

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

1

¹ Love righteousness, ye that be judges of the earth,

Think ye of the Lord with a good mind,
And in singleness of heart seek ye him;

² Because he is found of them that tempt him not,
And is manifested to them that do not distrust him.

³ For crooked thoughts separate from God;
And the *supreme* Power, when it is brought to the proof, putteth to confusion the foolish:

⁴ Because wisdom will not enter into a soul that deviseth evil,

Nor dwell in a body that is held in pledge by sin.

⁵ For a holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit.
And will start away from thoughts that are without understanding,

And will be put to confusion when unrighteousness hath come in.

⁶ For wisdom is a spirit that loveth man,
And she will not hold a blasphemer guiltless for his lips;

Because God beareth witness of his heart,
And is a true overseer of his mind,
And a hearer of his tongue:

⁷ Because the spirit of the Lord hath filled the world,
And that which holdeth all things together hath knowledge of every voice.

8 Therefore no man that uttereth unrighteous things shall be unseen;
Neither shall Justice, when it convicteth, pass him by.

9 For in *the midst of* his counsels the ungodly shall be searched out;
And the sound of his words shall come unto the Lord
To bring to conviction his lawless deeds:

10 Because *there is* an ear of jealousy *that* listeneth to all things,
And the noise of murmurings is not hidden.

11 Beware then of unprofitable murmuring,
And refrain your tongue from backbiting;
Because no secret utterance shall go on its way void,
And a mouth that believeth destroyeth a soul.

12 Court not death in the error of your life;
Neither draw upon yourselves destruction by the works of your hands:

13 Because God made not death;
Neither delighteth he when the living perish:

14 For he created all things that they might have being:
And the generative powers of the world *are* healthsome,

And there is no poison of destruction in them:
Nor hath Hades royal dominion upon earth,

15 For righteousness is immortal:

16 But ungodly men by their hands and their words called death unto them:
Deeming him a friend they consumed away,
And they made a covenant with him,

Because they are worthy to be of his portion.

2

¹ For they said within themselves, reasoning not aright,

Short and sorrowful is our life;

And there is no healing when a man cometh to his end,

And none was ever known that gave release from Hades.

² Because by mere chance were we born,

And hereafter we shall be as though we had never been:

Because the breath in our nostrils is smoke,

And while our heart beateth reason is a spark,

³ Which being extinguished, the body shall be turned into ashes,

And the spirit shall be dispersed as thin air;

⁴ And our name shall be forgotten in time,

And no man shall remember our works;

And our life shall pass away as the traces of a cloud,

And shall be scattered as is a mist,

When it is chased by the beams of the sun,

And overcome by the heat thereof.

⁵ For our allotted time is the passing of a shadow,

And our end retreateth not;

Because it is fast sealed, and none turneth it back.

⁶ Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things that *now* are;

And let us use the creation with all our soul as youth's *possession*.

7 Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and perfumes;

And let no flower of spring pass us by:

8 Let us crown ourselves with rosebuds, before they be withered:

9 Let none of us go without his share in our proud revelry:

Everywhere let us leave tokens of *our* mirth:

Because this is our portion, and our lot is this.

10 Let us oppress the righteous poor;

Let us not spare the widow,

Nor reverence the hairs of the old man gray for length of years.

11 But let our strength be *to us* a law of righteousness;

For that which is weak is found to be of no service.

12 But let us lie in wait for the righteous man,

Because he is of disservice to us,

And is contrary to our works,

And upbraideth us for sins against the law,

And layeth to our charge sins against our discipline.

13 He professeth to have knowledge of God,

And nameth himself servant of the Lord.

14 He became to us a reproof of our thoughts.

15 He is grievous unto us even to behold,

Because his life is unlike other men's,

And his paths are of strange fashion.

16 We were accounted of him as base metal,

And he abstaineth from our ways as from uncleannesses.

The latter end of the righteous he calleth happy;

And he vaunteth that God is his father.

17 Let us see if his words be true,
And let us try what shall befall in the ending of
his *life*.

18 For if the righteous man is God's son, he will
uphold him,
And he will deliver him out of the hand of his
adversaries.

19 With outrage and torture let us put him to the
test,

That we may learn his gentleness,
And may prove his patience under wrong.

20 Let us condemn him to a shameful death;
For he shall be visited according to his words.

21 Thus reasoned they, and they were led astray;
For their wickedness blinded them,

22 And they knew not the mysteries of God,
Neither hoped they for wages of holiness,
Nor did they judge *that there is* a prize for
blameless souls.

23 Because God created man for incorruption,
And made him an image of his own proper being;

24 But by the envy of the devil death entered into
the world,

And they that are of his portion make trial
thereof.

3

1 But the souls of the righteous are in the hand
of God,

And no torment shall touch them.

2 In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have
died;

And their departure was accounted *to be their*
hurt,

³ And their journeying away from us *to be their*
ruin:

But they are in peace.

⁴ For even if in the sight of men they be punished,
Their hope is full of immortality;

⁵ And having borne a little chastening, they shall
receive great good;

Because God made trial of them, and found them
worthy of himself.

⁶ As gold in the furnace he proved them,
And as a whole burnt offering he accepted them.

⁷ And in the time of their visitation they shall
shine forth,

And as sparks among stubble they shall run to
and fro.

⁸ They shall judge nations, and have dominion
over peoples;

And the Lord shall reign over them forevermore.

⁹ They that trust on him shall understand truth,
And the faithful shall abide with him in love;
Because grace and mercy are to his chosen.

¹⁰ But the ungodly shall be requited even as they
reasoned,

They that lightly regarded the righteous *man*,
and revolted from the Lord;

¹¹ (For he that setteth at nought wisdom and
discipline is miserable;)

And void is their hope and their toils unprof-
itable,

And useless are their works:

12 Their wives are foolish, and wicked are their children;

13 Accursed is their begetting.

Because happy is the barren that is undefiled,
She who hath not conceived in transgression;
She shall have fruit when *God* visiteth souls.

14 And *happy* is the eunuch who hath wrought no lawless deed with his hands,

Nor imagined wicked things against the Lord;
For there shall be given him for his faithfulness
a peculiar favor,

And a lot in the sanctuary of the Lord more
delightful *than wife or children*.

15 For good labors have fruit of great renown;
And the root of understanding cannot fail.

16 But children of adulterers shall not come to maturity,

And the seed of an unlawful bed shall vanish away.

17 For if they live long, they shall be held in no account,

And at the last their old age shall be without honor.

18 And if they die quickly, they shall have no hope,

Nor in the day of decision *shall they have* consolation.

19 For the end of an unrighteous generation is always grievous.

4

1 Better *than this* is childishness with virtue;
For in the memory of virtue is immortality:

Because it is recognized both before God and
before men.

² When it is present, *men* imitate it;
And they long after it when it is departed:
And throughout all time it marcheth crowned in
triumph,
Victorious in the strife for the prizes that are
undefiled.

