EDITION OF THE GREEK TEXT
The NETS translation of the Wisdom of Salomon (WisSal) is based on the edition of Joseph Ziegler, *Sapientia Salomonis (Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editionum XII.1, 2 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962 (durchgesehene Auflage, 1962)])*. This fully-fledged critical edition is based primarily on the evidence of the major Greek witnesses, Codex Vaticanus (B) and Codex Sinaiticus (S), which Ziegler believed to be related, and Codex Alexandrinus (A), but it also draws on the evidence of all the other Greek witnesses and of the versions, particularly the Old Latin. This (the Old Latin) dates from the second half of the second century and is of particular importance because it is based on Greek manuscripts earlier than any still extant. In addition to Ziegler’s edition, I have consulted the manual edition of the Septuagint edited by Alfred Rahlfs (*Septuaginta. Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes, 2 vols. [Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935]*)

I have diverged from the critical text established by Ziegler in only six cases. In two of these, Ziegler adopted into his text readings based on the evidence of the Old Latin: in 2.9 I read ἡμῶν, which is attested by most of the Greek witnesses, and not λειμών (= pratum of the Old Latin), and in 18.23 I read τὴν ὕπαρξιν, attested by all the Greek witnesses, and not τὴν ὤρμην (= Old Latin impetum). In 12.5 I follow an old conjecture and read φονᾶς in place of φονίας. In 7.1 I read θυτός with B*-S, not θυτός αὐθηραπος, and in 15.14 I read οἱ καταδυναστευόμενοι, which is attested by many Greek manuscripts and seems to be required by the sense, not καταδυναστευόμενοι. Finally, in 15.17 I read ἀνθ’ ὄν with S and other Greek witnesses, not ὄν. In all six cases the reading I have adopted corresponds to that followed by the NRSV.

CHARACTER OF THE GREEK
There is widespread recognition that the WisSal was composed in Greek, and the few suggestions that have been made for composition in Hebrew or Aramaic and for translation into Greek have found little support. The book is an example of a protreptic work (προτρεπτικὸς λόγος), an exhortation to adopt a particular philosophy, and it deploys literary genres familiar from Hellenistic rhetorical texts including the diatribe (1.1–6.11 + 6.17–20; 11.15–15.19), the “problem” genre (6.12–16 + 6.21–10.21), and the comparison (σύγκρισις, 11.1–14 + 16.1–19.22). Correspondingly, as Reese in his important study of the literary style and vocabulary of WisSal has shown, the book is written in a good Greek style and shows none of the characteristics of translation Greek. The author does adapt his style to the point that he makes use of *parallelismus membrorum*, which is a characteristic feature of Hebrew verse, but he also employs “the features of florid Greek rhetorical prose.” The author uses a full range of Hellenistic stylistic devices, and this is evident particularly in his very frequent use of hyperbaton, both hyperbaton involving the separation of the article from its substantive and hyperbaton not linked to an article. A common type of the latter in Wisdom is the placing of a verb form between a noun and its modifier, e.g., παρούσαν τε μιμοῦνται αὐτήν (4.2).

The very frequent use of hyperbaton is obvious on even a casual reading of the Greek of the WisSal. But the rhetorical character of the Greek is likewise evident in the frequent occurrence of different types of wordplay, such as assonance and alliteration. The author also employs various figures of speech that are typical of Hellenistic Greek, of which the sorites of 6.17–20 is merely the best known example.

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TO THE READER OF WISDOM OF SALOMON

The vocabulary of the WisSal is quite distinctive within the context of the Septuagint and reflects the Hellenistic milieu in which the book was composed, as Reese has demonstrated. On the one hand, the author uses a number of words familiar from the Septuagint but with their normal meaning in Greek. For example, the word φόνος occurs in 17.17 and 19.4 in the sense familiar from Greek of “necessity, fate,” but when it is used in the Septuagint in books translated from Hebrew, it always has the meaning “distress, anguish” (e.g., Ps 106[107].6). On the other hand, the author uses 335 words (out of a total vocabulary of 1734 different words) that do not occur in any other canonical book of the Septuagint, and Reese has shown that many of these are characteristic of Hellenistic religious, philosophical, ethical, and psychological vocabulary. The use of Hellenistic religious vocabulary in the WisSal is pervasive and includes such words as αὐστητός ("reflection," 7.26) and πάγος ("sitting by," hence “throne-partner," 9.4, cf. 6.14), both used to describe wisdom, or αὐστητήτα ("nameless," 14.27) and αὐστής ("lifeless," 13.17; 14.29), both used in the description of idols, or στεφανοφόρος ("wearing a crown," 4.2), used of the virtuous but childless believer. The use of Hellenistic philosophical vocabulary within the WisSal is illustrated by some of the terms applied to wisdom in 7.22–24, such as ὄφελος ("unhindered") and ἔργοτικός ("beneficient"), or by the words that describe Salomon’s relationship with wisdom, γυμφή ("bride," 8.2) and ἔρωστις ("enamored," 8.2), which are not used in a metaphorical sense in the Septuagint. Examples of Hellenistic ethical vocabulary are to be found in the terms used for virtues and vices in WisSal, such as αὐστητήτα ("longsuffering, forbearance," 2.19) or ἐπωρχία ("perjury," 14.25, one of a whole list of vices in 14.25–26), and examples of psychological vocabulary are to be found in the terms used to describe the fear that gripped the lawless Egyptians (17.3–19), such as ἰνδιάλημα ("apparitions," 17.3) or δείσια ("terrors," 17.8), or in such terms as ὁπότομος ("stern, severe," 5.20; 6.5; 11.10; 12.9; 18.15).

Finally it may be observed that the author quotes from the Septuagint in a number of places (cf. e.g., 2.12 and Esa 3.10; 11.22 and Esa 40.15; 16.22 and Ex 9.24).

THE NETS TRANSLATION OF THE WISDOM OF SALOMON

The translation for NETS of a book composed in Greek is manifestly a different kind of enterprise from the translation of a book composed in Hebrew and translated into Greek. The NRSV already provides a translation of the Greek text of WisSal and is based on a Greek text that differs to only a limited extent from the one used for the present translation. That there should, nonetheless, be a need for a NETS translation of WisSal different from that of the NRSV derives from the different aims of the two translations and from the different needs of the audiences at which they are directed. Thus whereas the NRSV “is intended for use in public reading and congregational worship, as well as in private study, instruction, and meditation,”7 NETS “is aimed primarily at . . . a biblically well-educated audience”8 and is intended in the first instance as an aid to scholarly study. With this in mind, I have tried to keep to the following principles for the translation of WisSal for NETS: (1) the general principle “as literal as possible, as free as necessary;” (2) consistency in English translation equivalents so far as is compatible with the meaning of the sentence being translated; (3) in the light of these two principles, the NRSV as the default translation.

