

WISDOM OF SOLOMON, BOOK OF THE (LXX. Σοφία Σολομῶνος; Vulgate, "Liber Sapientiae"): (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906)

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Table of Contents

- [Contents of the Book.](#)
- [Hellenistic Passover Haggadah.](#)
- [Wonders of the Exodus.](#)
- [The Folly of Idolatry.](#)
- [Plagues upon Egypt.](#)
- [Authorship and Date.](#)

Apocryphal book written in Alexandria about the middle of the first century B.C. That it was composed in Greek by an Alexandrian Jew has been conclusively shown by Freudenthal ("J. Q. R." iii. 722-753). The book has neither an introductory verse nor a regular conclusion. In fact, it consists of three independent parts which have no real connection, and which treat of subjects altogether different, a fact clearly recognized by Bretschneider, Eichhorn, and others, but disputed by Grimm ("Kurzgefasstes Exegetisches Handbuch zu den Apocryphen des Alten Testaments," vi. 9-24, Leipsic, 1860) and his followers.

Contents of the Book.

The first six chapters of Wisdom form an address to the rulers of the earth (i. 1; comp. iii. 8; vi. 1-2, 9, 21). They accentuate the necessity of wisdom as indispensable to rulers (i. 6, vi. 9-25), although they are chiefly directed against the Epicureans, the ungodly who deny immortality, indulge in lust and incest, and mock the righteous and the learned, who in their turn upbraid them for their lawlessness and licentiousness (ii. 1-16). In contrast with them the "saints" (Ḥasidim) whom they expose to torture (ii. 19, iii. 1) and to a martyr's death (iii. 2) are called "sons of God," initiated into His mystery, promised an inheritance in eternal life (i. 14; ii. 13, 21, 23; iii. 4, 15; iv. 1; v. 15) like Enoch (iv. 10-16), and assured of a crown of glory in the world to come (v. 16). Finally, wisdom is introduced in vi. 9-25 as the speaker, and as the one who bestows the divine kingdom and confers immortality (vi. 20-21); whereas sin brings death, since "through envy of the devil came death into the world" (ii. 24). The second part (ch. vii.-ix. 17) contains an address of King Solomon, relating how his life was guided solely by wisdom, and closing with a prayer offered by him to God that he might obtain her. Here wisdom is represented as a mystic power which imparts not only knowledge of all mysteries and the spirit of prophecy (vii. 17-21, 27), but even immortality (viii. 13), while it is also a cosmic force invested with twenty-one divine attributes, this number being either a triple multiple of seven, or, if originally twenty-two instead of twenty-one, corresponding to the twenty-two letters of the Greek alphabet (vii. 22-23). At the same time, wisdom, as in the Platonic system, is believed to teach the four cardinal virtues of temperance, prudence, justice, and fortitude (viii. 7). The prayer of Solomon refers to the heavenly tabernacle prepared from the beginning, and to his own predestination (ix. 7-8; [see Preexistence](#)). Wisdom is described as a cosmic principle dwelling on the throne of glory next to God, and as knowing and designing all things (ix. 1, 4, 10), being identical with the creative Word (ix. 1) and the Holy Spirit (ix. 17).

Hellenistic Passover Haggadah.

While these two portions of the book form a unity to some extent, and probably gave the entire work its title of "Wisdom of Solomon," the last section (ix. 18-xix. 22) is devoid of all connection with what precedes. The speaker is no longer Solomon, but the author or the saints (xvi. 28, xviii. 6 *et passim*), who recite the history of Israel's redemption from Egypt and other enemies. In like manner, the words are not addressed to the kings of the earth (ix. 18; x. 20; xi. 4, 9, 17, 21; *et passim*), but to God, the deliverer from the Red Sea. The whole appears on close observation to be part of a Passover Haggadah recited in Egypt with reference to Gentile surroundings, and it accordingly abounds in genuine haggadic passages of an ancient character. The tenth chapter serves as a connecting-link between the Solomonic Wisdom-book and this Passover-Haggadah fragment, and must, therefore, be taken with the last verse of the ninth chapter and the first of the eleventh, in both of which wisdom forms the theme. Here, however, it has nothing in common with the Solomonic wisdom, which, enabling the king to penetrate into all the mysteries of heaven and earth, to study the world of the spirits, and to learn the virtues of stones and

