gold like so much tin,
 and made silver as common as lead.
19 You abandoned your body to women
 and you became the slave of your appetites.
20 You stained your honour,
 and you profaned your stock,

13 The NJB adds 'and' at the beginning of the 2nd line.

14 The Hebrew text has 'the Nile' (כַּיִס) in place of 'a river' (ποταμὸς).

15 The WEBBE reads, "Your influence covered the earth, and you filled it with parables and riddles."

16 The 2nd line is an allusion to the name of Solomon ('the peaceful one'), as in v. 13. *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* omits this verse.

17 'Your songs' refers to the Song of Songs. On the wisdom and literary activity of Solomon, see 1K 5:9–14. For the 'answers', see 1K 10:1–10.

18 The 1st line perhaps alludes to the name given to Solomon at birth (Jedidiah, 'beloved of Yahweh', 2S 12:25).

19 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

20 In place of 'for your folly', here following the LXX, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (על משכבך) has 'on your deathbed' (i.e. your posterity).

ἐπαγαγεῖν ὀργὴν ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα σου
 καὶ κατανυγῆναι ἐπὶ τῇ ἀφροσύνῃ σου
 21 γενέσθαι δίχα τυραννίδα
 καὶ ἐξ Ἐφραιμ ἄρξαι βασιλείαν ἀπειθῆ.
 22 ὁ δὲ κύριος οὐ μὴ καταλίπη τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ
 καὶ οὐ μὴ διαφείρη ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων αὐτοῦ
 οὐδὲ μὴ ἐξαλείψῃ ἐκλεκτοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔκγονα
 καὶ σπέρμα τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντος αὐτὸν οὐ μὴ ἐξάρῃ·
 καὶ τῷ Ἰακωβ ἔδωκεν κατάλειμμα
 καὶ τῷ Δαυιδ ἐξ αὐτοῦ ῥίζαν.
 23 Καὶ ἀνεπαύσατο Σαλωμων μετὰ τῶν πατέρων αὐτοῦ
 καὶ κατέλιπεν μετ' αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτοῦ
 λαοῦ ἀφροσύνην καὶ ἐλασσοῦμενον συνέσει
 Ροβοαμ, ὃς ἀπέστησεν λαὸν ἐκ βουλήs αὐτοῦ.
 24 καὶ Ἰεροβοαμ υἱὸs Ναβατ, ὃs ἐξήμαρτεν τὸν Ἰσραηλ
 καὶ ἔδωκεν τῷ Ἐφραιμ ὁδὸν ἀμαρτίας·
 καὶ ἐπληθύνθησαν αἱ ἀμαρτίαι αὐτῶν σφόδρα
 ἀποστῆσαι αὐτοὺs ἀπὸ τῆs γῆs αὐτῶν·
 25 καὶ πᾶσαν πονηρίαν ἐξεζήτησαν,
 ἕως ἐκδίκησιs ἔλθῃ ἐπ' αὐτούs.

so bringing retribution on your children and affliction for your folly.

- 21 The empire split in two and, from Ephraim, arose a disobedient kingdom.
- 22 But the Lord never goes back on his mercy and never cancels any of his words. He will neither deny offspring to his elect nor stamp out the line of the man who loved him; and he has granted a remnant to Jacob and to David, a root sprung from him.
- 23 And Solomon then rested with his fathers, and left one of his sons as his successor: The stupidest member of the nation, brainless Rehoboam, who drove the people to rebel.
- 24 Then, Jeroboam son of Nebat made Israel sin, and set Ephraim on the way of evil. And, from then on, their sins multiplied so much as to drive them out of their country.
- 25 For, they sought out every kind of wickedness, until vengeance overtook them.

21 For 'disobedient', here following the WEBBE & NETS, the NJB has 'rebel'.

22 The NJB opens the 5th line with 'Hence' in place of 'and'.

23 The NJB lacks the opening conjunctions of the first 2 lines.

24 The NRSV includes the first two lines in v. 23.

25 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' omits this verse. The NJB has 'tried' in place of 'sought'.

Σοφία Σιραχ 48

- ¹ Καὶ ἀνέστη Ηλίας προφήτης ὡς πῦρ,
καὶ ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ ὡς λαμπὰς ἐκαίετο·
- ² ὃς ἐπήγαγεν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς λιμὸν
καὶ τῷ ζήλῳ αὐτοῦ ὠλιγοποίησεν αὐτούς·
- ³ ἐν λόγῳ κυρίου ἀνέσχευεν οὐρανόν,
κατήγαγεν οὕτως τρεῖς πῦρ.
- ⁴ ὡς ἐδοξάσθης, Ηλία, ἐν θαυμασίοις σου·
καὶ τίς ὅμοιός σοι καυχᾶσθαι;
- ⁵ ὁ ἐγείρας νεκρὸν ἐκ θανάτου
καὶ ἐξ ᾄδου ἐν λόγῳ ὑψίστου·
- ⁶ ὁ καταγαγὼν βασιλεῖς εἰς ἀπώλειαν
καὶ δεδοξασμένους ἀπὸ κλίνης αὐτῶν·
- ⁷ ἀκούων ἐν Σινα ἐλεγμὸν
καὶ ἐν Χωρηβ κρίματα ἐκδικήσεως·
- ⁸ ὁ χρίων βασιλεῖς εἰς ἀνταπόδομα
καὶ προφήτας διαδόχους μετ' αὐτόν·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 48

- ¹ Then the prophet Elijah arose like a fire,
and his word flared like a torch.
- ² He bought a famine upon them
and decimated them in his zeal.
- ³ By the word of the Lord, he shut up the heavens;
three times also, he brought down fire.
- ⁴ How glorious you were in your miracles, Elijah!
Has anyone reason to boast as you have?
- ⁵ You roused a corpse from death,
from Sheol, by the word of the Most High.
- ⁶ You sent kings down to destruction,
and famous men from their sickbeds.
- ⁷ You heard a rebuke at Sinai
and decrees of punishment on Horeb.
- ⁸ You anointed kings as avengers
and prophets to succeed you.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 48

- ¹ Cairo Genizah MS 'B' lacks the name, 'Elijah'.
- ² For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, **וַיִּשְׁבֵּר לֵהֶם מִטָּה לַחֵם וּבְקִנְיָתוֹ הִמְעִיטֵם** ('And he shattered their staff of bread, and in his zealousness reduced them greatly').
- ³ Cairo Genizah MS 'B' opens with 'By the word of God' (**בַּדְבַר אֱלֹהִים**) in place of 'By the word of the Lord' (**ἐν λόγῳ κυρίου**).
- ⁴ Here, the name, 'Elijah' (**אֵלִיָּהוּ**), is given in Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (cf. #1).
- ⁵ Cairo Genizah MS 'B' represents the Divine Name with a triple-yod (**יהויהויה**).
- ⁶ In place of 'destruction', Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'pit' (**שַׁחַת** – which could also be read as 'grave').
- ⁷ The 'rebuke' is perhaps implicit in the vision of 1K 19:9–14.
- ⁸ Cairo Genizah MS 'B' inverts the order of vv. 7 & 8.