With regard to details, I have used gender-inclusive language except in passages where the cultural context seemed to require otherwise (e.g., 14.1, 8). In most such passages, the NRSV gives a similar translation but not in the case of the passage concerning the potter (15.7–13). I have usually translated ὁθρώτος by “human being” or “mortal,” occasionally by other words, and have only translated it by “man” in the one passage (9.5) where the context required it.

EDITORIAL DETAIL

The chapter and verse divisions follow those given by Ziegler in the Göttingen edition of WisSal and correspond almost without exception to those given in the NRSV. But in one or two cases (e.g., 4.14–15) there are minor differences from the NRSV affecting the verse division.

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5 The examples that follow are taken from Reese, Hellenistic Influence, 3–25.
6 Except where otherwise indicated, none of the following words occurs elsewhere in the Septuagint.
7 ἰνδιάλημα also occurs in Ier 27(50).39 with the meaning “phantoms.”
8 See the preface in the NRSV by B. M. Metzger addressed “To the Reader.”
The division of the text into paragraphs also follows Ziegler’s edition of WisSal, but differs in some respects from the arrangement of the text in the NRSV. However, I have not felt it necessary in all cases to follow Ziegler’s punctuation of the Greek text.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE
In addition to the NRSV and to standard grammars, lexica and concordances, I have consulted the translations by David Winston (The Wisdom of Solomon [AB 43; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1979]) and by S. Holmes (“The Wisdom of Solomon,” in Charles I.518–568). I have also found it helpful on occasions to consult the Revised Version (the revision of the Apocrypha appeared in 1895) and the German translation by Johannes Fichtner (Weisheit Salomos [Handbuch zum Allt Testament: II.6; Tübingen J. C. B. Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1938]), which includes some brief notes on the Greek text.

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1 Love righteousness, you who judge the earth; think about the Lord in goodness, and seek him with sincerity of heart; because he is found by those who do not test him, he reveals himself to those who do not distrust him.

2 For crooked thoughts separate from God, and his power, when it is tested, convicts the foolish, because wisdom will not enter a soul that plots evil or reside in a body involved in sin.

3 For a holy and disciplined spirit will flee from deceit and depart from senseless thoughts and be ashamed when unrighteousness approaches.

4 For wisdom is a kindly spirit, but it will not hold blasphemers free of the guilt of their words, because God is a witness of their inner feelings and a true overseer of their hearts and a hearer of their tongues.

5 Because the spirit of the Lord fills the world and that which holds all things together has knowledge of what is said, therefore those who utter unrighteous things will not escape detection, and justice, when it convicts, will not pass them by.

6 For there will be an inquiry into the intrigues of the impious, and a report of their words will come to the Lord to convict them of their lawless deeds, because no word uttered in secret will go without effect, and a mouth uttering falsehood destroys the soul.

7 Beware then unprofitable grumbling, and keep your tongue from slander, because no word uttered in secret will go without effect, and a mouth uttering falsehood destroys the soul.

8 Do not zealously seek death by the error of your life or bring destruction on yourselves by the deeds of your hands, because God did not make death nor does he delight in the destruction of the living.

9 For he created all things that they might exist, and the generative forces of the world are wholesome, and there is no destructive poison in them, nor is the kingdom of Hades on earth. For righteousness is immortal.

10 But the impious by their deeds and words summoned it; considering it to be a friend, they wasted away and made a covenant with it, because they are worthy to belong to its party.

11 For they did not reason rightly and said among themselves: "Short and sorrowful is our life, and there is no remedy when a human being dies, and no one is known who has returned from Hades.

12 Because we came into being by chance and hereafter we shall be as though we had never existed, because the breath in our nostrils is smoke and reason is a spark within the beating of our hearts, when it is extinguished, the body will turn to ashes,
and the spirit will be dispersed as thin air.
And our name will be forgotten in time, and no one will remember our deeds; our life will pass away as the traces of a cloud and will be scattered as mist that is chased by the rays of the sun and weighed down by its heat.
For our allotted time is the passing of a shadow, and there is no putting back of our death, because it has been sealed and no one turns it back.
"Come, therefore, let us enjoy the good things that exist, and let us make good use of the creation as in youth;
let us take our fill of costly wine and perfumes, and let no flower of spring pass us by.
Let us crown ourselves with rosebuds before they are withered.
But let our strength be the standard of what righteousness is, for what is weak is proved to be useless.
"Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us, and he opposes our actions and reproaches us for sins against the law and ascribes to us sins against our training.
He professes to have divine knowledge and calls himself a child of the Lord; he has become a reproof to us of our thoughts; he is a burden to us even to see, because his life is unlike that of others and his behavior is different.
We are considered by him to be base, and he keeps distant from our ways as from uncleanness.
He calls the last end of the righteous happy and boasts that God is his father.
Let us see if his words are true, and let us test what will happen at the end of his life;
for if the righteous man is a divine son, he will help him and will rescue him from the hand of those who oppose him.
Let us afflict him with insult and torture, that we may learn how reasonable he is and may put his forbearance to the test.

Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to his words, he will be watched over."
Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray, for their wickedness blinded them, and they did not know divine mysteries nor hoped for the wages of holiness nor recognized the reward for blameless souls.
Because God created human beings for immortality and made them the image of his own nature, but through the envy of the devil death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it.

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was considered to be suffering, and their going from us to be destruction, but they are at peace.
For even if in the sight of human beings they were punished, their hope is full of immortality, and having been disciplined a little, they will be greatly benefited, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; as gold in the furnace, he tested them, and as a sacrificial whole burnt offering, he accepted them.
And in the time of their visitation they will shine out, and as sparks through the stubble, they will run about.
They will judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will be king over them for ever.
Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will remain with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his chosen ones.
But the impious will receive punishment in accordance with the way they reasoned, those who neglected the righteous person and revolted from the Lord—
for the one who disdains wisdom and instruction is wretched—and their hope is vain, and their labors are unprofitable;
and their deeds useless; 
their wives are foolish, and their children 
evil;
(13)
Because blessed is the barren woman who is 
undefiled, 
she who has not known intercourse that 
involved transgression, 
for she will have fruit at the visitation of 
souls.
And b blessed is b the eunuch who has done 
no lawless deed with his hands 
nor thought evil things against the Lord, 
for special favor will be given c him for his 
faithfulness, 
and a very delightful lot in the shrine of the 
Lord.
For the fruit of good labors is renowned, 
and the root of understanding does not fail.
But the children of adulterers will not reach 
maturity, 
and the offspring of unlawful intercourse 
will perish.
Even if they live long, they will be held of 
no account, 
and finally their old age will be without 
honor; 
if they die early, they will have no hope 
nor comfort on the day of decision, 
for the end of an unrighteous generation is 
grievous.