³ But the multiplying brood of the ungodly shall
be of no profit,
And with bastard slips they shall not strike deep
root,
Nor shall they establish a sure hold.

⁴ For even if these put forth boughs and flourish
for a season,
Yet, standing unsure, they shall be shaken by the
wind,
And by the violence of winds they shall be rooted
out.

⁵ *Their* branches shall be broken off before they
come to maturity,
And their fruit *shall be* useless,
Never ripe to eat, and fit for nothing.

⁶ For children unlawfully begotten are witnesses
of wickedness
Against parents when *God* searcheth them out.

⁷ But a righteous man, though he die before his
time, shall be at rest.

⁸ (For honorable old age is not that which
standeth in length of time,

Nor is its measure given by number of years:

⁹ But understanding is gray hairs unto men,
And an unspotted life is ripe old age.)

10 Being found well-pleasing unto God he was
beloved of *him*,

And while living among sinners he was translated:

11 He was caught away, lest wickedness should
change his understanding,

Or guile deceive his soul.

12 (For the bewitching of naughtiness obscureth
the things which are good,

And the giddy whirl of desire perverteth an
innocent mind.)

13 Being made perfect in a little while, he fulfilled
long years;

14 For his soul was pleasing unto the Lord:

Therefore hastened he out of the midst of wickedness.

15 But as for the peoples, seeing and understanding not,

Neither laying this to heart,

That grace and mercy are with his chosen,

And that he visiteth his holy ones—

16 But a righteous man that is dead shall condemn the ungodly that are living,

And youth that is quickly perfected the many
years of an unrighteous man's old age;

17 For *the ungodly* shall see a wise man's end,

And shall not understand what the Lord purposed concerning him,

And for what he safely kept him—

18 They shall see, and they shall despise;

But them the Lord shall laugh to scorn.

And after this they shall become a dishonored
carcass,

And a reproach among the dead forever:

¹⁹ Because he shall dash them speechless to the ground,

And shall shake them from the foundations,

And they shall lie utterly waste, and they shall be in anguish,

And their memory shall perish.

²⁰ They shall come, when their sins are reckoned up, with coward fear;

And their lawless deeds shall convict them to their face.

5

¹ Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness

Before the face of them that afflicted him,

And them that make his labors of no account.

² When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear,

And shall be amazed at the marvel of *God's* salvation.

³ They shall say within themselves repenting,

And for distress of spirit shall they groan,

This was he whom aforetime we had in derision,

And *made* a parable of reproach:

⁴ We fools accounted his life madness,

And his end without honor:

⁵ How was he numbered among sons of God?

And *how* is his lot among saints?

⁶ Verily we went astray from the way of truth,

And the light of righteousness shined not for us,

And the sun rose not for us.

⁷ We took our fill of the paths of lawlessness and
destruction,

And we journeyed through trackless deserts,
But the way of the Lord we knew not.

⁸ What did our arrogancy profit us?

And what good have riches and vaunting
brought us?

⁹ Those things all passed away as a shadow,

And as a message that runneth by:

¹⁰ As a ship passing through the billowy water,
Whereof, when it is gone by, there is no trace to
be found,

Neither pathway of its keel in the billows:

¹¹ Or as when a bird flieth through the air,

No token of *its* passage is found,

But the light wind, lashed with the stroke of its
pinions,

And rent asunder with the violent rush of the
moving wings, is passed through,

And afterward no sign of *its* coming is found
therein:

¹² Or as when an arrow is shot at a mark,

The air disparted closeth up again immediately,

So that men know not where it passed through:

¹³ So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to
be;

And of virtue we had no sign to show,

But in our wickedness we were utterly con-
sumed.

¹⁴ Because the hope of the ungodly man is as
chaff carried by the wind,

And as foam vanishing before a tempest;

And is scattered as smoke *is scattered* by the wind,
And passeth by as the remembrance of a guest
that tarrieth but a day.

- 15 But the righteous live forever,
And in the Lord is their reward,
And the care for them with the Most High.
- 16 Therefore shall they receive the crown of royal
dignity
And the diadem of beauty from the Lord's hand;
Because with his right hand shall he cover them,
And with his arm shall he shield them.
- 17 He shall take his jealousy as complete armor,
And shall make the *whole* creation his weapons
for vengeance on *his* enemies:
- 18 He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate,
And shall array himself with judgment unfeigned
as with a helmet;
- 19 He shall take holiness as an invincible shield,
- 20 And he shall sharpen stern wrath for a sword:
And the world shall go forth with him to fight
against *his* insensate *foes*.
- 21 Shafts of lightning shall fly with true aim,
And from the clouds, as from a well drawn bow,
shall they leap to the mark.
- 22 And *as* from an engine of war shall be hurled
hailstones full of wrath;
The water of the sea shall be angered against
them,
And rivers shall sternly overwhelm them;
- 23 A mighty blast shall encounter them,
And as a tempest shall it winnow them away:

And so shall lawlessness make all the land
desolate,
And their evildoing shall overturn the thrones of
princes.

6

¹ Hear therefore, ye kings, and understand;
Learn, ye judges of the ends of the earth:
² Give ear, ye that have dominion over much
people,
And make your boast in multitudes of nations.
³ Because your dominion was given you from the
Lord,
And your sovereignty from the Most High;
Who shall search out your works,
And shall make inquisition of your counsels:
⁴ Because being officers of his kingdom ye did not
judge aright,
Neither kept ye law, nor walked after the counsel
of God.
⁵ Terribly and swiftly shall he come upon you;
Because a stern judgment befalleth them that be
in high place:
⁶ For the man of low estate may be pardoned in
mercy,
But mighty men shall be searched out mightily.
⁷ For the Sovereign Lord of all will not refrain
himself for any *man's* person,
Neither will he reverence greatness;
Because it is he that made *both* small and great,
And alike he taketh thought for all;

8 But strict is the scrutiny that cometh upon the powerful.

9 Unto you therefore, O princes, are my words,
That ye may learn wisdom and fall not from the right way.

10 For they that have kept holily the things that are holy shall *themselves* be hallowed;
And they that have been taught them shall find what to answer;

11 Set your desire therefore on my words;
Long for *them*, and ye shall be trained by *their* discipline.

12 Wisdom is radiant and fadeth not away;
And easily is she beheld of them that love her,
And found of them that seek her.

13 She forestalleth them that desire *to know her*,
making herself first known.

14 He that riseth up early to *seek* her shall have no toil,
For he shall find her sitting at his gates.

15 For to think upon her is perfectness of understanding,
And he that watcheth for her sake shall quickly be free from care.

16 Because she goeth about, herself seeking them that are worthy of her,
And in their paths she appeareth unto them graciously,

And in every purpose she meeteth them.