- 9 ὁ ἀναλημφθεὶς ἐν λαίλαπι πυρὸς
ἐν ἄρματι ἵππων πυρίνων·
- 10 ὁ καταγραφεὶς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιροὺς
κοπάσαι ὀργὴν πρὸ θυμοῦ,
ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱὸν
καὶ καταστήσαι φυλὰς Ἰακωβ.
- 11 μακάριοι οἱ ἰδόντες σε
καὶ οἱ ἐν ἀγαπήσει κεκοιμημένοι·
καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ζωῆς ζήσομεθα.
- 12 Ἡλίας ὃς ἐν λαίλαπι ἐσκεπάσθη,
καὶ Ἐλισαίη ἐνεπλήσθη πνεύματος αὐτοῦ·
...
- καὶ ἐν ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐσαλεύθη ὑπὸ ἄρχοντος,
καὶ οὐ κατεδυνάστευσεν αὐτὸν οὐδεὶς.
- 13 πᾶς λόγος οὐχ ὑπερῆρεν αὐτόν,
καὶ ἐν κοιμήσει ἐπροφήτευσεν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ·

- 9 You were taken up by a whirlwind of fire,
in a chariot with fiery horses.
- 10 At the appointed time, it is written, you are destined
to allay God's wrath before the fury breaks,
to turn the hearts of fathers towards their children
and to restore the tribes of Jacob.
- 11 Happy are those who will see you,
and those who have fallen asleep in love,
for we too shall certainly have life.
- 12 Such was Elijah, who was enveloped in a whirlwind;
and Elisha was filled with his spirit.
*He performed twice as many signs,
and marvels with every utterance of his mouth.*
And, throughout his life, no ruler could shake him,
and no one could subdue him.
- 13 No task was too hard for him,
and even in death his body prophesied.

9 The latter part of the 2nd line is illegible in *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* ([...]א ובגודי [...]) but the sense seems to concur with the *LXX*.

10 'You are destined' follows the *Hebrew* text; the *LXX* has 'are for reproofs'.

11 The *LXX* text and meaning of this verse are uncertain. Having eulogised the prophet, the author asserts that those who will see Elijah when he returns, as also those who have died 'in love' (of God?), will live forever. This is a clear expression of the hope of immortality. However, the text of *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* is unfortunately defective here (יה[... ...] [... ...] ומ אשר ראך ומ - 'blessed he who sees you before [he dies ... we shall live]'); it is perhaps alluding to Elisha, who saw Elijah disappear (2K 2:10 - 12). If so, the verse merely marks a transition to the next section.

12 The *NJB*, following the *LXX*, lacks the 3rd & 4th lines, here following *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (פה ומופתים כל מוצא פיהו) and the *NRSV*.

13 After dying, the prophet raised a dead man to life (2K 13:20-21); but the *LXX* text is overloaded; for the 2nd line, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads, "Beneath him, his body was consecrated."

- 14** καὶ ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ἐποίησεν τέρατα,
καὶ ἐν τελευτῇ θαυμάσια τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.
- 15** Ἐν πᾶσιν τούτοις οὐ μετενόησεν ὁ λαὸς
καὶ οὐκ ἀπέστησαν ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν,
ἕως ἐπρονομεύθησαν ἀπὸ γῆς αὐτῶν
καὶ διεσκορπίσθησαν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῆ.
- 16** καὶ κατελείφθη ὁ λαὸς ὀλιγοστός,
καὶ ἄρχων ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ Δαυιδ·
τινὲς μὲν αὐτῶν ἐποίησαν τὸ ἄρεστόν,
τινὲς δὲ ἐπλήθυναν ἁμαρτίας.
- 17** Εἰζεκίας ὠχύρωσεν τὴν πόλιν αὐτοῦ
καὶ εἰσήγαγεν εἰς μέσον αὐτῆς ὕδωρ,
ὠρυξεν σιδήρῳ ἀκρότομον
καὶ ὠκοδόμησεν κρήνας εἰς ὕδατα.
- 18** ἐν ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ ἀνέβη Σενναχηριμ
καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Ραψακην, καὶ ἀπῆρεν·
καὶ ἐπῆρεν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ Σιων
καὶ ἐμεγαλαύκησεν ἐν ὑπερηφανίᾳ αὐτοῦ.
- 19** τότε ἐσαλεύθησαν καρδίαι καὶ χεῖρες αὐτῶν,
καὶ ὠδίνησαν ὡς αἱ τίκτουσαι·

- 14** In his lifetime, he performed wonders,
and, in death, his works were marvellous.
- 15** Despite all this, the people did not repent,
and nor did they give up their sins,
until they were herded out of their country
and scattered all over the earth.
- 16** Only a few of the people were left,
with a ruler of the House of David.
Some of them did what displeased the Lord;
but some multiplied sins.
- 17** Hezekiah fortified his city
and laid on a water supply inside it.
With iron, he tunnelled through the rock
and constructed storage-tanks.
- 18** In his days, Sennacherib invaded;
he sent Rabshakeh and departed.
He lifted his hand against Zion
and boasted loudly in his arrogance.
- 19** Then their hearts and hands trembled;
and they felt the pangs of a woman in labour.

14 The WEBBE reads, "As in his life he did wonders, so his works were also marvellous in death."

15 For the 3rd line, the WEBBE reads, "until they were carried away as a plunder from their land."

16 For the last line, the NJB has, "others piled sin on sin."

17 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'bronze' (תשננה) in place of 'iron' (σιδήρῳ).

18 Ben Sira's translator has made a proper name out of 'the chief cupbearer' (רב שקה). The NJB lacks 'and departed'.

19 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

20 καὶ ἐπεκαλέσαντο τὸν κύριον τὸν ἐλεήμονα
ἐκπετάσαντες τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν πρὸς αὐτόν.
καὶ ὁ ἅγιος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ταχὺ ἐπήκουσεν αὐτῶν
καὶ ἐλυτρώσατο αὐτοὺς ἐν χειρὶ Ἡσαιου·

21 ἐπάταξεν τὴν παρεμβολὴν τῶν Ἀσσυρίων,
καὶ ἐξέτριψεν αὐτοὺς ὁ ἄγγελος αὐτοῦ.

22 ἐποίησεν γὰρ Εζεκιας τὸ ἀρεστὸν κυρίῳ
καὶ ἐνίσχυσεν ἐν ὁδοῖς Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ,
ὃς ἐνετείλατο Ἡσαιας ὁ προφήτης
ὁ μέγας καὶ πιστὸς ἐν ὁράσει αὐτοῦ.

23 ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ ἀνεπόδισεν ὁ ἥλιος
καὶ προσέδηκεν ζωὴν βασιλεῖ.

24 πνεύματι μεγάλῳ εἶδεν τὰ ἔσχατα
καὶ παρεκάλεσεν τοὺς πενθοῦντας ἐν Σιων.