Better is childlessness with virtue, 
for in the memory of it d is immortality, 
because it is recognized both by God and by 
human beings.
When it is present, they imitate it, 
and they long for it when it has gone, 
and through all time it marches wearing the 
crown, 
having won the victory in the contest for the 
prizes that are undefiled.
But the prolific brood of the impious will be 
of no use, 
and illegitimate seedlings from them will 
not strike deep root 
or take firm hold;
for even if for a time they sprout e and 
produce f branches, 
growing unstable, they will be shaken by the 
wind, 
and by the force of the winds uprooted.
The branches will be broken off before they 
come to maturity, 
and their fruit will be useless, 
too unripe to eat and fit for nothing.
For children born of unlawful intercourse 
are witness of evil against their parents 
when they are examined f.
But the righteous, even if they die 
prematurely, will be at rest.

For an honored old age does not consist in 
length of time, 
nor is it measured by number of years, 
but understanding is gray hair for human 
beings, 
and a spotless life is ripe old age.
One who became well-pleasing to God was 
beloved, 
and, while living amongst sinners, was 
taken;
he was seized in order that wickedness 
should not affect his understanding 
or guile deceive his soul.
For the fascination of wickedness g obscures 
the things that are good, 
and roving desire undermines an innocent 
mind.
But being perfected in a short time, he 
fulfilled long years;
for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, 
therefore he hastened h from the midst of 
evil.
But the peoples saw and did not understand 
nor take such a thing to heart, 
[that grace and mercy are upon his chosen 
ones 
and he watches over his holy ones.]
But the righteous who are dead will 
condemn the impious who are 
living, 
and youth that is quickly made perfect, the 
prolonged old age of the 
unrighteous, 
for they will see the end i of the wise 
and will not understand what the Lord 
planned for them 
and for what he kept them safe.
They will see and will be contemptuous, 
but the Lord will laugh them to scorn.
And after this they will become dishonored 
corpses 
and an object of outrage amongst the dead 
for ever, 
because he will dash them speechless to the 
ground 
and shake them from the foundations, 
and they will be left utterly dry and barren 
and will be in anguish, 
and the memory of them will perish.
And they will come with dread at the 
reckoning of their sins, 
and their lawless deeds will convict them to 
their face.
Then the righteous will stand with great 
confidence 
in the presence of those who have afflicted 
them

a Or had b Lacking in Gk c Or shown d i.e. virtue e Or with f Or at their examination g Or worthlessness h Or hastened him i Or death
and those who make light of their labors.

2 When they see them, they will be troubled with terrible fear and will be amazed at the unexpected salvation of the righteous.

3 Repenting, they will say amongst themselves (and through distress of spirit will groan):

4 “These are they whom we once held in derision and as a byword of reproach—we fools! We thought their life to be folly and their end to be without honor.

5 How have they been counted amongst divine sons, and how is their lot amongst the holy ones?

6 Surely we strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness did not shine on us, and the sun did not rise on us.

7 We were entangled in the thorns of lawlessness and destruction and journeyed through trackless wastes, but the way of the Lord we did not know.

8 What has our arrogance profited us? And what good has our boasted wealth brought us?

9 “All those things have passed away like a shadow and like a rumor that runs by, like a ship that passes through the billowy water, of which, when it is has gone by, no trace can be found, no track of its keel in the billows, or, as when a bird flies through the air, no evidence of its passage is found, but the light air, lashed by the beat of its pinions and pierced by its violent rush, is traversed by the movement of its wings, and afterwards no sign of its coming is found there,

10 or, as when an arrow is shot at a target, the air, thus cut through, immediately comes together so that no one knows its pathway, so we, as soon as we were born, ceased to be, and we had no sign of virtue to show but were consumed in our wickedness.”

11 Because the hope of the impious is as dust that is carried by the wind and as light frost that is driven away by a hurricane, and it is scattered like smoke by the wind and passes like the remembrance of a guest who stays for only one day.

12 But the righteous live for ever, and in the Lord is their reward, and the care of them with the Most High. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will protect them and with his arm he will shield them.

13 He will take his zeal as his whole armor and make creation his weapons for vengeance on his enemies; he will put on righteousness as a breastplate and wear impartial justice as a helmet; he will take holiness as an invincible shield and will sharpen stern anger for a sword, and creation will fight with him against those without sense.

14 Because the hope of the impious is as dust that is carried by the wind and as light frost that is driven away by a hurricane, and it is scattered like smoke by the wind and passes like the remembrance of a guest who stays for only one day.

15 But the righteous live for ever, and in the Lord is their reward, and the care of them with the Most High. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because with his right hand he will protect them and with his arm he will shield them.

16 He will take his zeal as his whole armor and make creation his weapons for vengeance on his enemies; he will put on righteousness as a breastplate and wear impartial justice as a helmet; he will take holiness as an invincible shield and will sharpen stern anger for a sword, and creation will fight with him against those without sense.

17 Well-aimed shafts of lightning will fly out and from the clouds, as from a well-drawn bow, will leap to the target, and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will overwhelm them relentlessly; a mighty wind will rise against them and like a hurricane will winnow them away.

18 And lawlessness will make the whole earth a desert, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers.

Hear therefore, you kings, and understand; learn, you judges of the ends of the earth; give ear, you that have dominion over multitudes and boast of many nations, because your dominion was given you from the Lord and your dominion from the Most High. He will examine your deeds and inquire into your counsels, because, being servants of his kingdom, you did not judge rightly or keep the law or walk according to the counsel of God. Terribly and swiftly he will come upon you, because a severe judgment falls on those in high places.

For the least may be pardoned in mercy, but the mighty will be mightily tested, for the Sovereign Lord of all will not give way to anyone or have regard for greatness, because he himself made small and great and takes thought for all alike, but a strict inquiry awaits the powerful.

To you therefore, you princes, my words are addressed, that you may learn wisdom and not fall into error.

aLacking in Gk  bOr death  cOr as its wings move  dOr chaff or thistledown  eOr to repel  fOr will come upon
10 For those who have observed holy things in holiness will be made holy, and those who have been taught them will find a defense.