17 For her true beginning is desire of discipline;
And the care for discipline is love *of her*;

18 And love *of her* is observance of her laws;

And to give heed to *her* laws confirmeth incorruption;

19 And incorruption bringeth near unto God;

20 So then desire of wisdom promoteth to a kingdom.

21 If therefore ye delight in thrones and scepters,
ye princes of peoples,

Honor wisdom, that ye may reign forever.

22 But what wisdom is, and how she came into being, I will declare,

And I will not hide mysteries from you;

But I will trace *her* out from the beginning of creation,

And bring the knowledge of her into clear light,

And I will not pass by the truth;

23 Neither indeed will I take pining envy for my companion in the way,

Because envy shall have no fellowship with wisdom.

24 But a multitude of wise men is salvation to the world,

And an understanding king is tranquility to *his* people.

25 Wherefore be disciplined by my words, and *thereby* shall ye profit.

7

1 I myself also am mortal, like to all,

And am sprung from one born of the earth, *the man* first formed,

2 And in the womb of a mother was I molded into flesh in the time of ten months,

Being compacted in blood of the seed of man and
pleasure that came with sleep.

³ And I also, when I was born, drew in the
common air,

And fell upon the kindred earth,
Uttering, like all, for my first voice, the selfsame
wail:

⁴ In swaddling clothes was I nursed, and with
watchful cares.

⁵ For no king had any other first beginning;

⁶ But all men have one entrance into life, and a
like departure.

⁷ For this cause I prayed, and understanding was
given me:

I called upon *God*, and there came to me a spirit
of wisdom.

⁸ I preferred her before scepters and thrones,
And riches I esteemed nothing in comparison of
her.

⁹ Neither did I liken to her any priceless gem,
Because all the gold *of the earth* in her presence
is a little sand,

And silver shall be accounted as clay before her.

¹⁰ Above health and comeliness I loved her,
And I chose to have her rather than light,
Because her bright shining is never laid to sleep.

¹¹ But with her there came to me all good things
together,

And in her hands innumerable riches:

¹² And I rejoiced over *them* all because wisdom
leadeth them;

Though I knew not that she was the mother of
them.

13 As I learned without guile, I impart without
grudging;

I do not hide her riches.

14 For she is unto men a treasure that faileth not,
And they that use it obtain friendship with God,
Commended *to him* by the gifts which they
through discipline present *to him*.

15 But to me may God give to speak with judg-
ment,

And to conceive thoughts worthy of what hath
been given *me*;

Because himself is one that guideth even wisdom
and that correcteth the wise.

16 For in his hand are both we and our words;
All understanding, and *all* acquaintance with
diverse crafts.

17 For himself gave me an unerring knowledge of
the things that are,

To know the constitution of the world, and the
operation of the elements;

18 The beginning and end and middle of times,
The alternations of the solstices and the changes
of seasons,

19 The circuits of years and the positions of stars;

20 The natures of living creatures and the ragings
of wild beasts,

The violences of winds and the thoughts of men,
The diversities of plants and the virtues of roots:

21 All things that are either secret or manifest I
learned,

22 For she that is the artificer of all things taught
me, *even* wisdom.

For there is in her a spirit quick of understanding, holy,

Alone in kind, manifold,

Subtle, freely moving,

Clear in utterance, unpolluted,

Distinct, unharmed,

Loving what is good, keen, unhindered,

²³ Beneficent, loving toward man,

Steadfast, sure, free from care,

All-powerful, all-surveying,

And penetrating through all spirits

That are quick of understanding, pure, most subtle:

²⁴ For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;

Yea, she pervadeth and penetrateth all things by reason of her pureness.

²⁵ For she is a breath of the power of God,

And a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty;

Therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into her.

²⁶ For she is an effulgence from everlasting light,

And an unspotted mirror of the working of God,

And an image of his goodness.

²⁷ And she, being one, hath power to do all things;

And remaining in herself, reneweth all things:

And from generation to generation passing into holy souls

She maketh *men* friends of God and prophets.

²⁸ For nothing doth God love save him that dwelleth with wisdom.

²⁹ For she is fairer than the sun,

And above all the constellations of the stars:

Being compared with light, she is found *to be*
before it;

³⁰ For to the light *of day* succeedeth night,
But against wisdom evil doth not prevail;

8

¹ But she reacheth from one end *of the world* to
the other with full strength,
And ordereth all things graciously.

² Her I loved and sought out from my youth,
And I sought to take her for my bride,
And I became enamored of her beauty.

³ She glorifieth *her* noble birth in that it is given
her to live with God,
And the Sovereign Lord of all loved her.

⁴ For she is initiated into the knowledge of God,
And she chooseth out *for him* his works.

⁵ But if riches are a desired possession in life,
What is richer than wisdom, which worketh all
things?

⁶ And if understanding worketh,
Who more than wisdom is an artificer of the
things that are?

⁷ And if a man loveth righteousness,
The fruits of wisdom's labor are virtues,
For she teacheth soberness and understanding,
righteousness and courage;
And there is nothing in life for men more
profitable than these.

⁸ And if a man longeth even for much experience,
She knoweth the things of old, and divineth the
things to come:

She understandeth subtleties of speeches and
interpretations of dark sayings:

She foreseeeth signs and wonders, and the issues
of seasons and times.

⁹ I determined therefore to take her unto me to
live with me,

Knowing that she is one who would give me good
thoughts for counsel,

And encourage me in cares and grief.

¹⁰ Because of her I shall have glory among
multitudes,

And honor in the sight of elders, though I be
young.

¹¹ I shall be found of a quick conceit when I give
judgment,

And in the presence of princes I shall be admired.

¹² When I am silent, they shall wait for me;

And when I open my lips, they shall give heed
unto me;

And if I continue speaking, they shall lay their
hand upon their mouth.

¹³ Because of her I shall have immortality,

And leave behind an eternal memory to them
that come after me.

¹⁴ I shall govern peoples,

And nations shall be subjected to me.

¹⁵ Dread princes shall fear me when they hear of
me:

Among *my* people I shall show myself a good
ruler, and in war courageous.

¹⁶ When I am come into my house, I shall find
rest with her;

For converse with her hath no bitterness,

And to live with her hath no pain, but gladness
and joy.

¹⁷ When I considered these things in myself,
And took thought in my heart how that in kinship
unto wisdom is immortality,

¹⁸ And in her friendship is good delight,
And in the labors of her hands is wealth that
faileth not,

And in assiduous communing with her is under-
standing,

And great renown in having fellowship with her
words,

I went about seeking how to take her unto
myself.

¹⁹ Now I was a child of parts, and a good soul fell
to my lot;

²⁰ Nay rather, being good, I came into a body
undefiled.

