

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

## INTRODUCTION

### § 1. SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE BOOK.

THE Book of Wisdom has long enjoyed the reputation of being the most attractive and interesting book in the Apocrypha. Nor is the reputation undeserved if attention is confined to the first ten or eleven chapters. In these chapters both thought and expression are of a high order. The thought, it is true, is not that of a systematic or consistent thinker, but of a writer imbued with a strongly religious spirit; one who felt the stress and perplexity of life and suffering, and yet resisted the temptation to abandon—like many of his co-religionists—his ancestral belief in a God of righteousness. These thoughts are expressed in the ancient Hebrew style of parallelism: in spite of rare words, the language is vigorous and the construction simple: the impression that he was well acquainted with the literature and philosophy of Greece grows upon one the more the book is studied, and he is not without boldness in revising some of the traditional beliefs of his religion.

The work falls naturally into three sections: (1) cc. i to vi. 8; (2) vi. 9 to xi. 1; (3) xi. 2 to xix. The first section has been well called 'the book of eschatology'; it portrays in vivid contrast the different destinies which await the righteous and the ungodly who oppress them. The impious and defiant speech of the ungodly, the picture of their despair and remorse after death, and the description of the divine vengeance upon them are the outstanding literary features in this part of the book. The religious teaching also of this section is interesting and important. The writer enunciates the doctrine of immortality immediately after death, denies that suffering presupposes sin, refuses to admit that early death is necessarily a calamity, or that childlessness is a mark of divine displeasure. It would be difficult to find five other chapters in the Old Testament Scriptures with so much departure from traditional views.

The second section consists of the panegyric on Wisdom which gives its name to the book. In beautiful and eloquent language the attractions of Wisdom as a heavenly Being are set forth. 'Wisdom is radiant and fadeth not away'; she seeks to know those that are worthy of her, and leads them to the enjoyment of immortality in the presence of God. According to the testimony of Solomon, who now speaks, her treasures are bestowed upon mankind in answer to prayer. The fine description of Wisdom is continued, and culminates in the statement that 'she is a breath of the power of God, and a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty' (vii. 25). Solomon is not the only one who has been favoured by her. She guided the great ones of old, rescued them from all their troubles, and finally brought the holy nation itself out of captivity and 'prospered their works by the hand of a holy prophet' (xi. 1).

From this point onward a great change takes place. We have no longer a poem extolling goodness and celebrating Wisdom, but a Midrash in glorification of the Jews.

From xi. 2 to the end of the book we have an historical retrospect of Israel in Egypt and in the wilderness, broken by a dissertation on the origin and evils of idolatry in cc. xiii, xiv, xv. Chapters xi and xii with xvi to xix contrast the lot of Israel in the wilderness with that experienced by the Egyptians during the plagues. The writer sets himself to prove the two propositions that 'By what things a man sins, by these he is punished' (xi. 16), and 'By what things their foes were punished, by these they in their need were benefited' (xi. 5). First, the punishments of the Egyptians are said to have been framed in accordance with a variety of the *lex talionis*. This is shown most clearly in the plagues of frogs, lice, and flies. Because the Egyptians worshipped despicable animals, by despicable animals they were punished. But the writer's power of drawing parallels does not end here. He goes further and gives examples to prove his other contention that what was noxious to the Egyptians was beneficial to Israel. Historical facts are ingeniously selected and opposed to one another; if the main facts are intractable, the details are made to furnish the required lesson. If he cannot get a positive comparison, a negative one will do. The comparisons are mostly forced, except in the case of the last plague, where the slaying of the firstborn had a double effect. It punished the Egyptians and at the same time freed Israel. The first of these ideas, appropriateness of retribution, was doubtless based on Exod. iv. 22-23: 'Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, my firstborn: . . . (because) thou hast refused to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, thy firstborn.' The second seems to be peculiar to this book.

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In cc. xiii-xv the author discourses on idolatry and its attendant evils. He treats the worship of the heavenly bodies with some leniency, only marvelling that the worshippers did not go a step farther and find the Sovereign Lord of all through His works. He then turns to idolatry proper, and following Isa. xl pours scorn and sarcasm on those who worship a crooked piece of wood for which the workman can find no use save as an object of worship: a piece of wood not sound enough to be used for the building of a ship. The origin of idolatry is sketched after the manner of Euhemerus, and the methods of a second idol-maker—the worker in clay—held up to derision.

After this digression the writer turns once more to the Egyptians; and from here to the end the contrast between Egypt and Israel is resumed. The work concludes with a repetition of a favourite theme of the writer, that the world fights for the righteous: the elements by their transmutation into one another are used by God to punish the Egyptians and defend Israel.

The book is included in the so-called Wisdom Literature of the Hebrews, the chief object of which is to discuss the problem of life and its conditions. Some of the writers limited their teaching to directing men aright in their social relations. They saw that much of the failure and unhappiness of life arose from disregard of prudential considerations and rightly laid emphasis on this. Small troubles were the result of imprudence; serious troubles the result of deliberate wrongdoing; therefore, to avoid trouble small or great, be prudent and abstain from wrongdoing. We have examples of this teaching in Proverbs and Sirach. But the teaching of experience showed that this doctrine was very imperfect. The rich oppressed the poor, however prudent and pious the poor might be; and in times of religious persecution or national trial the theory broke down utterly. Some teachers faced these perplexing facts and tried to account otherwise for the mystery of suffering. Here they deserted the rôle of the sage inculcating prudential precepts, and became religious rather than moral teachers (though the difference would hardly be recognized by a Jew), endeavouring to penetrate the mysteries of God and explain them to suffering humanity. We have examples of this in Job, Ecclesiastes, and the well-known Psalms, xxxvii, xlix, and lxxiii. It is to this last division that the writer of Wisdom, cc. i-x, belongs: the later chapters, xi to xix, have nothing in common with either class of Wisdom literature.

The authorship of the book is unknown. It is perhaps the work of more than one writer, and dates probably from after 50 B.C. St. Paul undoubtedly knew and used the book. Romans and Ephesians showing clear traces of its influence; some other parts of the New Testament also show points of contact with it.

### § 2. TITLE.

The earliest mention of the book is perhaps found in p. 11 a, line 8 of the Muratorian Canon (A. D. 200). There the title is 'Sapientia', with the added words 'ab amicis Salomonis in honorem ipsius scripta'. Clement of Alexandria, head of the Catechetical School A. D. 190-203, speaks of it under the title Wisdom of Solomon. Tertullian (circa 200) quotes it as the Wisdom of Solomon. Origen (d. 250) speaks of it in the same way as Clement. Cyprian (d. 258) quotes it as Solomon or the Wisdom of Solomon. The Latin version has 'Liber Sapientiae'; the Peshitta, 'The great Wisdom of Solomon.'

In the fourth-century MSS. A and B the title is *Σαλωμωντος* and *Σαλωμωνος* respectively. The Alexandrine fifth-century MS. has *Σολομωντος*. Jerome (d. 420), who recognizes that the book is pseudepigraphic, says it was entitled 'Sapientia Salomonis'. Only the Latin omits the name of Solomon, and this may be due to Jerome's influence: although he did not alter the translation—'calamo temperavi' he says—he may have altered the title.

### § 3. THE MSS.

The most important uncials, A and B, contain the book in its entirety. C (Codex Ephraim) contains viii. 5-xii. 10, xiv. 19-xvii. 18, xviii. 24-xix. 22. V (23), eighth-ninth century, contains the whole. The cursives mentioned in Holmes and Parsons are numbered 23 (but this is a mistake: 23 is an uncial and is now called V), 55, 68, 106, 153 (omits vi. 22-xvi. 19), 157, 248, 253, 254, 261, 296. According to Klostermann (*Analekta*, Leipzig, 1895) 55 does not contain Wisdom. Klostermann has examined 248 and 253, while Nestle (*Urtext und Übersetzungen*) has investigated the readings of 68, 106, 157, 253, and 296. Of the cursives 248 seems to be the most important. It is frequently quoted by Prof. Margoliouth in *JKAS*, 1890, and Sanday and Headlam (*Romans*, p. 51 note) say, 'Cod. 248 embodies very ancient elements.' Grimm and Feldmann quote certain Parisian MSS. collated by Thilo of Halle, who contemplated an edition of the book (c. 1825).

The text of B is given in Swete, *O.T. in Greek*, with the variants of A and C. Many interesting variants in the cursives are given in Grimm, Holtzmann, and especially Feldmann. Feldmann's



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investigation (*Textmaterialien z. B. der W.*, Freiburg im B., 1902) is by far the most thorough yet published.

### § 4. THE VERSIONS.

The Latin version is the Old Latin; Jerome did not touch it: he says 'calamo temperavi'. It is generally faithful to the Greek, but includes several lines not in any Greek MS., one of which (ii. 8) is undoubtedly, another (i. 15) possibly, genuine; a third (v. 14) a very intelligent gloss: others, e.g. ii. 17, vi. 1, 23, viii. 11, ix. 19, xi. 5, are glosses pure and simple. The text has been exhaustively examined by Thielmann in the *Archiv für lat. Lex. und Gram.*, 1893, pp. 235-277.<sup>1</sup> Like previous investigators, Thielmann comes to the conclusion that the home of the version is North Africa. This he proves by full lists of words and constructions in Wisdom, only found elsewhere in North African Latin. A short list of such words is given in § 4 of Westcott's article on Wisdom in Smith's *DB*; a longer list may be found in Deane, *Index II*. As Tertullian and Cyprian used it, the version is placed by Thielmann in the latter half of the second century.

The Syriac (Peshitta) version is full of mistakes and paraphrases, but is of great interest on account of its striking relationship to the Latin. Prof. Margoliouth points out that the Peshitta agrees with the Latin 'in a way which cannot be the result of chance'. This relationship is probably that of assistant to the Latin translator. The reverse could not be the case, since, if the Syriac translator had had the Latin to refer to, he would have made far fewer mistakes. Both the Latin and the Syriac are from earlier Greek MSS. than any we now possess.

Some interesting instances of agreement between the Syriac and Latin, besides those mentioned by Prof. Margoliouth on p. 279, *JRAS*, 1890, are as follows: v. 14, x. 5, 12 (see note), xiv. 2, and especially xiv. 19, of which Prof. Margoliouth says 'the Latin rendering can only be accounted for as a rendering of either the Syriac or the (supposed Hebrew) original'.

There are numerous additions in the form of explanatory glosses, e.g. the proper names in c. x, Cain, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Jacob and Joseph, are inserted, and in xix. 17 (Syr. 16) *ἐκεῖνοι* rightly explained as the men of Sodom.

The text has been thoroughly examined by Joseph Holtzmann, *Die Pesch. z. B. der W.*, pp. 152, Freiburg im B., 1903. Of his conclusions, the two following deserve mention here: (1) the language of the copy before the translator was Greek, as is shown by mistranslations which could only have arisen from a misunderstanding of the Greek; (2) the Syriac version was used by the translator of the Latin version, therefore its date must be earlier.

The other versions (except the Arabic—which is said to be very late,—twelfth century or later) have been examined by Feldmann, who has collated the Coptic (Sahidic), Syro-Hexaplaric, and Armenian, and given the variants of each. He then (pp. 41-84) gives a most useful enumeration, with frequent discussions, of the various readings throughout the book.

### § 5. DATE.

The difficulty of arriving at a satisfactory date for the book is seen from the differences which exist between scholars as to the period of its composition. Grimm dates it 145-50 B.C., Thackeray 130-100 B.C., Gregg 125-100 B.C., Gfrörer 100 B.C., Bousset under the Empire, Farrar 40 A.D.

An indisputable *terminus a quo* is obtained from the fact that the writer made use of the LXX version of Isaiah, but that may be no later than 200 B.C. By common consent this date is far too early. It is, however, possible to get a later date for the *terminus a quo*. If the line in 1 Enoch v. 7 is the source of Wisd. iii. 9 the book must be later than the translation of Enoch into Greek, which was probably undertaken as a whole, seeing that the fragments which survive include chapter lxxxix. The latest part of Enoch consists of chapters xxxvii to lxxi, and the date of this according to Charles is 94-79 B.C. We may suppose Enoch to have been translated at some date between 70 and 50 B.C. and adopt this period as the *terminus a quo*.

Mr. Thackeray dates the book 130-100 B.C. on the ground that the two forms *οὐδείς* and *οὐδὲς* occur in it, a characteristic which he would assign to that period (*Gr. of O. T. Gk.*, p. 62). On the ground, however, that only the *δ* forms of *οὐδὲς* occur in LXX Proverbs, he assigns that book to about 100 B.C., making it later than Wisdom. But it is difficult to believe that the author of Wisd. i-xi was not acquainted with LXX Proverbs. If he was not, we must delete iii. 11 and vi. 12 *c* as interpolations based on Prov. i. 7 and viii. 12 *b*. It is no doubt possible that these lines may be interpolations, but it is more difficult to get rid of *παρεδρὼν γὰρ εὐρήσει τῶν πύλων αὐτοῦ* (vi. 14), which seems to be a reminiscence of Prov. i. 21 *ἐπὶ δὲ πύλαις δυναστῶν παρεδρεύει*, and viii. 2 *παρὰ γὰρ πύλαις δυναστῶν παρεδρεύει*. Possibly, too, *ἀγρυπνέω* in Wisd. vi. 15 is a reminiscence of the

<sup>1</sup> There is an earlier work by Thielmann, *Die lat. Übers. d. Buches der Weisheit* (Leipzig, 1872).

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same word in Prov. viii. 34. Moreover, the general description of Wisdom in c. vi. 9-16 seems based on that in Prov. i and viii.

Further, if the LXX version of Proverbs was not in existence when Wisdom was written—and this would be the case if Mr. Thackeray's dates are accepted—we must assume that the author was able to consult Proverbs in the Hebrew, and yet that he resorted to the Greek for such an important book as Isaiah. It seems impossible to deny that in c. ii. 12 he accepted the erroneous LXX translation of Isa. iii. 10 (as the writer of the second part accepted that of Isa. xlii. 20). This would be a strange circumstance if he were able to read the original.

The evidence, therefore, is strongly in favour of assuming the dependence of Wisdom on LXX Proverbs. We may, however, with Mr. Thackeray accept a date for Proverbs subsequent to Sirach, i. e. subsequent to 130 B. C., and take the order as Sirach, Proverbs, Wisdom. This would strengthen the conjecture made above that the date of Wisdom is not earlier than the middle of the first century B. C.

The *terminus ad quem* depends on the undoubted use made of the book by St. Paul: this would require a date not later than the first few years of our era: it would take some little time for the book to acquire a reputation and get into circulation. Grimm points out (page 34) that the writer's apparent ignorance of the Alexandrine doctrine of the Logos points to a date earlier than Philo. More than that, as Philo did not expound his doctrine of the Logos as though it originated with him, the date of Wisdom must be earlier than the acceptance of this doctrine by the Jewish scholars of Alexandria. This argument is no doubt valid, but it only means that the book must be earlier than the student life of Philo, which may be placed from 5 B. C. to A. D. 5. To place the book on this account a hundred years earlier than Philo, as Gregg does, seems quite uncalled for. But ignorance of the Alexandrine Logos doctrine can only affect the date of the first part of the book; the second part may with Boussset (*Religion des Juifs*, p. 351) be dated after the beginning of the Empire (say 30 B. C.), on account of xiv. 17, where the likeness of an *absent* ruler is mentioned.

The present writer inclines to a date between 50 and 30 B. C. for the first part of the book, and 30 B. C. to A. D. 10 for the second part, which was written in continuation of part 1.

### § 6. COMPOSITE NATURE.

The unity of the book was early disputed. In the eighteenth century the French scholar Houbigant pronounced the work to be composite, and was followed by Eichhorn, Bretschneider, and others. Houbigant divided the book at the end of ch. ix; Eichhorn, whose position is here adopted, at xi. 1; Bretschneider, at vi. 8 and xii, taking ch. xi as the work of a redactor. Gfrörer (1835) and Grimm (1860) upheld the unity of the book, the former speaking with scorn of Eichhorn, the latter with respect; and the deservedly great influence of Grimm caused subsequent scholars to accept his decision. In 1900 Siegfried called it 'the well-arranged product of a single author'.

In 1903, however, Lincke in *Samaria und seine Propheten* divided the book into two parts. He attributed cc. i-xii. 8 to a writer living in Samaria in the time of the Seleucidae. It was a polemic against the hierarchy at Jerusalem. Ch. xii. 9 to the end is Alexandrian.

In the same year Stevenson, in *Wisdom and the Jewish Apoc. Writings*, a little volume in the Temple Bible Series, offered another division of the book. He agrees very nearly with Eichhorn in making the first part end at xi. 4; but in the remainder of the book he sees three different compositions—viz. (1) cc. xiii-xv, the section on idolatry; (2) xi. 21-xii. 22, the section on the love and mercy of God; (3) the strictly historical part, xi. 5-20, xii. 23-27, xvi-xix.

In 1904 Weber, in Hilgenfeld's *Zeitschrift*, attempted another analysis. He also divided the book into four parts: cc. i-v, the book of eschatology; cc. vi-x, the Book of Wisdom proper; c. xi to the end, the book of the method of retribution; in this last part the chapters on idolatry (xiii-xv) are an insertion. Feldmann, in *Bib. Zeitsch.* 1909, pp. 140-150, criticized and rejected Weber's attempt, scarcely noticing Lincke's work.

Kohler in the *Jewish Encycl.* maintains the composite authorship, apparently following Eichhorn. Toy in the *Ency. Bib. and Ency. Brit.* thinks that the question admits of no certain answer.

The arguments for the unity of the book (some of which are given by Grimm) may be set forth as follows: (1) Use of certain unusual words and expressions throughout the book—e.g. the word μεταλλεύω is used in the same *erroneous* meaning in both parts, iv. 12 and xvi. 25; ἀπόλαμνος, a word which occurs nowhere else in the Greek Bible, is found in v. 20, 22, vi. 5, xi. 10, xii. 9, xviii. 15; ἀνυπόκριτος in v. 18, xviii. 16, nowhere else in the Greek Bible; αἰθῆλος, ii. 16, xv. 9, only twice besides in the Greek Bible; σνγγνωστός, vi. 6, xiii. 8, nowhere else in the Greek Bible. The phrase ἐν ὄψει is found in iii. 4, vii. 9, viii. 11, xiv. 17, xv. 19, but nowhere else in the Greek Bible (but see below); θηρίων θυμὸς, vii. 20, xvi. 5, and λογισμοὶ ἀσύνετοι, i. 5 and xi. 15, both seem to be unique.



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phrases; *πανταδύναμος*, vii. 23, xi. 17, xviii. 15, *γεωδης*, ix. 15, xv. 13, *διέπω*, ix. 3, xii. 15, *διερευνάω*, vi. 3, xiii. 7, occur nowhere else in the Greek Bible; *κακότεχνος*, i. 4, xv. 4, only once besides, 4 Macc. vi. 14. (2) The same extensive vocabulary, the similar use of compound and poetical words, assonances, and the like. (3) The rhythmical structure (see Thackeray, *JTS*, vol. vi, p. 232) throughout the book. (4) The use of philosophic theories in both parts—e.g. in part 1 the Stoic doctrine of the world-soul, in part 2 the Stoic doctrine of the metabolism of the four elements. (5) Omission of proper names in both parts.<sup>1</sup> (6) The occurrence in both parts of the striking conception of the 'world fighting for the righteous', which is found in v. 17, 20, xvi. 17, 24, xviii. 24 (perhaps), and xix. 6. The most formidable argument is the first. Many scholars would feel that the use of *μεταλλεύω* alone decides the question.

The arguments for the composite nature of the book are:—

- (1) The difference in style, presentation, and tone.
- (2) The omission of all reference to Wisdom in xi. 2 to the end, except in one doubtful passage.
- (3) The abandonment of the transcendental view of the Deity.
- (4) The absence of any reference to the doctrine of immortality, except a passing reference in xv. 3.
- (5) Abandonment of parallelism.
- (6) The numerous and striking linguistic differences.

The first five points may be explained away; it may be said that the writer is a philosopher in the first part, a preacher in the second; the sixth point, however, is more troublesome.

The most striking linguistic difference is found in the very different proportions in which certain particles are used<sup>2</sup> in the two parts—e.g. *μέν* is used three times only in the first part, v. 13, vii. 1, 30, and twenty-seven times (according to Swete's text) in the second, xi. 6, 10, xiii. 1, 3, 16, 17, xiv. 2, 8, 19, xv. 9, 17, xvi. 3, 9, 14, 18, 21, xvii. 5, 15, xviii. 1, 3, 4, 7, 16, 17, xix. 5, 10, 14. *δέ* is also unequally distributed, with fifty-two occurrences in part 1, eighty-two in part 2. *ὅρα* occurs seven times in the first part, viz. ii. 19, vi. 9, 21, ix. 2, 10, x. 8, 12, and twenty-one times in part 2—e.g. xi. 16, xii. 2, 7, 8, 13, 22, xiii. 9, 16, xiv. 4, 17, xvi. 3, 11, 18, 19, 22, 23, 26, xviii. 6, 19, xix. 4, 6. *ἀλλά* occurs four times in the first part, vi. 22, viii. 16, x. 8, 13, and seventeen times in part 2, viz. xi. 19, 20, xii. 8, xiii. 2, 6, xiv. 22, 31, xv. 7, 9, 12, xvi. 7, 12, 18, 26, xviii. 20, 22, xix. 15, and in connexion with this *μόνον* is of course more frequent in the second part than in the first. *γάρ* occurs 52 times in the first part, as against 102 in the second; *καί* *γάρ* twice in the first part, twelve times in the second.

In addition to these considerable differences the following smaller differences in the use of particles exist:—

*ἀντί*, xiv. 4, xix. 13.  
*ἐπεὶ*, xiv. 16, 22, xvii. 16.  
*ἐπειδὴ*, xviii. 12, xix. 15.  
*ἔτι*, x. 7, xiii. 6, xiv. 24, xix. 3, 10.

*ὅτε*, ix. 9, xi. 9, 13, xvi. 5, xix. 11, 17.  
*ποτε*, v. 3, xiv. 15, xvi. 18, 19, xviii. 20.  
*τότε*, v. 1, xi. 8, xiv. 15, xvi. 25, xviii. 17, 20.  
*πῶς*, v. 5, vi. 22, xi. 8, 9, 25, xiii. 9, xvi. 4, xix. 10.  
*πάλιν*, x. 4, xiii. 8, xiv. 1, xvi. 23, xix. 6.  
*ἀνάπαυ*, xix. 21.

This gives seven of these particles in part 1 to thirty-six in part 2.

The distribution of some other words is worthy of notice. The following occur only in the first part:—

*ἀρετή*, iv. 1, v. 13, viii. 7.  
*παιδεία*, i. 5, ii. 12, iii. 11, vi. 17, vii. 14.  
*τρίβοι*, in a metaphorical sense, ii. 15, v. 7, vi. 16, ix. 18, x. 10 (in xiv. 3 the singular is used in a literal sense).  
*ἐνθυμέομαι*, iii. 14, vi. 15, vii. 15, ix. 13.  
*ἔσχατος*, ii. 16, iii. 17, iv. 19.  
*συνήγη*, iii. 9, vi. 1, ix. 11.  
*σύνεσις*, iv. 11, ix. 5.

*σημεῖον*, v. 11, 13, viii. 8, x. 16.  
*κινέω*, v. 11.  
*κίνησις*, ii. 2, vii. 24.  
*καθηκός*, vii. 24.  
*ἐκάνητος* is in both parts, vii. 22 applied to Wisdom, xiii. 11 applied to a tree, nowhere else in the Greek Bible.  
*πυροδένει*, i. 8, ii. 7, v. 14, vi. 22, x. 8.

*πολύς* is evenly distributed, but the compounds (seven) are all in part 1: *πολυτελής* ii. 7,

<sup>1</sup> The singularity of this largely disappears when we notice that Philo often omits the names of historical characters: see *De Vita Mosi*, Bk. i. c. 42 (Caleb and Joshua), 43 (Edom), 59 (Reuben and Gad); Bk. ii. c. 10 (Lot); Bk. iii. cc. 21 and 38 (Korah, Dathan, and Abiram).