11 Set your desire therefore on my words; long for them, and you will be instructed.

12 Wisdom is radiant and unfading and is easily discerned by those who love her and found by those who seek her; she anticipates those who set their desire on her to make herself known in advance.

13 Those who rise early for her will not have to labor, for they will find her sitting at their gates.

14 For to fix one’s thought on her is perfect understanding, and those who lie awake on her account will quickly be free from care, because she goes about seeking those worthy of her and graciously appears to them in their paths and meets them in every thought.

17 For her true beginning is the desire for instruction, and concern for instruction is love of her, and love of her is keeping her laws, and paying attention to her laws is confirmation of incorruption, and incorruption brings one near to God; so the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom.

21 If therefore you take delight in thrones and scepters, you princes of peoples, honor wisdom that you may reign for ever.

22 What wisdom is and how she came into being I will declare, and I will hide no mysteries from you, but I will trace out from her first beginning and bring knowledge of her into the open, and I shall not pass by the truth.

23 Nor indeed will I travel in the company of consumptive envy, because this can have no fellowship with wisdom.

24 A multitude of wise people is the salvation of the world, and a sensible king is the stability of a people.

25 Therefore be instructed by my words, and you will profit.

7 I myself also am mortal like everyone, and a descendant of the first-formed individual born on earth, and in the womb of a mother I was molded into flesh, within the period of ten months being compacted of blood, from the seed of man and the pleasure that accompanies intercourse.

3 And I myself, when I was born, drew in the common air and fell upon the kindred earth, with the same first sound crying like everyone.

4 In swaddling clothes I was nursed, and with care.

5 For no king has had a different beginning of existence, but there is for all one entrance into life and the same way out.

7 Therefore I prayed, and understanding was given to me; I called on God, and a spirit of wisdom came to me.

8 I preferred her to scepters and thrones, and wealth I considered nothing in comparison with her.

9 Neither did I compare any priceless gem to her, because all gold in her sight is a little sand, and silver will be counted as clay before her.

10 I loved her more than health and beauty and chose to have her rather than light, because the radiance from her never rests.

11 But all good things came to me together with her and in her hands uncounted wealth.

12 I rejoiced in them all because wisdom leads them, but I did not know that she was their mother.

13 I learned without guile, and I impart without grudging; I do not hide her wealth.

14 For it is an unfailing treasure for human beings; those who get it obtain friendship with God, commended for the gifts that come from instruction.

15 May God grant to me to speak with judgment and to think thoughts worthy of what has been given to me, because he himself is the guide even of wisdom and the corrector of the wise.

16 For both we and our words are in his hand, both all understanding and skill in crafts.

17 For he himself gave me an unerring knowledge of the things that exist, to know the constitution of the world and the activity of the elements,

a Or her beginning is the true desire for instruction b Lacking in Gk c Or from the beginning of creation d a mortal man = Zi
18 the beginning and end and middle of times, the alterations of the solstices and the changes of the seasons, 
19 the cycles of the year and the constellations of the stars, 
20 the natures of animals and the tempers of wild animals, the violent forces of spirits and the thoughts of human beings, the varieties of plants and the powers of roots, and all things, both what is secret and what is manifest, I learned, 
22 for she that is the fashioner of all things taught me, namely wisdom.

For there is in her a spirit that is intelligent, holy, unique, of many parts, subtle, free-moving, lucid, unpolluted, distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, sharp, unhindered, beneficent, loving towards humanity, firm, unailing, free from care, all-powerful, all-surveying and penetrating all spirits that are intelligent, pure, most subtle. 
24 For wisdom moves more freely than any movement; she pervades and penetrates all things because of her pureness. For she is a breath of the power of God and an emanation of the pure glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. 
26 For she is a reflection of eternal light and a spotless mirror of the activity of God and an image of his goodness. 
27 Although she is one, she can do all things, and while remaining in herself, she renews all things, and in every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets; for God loves nothing except the person who lives with wisdom, and she is more beautiful than the sun and above every constellation of stars. Compared with the light, she is found to be more radiant, for this is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom wickedness does not prevail.

8 She reaches with might from one end of the world to the other and orders all things well.

2 Her I loved and sought out from my youth, and I sought to take her as my bride, and I became enamored of her beauty. She glorifies her noble birth by having a shared life with God, and the Sovereign Lord of all loves her, for she is an initiate in the knowledge of God and chooses his works. If riches are a desirable possession in life, what is richer than wisdom which makes all things? And if understanding is productive, who more than she is the fashioner of the things that exist? And if anyone loves righteousness, the fruits of her labors are virtues, for she teaches self-control and understanding, righteousness and courage; nothing is more useful in life than these for human beings. And if anyone longs for wide experience, she knows the things of old and infers the things to come; she understands the subtilities of speech and the solutions of riddles; she has foreknowledge of signs and wonders and the outcomes of seasons and times. I determined then to take her to live with me, knowing that she would be a good counselor for me and a comfort in cares and grief. Because of her, I will have glory among the multitudes and honor in the presence of elders, although I am young. I will be found quick in judgment and in the sight of rulers will be admired. When I am silent, they will wait, and when I speak, they will pay attention, and if I talk at greater length, they will place a hand on their mouth. Because of her, I will have immortality and will leave behind an everlasting memorial for those who come after me. I will govern peoples, and nations will be subject to me; dread princes will fear me when they hear of me, among the multitude I will show myself noble, and in war courageous. When I enter my house, I will find rest with her; for companionship with her has no bitterness, and living with her no grief, rather gladness and joy. When I considered these things in myself and pondered in my heart that in kinship with wisdom is immortality and in friendship with her pure delight.

aOr winds bLacking in Gk
and in the labors of her hands unfailing
wealth
and in training in intimate companionship
with her understanding
and great renown in a conversing with her, I
went about seeking how I might take her
to myself.
19 I was a naturally clever child,
and I obtained a good soul as my lot,
or rather, being good, I entered an undefiled
body.
21 But knowing that I would not otherwise
gain possession of her unless God
gave it to me—
and it was a mark of understanding to know
in whose gift it was—
I made supplication to the Lord and
besought him,
and with my whole heart I said,