²¹ But perceiving that I could not otherwise
possess *wisdom* except God gave *her* me
(Yea and to know by whom the grace is given,
this *too* came of understanding),

I pleaded with the Lord and besought him, and
with my whole heart I said,

9

¹ O God of the fathers, and Lord who keepest thy
mercy,

Who madest all things by thy word;

² And by thy wisdom thou formedst man,
That he should have dominion over the creatures
that were made by thee,

³ And rule the world in holiness and righteousness,
And execute judgment in uprightness of soul;
⁴ Give me wisdom, her that sitteth by thee on thy throne;
And reject me not from among thy servants:
⁵ Because I am thy bondman and the son of thy handmaid,
A man weak and short-lived,
And of small power to understand judgment and laws.
⁶ For even if a man be perfect among the sons of men,
Yet if the wisdom that cometh from thee be not with him, he shall be held in no account.
⁷ Thou didst choose me before *my brethren* to be king of thy people,
And to do judgment for thy sons and daughters.
⁸ Thou gavest command to build a sanctuary in thy holy mountain,
And an altar in the city of thy habitation,
A copy of the holy tabernacle which thou preparedst beforehand from the beginning.
⁹ And with thee is wisdom, which knoweth thy works,
And was present when thou wast making the world,
And which understandeth what is pleasing in thine eyes,
And what is right according to thy commandments.
¹⁰ Send her forth out of the holy heavens,
And from the throne of thy glory bid her come,
That being present with me she may toil *with me*,

And *that* I may learn what is well-pleasing before thee.

11 For she knoweth all things and hath understanding *thereof*,

And in my doings she shall guide me in *ways of* soberness,

And she shall guard me in her glory.

12 And so shall my works be acceptable,

And I shall judge thy people righteously,

And I shall be worthy of my father's throne.

13 For what man shall know the counsel of God?
Or who shall conceive what the Lord willeth?

14 For the thoughts of mortals are timorous,

And our devices are prone to fail.

15 For a corruptible body weigheth down the soul,

And the earthy frame lieth heavy on a mind that is full of cares.

16 And hardly do we divine the things that are on earth,

And the things that are close at hand we find with labor;

But the things that are in the heavens who *ever* yet traced out?

17 And who *ever* gained knowledge of thy counsel, except thou gavest wisdom,

And sentest thy holy spirit from on high?

18 And it was thus that the ways of them who are on earth were corrected,

And men were taught the things that are pleasing unto thee;

And through wisdom were they saved.

10

¹ Wisdom guarded to the end the first formed
father of the world, that was created alone,
And delivered him out of his own transgression,

² And gave him strength to get dominion over all
things.

³ But when an unrighteous man fell away from
her in his anger,
He perished himself in the rage wherewith he
slew his brother.

⁴ And when for his cause the earth was drowning
with a flood,
Wisdom again saved it,
Guiding the righteous man's course by a poor
piece of wood.

⁵ Moreover, when nations consenting together in
wickedness had been confounded,
Wisdom knew the righteous man, and preserved
him blameless unto God,
And kept him strong when his heart yearned
toward his child.

⁶ While the ungodly were perishing, wisdom
delivered a righteous man,
When he fled from the fire that descended out of
heaven on Pentapolis.

⁷ To whose wickedness a smoking waste still
witnesseth,
And plants bearing fair fruit that cometh not to
ripeness;

Yea and a disbelieving soul hath a memorial
there, a pillar of salt *still* standing.

⁸ For having passed wisdom by,

Not only were they disabled from recognizing
the things which are good,
But they also left behind them for *human* life a
monument of their folly;
To the end that where they went astray they
might fail even to be unseen:

⁹ But wisdom delivered out of troubles those that
waited on her.

¹⁰ When a righteous man was a fugitive from
a brother's wrath, wisdom guided him in
straight paths;

She showed him God's kingdom, and gave him
knowledge of holy things;

She prospered him in his toils, and multiplied the
fruits of his labor;

¹¹ When in their covetousness *men* dealt hardly
with him,

She stood by him and made him rich;

¹² She guarded him from enemies,

And from those that lay in wait she kept him safe,

And over his sore conflict she watched as judge,

That he might know that godliness is more
powerful than all.

¹³ When a righteous man was sold, wisdom
forsook him not,

But from sin she delivered him;

She went down with him into a dungeon,

¹⁴ And in bonds she left him not,

Till she brought him the scepter of a kingdom,

And authority over those that dealt tyrannously
with him;

She showed them also to be false that had
mockingly accused him,
And gave him eternal glory.

¹⁵ Wisdom delivered a holy people and a blameless seed from a nation of oppressors.

¹⁶ She entered into the soul of a servant of the Lord,
And withstood terrible kings in wonders and signs.

¹⁷ She rendered unto holy men a reward of their toils;

She guided them along a marvelous way,
And became unto them a covering in the day-time,

And a flame of stars through the night.

¹⁸ She brought them over the Red Sea,
And led them through much water;

¹⁹ But their enemies she drowned,
And out of the bottom of the deep she cast them up.

²⁰ Therefore the righteous plundered the ungodly;

And they sang praise to thy holy name, O Lord,
And extolled with one accord thy hand that fought for them:

²¹ Because wisdom opened the mouth of the dumb,

And made the tongues of babes to speak clearly.

11

¹ She prospered their works in the hand of a holy prophet.

- 2 They journeyed through a desert without inhabitant,
And in trackless regions they pitched their tents.
3 They withstood enemies, and repelled foes.
4 They thirsted, and they called upon thee,
And there was given them water out of the flinty rock,
And healing of their thirst out of the hard stone.
5 For by what things their foes were punished,
By these they in their need were benefited.
6 When *the enemy* were troubled with clotted blood instead of a river's ever-flowing fountain,
7 To rebuke the decree for the slaying of babes,
Thou gavest them abundant water beyond all hope,
8 Having shown *them* by the thirst which they had suffered how thou didst punish the adversaries.
9 For when they were tried, albeit but in mercy chastened,
They learned how the ungodly were tormented, being judged with wrath:
10 For these, as a father, admonishing them, thou didst prove;
But those, as a stern king, condemning them, thou didst search out.
11 Yea and whether they were far off *from the righteous* or near *them*, they were alike distressed;
12 For a double grief took hold on them,
And a groaning at the remembrance of things past.

13 For when they heard that through their own
punishments the others had been bene-
fited,

They felt *the presence* of the Lord;

14 For him who long before was cast forth and
exposed they left off mocking:

In the last issue of what came to pass they
marveled,

Having thirsted in another manner than the
righteous.

15 But in requital of the senseless imaginings of
their unrighteousness,

Wherein they were led astray to worship irra-
tional reptiles and wretched vermin,

Thou didst send upon them a multitude of
irrational creatures for vengeance;

16 That they might learn, that by what things a
man sinneth, by these he is punished.

17 For thine all-powerful hand,

That created the world out of formless matter,

Lacked not means to send upon them a multitude
of bears, or fierce lions,

18 Or new-created wild beasts, full of rage, *of*
unknown *kind*,

Either breathing out a blast of fiery breath,

Or blowing forth *from their nostrils* noisome
smoke,

Or flashing dreadful sparkles from their eyes;

19 Which had power not only to consume them
by their violence,

But to destroy them even by the terror of their
sight.