<sup>2</sup> It must be stated that the proportion of matter in the two parts is 11½ to 13, or 23 to 26: the second part may be taken as one-eighth longer than the first: but in considering the particles it should be noticed that there are in B 556 stichoi in part 1, to 568 in part 2.

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παλιγγύως iv. 3, πολυετής iv. 16, πολυμερής vii. 22, πολυπειρία viii. 8, παλιφρονής ix. 15, παλαχάριος ii. 10, iv. 8.

The following words occur in the second part only:—

ἁμαρτάνω, xi. 16, xii. 2, 11, xiv. 31, xv. 2, 13.  
ἀρνόμαι, xii. 27, xvi. 16, xvii. 10.  
δέ, *nécessé est*, xii. 19, xv. 12, xvi. 4, 28.  
ἐπιταγή, xiv. 16, xviii. 16, xix. 6.

ἔρχω, xi. 21, xiii. 1, 9, xv. 16, xvi. 20, xix. 20.  
μεγαλίω, xix. 22, μέγας, xi. 21, xiv. 22, μέγα-  
λωση, xviii. 24.  
τρέχει, xi. 11, xiv. 15.

The following differences occur in the two parts:—

ἐπισκοπή, ii. 20, iii. 7, 9, 13, iv. 15, all in a favourable sense; xiv. 11, xix. 15, in an unfavourable sense (pointed out first by Weber).

καὶ γὰρ, iv. 4, ix. 6; καὶ γὰρ εἰν, xv. 2.

ἴδιος occurs eleven or twelve times: two of these occurrences being in part 1, the remaining nine or ten in part 2. This difference could hardly be connected with difference in subject-matter.

The word ὅψις occurs three times in the first part, eight times in the second. In the first part it is used in a metaphorical sense in the phrase *ἐν ὅψει*: in the second, seven times literally, the eighth being doubtful. This should be considered with the similar cases of ἐπισκοπή and τρέβος.

The distribution of βίος and ζωή is worth noticing. βίος occurs ten times in the first part and five times in the second, ζωή once in the first part and six times in the second. ἐξετάζω and ἐτάζω and its derivatives five times in the first part, once in the second; κολάζω is a favourite word in part 2, eleven times as against once in part 1. This last, no doubt, is due to difference of subject-matter. The same reason holds good for σοφία, which occurs twenty-eight times in part 1 and twice in part 2.

The use of compound words is considerable in both parts, but there are differences to be observed. Of compounds of ἐπί there are nineteen in part 1 as against forty in part 2; compounds of πρό have nine instances in part 1 as against twenty-two in part 2; πρὸς seven in part 1 as against twenty in part 2; and ὑπό five in part 1 as against twenty-five in part 2. Compounds of κατά are twenty-one in part 1 to thirty-four in part 2, of μετά seven in part 1 to twelve in part 2. This gives sixty-eight of these compounds in part 1 to 153 in part 2. If the cumulative argument is worth anything, it should certainly be considered in deciding what weight should be assigned to these linguistic differences.

The difference in style, presentation, and tone between the two parts is undeniable. In style, as Eichhorn says, 'the first part is appropriate and concise, the second inappropriate, diffuse, exaggerated, and bombastic' (p. 145); though a few passages in part 2 may escape this censure.

With the exception of iv. 15-17, where the text is in disorder, there are no specially difficult or doubtful passages in the first part, while there are serious difficulties in xii. 5, 24, xv. 17 c, 18 b, 19 a, xvii. 6, 13, and xviii. 1, 2. It is also worth noting that the difference in style between the two parts led Siegfried, who accepts the unity of the book, to print his translation from xii. 19 to the end in prose. The presentation in the first part is varied: we have the author's own words, the speech of the apostates, Solomon's address and his prayer; part 2 is one continuous apostrophe to the Deity. In tone the second part is pervaded by a narrow and bitter Jewish spirit, which is markedly absent from part 1.

In answer to this latter point, it may be said that part 1 deals with Jews only; that there was no opportunity of displaying narrow national feeling towards the Gentiles. It must then be asked what, on the supposition of its unity, was the object of the second part of the book? how does it fit in with the object of the first part? The first part is a polemic against the apostate Jews of Alexandria, and an appeal to them, by the example of the wise king, to return to the worship of Jehovah. But this object could hardly be helped forward by the contents of part 2. The teaching that by what things a man sins, by these he is punished, appears to be pointless with regard to the sins of the apostates. It is very far-fetched on the part of Bois to find this teaching in iii. 10. Again, these apostates who had adopted Greek or Epicurean views of life were in no danger of falling into idolatry; they could scoff at the worshippers of a 'rotten piece of wood' as well as the author. The only way in which the appeal to history could be thought to influence them would be by pointing out that in plaguing the Egyptians and delivering Israel, Jehovah had shown Himself to be the true God, and that the Egyptians themselves had confessed Him to be so; but in view of the sceptical and scoffing attitude of the apostates towards the miraculous, as recorded by Philo (see end of note on i. 1), such an appeal could have no effect. It might uphold the courage of the faithful; it could have no effect on unbelievers except to make them scoff the more.



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The difference in the view of the action of the Deity adopted in the two parts (pointed out in the note on xi. 2) is seen most plainly in two parallel passages, where the very functions assigned to Wisdom in part 1 are assigned directly to God in part 2. In vii. 22 Wisdom is *πάντων τεχνίτης*, in viii. 6 *τῶν ὄντων . . . τεχνίτης*, while in xiii. 1 God Himself is called *τεχνίτης*. In viii. 1 it is said of Wisdom *διοικεῖ τὰ πάντα*, in xv. 1 God is addressed directly as *διοικῶν τὰ πάντα*. Moreover, when Heinisch (p. 47) affirms the God of the Book of Wisdom to be the living personal and almighty God of Israel, the passages he quotes in support of this position are drawn entirely from the second part of the book. He adduces xii. 18, xi. 17, 23, xvi. 13, 15, xi. 22, xiii. 1-7. This testimony is all the more valuable as it is given quite unwittingly. It shows plainly what part of the book a writer must resort to in order to find the action of the Deity portrayed in Jewish fashion.

In truth there are considerable difficulties in the way of accepting the unity of authorship which have not been met by its upholders. If we could assume that the writer of the second part had studied the first part carefully and wished to write a supplement to it, both resemblances and differences could be accounted for.

The proofs adduced by Thackeray (*JTS*, vi, pp. 232 ff.) and approved by Blass seem to show that the writer of the second part endeavoured to keep up the poetical form of the first: for this reason, although the second part is very prosaic, it has been thought well to keep the verse form of the Revised Version throughout.

### § 7. AUTHORSHIP AND LANGUAGE.

The author of the book is generally assumed to be an Alexandrian Jew. But the opinion of scholars is not unanimous on the point. Bretschneider considered the first section, i-vi. 8, to have been written by a Palestinian Jew. Grimm in 1833 wrote a thesis entitled 'de Sap. libri indole Alexandrina perperam asserta', but he withdrew from this position in his great commentary of 1860, where the Alexandrian origin of the book is maintained. Grimm's later position was unanimously accepted till the appearance of Prof. Margoliouth's article in *JRAS*, 1890, entitled 'Was the Book of Wisdom written in Hebrew?'<sup>1</sup> He there maintains that 'the writer shows no acquaintance with Egypt beyond what he might have got from the Bible, and that he shows a familiarity with the interpretation of the Midrash which points to the Palestinian School'. This last clause can refer to the second part only, cc. xi-xix.

In 1903 Lincke, while accepting Greek as the original language, maintained that cc. i-xii were written in Palestine, and Bousset in *Die Religion des Judenthums* (1906), p. 212, writes, 'The early chapters of the Wisdom of Solomon are probably of Palestinian origin.' (He thus admits the composite authorship; see also p. 501, where he speaks of the second and third parts of the book.)

It seems difficult to accept the proposition that the book was written in Hebrew in face of the numerous instances where dependence on LXX seems undeniable, e.g.:-

ii. 12 ἐνδρεῖσθωμεν δὲ τὸν δίκαιον, ὅτι δύσχωρητος ἡμῖν ἐστίν. Isa. iii. 10 δῆσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον ὅτι δύσχωρητος ἡμῖν ἐστί. These passages have only to be put side by side to show the dependence of one upon the other (the fact that the passage from Isaiah is corrupt in the present Hebrew text, which should doubtless read אֲשֶׁר בִּי צָדִיק, does not enter into consideration here; though it shows how the LXX got δῆσωμεν).

xi. 4 καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου ἕδωρ. Deut. viii. 15 τὸν ἐξαγαγόντος σοι ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου πηγὴν ὕδατος. Here the fact that ἀκροτόμος, 'steep', is an incorrect translation of שֶׁלֶטֶח, 'flint', makes for an undoubted connexion between the two passages.

xi. 22 ὅτι ὡς ῥοπή ἐκ πλαστήγγων ὁλος ὁ κόσμος ἐναντίον σου. Isa. xl. 15 πάντα τὰ ἔθνη . . . ὡς ῥοπή ξυγοῦ ἐλογίσθησαν. The thought is identical, and the writer could not have got it from the Hebrew, which has 'dust of the balance'.

xv. 7 and Isa. xlii. 20 both refer to the idolater. The Hebrew has 'he feedeth on ashes, a heart deceived hath misled him'. The LXX divided the words in the Hebrew text wrongly and translated σποδὸς ἢ καρδία αὐτοῦ. The writer of Wisdom followed this and wrote σποδὸς ἢ καρδία αὐτοῦ.

xvi. 22 πῦρ φλεγόμενον ἐν τῇ χαλάζῃ. Exod. ix. 24 τὸ πῦρ φλογίζον ἐν τῇ χαλάζῃ. The LXX translator was perhaps puzzled at the meaning to be assigned to the Hebrew word דָּלָדָל, 'darting hither and thither'; at any rate he did not translate it literally, but put another word which would make sense: the writer of Wisdom borrowed directly from the LXX.

These examples seem to make it plain that Pseudo-Sol. did not use the Hebrew Bible and that he drew his quotations directly from the LXX.

The following resemblances also show the writer's acquaintance with LXX:

iii. 11 σοφίαν γὰρ καὶ παιδείαν ὁ ἐξουθενῶν ταλαίπωρος. Prov. i. 7 σοφίαν δὲ καὶ παιδείαν ἀσεβεὺς ἐξουθενῶσιν.

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Margoliouth's thesis was contested by Freudenthal in an article entitled 'What is the Original Language of the Wisdom of Solomon?' *JQR*, iii. 722-53.

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vi. 12 (if genuine) καὶ εὐρίσκειται ἐπὶ τῶν ζητούντων αὐτήν. Prov. viii. 17 οὐδὲ ἐπὶ ζητούντες εὐρίσκειται.  
vi. 14 παρέδρον γὰρ εὐρίσκει τῶν πωλῶν αὐτοῦ. Prov. i. 21 ἐπὶ δὲ πύλαις θανάτων παρέδρου.  
Compare also v. 17 with Isa. lix. 17, quoted below, p. 527. See also notes on vi. 7, xii. 26, and xiv. 8.

Again, throughout the book, compound words abound—a mark of Alexandrian Greek. Swete, *Introd. to O.T. in Greek*, p. 311, gives over fifty from the first six chapters.

Further, the knowledge of Greek philosophy displayed in the book speaks for its Alexandrian origin; though this is not absolutely decisive, as Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are supposed by some scholars to show traces of Greek philosophical influence. Moreover, the doctrine of immortality in all probability, and the doctrine of the transcendence of God certainly, are Alexandrian, not Palestinian. Finally, it seems likely that iii. 9 is borrowed from the Greek translation of Enoch. As we cannot imagine a Palestinian writer borrowing from the Greek translation of a book originally written in Hebrew, the borrowing must have taken place outside Palestine, and the only possible alternative seems to be Alexandria.

But wherever the book originated the writer is unknown. In part 1 he plainly speaks in the name of Solomon, though the name itself is not mentioned, any more than it is in Ecclesiastes (where, according to McNeile, i. 1 is no part of the original text). The speaker is said to be of royal birth (vii. 5); he prays for wisdom (viii. 21), and says 'thou hast chosen me to be a king' (ix. 7). This is, of course, a literary device and would deceive no one. But it made the book anonymous, and anonymous it still remains.

The earliest record of any conjecture as to its authorship is given by Jerome, who says that some of the ancient writers affirm the author to be Philo. This may also have been the opinion of the writer of the document known as the Muratorian Canon. An interesting suggestion was made by Tregelles that in the Muratorian Canon, p. 11 a, lines 7 and 8, where the Latin has 'Sapientia ab amicis Salomonis in honorem ipsius scripta', there may have originally stood ἐπὶ τοῦ φιλοῦ instead of ἐπὶ τοῦ φιλῶν. But though Jerome's testimony is interesting as showing that at an early period many saw the impossibility of ascribing the book to Solomon as Origen also did (*Contra Cels.* v. 29), the authorship of Philo does not recommend itself to modern scholars. The Philonian doctrine of the Logos, the pronounced dualism which said σῶμα = σῆμα, and almost certainly the doctrine of ideas, are all absent from Wisdom; while the personality of the devil is accepted as a fact in Wisdom, whereas in Philo it is allegorized into pleasure.

The suggestion that Apollon was the author (Noach, Plumptre) is generally rejected.

Like many other books in the Canon, both Hebrew and Greek, its authorship must remain unknown.

### § 8. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER BOOKS IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

The relationship of the Book of Wisdom to Ecclesiastes is generally admitted. The first section of Wisdom might be said to be a polemic against the words of Eccles. vii. 15, 'There is a righteous man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his evil doing.' That one book could be written in answer to another (both now sacred) is seen from Ecclesiastes itself, which was doubtless written in antagonism to the view propounded by Ezekiel and his followers that righteousness and unrighteousness were both rewarded in this life, a view which the author of Job also contests. Ruth, also, was probably written as a protest against the endeavours of Ezra and Nehemiah to enforce the Deuteronomic law (xxiii. 3) against mixed marriages. The first part of Wisdom, therefore, may have been written to oppose the despairing philosophy of Ecclesiastes and the opinions and practices of the apostates, who may have quoted it to support their views. The most striking passages, a full list of which is given in Grimm, p. 30, and McNeile, p. 38, are the following:—

Wisd. ii. 1, 'Short and sorrowful is our life.' Eccles. ii. 23, 'All his days are but sorrow, and his labour is grief.'

Wisd. ii. 2, 'By mere chance (αἰτοῦσθεῖως) were we born.' Eccles. iii. 19, 'The sons of men are a chance' (R.V. margin).

Wisd. ii. 4, 'Our name shall be forgotten and no one shall remember our works.' Eccles. i. 11, 'There is no remembrance of the former generations.' Eccles. ii. 16, 'For of a wise man, as of a fool, there is no remembrance for ever.' Eccles. ix. 5, 'The memory of them (i. e. the dead) is forgotten.'

Wisd. ii. 6-10 and Eccles. ix. 7-9 show a great similarity, the difference being only in tone. The tone of the apostates' words in Wisdom is defiant, that of Ecclesiastes is sad: 'Go eat thy bread in gladness, and drink thy wine with a cheerful heart. . . . At all times let thy garments be white, and let not oil on thy head be lacking. Enjoy life with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of thy transient life, which he hath given



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thee under the sun; for that is thy portion in life. . . . 'There is no work nor device nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol, whither thou goest.'

(The phrase 'this is our portion', *Wisd.* ii. 9c, is probably an echo of the words 'this is his or thy portion', which recur in *Eccles.* iii. 22, v. 18, ix. 9.)

Hitzig in his edition of *Ecclesiastes* (1847) refused to admit any connexion between the two books. According to Grimm, Hitzig did not give any reasons for his assertion. Mr. Gregg, in *CBS*, also rejects the idea of any connexion, and gives reasons, but they do not seem convincing. It is true that Epicureanism and Sadduceism did not require *Ecclesiastes* to appeal to. The Sadducees in 1 *Enoch* cii. 6 say, 'As we die so die the righteous, and what benefit do they reap for their deeds? Behold, even as we, so do they die in grief and darkness, and what have they more than we? from henceforth we are equal.' These are the very same sentiments as those found in the speech of the apostates in *Wisdom* ii. Sadduceism was a disease of the time, and the author of the first part of *Wisdom* combated it. That he would have opposed it had *Ecclesiastes* never been written is quite likely, but for all that the form of *Wisdom* ii. 6-10 probably owes something to *Ecclesiastes* ix. 7-9.

The influence of the Book of *Wisdom* upon the New Testament has been differently estimated. Eichhorn (p. 202) first pointed out resemblances in *Romans* and *Ephesians*, but Grimm declined to admit any direct connexion even in the case of *Wisd.* xv. 7 and *Rom.* ix. 21. Other scholars, however, maintain a direct connexion not only with St. Paul but with the Gospel of St. John, the Epistle of St. James, *Hebrews*, and the *Apocalypse*.

In his commentary Grimm gives, on p. 36, a large number of passages where connexion between *Wisdom* and the New Testament was affirmed by Nachtigal, Stier, and others; but all earlier investigations with regard to St. Paul's use of the book have been superseded by that of Grafe, *Das Verhältniss der Paulinischen Schriften zur Sapientia Salomonis*, Theol. Abhandl. in honour of Weizsäcker, 1892, pp. 253-86.

Seeing that St. Paul nowhere quotes *Wisdom* by name, it is almost impossible to adduce a proof of connexion which will satisfy everybody; a parallel in expression or thought may be only a coincidence or go back to a common source. Take, for instance, passages that would occur to any one who knows both books, *Rom.* i. 20 and *Wisd.* xiii. 1, where the possibility of knowing God through His works is affirmed: here both writers might be independently using a well-known argument of the Stoics. The argument of course is cumulative: one or two resemblances would be of no value for proving connexion; but when in two short books like *Wisdom* and *Romans* a large number of parallelisms are found (Sanday and Headlam, p. 51, quote ten verses from the first chapter of *Romans* which have points of resemblance to *Wisdom*) it seems perverse to deny connexion. The most striking parallelism between *Wisdom* and *Romans* is found in the passages where St. Paul expounds his doctrine of predestination.

In *Wisd.* xii. 12 ff. and *Rom.* ix. 21-3 Grafe (p. 265) traces three thoughts:—

(1) The idea of the infinite power of God, which admittedly by itself proves nothing. *Wisd.* xii. 12; *Rom.* ix. 19-23.

(2) In the same context, however, both writers dwell upon the fact of God being longsuffering towards His enemies although He knows it will be unavailing. *Wisd.* xii. 8-10, 11a, 20a; *Rom.* ix. 22.

(3) In the same context also is found a contrast between the enemies and the sons of God in relation to their respective destinies. *Wisd.* xii. 20-2; *Rom.* ix. 22, 23.

The point to be noticed is that these three ideas occur in close connexion both in *Wisdom* and *Romans*.

In addition to the parallelism of thought there are also resemblances in language.

*Wisd.* xii. 12.

*Rom.* ix. 19, 20.

<p>τίς γὰρ ἐρεῖ τί ἐποίησας; ἢ τίς ἀντιστήσεται τῷ κρίματι σου;</p>	<p>μὴ ἐρεῖ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι· τί με ἐποίησας οὕτως τῷ γὰρ βουλήματι αὐτοῦ τίς ἀνθέστηκεν;</p>
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Again, there is the parallel between *Wisd.* xv. 7 and *Rom.* ix. 21.

Here St. Paul uses in O.T. fashion the image of the potter and the clay as an illustration of God's dealings with man, but in addition to this he introduces the thought which is not found in the O.T. of the potter making out of the same clay some vessels for noble and others for ignoble purposes. The latter point is found only in *Romans* and *Wisdom*. But even here Grimm will not admit direct connexion. He thinks that both writers may have independently hit upon the same illustration. Here Grimm seems to be quite alone; all other expositors recognize the connexion.

Grafe was the first to point out in full the connexion between St. Paul's views on idolatry and

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those expressed in Wisdom, especially in regard to the lighter judgement passed on the more refined form of idolatry found in the worshippers of natural phenomena.

Taking στοιχεῖα<sup>1</sup> in Gal. iv. 3 as referring to the heavenly bodies, Grafe points out the lenient judgement passed by St. Paul here, and compares the lenient judgement on the same kind of worship in Wisd. xiii. 6. Against the grosser forms of idolatry St. Paul is scathingly severe, and the same attitude is found in Wisdom.

Again, after discussing the nature and folly of idol worship, both the writer of Wisdom and St. Paul dwell upon the immorality which they affirm to be the direct result of idolatry. Both give a long catalogue of vices, St. Paul 24, Wisdom 14, which naturally tally in several points.

Another similarity worth noticing is that between the striking and original thought in xi. 23 *b* that God's longsuffering is meant to lead sinners to repentance, and Rom. ii. 4 'not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.'

An interesting comparison between Wisd. ix. 15 and 2 Cor. v. 1 ff. is pointed out by E. Pfeleiderer (p. 317 note). He there shows the similarity both of thought and language. With reference to this, Otto Pfeleiderer remarks (*Prim. Christianity*, vol. i. p. 454): 'It is true that 2 Cor. v. 1-5 has such close affinities with Wisd. ix. 15 that the conjecture is legitimate that this passage may have hovered before his (St. Paul's) mind and perhaps even suggested the choice of his words. But this close affinity by no means proves a direct borrowing of the Pauline doctrine from the Book of Wisdom.'

The connexion of Wisd. v. 17 ff. with Eph. vi. 11 ff. is denied by Grimm on the ground that Isa. lix. 17 is the source of both. The passages are as follows:

Isa. lix. 17.	Wisd. v. 17 ff.	Eph. vi. 11.
καὶ ἐνδύσῃτο δικαιοσύνην ὡς θώρακα, καὶ περιέβητο περικεφαλαίαν σωτηρίου ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς.	λήψεται πανοπλίαν τὸν ζήλον αὐτοῦ . . . ἐνδύσεται θώρακα δικαιοσύνης καὶ περιβήσεται κράνη κρίσιν ἀντιπύκτων· λήψεται ἰσχύϊα . . . ὅξυνεῖ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄργου εἰς ῥομφαίαν.	ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ . . . ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν θώρακα δικαιοσύνης . . . ἀναλαβόντες τὸν θυρεὸν τῆς πίστεως . . . καὶ τὴν περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου δέξασθε καὶ τὴν μάχαιραν·

The decisive point for those who accept direct connexion is the fact that *πανοπλία* occurs in both Wisdom and St. Paul, but not in Isaiah: also 'shield' and 'sword' are in Wisdom and St. Paul, but not in Isaiah. On the other hand, *περικεφαλαίαν σωτηρίου* in Isaiah corresponds to *περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου* in St. Paul.

The fact that St. Paul knew and used the Book of Wisdom makes it far easier to admit its influence on other parts of the New Testament. The parallels to St. John and St. James adduced by other scholars and rejected by Grimm have now more to be said for them. Mr. Gregg quotes a large number of parallels to St. John, the most interesting being 'This is life eternal, that they should know thee' (St. John xvii. 3) and Wisd. xv. 3. Prof. J. B. Mayor in his commentary on St. James, p. lxxv, gives twelve passages from Wisdom, echoes of which may be found in the epistle.

### § 9. THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE BOOK.

The theology of the Book of Wisdom is Alexandrine, a combination of Jewish religion with Greek philosophy.