25 ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος ὑπέδειξεν τὰ ἐσόμενα
καὶ τὰ ἀπόκρυφα πρὶν ἢ παραγενέσθαι αὐτά.

20 But they called on the merciful Lord,
stretching out their hands towards him.
Swiftly, the Holy One heard them from heaven
and delivered them by the agency of Isaiah.

21 He struck the camp of the Assyrians
and his Angel annihilated them.

22 For Hezekiah did what is pleasing to the Lord
and was steadfast in the ways of David his father,
enjoined on him by the prophet Isaiah,
a great man trustworthy in his vision.

23 In his days, the sun moved back
and he prolonged the life of the king.

24 In the power of the spirit, he saw the last things
and he comforted those who mourned in Zion.

25 He revealed the future to the end of time,
and hidden things, long before they happened.

20 For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'They [called out] to the Most High God' (ו אל אל עליון [...]).

21 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'and destroyed them with a plague' (ויהמם במגפה).

22 'Steadfast' is play on the name Hezekiah ('Yahweh makes strong').

23 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line (as also in v. 24).

24 The NJB ends, "the mourners of Zion."

25 The 2nd line possibly relates to the prophecies on the end of the Exile (Is 40–55), or those of Chs. 24–27, or of Ch. 61.

Σοφία Σιραχ 49

- ¹ Μνημόσυνον Ιωσίου εἰς σύνθεσιν θυμιάματος
ἐσκευασμένον ἔργῳ μυρεψοῦ·
ἐν παντὶ στόματι ὡς μέλι γλυκανθήσεται
καὶ ὡς μουσικὰ ἐν συμποσίῳ οἴνου.
- ² αὐτὸς κατευθύνη ἐν ἐπιστροφῇ λαοῦ
καὶ ἐξῆρεν βδελύγματα ἀνομίας·
- ³ κατεύθυνεν πρὸς κύριον τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ,
ἐν ἡμέραις ἀνόμων κατίσχυσεν τὴν εὐσέβειαν.
- ⁴ Πάρεξ Δαυιδ καὶ Εζεκιου καὶ Ιωσίου
πάντες πλημμέλειαν ἐπλημμέλησαν·
κατέλιπον γὰρ τὸν νόμον τοῦ ὑψίστου,
οἱ βασιλεῖς Ιουδα ἐξέλιπον·
- ⁵ ἔδωκαν γὰρ τὸ κέρας αὐτῶν ἐτέροις
καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν ἔδνει ἄλλοτριῷ.
- ⁶ ἐνεπύρισαν ἐκλεκτὴν πόλιν ἀγιάσματος
καὶ ἠρήμωσαν τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῆς
- ⁷ ἐν χειρὶ Ιερεμίου·

WISDOM OF SIRACH 49

- ¹ The memory of Josiah is like blended incense prepared by the perfumer's art. It is as sweet as honey to all mouths, and like music at a wine feast.
- ² He took the right course, of converting the people; he rooted out the iniquitous abominations.
- ³ He set his heart on the Lord; in godless times, he upheld the cause of religion.
- ⁴ Apart from David, Hezekiah, and Josiah, they all heaped wrong on wrong. They abandoned the Law of the Most High: the kings of Judah disappeared.
- ⁵ They handed their power over to others and their honour to a foreign nation.
- ⁶ The holy, chosen city was burnt down; and her streets were left deserted, by the hand of Jeremiah.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 49

- ¹ The NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS 'B', has 'name' (שם) in place of 'memory', here following the LXX (Μνημόσυνον) and NJB.
- ² For the 1st line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has, "he was grieved over our apostasy." (כי נחל על משובתינו)
- ³ For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'He set his heart towards God' (ויתם אל אל לבו).
- ⁴ The title, 'the Most High', translates τοῦ ὑψίστου (זליו).
- ⁵ This verse refers either to forming alliances or, more simply, by provoking the Exile as punishment for their sins; Cairo Genizah MS 'B' opens with, "He (God) handed over ..." (ויתן קרנם לאחור)
- ⁶ The words, 'by the hand of Jeremiah', are part of v. 7 according to Rahlfs' scheme.

ἐκάκωσαν γὰρ αὐτόν,
καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν μήτρῃ ἡγιασθεὶς προφήτης
ἐκρίζουῖν καὶ κακοῦν καὶ ἀπολλύειν,
ὡσαύτως οἰκοδομεῖν καὶ καταφυτεύειν.

⁸ Ἰεζεκιηλ ὃς εἶδεν ὄρασιν δόξης,
ἦν ὑπέδειξεν αὐτῷ ἐπὶ ἄρματος χερουβιν·

⁹ καὶ γὰρ ἐμνήσθη τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἐν ὄμβρῳ
καὶ ἀγαθῶσαι τοὺς εὐθύνοντας ὁδοὺς.

¹⁰ καὶ τῶν δώδεκα προφητῶν τὰ ὀστᾶ
ἀναθάλοι ἐκ τοῦ τόπου αὐτῶν·
παρεκάλεσαν γὰρ τὸν Ἰακωβ
καὶ ἐλυτρώσαντο αὐτοὺς ἐν πίστει ἐλπίδος.

¹¹ Πῶς μεγαλύνωμεν τὸν Ζοροβαβελ;
καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς σφραγὶς ἐπὶ δεξιᾷ χειρός,

¹² οὕτως Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Ἰωσεδεκ,
οἱ ἐν ἡμέραις αὐτῶν ὠκοδόμησαν οἶκον
καὶ ἀνύψωσαν ναὸν ἅγιον κυρίῳ
ἡτοιμασμένον εἰς δόξαν αἰῶνος.

⁷ For, they had mistreated him,
though consecrated a prophet in his mother's womb,
to tear up, afflict and destroy,
but also to build up and to plant.

⁸ Ezekiel saw a vision of glory,
shown to him by the cherubim on a chariot.

⁹ For God also mentioned Job,
who held fast to all the ways of justice.

¹⁰ As for the twelve prophets, ...
may their bones flower again from the tomb,
since they have comforted Jacob
and redeemed him in faith and hope.

¹¹ How shall we extol Zerubbabel?
He, too, was like a signet ring on the right hand.

¹² So too was Jeshua son of Jozadak;
they who, in their days, built the House
and raised a Sanctuary sacred to the Lord,
destined to everlasting glory.

⁷ See #6 on the division between v. 6 & v. 7.

⁸ For the 2nd line, the NJB has 'which God showed to him above the chariot of the cherubim'.

⁹ This verse follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (דק[...]. כל המכלכל כל ד[...].) and the Peshitta (and NRSV; cf. Ezk 14:14–20); the NJB, following the (uncertain) LXX, reads, "For he mentioned the enemies in the downpour to the advantage of those who follow the right way." This may be an allusion to the prophecy against Gog (Ezk 38–39, esp. 38:22) but there is possibly confusion between the Hebrew words for 'Job' and 'enemy'.