20 Yea and without these might they have fallen
by a single breath,
Being pursued by Justice, and scattered abroad
by the breath of thy power.
But by measure and number and weight thou
didst order all things.

21 For to be greatly strong is thine at all times;
And the might of thine arm who shall withstand?

22 Because the whole world before thee is as a
grain in a balance,
And as a drop of dew that at morning cometh
down upon the earth.

23 But thou hast mercy on all men, because thou
hast power to do all things,
And thou overlookest the sins of men to the end
they may repent.

24 For thou lovest all things that are,
And abhorrest none of the things which thou
didst make;
For never wouldest thou have formed anything
if thou didst hate it.

25 And how would anything have endured, ex-
cept thou hadst willed it?
Or that which was not called by thee, *how would*
it have been preserved?

26 But thou sparest all things, because they are
thine,
O Sovereign Lord, thou lover of *men's* lives;

12

1 For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things.

2 Wherefore thou convictest by little and little
 them that fall from the right way,
And, putting them in remembrance by the *very*
 things wherein they sin, dost thou admon-
 ish them,
That escaping from their wickedness they may
 believe on thee, O Lord.

3 For verily the old inhabitants of thy holy land,
4 Hating *them* because they practiced detestable
 works of enchantments and unholy rites
5 (Merciless slaughters of children,
And sacrificial banquets of men's flesh and of
 blood),
6 Confederates in an impious fellowship,
And murderers of their own helpless babes,
It was thy counsel to destroy by the hands of our
 fathers;
7 That the land which in thy sight is most precious
 of all *lands*
Might receive a worthy colony of God's servants.
8 Nevertheless even these thou didst spare as
 being men,
And thou sentest hornets as forerunners of thy
 host,
To cause them to perish by little and little;
9 Not that thou wast unable to subdue the
 ungodly under the hand of the righteous
 in battle,
Or by terrible beasts or by *one* stern word to
 make away with them at once;
10 But judging them by little and little thou gavest
 them a place of repentance,

Not being ignorant that their nature by birth was
evil, and their wickedness inborn,
And that their manner of thought would in no
wise ever be changed,

11 For they were a seed accursed from the
beginning:

Neither was it through fear of any that thou didst
leave them *then* unpunished for their sins.

12 For who shall say, What hast thou done?
Or who shall withstand thy judgment?
And who shall accuse thee for the perishing of
nations which thou didst make?
Or who shall come and stand before thee as an
avenger for unrighteous men?

13 For neither is there any God beside thee that
careth for all,
That thou mightest show *unto him* that thou didst
not judge unrighteously:

14 Neither shall king or prince be able to look thee
in the face *to plead* for those whom thou
hast punished.

15 But being righteous thou rulest all things
righteously,
Deeming it a thing alien from thy power
To condemn one that doth not himself deserve to
be punished.

16 For thy strength is the beginning of righteous-
ness,
And thy sovereignty over all maketh thee to
forbear all.

17 For when men believe not that thou art perfect
in power, thou showest thy strength,

And in dealing with them that know *it* thou
puttest their boldness to confusion.

18 But thou, being sovereign over *thy* strength,
judgest in gentleness,

And with great forbearance dost thou govern us;
For the power is thine whensoever thou hast the
will.

19 But thou didst teach thy people by such works
as these,

How that the righteous must be a lover of men;
And thou didst make thy sons to be of good hope,
Because thou givest repentance when men have
sinned.

20 For if on them that were enemies of thy
servants and due to death
Thou didst take vengeance with so great heedful-
ness and indulgence,

Giving them times and place whereby they might
escape from their wickedness;

21 With how great carefulness didst thou judge
thy sons,

To whose fathers thou gavest oaths and
covenants of good promises!

22 While therefore thou dost chasten us, thou
scourgest our enemies ten thousand times
more,

To the intent that we may ponder thy goodness
when we judge,

And when we are judged may look for mercy.

23 Wherefore also the unrighteous that lived in
folly of life

Thou didst torment through their own abominations.

²⁴ For verily they went astray very far in the ways of error;

Taking as gods those animals which even among their enemies were held in dishonor,

Deceived like foolish babes.

²⁵ Therefore, as unto unreasoning children, thou didst send thy judgment to mock them.

²⁶ But they that would not be admonished by a mocking correction as of children

Shall have experience of a judgment worthy of God.

²⁷ For through the sufferings whereat they were indignant,

Being punished in these creatures which they supposed to be gods,

They saw, and recognized as the true God him whom before they refused to know:

Wherefore also the last end of condemnation came upon them.

13

¹ For verily all men by nature *were but* vain who had no perception of God,

And from the good things that are seen they gained not power to know him that is,

Neither by giving heed to the works did they recognize the artificer;

² But either fire, or wind, or swift air,

Or circling stars, or raging water, or luminaries of heaven,

They thought to be gods that rule the world.

³ And if it was through delight in their beauty
that they took them to be gods,
Let them know how much better than these is
their Sovereign Lord;

For the first author of beauty created them:

⁴ But if it was through astonishment at their
power and influence,

Let them understand from them how much more
powerful is he that formed them;

⁵ For from the greatness of the beauty even of
created things

In like proportion doth man form the image of
their first maker.

⁶ But yet for these men there is but small blame,
For they too peradventure do *but* go astray
While they are seeking God and desiring to find
him.

⁷ For living among his works they make diligent
search,

And they yield themselves up to sight, because
the things that they look upon are beautiful.

⁸ But again even they are not to be excused.

⁹ For if they had power to know so much,
That they should be able to explore the course *of*
things,

How is it that they did not sooner find the
Sovereign Lord of these *his works*?

¹⁰ But miserable *were* they, and in dead things
were their hopes,

Who called them gods which are works of men's
hands,

Gold and silver, wrought with careful art, and
likenesses of animals,

Or a useless stone, the work of an ancient hand.

¹¹ Yea and if some woodcutter, having sawn
down a tree that is easily moved,

Skillfully strippeth away all its bark,

And fashioning it in comely form maketh a vessel
useful for the service of life;

¹² And burning the refuse of his handiwork to
dress his food, eateth his fill;

¹³ And taking the very refuse thereof which
served to no use,

A crooked piece of wood and full of knots,

Carveth it with the diligence of his idleness,

And shapeth it by the skill of his indolence;

Then he giveth it the semblance of the image of
a man,

¹⁴ Or maketh it like some paltry animal,

Smearing it with vermilion, and with paint
coloring it red,

And smearing over every stain that is therein;

¹⁵ And having made for it a chamber worthy of
it,

He setteth it in a wall, making it fast with iron.