The first part, cc. i-xi. 1, is more Greek than Jewish, and in nothing is this shown more clearly than in the idea of God presented by the two parts respectively. The idea of God in part 1 is that of Greek philosophy—a transcendent God who has no immediate contact with the world. It is true that in the later parts of the O.T. the writers had largely abandoned the conception of Jahveh as a God who had direct dealings with mankind. The theophanies which took place under the guise of the 'Angel of Jahveh' disappear, and in Daniel, for instance, the angel Gabriel gives to the seer the revelation which would have been given in earlier times by the 'Angel of Jahveh', i.e. by Jahveh Himself. God gradually became thought of as more and more remote, though even in Daniel the scene where the Ancient of Days sits in judgement on the nations shows that God could still be thought of as having immediate dealings with mankind. In Wisdom, however, in cc. i-x, we find that the author conceives God to be so remote, that He performs His will by means of an intermediary, whom He sends forth into the world (ix. 10). This intermediary is Wisdom, and possesses all the attributes of Deity. She is omnipotent (vii. 27), omniscient (viii. 8 and ix. 11), and puts these attributes into action: she administers all things well (viii. 1). At the Creation Wisdom stood by God and chose His works: the subsequent administration of the world was committed to her, since her relationship to God at the Creation ensured to her complete knowledge

<sup>1</sup> That R. V. here, following Lightfoot, must be given up, see the article 'Elements' in *Hastings' DB.*



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of His commands (ix. 9). If God knows all things, it is because Wisdom takes her report to Him (i. 9-10). If for a moment it is said that God gave Solomon knowledge of things that are (vii. 17), it is immediately corrected by the statement, 'For she that is the artificer of all things taught me, even Wisdom' (vii. 21). In ix. 1 the direct action of God is not spoken of *simpliciter*; it is softened by the expressions 'word' and 'wisdom'—'who madest all things by thy word, and by thy wisdom formedst man.'

It must be admitted that the passages in which the writer speaks of the author of Creation are not at first sight consistent. We seem to have three views: (1) God as Creator, i. 14, vi. 7, ix. 1, ix. 9; (2) God as Creator while Wisdom is present and exercises the prerogative of choice, viii. 4, ix. 9; (3) Wisdom as creator, vii. 22, viii. 5 and 6, and by implication in vii. 23 (all-powerful), and vii. 27 (hath power to do all things). The only possible way of reconciling these utterances is to take (3) as representing the philosophic view of the writer, while in (1) God is spoken of as Creator on the principle that 'qui facit per alium facit per se'. No. 2 may represent the means by which the writer endeavoured to reconcile the biblical with his philosophic view of Creation. That the view expressed in vii. 22 and viii. 5 and 6 was deliberately adopted by the writer may be inferred by comparing vii. 22 with vii. 19, where he corrects an expression which might have been taken as attributing unmediated action to God. Yet it would appear that the writer felt unwilling to deny that man can have direct access to God. Solomon's prayer in c. ix presupposes that God hears man directly, and the belief in God as real, and not as a philosophical abstraction—to say nothing of the influence of the psalmists—caused the author, as it did Origen, to believe in direct access to God in prayer. This, it may be said, is inconsistent with a strictly philosophical belief in the abstract transcendence of God as *ἐπέκεινα νοῦ καὶ οὐρανοῦ*, but it is an inconsistency our author shares in good company. On the other hand, the doctrine of the transcendence of God entirely disappears in part 2, where He is repeatedly spoken of as acting directly on the world (see note on xi. 2).

It is generally agreed that 'Wisdom' is not a 'person', i.e. a being capable of exercising understanding and will—a self-determining intelligence. What, then, is it? Is it an attribute of God personified? Personification is difficult to us: it is a device of the poet; but to the Oriental mind it came easily enough. The O. T. contains numerous instances of the personification of the nation: Rachel is pictured as weeping for her children: 'Ephraim hath grey hairs upon him, and he knoweth it not,' says Hosea; the nation is personified as the suffering servant in 2 Isaiah. The personification of an attribute or power would naturally come later. We perhaps see the first beginnings of it in 2 Isaiah (see the commentators on lxxiii. 10) with respect to the Spirit of God. The belief in subordinate heavenly powers present at Creation (Gen. i. 26, Job xxxviii. 7) would help to give Wisdom its position in Prov. viii and Sir. xxiv; though probably without Greek influence Wisdom would never have been personified as it is there (Siegfried, *Hastings' DB*, iv, p. 925). In answering the question whether our author regarded Wisdom as personal or impersonal, we must remember that to the ancients, to whom even the stars were persons, the modern idea of personality was quite foreign, and that the same question with regard to the Logos of Philo cannot be satisfactorily answered (Caird, vol. ii, *Evol. of Theol.*, p. 200). But Philo did answer a somewhat similar question—was the Logos created or uncreated? 'The Logos, he declares, is neither uncreated like God nor created like us; but he is at equal distance between the extremes' (Caird, p. 202). 'The Logos is not unbegotten as God.' 'On the other hand it is not begotten as man' (Drummond, *Philo*, ii. 192). We shall perhaps not be far wrong if we attribute the same idea to our author with regard to the personality of Wisdom.

God created the world by means of Wisdom, and as Wisdom is *φύλακθρωπος*, i. 6, vii. 23, the motive of Creation, though not explicitly stated, can be assumed to be God's love to man. This is expressed in both parts of the book, but with far greater emphasis on His love in part 2. 'It is he that made both small and great, and alike he taketh thought (*προνοεῖ*) for all' (vi. 7). 'But thou sparest all things, O Sovereign Lord, thou lover of souls' (xi. 26). But though there is more stress placed on love in the second part, in part 1 God assigns to man a higher destiny. In ii. 23 it is said, 'He made him an image of his own being,' while in xv. 11 He simply bestows on man the gift of life: accordingly, in part 1, a higher standard is demanded from man if he is to be worthy of His love: 'For nothing doth God love save him that dwelleth with Wisdom,' vii. 28; while in part 2 no such high demand is made; mere existence ensures God's love: 'For thou lovest all things that are, and abhorrest none of the things that thou didst make,' xi. 24. The Creator made man in His love, bestowed upon him the gift of likeness to Himself. From this being He looks for conduct worthy of his privileges, and therefore demands wisdom and righteousness (i. 6-8). In accordance with this demand Justice punishes those that sin (i. 8), while the righteous are rewarded with the 'wages of holiness' and the 'prize for blameless souls' (ii. 22). The reward is life, the punishment is death. But it is spiritual life, not so much upon earth—though the writer recog-

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nizes that as is seen from the blessings of Wisdom recounted in cc. vi and vii—as in the future; a blessed immortality with God entered upon immediately after death.

It is doubtful, however, whether the writer had realized that this belief involved the abandonment of the traditional Jewish eschatology. It certainly seems as though he could not give up the old Jewish idea of a visible triumph of the righteous over their enemies. The day of judgement also is mentioned more than once (iii. 18, iv. 20), and this is inconsistent with the belief that the soul immediately after death receives its full reward, happiness or misery, life or death. Again, ch. iii. 7 ff. clearly reflects ideas of a distinctly Jewish type. The righteous shall 'run to and fro like sparks amongst the stubble'. Here we seem to have an echo of the judgement by the sword inaugurating the Messianic Kingdom: then it is said, 'they shall judge nations and have dominion over peoples', indicating a belief in a Messianic Kingdom which would naturally succeed the judgement. In v. 17, however, the conception is somewhat different. There it is Jehovah Himself who is to overthrow the ungodly by means of the forces of nature, while the spirits of the righteous are safe in His keeping. Probably iv. 18 b ff. is also equivalent to this.

With regard then to the future destiny of the righteous we must ask, what did the writer contemplate for them? The alternatives are (1) an everlasting Messianic Kingdom on earth, (2) a temporary Messianic Kingdom with heaven afterwards, or (3) immortality immediately after death—a purely Greek idea. If the first alternative is taken, he must have considered that the righteous were to descend from heaven at the day of judgement or decision and take up their position as rulers in an everlasting Messianic Kingdom. The mournful retrospect of the ungodly is said to take place when their sins are reckoned up, that is, on the day of decision. After this day of decision there will come for the righteous the time of their triumph, which is described in iii. 7. Against this arrangement of events Grimm affirms that in no known Jewish system of eschatology does this descent of spirits with (it is to be presumed) heavenly bodies take place: though Charles's translation of 1 Enoch cviii. 12 should be considered, 'And I will bring clad in shining light those who have loved my holy name, and I will seat each on the throne of his honour.' And it may be urged that a writer who could in these chapters propound four novel beliefs might have entertained a fifth.

The second alternative of a temporary Messianic Kingdom is found in 1 Enoch xci-civ, a book that has many points of contact with Wisd. i-x. There we find the wicked oppressing the righteous, encouragement given to the suffering righteous by the promise of reward in the next world: after their death their souls are guarded by angels: a temporary Messianic Kingdom comes into existence at the appointed time: at the close of this Messianic Kingdom the last judgement takes place, and all the righteous, including those whose souls had been kept in safety, enjoy everlasting life in heaven (see Charles's 1 Enoch<sup>2</sup>, pp. 219-23). Wisd. iii. 7 deviates from this scheme, it is true, but v. 17 does not, nor perhaps iv. 18 b ff. Enoch makes it plain that the punishment of the unrighteous in the Messianic Kingdom is not effected by means of the righteous who have died: their souls are still in the keeping of angels; while in Wisd. iii. 7 it is the very same righteous who have suffered who are to 'run to and fro like sparks in the stubble', i. e. to consume their enemies. But in v. 17 Jehovah Himself overthrows the ungodly, the righteous being covered by His Hand. Thus iii. 7 fits in with the first alternative, v. 17 with the second.

The comparison of these different schemes of eschatology with Wisdom forces one to the belief that the writer simply added the idea of the immortality of the soul immediately after death to one or other of the current forms of Jewish eschatology, and did not, or rather could not, make them consistent. It is perhaps doubtful whether he felt the difficulty. Indeed, a much greater Alexandrian, Philo, found it impossible to have a consistent eschatology. He accepted the idea of a Messianic Kingdom though it was entirely 'foreign to his system' (Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 260): and with regard to a greater than either—St. Paul—we are told that it is impossible to get a systematic scheme of eschatology out of his writings (Stevens, *Theol. of New Test.*, p. 482).<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, it is no doubt just possible that the writer adopted a purely Greek view of immortality: that iii. 7 ff., iv. 18 b ff., and v. 17 ff. are survivals of a former method of thinking which he had discarded, traces of which, however, remain in his language: but the expressions used seem to be too forcible for this explanation to hold good.

But the belief in the future blessedness of the righteous cannot do away with the perplexing fact that at present they suffer, and suffer undeservedly. Death, and even premature death, seems to be their portion. How is this to be explained? This brings us to the discussion of the problem of undeserved suffering and the solution offered by the writer.

In the greater part of the Old Testament the problem of undeserved suffering does not appear.

<sup>1</sup> The reason in the last case is obviously that St. Paul's eschatological views advanced with his own spiritual experience and development.—General Editor.



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Affliction is punishment, and the punishment is retributive. In Amos there is a hint given that punishment may be disciplinary and remedial. The Israelites have been punished, 'Yet ye have not returned unto me.' In one solitary place in Prov. iii. 12, 'Whom the Lord loveth he reproveth,' and in Job v. 17, 'Happy is the man whom God reproveth,' this idea recurs; in the Elihu speeches also (Job xxxv. 15 and xxxvi. 8) suffering is regarded as disciplinary and remedial; but the problem of undeserved suffering which gave rise to the book is apparently abandoned as insoluble. How great the perplexity continued to be is seen from the desperate argument in 2 Macc. vi. 12-17. There the writer says that the afflictions which came upon the Jews 'were not for the destruction but for the chastening of our race', and are 'a sign of great beneficence', while the reason of the heathen escaping such afflictions is that they may be punished 'when they have attained unto the full measure of their sins'.

In the first part of Wisdom a solution of the problem is offered in the theory that suffering is meant to test the righteous and prove them worthy of immortality and communion with God. 'As gold in the furnace, he proved them' (iii. 6). This corresponds to the conception in 1 Enoch cviii. 9: 'The righteous were much tried by the Lord and their spirits were found pure.' This world is not all: there is recompense and reward in the future. This belief may be said to be consoling, though it cannot be taken as a complete solution of the difficulty, which is perhaps to be found in the deeper thought suggested in Isa. liii. But even if the solution attempted is not quite satisfactory, the problem of the undeserved suffering of the righteous is fairly faced and an endeavour made to answer it. They will eventually be rewarded with life, while the wicked are punished with death.

The meaning of the word 'death', as used in part 1, is not at first sight apparent. Does it mean physical death only, or physical death in the first place and spiritual death afterwards? Or does the author always use it to denote spiritual death? He says 'God made not death; . . . for he created all things that they might have being: and all the created things of the world are serviceable to life, and there is no poison of destruction in them' (i. 13 ff.). From this it follows that our author, in accordance with ideas found in other writers (1 Enoch lxix. 11), probably held that death did not belong to the original purpose of Creation and that man would have been immortal if Adam had not sinned. This conclusion seems to follow also from ii. 23, 'God created man for incorruption, and made him an image of his own being,' i.e. immortal. 'By the envy of the devil death entered into the world, and those who belong to him experience it.' But what of those who do not belong to him? Do not they experience death? No, says our author; they only seem to die (iii. 2). The fact of physical death is passed over and attention directed solely to spiritual death. Other writers—St. Paul, for instance—did not pass over physical death in this way; they accounted for it by saying that physical death came upon all men, good and bad, on account of Adam's transgression. We may suppose that our author would have accepted this theory: it is quite consistent with his views, and was a common belief of the time.

Physical death, however, is practically disregarded by our author: he fixes his attention upon spiritual death, and this can take place even on earth. The wicked are made to say, 'as soon as we were born we ceased to be' (v. 13). According to this statement spiritual death does not mean annihilation; the wicked are spiritually dead even on earth; and in the next world this miserable condition continues, with the additional fact that they are now conscious of their condition. That they are likened to a city razed to the ground, the very name of which is forgotten, does not mean that they are to be annihilated. They are still to be 'in anguish' (iv. 19 c). We can compare this with 1 Enoch cviii. 3, where we read 'their names shall be blotted out of the book of life . . . and their seed shall be destroyed for ever, and their spirits shall be slain, and they shall cry and make lamentation in a place that is a chaotic wilderness'. This seems to give exactly the view of the author of Wisdom. The opinion of Bois, therefore, reviving that of Bretschneider, that the writer believed the wicked suffered for a time and were then annihilated, must be rejected. An existence which was nothing but pain and misery could rightly be called 'death.'

The doctrine of retribution in part 1 is Life for the righteous, Death for the unrighteous, with the additional threat that the latter may be punished in this world and in their children. Suffering in the case of the righteous tests their goodness, while in the case of the unrighteous it is purely retributive.

In part 2 a different attitude is adopted. Undeserved suffering appears not to be thought of. Punishment is deserved, but it is remedial—God loves all men, otherwise He would not have created them; hence punishment inflicted by a God of love must be for the benefit of His creatures. In applying this theory to the Israelites the author, by means of ignoring much of the traditional narrative, is apparently consistent; but not so when he deals with the fate of the heathen, in xi. 16 and xii. 22. In truth, he adopts a very difficult rôle. He wishes to reconcile the O.T. statements of the action of God in exterminating the Canaanites with the higher view of the Deity due to

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Ethical Monotheism. Ethical Monotheism cannot regard punishment as arbitrary or merely retributive; it must be reformatory. Accordingly the writer ignores the biblical account and affirms that punishment in the case both of the Egyptians and the Canaanites was inflicted to give them the opportunity of repentance. But the fact remains that they did not repent. This is accounted for in the case of the Canaanites by saying that they were incorrigible. 'They were a seed accursed from the beginning'; while the Egyptians are punished because, when they knew the true God, they refused to obey Him; though subsequently they are placed in the same position as the Canaanites by the statement that Destiny (*ἀνάγκη*) was dragging them to their doom (six. 4).

In addition to the eschatology in part i, the anthropology differs from that of the Old Testament, in that it assumes the existence of the soul before birth. The question as to whether the writer accepted this belief at first sight admits of no dispute. In viii. 19, 20 he says, 'Now I was a child good by nature and a good soul fell to my lot; nay, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled.' These words seem decisive. But granted that the writer believed in the pre-existence of the soul the question may be asked, What kind of pre-existence? Do the words of viii. 19 mean in his mouth, as they would in the mouth of Philo, not mere existence but self-conscious existence? It may help to answer this question, if we remind ourselves of the writer's attitude towards some other Greek ideas which he adopts, and ask whether they meant to him what they meant to the philosophers. We have seen that he adopted the Greek idea of immortality, but that it cannot be said that he did so fully and completely, since it is probable that he believed in a final day of judgement (iii. 18) to be followed or preceded by a Messianic Kingdom on earth. Again, he knew something of the philosophic theory of the inherent evil of matter, and says with reference to the body, that it 'weighs down the soul'; but there is no indication that he adopted the opinion that the body was no better than a tomb; i. 14 shows that he is very far from accepting the philosophical belief in the evil of matter as Philo subsequently did. It may therefore be fairly argued that as the writer perhaps did not accept the Greek philosophical belief in immortality, and certainly did not accept the belief in the evil of matter, without modification, it is quite possible that he also modified the philosophical belief in the pre-existence of the soul. In the case of the two former beliefs, however, it must be remembered that it would have been contrary to Jewish feeling to admit them completely. The complete and formal abandonment of the Messianic hope and the absolute worthlessness of the body were opinions too much opposed to Jewish tradition to be accepted by a writer who, though he had no great feeling for strict consistency, yet desired not to deviate too far from his ancestral beliefs. But there is no reason for thinking that the Greek doctrine of pre-existence was antagonistic to Jewish religious feeling. According to Harnack (*Hist. of Dogma*, vol. i, pp. 319 ff.), the early idea of some sacred object on earth being a copy of the original in heaven underwent development in the time of the Maccabees and the following decades. The conception became 'applied to persons'. Moreover, the Rabbis themselves adopted and worked it out, locating the unborn souls in the seventh heaven.<sup>1</sup> According to Porter<sup>2</sup> (p. 267), this Rabbinic idea of pre-existence is 'impersonal or half personal', and it is belief in this kind of pre-existence which he would ascribe to the author of our book. But it is doubtful if we have any more right to ascribe to the writer subsequent rabbinic than subsequent philosophic ideas; indeed, as the writer is an Alexandrian, it would seem less unjustifiable to ascribe to him the subsequent Philonic method of thinking on this point. Probably the writer of part i adopted the idea of the pre-existence of the soul without asking himself whether he was thinking of a mere vague general notion of existence, or a definite idea of self-conscious existence; it is worth noting, however, that he is far more definite than the writer of part 2 in xv. 8 and 11.

In regard to the writer's philosophical beliefs, it is generally agreed that he was well acquainted with the theories of the Greek philosophers, but whether his knowledge was first- or second-hand is a matter of dispute. Grimm considers that the writer's knowledge did not go beyond that possessed by every educated Alexandrian of the time: that he had no first-hand acquaintance with Platonism he infers from the absence of all reference to the doctrine of ideas, though it appears quite legitimate to ask whether a writer who admittedly had considerably more than a bowing acquaintance with Greek philosophy could have been ignorant of such a celebrated theory. Whether the writer's knowledge was first- or second-hand, it was certainly extensive. The views of the Stoics, of Plato, and of Heraclitus (to take them in order of importance) can all be traced in the book. In vii. 17 ff. he claims for his hero acquaintance with the whole range of philosophy and science; and he can hardly have failed to possess some of the knowledge which he attributes to Solomon.

<sup>1</sup> Weber, *Jüdische Theologie*, 1897, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> 'The pre-existence of the Soul in the Book of Wisdom,' see below, p. 534. Porter takes viii. 19 to be by the same writer as xv. 11. Much of his argument would require restating if these are from different authors.



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The influence of the Stoic philosophy appears in the idea of the world soul in i. 7, vii. 27, viii. 1. It is seen in the epithets 'alone in kind' (*μονογενής*) and 'manifold' (*πολυμερής*) applied to Wisdom in vii. 22, where the one world soul and its different manifestations are referred to, and especially in the use of technical Stoical terms. The reader can satisfy himself of this by referring to Ritter and Preller,<sup>1</sup> extract 513 (taken from Diog. Laertius' life of Zeno), where in the first few lines we find *σοφός, τὸ δύσκολον διὰ πάντων, διὰ τοῦ ζῆνι κεχώρηκεν*, all referring to the Deity. Like expressions are applied in c. vii to Wisdom. The four Cardinal Virtues (viii. 7) are Stoic, and also the metabolism of the elements, by the help of which the writer of part 2 endeavours to rationalize the miracles of the Exodus. The Sorites, a favourite figure of the Stoics, is used in vi. 17-20.

The influence of Platonism in the book is just as undeniable: the transcendence of God, the pre-existence of souls, the depreciation of the body (in part 2 also the pre-existence of matter (xi. 17)), all show platonic influence. Moreover, it seems difficult to deny a first-hand knowledge of Plato when we compare ix. 15 *φθαρτὸν γὰρ σῶμα βαρύνει ψυχὴν, καὶ βρῖθει τὸ γεῶδες ἀκῆρος νοῦν πολυφρόντιδαι*, with the passage from the *Phaedo* 81 C *Ἐμβριθὲς δὲ γε τοῦτο (i.e. σωματωεῖδες) οἶσθαι χρεῖ εἶναι καὶ βαρὺ καὶ γεῶδες καὶ ὀρατὸν. ὃ δὲ καὶ ἔχουσα ἢ τοιαύτη ψυχὴ βαρύνεται*. The three points of connexion, *βρῖθει*, *γεῶδες*, and *βαρύνει*, in one and the same sentence would be striking if they were all ordinary words; but when it is remembered that *βρῖθω* occurs nowhere else in the Greek Bible, and that *γεῶδες* occurs only here and in xv. 13, the argument for direct connexion seems very strong. Porter, who denies direct dependence, admits the probability of some indirect connexion. It should also be noticed that the Platonic classification of the Virtues is implicitly rejected in vii. 12.

With regard to Heraclitus, we have to remember that, as Zeller (*Stoics*, p. 371) says, 'there is hardly a single point in the Heraclitean theory of nature which the Stoics did not appropriate.' This increases the difficulty of deciding. His influence, direct or indirect, is to be found in ii. 3, 'reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our heart'; but, as mentioned in the note on the passage, the Stoics took up the idea. It is true that the Stoics considered that souls lived after death until the great conflagration, and our author puts into the mouth of the ungodly the exact view of Heraclitus—the belief in extinction immediately after death.<sup>2</sup> This, however, was also the view of the Epicureans, so we cannot be sure of the direct influence of Heraclitus here.

In vi. 24 the author announces his intention of making known the secrets of Wisdom, and apparently declaims against those who enviously keep knowledge to themselves: here all the commentators see a reference to the pagan mysteries, but E. Pfeiderer<sup>3</sup> wishes to see a reference to an individual philosopher—Heraclitus; the reference, however, seems quite general; the quotation from Philo by Grimm (see note) shows that the heathen mysteries were not identified with any individual. Our author's statement that 'a multitude of wise men is salvation to the world' is said by Pfeiderer to stand in direct opposition to the saying of Heraclitus, 'To me, one is ten thousand if he be the best' (Zeller, *Pre-Socratic Phil.* ii, p. 10), but neither observation is very original. The first is surely a commonplace, and as for the second, Milton's 'fit audience, though few', does not depend on Heraclitus.

The metabolism of the elements at the end of part 2 is traced by E. Pfeiderer to Heraclitus, and to him directly, rather than indirectly through the Stoics, on account of the allusion in c. xix to three elements only—fire, water, earth—since Heraclitus recognized only three. But it is difficult to see how the author could have brought in the idea of air changing into anything else: water changes into earth in the passage through the Red Sea, and earth becomes water again to overwhelm the Egyptians; fire lost its power and was unable to melt the heavenly food; what need or opportunity was there for adducing the change of air into another element? In this connexion it is worth noticing that Philo in *Vita Mosis*, iii, § 2, in speaking of the High Priest's robe (see note on xviii. 24) only mentions three elements and calls them 'the three elements', air, water, and earth, so that if we had no other passage to go by, we should be unable to prove that he accepted, as he certainly did, the doctrine of the four elements. It must, no doubt, be admitted that the Book of Wisdom has points of connexion with the system of Heraclitus, who was highly esteemed in Alexandria, but whether directly or indirectly it is impossible to say.