9 "God of the fathers and Lord of mercy,
who made all things by your word
and by your wisdom formed human
beings
to rule over the creatures that were made by
you
and to manage the world in holiness and
righteousness
and to pronounce judgment in uprightness
of soul,
give me wisdom that sits by you on your
throne,
and do not reject me from amongst your
children,
because I am your servant and the son of
your handmaid,
a weak and short-lived man,
with limited understanding of judgment
and laws;
for even if someone is perfect amongst
human beings,
if the wisdom that comes from you is
absent, they will be considered to be nothing.
7 You preferred me as king of your people
and judge of your sons and daughters;
8 you said that I should build a shrine on
your holy mountain,
an altar in the city of your encamping,
a copy of the holy tent that you prepared
beforehand from the beginning.
9 With you is wisdom, which knows your
works
and was present when you made the world
and understands what is pleasing in your
eyes
and what is right according to your
commandments.
10 Send her out from the holy heavens,
and from your glorious throne send her,
that, being present with me, she may labor
b with me
and that I may learn what is well-pleasing
before you,
11 for she knows all things and understands
them
and will guide me prudently in my actions
and guard me with her glory.
12 Then my deeds will be acceptable,
and I will judge your people justly
and be worthy of the throne of my father.
13 For what human being can learn divine
counsel?
Or who can conceive what the Lord wills?
For the thoughts of mortals are worthless,
and our inventions liable to fail.
15 For a corruptible body burdens the soul,
and the earthly tent weighs down a mind
full of cares.
16 With difficulty we make inferences about
what is on earth,
and what is at hand we find with labor,
but who has traced out what is in the
heavens?
17 Who has learned your counsel
unless you gave wisdom
and sent your holy spirit from on high?
18 And thus the ways of those on earth were set
right,
and human beings were taught what is
pleasing to you
and were saved by wisdom."

10 She carefully guarded the first-formed
father of the world, when he alone
was created,
and delivered him from his own
transgression;
she gave him strength to rule over all things.
3 But when an unrighteous man departed
from her in his anger,
he perished through his fratricidal rage.
4 When because of him the earth was flooded,
wisdom again saved it,
piloting the righteous man by a worthless
piece of wood.
5 She also, when nations, collaborating
together in wickedness, were put to
confusion,
recognized the righteous man and preserved
him blameless with God
and kept him strong in the face of
compassion for his child.
6 She rescued a righteous man, when the
impious were perishing,
as he fled from the fire descending on the
Five Cities.
7 As testimony of their evil
a smoking waste still remains,
and plants bearing fruit b that does not ripen,
and b a stele of salt standing as a monument
to an unbelieving soul.

a Or sharing her words  b Lacking in Gk  c Or servants  d Or thoughts  e Or before it is ripe
For, having passed wisdom by, they not only were hindered from recognizing the things that are good, but also left behind for human life a reminder of their folly in order that in the things in which they failed they would not be able to escape detection.

But wisdom rescued from troubles those who served her. When a righteous man fled from his brother’s anger, she guided him on straight paths; she showed him a divine kingdom and gave him knowledge of holy things; she prospered him in his toils and increased the fruits of his labor.

When in their greed men were trying to prevail over him, she stood by him and made him rich; she carefully guarded him from his enemies, and from those who lay in wait for him she kept him safe; and in his arduous contest she decided in his favor, that he might learn that piety is more powerful than everything.

She did not abandon a righteous man who had been sold but rescued him from sin; she went down with him into the dungeon, and when he was in chains, she did not leave him until she had brought him the scepter of a kingdom and authority over those who ruled over him.

Those who had found fault with him she showed to be false and gave him everlasting glory.

A holy people and a blameless race she rescued from a nation of oppressors; she entered into the soul of the Lord’s attendant and withstood terrible kings with wonders and signs.

She paid to holy people a reward for their labors; she guided them on a marvelous way and became a covering for them by day and a blaze of stars by night.

She led them across the Red Sea and brought them through deep water, but their enemies she drowned, and from the bottom of the deep she cast them up. Therefore the righteous spoiled the impious; they sang hymns, O Lord, to your holy name and praised with one accord your hand that vindicated them, because wisdom opened the mouth of the dumb and made the tongues of infants articulate.

She prospered their actions by the hand of a holy prophet. They journeyed through an uninhabited wilderness and in trackless places pitched their tents; they withstood their adversaries and defended themselves against their enemies. They thirsted and called upon you, and water was given them out of flinty rock, and a remedy for their thirst out of hard stone.

For through the very things by which their enemies were punished, they themselves were benefited in their need. Instead of the perennial spring of a river, stirred up with defiled blood in rebuke for the decree to kill the infants, you unexpectedly gave them abundant water, having shown by their thirst at that time how you punished their opponents.

For when they were tested, although they were being disciplined in mercy, they learned how the impious, being judged in anger, were tormented. For these you put to the test like a father giving a warning, but the others you examined like a stern king passing sentence. Whether far away or near, they were alike distressed, for a double grief took hold of them, and a groaning at the memory of what had occurred.

For when they heard that through their own punishments the others were being benefited, they took notice of the Lord.

For they mockingly disowned the one who long before had been cast out and exposed, but at the end of events they marveled at him, having thirsted in a way not like the righteous.

In return for their senseless and wicked thoughts through which they were led astray to worship irrational reptiles and worthless vermin, you sent on them a multitude of irrational creatures to take vengeance in order that they might learn that a person is punished by the very things by which the person sins.

For your all-powerful hand,
which created the world out of formless matter,
was not at a loss to send out on them a multitude of bears or bold lions
or newly-created unknown monsters, full of fury,
either breathing out blasts of fiery breath or belching forth smoke
or flashing terrible sparks from their eyes,
which were able not only to wipe them out by the harm they did
but even to destroy them by their terrifying appearance alone.

Even without these they could have fallen by a single breath,
being pursued by justice and scattered by the breath of your power,
but by measure and number and weight you ordered all things.

For it is always in your power to show great strength,
and who can withstand the might of your arm?

Because the whole world before you is like a speck that tips the scales
and like a drop of dew that falls on the ground in the morning.

You have mercy on all, because you can do all things,
and you overlook the sins of human beings that they may repent.

For you love all things that exist and detest none of the things that you have made,
for you would not have formed anything if you had hated it.

How would anything have endured if you had not willed it?
Or how would anything not called into existence by you have been preserved?

You spare all things, because they are yours, O Sovereign Lord, you who love human beings.

For your incorruptible spirit is in all things.
Therefore you reprove little by little those who fall into error,
and by reminding them of the things through which they sin you warn them
in order that, being freed from wickedness, they may believe in you, O Lord.