¹⁰ The 1st line speaks of the twelve Minor Prophets who, according to the order of the Hebrew canon, follow the three major ones. As regards the prophetic books, Ben Sira's Bible was already complete. A footnote to the WEBBE suggests that some MSS have additional text at the end of the 1st line.

¹¹ The opening conjunction (καὶ – 'and') has here been translated as 'too'.

¹² For 'Sanctuary', the WEBBE reads 'people'.

- ¹³ καὶ Νεεμίου ἐπὶ πολὺ τὸ μνημόσυνον
τοῦ ἐγείραντος ἡμῖν τείχη πεπτωκότα
καὶ στήσαντος πύλας καὶ μοχλοὺς
καὶ ἀνεγείραντος τὰ οἰκόπεδα ἡμῶν.
- ¹⁴ Οὐδεὶς ἐκτίσθη ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τοιοῦτος οἷος Ἐνωχ·
καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀνελήμφθη ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς.
- ¹⁵ οὐδὲ ὡς Ἰωσηφ ἐγεννήθη ἀνὴρ
ἡγούμενος ἀδελφῶν, στήριγμα λαοῦ,
καὶ τὰ ὀστᾶ αὐτοῦ ἐπεσκέπησαν.
- ¹⁶ Σημ καὶ Σηθ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐδοξάσθησαν,
καὶ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ζῶον ἐν τῇ κτίσει Ἀδαμ.

- ¹³ Great, too, is the memory of Nehemiah,
who rebuilt our fallen walls.
And he erected the bolted gates
and he rebuilt our houses.
- ¹⁴ No man was created upon the earth like Enoch;
for, he was taken up from earth.
- ¹⁵ Nor has anyone ever been born like Joseph,
the leaders of his brothers, the prop of his people;
his bones received a visitation.
- ¹⁶ Shem, Seth, and Enosh were the most honoured of men,
but above every living creature is Adam.

¹³ The opening conjunction (καὶ – ‘and’) has here been translated as ‘too’.

¹⁴ For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, “No one else has ever been created on earth to equal Enoch.”

¹⁵ The NRSV, following Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’, omits the 2nd line, here following the LXX (and NJB).

¹⁶ The NJB, following the LXX, lacks ‘and Enosh’, here following Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ (ושם ושת ואנוש נפקדו) and the NRSV. After ‘living’, the LXX adds ‘in the creation’.

Σοφία Σιραχ 50

- 1 ...
Σιμων Ονιου υἱὸς ἱερεὺς ὁ μέγας,
ὃς ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ὑπέρραψεν οἶκον
καὶ ἐν ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ ἐστερέωσε ναόν·
- 2 καὶ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐθεμελιώθη ὕψος διπλῆς,
ἀνάλημμα ὑψηλὸν περιβόλου ἱεροῦ·
- 3 ἐν ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ ἐλατομήθη ἀποδοχεῖον ὑδάτων,
λάκκος ὡσεὶ θαλάσσης τὸ περίμετρον·
- 4 ὁ φροντίζων τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πτώσεως
καὶ ἐνισχύσας πόλιν ἐν πολιορκήσει.
- 5 ὡς ἐδοξάσθη ἐν περιστροφῇ λαοῦ,
ἐν ἐξόδῳ οἴκου καταπετάσματος·
- 6 ὡς ἀστήρ ἑωθινὸς ἐν μέσῳ νεφελῶν,
ὡς σελήνη πλήρης ἐν ἡμέραις,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 50

- 1 The leader of his brothers and the pride of his people was the High Priest Simon son of Onias, who repaired the Temple during his lifetime and, in his day, fortified the Sanctuary.
- 2 He laid the foundations of double depth, the high buttresses of the Temple precincts.
- 3 In his day, the pool was excavated, a reservoir as huge as the sea.
- 4 He planned to save his people from ruin and he fortified the city against siege.
- 5 How splendid he was, as he spun through the people, when he emerged from the house of the curtain,
- 6 like the morning star among the clouds, like the full moon on feast days,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 50

- 1 The LXX (and NJB) lacks the 1st line (cf. 49:15), here following *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (גדול אחיו ותפארת עמו) and the *Peshitta* (and NRSV). The 'High Priest' of the 2nd line is Simon II son of Onias III, about 219–196 BCE (*Ant.*, XII, iv, 10). 'Onias' is the Greek form of Jonathon.
- 2 The 'double depth' and the 'high buttresses' cannot be identified with certainty (*Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads, 'In his time were built the wall and the dwelling corners at the king's palace' – אשר בדורו נכרה מקוה אשיח במ בהמונו). No other biblical text mentions these improvements, but Josephus states that Antiochis III (223–187 BCE) gave money for the upkeep of the Temple, which would seem to confirm what Ben Sira says.
- 3 'Was excavated' follows *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* (אשר בימיו נבנה קיר); the LXX has 'was reduced'.
- 4 The NJB reads, "Anxious to save the people from ruin, he fortified the city against siege."
- 5 The 'house of the curtain' is the Debir, or Holy of Holies, separated from the Hekal by a curtain (Ex 36:35–38). Here, the author is describing the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement (Lv 16). The meaning of 'as he spun through the people' is uncertain (the NJB has 'with the people thronged around him').
- 6 The NJB, following the LXX, lacks 'on feast days', here following the *Hebrew* text.

7 ὡς ἥλιος ἐκλάμπων ἐπὶ ναὸν ὑψίστου
 καὶ ὡς τόξον φωτίζον ἐν νεφέλαις δόξης,
 8 ὡς ἄνθος ῥόδων ἐν ἡμέραις νέων,
 ὡς κρίνα ἐπ' ἐξόδῳ ὕδατος,
 ὡς βλαστὸς Λιβάνου ἐν ἡμέραις θέρους,
 9 ὡς πῦρ καὶ λίβανος ἐπὶ πυρείου,
 ὡς σκεῦος χρυσοῦ ὀλοσφύρητον
 κεκοσμημένον παντὶ λίθῳ πολυτελεῖ,
 10 ὡς ἐλαία ἀναθάλλουσα καρποὺς
 καὶ ὡς κυπάρισσος ὑψουμένη ἐν νεφέλαις.
 11 ἐν τῷ ἀναλαμβάνειν αὐτὸν στολὴν δόξης
 καὶ ἐνδιδύσκεσθαι αὐτὸν συντέλειαν καυχήματος,
 ἐν ἀναβάσει θυσιαστηρίου ἁγίου
 ἐδόξασεν περιβολὴν ἀγιάσματος·
 12 ἐν δὲ τῷ δέχεσθαι μέλη ἐκ χειρῶν ἱερέων,
 καὶ αὐτὸς ἐστὼς παρ' ἐσχάρα βωμοῦ,
 κυκλόθεν αὐτοῦ στέφανος ἀδελφῶν
 ὡς βλάστημα κέδρων ἐν τῷ Λιβάνῳ
 καὶ ἐκύκλωσαν αὐτὸν ὡς στελέχη φοινίκων,
 13 καὶ πάντες οἱ υἱοὶ Ααρων ἐν δόξῃ αὐτῶν

7 like the sun shining on the Temple of the Most High,
 like the rainbow gleaming against brilliant clouds,
 8 like a rose in springtime,
 like a lily by a spring of water,
 like a branch of the incense tree in summer,
 9 like fire and incense in the censer,
 like a massive golden vessel
 encrusted with every kind of precious stone,
 10 like an olive tree loaded with fruit,
 and like a cypress soaring to the clouds,
 11 when he took his ceremonial robe
 and put on his magnificent ornaments,
 when he went up to the holy altar
 and filled the Sanctuary court with his grandeur;
 12 when he received the portions from the priests' hands,
 and, as he stood by the hearth of the altar,
 crowned with the circle of his brothers,
 he was like a young cedar in Lebanon
 surrounded by the trunks of palm trees.
 13 When all the sons of Aaron in their splendour,

7 In place of 'on the Temple of the Most High', here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'on the king's palace' (אל היכל המלך).