Heinisch,<sup>4</sup> who denies to the writer of Wisdom anything beyond a superficial knowledge of Greek philosophy, admits, or rather affirms, that he had read Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. He quotes *Mem.* 2. 1 (the choice of Hercules) side by side with Wisd. viii. 2-18, and points out that in nearly every one of these verses there is an echo of the passage in the *Memorabilia*. It is not merely that the writer knew the story of the choice of Hercules, but that he had read it in Xenophon, to which Heinisch commits himself. This is highly probable, but it is difficult to reconcile it with

<sup>1</sup> Eighth ed., 1898.

<sup>2</sup> See Zeller, *Pre-Soc. Phil.* ii, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Phil. des Heraclitus*, see below, p. 533.

<sup>4</sup> *Die griech. Phil. im B. der Weisheit*, see below, p. 534.

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Heinisch's denial of any direct acquaintance on the part of the author with other Greek writers. One who had studied the *Memorabilia* carefully enough to reproduce from memory a large number of the sentiments put into the mouth of Virtue in 2. 1 would not be a superficial student of the book; and if he had studied the *Memorabilia* carefully it is probable that he had paid the same attention to much more celebrated works such as the *Phaedo*. It may be added that Heinisch was the first to notice the close resemblance between these passages of Wisdom and Xenophon. It shakes one's confidence in a scholar to find that a resemblance discovered by himself is maintained to be the result of direct connexion, while those pointed out by other scholars are minimized or denied.

With reference to the general question of the indebtedness of our author to other thinkers, it may be noticed that Menzel<sup>1</sup> gives 135 places where connexion has been traced by one scholar or another. Most writers are children of their time, and their work cannot but show traces of the intellectual atmosphere which they breathed. We can admire the language and thought of the Book of Wisdom (i.e. cc. i-x), and yet admit that the parallels pointed out by the critics are valid.

In its method of interpretation of O.T. Scripture the book contains both haggadah and allegory. The haggadic treatment of the plague of darkness is equal to anything in the Rabbis, the allegory is of a milder type. We do not meet with that thoroughgoing kind of allegory where the literal truth of the narrative is denied as in Philo. The nearest approach to this is in the treatment of the serpent in Eden and the cloud which accompanied the Israelites on their wanderings. According to our author the serpent was not really a serpent but the devil, the cloud was not really a cloud but the form which Wisdom assumed. In some other instances historical events are regarded as parables. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt as a warning against unbelief. The victory of Jacob in his struggle with the angel shows that piety is more powerful than even a supernatural opponent. That the manna was to be gathered before sunrise shows that prayer must be offered betimes; that it melted after sunrise shows that the hopes of the ungrateful come to naught. The successful intercession of Aaron, with his symbolical garments which represented the world, probably illustrates the truth that the world fighteth for the righteous. The ark of Noah shows that God blesses natural productions when they are put to a beneficial use, e.g. wood for the building of ships; and perhaps that He will protect men venturing on the high seas for the beneficent purposes of commerce. The narrative of the brazen serpent in the wilderness and its healing power is taken as historical; but the serpent has no magical power: it acts as a reminder to the Israelites who had forgotten God. This can hardly be called allegorical treatment unless allegory is taken to mean any interpretation of the narrative which goes beyond the literal one.

The allegorical traits in the book are not nearly so strong as the haggadic, but though the latter is generally associated with the methods of the Rabbis, both flourished vigorously amongst the Hellenistic Jews (Schurer, ii. 1. p. 341).

### § 10. CHIEF CRITICAL INQUIRIES.

Eichhorn, *Einführung in die apokryph. Schriften des A. T.*, pp. 86-207. Leipzig, 1795.

Gfrörer, *Philo*, vol. ii (1831), pp. 200-72. An interesting review of the whole book.

Edmund Pfeiderer, *Die Phil. des Heraklitus*, 1886, pp. 289-348. Pfeiderer affirms that the writer of Wisdom had an intimate knowledge of Greek philosophy and in especial a direct acquaintance with Heraclitus. Heinisch (see below), pp. 18-30, subjects Pfeiderer's contention to a searching criticism. He denies that the writer of Wisdom had even a superficial knowledge of the system of Heraclitus.

Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, 1888, vol. i, pp. 177-229. As a preliminary to his exposition of Philo's philosophy Dr. Drummond gives a most valuable discussion of the theology of the Book of Wisdom. The following statement deserves attention: 'There is little connected reasoning of any kind in the work. . . . It is as though the process of investigation had been conducted elsewhere, and led to results esteemed satisfactory by an important section of the Jewish community' (p. 186).

P. Menzel, *Der griech. Einfluss auf Prediger und Weisheit Salomos*, 1889, pp. 39-70. Menzel gives a useful table of passages (135) which Professor Margoliouth says 'might be considerably reduced without disadvantage'—where connexion between Wisdom and Greek philosophy has been pointed out by Grimm and Pfeiderer. He has coined a somewhat question-begging epithet in the word 'pandemonium' which shows his attitude towards those who would trace the ideas of the author to their source. He admits, however, some of Pfeiderer's positions. Menzel is severely criticized by Heinisch, pp. 9 ff. Cheyne (*Origin of Psalter*, p. 423) calls the work 'a painstaking dissertation'.

H. Bois, *Essai sur les origines de la philosophie Judéo-Alexandrine*, 1890, pp. 211-311. Notes on the text 373-411. Bois undertakes a thorough examination of the theological principles in the Book of Wisdom, in a fresh and stimulating manner. In his notes on the text he suggests the rearrangement of certain passages, one of which is most probably right (see note on iv. 15). He also suggests several emendations, some of which are accepted by Siegfried. His exposition of the transmutation of the elements alluded to in ch. xix *ad fin.* deserves special attention.

Margoliouth. In the *JRAS* for 1890, pp. 263-97, Professor Margoliouth maintained that Hirschneider was on the right track in suggesting that the Book of Wisdom was originally written in Hebrew; and adduced many passages where he affirms that traces of mistranslation can be proved. This theory has not, however, found acceptance. Freudenthal in the *JQR*, 1901, contested it.

<sup>1</sup> *Der griech. Einfluss, &c.*, see below, § 10.



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Grafe. In 1892, in *Theol. Abhandl.* in honour of Weizsäcker, pp. 253-86, Grafe published a convincing paper on the question of St. Paul's use of the Book of Wisdom.

Thielmann. In 1893 Thielmann published an exhaustive inquiry into the Latinity of the Latin version of the book in *Archiv für lat. Lex. und Gram.*, pp. 235-77.

Feldmann, *Textkritische Mot. zum B. der Weisheit gesammelt aus der syrischen syrohexaplarischen und armenischen Übersetzung*, Freiburg im B., 1902, pp. 84. A most valuable contribution to the criticism of the text.

Joseph Holzmann, *Die Peshitta zum B. der Weisheit*, Freiburg im B., 1903, pp. 152. A thorough investigation of the Syriac version.

Weber, in *Zeitschrift fürwiss. Theol.*, 1904, upholds the composite authorship, tracing four different hands in the work. Feldmann in *Bibl. Zeitschrift*, Freiburg im B., 1909, contests this view.

Heinisch, *Die griech. Phil. im B. der Weisheit*, Münster i. W., 1908, pp. 158. An exhaustive inquiry into the relationship between the book and Greek philosophy: a work of great learning and ability. Unfortunately the writer, a Roman Catholic, seems to have made up his mind to prove that the author of the Book of Wisdom 'taught nothing which contradicted the faith inherited from his fathers. That which was new, which he expounded in his speculations on Wisdom and in his Eschatology, made no breach with the ideas of the O.T. . . and if it has found acceptance in the N.T., that is only a proof that the sacred writer in his literary activity was under the guidance of divine inspiration' (p. 156). The author's knowledge of Greek philosophy was, according to Heinisch, 'very superficial.'

Porter, 'The pre-existence of the Soul in the Book of Wisdom and in the Rabbinical writings.' (In *Old Testament and Semitic Studies in memory of William Rainey Harper*, 1908, pp. 208-69.) A vigorous onslaught upon the prevalent view that the writer of Wisdom accepted the Greek doctrine of the pre-existence of souls. In this he is upheld by Heinisch (p. 86); though as Heinisch will not admit that Wisdom contains anything contrary to the doctrine of the Church, i.e. the Roman Catholic Church, his judgement is biased. An admirable summary of Porter's position is given by Prof. W. B. Stevenson in the *International Journal of Apocrypha*, April, 1912. Prof. Stevenson affirms that 'the argument is convincing'.

### EDITIONS.

(The earlier editions of the book may be found in Grimm, p. 45, or Deane, p. 42.)

Grimm, 1860. In *Kurzgefasstes exeg. Handbuch zu den Apokryphen*, pp. 300. It is difficult to speak too highly of this masterly work. Grimm first published a commentary in 1837. For the next twenty-three years he was collecting additional materials, and the result was the work of 1860, which is and will probably long remain an indispensable quarry for all students of the book.

Deane, W. J., 1881, prints the Greek, Latin, and English A.V. in parallel columns. It contains very useful linguistic notes both on the Greek and the Latin.

Farrar, *Speaker's Comm.*, 1888. Abounds in apt illustrations from classical and English literature.

Zöckler, *Apocryphen und Pseud. des Alt. Test.*, 1891, pp. 355-95. Short introduction, translation, and notes.

Siegfried in Kautsch's *Apocrypha*, 1900, gives a new and excellent translation, generally following Grimm. The notes, however, are very short.

Gregg, *Camb. Bible for Schools*, 1909. This is, perhaps, the best edition in English.

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*True religion leads to a blessed immortality: irreligion and apostasy to destruction.*

*Seek the knowledge of God by purity of life: such knowledge (i.e. wisdom) cannot be attained by the slaves of sin.*

- 1 <sup>1</sup> 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 held in pledge by sin.  
5 For the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit,  
And will start away from thoughts that are without understanding,  
And will be scared away when unrighteousness approacheth.

*The sinner cannot escape punishment: his very words are known.*

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

1. 1. **judges of the earth.** It is in his assumed character of Solomon that the writer speaks of 'judges of the earth'; in all probability, however, the judges really aimed at are the rulers of the Jewish community in Alexandria. As in the time of Philo the Jews in Egypt amounted to a million souls, we may presume that at least half a million lived in the capital. Strabo (died A.D. 21), quoted by Josephus, *Ant.* xiv. 7, says: 'There is also an ethnarch at their head who rules the people and dispenses justice, and sees that obligations are fulfilled and statutes observed, like the archon of an independent state.'

Doubtless many of the ruling classes in Alexandria, like those in Palestine, were of a Sadducean type and inclined to Hellenize. Indeed, some Jews, like Tiberius Julius Alexander who held high office under Nero, went over to the Gentiles completely. Bousset, *Rel. des Ind.* (p. 81, note 1), thinks that complete apostasy of this kind only rarely took place. The persecution of the pious by the freethinkers spoken of in ii. 10 may be paralleled by the oppression of the Pharisees under Alex. Jannæus about 94 B.C. See Charles, *1 Enoch*, p. 297. 'The rulers appear as the aiders and abettors of the enemies of the righteous. These enemies are the Sadducees, sinners, apostates, and paganizers.' Ch. ii. 12 shows that apostates are the object of the polemic: 'He upbraided us with sins against the law.' Philo alludes to apostate Jews, *De Conf. Ling.*, ch. ii: 'Those who are discontented at the constitution under which their fathers have lived, being always eager to blame and accuse the laws, say—Do you boast of your precepts as if they contained truth itself? Behold, the books which you call sacred scriptures contain fables at which you are accustomed to laugh when you hear others relating them.' See also *Vita Mos.* i. 6.

Intermarriage with the Gentiles would facilitate apostasy, and as an act is not censured unless it has taken place, we may infer the existence of such marriages from Jubilees xxx. 7: 'If there is any man in Israel who wishes to give his daughter or his sister to any man who is of the seed of the Gentiles, he shall surely die, and they shall stone him with stones, for he hath wrought shame in Israel; and they shall burn the woman with fire, because she has dishonoured the name of the house of her father, and she shall be rooted out of Israel.'

**with a good mind,** Greek 'in goodness'. What a pious Jew would consider to be right thoughts about God may be gathered from Exod. xxxiv. 6-7, especially the last clause, 'Jahveh is a God full of compassion and gracious . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.' The opposite is seen in Ps. l. 21, 'Thou thoughtest that I was even such a one as thyself.'

**singleness of heart.** A Hebraism: straightness of mind as opposed to crookedness: see v. 3, 'crooked thoughts.' The heart is the seat of the intellect in Hebrew; the reins (see v. 6) the seat of the emotions.

5. **discipline:** A.V. and R.V., but the idea of instruction must be included.

**scared away:** ἀεχθήσεται is a difficulty of long standing. Schultess (1820) declared the word to be corrupt. R.V. 'put to confusion', margin 'convicted'; Grimm, from a use of the word in Byzantine Greek, 'is scared away'. Siegfried, 'is filled with a spirit of reproof,' a very satisfactory meaning if allowable. The idea of being 'put to shame' like purity in the presence of iniquity is possible. This use of the word is found only in Homer, according to Liddell and Scott; and the book is admittedly full of poetical words.

6. **For wisdom, &c.** This line, which appears to have no connexion with what precedes or follows, has given great trouble to the commentators. Grimm takes the sense to be 'Wisdom is a spirit that loves mankind, and for that very reason will not leave wickedness unpunished'. The earlier commentators took φιλανθρωπία in the sense of 'mild',



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 1. 6-16

- Because God is witness of his reins,  
And is a true overseer of his heart,  
And a hearer of his tongue:  
7 Because the spirit of the Lord filleth 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 punisheth, pass him by.  
9 For the counsels of the ungodly shall be searched out;  
And the report of his words shall come unto the Lord  
For the punishment of his lawless deeds:  
10 Because there is an ear of jealousy that listeneth to all things,  
And the noise of murmurings is not hid.  
11 Beware then of unprofitable murmuring,  
And refrain your tongue from blasphemy;  
Because no secret utterance shall go forth with impunity,  
And a mouth that lieth destroyeth the soul.

*God does not willingly afflict men: they bring punishment and death upon themselves.*

- 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 products 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,  
(But the gain of unrighteousness is death).  
16 But the ungodly by their hands and words called him unto them:  
Deeming him a friend they were consumed with love of him,  
And they made a covenant with him,  
Because they are worthy to be of his portion.

'gentle', and connected it with preceding verse. The meaning then would be: 'Wisdom is put to confusion or scared away when wickedness enters in, because it is a mild and kindly spirit and cannot stay in the same abode as injustice.' Bois, p. 379, seeing that these explanations are unsatisfactory would transpose the line to the end of v. 13, and in this alteration Siegfried concurs. But the close connexion between the last line of v. 13 and the beginning of v. 14 militates against this. In face of these difficulties it does not seem rash to suggest that the line may be an interpolation on the basis of vii. 22-3, where Wisdom is said to be a *πνῆμα* and *φιλάνθρωπος*.

Further, the fact that this line is out of harmony with its surroundings gives force to Weber's suggestion that vv. 4, 5, together with this line, have been interpolated; the connexion obtained after their omission is quite satisfactory. v. 3: 'The Power, when brought to the proof, chastiseth fools and (6) will not hold the blasphemer guiltless for his lips. For God, &c.'

7. *filleth*, as A.V.; R.V. 'hath filled'; but see Grimm's note, Burton, *N.T. Moods and Tenses*, § 76, and cf. St. John xi. 11.

*holdeth all things together*. We have here the Stoic idea of the world soul. The Stoics said of the world, *εἰς ἅπαν αὐτοῦ μέρος διήκοντες τοῦ νοῦ, καθάπερ ἐφ' ἡμῶν τῆς ψυχῆς*. See Dio. Laert. in Ritter and Preller, § 493; Zeller, *Stoics*, &c., p. 142.

8. For examples of *unrighteous things* see the quotation from *De Conf. Ling.* in the note on v. 1.  
11. *blasphemy*. *καταλαλία* in parallelism with murmuring, *γογγυσμός*, plainly means speaking against God: *γογγυσμός* is the word used in LXX Exod. xvi. 7, 8, 9, for the murmuring of the Israelites.

15-16. Man lost his uprightness and immortality through his own act according to this passage; in ii. 24, through the envy of the devil.

15. *For righteousness*. Either this line is in its wrong place and should be transferred perhaps to a position between vv. 22 and 23 of ch. ii, where it would be in a satisfactory context, or we must with Grimm accept the succeeding line found in some Latin MSS., '*iniustitia autem mortis acquisitio est*.' Grimm renders this by *ἀδικία δὲ θανάτου περιποίησις ἐστίν* (the word *περιποίησις* is not found in the LXX with this meaning). As the line stands it has no connexion with what precedes or follows, and if the extra line is not accepted deletion or transference to the end of ii. 22 would seem to be justified. It should be noticed that the line summarizes the teaching of this part of the book, and may originally have been a marginal note. The Latin line *iniustitia autem* would then be a gloss like ii. 17, vi. 1, &c., and *οὐρόν* in the next line, referring to Hades, would not be separated from its antecedent.

16. Seems to be based verbally on Isa. xxviii. 15, though the context is quite different. There the covenant is that Death should spare the other contracting parties, while here they give themselves into the arms of Death. For *τῆσδε* used to denote a state of mind, see vi. 23, '*pining* envy.' E. Pfeiderer, followed by Bois, takes this verse as referring to the pagan mysteries, especially to the identification of Hades the God of death with Dionysus the God of life.

## THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 2. 1-9

*Some men even prefer the ways of death: they affirm that their souls are even as their bodies, that after this life nothing remains.*

- 2 <sup>1</sup> For they said within themselves, reasoning not aright,  
Short and sorrowful is our life;  
And there is no remedy when a man cometh to his end,  
And none was ever known that returned 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 reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our heart,  
3 Which being extinguished, the body shall be turned into ashes,  
And the spirit 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 there is no putting back of our end;  
Because it is fast sealed, and none reverseth it.

*They therefore will enjoy this life to the full, and crush those whose lives reprove their own.*

- 6 Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things that *now* are;  
And let us use creation with all earnestness 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 wither:  
9 Let there be no (meadow) without traces of our proud revelry:  
Everywhere let us leave tokens of *our* mirth:  
Because this is our portion, and our lot is this.

Heraclitus had said *ἀνθρώποι δὲ Αἴδης καὶ Διόνυσος* (Ritter and Preller, § 49, Zeller, *Pre-Socratic Phil.* ii, p. 100). If this is accepted and we assume that the writer is referring to the apostate Jews, we must infer that they had gone so far as to take part in the pagan mysteries. His 'portion' is the realm assigned to him.

11. The opinions here put into the mouth of the godless may easily have been known to the writer from his personal experience of Jews who adopted the tenets of Epicurus; most scholars also see a reference to Ecclesiastes, see Introduction, p. 525. It should, however, be noticed that the same sentiments are put into the mouth of the ungodly in 1 Enoch ch. 6-8.

1. It is impossible to say whether *ἀναλίσκειν* is transitive or intransitive. Grimm on 2 Macc. viii-xxv gives eight places where *ἀναλίσκειν* = 'to return'; but it is used in the passive in iv. 12, so that if we take this as deciding the author's usage, it should be transitive here. Against this it may be urged, that in view of the liberties which the author allows himself to take with the Greek language, it is quite possible that he used the active and passive forms of an intransitive verb without any appreciable difference of meaning.

2. **reason is a spark.** A reference to the view of Heraclitus and others that fire (see note on xiii. 2) is the primitive substance. 'The soul of man is a part of this divine fire' (Zeller, *Outlines*, p. 70). 'It was conceived . . . as a transient individualization of the one primitive substance or force, and this individualization terminated at death' (Charles, *Exeget.*, p. 143). The Stoics adopted this view. 'The soul is . . . a part of the divine fire which descended into the bodies of men when they first arose out of the æther' (Zeller, *Outlines*, p. 244). Cic. *Tusc.* i. 19. 'Zenoni Stoico animus ignis videtur'.

4. **overcome.** This is perhaps a justifiable paraphrase. The Greek means 'weighed down', which is incorrect from the point of view of Natural Science. But the writer merely wanted a parallel expression to 'chased away', and being unscientific chose an incorrect term.

5. **allotted time,** reading *καρπός* with **A** and Latin, as against *βίος*, **B**\*. So most editors.

**putting back.** The explanation adopted by Grimm, Siegfried, and others, that no man can die twice, is not satisfactory. Gregg's reference to the shadow on a sundial is more acceptable, though there is a sudden change of metaphor in the next line in the word 'sealed'; the end is fast sealed as the end is predetermined.

The sense probably is 'while we are young', and Grimm gets this by reading *ὡς ἐν νεότητι* on the authority of 157, 248, 253, and the Complutensian polyglot. **B** reads *ὡς νεότητι*, **A** and **A** *ὡς νεότητι*.

7. **spring,** reading *ἔαρος* for *ἄρος*. So **A**, Latin, and most editions.

9a. The Greek here has one line, *μηδὲς ἡμῶν δούλωσεν ἑαυτὸν τῇ ἡμετέρῃ ἀγρομαχίᾳ*; the Latin has two: 'nemo nostrum exors sit luxurie nostrae', and 'nullum pratum sit quod non pertranseat luxuria nostra'. This is a doublet of the Greek line with *λεπιδῶν* in line 2 for *ἡμῶν*. As an old glossary to the book shows that it originally contained the word *λεπιδῶν*, this must be restored in place of *ἡμῶν*, and *μηδὲς δούλωσεν ἑαυτὸν* accepted as the true reading. See Feldmann.

**proud revelry:** *ἀγρομαχία*, may be an allusion to the heathen mysteries (Bois, p. 295).

**our portion;** our only portion and lot. For connexion with Ecclesiastes see *Introd.*, p. 525.



THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 2. 10-3. 1

- 10 Let us oppress the righteous poor;  
 Let us not spare the widow,  
 Nor reverence the hairs of the old man grey 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 with 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 according to his words he will be visited.

*But they are wrong: a future life is in store for the righteous, who shall then triumph over the ungodly.*

- 21 Thus reasoned they, being far 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 belong to his realm experience it.  
 3<sup>1</sup> But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,  
 And no torment shall touch them.

12. The translation of *παῖδεία* in the last line is difficult. Weber gives 'and reproaches us on account of the sins of our method of life' (*Bildung*). Mr. Gregg would omit. The line certainly looks like an addition.

let us lie in wait. Cf. LXX rendering of Isa. iii. 10, see *Introd.*, p. 524.

20. according to his words, i.e. 'if what he says is true.'

visited. *ἐπισκοπή* is always used in a good sense in this part of the book, see *Introd.*, p. 523. The word *ἐπισκοπή* is said to be used only once outside biblical and ecclesiastical Greek. It is a translation of the Hebrew word *חִסּוּף*, which means a visitation to deliver, LXX Gen. i. 24, 25, Exod. iii. 16, or a visitation to punish, LXX Isa. xxiv. 22, xxix. 6. See Hort's full note on 1 Pet. ii. 12, and Charles's *Apoc. Bar.* xx. 2, note.

22. At the end of this verse i. 15 would be appropriate. There is a prize for blameless souls, viz. immortality. mysteries of God, i.e. that suffering is not necessarily punishment, but is often a test of goodness which will be rewarded after death by immortality.

23. The difference between the author and Philo is seen very plainly here. In Philo, man is the image of the Logos (Drummond, *Philo Judaeus*, ii. 186-7).

his own proper being, *ἰδωτέος*, & A and B. *αἰδωτέος*, 248, 253, and most of the patristic writers. But Gen. i. 26 seems to decide for the former, though Sanday and Headlam (*Romans*, p. 51) are doubtful, while Prof. Margoliouth prefers *αἰδωτέος*. He also suggests *κατ' ἐκείνα*, which is now upheld by Feldmann.