¹⁶ While then he taketh thought for it that it may
not fall down,

Knowing that it is unable to help itself;

(For verily it is an image, and hath need of help;)

¹⁷ When he maketh his prayer concerning goods
and his marriage and children,

He is not ashamed to speak to that which hath
no life;

18 Yea for health he calleth upon that which is weak,
And for life he beseecheth that which is dead,
And for aid he supplicateth that which hath least experience.
And for a *good* journey that which cannot so much as move a step,
19 And for gaining and getting and good success of his hands
He asketh ability of that which with its hands is most unable.

14

1 Again, one preparing to sail, and about to journey over raging waves,
Calleth upon a piece of wood more rotten than the vessel that carrieth him;
2 For that *vessel* the hunger for gains devised,
And an artificer, *even* wisdom, built it;
3 And thy providence, O Father, guideth it along,
Because even in the sea thou gavest a way,
And in the waves a sure path,
4 Showing that thou canst save out of every *danger*,
That *so* even without art a man may put to sea;
5 And it is thy will that the works of thy wisdom should be not idle;
Therefore also do men entrust their lives to a little piece of wood,
And passing through the surge on a raft are brought safe *to land*.
6 For in the old time also, when proud giants were perishing,

The hope of the world, taking refuge on a raft,
Left to the race of men a seed of generations *to*
come,

Thy hand guiding the helm.

⁷ For blessed hath been wood through which
cometh righteousness:

⁸ But the *idol* made with hands is accursed, itself
and he that made it;

Because his was the working, and the corruptible
thing was named a god:

⁹ For both the ungodly doer and his ungodliness
are alike hateful to God;

¹⁰ For verily the deed shall be punished together
with him that committed it.

¹¹ Therefore also among the idols of the nations
shall there be a visitation,

Because, though formed of things which God
created, they were made an abomination,

And stumbling blocks to the souls of men,

And a snare to the feet of the foolish.

¹² For the devising of idols was the beginning of
fornication,

And the invention of them the corruption of life:

¹³ For neither were they from the beginning,
neither shall they be forever;

¹⁴ For by the vaingloriousness of men they
entered into the world,

And therefore was a speedy end devised for
them.

¹⁵ For a father worn with untimely grief,

Making an image of the child quickly taken away,

Now honored him as a god who was then a dead
man,

And delivered to those that were under him
mysteries and solemn rites.

16 Afterward the ungodly custom, in process of
time grown strong, was kept as a law,
And by the commandments of princes the graven
images received worship.

17 And when men could not honor them in
presence because they dwelt far off,
Imagining the likeness from afar,
They made a visible image of the king whom they
honored,
That by their zeal they might flatter the absent
as if present.

18 But unto a yet higher pitch was worship raised
even by them that knew *him* not,
Urged forward by the ambition of the artificer:

19 For he, wishing peradventure to please one in
authority,
Used his art to force the likeness toward a greater
beauty;

20 And the multitude, allured by reason of the
grace of his handiwork,
Now accounted as an object of devotion him that
a little before was honored as a man.

21 And this became a hidden danger unto life,
Because men, in bondage either to calamity or to
tyranny,
Invested stones and stocks with the incommuni-
cable Name.

22 Afterward it was not enough for them to go
astray as touching the knowledge of God;
But also, while they live in sore conflict through
ignorance *of him*.

That multitude of evils they call peace.

²³ For either slaughtering children in solemn rites, or celebrating secret mysteries,

Or holding frantic revels of strange ordinances,

²⁴ No longer do they guard either life or purity of marriage,

But one bringeth upon another either death by treachery, or anguish by adulterate offspring.

²⁵ And all things confusedly are filled with blood and murder, theft and deceit,

Corruption, faithlessness, tumult, perjury,
²⁶ turmoil,

Ingratitude for benefits *received*,

Defiling of souls, confusion of sex,

Disorder in marriage, adultery and wantonness.

²⁷ For the worship of those nameless idols

Is a beginning and cause and end of every evil.

²⁸ For *their worshipers* either make merry unto madness, or prophesy lies,

Or live unrighteously, or lightly forswear themselves.

²⁹ For putting their trust in lifeless idols,

When they have sworn a wicked oath, they expect not to suffer harm.

³⁰ But for both *sins* shall the just doom pursue them,

Because they had evil thoughts of God by giving heed to idols,

And sware unrighteously in deceit through contempt for holiness.

³¹ For it is not the power of them by whom men swear,

But it is that Justice which hath regard to them
that sin,
That visiteth always the transgression of the
unrighteous.

15

¹ But thou, our God, art gracious and true,
Long-suffering, and in mercy ordering all things.

² For even if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy
dominion;

But we shall not sin, knowing that we have been
accounted thine:

³ For to be acquainted with thee is perfect
righteousness,

And to know thy dominion is the root of immor-
tality.

⁴ For neither were we led astray by any evil
device of men's art,

Nor yet by painters' fruitless labor,
A form stained with varied colors;

⁵ The sight whereof leadeth fools into lust:

Their desire is for the breathless form of a dead
image.

⁶ Lovers of evil things, and worthy of such hopes
as these,

Are both they that do, and they that desire, and
they that worship.

⁷ For a potter, kneading soft earth,

Laboriously moldeth each several vessel for our
service:

Nay, out of the same clay doth he fashion

Both the vessels that minister to clean uses, and
those of a contrary sort,

All in like manner;

But what shall be the use of each *vessel* of either
sort,

The craftsman *himself* is the judge.

⁸ And also, laboring to an evil end, he moldeth a
vain god out of the same clay,

He who, having but a little before been made of
earth,

After a short space goeth his way *to the earth* out
of which he was taken,

When he is required to render back the soul
which was lent him.

⁹ Howbeit he hath anxious care,

Not because his powers must fail,

Nor because his span of life is short;

But he matcheth himself against goldsmiths and
silversmiths,

And he imitateth molders in brass,

And esteemeth it glory that he moldeth counter-
feits.

¹⁰ His heart is ashes,

And his hope of less value than earth,

And his life of less honor than clay:

¹¹ Because he was ignorant of him that molded
him,

And of him that inspired into him an active soul,

And breathed into him a vital spirit.

¹² But he accounted our *very* life to be a play-
thing,

And our lifetime a gainful fair;

For, saith he, one must get gain whence one can,
though it be by evil.

13 For this man beyond all others knoweth that
he sinneth,
Out of earthy matter making brittle vessels and
graven images.

14 But most foolish *were* they all, and of feeblér
soul than a babe,

The enemies of thy people, who oppressed them;

15 Because they even accounted all the idols of
the nations *to be* gods;

Which have neither the use of eyes for seeing,

Nor nostrils for drawing breath,

Nor ears to hear,

Nor fingers for handling,

And their feet are helpless for walking.

16 For a man made them,

And one whose own spirit is borrowed molded
them;

For no one hath power, *being* a man, to mold a
god like unto himself,

17 But, being mortal, he maketh a dead thing by
the work of lawless hands;

For he is better than the objects of his worship,

Forasmuch as he indeed had life, but they never.