8 For the 1st line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "like the flower on the bough at festal times." (כנן בענפי בימי מועד)

9 In place of 'in the censer', Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (על המנחה) has 'for the offering'.

10 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

11 In place of 'court', the NJB has 'precincts'.

12 For the last 2 lines, the NJB reads, "as a cedar of Lebanon is by its foliage, as though surrounded by the trunks of palm trees."

13 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' represents the Divine Name with a triple-yod (י״י).

καὶ προσφορὰ κυρίου ἐν χερσὶν αὐτῶν
 ἔναντι πάσης ἐκκλησίας Ἰσραηλ,
 14 καὶ συντέλειαν λειτουργῶν ἐπὶ βωμῶν
 κοσμηῆσαι προσφορὰν ὑψίστου παντοκράτορος,
 15 ἐξέτεινεν ἐπὶ σπονδαίου χεῖρα αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἔσπεισεν ἐξ αἵματος σταφυλῆς,
 ἐξέχεεν εἰς θεμέλια θυσιαστηρίου
 ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας ὑψίστω παμβασιλεῖ.
 16 τότε ἀνέκραγον οἱ υἱοὶ Ἀαρων,
 ἐν σάλπιγξιν ἔλαταῖς ἤχησαν,
 ἀκουστὴν ἐποίησαν φωνὴν μεγάλην
 εἰς μνημόσυνον ἔναντι ὑψίστου.
 17 τότε πᾶς ὁ λαὸς κοινῇ κατέσπευσαν
 καὶ ἔπεσαν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν
 προσκυνῆσαι τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτῶν
 παντοκράτορι θεῷ ὑψίστῳ.
 18 καὶ ἤνεσαν οἱ ψαλτωδοὶ ἐν φωναῖς αὐτῶν,
 ἐν πλείστῳ ἤχῳ ἐγλυκάνθη μέλος.
 19 καὶ ἐδεήθη ὁ λαὸς κυρίου ὑψίστου
 ἐν προσευχῇ κατέναντι ἐλεήμονος,

held the Lord's offering in their hands,
 stood before the whole assembly of Israel.
 14 Finishing the rites at the altars,
 nobly adorning offerings to the Almighty, Most High!
 15 He would reach out his hand to the cup
 and pour a libation of wine.
 He poured it at the foot of the altar,
 a fragrance pleasing to the Most High, King of All.
 16 Then the sons of Aaron would shout
 and blow their metal trumpets,
 making a mighty sound ring out
 as a reminder before the Most High.
 17 Then immediately, all the people together
 would fall on their faces to the ground,
 in adoration of their Lord,
 the Almighty, God Most High.
 18 Then the cantors praised him with their voices,
 in sweet and full-toned melody.
 19 The people pleaded with the Lord Most High
 and prayed in the presence of the Merciful,

14 Some MSS have 'altar' in place of 'altars'.

15 This verse, omitted by *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*, refers to a libation rite not mentioned in Leviticus (cf. Ex 29:12, Lv 8:15, where blood is used, not wine).

16 In place of 'metal trumpets', the WEBBE has 'trumpets of beaten work'.

17 For the last 2 lines, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* has לְהַשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְפָנַי עַל־יוֹן לְפָנַי קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל ('To worship before the Most High, before the Holy One of Israel').

18 The 2nd line here follows the NRSV; the NJB has 'sweet was the melody of all these voices'.

19 'Service' follows *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*; the LXX has 'adornment'.

ἕως συντελεσθῆ κόσμος κυρίου
 καὶ τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτοῦ ἐτελείωσαν.
 20 τότε καταβάς ἐπῆρεν χειρὰς αὐτοῦ
 ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἐκκλησίαν υἱῶν Ἰσραηλ
 δοῦναι εὐλογίαν κυρίου ἐκ χειλέων αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἐν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ καυχῆσασθαι.
 21 καὶ ἐδευτέρωσαν ἐν προσκυνήσει
 ἐπιδέξασθαι τὴν εὐλογίαν παρὰ ὑψίστου.
 22 Καὶ νῦν εὐλογήσατε τὸν θεὸν πάντων
 τὸν μεγάλα ποιοῦντα πάντη,
 τὸν ὑψοῦντα ἡμέρας ἡμῶν ἐκ μήτρας
 καὶ ποιοῦντα μεθ' ἡμῶν κατὰ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ.
 23 δῶη ἡμῖν εὐφροσύνην καρδίας
 καὶ γενέσθαι εἰρήνην ἐν ἡμέραις ἡμῶν
 ἐν Ἰσραηλ κατὰ τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ αἰῶνος.
 24 ἐμπιστεύσαι μεθ' ἡμῶν τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ
 καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἡμῶν λυτρωσάσθω ἡμᾶς.
 25 Ἐν δυσὶν ἔθνεσιν προσώχθισεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου,
 καὶ τὸ τρίτον οὐκ ἔστιν ἔθνος.

until the service of the Lord was completed
 and the ceremony at an end.
 20 Then he would come down and raise his hands
 over the whole assembly of the Israelites,
 to give them the Lord's blessing from his lips,
 being privileged to pronounce his name.
 21 Then, once again, the people would bow down low
 to receive the blessing of the Most High.
 22 And now bless the God of all things,
 the doer of great deeds everywhere,
 who has exalted our days from the womb
 and has acted mercifully towards us.
 23 May he grant us cheerful hearts
 and bring peace in our time,
 in Israel for ages on ages.
 24 May his mercy be faithfully with us;
 may he redeem us in his own times!
 25 There are two nations that my soul detests;
 the third is not a people:

20 The Day of Atonement was the only occasion when the name of Yahweh could be pronounced over the people, as a form of blessing.

21 Much of the 2nd line is illegible in *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'*.

22 'God of all things' follows the LXX; *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* has 'Yahweh, God of Israel' (יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל).

23 The WEBBE ends with 'for the days of eternity'.

24 The NRSV has 'our' in place of 'his own'. For this verse, *Cairo Genizah MS 'B'* reads, "May his mercy be faithfully with Simon, may he fulfil in him the covenant of Phinehas, may it not be withdrawn from him or from his posterity as long as the heavens endure."