24. Bois (p. 297) suggests that the reference here is to Cain, the first murderer, and Mr. Gregg adduces additional arguments for this. All other expositors take it to refer to the temptation of Eve. In 1 Enoch lxix. 6 it is said that a Satan led Eve astray. This seems to favour the latter view.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 3. 2-13

- 2 In the eyes of fools they seemed to die;  
And their departure was accounted to be their hurt,
- 3 And their going from us to be their ruin:  
But they are in peace.
- 4 For though 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 tested 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 like 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 for evermore.
- 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,  
And he will graciously visit his holy ones.

*But the unrighteous shall be punished, both they and their ungodly offspring, while the righteous though childless shall be rewarded.*

- 10 But the ungodly shall be requited even as they reasoned,  
They which lightly regarded the righteous man, and revolted from the Lord
- 11 (For he that setteth at naught wisdom and discipline is miserable;)   
And void is their hope and their toils unprofitable,  
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.

III. 2. **seemed.** The righteous cannot die. For this spiritual idea of life and death see v. 13 and x. 3. Philo says (*Quod det. pot.* § 15), 'The wise man who appears to have departed from this mortal life lives in a life immortal.'

5. **tested.** The object of affliction is testing, proving; not punishment. Cf. 1 Enoch cviii. 9: 'The righteous were much tried by the Lord and their spirits were found pure.'

7. **visitation.** Cf. Ps. cvi. 4, 'visit me with thy salvation.' Salvation in the O.T. always means deliverance—deliverance from one's foes and triumph over them. So here; the writer cannot refrain from picturing the visible triumph of the godly over the wicked, though it is quite inconsistent with the idea of reward or retribution coming immediately after death. For the figure cf. Obad. 18 upon the destruction of Edom: 'The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble.'

8. In the Messianic Kingdom. Cp. St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels.'

9. **understand truth,** i.e. God's methods in governing the world.

9b. With *ὅτι χάρις καὶ ἔλεος τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς αὐτοῦ* compare 1 Enoch v. 7 *καὶ τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς αὐτοῦ χάρις καὶ χάρις καὶ ἔλεος*. 1 Enoch i-xxxvi was written before the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes; but the translation of Enoch into Greek was probably undertaken as a whole. If this is later than the latest part of 1 Enoch (cc. xxxvii-lxxi) it must be subsequent to 94 B.C., and so has a bearing on the date of Wisdom itself, see *Intro.*, p. 520.

9d. So *NA* and Syriac, *καὶ ἐνιστάσθαι ἐν τοῖς ὁσίοις (ἐκλεκτοῖς δὲ) αὐτοῦ*, which B Latin and R.V. omit. For justification of this see note on iv. 15. In addition, the line is suitable here as a rejoinder to ii. 20b.

10. **reasoned.** This means that the annihilation after death proclaimed by the godless shall indeed be their lot, only the writer's idea of annihilation is different from that of the apostates.

11. **he that setteth, &c.** This line is almost a verbal reproduction of Prov. i. 7, 'The ungodly set at naught wisdom and discipline.'

13. **happy.** The reference here may simply be general; but it is difficult to read Philo's account of the Therapeutae without feeling that the writer of these lines had them in mind. Of the virgins who were enrolled amongst the Therapeutae, Philo (*De Vit. Con.* § 8) says they 'yearn not for mortal but for immortal offspring', *οὐ θνητὴν ἐκγονὰν ἀλλ' ἀθάνατον ὑπεχθόμεναι*. This, and the statement in the text 'She shall have fruit when God visiteth souls', seem to belong to the same circle of ideas. It is not necessary to infer that the writer belonged to the sect; Philo, in spite of his admiration for them, was not one of them. Whether he is referring to the Therapeutae or not the writer shows considerable independence in discarding the strong Jewish belief that a numerous offspring was the greatest blessing of mankind.

**transgression.** This refers to unlawful marriages with the heathen. See Jubilees xxx. 7, quoted on i. 1.  
**fruit.** This may be a vague phrase for reward. Philo works out the idea contained in the words 'immortal offspring' as that 'which the soul that is attached to God is alone able to produce by itself and from itself', meaning perhaps what the Christian sums up in the word 'bliss'. This is subjective and may be contrasted with the more objective statement as to the reward of the childless man, which is to be a blissful position in the heavenly sanctuary.



THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 3. 14—4. 8

- 14 And *happy* is the eunuch which 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 favour,  
And a lot in the sanctuary of the Lord of great delight.
- 15 For good labours have fruit of great renown;  
And wisdom's root cannot fail.
- 16 But children of adulterers shall not come to maturity,  
And the seed of an unlawful union shall perish.
- 17 For if they live long, they shall be held in no account,  
And at the last their old age shall be without honour.
- 18 And if they die early, 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 childlessness with virtue;  
For in the memory of virtue is immortality:  
Because it is recognized both by God and man.
- 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 prizes 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 ere they come to maturity,  
And their fruit *shall be* useless,  
Not ripe to eat, and meet for nothing.
- 6 For children unlawfully begotten are witnesses of wickedness  
Against parents when God searcheth them out.

*The premature death of the righteous is followed by immortality, but the very memory of the ungodly shall perish.*

- 7 But the righteous, though he die before his time, shall be at rest.
- 8 (For honourable old age is not that which standeth in length of time,

14. **sanctuary.** Where is this sanctuary to be? In the Jerusalem which the seer saw 'descending out of heaven from God' (Rev. xxi. 10) or in heaven itself?

of great delight. *θυμωδέστερος* in an elative or intensive sense. Thackeray, *Gr.*, p. 181; Blass, *Gr. of N. T.*, *Gk.*, p. 141.

15. **cannot fail.** These two lines are merely a variation of i. 15, 'For righteousness is immortal'; and iv. 1, 'For in the memory of virtue is immortality'; see also viii. 13. It may be that the writer could not get rid of the old Jewish idea of subjective immortality, Ps. cxii. 6, Prov. x. 7, or that he wished to oppose the repeated statement in Ecclesiastes i. 11, ii. 16, ix. 5, that there is no remembrance of the dead, righteous or unrighteous. See *Introd.*, p. 525.

16. **adulterers.** Those who had contracted unlawful marriages, as is plain from the next line and from iv. 6.

17. In denying that affliction necessarily indicates God's displeasure and is therefore punishment, the writer advances beyond the view of Ezekiel and his followers. Here, in affirming that the children shall be punished for the parents' sins, he falls behind it. See also iv. 4.

18. Reading *οὐκ ἔχουσιν* with N A Latin; *οὐκ ἔχουσιν* B.

hope. The idea seems to be that even if the children of the godless die young, before they have had much time to sin, they will have no hope of future happiness.

19. An involuntary and instinctive utterance of the old view that wickedness is always punished in this life.

IV. 3-6. This is taken by Grimm as referring not to a material but to a spiritual state. The children of the ungodly have an ineradicable taint. Here again the writer falls below Ezekiel and displays the spirit of the imprecatory psalms.

6. **witnesses of wickedness.** Their sufferings are a proof of the sin of their parents. Cf. St. John ix. 2.

8. **old age is not that, &c.** The writer has already departed from the traditional view that life without offspring cannot be regarded as happy; he now departs from the belief that length of days is necessary to the happiness of a godly man. Here again one cannot fail to be struck with the correspondence of the author's views with those of the Therapeutae. Philo (*De Vita Cont.*, ch. 8) writes: 'For they do not regard those as elders who are advanced in years and aged, but as mere youths if they have only lately devoted themselves to the vocation; but they call those elders who from their earliest years have spent time and strength in the contemplative part of philosophy.' Grimm gives a whole series of

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 4. 8-19

- Nor is its measure given by number of years:  
 9 But understanding is grey 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 fascination of wickedness bedimmeth the things which are good,  
 And the frenzy 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 He hastened him out of the midst of wickedness.  
 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 age.  
 15 But as for the peoples, seeing and understanding not,  
 Neither laying this to heart:—  
 17 For they will see the wise man's end,  
 And not understand what the Lord purposed concerning him,  
 And for what he safely kept him:—  
 18 They will see, and despise;  
 But them the Lord shall laugh to scorn.  
 And after this they shall become a dishonoured carcase,  
 And a reproach among the dead for ever:  
 19 Because he shall dash them speechless to the ground,  
 And shall shake them from the foundations,

quotations from Greek and Latin authors emphasizing this thought. Perhaps the quotation from Bailey's *Fetus* given by Farrar is as good as any:

'We live in deeds not years; in thoughts not breaths,  
 In feelings not in figures on a dial;  
 We should count time by heart-throbs.'

10. *ἐλαττωτός*, &c. This looks like tautology. But reference to the LXX shows that the writer is thinking of Gen. v. 22, 24 (of Enoch); vi. 9; xvii. 1; and other places where *ἐλαττωτός*, a translation of *לַחֲיוֹת* 'to walk', plainly refers to the spiritual condition of the person mentioned. In xvii. 1 *ἐλαττωτός* *ἐννοῦντος* *σοῦ* addressed to Abraham shows this very clearly. Gen. v. 22, 24, shows that Enoch is referred to here. No one could say that Enoch's comparatively early removal was a punishment; it was plainly a blessing, and this supports the author's contention in v. 8 as to the early death of other righteous men.

12. *bedimmeth*. The editors point out that the word *ἀμυνῶσα* was used by Greek philosophers to express the darkening of the moral sense.

things which are good, *τὰ καλὰ*. Moral and spiritual qualities.

*perverteth*. Greek *μεταλλῆμι*, so again in xvi. 25. The word properly means 'to mine'. Here the author gives it the meaning of 'change', deriving it no doubt from *ἄλλα*. Commentators compare this mistake with that in St. Mark xii. 4.

13. *he fulfilled long years*. Of a Rabbi who died young it was said, 'In the twenty-eight years of his life he has learned more than others learn in a hundred years' (Oesterley and Box, *Rel. of Syn.*, p. 97).

14-16. The passage reads as follows in the R. V. according to B:—

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.

Some rearrangement is plainly necessary. For (1) the passage is now impossible as it stands in B. (2) The MSS. show that there has been some transference to or from iii. 9. (3) Transference of 15*c*, *d* to iii. 9 relieves this passage. (4) After 13*c*, *d* have been returned to their proper place, the necessity of placing v. 16 before 15 is obvious. Bois (p. 387) would make a much more thoroughgoing rearrangement, but it has been thought better to be content with the minimum of alteration.

15. *the peoples*. vv. 17 ff. show that the ungodly are meant. NB Latin give *λαοί*, A *ἄλλοι*. Mr. Gregg, on the basis of the latter, would emend to *ἄνθρωποι*. It looks, however, like a reminiscence of LXX Isa. vi. 9: 'Go, tell this people (*λαός*) . . . seeing ye shall see and not understand.'

18. This is best explained as the judgement by the sword at the beginning of the Messianic age, like vv. 17 ff.

19. *foundations*. The figure in the mind of the writer was probably that of a city razed to the ground. Cf. Ps. ix. 6: 'The enemy are come to an end, they are desolations for ever; and the cities which thou didst uproot, their memory is perished' (Driver, *Parallel Psalter*).



THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 4. 19—5. 13

And they shall lie utterly waste, and be in anguish,  
And their memory shall perish.

*The remorse of the ungodly at the judgement. Their retrospect.*

- 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 labours of no account.
- 2 When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear,  
And shall be amazed at the marvel of his 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 byword of reproach:
- 4 We fools accounted his life madness,  
And his end without honour:
- 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 *her* passage is found,  
But the light wind, lashed with the stroke of her pinions,  
And rent asunder with the violent rush of the moving wings, is passed through,  
And afterwards no sign of *her* 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 were utterly consumed in our wickedness.

V. 2. **When they see it.** Cf. 1 Enoch cviii. 15: 'And the sinners will cry aloud and see them (i.e. the righteous) as they shine, and they indeed will go where days and seasons are prescribed for them.'

4. **madness.** See ii. 15. The refusal to purchase material advantage at the price of apostasy.

6. **Verily**, ἀρα = 'as it now seems'. 'Hence it amounts sometimes to an expression of regret' (Donaldson, *Gk. Gr.*, p. 567).

7. **trackless deserts.** They now see that the 'primrose path of dalliance' is better described as 'a dry and weary land where no water is' (Ps. lxi. 1).

**knew**: in a practical sense = 'pay heed to'. So frequently in the O. T. See especially Amos iii. 2, 'You only have I known (= regarded with favour) of all the nations of the earth'. See also Ps. i. 6.

11. The images here used to denote the transitory nature of life are vivid and poetical: whether they are quite appropriate in the mouth of those in whom the agony of remorse is supposed to be working, is another question. The passage forms, however, an effective contrast to their defiant boasting in ch. ii.

12. **closeth**, ἀνελίσθη. The active is used in ii. 1 and has been translated there as intransitive (see note). 'Various explanations are given of ἀνελίσθη, but it seems most simple to take it in the sense of "returns" as ii. 1' (Deane). ἀνέλυσεν is read by 23 (V) and 253.

13. **ceased to be.** Another proof that the writer's view of life and death is spiritual.

At the end of v. 13 the Latin adds 'Talía dixerunt in inferno hi, qui peccaverunt'. This, if not genuine, is appropriate, as showing that the following verse is a reflection of the author and no part of the words of the ungodly.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 5. 14-6. 1

- 14 Because the hope of the ungodly is like chaff carried off by the wind,  
And like a thin spider's web driven away by a tempest;  
And like smoke which is scattered by the wind,  
And passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day.

*The bliss of the righteous and the miserable fate of the ungodly.*

- 15 But the righteous live for ever,  
And in the Lord is their reward,  
And the care for them with the Most High.  
16 Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom,  
And a 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 armour,  
And shall make the whole creation his weapons for vengeance on his enemies:  
18 He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate,  
And shall take judgement unfeigned as a helmet;  
19 He shall take holiness as an invincible shield,  
20 And 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 rage against them,  
And rivers shall sternly overwhelm them;  
23 A mighty blast shall encounter them,  
And as a tempest shall it winnow them away:  
So shall lawlessness make all the land desolate,  
And their evil-doing shall overturn the thrones of princes.

*Admonition to the rulers.*

- 6 Hear therefore, ye kings, and understand;  
Learn, ye judges of the ends of the earth:

14. **hope.** The object of their hope or that on which they found their hope, e.g. riches, &c.  
**spider's web.** So Cursives 23, 106, reading ἀράχνη, and also R.V. margin. S A B read πύλον, 'hoar-frost', which is quite unsuitable. Some MSS. give ἀχνη, which was no doubt the reading of the Syriac (ܐܪܚܢܐ), and of the Latin *spuma*. Both πύλον and ἀχνη can be explained from ἀράχνη better than ἀράχνη from the others. The strange mistranslation in LXX Ps. xc. 9 may be compared, τὰ ἔτη ὡς ἀράχνη, 'our years are like a spider's web'.  
16. **a glorious kingdom.** βασιλείαν, occurs in i. 14 and here. In i. 14 it undoubtedly means kingdom, and there is no reason to adopt a different meaning here. In Dan. vii. 18 and 22 the kingdom is given to the saints.  
17-23. These verses are not quite consistent with the similar passage in iii. 7 ff. There the righteous execute judgement on the ungodly: here, Jehovah Himself rouses the forces of Nature to fight against them. See *Intro.*, p. 529.  
17 b. See in note on xix. 18 the quotation there given from Philo.  
18-20. Compare Eph. vi. 11-17, and see *Intro.*, p. 527. The *παραπλία* found both here and in St. Paul, which is taken by some scholars as conclusive evidence of direct connexion between the two writers, consisted of helmet, breastplate, greaves, and shield, as defensive, sword and lance as offensive armour.  
18. **judgement unfeigned**, without respect of persons.  
20. **stern**, or relentless, Greek ἀπόρητος, also vi. 5, xi. 10, xii. 9, xviii. 15 and the adverb v. 22.  
21. Possibly the rainbow is referred to: if so the translation should be, 'And from the well-drawn bow of the clouds' as in the Latin 'a bene curvato arcu nubium'. The association of Jahveh with a thunderstorm is frequent in Hebrew poetry, see Ps. lxxix. 17-20, xcvi. 3-5; Hab. iii.  
15-23 b. This passage is 'eschatological'. 23 b. suddenly brings the reader back to the present age.  
23 b. Feldmann would omit ὡς on the authority of the Coptic. It is certainly better away. A 'mighty blast' is a tempest.

**So shall lawlessness.** The writer returns to the idea of i. 1. Those who follow these ungodly and lawless ways are in high positions in the community, and without any exaggeration may be addressed as judges and princes.

VI. The writer now apparently takes a wider outlook than in i. 1. Having dealt with the misdeeds of the governing body of the Jews in Alexandria, he turns in the manner of the prophets, e.g. Isa. viii. 9, Ps. ii. 10, to the rulers of the outside world. They too have a law which they have not kept, for the transgression of which they will be punished. It is not necessary to suppose that the writer ever thought of his words reaching the 'rulers of the ends of the earth', any more than Isaiah or the writer of Psalm ii imagined that their words would come to the ears of the foreign nations or rulers whom they apostrophized. The Jewish magnates at Alexandria are still the real object of the address.

1. The Latin begins the chapter with the words 'Melior est sapientia quam vires, et vir prudens quam fortis', a good introduction to the section.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 6. 2-17

- 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 the law, nor walked after the counsel of God.
- 5 Awfully and swiftly shall he come upon you ;  
For a stern judgement befalleth them that be in high places :
- 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 regard any *man's* person.  
Neither will he stand in awe of 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 not fall away.
- 10 For they that have kept holily the things that are holy shall *themselves* be accounted holy ;  
And they that have been taught them shall find what to answer ;
- 11 Set your desire therefore upon my words ;  
Long for *them*, and ye shall be instructed.

## *Wisdom desires to be found.*

- 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 perfection of understanding,  
And he that keepeth vigil for her sake shall quickly be free from care.
- 16 For she goeth about, seeking them that are worthy of her,  
And in their paths she appeareth unto them graciously,  
And in every purpose she meeteth them.

## *The Sorites.*

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

6. **searched out**, Greek *ἐρεύω*. The same word in ii. 19 probably means 'torture', so perhaps the A. V. and Latin are right in their interpretation, 'tormented', 'tormenta patientur'.

7. **regard any man's person**, R. V. 'refrain himself for'. The Greek *ὑποσχεῖται πρόσωπον* here is probably an echo of Deut. i. 17 LXX, where *ὑποσχεῖται πρόσωπον* is used to translate the Hebrew *פָּנִים פָּנִים*, to show partiality to any one. The injunction to Moses to make no difference between small and great appears in the same context.

12. This description of Wisdom is based on Prov. viii.

**And found.** This line looks so much like a variant of Prov. viii. 17 that some scholars have suspected it of being an insertion. But the writer probably had the chapter in Proverbs before his mind, so in spite of its omission in B\* it may be genuine. It is found in 8 B\* and A.

15. **to think upon her.** Through the contemplation of Wisdom, a man gains a high moral standard: cf. 'His (i.e. Plato's) theory of education is dominated by the thought that the mind itself inevitably "imitates" the character of the things it habitually contemplates. Just because the aspiration after wisdom is the fundamental expression of the mind's true nature, it cannot be followed persistently without resulting in a transfiguration of our whole character' (A. E. Taylor, *Plato*, p. 35).

17-20. An instance of the logical figure called Sorites, or Chain-inference, of which the Stoics were very fond (Zeller, *Stoics*, p. 216 note). v. 20 contains the main conclusion consisting of the first and last step: Desire for wisdom promoteth to a kingdom. But the first premiss is not expressed in v. 17 and must be supplied, and another member is omitted in v. 19.

[The desire for wisdom is the beginning of wisdom ;]

17. The true beginning of wisdom is the desire for instruction ;  
The care for instruction is love of wisdom ;

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 6. 18-7. 9

- 18 And love of *her* is observance of her laws;  
And to give heed to *her* laws is the assurance of incorruption;
- 19 And incorruption bringeth near unto God;
- 20 So then desire of wisdom promoteth to a kingdom.

*Solomon promises to declare the nature of wisdom.*

- 21 If therefore ye delight in thrones and sceptres, ye princes of peoples,  
Honour wisdom, that ye may reign for ever.
- 22 But what wisdom is, and how she came to *me*, I will declare,  
And I will not hide *her* mysteries from you;  
But I will trace *her* out from her first beginning  
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,  
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 tranquillity to *his* people.
- 25 Wherefore be ye instructed by my words, and *thereby* shall ye profit.

*Solomon at first like other men: wisdom given to him in answer to prayer.*

- 7 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 moulded 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 self-same 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.

*The value of wisdom.*

- 8 I preferred her before sceptres 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 sight is but a little sand,  
And silver shall be accounted as clay before her.

18. Love of wisdom is the keeping of her laws;  
The keeping of her laws is immortality;
19. Immortality bringeth near to God;  
[To be near to God is to be a king;]  
So the desire for wisdom promoteth to a kingdom.

There is remarkably little deviation from the exact logical form: what there is is justified by the poetical character of the composition.

22. *to me.* Ewald and Pois understand *moi* after *ἐγώ*.

*from her first beginning.* This (the A. V. and Latin) is the better translation; not 'from the beginning of creation', R. V.; as is seen from vii. 5, 'no king had any other first beginning,' where the Greek is practically the same.

*mysteries.* The Alexandrian Jews regarded their syncretism of Greek philosophy and Hebrew religion as a mystery, which, however, they were anxious to propagate in contrast to the heathen who kept their mysteries secret. Cf. Philo, *de Sacrificantiis*, 12: 'Why, ye initiates, if these things are good and profitable, do ye shut yourselves up in darkness and benefit three or four only, instead of bringing the advantages into the market-place for all men, so that every one might enjoy a better and happier life? For envy does not dwell with virtue.' See vii. 13.

23. Cf. the last clause of the preceding quotation which strikingly resembles 23.6. The pride of the philosophers is no doubt referred to and perhaps the greed of the Sophists. For the Sophists see Philo, *de Congressu*, 23.

24. *a multitude of wise men.* This is a sounder view than that of Ecclesiastes. 15, 'In much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.'

VII. 1. *first formed.* The word *πρωτόπλαστον* first occurs here.

2. *was I moulded.* The man is here identified with the body in contrast to the soul which pre-existed, see viii. 19.

3. *kindred, ὁμογενής.* This is the usual significance of the word. But the commentators point out that the affinity is not between Solomon and the earth but between Solomon and the rest of mankind. Grimm gives 'equally trodden by all'. It is, perhaps, another instance of the author's free use of the language.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 7. 10-22

- 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 come through discipline.

*Solomon's own great knowledge came from this gift of wisdom.*

- 15 But to me may God give to speak with judgement,  
And to conceive thoughts worthy of what hath been given *me*;  
Because himself is one that guideth even wisdom and correcteth the wise.
- 16 For in his hand are both we and our words;  
All understanding, and *all* acquaintance with divers crafts.
- 17 For he hath given 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 powers of spirits 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.