For even the ancient inhabitants of your holy land,
because you hated them for practicing the most detestable things—
deeds of sorcery and unholy rites,
merciless slaughters of children,
sacrificial feasting on human flesh and blood—
those initiates from the midst of a pagan ceremony
and parents who murder helpless lives, you willed to destroy by the hands of our fathers
in order that the land that is the most precious of all before you might receive a worthy colony of servants of God.

But even these you spared as being human beings,
and you sent wasps as forerunners of your army
in order to destroy them little by little.
It was not that you were unable to give the impious into the hands of the righteous in battle
or to wipe them out at a stroke by terrible beasts or by your stern word,
but judging them little by little you gave them an opportunity to repent,
though you were not unaware that their origin was evil and their wickedness inborn
and that their way of thinking would never change.

For they were an accursed race from the beginning,
and it was not through fear of anyone that you granted them pardon for the things in which they sinned.

For who will say, “What have you done?”
Or who will withstand your judgment?
Who will accuse you for the destruction of nations that you made?
Or who will come before you to plead as an advocate for unrighteous human beings?

For neither is there any god beside you, whose care is for all,
to whom you must prove that you did not act unjustly.

But being righteous, you manage all things righteously,
considering it alien to your power to condemn anyone who does not deserve to be punished.

For your strength is the beginning of righteousness,
and your sovereignty over all causes you to spare all.

For you show your strength when people doubt the completeness of your power,
and you rebuke any insolence among those who know it.
Although you are sovereign in strength, you judge with fairness, and with great forbearance you govern us, for you have the power to prevail whenever you choose.

You taught your people by such acts as these that the righteous ought to be loving towards human beings, and you have made your sons hopeful, because you give repentance for sins.

If it was through delight in their beauty that they took these things to be gods, let them know how much better than these is their Sovereign Lord.

For if you punished with such great care and indulgence the enemies of your servants and those deserving of death, giving them time and opportunity in which to free themselves from their wickedness, with how great carefulness have you judged your sons to whose fathers you gave oaths and covenants of good promises!

While therefore you chastise us, you scourge our enemies ten thousand times more in order that, when we judge, we may think about your goodness and, when we are judged, we may look for mercy.

Hence those who lived unrighteously in a life of folly you tormented through their own abominations.

For they went far astray on the paths of error, taking as gods the most despised and loathsome of animals being deceived like foolish infants.

For all human beings who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature, and from the good things that are seen they were unable to know the one who is, nor, though paying attention to his works, did they recognize the craftsman, but either fire or wind or swift air or the circle of the stars or turbulent water or the luminaries of heaven they thought to be gods that rule the world.

If it was through delight in their beauty that they took these things to be gods, let them know how much better than these is their Sovereign Lord.

For from the greatness and beauty of created things is their Creator correspondingly discerned. But nevertheless little blame attaches to these, for perhaps they go astray while seeking God and wishing to find him. For being conversant with his works, they make their search and are persuaded by the sight, because the things that are seen are beautiful. But again, not even they are to be pardoned; for if they had the power to know so much that they could investigate the world, how is it that they did not more quickly find the Sovereign Lord of these things.
15 and having made for it a niche worthy of it, he sets it in a wall and secures it with iron.
16 Thus he takes thought for it that it may not fall down, knowing that it is unable to help itself, for it is an image and has need of help.
17 But when he prays about his possessions, his marriage and his children, he is not ashamed to address a lifeless object, and for health he calls upon that which is weak;
18 for life he prays to that which is dead; for aid he supplicates that which is utterly inexperienced; for a good journey that which cannot take a step; for means of livelihood and work and success with his hands, he asks strength of that which has no strength at all in its hands.

14 Again, one preparing for a voyage and about to travel over raging waves calls upon a piece of wood more fragile than the ship that carries him.
2 For it was longing for gain that planned it, and wisdom the craftsman that built it, but it is your providence, Father, that pilots it, because you have made a way in the sea and a safe path in the waves, showing that you can save from everything so that even a person who lacks skill may put to sea.
3 It is your will that the works of your wisdom should not be without effect; therefore human beings trust their lives even to the smallest piece of wood and passing through the billows on a raft come safely through.
4 For even in the beginning, when arrogant giants were perishing, the hope of the world fled for refuge on a raft and, piloted by your hand, left to the world the seed of a new generation.
5 For blessed is the wood through which righteousness comes,
6 but the handmade idol is accursed, and the one who made it, because he worked it, and the corruptible thing was named a god.
7 For equally hateful to God are the impious and their impiety,
8 therefore there will be a visitation also upon the idols of the nations, because, though part of the divine creation, they have become an abomination,
9 a stumbling-block for the lives of human beings and a trap for the feet of the foolish.
10 For the invention of idols was the beginning of fornication, and the discovery of them the corruption of life.
11 For they did not exist from the beginning, nor will they last forever.
12 For through human conceit they entered the world, and because of this a speedy end was planned for them.

14 For a father, tormented by untimely grief, having made an image of the child who had been quickly taken away, now honored as a god what was once a dead human being and handed on to his dependants mysteries and sacred rites.
16 Then, when the impious custom had grown strong with time, it was kept as a law, and at the command of princes carved images were worshipped.
17 When people could not honor them in their presence because they lived far off, they imagined their appearance from afar and made a visible image of the king whom they honored, that through diligence they might flatter the absent one as though present.
18 But the ambition of the craftsman impelled even those who did not know the king to a higher pitch of worship.
19 For he, perhaps wishing to please his ruler, skillfully forced the likeness into a more beautiful form,
20 but the multitude, drawn by the charm of his work, now counted as an object of worship the one whom a little before had been honored as a human being.
21 And this became a trap for human life, because people, enslaved either by misfortune or tyranny, bestowed on objects of stone and wood the incommunicable name.
22 Then it was not enough to go astray concerning the knowledge of God, but though living in great strife through ignorance, they call such great evils peace.
23 For whether performing ritual murders of children or secret mysteries or frenzied revels connected with strange laws,
24 they no longer keep either their lives or their marriages pure, but they either kill one another by treachery or grieve one another by adultery.

25 And all things are an overwhelming confusion of blood and murder, theft and deceit, corruption, unfaithfulness, tumult, perjury, turmoil of those who are good, forgetfulness of favors, defilement of souls, sexual perversion, disorder in marriages, adultery and debauchery.

26 For the worship of idols that may not be named is the beginning and cause and end of every evil.

27 But you, our God, are kind and true, long-suffering and ordering all things with mercy.

2 For even if we sin, we are yours, knowing your might, but knowing we are considered yours, we will not sin; for to know you is perfect righteousness, and to recognize your might is the root of immortality.