25 The NJB ends with 'not a nation at all'.

²⁶ οἱ καθήμενοι ἐν ὄρει Σαμαρείας καὶ Φυλιστιμ
καὶ ὁ λαὸς ὁ μωρὸς ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν Σικιμοῖς.
²⁷ Παιδείαν συνέσεως καὶ ἐπιστήμης
ἐχάραξεν ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ
Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Σιραχ Ἐλεαζαρ ὁ Ἱεροσολυμίτης,
ὃς ἀνώμβρησεν σοφίαν ἀπὸ καρδίας αὐτοῦ.
²⁸ μακάριος ὃς ἐν τούτοις ἀναστραφήσεται,
καὶ θεῖς αὐτὰ ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτοῦ σοφισθήσεται·
²⁹ εἰὰν γὰρ αὐτὰ ποιήσῃ, πρὸς πάντα ἰσχύσει·
ὅτι φῶς κυρίου τὸ ἴχνος αὐτοῦ.
καὶ τοῖς εὐσεβέσιν ἔδωκε σοφίαν.

εὐλογητὸς Κύριος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα· γένοιτο γένοιτο.

²⁶ the inhabitants of Mount Seir, the Philistines,
and the stupid people living at Shechem.
²⁷ Instruction in wisdom and knowledge
is what has been written in this book
by Jesus son of Sira Eleazar of Jerusalem,
who has poured a rain of wisdom from his heart.
²⁸ Happy is he who devotes his time to these
and grows wise by taking them to heart!
²⁹ For, if he does them, he will be strong in all things,
since the light of the Lord is his path
and to the devout he gives wisdom.

Blessed be the Lord forever. May it be so; may it be so.

²⁶ 'Seir' follows Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (רעיר) and the Vg (*monte Seir*); the LXX has 'Samaria'. The inhabitants of Shechem are the Samaritans, hence the reading 'Seir' (i.e. the Edomites) in the previous line, and not 'Samaria', which would be repetitious. 'Philistines' may be a reference to pagans or Hellenists.
²⁷ For the 3rd line, here following the LXX, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'son of Jesus son of Eleazar, son of Sira' (בן ישוע בן אלעזר בן סירא).
²⁸ The WEBBE opens with 'Blessed' in place of 'Happy'.
²⁹ For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads 'for the fear of Yahweh is life'. The last 2 lines, following the Greek 248 MS, are not present in the NRSV and included in the NJB only as a footnote.

Σοφία Σιραχ 51

Προσευχὴ Ἰησοῦ υἱοῦ Σιράχ

- ¹ Ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι, κύριε βασιλεῦ,
καὶ αἰνέσω σε θεὸν τὸν σωτήῆρά μου,
ἐξομολογοῦμαι τῷ ὀνόματί σου,
- ² ὅτι σκεπαστῆς καὶ βοηθὸς ἐγένου μοι
καὶ ἐλυτρώσω τὸ σῶμά μου ἐξ ἀπωλείας
καὶ ἐκ παγίδος διαβολῆς γλώσσης,
ἀπὸ χειλέων ἐργαζομένων ψεῦδος
καὶ ἔναντι τῶν παρεστηκότων
ἐγένου βοηθὸς καὶ ἐλυτρώσω με
- ³ κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος ἐλέους καὶ ὀνόματός σου
ἐκ βρυγμῶν ἔτοιμον εἰς βρῶμα,
ἐκ χειρὸς ζητούντων τὴν ψυχὴν μου,
ἐκ πλειόνων θλίψεων, ὧν ἔσχον,
- ⁴ ἀπὸ πνιγμοῦ πυρᾶς κυκλόθεν
καὶ ἐκ μέσου πυρός, οὗ οὐκ ἐξέκαυσα,
- ⁵ ἐκ βάθους κοιλίας ἄδου
καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης ἀκαθάρτου καὶ λόγου ψευδοῦς.

WISDOM OF SIRACH 51

A PRAYER OF JESUS SON OF SIRA

- ¹ I shall give thanks to you. Lord and King,
and praise you, God my Saviour.
I give thanks to your name,
- ² for you have been my guard and support
and redeemed my body from destruction,
from the snare of the lying tongue,
from lips that fabricate falsehood.
In the presence of my assailants, you were on my side;
you have been my support, you have redeemed me,
- ³ true to your abounding kindness and your name,
from the fangs of those seeking to devour me,
from the clutches of those seeking my life,
from the many ordeals that I have endured,
- ⁴ from the choking of a fire on every side,
and from the heart of a fire that I had not kindled,
- ⁵ from deep in the belly of Hades,
and from an unclean tongue and lying words,

WISDOM OF SIRACH 51

- ¹ The title of this closing chapter is included in the text of Greek 248. Vv. 1-12 form a psalm of thanksgiving.
- ² Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "For, you have delivered my soul from death, saved my flesh from the pit, kept my foot from Sheol, protected me from the slander of the people..." (:כוב שטי ומשפת דבת לשון ומשוט עם מדבת עם מציתני מדבת רגלי: פציתני מדבת עם משוט דבת לשון ומשפת שטי כוב:)
- ³ At the end of the 1st line, the NJB adds 'you liberated me'.
- ⁴ For the 1st line, here following the WEBBE, the NJB has, "from the stifling heat that hemmed me in."
- ⁵ The NJB lacks the 2nd line, here following the NRSV.

6 βασιλεῖ διαβολή γλώσσης ἀδίκου.
 ἤγγισεν ἕως θανάτου ἡ ψυχὴ μου,
 καὶ ἡ ζωὴ μου ἦν σύνεγγυς ᾄδου κάτω.

7 περιέσχον με πάντοθεν,
 καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ βοηθῶν·
 ἐνέβλεπον εἰς ἀντίλημψιν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ οὐκ ἦν.

8 καὶ ἐμνήσθην τοῦ ἐλέους σου, κύριε,
 καὶ τῆς ἐργασίας σου τῆς ἀπ' αἰῶνος,
 ὅτι ἐξαιρῆς τοὺς ὑπομένοντάς σε
 καὶ σώξεις αὐτοὺς ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν.

9 καὶ ἀνύψωσα ἀπὸ γῆς ἱκετεῖάν μου
 καὶ ὑπὲρ θανάτου ῥύσεως ἐδεήθην·

10 ἐπεκαλεσάμην κύριον πατέρα κυρίου μου
 μή με ἐγκαταλιπεῖν ἐν ἡμέραις θλίψεως,
 ἐν καιρῷ ὑπερηφانيῶν ἀβοηθησίας·
 αἰνέσω τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐνδελεχῶς
 καὶ ὑμνήσω ἐν ἐξομολογήσει.

11 καὶ εἰσηκούσθη ἡ δέησίς μου·
 ἔσωσας γὰρ με ἐξ ἀπωλείας
 καὶ ἐξείλου με ἐκ καιροῦ πονηροῦ.

6 the slander of an unrighteous tongue to the king.
 My soul has been close to death;
 my life had gone down to the brink of Hades.