*The attributes of wisdom: her source: her activity.*

For there is in her a spirit quick of understanding, holy,  
Alone in kind, manifold,  
Subtil, freely moving,

11. Cf. Matt. vi. 33, 'and all these things shall be added unto you.'
12. *mother*, γενίτις (hapax); *N* and *B* give γένειος, but γένειος has already been used in vi. 22 and again in vi. 5 in the abstract, and therefore is hardly likely to be used here with a concrete meaning. Wisdom is the 'mother' or root of all 'good things', not merely the chief. Plato's classification of the Virtues is rejected. See on viii. 7.
13. *without grudging*. See notes on vi. 22 and 23.
14. *friendship with God*. See on vi. 27.
15. *given*. These gifts would be called 'graces' by the Christian. The R. V. takes the gifts as offered to God to win His favour.
16. *judgement*, or as R. V. margin, 'according to his (i. e. God's) mind', κατὰ γνώμην.
17. *what hath been given*. There are three readings here given by Feldmann. (1) δεδομένων: *B*, and three cursives, including 248; (2) λεγομένων: *N* A, six cursives, Syriac and other versions; (3) διδομένων: comp. Latin (*quae mihi dantur*), Coptic, and Ethiopic. λεγομένων is generally rejected. διδομένων is preferred by Grimm and Feldmann. This reading, as Farrar points out, emphasizes the fact that the gift of Wisdom is continuous.
- 17-20. In these verses the writer shows his knowledge of the technical terms of Greek science. He highly esteems all branches of learning, including astronomy; which Philo, in spite of the remarkable contributions made by Alexandrian astronomers to the advancement of the science, strangely depreciated (Drummond, *Philo*, i. 264).
17. *things that are*, τὰν ὄντων γνώσις = 'philosophy'.
18. *constitution of the world* = 'cosmology'.
18. *beginning, &c., of times* = 'chronology'.
19. *alternations, &c.* = 'astronomy'.
19. *circuits, i. e. cycles, e. g. the metonic and solar cycles*.
20. *natures, &c.* = zoology.
20. *powers of spirits*. Latin gives *vim ventorum*, but Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 2, says that Solomon is said to have had power over spirits, so that demonology and not meteorology may be meant.
21. *thoughts of men*. The desires and passions which agitate the soul; part of the modern science of psychology.
22. The writer here takes care to emphasize his belief that the action of God is only indirect; thus differing from the presentation in the second part.
22. *artificer*, τεχνίτις. It is suggested by Toy, following Grimm, that this is founded on Prov. viii. 30, where Wisdom is said to be חַכְמָה and where the LXX gives ἀρπύγους. It is doubtful, however, whether this can be accepted. It would involve the correction of LXX by the writer.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 7. 22-29

- Clear in utterance, unpolluted,  
Distinct, that cannot be harmed,  
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, subtil:  
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, though but 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 them 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;

22, 23. Wisdom has twenty-one qualities, the number no doubt being purposely chosen as a multiple of the two sacred numbers, seven and three. Philo calls Wisdom *πολυώνυμος*.

Grimm quotes a fragment ascribed to Cleanthes the Stoic: *τάχιστον ἔρωτας μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν; ἄκουσ δὲ τεταγμένον, δίκαιον, ὁσιον, εὐσεβές, κρατοῦν ἑαυτοῦ, χρήσιμον, καλόν, δέον, ἀσχηρὲν, ἀδελκύστατον, αἰεὶ συμφέρον, ἄφοβον, ἄλκτον, λυσίτελές, ἀνώδυνον, ὠφέλιμον, εὐαίματον, ὁμοιομορφικόν, εὐδαίμων, ἀνέμω, ἐπιμελές, πᾶσι, σφαιρῶν, χρησιμικτόν, ἀμειψτόν, αἰεὶ διαμένον.*

22. in her, *ἐν αὐτῇ* & B Latin. *αὐτῇ* = 'She is a spirit' A. If *ἐν αὐτῇ* is right this is the nearest approach the author makes towards giving a distinct personality to Wisdom. But in ix. 17 he plainly makes Wisdom equivalent to the Holy Spirit.

quick of understanding. *σοφίης*, a technical term of the Stoics applied to the world soul, see on i. 7. Other Stoical terms in this passage are *φιλοφροσύνη* (23), *χωρῶν* (23), *διήκειν* (24), *διακρίν* (viii. 1). Three of these are found in one passage of Dio. Laert. quoted by Ritter and Preller, § 513. *ἀπύρροια* ('effluence') is also a philosophical term.

Alone in kind = 'the only one of its kind', *μονογενής*; manifold, *πολυμερές*, are opposed to one another and correspond to the Stoic idea of the world soul and its different manifestations. Compare St. Paul on the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 4.

keen, unhindered. These words go together. Most commentators compare the *λόγος τεταγμένος* of Philo which divides, arranges, and unites the unarranged matter of chaos. Heinisch (p. 134) refuses to accept this.

23. free from care, *ἀμεριμνόν*. This may be equivalent to the Aristotelian word *ἀμεριμνία* applied to virtue in *Ἠθικά* Nic. i. 7. 6.

subtil. R. V. 'most subtil', Latin *subtilis*, Greek *λεπτοτάτων*. *λεπτός* probably = 'ethereal'. In i. 22 Wisdom is said to be a *πνεῦμα λεπτόν*. Here it is said to penetrate spirits like itself intellectual, pure, and *λεπτοτάτων*. This can hardly mean that the spirits through which Wisdom penetrates must be *λεπτά* in a superlative degree, while Wisdom possesses the quality only in a positive degree. If it is not a mere rhetorical use of the superlative it must mean spirits which have the quality in as high a degree as is possible for men to possess it: an elative use of the superlative.

26. effulgence, *ἀπαύγασμα*. Cf. Heb. i. 3. The word can mean either (1) effulgence, radiance, or (2) reflection. The word 'effluence', *ἀπύρροια*, v. 26, upholds the first, the words 'unspotted mirror' uphold the second. Since the word 'mirror' seems to be in parallelism with *ἀπαύγασμα* the meaning 'reflection' is the more probable. Heinisch (p. 133) decides for 'effulgence' on the ground of Sir. i. 9, where it is said of Wisdom that God 'poured her out upon all his works'. So does Westcott on Heb. i. 3. Grimm and Gregg favour the rendering 'reflection'.

27. all things. Omnipotence is here ascribed to Wisdom.

remaining in herself, &c. Bois (p. 391) argues that this line contains a philosophical idea to be traced to Heraclitus or the Stoics. The *primaeva* fire, or the *Logos*, remains the same in its essence in spite of all its various manifestations in nature (see note on *πολυμερές*, v. 22). Grimm and Heinisch are content with a reference to Ps. cii. 27-28.

friends of God. See p. 15. Deissmann, *Lib. St.*, p. 167, thinks the word means favourites. 'Friend was the title of honour given at the court of the Ptolemies to the highest royal officials.' 'φίλος θεῶν denotes high honour in the sight of God, nothing more nor less.' But the thought was not peculiar to Egypt. If Heinisch is right in seeing direct connexion between ch. viii and the fable of the choice of Hercules (see note on viii. 2) the words may be an echo of δὲ ἐπὶ φίλοι μὲν θεοῖς ὄντες in that passage. Compare also Plato, *Leg.* iv. 716: ἡ μὲν σωφροσύνη θεῶν φίλος. Philodemus (about 50 B.C.) quotes a Stoic saying 'that the wise are the friends of God and God of the wise' (Zeller, *Stoics*, p. 254 note).

and prophets. The Stoics also believed in prophecy and said that only a wise man could be a prophet. Cic. *De Div.* ii. 63 'Stoici negant quemquam nisi sapientem divinum esse posse.'



THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 7. 30—8. 12

- 30 For to the light of day succeedeth night,  
But against wisdom evil doth not prevail;  
8<sup>1</sup> But she reacheth from one end of the world to the other with full strength,  
And ordereth all things well.

*Solomon desired wisdom for a bride to assist him both in public and private matters:  
but only God could give her.*

- 2 Her I loved and sought out from my youth,  
And I sought to take her for my bride.  
And I became enamoured of her beauty.  
3 She proclaimeth *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 labour are virtues.  
For she teacheth self-control 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 subtilties of speeches and interpretations of dark sayings:  
She foreseeth 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 honour in the sight of elders, though I be young.  
11 I shall be found of a quick discernment when I give judgement,  
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;

VIII. 1. *ordereth*, διοικεῖ. A favourite term of the Stoics. They said τὸν δὲ κόσμον διοικεῖσθαι κατὰ νοῦν καὶ πρόνοιαν (Dio. Laert. 133, in Ritter and Preller, § 493).

2-18. In every one of these verses except 14 Heinisch finds an echo of the speech of Virtue in the apologue of the choice of Hercules in Xenophon, *Mem.* ii. 1. The fable was no doubt well known, but Heinisch insists that Pseudo-Sol. had a first-hand acquaintance with Xenophon's work. The passage runs as follows:—

Virtue says: 'I associate with gods and I associate with men who are good (cf. v. 3, it is given her to live with God), and no noble work divine or human is done without me (cf. v. 4, she is initiated into the knowledge of God, and she chooseth out for him his works). I am a beloved co-worker with artificers (cf. v. 6, Who more than wisdom is an artificer?) . . . a steadfast ally in the work of war (cf. v. 15, . . . I shall show myself a good ruler, and in war courageous), and the best companion in friendship (v. 18, in her friendship is good delight). . . . And the young rejoice in the praises of their elders, and those who are older are delighted with honour from the young (cf. v. 10). And when their destined end shall come they will not lie unhonoured in forgetfulness, but be celebrated in song and flourish in memory for all time' (cf. vv. 13 and 17).

In this case, as in that of the connexion between Rom. ix and Wisd. xii, it should be noticed that the resemblances are all found in one continuous passage in both authors.

3. *proclaimeth*, R.V. 'glorifieth'. δοξάζω = to cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged, cf. 2 Thess. iii. 1. See Thayer's edition of Grimm's *N. T. Lexicon*. Does a man desire noble birth in a bride? Wisdom is noble enough to be the bride of God. Philo (*de Cherub.* 13, 14) calls God the husband of Wisdom.

6. ἐργάζεσθαι has a pregnant meaning 'to work effectually or successfully'. If φρόνησις—earthly wisdom—works with success, much more does σοφία, the divine wisdom.

7. *self-control*, &c. The four cardinal virtues; a well-known philosophical classification originating with Plato and taken up by the Stoics. Zeller (iii. 2, p. 230, note) affirms direct Stoic influence here, since Chrysippus made Wisdom the root of the four virtues, whereas Plato made Wisdom one of them. See also note on vii. 12.

8. *dark sayings*, parables or allegories. The writer probably had Prov. i. 6 in mind, where the αἰνίγματα of the wise are spoken of.

*signs and wonders*. Probably a reference to the prediction of eclipses, &c., by astronomers.

12. See Job xxix. q.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 8. 12—9. 8

- 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 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 labours of her hands is wealth that faileth not,  
 And in assiduous communing with her is understanding,  
 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 good by nature 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 possess wisdom except God gave her to 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,

*He prays to God for this gift, pleading his own human weakness and the greatness of his task.*

- 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 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 judgement 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 judgement 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 judgement 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 aforehand from the beginning.

17. Wisdom is immortal. Those akin to her share her immortality. But in xv. 3 knowledge of the might of God is immortality. It may, however, be said that this knowledge could only arise from kinship with or the possession of Wisdom.

19. See *Intro.*, p. 531, for the doctrine of pre-existence in the book. For the difference between the Jewish and Greek conception of pre-existence, see Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. i, pp. 318 ff.

20. This verse is a correction of v. 19. If v. 19 stood alone it would mean that the writer identified the Ego with the body or perhaps with the compound organism body and soul. But, strictly speaking, the soul is the Ego, hence the correction. In v. 19, as in vii. 2, the writer uses ordinary everyday language such as we find in the second part, 'the soul which was lent him', xv. 8, or in the N. T., 'this night thy soul shall be required of thee' (Luke xii. 20), where the soul seems to be regarded as distinct from the personality. It is generally accepted that the writer deliberately corrects himself in view of his doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul ; but see Porter. Cf. note on xv. 8.

21. possess wisdom, i.e. *ἐκπατρίξ* in the sense of the Latin *compas*, understanding *οὐκ ἔστιν*. Grimm takes it in the sense of 'continent', but all other moderns take it as in the text.

IX. 1. by thy word . . . by thy wisdom. We may, perhaps, see here the truth of the statement that the writer of Wisdom was a forerunner of Philo. Word and Wisdom are here synonymous. Our author chose Wisdom, Philo chose the Word as the intermediary between God and the world.

3. God's purpose in Creation beneficent, see i. 13.

8. A copy. In Ps. cxxxv. 16, Exod. xxv. 9 we have the idea of heavenly archetypes of certain things on earth. This seems to have been a common Semitic idea. The temple of the goddess Nina was built by Gudea, King of



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 9. 9—10. 1

- 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 the 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 labour;  
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 which are on earth were corrected,  
And men were taught the things that are pleasing unto thee;  
And through wisdom were they saved.

*The work of wisdom in history from Adam to Moses.*

- 10.1 She guarded to the end the first formed father of the world, that was created alone,  
And delivered him out of his transgression,

Lagash (3000 B.C.), after he had been shown a model of it in a dream (Maspero, *Dawn of Civilization*, p. 610). It is, therefore, not necessary to resort to the Platonic doctrine of ideas as Gfrörer does. Grimm prefers to take *ἀπὸ οὐρανό*, as heaven itself. The temple would then represent the higher just as the high-priest's garments represented the lower world. Cf. xviii. 24.

9. Here Wisdom is only present as a spectator at the Creation in accordance with Prov. viii. 30. His devotion to Scripture in this place overcomes the writer's philosophical theories.

11. *glory*. The meaning of this is difficult. The Latin cuts the knot by translating *potentia*. Certain scholars follow this and refer to Rom. vi. 4. If, however, 'guard' can be taken as carrying on the idea in 'guide' in the preceding line, then 'glory' may, as Grimm suggests, refer to the brightness which Wisdom sheds over the path of her followers. As the author places great stress on the superiority of Wisdom to Light (see vi. 12, vii. 10, 26, 29) this interpretation seems most probable.

15. The writer was no doubt somewhat influenced by the Greek idea of the inherent evil of matter, though he probably did not accept it. It is quite possible to admit that the body is the occasion of evil without accepting the dualistic theory that it is the cause of evil. For the connexion of this verse with Plato's *Phaedo* see Introduction, p. 532.

*cares*. The cares are mentioned in the next verse. Grimm prefers the rendering which is given in R.V. margin, 'that mused on many things.' The thought is a common one in literature, sacred and profane. See St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 4, 'For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened'; Seneca, *Ep.* 65 'Corpus hoc animi pondus ac poena est.' Philo made the body equivalent to a tomb, but according to Ritter and Preller, § 46, note b, he did not, as is sometimes said, get this from Heraclitus: 'Sed quod aiunt *σῶμα* esse quasi *σῆμα*, non est ab Her. inventum.'

16. *hardly*. If the mind were not weighed down by the body, knowledge would be easily acquired.  
*close at hand*, *τὰ ἐν χερσίν*. N 23 read *παρὶν*, also the Armenian according to Feldmann.

17. Here 'thy holy spirit' is plainly equivalent to Wisdom: this may have some bearing on the reading of vii. 22.

18. *through wisdom were they saved*. Houbigant divided the book here, and it must be admitted that it is a very good ending. It is in striking contrast to the ending of ch. xix.

N. 1. *alone*. According to Gen. ii. 7, Adam was created before anything was ready for him, therefore he required protection. The ingenious emendation of Bois, *ὁ μόνος*, the *ὁ* having dropped out after *κόσμου*, is accepted by Siegfried and Heinisch (p. 147). He would translate 'Wisdom not only guarded and delivered, but gave him', &c. For *καὶ* used in this way he quotes Esther v. 3 (Bois, p. 399).

*his, ὁδὸν*. This is doubtless, as already pointed out by Grimm, an instance of the 'use of the exhausted *ὁδὸς*, which is confirmed by the Apocryphal books, especially by those in Greek from the first' (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, pp. 123-4). In ch. xviii. vv. 13 and 21, there seem to be undoubted examples of this use. Opinions may differ as to the other cases, ii. 23, xi. 13, xii. 23, xvi. 23, xvii. 11, xix. 6, 13, 20, though Deissmann says the best course is 'to take

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 10. 2-14

- 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;  
So that wherein they had offended could not but be known:
- 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 labour;
- 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 in his sore conflict she guided him to victory,  
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 sceptre of a kingdom,  
And authority over those that dealt tyrannously with him;  
She showed them also to be false that had accused him,  
And gave him eternal glory.

*ἱδίοις* in the old sense only when the context absolutely requires it'. See also Bois, p. 409. In xix. 13 *ἱδίοις* is fortified by *αἰσῶν* and is certainly emphatic.

3. This is generally taken to mean that Cain underwent spiritual death when he slew his brother. Compare v. 13, 'As soon as we were born we ceased to be.' The writer's idea of life and death is a spiritual one. We find the same idea in Philo: 'Cain rose up and killed himself. . . . For the soul which destroys out of itself the virtue-loving and God-loving principle has died to the life of virtue' (*Quod det. pot.* § 14). There are two traditions as to the death of Cain, one that he was slain accidentally by Lamech who was blind, the other that he was overwhelmed in the fall of a house. See note on xi. 16.

4. **for his cause.** Like the author of the 'prophetic' narrative in Genesis, Pseudo-Sol. considers the evil on the earth before the flood to be due to the descendants of Cain.

5. **knew,** reading *ᾔστω* & A C Latin and Syriac. B gives *εἶπερ*.

**the righteous man.** Abraham.

6. Lot.

7. Cf. 'Apples of Sodom'. See Josephus in his account of the Dead Sea, *Jell. Ind.* iv. 8. 4.

**still standing.** Josephus says 'I have seen it, for it remains even now' (*Ant.* i. 11. 4). 'Robinson (ii. 108) remarks that during the rainy season such pillars are constantly in the process of formation and destruction' (Driver, in *Hastings' DB*, vol. iii, p. 152).

8. **disabled,** i.e. they incur 'judicial blindness'.

10. Jacob.

**holy things,** or holy ones, i.e. the angels ascending and descending.

12. **guided him to victory.** Latin 'dedit ut vinceret'. K. V. 'watched as judge', but see *ἡγεῖσθαι* in Liddell and Scott, ii. 2. The Syriac agrees in this interpretation.

13. Joseph.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 10. 15—11. 12

- 15 She 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 marvellous way,  
And became unto them a covering in the daytime,  
And a light 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 spoiled 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 by the hand of a holy prophet.

*Contrast between the fortunes of Israel and Egypt; the instrument of punishment to the Egyptians became the instrument of benefit to Israel.*

- 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,  
To punish the decree for the slaying of babes,
- 7 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.

15. a holy people and a blameless seed. This idealization of Israel is in strong contrast with Exod. xxxii. 9, Deut. ix. 6, and other similar passages. But the moral and spiritual superiority of the Jews to the heathen in the first century B.C. (see Housset, *Rel. des Jud.*, p. 83) would naturally be carried back to their ancestors in a heightened degree.

17. This is the strongest instance of allegory in the book. It is quite of a piece with 'Philo's habit of allegorizing an angel into a Logos' (Drummond, ii, p. 268).

20. spoiled. According to a tradition mentioned by Josephus (*Ant.* ii. 16. 6) the arms of the Egyptians were washed up on the shore and so provided the Israelites with weapons.

21. dumb. In Exod. iv. 10 Moses says 'I am slow of speech'.

XI. 2. Here the second part of the book begins. In v. 7 the writer speaks of the direct action of God, and continues to do so in vv. 10, 15, 17. In v. 20, it is true, he speaks of 'Justice', and the 'breath of thy power'; but reverts to the idea of the direct action of the Deity. Wisdom has disappeared and with it the Greek view of God as transcendent.

4. called upon thee. The writer prefers to follow Ps. cvii. 5 rather than Exod. xvii. 1-7.

ἀκρότομος = 'abrupt', 'precipitous': the LXX translation of חֲלָמִישׁ ('flint') in Deut. viii. 15. This shows direct dependence on the LXX.

5. The principles enunciated here and in v. 16 (appropriateness of retribution) are dwelt upon at considerable length in the rest of the book. The first point (elaborated in cc. xvi-xix), viz. that what injured the Egyptians benefited Israel, seems to be peculiar to the author. It appears later in Philo (*Vita Contem.* cii), 'For by the commandment of God the sea became to one party the cause of safety and to the other that of utter destruction'.

6. The R.V. margin says 'The text of this verse is perhaps corrupt'. B and C upheld by the Latin read *παρὰχθόντων*; *παραχθόντων*. If the nominative is read, a subject must be supplied—'the enemy', as in R.V.; if the genitive, the translation must be 'Instead of a perennial fountain of a river turbid with clotted blood thou gavest them', &c. R.V. (i.e. Hort) takes the first; Grimm, Feldmann, and others adopt the second.

12. things past, reading *παρελθόντων* *παραλθόντων* is given by B and C agreeing with *μετῶν*. Feldmann has a long discussion of the passage: he would emend to *μηνημονας* agreeing with *αἰώνων*.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON II. 13-22

- 13 For when they heard that by the very means wherewith they had been punished the others had been benefited,  
They felt the presence of the Lord;  
14 For him who long before was driven forth in hatred they left off mocking:  
And marvelled at the events that had come to pass,  
Having thirsted in another manner than the righteous.

*Appropriateness of retribution shown to be the purpose of God.*

- 15 But in requital of the senseless imaginings of their unrighteousness,  
Wherein they were led astray to worship irrational 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.

*God, though almighty, is full of mercy and compassion.*

- 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.

14. in hatred, reading *ἐν ὀχθρῇ* with N A C: B gives *ἐν ἰδύσῃ*.

16. For the idea see Ps. vii. 15, 16 ('He hath made a pit, &c.') and numerous other passages in the O. T. Jub. iv. 31 puts it very plainly: 'For with a stone he (Cain) had killed Abel and by a stone was he killed in righteous judgement.' As usual the writer does not trouble himself about literal accuracy. The Egyptians were punished, not by the identical animals which they worshipped, though in one district or another almost all animals were sacred, but by others, i.e. frogs and lice, quite as irrational and disgusting. Philo (*Vita Mos.* i. 17) says, 'For as the Egyptians used to honour the water in an especial degree . . . he thought it fitting to summon that first to the affliction and correction of those who honoured it.'

17. That created. Reading with all the versions, Lat., Syr., Arm., Kopt., *ἡ* for *καὶ*. B N<sup>a</sup> A C all read *καὶ κτίσαντα*. N<sup>a</sup> exhibits a conflate reading *ἡ καὶ κτίσαντα*. For the confusion between *ἡ* and *καὶ* see Cobet, *Variae Lectiones*, p. 5, 'ἡ et καὶ in veteri scriptura nil differunt.'

formless matter. As the words stand they convey a purely Greek philosophical idea. Matter was in existence from all eternity and God moulded it to His purpose. The question then arises—Did our author also conceive of matter as increate or did he assume that God first created formless matter and then brought it into order and arrangement? Grimm points out that the author's object was to adduce as great a proof as possible of the power of God. Creation *ex nihilo* would be even a greater marvel than the organization of matter; as the author does not mention this greater marvel it is urged that he did not accept it. Siegfried (*Philo*, p. 230) thinks that as Philo assumes the doctrine of the eternity of matter to be true and to require no proof, the Alexandrian Jews had accepted it before him. But even Philo, philosopher as he is, seems to waver in his acceptance of the belief (Siegfried, p. 232): 'God, when he begat all things, not only brought them into manifestation, but made things which did not exist before, being himself not only a Demiurge but also a Creator.' *De Somn.* i. 13. Caird (*Evolution of Theod.*, vol. ii. p. 191), speaking of Philo's views, says, 'In accommodation to Jewish notions God must be supposed to create the matter in which his ideas are realized.'

bears, or fierce lions. In *Vita Mos.* i. 19, Philo says, 'Some one may ask why God punished the land with such insignificant and despised animals and not rather by bears, lions, and panthers . . . who devour human flesh.' The answer he gives bears a striking similarity to that in Wisd. xii. 20-25, 'God was desirous rather to admonish the Egyptians than to destroy them.'

18. noisome smoke. R. V. taking *βρόπος*, 'roaring', as a misspelling of *βρωμῶς*, 'stench'.

19. The basilisk was supposed to kill by a glance.

20. measure and number and weight. Hence God deals out appropriate, not arbitrary retribution. This passage is referred to in Charles's *Testaments Naph.* ii. 3, where we read, 'By weight, measure, and rule was all the creation made.'

22. a grain: cf. Isa. xl. 15. Another indication of direct dependence on LXX.