18 Yea, and the creatures that are most hateful do
they worship,

For, being compared as to want of sense, these
are worse than all others;

19 Neither, as seen beside *other* creatures, are
they beautiful, so that one should desire
them,

But they have escaped both the praise of God and
his blessing.

16

¹ For this cause were *these men* worthily punished through *creatures* like *those which they worship*,

And tormented through a multitude of vermin.

² Instead of which punishment, thou, bestowing benefits on thy people,

Preparedst quails for food,

Food of rare taste, to *satisfy* the desire of *their* appetite;

³ To the end that thine enemies, desiring food,

Might for the hideousness of the *creatures* sent among them

Loathe even the necessary appetite;

But these, *thy people*, having for a short space suffered want,

Might even partake of *food of rare taste*.

⁴ For it was needful that upon those should come inexorable want in their tyrannous dealing,

But that to these it should only be shown how their enemies were tormented.

⁵ For even when terrible raging of wild beasts came upon thy people,

And they were perishing by the bites of crooked serpents,

Thy wrath continued not to the uttermost;

⁶ But for admonition were they troubled for a short space,

Having a token of salvation,

To put them in remembrance of the commandment of thy law:

7 For he that turned toward it was not saved
because of that which was beheld,
But because of thee, the Savior of all.

8 Yea, and in this didst thou persuade our
enemies,

That thou art he that delivereth out of every evil.

9 For them verily the bites of locusts and flies did
slay,

And there was not found a healing for their life,
Because they were worthy to be punished by
such *as these*;

10 But thy sons not the very teeth of venomous
dragons overcame,

For thy mercy passed by where they were, and
healed them.

11 For they were bitten, to put them in remem-
brance of thine oracles;

And were quickly saved, lest, falling into deep
forgetfulness,

They should become unable to be roused by thy
beneficence:

12 For of a truth it was neither herb nor mollify-
ing plaster that cured them,

But thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things;

13 For thou hast authority over life and death,
And thou leadest down to the gates of Hades, and
leadest up again.

14 But though a man *may* slay by his wickedness,
Yet the spirit that is gone forth he turneth not
again,

Neither giveth release to the soul that *Hades* hath
received.

15 But thy hand it is not possible to escape;

16 For ungodly men, refusing to know thee, were
scourged in the strength of thine arm,
Pursued with strange rains and hails and show-
ers inexorable,
And utterly consumed with fire;

17 For, what was most marvelous *of all*,
In the water which quencheth all things the fire
wrought yet more mightily;
For the world fighteth for the righteous.

18 For at one time the flame lost its fierceness,
That it might not burn up the creatures sent
against the ungodly,
But that *these* themselves as they looked might
see that they were chased through the
judgment of God:

19 And at another time even in the midst of water
it burneth above the power of fire,
That it may destroy the fruits of an unrighteous
land.

20 Instead whereof thou gavest thy people angels'
food to eat,
And bread ready *for their use* didst thou provide
for them from heaven without *their* toil,
Bread having the virtue of every pleasant savor,
And agreeing to every taste;

21 For thy nature manifested thy sweetness to-
ward *thy* children;
While *that bread*, ministering to the desire of the
eater,

Tempered itself according to every man's choice.

22 But snow and ice endured fire, and melted not,
That *men* might know that fire was destroying
the fruits of the enemies,

Burning in the hail and flashing in the rains;

23 And that this *element* again, in order that
righteous men may be nourished,

Hath even forgotten its own power.

24 For the creation, ministering to thee its maker,
Straineth its force against the unrighteous, for
punishment,

And slackeneth it in behalf of them that trust in
thee, for beneficence.

25 Therefore at that time also, converting itself
into all forms,

It ministered to thine all-nourishing bounty,

According to the desire of them that made
supplication;

26 That thy sons, whom thou lovedst, O Lord,
might learn

That it is not the growth of *the earth's* fruits that
nourisheth a man,

But that thy word preserveth them that trust
thee.

27 For that which was not marred by fire,

When it was simply warmed by a faint sunbeam
melted away;

28 That it might be known that *we* must rise
before the sun to give thee thanks,

And must plead with thee at the dawning of the
light:

29 For the hope of the unthankful shall melt as
the winter's hoar frost,

And shall flow away as water that hath no use.

17

¹ For great are thy judgments, and hard to interpret;

Therefore souls undisciplined went astray.

² For when lawless men had supposed that they held a holy nation in their power,

They, *themselves*, prisoners of darkness, and bound in the fetters of a long night,

Close kept beneath their roofs,

Lay exiled from the eternal providence.

³ For while they thought that they were unseen in *their* secret sins,

They were sundered one from another by a dark curtain of forgetfulness,

Stricken with terrible awe, and sore troubled by spectral forms.

⁴ For neither did the dark recesses that held them guard them from fears,

But sounds rushing down rang around them,

And phantoms appeared, cheerless with unsmiling faces.

⁵ And no force of fire prevailed to give *them* light,

Neither were the brightest flames of the stars strong enough to illumine that gloomy night:

⁶ But only there appeared to them the glimmering of a fire self-kindled, full of fear;

And in terror they deemed the things which they saw

To be worse than that sight, on which they could not gaze.

⁷ And they lay *helpless*, made the sport of magic art,

And a shameful rebuke of their vaunts of understanding:

⁸ For they that promised to drive away terrors and troublings from a sick soul,

These were *themselves* sick with a ludicrous fearfulness:

⁹ For even if no troublous thing affrighted them, Yet, scared with the creepings of vermin and hissings of serpents,

¹⁰ They perished for very trembling, Refusing even to look on the air, which could on no side be escaped.

¹¹ For wickedness, condemned by a witness within, is a coward thing, And, being pressed hard by conscience, always forecasteth the worst *lot*:

¹² For fear is nothing else but a surrender of the succors which reason offereth;

¹³ And from within *the heart* the expectation of *them* being less

Maketh of greater account the ignorance of the cause that bringeth the torment.

¹⁴ But they, all through the night which was powerless indeed,

And which came upon them out of the recesses of powerless Hades,

All sleeping the same sleep,

¹⁵ Now were haunted by monstrous apparitions, And now were paralyzed by their soul's surrendering;

For fear sudden and unlooked for came upon them.

16 So then *every man*, whosoever it might be,
sinking down in his place,
Was kept in ward shut up in that prison which
was barred not with iron:

17 For whether he were a husbandman, or a
shepherd,
Or a laborer whose toils were in the wilderness,
He was overtaken, and endured that inevitable
necessity,
For with one chain of darkness were they all
bound.

18 Whether there were a whistling wind,
Or a melodious noise of birds among the spread-
ing branches,

Or a measured fall of water running violently,

19 Or a harsh crashing of rocks hurled down,
Or the swift course of animals bounding along
unseen,

Or the voice of wild beasts harshly roaring,
Or an echo rebounding from the hollows of the
mountains,

All these things paralyzed them with terror.