7 I was completely surrounded
 and there was no one to help me;
 I looked for someone to help me: there was none.

8 Then I remembered your mercy, Lord,
 and your deeds from earliest times,
 how you deliver those who wait for you patiently,
 and save them from the clutches of their enemies.

9 And I sent up my prayer from the earth;
 I begged to be delivered from death.

10 I called on the Lord, the father of my Lord,
 “Do not desert me in the days of ordeal,
 in the days of the proud, when we are helpless.
 “I shall praise your name unceasingly
 and gratefully sing its praises.”

11 And my plea was heard,
 for you saved me from destruction,
 you delivered me from that time of evil.

6 The NJB, following Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’, has ‘Sheol’ (לְשׂוֹל) in place of ‘Hades’.

7 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction of the 2nd line.

8 The NRSV has ‘kindness’ in place of ‘deeds’.

9 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ reads, “And I prayed from the gates of Sheol.” (ומשערי שאול שועתי)

10 The NRSV includes the last two lines in v. 11. The expression of the 1st line may suggest a Christian interpretation intruded into the LXX text; possibly, however, it is simple an imaginative translation of a corrupt text, but cf. Ps 2:7 (LXX). Cairo Genizah MS ‘B’ reads, “I proclaimed: Yahweh, you are my father, for you are the champion of my salvation.” (עֵי אָבִי אַתָּה כִּי אַתָּה גְבוּר יִשְׁעִי)

11 The NRSV includes the last two lines in v. 12.

¹² διὰ τοῦτο ἔξομολογήσομαί σοι καὶ αἰνέσω σε
καὶ εὐλογήσω τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου.

הודו ליי כי טוב
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו לאל התשבחות
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו לשומר ושראל
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו ליוצר הכל
כי לעולם חסדו:
[...]ו לגואל ישראל
כי לעולם חסדו:
[..]דו למק[..] נדחי ישראל
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו לבונה עירו ומקדשו
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו למצמיה קרן לבית דוד
כי לעולם חסדו:

¹² Therefore, I shall thank you and praise you,
and bless the name of the Lord.

^{12a} Praise the Lord, for he is good;
for, his mercy endures forever.
^{12b} Praise the God of praise;
for, his mercy endures forever.
^{12c} Praise the guardian of Israel;
for, his mercy endures forever.
^{12d} Praise the One who formed all things;
for, his mercy endures forever.
^{12e} Praise the redeemer of Israel;
for, his mercy endures forever.
^{12f} Praise him who gathers the outcasts of Israel;
for, his mercy endures forever.
^{12g} Praise the Builder of his city and his Sanctuary;
for, his mercy endures forever.
^{12h} Praise him who makes the horn of the House of David flourish;
for, his mercy endures forever.

¹² Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has על כן הודיתי ואהללה ואברכה את שם יי ('For this reason, I give thanks and praise; and bless the name of the Lord'.)

^{12a} Vv. 12a-12p, here following Cairo Genizah MS 'B' (and the NRSV) are not included in the LXX, and the NJB includes them only as a footnote.

The passage resembles Ps 136 and the *Shemoneh Esreh* (the 'eighteen' prayers recited daily by Jews); cf. also Si 36:1-17.

^{12b} Throughout vv. 12a-12n, Abegg opens with 'Give thanks to' in place of 'Praise'.

^{12c} Throughout vv. 12a-12n, Abegg has 'loving kindness' in place of 'mercy' in the 2nd part of the verses.

^{12d} The NRSV has 'him' in place of 'the One'.

^{12e} The opening words of vv. 12e & 12f cannot be fully read in Cairo Genizah MS 'B' due to a tear in the manuscript.

^{12f} In place of 'outcasts', the NRSV has 'dispersed'.

^{12g} The NRSV has 'him who rebuilt' in place of 'the Builder'.

^{12h} Abegg has 'spring up' in place of 'flourish'.

הודו לבוחר בבני צדוק לכהן
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו למגן אברהם
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו לצור יצחק
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו לאביר יעקב
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו לבחר בציון
כי לעולם חסדו:
הודו למלך מלכי מלכים
כי לעולם חסדו:

וירם קרן לעמו תהלה לכל חסידיו לבני ישראל עם
קרבו הללו יה:

¹³ Ἐτι ὡν νεώτερος πρὶν ἢ πλανηθῆναι με
ἐζήτησα σοφίαν προφανῶς ἐν προσευχῇ μου.

¹²ⁱ Praise the One who has chosen the sons of Zadok to be priests;
for, his mercy endures forever.

^{12j} Praise the Shield of Abraham;
for, his mercy endures forever.

^{12k} Praise the Rock of Isaac;
for, his mercy endures forever.

^{12l} Praise the Mighty One of Jacob;
for, his mercy endures forever.

^{12m} Praise the One who has chosen Zion;
for, his mercy endures forever.

¹²ⁿ Praise the King of the kings of kings;
for, his mercy endures forever.

^{12o} He raises up a horn for his people, praise for all his loyal ones.

^{12p} For the children of Israel, the people close to him.
Hallelujah!

¹³ When I was still a youth, before I went travelling,
in my prayers I asked outright for wisdom.

¹²ⁱ The NRSV has 'him' in place of 'the One'.

^{12j} The NRSV does not capitalize 'Shield'.

^{12k} The NRSV does not capitalize 'Rock'.

^{12l} Throughout vv. 12a-12n, Abegg opens with 'Give thanks to' in place of 'Praise'.

^{12m} The NRSV has 'him' in place of 'the One'.

¹²ⁿ Throughout vv. 12a-12n, Abegg has 'loving kindness' in place of 'mercy' in the 2nd part of the verses.

^{12o} Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has a blank line where this verse would be expected.

^{12p} The NJB has 'Praise the Lord' in place of 'Hallelujah' (הללו יה).

¹³ Vv. 13-20, which have been preserved in a Psalms scroll from Qumran Cave II (11Q5/1QPsa^a), form an acrostic (alphabetical) poem (cf. #Pr 31:10) about Ben Sira's love of Wisdom.

14 ἔναντι ναοῦ ἠξίου περι αὐτῆς
 καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτων ἐκζητήσω αὐτήν.
15 ἐξ ἄνθους ὡς περκαζούσης σταφυλῆς
 εὐφράνθη ἡ καρδιά μου ἐν αὐτῇ.
 ἐπέβη ὁ πούς μου ἐν εὐθύτητι,
 ἐκ νεότητός μου ἵχνευον αὐτήν.
16 ἔκλινα ὀλίγον τὸ οὖς μου καὶ ἐδεξάμην
 καὶ πολλὴν εὖρον ἐμαυτῷ παιδείαν.
17 προκοπὴ ἐγένετό μοι ἐν αὐτῇ·
 τῷ διδόντι μοι σοφίαν δώσω δόξαν.
18 διενόηθην γὰρ τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτήν
 καὶ ἐζήλωσα τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ οὐ μὴ αἰσχυνηθῶ.
19 διαμεμάχισται ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῇ
 καὶ ἐν ποιήσει νόμου διηκριβασάμην.
 τὰς χειρὰς μου ἐξέπέτασα πρὸς ὕψος
 καὶ τὰ ἀγνοήματα αὐτῆς ἐπένησα.