- 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 wouldst thou have formed anything if thou didst hate it.  
25 And how would anything have endured, except 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 souls;  
12 For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things.  
2 Wherefore thou dost chastise 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 admonish them,  
That escaping from their wickedness they may believe on thee, O Lord.

*As shown by his patience with the Canaanites.*

- 3 For verily the old inhabitants of thy holy land,  
4 Whom thou didst hate because they practised detestable works of enchantments and unholy rites,  
5 Merciless slaughterers of children,  
And sacrificial banqueters on men's flesh and 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 destroy them at once;  
10 But judging them by little and little thou gavest them a place of repentance,  
Though thou knewest their nature 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 pass over their sins.

23. *repent.* The thought that the goodness and mercy of God are calls to repentance does not seem to occur earlier than this. It was taken up by St. Paul, Rom. ii. 4, and is found in 2 Pet. iii. 9.

24 to xii. 2. This beautiful passage has nothing to compare with it in cc. i-x. Ch. i. 13, 14 do not speak of the love of God in the fervent way that the writer does here: while vi. 6-7 refer rather to God's compassion.

24. In Philo, as in his master Plato, the goodness of God is the motive of Creation. But we have not quite got this idea here. It only needs another step, it is true, but the author did not take it. He does not go beyond the O.T. The Jews did not ask what motive God had in creating man. The nearest approach to alleging a motive is found in Isa. xlii. 7, where the creation of Israel for the 'glory' of Jehovah is spoken of.

25. *called* = 'created'. A Hebraism, cf. Isa. xli. 4. 'Calleth' in Rom. iv. 17 is not quite the same, but probably = 'issues commands to'.

26. *lover of souls.* φιλόψυχος, in classical Greek, means 'cowardly'.

XII. The writer has set forth a very high ideal of God in xi. 24, and endeavours to illustrate it not only by His action towards the chosen people, but even by the treatment extended to His enemies, the Egyptians and Canaanites. He can only achieve his purpose by disregarding certain parts of the Biblical tradition. The Egyptians, according to the writer, were treated mercifully, in being afflicted at first with lighter plagues as a means of correction and admonition. It was only when they refused to be admonished and to obey the God whom they recognized to be the true God, that the punishment of death was inflicted. The difference between this view and that found in Exodus is considerable. There Jahveh hardens Pharaoh's heart to prevent the plagues from having a reformatory effect. Again, the Canaanites, who, in spite of xi. 24, are described in xii. 4 as being hated by God, and as 'a seed accursed from the beginning', are said to have been leniently treated in order that they might escape from their wickedness by repentance. The reason given in Exodus (xxiii. 29, 30) why the Canaanites were destroyed little by little is that the land might not become the prey of wild beasts. The Deuteronomic editor of the Book of Judges gives two reasons why the Canaanites were not driven out at once: (1) To prove the Israelites; (2) To give them experience in war (Judges ii. 22-iii. 6).

5. *slaughterers, φονίαι.* R.V. gives 'slaughters', emending to φονίαι. This is probably on account of θοίαι, 'banquet', in the next clause; but φονίαι is supported by μίστρος and αἰθέριος γυνεὺς later on, so that it seems better to take 'banquet' as used by metonymy for 'banqueters' as in the Latin, which gives *devoratores*.

6. *Confederates.* The true reading of this line in the Greek seems beyond the possibility of recovery. The above rendering is that of the R.V. reading ἐκμυστοῦς from ἐκμυσθῆς, a word coined by Grimm in his first edition (1837). Grimm, in the edition of 1860, read ἐκ μυστοῦ μίστρος θάισου, which equals 'impious initiates or confederates of a (secret idolatrous) fellowship'. The meaning is the same, but he avoids coining a word.

11. *accursed from the beginning.* Cf. Gen. ix. 25.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 12. 12-27

*God's possession of almighty power shows that his leniency is due to his mercy.*

- 12 For who shall say, What hast thou done?  
Or who shall withstand thy judgement?  
And who shall accuse thee for the destruction of nations which thou didst make?  
Or who shall come and stand before thee as an avenger for the unrighteous?
- 13 For neither is there any God beside thee that careth for all,  
That thou mightst show unto him that thou didst not judge unrighteously:
- 14 Neither shall king or prince meet thee to plead for those whom thou hast punished.
- 15 But being righteous thou rulest all things righteously,  
Deeming it alien from thy power  
To condemn him that doth not deserve to be punished.
- 16 For thy strength is the beginning of righteousness,  
And thy sovereignty over all maketh thee to spare 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 wilt.

*His mercy an example to men.*

- 19 But thou didst teach thy people by such works as these,  
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 the enemies of thy servants, even them that were due to death,  
Thou didst punish with so great heedfulness and indulgence,  
Giving them times and place to 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.

*Those who did not respond to lenient treatment received a heavier punishment.*

- 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 dishonour,  
Deceived like foolish babes.
- 25 Therefore, as unto unreasoning children, thou didst send thy judgement to mock them.
- 26 But they that would not be admonished by a correction which was but as child's play  
Shall experience a judgement worthy of God.
- 27 For because through their own sufferings they were moved to indignation  
Against those creatures which they thought to be gods,

16. **beginning of righteousness.** So R. V.; Grimm, Deane, Farrar, and Siegfried, 'foundation.' Everywhere else in the book ἀρχή means 'beginning', though in xiv. 27 it is parallel with αἴτια: it may mean that God's power enables Him always to do justice. The word 'source' might be a good equivalent.

17. The Revisers say 'The Greek text here is perhaps corrupt'. B gives εἰδότες, 'those that know'; A omits εἰδότες, 'those that know not'. Latin has qui sciunt, with which the Syriac agrees. Bois (p. 400) offers the emendation ἐνδοξαστας, which is accepted by Siegfried. To rebuke the audacity of those that doubt certainly seems at first sight a more likely statement than to rebuke the audacity of those that know; but if we compare the last two lines of the chapter we see that the Egyptians, who 'saw and recognized' the true God and may thus certainly be said to know Him, are thought of here, so that εἰδότες is right. The Egyptians knew God's power but defied it.

20. **indulgence,** reading δεικνύς N. B reads δεικνύς, which gives no sense. A and Latin omit.

24. So R. V. Bois, however (p. 401), compares ἐν ζώῃς τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄντων with xv. τῶν ζῶν τῶν ἐχθρῶν σῶντων, and takes ἐχθρῶν with the same meaning in both places. If this is right we must probably translate 'taking as gods the most ignoble of hateful animals'. For the positive used as a superlative see Blass, *Gr. of N. T.*, p. 143.

26. The writer was misled by the LXX of Exod. x. 2 ὅσα ἐπαινοῦσα. There is no idea of child's play in the Hebrew word.

27. In opposition to R. V. and other renderings it is here suggested that ἐφ' οὗ is not prospective, anticipating ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσι, but simply means 'because' (on ἐφ' οὗ and ἐφ' οὗ see Sanday's *Romans*, v. 12, and Lightfoot, Phil. iii. 12). The editorial comma after ἡγαιεῖσθαι must be deleted.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 12. 27—13. 9

Being punished by their means,  
They saw, and recognized the true God whom before they refused to know;  
Wherefore also the uttermost penalty came upon them.

*Men being foolish by nature cannot know the true God, but worship, perhaps excusably, the works  
he has made.*

- 13 <sup>1</sup> For by nature all men were foolish, and had no perception of God,  
And from the good things to be seen had not power to know him that is,  
Neither by giving heed to the works did they recognize the artificer;  
<sup>2</sup> 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.  
<sup>3</sup> And if through delight in their beauty 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:  
<sup>4</sup> But if through astonishment at their power and influence,  
Let them understand from them how much mightier is he that formed them;  
<sup>5</sup> For from the greatness and beauty of created things  
Does man correspondently form the image of their first maker.  
<sup>6</sup> 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.  
<sup>7</sup> For living among his works they make diligent search.  
And believe their sight, because the things that they look upon are beautiful.  
<sup>8</sup> But again even they are not to be excused.  
<sup>9</sup> For if they had power to know so much,  
That they could explore the course of *things*,  
How is it they did not sooner find the Sovereign Lord of these *works*?

**the true God.** The indignation of the Egyptians at their gods, on finding them to be weaker than Jahveh, drove them to acknowledge Him to be the true God. The savage is often angry with his fetish. The statement in the text is founded either on Exod. viii. 8, ix. 28, x. 17, where Pharaoh requests Moses to 'entreat Jahveh' for him, thus recognizing that Jahveh was the true God, or on Exod. viii. 18, where the magicians, being unable to repeat the third plague, say, 'This is the finger of God.'

**Wherefore.** The writer takes it for granted that the reader will supply from the preceding words the thought that the Egyptians, though they recognized the true God, still refused to accept His admonition: 'Wherefore,' &c.

XIII. 1. **by nature . . . foolish,** as opposed to the intelligence that comes from wisdom. A solitary and indirect reference to the Wisdom of part I.

**the good things.** The argument from design was a favourite one with the Stoics. 'They argued from the analogy of human art, and contended that the orderly movements and immutable constancy of the universe were just as clear an evidence of controlling reason as could be found in a statue or picture, in the course of a ship or a sundial' (Drummond, *Philo*, i, p. 77). Cf. Rom. i. 20, and see Sanday and Headlam, *in loco*.

**him that is,** *τὸν ὄντα*, from LXX Exod. iii. 14 'Εγὼ εἰμι ὁ Θεός.

2. By the words 'fire', &c., Grimm, on the basis of Philo, *De Dec. Or.* ch. xii, and *De Vita Cont.* 1, takes the author to refer to the personification of natural phenomena under the names of Hephaestus, fire; Aeolus, wind; Hera, air; and Poseidon, water. E. Pfeiderer, who wishes to make the author a thoroughgoing Greek philosopher, takes the references to be to Heraclitus, who made fire the original element (i.e. fire as a vivifying and quickening power); Anaximenes, who proposed air; Pythagoras, who, with many others, considered the 'circling stars' to be gods; and Thales, who considered water to be the origin of all things. It is, of course, impossible to deny that the writer may have had these philosophers in his mind, but the reference is most probably a general one. See the statement of Prodicus in Zeller, *Pre-Socratic Phil.*, ii, p. 482.

**luminaries of heaven.** These were common objects of heathen worship. Cf. Deut. iv. 19, where it is also distinctly stated that Jahveh assigned the heavenly bodies to the nations to be worshipped.

3. **their beauty.** The commentators point out that the admiration of beauty is a Greek trait, not Hebrew. The beauty of the universe was a favourite subject with the Stoics.

5. **greatness and beauty.** Although N B and A, the Latin and Peshitta, all read 'the greatness of the beauty', the editors (except R. V.) all accept the reading given in the text, which follows N<sup>a</sup>, various cursives, including 248, Athanasius, and other patristic authorities; and according to Feldmann is found in the Armenian, Syro-Hexaplar, Aethiopic, and probably the Coptic versions.

9. The writer, perhaps, forgot that he considered the Gentiles to be *μῆραι φύσει*, 'foolish by nature', see *v.* 1. His question may be one of surprise, or he may, as Grimm and others suggest, insinuate that there was a moral failure. Philo makes it an intellectual failure, 'Therefore those persons are mere guessers who are anxious to contemplate the uncreated God through the medium of the things which he created; acting like those persons who seek to ascertain the nature of the unit through the number two when they ought to employ the investigation of the unit itself to ascertain the nature of the number two, for the unit is the first principle.'

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 13 10—14. 6

*But some men are without excuse because they worship objects which they themselves have made.*

- 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 beasts,  
Or a useless stone, the work of an ancient hand.  
11 Yea, and if some woodcutter, having sawn down a tree he can handle,  
Skillfully strippeth away all its bark,  
And fashioning it handsomely maketh a vessel for the service of life;  
12 And with that which is left he prepareth his food and is filled;  
13 And taking that which is left again, for which no use can be found,  
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 colouring 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, and maketh it fast with iron.  
16 In order therefore that it may not fall, he taketh thought for it;  
Knowing that it is unable to help itself;  
(For verily it is an image, and hath need of help.)  
17 And when he maketh his prayer for his goods and for 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 no experience,  
And for a good journey that which cannot so much as use its feet,  
19 And for gaining and getting and good success of his hands  
He asketh power of that which with its hands is quite powerless.

*Folly of the navigator who for safety prays to a useless piece of wood.*

- 14 Again, one preparing to sail, and to journey through raging waves,  
Calls on a piece of wood less sound than the vessel that bears him;  
2 For that vessel the hunger for gain devised,  
And an artificer by his 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 not be idle;  
Therefore also do men intrust 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,

10. work of an ancient hand. Acts xix. 35.

11 ff. Founded on Isa. xl, xli, xlii and xlii.

13. idleness. The idol is made at odd times and no care spent upon it. A different method is mentioned in xiv. 19. NB ἀργίας, ἄργιας.

indolence. N\* A B ἀνείκελος, ἀνείκελος N\* Latin.

18. ἀνεπίστατος. An elative. A.V. margin 'that which hath no experience at all'. R.V. 'hath least experience'.

XIV. 1. less sound. Lit. 'more rotten'; see xiii. 13, where the wood of which the idol is made cannot be used for anything else.

2. by his wisdom. So the Vulgate and Syriac. N B A give τεχνίτης δι' σοφίαν, and R.V. translates 'an artificer, even wisdom'. Nearly all the editors prefer the first, taking wisdom as the human quality. Blass *Gram. of N. T.* (Gk., p. 6) points out that the mute ι in the dative was often omitted by scribes; also (see p. 8) η sometimes becomes ι. So read τεχνίτης δι' σοφίαν. See also Thackeray, *Gr. of O. T. in Greek*, p. 85.

3. Because. This and the next three lines refer to Noah. The lines justify the statement that it is God's providence that guides a vessel rather than man's seamanship. Noah was not acquainted with navigation.

5. a little piece. ὀλίγον, elative sense = 'very little'. See Thackeray, *Gr. of O. T.*, p. 185.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 14. 6-22

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 was the wood through which cometh righteousness :

## *Idolaters shall be punished.*

- 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 that which was made shall be punished together with him that made it.  
11 Therefore 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 stumblingblocks to the souls of men,  
And a snare to the feet of the foolish.

## *The origin of idolatry.*

- 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 for ever ;  
14 For through the vain error of men they entered into the world,  
And therefore has a speedy end been devised for them.  
15 For a father worn with untimely grief,  
Making an image of the child too quickly taken away,  
Now honoured him as a god who then was a corpse,  
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 graven images were worshipped.  
17 And when men could not honour them in presence because they dwelt far off,  
Imagining the likeness from afar,  
They made a visible image of the king whom they honoured,  
That by their zeal they might flatter the absent as if he were present.  
18 But unto a yet higher pitch of worship  
Did the ambition of the artificer urge forward even them that knew him not,  
19 For he, wishing perchance to please the ruler,  
Compelled his art to give the likeness greater beauty ;  
20 And so the multitude, allured by the grace of his work,  
Now accounted as an object of worship him whom they had honoured before as a man.  
21 And this became a hidden danger unto life,  
Because men, under the power either of calamity or of tyranny,  
Invested stones and stocks with the incommunicable Name.

## *Evil results of idolatry.*

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

7. **righteousness**, i. e. 'the righteous purpose of God'. The ark preserved a righteous man, who was the ancestor of the righteous people. This is the highest example of the beneficial purposes for which wood has been used; other examples are seen in its enabling God's gifts to be conveyed from one part of the world to another; but wood which is put to a bad use is 'accursed'.

8. **idol made with hands**. χειροποίητος, the term used in LXX Isaiah to translate עֲלִיל, ii. 18, x. 11, *et al.*

11. **a visitation**. ἐπισκοπή used in an unfavourable sense as in xix. 15, the only other occurrence of the word in this part of the book.

14. **devised**. ἐνευρήθη is used as a paranomasia—which the R.V. keeps up—upon ἐπίνοια, 'devising', in v. 12. The A.V. prefers to give the meaning plainly, 'therefore shall they shortly come to an end.' Cf. 1 En. xcix. 9, where of the idolaters it is said, 'They shall have wrought all their work in a lie and shall have worshipped a stone: therefore in an instant shall they perish.'

15. The theory of Euhemerus was that idolatry arose from the worship of deceased heroes. The writer adopts this view with a slight modification.

17. On the basis of the words 'absent ruler' Bousset (*Rel. des Juifenthums*, p. 35) would date the book after Egypt had come under the Roman Empire. For the worship of the Emperors, cf. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero*, p. 617: 'But Egypt went rather too far for the western mind in its apotheosis of kings.'

22. Cf. Philo, *de Conf. Ling.* c. 12, 'For they do in peace everything that is done in war; they plunder, ravage, carry off booty; they assault, destroy, pollute; they murder treacherously; they murder openly if they are the more powerful.'

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 14. 22—15. 7

- 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 slays another treacherously, or grieves him by adultery;  
 25 And all things confusedly are filled with blood and murder, theft and deceit.  
 26 Corruption, faithlessness, tumult, perjury,  
 Disquieting of the good,  
 Ingratitude for benefits received,  
 Defiling of souls, confusion of sex,  
 Disorder in marriage, adultery, and wantonness.  
 27 For the worship of those unnameable idols  
 Is the beginning and cause and end of every evil.  
 28 For *their worshippers* either make merry unto madness, or prophesy lies,  
 Or live unrighteously, or lightly forswear themselves.  
 29 For putting their trust in lifeless idols,  
 They wickedly swear *false* oaths and look not to be harmed.  
 30 But for both *sins* shall the just doom pursue them,  
 Because they had evil thoughts of God by giving heed to idols,  
 And swore unrighteously in deceit, despising holiness.  
 31 For not the power of them by whom men swear,  
 But Justice which hath regard to them that sin,  
 Punisheth always the transgression of the unrighteous.

*Benefits of worshipping the true God.*

- 15 1 But thou, our God, art gracious and true,  
 Longsuffering, 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 are accounted thine:  
 3 For to know thee is perfect righteousness,  
 Yea, to know thy dominion is the root of immortality.  
 4 For neither did any evil device of man lead us astray,  
 Nor yet the painters' fruitless labour,  
 A form stained with varied colours:  
 5 The sight whereof leadeth fools into lust:  
 Who desire the form of a dead image that hath no breath;  
 6 Lovers of evil things, and worthy to have such things to hope in,  
 Are both they that make them, and they that desire, and they that worship them.

*Another example of the manufacture of idols.*

- 7 For a potter, kneading soft earth,  
 Laboriously mouldeth each *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 either sort,  
 The craftsman *himself* is the judge.

27. ἀνομιαν, Latin *infandorum*. The meaning may be 'unspeakable', 'indescribable', referring to the immoralities of the mystery cults without any reference to Exod. xxiii. 13. The context favours this. Cf. Eph. v. 12.

XV. For a moment the writer turns aside to contrast the true worship with the false. The interruption has the effect, which was doubtless intended, of giving a slight rest to the reader before renewing the polemic against idolatrous worship.

2. **we shall not sin.** If the nation could be regarded as holy and blameless in the past in spite of the admissions in xii. 22, xvi. 11, xviii. 20, the future could be painted in the same colours.

5. **lust, ἡδονή.** N A C and all the versions. *ἡδονή* B and 68. *πορνείας* in v. 6 justifies this. The reference, no doubt, is to Pygmalion, King of Cyprus, who fell in love with a statue of Venus.

7. For the connexion of this verse with Rom. ix. 21, see *Introd.*, p. 536. E. Pfeiderer compares the saying of Heraclitus that 'the clay out of which things are made is for ever being moulded into new forms' (*Zeller, Pre-Soc. Phil.*, ii, p. 17), and affirms direct connexion.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 15. 8-17

- 8 And also, with evil labour, he mouldeth a vain god from the same clay,  
He who, but a little before was made of the earth,  
And will soon go his way *to the earth* out of which he was taken,  
When the soul which was lent him shall again be demanded.
- 9 Howbeit his care is,  
Not that his powers must fail,  
Nor that his span of life is short;  
But he rivals the workers in silver and gold,  
And copieth moulders in brass,  
And esteemeth it glory that he mouldeth counterfeit things.
- 10 His heart is ashes,  
And his hope of less value than earth,  
And his life of less honour than clay:
- 11 Because he was ignorant of him that moulded him,  
And of him that inspired into him an active soul,  
And breathed into him a vital spirit.
- 12 But he accounted our life to be but a game,  
And our way of life a gainful fair;  
For one must, saith he, get gain whence one can, though it be by evil means.
- 13 For this man beyond all others knoweth that he sinneth,  
When out of the same earthy matter he maketh both brittle vessels and graven images.
- 14 But most foolish *were* they all, and of feebler soul than a babe,  
The foes of thy people, who crushed them;
- 15 Because all the idols of the nations they reckoned as 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 it was that made them,  
And one whose own spirit is borrowed moulded them;  
For no one hath power, *being* a man, to mould a god like unto himself,
- 17 But, being mortal, he maketh a dead thing with lawless hands;  
For he is better than the things he worshippeth;  
Of the two, he indeed had life, but they never.

8. **the soul which was lent him.** This idea is repeated in v. 16, and must therefore be taken as a settled conviction of the writer. Whether in his mind it included the idea of pre-existence, it is perhaps difficult to say; it is, however, far less definite than the statement in viii. 20, 'I came into a body undeiled,' and it is immediately followed by words in v. 11 which are apparently inconsistent with pre-existence. From *ψυχή* here and *πνεῦμα* in v. 16 it appears that they were to our author only different names for the same thing. This shows without any elaborate argument that there is no trichotomy intended in v. 11.

9. **he rivals.** The clay idols were glazed and gilded.

10. For the connexion of this verse with LXX see *Introd.*, p. 524. The word 'ashes' in Isa. xlv. 20, on which this passage is based, means that which is worthless. Cf. Job xiii. 12, 'Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes.' The words are a rhetorical statement that the whole being of the idolater is inferior to the clay he uses, though in v. 17 the opposite statement is made.

11. That the soul and spirit are here the same, cf. second part of note on v. 8. On the subject see the long and interesting note of Lightfoot on 1 Thess. v. 23 (*Notes on Epistles of S. Paul*).

12. **a gainful fair.** This comparison is traced by Grimm to Pythagoras, who said τὸν βίον ἐοικέναι πανηγύρι (Dio. Laert. viii. 1. 6). Cicero (*in Tusc. Disp.* v. 359) and other writers quote the saying. As the comparison was evidently well known, we cannot from its use here deduce any direct acquaintanceship by the author with the system of Pythagoras.

**gain.** The commentators quote the well-known passage of Horace, 'rem facias, rem. Si possis recte, si non, quocumque modo rem' (*Ep.* i. 1. 65).

15. It was a characteristic of heathen worshippers that they admitted the reality of the gods of other nations. This was natural enough to people who were not Monotheists. The Hebrews themselves before they were Monotheists acknowledged the existence of other gods besides Jahveh. Solomon recognized the gods of his foreign wives (1 Kings xi. 1-8). But the Egyptians went further than this. 'The Egyptian gods during the flourishing period of the country's history were not exclusive. They admitted into their number such of the gods of neighbouring peoples as had been found to be powerful and capable of resistance' (Wiedemann, p. 186 of *Hastings' DB*, extra vol.).

17. **Of the two.** R. V. 'Forasmuch as', reading *ὅτι ὡς* with R. All other MSS. *ὡς*, except 157 and 253, which omit. For the disappearance of the dual see Thackeray, *Gr. of O. T.*, p. 22.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 15. 18—16. 14

*The Egyptians worshipped irrational and unclean animals and were therefore punished by means of them. Small animals, viz. quails, benefited the Israelites.*

- 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 are outcasts from 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, for the desire of their appetite;
- 3 In order that thine enemies, when they desired to eat,  
Might for the hideousness of the creatures sent among them  
Loathe even the necessary food;  
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 tyrants inexorable want should come,  
But that to these it should only be showed how their enemies were tormented.