roots, thus came very close to the Platonic wisdom (vii. 17-26). The wisdom of the haggadist is exclusive and hostile to the Gentile world, rather than cosmopolitan and broad, saving only the righteous and bringing ruin upon the wicked (ix. 18, x. 1-21). From this point of view the lives of the Patriarchs are recounted to lead up to the story of the Exodus. Wisdom taught Adam to rise from his fall by repentance (comp. "Vita Adæ et Evæ," viii.; Pirke R. El. xx.); but it caused Cain and his generation to perish (x. 1-3). It saved Noah, Abraham, and Lot, but brought lasting doom upon the offenders (x. 4-9). It showed Jacob the kingdom of God in the vision of the ladder (comp. Gen. R. lxviii. 16; Targ. Yer. to Gen. xxviii. 12) and gave him victory over all his pursuers (x. 10-12). It preserved Joseph the righteous from sin, went with him into the pit and the prison, and raised him to the throne and to glory, but covered his detractors with shame (x. 13-15). It delivered Israel from its heathen oppressors, entered into the soul of Moses, enabling him to work all his miracles before Pharaoh, and, in the shape of a protecting pillar of cloud by day and of an illuminating fire by night, guided the people through the wilderness and through the Red Sea, while it drowned the Egyptians and cast them up again from the deep to enrich the Israelites with the spoils that floated upon the water (x. 15-20; comp. Mek., Beshallah, 6; Targ. Yer. to Ex. xiii. 21; xv. 12, 20; Josephus, "Ant." ii. 16, § 6). It also opened the mouths of the dumb so that they joined in the song of the people in praise of God at the Red Sea (x. 21; comp. Mek. to Shirah [Song of Moses], 1), and it prospered the work of Moses in the wilderness (xi. 1-4).

Wonders of the Exodus.

This section is followed (xi. 5-xix. 21) by a haggadic discourse in the form of a prayer of thanks-giving on the Egyptian plagues and other miracles connected with the Exodus, obviously to be recited on the eve of the Passover (xviii. 6-9; comp. Josephus, "Ant." ii. 16, § 4; Book of Jubilees, xlix. 2-6). The fundamental principle of the ancient Haggadah is that God metes out the perfect justice expressed by the Rabbis in the phrase "middah keneged middah" (= "measure for measure"), so that the book declares: "Wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished" (xi. 16). This was applied to the Egyptians with reference to Ex. xviii. 11 (see Targum *ad loc.*; Soṭah 11d). Here, however, the haggadist goes so far as to maintain that the very thing which proved an instrument of vengeance to the Egyptians became a means of safety for Israel (xi. 5). The water in which the Israelitish children were to be drowned was turned to blood for the parched Egyptians, while it flowed forth from the rock to quench the thirst of the children of Israel in the desert (xi. 4-7). In like manner, the animals worshiped by the Egyptians became the source of terror and harm to them (xi. 15-19, xii. 24-27); "for these [the Israelites] thou didst admonish and try, as a father: but the other [the Egyptian people], as a severe king, thou didst condemn and punish" (xi. 10), even though God loves all His creatures, and waits for the repentance of the sinner because He is the lover of souls (xi. 24-xii. 2). The real cause of the doom of such Gentile nations as the Canaanites was their commission of the capital sins of idolatry and murder (xii. 4-7; comp. Sibyllines, i. 150, 178; iii. 36-40, 585-605, 761-764; *et passim*). Yet even they were given time for repentance; wherefore God sent the wasps before Israel to destroy the Canaanites gradually, instead of killing them all at once (xii. 8-11; comp. Ex. xxiii. 28; Soṭah 36a); for God blends mercy with justice, to teach "that the just man should be merciful" (xii. 19; comp. i. 6), and unrepentant Egypt was thus severely punished until she acknowledged the God she had denied (xii. 27).

The Folly of Idolatry.