3 But on both accounts justice will pursue them: because they thought wrongly about God through devoting themselves to idols and in deceit swore unrighteously through despising holiness.

4 For neither has the artful inventiveness of human beings led us astray, nor the fruitless toil of painters, a figure stained with varied colors, whose appearance arouses yearning in fools so that they long for the unbreathing form of a dead image.

5 Lovers of evil things and worthy of such objects of hope are those who make or long for or worship them.

6 For a potter, laboriously kneading soft earth, molds each single article for our service, but out of the same clay he fashions both the vessels that serve clean uses and the contrary ones, all alike, but what shall be the use of each of them of either sort the worker in clay decides.

8 And, toiling perversely, he molds a futile god out of the same clay, he who a little before came into being out of the earth and after a short while returns whence he was taken, when the soul, which was lent him is demanded back.

9 But his concern is not that his health is likely to fail or that his life is brief, but he sets himself up against goldsmiths and silversmiths and imitates molders of bronze and considers it a glorious thing that he molds counterfeits.

10 His heart is ashes, his hope cheaper than earth, his life more ignoble than clay, because he did not know the one who molded him and infused him with an active soul and breathed into him a life-giving spirit, but he considered our life to be a game, and our existence a festival held for profit, for he says, one must make money wherever one can, even by evil.

12 For this man more than any knows that he sins when, from earthly material, he makes fragile vessels and carved images.

13 But most foolish, and with lives more miserable than that of an infant, are all the enemies of your people who oppressed them, because they even thought all the idols of the nations were gods, although they have neither the use of eyes for seeing nor nostrils for drawing breath nor ears to hear nor fingers for feeling, and their feet are of no use for walking.

14 For a human being made them, and one whose spirit is borrowed molded them; for no human has the power to mold a god like himself, but, being mortal, he makes a dead thing with lawless hands, for he is better than the objects of his worship in that he had life, but they never.

18 And they worship the most detestable animals;
for, when compared for lack of intelligence, they are worse than all others,

nor, viewed as animals, are they beautiful so that one would desire them, but they have escaped both the approval of God and his blessing.

Therefore they were deservedly punished through similar creatures and were tormented by swarms of vermin. Instead of which punishment you benefited your people and prepared quails for food, a delicacy to satisfy the desire of appetite, in order that those people, when they desired food, might reject even the demands of appetite because of the hideousness of the creatures sent among them, but these, your people, having suffered want for a short time, might partake of delicacies.

For it was necessary that upon those who ruled as tyrants inescapable want should come and that to these it should only be shown how their enemies were tormented.

For even when the terrible rage of wild animals came upon them and they were perishing through the bites of twisted snakes, your anger did not continue to the end; for a short while they were troubled as a warning, possessing a symbol of salvation to remind them of the command of your law.

For the one who turned was not saved because of what was beheld, but because of you, the savior of all.

And in this also you convinced our enemies that you are the one who rescues from every evil.

For the bites of grasshoppers and flies killed them, and no remedy was found for their life, because they deserved to be punished by such animals, but not even the teeth of venomous dragons conquered your sons, for your mercy came to their help and healed them.

For they were stung to remind them of your oracles and were quickly delivered in order that they might not fall into deep forgetfulness and might not be distracted from your kindness.

For it was neither herb nor poultice that cured them, but your word, O Lord, that heals all things. For you have authority over life and death and you lead down to the gates of Hades and bring back up again.

A person kills in his wickedness but cannot bring back the departed spirit or set free the soul that has been taken.

To escape from your hand is impossible; for the impious, denying that they knew you, were scourged by the strength of your arm, pursued by unusual rains and hail and relentless storms, and utterly consumed by fire.

For, what was most unexpected, in water that quenches all things the fire had still greater effect, for the world fights on behalf of the righteous;

for at one time the flame was restrained, that it might not consume the creatures sent against the impious, but that seeing this they might know that they were being pursued by divine judgment; at another time, even in the midst of water, it burned beyond the power of fire, that it might destroy the produce of an unrighteous land.

Instead of which you fed your people with the food of angels and untiringly supplied them from heaven with bread ready to eat, able to meet every pleasure and suited to every task.

For your sustenance manifested your sweetness towards your children and, serving the desire of the one who took it, was transformed to what anyone wished.

But snow and ice survived the fire and did not melt, that they might know that fire destroyed the fruits of their enemies, blazing in the hail and flashing in the rains,

and again this fire, in order that the righteous might be fed, forgot even its own power.

For creation, serving you who made it, strains itself for punishment against the unrighteous and relaxes in kindness on behalf of those who trust in you.

Therefore at that time also, changed into all forms, it served your all-nourishing bounty according to the wish of those who made supplication in order that your sons, whom you loved, O Lord, might learn

a Or living creatures  b Lacking in Gk  c Or transformed itself  d Or made supplication
For what was not destroyed by fire
melted away when simply warmed by a faint
ray of the sun
in order that it might be known that one
must rise before the sun to give you
thanks
and make petition to you at the dawning of
the light;
for the hope of an ungrateful person will
melt away like the winter's frost
and will flow away like waste water.