14 Outside the Sanctuary, I would pray for her,
 and to the last I shall continue to seek her.
15 From her blossoming to the ripening of her grape,
 my heart has taken its delight in her.
 My foot has pursued a straight path;
 I have sought her ever since my youth.
16 By bowing my ear a little, I have received her,
 and have found much instruction.
17 Thanks to her, I have advanced;
 glory to him who has given me wisdom.
18 For I was determined to put her into practice;
 I was zealous for good and shall not be put to shame.
19 My soul has fought to possess her;
 I have been scrupulous in keeping the Law.
 I have stretched out my hands to heaven
 and bewailed how little I knew of her.

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- 14** For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has just 'and I prayed when I was young' (ואתפלל תפלה בנערותי) and Qumran Scroll 11Q5 has 'and great was the instruction I found' (?) (באה לי בתרה ועד סופה אדורשנה).
15 In Cairo Genizah MS 'B', this verse (which therein occurs before v. 14) reads, 'My foot tread in youth; O Lord, from my youth I have studied wisdom' (באמתה דרכה רגלי אדני מנעורי חכמה למדת). In 11Q5 (ענתיה ידעתי) (גם גרע נץ בבשול ענבים ישמחו לב דרכי רגלי במישור כי מנעורי ידעתי), the verse concurs more with the LXX.
16 Qumran Scroll 11Q5 reads similar text to the LXX but Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has just והרבה מצאתי דעה ('And I found her to be in great knowledge').
17 For this verse, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, עלה היה לי לכבוד ולמלמדי אתן הודאה ('Her yoke was an honour for me; to him who instructs me, I shall give thanks').
18 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "and I shall never turn back once I have found her." (ולא אהפך כי אמצאנו)
19 For this verse, the (incomplete) Qumran Scroll 11Q5 reads חריתי נפשי בה ופני לוא השיבותי ('My soul has embraced her and I have not turned my face away from her').

20 τὴν ψυχὴν μου κατεύθυνα εἰς αὐτήν
καὶ ἐν καθαρισμῷ εὔρον αὐτήν.
καρδίαν ἐκτησάμην μετ' αὐτῆς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς·
διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μὴ ἐγκαταλειφθῶ.

21 καὶ ἡ κοιλία μου ἐταράχθη τοῦ ἐκζητῆσαι αὐτήν·
διὰ τοῦτο ἐκτησάμην ἀγαθὸν κτήμα.

22 ἔδωκεν κύριος γλῶσσάν μοι μισθόν μου,
καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ αἰνέσω αὐτόν.

23 ἐγγίσατε πρὸς με, ἀπαιδευτοί,
καὶ αὐλίσθητε ἐν οἴκῳ παιδείας.

24 τί ὅτι ὑστερεῖσθαι λέγετε ἐν τούτοις
καὶ αἱ ψυχαὶ ὑμῶν διψῶσι σφόδρα;

25 ἤνοιξα τὸ στόμα μου καὶ ἐλάλησα
Κτήσασθε ἑαυτοῖς ἄνευ ἀργυρίου.

26 τὸν τράχηλον ὑμῶν ὑπόθετε ὑπὸ ζυγόν,
καὶ ἐπιδεξάσθω ἡ ψυχὴ ὑμῶν παιδείαν.
ἐγγύς ἐστιν εὔρεῖν αὐτήν.

27 ἴδετε ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὑμῶν ὅτι ὀλίγον ἐκοπίασα
καὶ εὔρον ἑμαυτῷ πολλὴν ἀνάπαυσιν.

20 I have directed my soul towards her,
and in purity I have found her.
Having my heart fixed on her from the outset,
I shall never be deserted.

21 And my very core yearned to discover her,
and I have now acquired a prize possession.

22 In reward, the Lord has given me a tongue;
and, with it, I shall sing his praises.

23 Come close to me, you simpletons,
and live in the house of instruction.

24 Why, then, are you lacking these things,
when your souls are so thirsty for them?

25 I have opened my mouth, I have said:
"Buy her without money.

26 Put your necks under her yoke,
let your souls receive instruction;
she is near, within your reach."

27 See with your eyes how that I laboured just a little
and found for myself much rest.

20 For the last line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads, "and so I shall not desert her."

21 The NJB lacks the opening conjunction.

22 The text of Cairo Genizah MS 'B' is very similar: נתן ייי לי שכר שפתותי ובלשוני אהודנו.

23 For the 2nd line, the NJB has, "take your place in my school."

24 The NJB opens, "Why complain about these things."

25 For the 2nd line, Cairo Genizah MS 'B' reads 'buy Wisdom without money' (פי פתחתי ודברתי בה קנו לכם חכמה בלא כסף).

26 Cairo Genizah MS 'B' has 'burden' in place of 'instruction' and, at the end of the verse, adds, "and he who applies himself to this will find her."

27 The NJB reads, "See for yourselves, how slight my efforts have been, to win so much peace."

- ²⁸ μετάσχετε παιδείας ἐν πολλῶ ἀριθμῶ ἀργυρίου
καὶ πολὺν χρυσὸν κτήσασθε ἐν αὐτῇ.
²⁹ εὐφρανθεὶν ἢ ψυχὴ ὑμῶν ἐν τῷ ἐλέει αὐτοῦ,
καὶ μὴ αἰσχυνθεὶν ἐν αἰνέσει αὐτοῦ.
³⁰ ἐργάζεσθε τὸ ἔργον ὑμῶν πρὸ καιροῦ,
καὶ δώσει τὸν μισθὸν ὑμῶν ἐν καιρῷ αὐτοῦ.

ברוך יי לעולם
ומשובח שמו לדר ודר:

עד הנה דברי שמעון בן ישוע שנקרא בן סירא: חכמת
שמעון בן ישוע בן אלעזר בן סירא: יהי שם יי מבורך
מעתה ועד עולם:

- ²⁸ Buy instruction with a large sum of silver:
thanks to her, you will receive much gold.
²⁹ May your souls rejoice in his mercy;
may you never be ashamed of praising him.
³⁰ Do your work before the appointed time
and, in his time, he will give you your reward.

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

*This far the words of Simeon son of Jesus called Ben Sira. Wisdom of
Simeon son of Jesus, son of Eleazar, son of Sira. Blessed be the name of
Yahweh from now and forever.*

²⁸ This verse (here following the LXX and NJB) is in apparent contradiction with v. 25, and the sages took pride in giving free instruction. The Peshitta (and NRSV) reads, "Hear but a little of my instruction and, through me, you will acquire silver and gold."
²⁹ In place of 'his mercy', the NJB has 'the mercy of the Lord'.
³⁰ The concluding doxology and summary, here following Cairo Genizah MS 'B', are not present in the LXX.