Egyptian (and Greek) idolatry is declared (xiii. 1-10) to be far less excusable than Babylonian star-worship, and it is therefore derided (xiii. 11-19) in terms borrowed from Isa. xliv. 13-20. Idolatry was first introduced by the giants who were descended from the fallen angels. Its purposes were corruption and fornication (xiv. 1-13); it owed its hold on mankind to the honor paid the images of dead sons (xiv. 14-21; comp. Book of Jubilees, xi. 4; Bezold, "Die Schatzhöhle," p. 31), and it led to murder, adultery, theft, and perjury (xiv. 22-31). Knowledge of God alone guides to righteousness and immortality, while the enemies (the Romans and the Greeks of Alexandria, as well as the Egyptians) who hold Israel in subjection are termed foolish image-worshippers (xv. 1-15; comp. Ps. cxv., recited on the eve of the Passover). The Egyptian animal-worship again suggests to the haggadist the idea that while the beasts became a torment to Egypt, the quail became nourishing food for the people of God (xvi. 1-4); and though the serpents bit the Israelites in the wilderness, they were in the end a sign of salvation for them, admonishing them to look to God as the savior whose word heals all (xvi. 5-12; comp. R. H. iii. 8c). The fire which fell with both the hail and the rain (Ex. ix. 24; Tan., Wayera, ed. Buber, p. 22), as well as in the sea (Ex. xiv. 24; Targ. Yer. *ad loc.*; Josephus, "Ant." ii. 16, § 3), like the fire which would not destroy the

frogs in the oven (xix. 21; Pes. 53b), manifested the wondrous power of God (xvi. 16-19). On the other hand, the manna, which fell like hoar frost and was flavored to suit every wish and taste, did not melt in the heat of the wilderness, but disappeared under the first rays of the sun that the people might offer their praise early in the morning (comp. Yoma 75a; Targ. Yer. to Ex. xvi. 21; Mek., Wayassa', 4 [ed. Weiss, p. 58a]; for the Essene prayer at sunrise see Josephus, "B. J." ii. 8, § 5; Ber. 9b; and [comp. Essenes](#)).

Plagues upon Egypt.

The Egyptian plague of darkness, in striking contrast to the light in the houses of the children of Israel (Ex. x. 21-23), is declared to have been a punishment for their imprisonment of the Israelites, the future bearers of the light of the Law, and for their pride in their intellectuality, besides being a token of their future doom (xvii. 1-xviii. 4). The last plague, the death of the first-born, was the punishment for the intended murder of the Israelitish children (xviii. 5). This same night of watching proved to be the doom of the Egyptians and the election of Israel, so that on the one side resounded cries of lamentation, and on the other were heard songs of thanksgiving (xviii. 7-17). The almighty "Word" carried the sword of death throughout Egypt, and by this same power Aaron, with his robe, his breastplate, and his diadem decked with divine mysteries, subdued the angel of death (xviii. 20-25). Finally, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea is described as a renewal of the miracle of Creation (xix. 1-6), since out of the sea rose a green field (comp. Targ. Yer. to Ex. xv. 19). The Egyptians had been more brutal in their treatment of the strangers than had the inhospitable Sodomites, thus accounting for the severity of their punishment (xix. 13-22). Here the Haggadah breaks off abruptly.

Authorship and Date.

It is evident that these three parts, or at least the first two (i.-ix., x.-xix.), can not have emanated from the same author, for neither the style nor the views can be ascribed to one and the same person. This leads to the supposition that the original Wisdom of Solomon and the Passover-Haggadah fragment were probably joined together and then treated as one book. Grätz ("Gesch." 4th ed., iii. 382-385, 611-613) finds in the work allusions to the apotheosis of Caligula (38-40 C.E.), but the deification of the Ptolemies goes back to Egyptian custom. Ch. ii. and iii. refer to Jewish converts, not to Greeks in Alexandria. The character of the book as regards the creative Wisdom, Word, and Spirit indicates a stage prior to the Philonic system, and the Biblical story shows a haggadic form still fresh and not yet compressed into a rigid system, as in Philo (see Siegfried, "Philo von Alexandria," pp. 22-24, Jena, 1875). The apostle Paul (see Grafe, "Das Verhältniss der Paulinischen Schriften zur Sapientia Salomonis," Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1892; [comp. also Saul of Tarsus](#)), the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. i. 3, iv. 12; comp. Wisdom vii. 22, 26), and others have drawn from the Book of Wisdom. This places the date of the book, or at least that of the first part, with certainty in the first century B.C.

A Hebrew translation of the Wisdom of Solomon is mentioned by Nahmanides in the preface to his commentary on the Pentateuch. A Hebrew version with a commentary was published by Hartwig Wessely (Berlin, 1780), and a German translation with notes, valuable for the references to rabbinical literature, was made by M. Gutmann (Altona, 1841).