For great are your judgments and hard to
explain;
therefore uninstructed souls have gone
astray.
For when lawless people thought to oppress
a holy nation,
they themselves lay as captives of darkness
and prisoners of long night,
shut in under their roofs, fugitives from
eternal providence.
For thinking that in their secret sins they
were unobserved
behind a dark veil of forgetfulness,
they were scattered, terribly alarmed
and greatly troubled by apparitions.
For not even the deep recess that held them
protected them from fear,
but sounds rushing down crashed all
around them,
and dismal phantoms with gloomy faces
appeared.
And no fire had force enough to give light,
nor did the brilliant flames of the stars
avail to illumine that horrible night.
Only a terrifying self-kindled burning mass
glowed through to them,
and becoming terrified, they considered the
things that were seen
to be worse than that sight that was not
visible.
The delusions of their magic art were
ineffective,
a contemptuous rebuke of their boasted
intelligence.
For those who promised to drive away
terrors and troubles from a sick soul
were sick themselves with ridiculous fear.
For even if nothing disturbing frightened
them,
yet scared by the passing of vermin and the
hissing of reptiles
they perished in trembling fear,
refusing to look even at the dark haze,
which nowhere could be avoided.
For wickedness, 'condemning itself', testifies
to its innate cowardice,
and when afflicted by conscience, it always
exaggerates the difficulties.
For fear is nothing but a giving up of the
help that comes from reason,
and inner expectation, being weaker,
prefers ignorance of what causes the
 torment.
But they, throughout the night that was in
reality powerless
and came upon them from the recesses of
powerless Hades,
sleeping the same sleep,
now were plagued by monstrous phantoms,
now were paralyzed by their souls' surrender,
for sudden and unexpected fear poured over
them.
So then whoever was there fell down
and was held bound, shut up in a prison
without bars;
for whether they were farmers or shepherds
or workers whose toils were in the
wilderness,
they were overtaken and awaited the
inescapable fate;
for with one chain of darkness they were all
bound.
Whether it was a whistling wind
or the melodic sound of birds in wide-
spreading branches
or the rhythmic movement of violently
rushing water
or the harsh crash of rocks hurled down
or the unseen running of leaping animals
or the sound of the most savage roaring
beasts
or an echo reverberating from a hollow of
the mountains,
it paralyzed them with terror.
For the whole world shone with brilliant
light
and went about its work unhindered;
only over them heavy night was spread,
an image of the darkness that was destined
to receive them,
but still heavier than darkness were they to
themselves.
But for your holy ones there was very great
light.
They, hearing their voices but not seeing
their form,
counted them happy, because they had not
suffered,
and were thankful that they did not harm
them though having previously
been wronged,
and they begged their forgiveness for having
been at variance with them.
In contrast you provided a burning pillar of
fire
as a guide for an unknown journey,
a harmless sun for a glorious residence abroad.

4 But those deserved to be deprived of light and imprisoned in darkness who had kept your sons shut up, through whom the incorruptible light of the law was to be given to the world.

5 When they had resolved to kill the infants of the holy ones and one child had been exposed and saved, in punishment you took away a multitude of their children and destroyed them all together by a mighty flood.

6 That night was made known in advance to our fathers in order that, having sure knowledge, they might rejoice in the oaths in which they had trusted.

7 The salvation of the righteous and the destruction of their enemies were expected by your people; for by the same means by which you punished our opponents you called us to yourself and glorified us.

8 For in secret holy children of good people offered sacrifices and with one accord established the divine law that the holy ones should share alike the same blessings and dangers, while already singing the praises of the fathers.

9 But the discordant cry of their enemies echoed back, and the piteous sound of lamentation for their children was spread abroad.

10 Slave with master were together punished with the same penalty, and commoner suffered the same as king, and together, from the same form of death, they all had corpses too many too count. For the living were not sufficient even to bury them, since in a single moment their most precious offspring had been destroyed.

11 For although they disbelieved everything because of their magical practices, at the destruction of their firstborn, they acknowledged your people to be a divine son.

12 For while peaceful silence enveloped all things and night was in the middle of its own swift course, from heaven, from the royal throne, your all-powerful word leapt as a stern warrior into the midst of the land marked for destruction,

13 bearing your irrevocable command as a sharp rapier; standing, it filled all things with death, and while it touched heaven, it stood on the earth.

14 Then at once apparitions in terrible dreams greatly troubled them, and unexpected fears came upon them, and one here and another there, hurled down half-dead, revealed why they were dying; for the dreams that disturbed them forewarned them of this, that they might not perish without knowing why they suffered terribly.

15 But the experience of death touched the righteous also, and a plague came upon the multitude in the wilderness, but the divine anger did not long continue.

16 For a blameless man hastened to act as their champion, bringing the weapon of his own ministry, prayer and propitiation by incense; he withstood the wrath and set an end to the disaster, showing that he was your attendant.

17 He overcame the bitter anger, not by bodily strength, nor by force of arms, but by his word he subdued the chastiser, calling to mind the oaths and covenants given to the fathers.

18 For when the dead had already fallen on one another in heaps, he intervened, held back the anger and cut off its way to the living.

19 For on his full-length robe the whole world was depicted, and the glories of the fathers were engraved on the four rows of stones, and your majesty was represented on the diadem on his head.

20 But merciless wrath assailed the impious until the end; for he knew in advance what was to happen in respect of them.

21 For while they were still engaged in mourning and were lamenting at the graves of the dead, they adopted another foolish plan
and pursued as fugitives those whom, with
gerent request, they had driven out.

4 For the fate they deserved drew them on to
this end
and made them forget the things that had
happened
in order that they might fill up the
punishment that their torments still
lacked
and that your people might experience an
incredible journey,
but they themselves might find a strange
death.

5 For the whole creation was fashioned again
in its original nature,
serving your commands
in order that your childrena might be kept
unharmed.

6 The cloud was seen overshadowing the
camp,
and dry land emerging out of what before
was water,
and an unhindered way out of the Red Sea,
and a grassy plain out of the violent surge,
through which those protected by your
hand passed as one nation,
after gazing on marvelous wonders.

7 For like horses they grazed b at largeb,
and like lambs they skipped about,
praising you, O Lord, who rescued them.

8 For they still remembered the events of their
sojourn in a foreign land,
how instead of producing animalsc the earth
brought forth gnats,
and instead of fish the river vomited up a
mass of frogs.

9 But later they also saw a new kindsd of birds,
when, driven by desire, they asked for
luxuriant delicacies,
for to comfort them, quails came up from
the sea for them.

10 But the punishments did not come upon
the sinners
without signs being given beforehand in the
violence of the thunders,
for they suffered justly for their wicked acts,
for they practiced a more bitter hatred of
strangers.

11 For otherse refused to welcome those who
did not know themb when they
visited,
but these made slaves of guests who were
their benefactors.

12 And not only so—but while there will be a
visitation of some sort on the
former,
since they received foreigners with hostility,
the latter afflicted with terrible hard labor
those whom they had received with feasting
and who had already shared the same rights.

13 They were stricken also with loss of sight—
just as were those at the doors of the
righteous man—
when, surrounded by thick darkness,
each tried to find the way through their own
doors.

14 For as on a harp the notes vary the nature of
the rhythm,
while beach noteb always keeps to its sound,
so the elements changed places with one
another,
as may be accurately inferred from the sight
of the things that happened.

15 For land animals were transformed into
watery creatures,
and creatures that swim moved over to the
land;

16 fire even in water retained its normal
power,
and water forgot its fire-quenching nature;
flames, on the contrary, did not consume
the flesh of perishable creatures that walked
among them,
nor did they melt the ice-like kind of
heavenly food that melted easily.

17 For in all things, O Lord, you magnified
your people and glorified them
and did not disregard them, standing by
them in every time and place.

a Or servants  bLacking in Gk  cOr living creatures  dOr production  eI.e. the Sodomites