*It is true the Israelites had serpents sent against them, but that was for admonition.*

- 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 by that which he saw,  
But by thee, the Saviour of all.
- 8 Yea, and in this didst thou convince 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 came to their help, and healed them.
- 11 For they were bitten, that they should remember thine oracles;  
And were quickly saved, lest, falling into deep forgetfulness,  
They should be irresponsive to thy beneficence:
- 12 For of a truth neither herb nor mollifying plaister restored them to health,  
But thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things;
- 13 For thou hast power over life and death,  
And thou leadest down to the gates of Hades, and leadest up again.
- 14 But though a man can slay by his wickedness,  
Yet the spirit that is gone forth he bringeth not back,  
Neither giveth release to the soul that Hades hath received.

19 b. The writer probably considered that other animals besides the serpent were included in the curse of Gen. iii. 14: possibly all the creeping animals.

XVI. 3. **hideousness**, εἰδέχθαι. This reading, a hapax legomenon, is generally accepted. It is given by C. some cursives, including 248, and the Syro-Hexaplar version. εἰδέχθαι is given by N B A, Complu., Latin, Syr., and some cursives. εἰδέχθαι is accepted by most editors as referring to the frogs in the ovens and kneading-troughs, Exod. viii. 3.

3 c. **food**. Literally, 'appetite.' As for the quails see note on xix. 12.  
6. The allegory here is not so thoroughgoing as in xvi. 17. There Wisdom is identified with the cloud: here the serpent is a σύμβολον. Philo suggests that the serpent was chosen as a symbol of σαρφισμός and κακουργία.

**token**. N and A read σύμβολον, 'counsellor'.  
11. **irresponsive**, a paraphrase of ἀπερίστατος, 'unconcerned about'. R.V. 'unable to be roused by'. 23 (V) and 253 read ἀπερίστατοι, 'destitute of'.

12. **thy word**. Cf. Ps. cvii. 20, 'He sent his word, and healed them.' See on xviii. 15.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 16. 15-26

*How the Egyptians were punished by fire and the Israelites benefited.*

- 15 But thy hand it is not possible to escape;
- 16 For the ungodly, refusing to know thee, were scourged by the strength of thine arm,  
Pursued with strange rains and hails and showers inexorable,  
And utterly consumed with fire;
- 17 For, what was most marvellous 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* might see and perceive that they were pursued by the judgement of God:
- 19 And at another time even in the midst of water it burns beyond 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 use didst thou provide from heaven without *their* toil,  
Bread having the virtue of every pleasant savour,  
And agreeing to every taste;
- 21 For thy substance manifested thy sweetness toward *thy* children,  
Ministering to the desire of the eater,  
And transforming 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 might be nourished,  
Had even forgotten its 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

16 ff. Hail was rained down upon the Egyptians, but (v. 20) manna upon the Israelites.  
**strange rains.** Rain is unusual in Egypt, see Deut. xi. 10. 'It is only the parts along the sea-coasts that are ever moistened with a few drops of rain' (Philo, *Vita Mos.* i. 20).  
 17. Philo (*Vita Mos.* i. 20) notices this 'miracle within a miracle'. The lightning and the thunderbolts penetrated and descended through the hail, still they did not melt it nor were the flashes extinguished by it.  
 18. **that these**—and they alone: even the animals that formerly plagued them miraculously escaped. The writer has forgotten that the frogs are said to have been swept away by an east wind.  
 19. **fruits, γέννημα.** A new *κοινή* formation distinguished from γέννημα, 'offspring', see Thackeray, *Gram.*, p. 118.  
 20. **provide.** Reading παρέσχε A C<sup>1</sup> Latin, and Syriac. ἐπέσχε B.  
**agreeing to every taste.** This idea is found in the Talmud, *Yoma* 75, where it is said, 'Just as a child at the breast enjoys various flavours, so did the Israelites when they ate the manna find therein various flavours.'  
 21. **substance,** Greek ἡσώματα. This word has caused great difficulty. Early scholars proposed emendations; A. V. gives 'sustenance', and 248 altered σὺν into αὐτοῦ. It has been made equivalent to the Logos, and the R. V. translates it by 'thy nature'. It seems probable, however, that the writer was thinking of nothing more than the common substance which according to the Stoics underlay all four elements. As pointed out in the next note, he makes use of the doctrine of the metabolism of the elements to account for the manna being transformed to suit every taste. Here he goes back in thought to what the manna was before it assumed the attributes or accidents which differentiated it from other objects. The technical terms among the Stoics for substance and attribute were τὸ ὑποκείμενον or σὺν and τὸ πρῶτον (Zeller, *Stoics*, p. 97). The steps of the process were (1) ἡσώματα, (2) manna, (3) transformation.  
**transforming itself.** The author here gives a metaphysical basis to the events mentioned in v. 20 by the Stoic doctrine of the interchange of the four elements. Heraclitus first, and the Stoics after him, taught that the elements changed into one another by condensation and rarefaction, πύκνωσις and μίαισις. See Dio. Laert. ix. 8, quoted in Ritter and Preller, § 36, for Heraclitus (Heraclitus recognized only three elements); and for the Stoics, Ritter and Preller, § 497, and Zeller, *Stoics*, &c., pp. 131 ff. See also the quotation from Philo given in the note on xix. 18.  
 22. **snow and ice, i. e. the manna.** See xix. 21.  
 23. **might be nourished.** See Num. xi. 8, where the manna is said to have been capable of being baked in the oven, though it melted before the sun.  
 24. **Straineth . . . slackeneth.** In addition to the interchange of the four elements with one another, the power of a single element—here in v. 22 and 27 fire—could be increased or moderated.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 16. 26—17. 11

- That not the growth of *earth's* fruits do nourish a man,  
But thy word which preserveth them that trust thee.  
27 For that which could not be injured by fire,  
Simply warmed by a faint sunbeam melted away;  
28 To make 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.

*The plague of darkness.*

- 17 1 For great are thy judgements, and hard to interpret;  
Therefore souls undisciplined went astray.  
2 For when lawless men supposed they had overpowered a holy nation,  
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 scattered one from another by a dark curtain of forgetfulness,  
Stricken with terrible awe, and sore troubled by spectral forms.  
4 For neither did the 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 could the brightest flames of the stars illumine that gloomy night:  
6 But there appeared to them only the glimmering of a fire self-kindled, full of fear;  
And in terror at that sight on which they could not gaze  
They deemed the appearance  
To be worse *than it really was*;  
7 And the mockeries of magic art lay low,  
And shameful was the rebuke of their boasted knowledge:  
8 For they that promised to drive away terrors and troubles from sick souls  
Were sick *themselves* with fear worthy of laughter:  
9 For though no troublous thing affrighted them,  
10 Yet, scared with the creepings of vermin and hissings of serpents, they perished for very trembling;  
Refusing even to look on the air, which could on no side be escaped.  
11 For wickedness in itself is a coward thing, and witnesseth its own condemnation,

27. by fire, i.e. the manna in the oven.

28. Several scholars have maintained that 'Wisdom' was written by a member of the Therapeutae, and have appealed to this passage as well as to iii. 13, 14, iv. 8, and viii. 28. Grimm, however, shows that the habit of prayer before sunrise was a Jewish practice.

XVII. 3. *secret sins*. The writer appears to attribute to the ancient Egyptians the mystery cults of his own time. He seems to picture some of them as engaged in their worship and suddenly scattered. It is true, he says in vi. 16, every man remained in the place where he was; but, as he also says in xix. 17 that they tried to grope their way to their houses, it is plain that rigid consistency is not to be looked for in details due solely to the imagination of the writer, hence the literal translation 'scattered'—R. V. margin—is best. A and C read *ἐκκρίθησαν*. The description is a good example of the Jewish haggadic method of treating history.

4. *rushing down*. Reading *ὡς κατακρησσομένης* with B<sup>ab</sup> A C and Latin *descendens*. Feldmann prefers *ὡς ἐκρησσομένης*, the reading of B\*. N has *κατακρησσομένης*, and so affords no help. If the more difficult reading is to be preferred that in the text—R. V. and Mr. Gregg—should be taken.

6. *And in terror, &c.* 'The form of expression is too obscure to be understood with certainty' (Farrar). If, however, we take *ὄφει* and *τὰ θεαρόμενα* to refer to the same thing, viz. the self-kindled fire, a good meaning can be obtained. The Egyptians did not or could not gaze directly upon the fire, but for all that could not avoid seeing it, and consequently were more terrified than they would have been had they deliberately looked at it. The endeavours of timid people to avoid seeing the flashes of lightning in a storm may be compared.

7. Reading *κατέκρητο* with N B and Latin, as against the plural in A C and 248. The plural is no doubt the more difficult reading, and is perhaps supported by *κατακρησσομένων* in 8 b. It is accepted by R. V.; but it is difficult to believe that a Jew would call the punishment sent by God *μυακή* *τέχνη*. The R. V. gives 'and they lay *helpless*', made the sport of magic art'.

10. *the air*. The ancients considered the natural colour of the air to be dark—*ἰσχυρόν* (Philo, *Vita Mos.* iii. 6 and 12). They shut their eyes so as not to look on the blackness of the air which surrounded them.

11. *in itself*. Reading *ἑαυτῷ* N A B and Latin, not *ἑαυτῷ* N\* and Comp. followed by Grimm and R. V. *ἑαυτῷ* is used nine other times in this part of the book, and is never separated from the word it qualifies. This is upheld by Feldmann. The origin of the mistake was doubtless the itacism in N and A, which both give *μαρτυρεῖ* for *μαρτυρεῖται*. See Thackeray, *Gram.*, p. 85.



THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 17. 11—18. 4

- And, being pressed hard by conscience, always forecasteth the worst :
- 12 For fear is naught but a surrender of the succours which reason offereth ;
- 13 And when from within *the heart* the expectation thereof is o'erthrown  
It reckons its ignorance worse than the cause that bringeth the torment.
- 14 But they, all through the night, which in truth was powerless  
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 paralysed by their soul's surrender ;  
For fear sudden and unlooked for came upon them.
- 16 So then each and every man sinking down in his place  
Was shut up in ward in that prison which was barred not with iron :
- 17 For whether he were husbandman, or shepherd,  
Or a labourer 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 spreading 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* paralysed 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,  
Envied them because they had not suffered,
- 2 And because they do not harm them *now*, though wronged by them before, are thankful ;  
And for their *former* hostility besought their pardon.
- 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 the loss of light and imprisonment in darkness,  
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.

**conscience.** This is the first mention of conscience in the Scriptures. It is here regarded as the higher self, after the manner of Philo (see Drummond, *Philo*, ii, pp. 124 and 295).

**forecasteth.** Reading *προειληφε* with  $\aleph^a$  and Latin *praesumit* instead of *προειληφε* with  $\aleph^a$  B C, which is accepted by Prof. Margoliouth and translated 'always increaseth its hardships'. In spite of the manuscript evidence all editors read *προειληφε*. According to Feldmann the Armenian and Coptic versions uphold it.

17. **in the wilderness,** *κατ' ἐρημίαν*, a Hebraism due to the LXX using *ἐρημος* to translate *מִדְבָּר*, the place where cattle are driven for pasture ; not a wilderness in our sense of the word.

18. The birds are made to sing in the darkness, and in v. 20 the writer says the whole world besides was in light. It has therefore been suggested that he thought of a subjective darkness, which would, of course, simply be blindness. But v. 10 is against this, and in xix. 17 he distinguishes between the blindness of the men of Sodom and the ' yawning darkness ' which encompassed the Egyptians.

21. **spread.** *ἐπέτατο* B A, *ἐπέτατο* N, *ἐπετέτατο* 254. The right form is doubtless *ἐπετέτατο*, which is printed in the Roman text apparently without manuscript authority.

**An image, &c.** Mr. Thackeray, *JTS*, vol. vi, p. 232, thinks that this line may be a Christian interpolation. The repetition of *σκότους* looks suspicious.

XVIII. 1. **not suffered.** Grimm, Siegfried, Farrar, Gregg, all agree in reading *οὐ* with A and Latin, instead of *οὐκ* N and B. Grimm's explanation that *οὐ* was altered into *οὐκ* by a scribe who took *καί* to refer to the Egyptians fully justifies the rejection of *οὐκ*, though it is better supported by manuscript evidence. Deane, following Gutberlet, takes *οὐ* and *οὐκ* together = ' whatsoever they also had suffered (before), they (the Egyptians) counted them happy '. This is accepted by Feldmann and Stevenson.

4. **Through whom, &c.** Cf. *Test. of Twelve Pat.*, Levi xiv. 4: ' The light of the law which was given to lighten every man.'

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 18. 5-19

*The Egyptians counsel death against the Israelites, but are slain themselves.*

- 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 punish them thou didst take away a multitude of their 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 the salvation of the righteous and destruction of the enemies.
- 8 For as thou didst take vengeance on the adversaries,  
By the same act thou didst glorify us, and call us unto thyself.
- 9 For holy children of good men offered sacrifice in secret,  
And with one consent took upon themselves the covenant of the divine law—  
That the saints would partake alike in the same blessings and perils—  
Singing the while the fathers' 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 noblest offspring was destroyed.
- 13 For though they had disbelieved all things by reason of their 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 swiftness was in mid course,
- 15 Thine all-powerful word leaped from heaven down from *the* royal throne,  
A stern warrior, into the midst of the doomed land,
- 16 Bearing as a sharp sword thine unfeigned commandment,  
And standing filled all things with death;  
And while it touched the heaven it trode upon the earth.
- 17 Then forthwith apparitions in terrible dreams troubled them,  
And fears came upon them unlooked for:
- 18 And one thrown here half dead, another there,  
Declared the cause of his death;
- 19 For the dreams, perturbing them, did foreshow this,  
That they might not perish without knowing why they were afflicted.

5. To punish them. Charles on Jub. xlviii. 14, p. lxxiv, shows that *ἐκ τῶν ἁγίων* must be taken as in the text. He would emend by deleting 'and saved' in line 2 and 'of their children' in line 3. He shows that *ἐκ τῶν ἁγίων* is probably a mistaken rendering of *ἐκ τῶν ἁγίων*, 'a myriad'. The meaning then would be that for every single Hebrew child cast into the Nile, ten thousand of the Egyptians were drowned. The passages here and in Jubilees are both based on a common tradition.

6. our fathers, i.e. the Patriarchs, as probably in v. 9.

9. divine law, reading *θεῖον νόμον* B A as against *δουλοῦ νόμον* N, Latin, Syriac, and other versions.

the saints, *οἱ ἅγιοι*. This is quite in accordance with the writer's idealization of the Israelites. R. V. with Grimm and others would take *οἱ ἅγιοι* with *αἱ ὁδοὶ*, 'the sacred songs of praise', but, as Mr. Gregg points out, the rhythm of the Greek is against this.

the fathers', &c. The reading adopted in the text is that of R. V. margin, following N<sup>a</sup> A, Complut., the Latin, and in all probability the Syriac. The writer attributes the custom of his own time—the singing of psalms at the Passover—to the Israelites at the Exodus. R. V. translates 'the fathers already leading', &c., reading *ἐπὶ τῶν πατέρων* with B.

12. noblest, R. V. 'nobler'. For this rendering of the comparative, see Thackeray, *Grimm, of O. T. in Gk.*, p. 181.

14. her swiftness. *ἰσχύς* is here plainly used in its 'exhausted' meaning, see note on x. 1.

15. Thine all-powerful word. Eichhorn, p. 158, and Gfrörer, p. 236, affirm this passage to show a pre-philonian use of the Philonic Logos. But in view of xvi. 12, which is plainly based on Ps. cvii. 20, and the Jewish complexion of this part of the book, it seems better with Grimm to take it as founded on O. T. usage (cf. Hos. vi. 5 LXX, 'I shew them by the word of my mouth'; Jer. xxiii. 29, 'Is not my word like a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?'; Ps. cxlvii. 26, 'His word runneth very swiftly'), though undoubtedly it differs from these passages in a far stronger personification. In 1 Chron. xxi. 16, which the writer may have had in his mind, the destroying angel is said to stand between heaven and earth.

16. unfeigned, *ἀνεπίκριτος*. The command was meant to be executed. It was no empty threat, feigned to terrify.

17. terrible dreams. The textual evidence for *ὀνείματα* *δεινὰ* is N A, several cursives, Comp., and all the versions. B alone reads *δεινὰ* which R. V. renders.

19. The revelation by dreams to those about to be punished may be compared with the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 18. 20—19. 5

*The Israelites also experienced the punishment of death, but the plague was stayed by the intercession of Aaron.*

- 20 But it befell the righteous also to experience death,  
And a multitude were stricken in the wilderness:  
Howbeit the wrath endured not for long.
- 21 For a blameless man hastened to be their champion:  
Bringing the weapon of his ministry,  
Even prayer and the propitiation of incense,  
He withstood the indignation, and put an end to the calamity,  
Showing that he was thy servant.
- 22 And he overcame the anger,  
Not by strength of body, not by power 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 its access to the living.
- 24 For upon *his* long *high-priestly* robe was the whole world *pictured*,  
And the glories of the fathers *were* upon the graving of the four rows of precious stones,  
And thy majesty *was* upon the diadem of his head.
- 25 To these the destroyer gave way, and these he feared;  
For the mere proof of the wrath was enough.

*But there was nothing to stay death in the case of the Egyptians.*

- 19 1 But upon the ungodly there came pitiless wrath to the uttermost;  
For what they would do He knew before,  
2 How that, having pressed them to be gone,  
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 adopted another counsel of folly,  
And pursued as fugitives those whom with intreaties they had cast out.
- 4 For the doom they deserved was dragging them unto this end,  
And made them forget what things had befallen them,  
That they might fill up the punishment yet lacking to their torments,
- 5 And that thy people might journey by a marvellous road,  
But they *themselves* might find a strange death.

Dan. ii. E. Pfeleiderer would see the influence of the Stoics here, and they certainly laid stress on the prophecies of the dying (Zeller, *Stoics*, p. 355, note 6).

21. Aaron, see Num. xvi. 47.

22. *anger*. Reading *χόλον* for *ὄχλον*, which gives no sense. So all editors (except Gutberlet and Deane), following Bauermeister.

24. *the whole world*. This is explained by passages in Philo, *Vita Mos.* iii. 12 and 13, where we learn that the high priest's robe and its adornments represented the *κόσμος*. The robe itself was blue, or rather dark purple (*ἰσικαθός*), and represented the air. The flowers on it symbolized the earth, and the pomegranates water, and (in c. xiii) the scarlet dye of the robe is the emblem of fire. The writer is thus able to get in another illustration of the idea found in v. 17, 20, xvi. 17, 24, and xix. 6, that 'the world fighteth for the righteous'.

25. *he feared*. *ἐφοβήθη* is supported by N<sup>o</sup> A, some cursives, including 248, the Comp. and Latin. It is accepted by Grimm, Siegfried, Feldmann, and Deane. *ἐφοβήθησαν* is supported by N<sup>o</sup> B C, some cursives, and Syr., and is adopted by R. V. and Mr. Gregg. Against the plural it may be urged that (1) the subject 'the people' has to be supplied, and (2) there seems to be no reason why the people should have feared the holy garments of the high priest.

XIX. 2. *pressed*, *ἐπιστρέφοντες*. R. V. 'changed their minds to let thy people go'. For the rendering here adopted see Jebb's note on Soph. *Trach.* 1182, where he says of *ἐπιστρέφω*, 'the primary notion is that of turning some constraining force upon a person.'

3. *adopted*. R. V. 'drew upon themselves'. For similar uses of the word in the sense here given see Liddell and Scott under *ἐπισπάω*, mid.

*cast out*, *ἐξέβαλον*. Probably a reminiscence of *ἐκβάλλω*, Exod. xi. 1 and xii. 33.

# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 19. 6-17

## *Creation fought for the chosen people,*

- 6 For the whole creation in its several kind was fashioned again anew,  
Performing their several commands,  
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 Through which they passed 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 delivered them.
- 10 For they still remembered what came to pass in the time of their sojourn,  
How instead of bearing cattle the land brought forth lice,  
And instead of fish the river cast up a multitude of frogs.
- 11 But afterwards 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.

## *And against the Egyptians.*

- 13 And upon the sinners came the punishments  
Not without tokens given beforehand by the force of thunders;  
For justly did they suffer through their own exceeding wickednesses,  
For grievous indeed was the hatred which they practised toward guests.
- 14 For whereas certain men received not strangers who came among them,  
These made slaves of guests who were their benefactors.
- 15 And not only so, but God shall visit the former 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 they too were stricken with loss of sight  
(Even as 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.

6. **fashioned again.** The writer again refers to the philosophical doctrine of the transmutation of the elements into one another; see xvi. 21 and xix. 18. Bois (p. 270) calls this 'a second edition of the Creation'.

12. The writer omits all mention of the murmuring of the Israelites. So does Philo, *Vita Mos.* i. 37, 'the Hebrews... enjoyed the most exquisite meat, varying their food with this necessary and delicious addition.' Philo takes it that the supply of quails was as regular as that of the manna.

13. **beforehand.** Josephus, *Ant.* ii. 16, records the tradition that the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea was accompanied by a violent storm. Our author has perhaps slightly altered the tradition, though the reading is not absolutely certain, γαγονότων B, προγαγονότων N A C Latin and Syriac. The tradition is probably founded on the poetry of Ps. lxxvii. 17-20.

**own, ιδίος,** strengthened by αὐτῶν, is most probably emphatic. Grimm would make it very emphatic: their own extraordinary and peculiar wickedness.

14. **certain men,** i.e. men of Sodom.

15. The punishment, ἐπισκοπή, of the men of Sodom is to be lighter than that of the Egyptians. When is this ἐπισκοπή to take place? Grimm thinks in the Messianic age, or rather perhaps at the world judgement preceding it. This is the only certain reference in this part of the book to future retribution. In the earliest section of 1 Enoch there are different gradations of punishment for the wicked in Sheol (Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 188). The text is that of R. V., which is conjectural. Swete gives καὶ οὐ μόνον, ἀλλ' ἡ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν ἔσται αὐτῶν, which means 'and not only so, but assuredly a certain kind of visitation, i.e. deliverance, shall be theirs'. But the author would not be likely to entertain any idea of a deliverance of the Sodomites, and to weaken the word ἐπισκοπή to mean 'consideration', 'allowance', is without justification. We can, dividing the words of B differently from Swete, read ἀλλ' οὐ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν = 'another kind of punishment', but as after οὐ μόνον, ἀλλὰ is necessary, and the Latin gives 'sed et alius quidam respectus', R. V. is probably right in seeing an instance of haplography in B and adopting the emendation of Graebe, ἀλλ' ἀλλ' οὐ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν.



# THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON 19, 18-22

*The marvels explained by the theory of the transmutation of the elements.*

- 18 For the elements changed their order one with another,  
Just as the notes of a psaltery vary the character of the rhythm,  
Continuing always *the same*, each in its *several* sound;  
As may clearly be divined from the sight of what came to pass.
- 19 For creatures of dry land were turned into creatures of waters,  
And creatures that swim trode *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 esteem them;  
Standing by their side in every time and place.

18. i.e. God deals with the elements as a musician handles his instrument. He arranges and rearranges them to produce the required results (Bois, pp. 410 ff.). Cf. Philo, *Vit. Mos.* i. 17, 'For all the elements of the universe, earth, water, air, and fire, of which the world was made, were all brought into a state of hostility against them, so that the country of those impious men was destroyed to exhibit the height of the authority which God wielded, who had fashioned those same elements at the creation of the universe so as to secure its safety, and who could change them all whenever he pleased to effect the destruction of impious men.'

Continuing. *μίνοντα* is neuter, agreeing grammatically with *στοιχεῖα*, but the sense shows that it should agree with *φθιγγον*.

20 and 21. See xvi. 18 and 23.

22. Contrast this verse with ix. 18, 'Through wisdom were they saved'; with x. 9, 'But wisdom delivered out of troubles those that waited on her'; and xi. 1, 'She (wisdom) prospered their works by the hand of a holy prophet.' The point of view has certainly changed, if not the writer.