20 For the whole world *beside* was enlightened
with clear light,

And was occupied with unhindered works;

21 While over them alone was spread a heavy
night,

An image of the darkness that should afterward
receive them;

But yet heavier than darkness were they unto
themselves.

18

1 But for thy holy ones there was great light;

And *the Egyptians*, hearing their voice but seeing
not their form,
Counted it a happy thing that they too had
suffered,

² Yet for that they do not hurt them *now*,
though wronged *by them* before, they are
thankful;

And because they had been at variance *with
them*, they made supplication *to them*.

³ Whereas thou didst provide *for thy people* a
burning pillar of fire,

To be a guide for *their* unknown journey,
And withal a kindly sun for *their* proud exile.

⁴ For well did the Egyptians deserve to be
deprived of light and imprisoned by dark-
ness,

They who had kept in close ward thy sons,
Through whom the incorruptible light of the law
was to be given to the race of men.

⁵ After they had taken counsel to slay the babes
of the holy ones,

And when a single child had been cast forth and
saved to convict *them of their sin*,

Thou tookest away from them their multitude of
children,

And destroyedst all *their host* together in a
mighty flood.

⁶ Of that night were our fathers made aware
beforehand,

That, having sure knowledge, they might be
cheered by the oaths which they had
trusted:

⁷ So by thy people was expected salvation of the
righteous and destruction of the enemies;

⁸ For as thou didst take vengeance on the adversaries,

By the same means, calling us unto thyself, thou
didst glorify us.

⁹ For holy children of good men offered sacrifice
in secret,

And with one consent they took upon themselves
the covenant of the divine law,

That they would partake alike in the same good
things and the same perils;

The fathers already leading the sacred songs of
praise.

¹⁰ But there sounded back in discord the cry of
the enemies,

And a piteous voice of lamentation for children
was borne abroad.

¹¹ And servant along with master punished with
a like just doom,

And commoner suffering the same as king,

¹² Yea, all *the people* together, under one form of
death,

Had *with them* corpses without number;

For the living were not sufficient even to bury
them,

Since at a single stroke their nobler offspring was
consumed.

¹³ For while they were disbelieving all things by
reason of the enchantments,

Upon the destruction of the firstborn they confessed
the people to be God's son.

- 14 For while peaceful silence enwrapped all things,
And night in her own swiftness was in mid-course,
- 15 Thine all-powerful word leaped from heaven out of *the* royal throne,
A stern warrior, into the midst of the doomed land,
- 16 Bearing as a sharp sword thine unfeigned commandment;
And standing it filled all things with death;
And while it touched the heaven it trod upon the earth.
- 17 Then forthwith apparitions in dreams terribly troubled them,
And fears came upon them unlooked for.
- 18 And *each*, one thrown here half dead, another there,
Made manifest wherefore he was dying:
- 19 For the dreams, perturbing them, did foreshow this,
That they might not perish without knowing why they were afflicted.
- 20 But it befell the righteous also to make trial of death,
And a multitude were stricken in the wilderness:
Howbeit the wrath endured not for long.
- 21 For a blameless man hasted to be their champion:
Bringing the weapon of his own ministry,
Even prayer and the propitiation of incense,
He withstood the indignation, and set an end to the calamity,

Showing that he was thy servant.

²² And he overcame the anger,

Not by strength of body, not by efficacy of weapons;

But by word did he subdue the minister of punishment,

By bringing to remembrance oaths and covenants made with the fathers.

²³ For when the dead were already fallen in heaps one upon another,

Standing between he stopped the *advancing* wrath,

And cut off the way to the living.

²⁴ For upon *his* long *high-priestly* robe was the whole world,

And the glories of the fathers *were* upon the grav-
ing of the four rows of precious stones,

And thy majesty *was* upon the diadem of his head.

²⁵ To these the destroyer gave place, and these *the people* feared;

For it was enough only to make trial of the wrath.

19

¹ But upon the ungodly there came unto the end indignation without mercy;

For their future also *God* foreknew,

² How that, having changed their minds to *let thy people* go,

And having speeded them eagerly on their way,

They would repent themselves and pursue them.

- 3 For while they were yet in the midst of their mourning,
And making lamentation at the graves of the dead,
They drew upon themselves another counsel of folly,
And pursued as fugitives those whom with entreaties they had cast out.
- 4 For the doom which they deserved was drawing them unto this end,
And it made them forget the things that had befallen them,
That they might fill up the punishment which was yet wanting to their torments,
- 5 And that thy people might journey on by a marvelous road,
But they *themselves* might find a strange death.
- 6 For the whole creation, *each part* in its several kind, was fashioned again anew,
Ministering to *thy* several commandments,
That thy servants might be guarded free from hurt.
- 7 *Then* was beheld the cloud that shadowed the camp,
And dry land rising up out of what before was water,
Out of the Red Sea an unhindered highway,
And a grassy plain out of the violent surge;
- 8 By which they passed over with all their hosts,
These that were covered with thy hand,
Having beheld strange marvels.
- 9 For like horses they roamed at large,

And they skipped about like lambs,
Praising thee, O Lord, who wast their deliverer.

¹⁰ For they still remembered the things that came
to pass in the time of their sojourning,
How that instead of bearing cattle the land
brought forth lice,
And instead of fish the river cast up a multitude
of frogs.

¹¹ But afterward they saw also a new race of
birds,
When, led on by desire, they asked for luxurious
dainties;

¹² For, to solace them, there came up for them
quails from the sea.

¹³ And upon the sinners came the punishments
Not without the tokens that were given before-
hand by the force of the thunders;
For justly did they suffer through their own
wickednesses,
For grievous indeed was the hatred which they
practiced toward guests.

¹⁴ For whereas the *men of Sodom* received not the
strangers when they came among *them*;
The Egyptians made slaves of guests who were
their benefactors.

¹⁵ And not only so, *but God* shall visit the men of
Sodom after another sort,
Since they received as enemies them that were
aliens;

¹⁶ Whereas these *first* welcomed with feastings,
And *then* afflicted with dreadful toils,

Them that had already shared *with them* in the same rights.

17 And moreover they were stricken with loss of sight

(Even as were those *others* at the righteous man's doors),

When, being compassed about with yawning darkness,

They sought every one the passage through his own door.

18 For as the notes of a psaltery vary the character of the rhythm,

Even so *did* the elements, changing their order one with another,

Continuing always *the same, each* in its *several* sound;

As may clearly be divined from the sight of the things that are come to pass.

19 For creatures of the dry land were turned into creatures of the waters,

And creatures that swim trod *now* upon the earth:

20 Fire kept the mastery of its own power in *the midst of* water,

And water forgot its quenching nature:

21 Contrariwise, flames wasted not the flesh of perishable creatures that walked among them;

Neither melted they the ice-like grains of ambrosial food, that were *of nature* apt to melt.

22 For in all things, O Lord, thou didst magnify thy people,

And thou didst glorify them and not lightly
regard them;
Standing by their side in every time and place.

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