Bibliography:

- *For the extensive literature see Schürer, Gesch. 3d ed., iii. 377-383.*
- *The chief editions, besides that contained in Fritzsche's Apocryphi Græci, are: Reusch, Liber Sapientie Græce, Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1858;*
- *Deane, Book of Wisdom, Oxford, 1881.*
- *On the question of the original language see Margoliouth, Was the Book of Wisdom Written in Hebrew? in J. R. A. S. 1890, pp. 263 et seq.;*
- *answered by Freudenthal, What Is the Original Language of the Wisdom of Solomon? in J. Q. R. iii. 722-753.*

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I. NAME

II. CANONICITY

III. CONTENTS

1. The Wisdom Section, The Wisdom of Solomon 1:1 through 11:14
2. The Historical Section, The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5 through 19:22

IV. LITERARY FORM

V. UNITY AND INTEGRITY

VI. TEACHING

1. Theology
2. Anthropology
3. Deontology
4. Hamartiology
5. Soteriology
6. Eschatology

VII. AIM

VIII. AUTHOR

IX. DATE

1. Literary
2. Historical
3. Philosophical

X. ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

XI. USE OF WISDOM BY CHRISTIAN WRITERS

XII. TEXT AND VERSIONS

1. Latin
2. Syriac

LITERATURE

I. Name.

In the Greek manuscripts (Codex Vaticanus, Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Sinaiticus, etc.) the book is called "The Wisdom of Solomon" *Sophia Salomonos*, the form of the latter word varying in the best manuscripts). In the Syriac (Peshitta) its title is "The Book of the Great Wisdom of Solomon." Solomon was among the Jews and the early Christians the patron of didactic, as David was of lyrical, and Moses of religious-legal, literature, and their names came to be associated with literary compositions with which they had nothing to do. We read in the Old Testament of the wisdom of Solomon ([1Ki 3:7-14](#); compare [Sirach 47:12-18 \(14-19\)](#)), and the whole of the Book of Proverbs is called by his name, though he is at most the author of but a part. Solomon speaks in the first person in this book (The Wisdom of Solomon 6 through 9), as he does in [Ec 1:12](#) ff, for that he is made the speaker until the close of The Wisdom of Solomon 9 is made certain by 7:1 ff; 9:2 ff. As long as he was thought to be the composer of this book it continued to be called "The Wisdom of Solomon" among the Jews and the early Christians.

Influenced by the Greek thought and style of the book, Jerome came to the conclusion that Solomon was not its author and he accordingly altered its title to "The Book of Wisdom" (*Liber sapientiae*), and it is this designation that the book bears in the Vulgate (Jerome's Latin Bible, 390-405 A.D.) and the versions made from it, though in the Protestant translations (German, English, Welsh, etc.) the title "The Wisdom of Solomon" is continued, as these, follow the Greek version and not the Latin Luther's title is "The Wisdom of Solomon to Tyrants". (*Die Weisheit Salamos an die Tyrannen*). Epiphanius and Athanasius quote the book under the name "All-Virtuous Wisdom" (*Panaretos Sophia*), a title by which Proverbs and Sirach are also known in the writings of some of the Fathers.

II. Canonicity.

In the manuscripts and odd of the Greek Bible and in the Vulgate, English Versions of the Bible, etc., Wisdom follows Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, and is followed by Sirach. Some of the Fathers, believing the book to be by Solomon, thought it divinely-inspired and therefore canonical; so Hippolytus, Cyprian, Ambrose, etc. Other Fathers, though denying the Solomonian authorship of the book, yet accorded it canonical rank; so Origen, Eusebius, Augustine, etc. On the other hand there were some in the early church who refused to acknowledge the book as in any way authoritative in matters of doctrine. The Council of Trent included it with the rest of the Protestant Apocrypha (except 1 and 2 Esdras and Pr Man) in the Canon, so that the Romanist Bible includes it, but the Protestant Bible excludes it.

III. Contents.

The book is made up of two main parts so different as to suggest difference of authorship. (1) The wisdom section (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:1 through 11:4): In this part the writer describes and commends Wisdom, warning his readers against neglecting it. (2) The historical section (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5 through 19:22).

1. The Wisdom Section, The Wisdom of Solomon 1:1 through 11:14:

(1) Righteousness:

Righteousness (i.e. Wisdom in operation) leads to immortality, unrighteousness to death (The Wisdom of Solomon 1).

(2) Contrasted Fortunes of the Wise (Righteous) and Unwise (Ungodly) (The Wisdom of Solomon 2:1 through 6:21).

(a) Sensual pleasures issue in death while God intended all men to live spiritually (The Wisdom of Solomon 2); (b) the lot of the wise (righteous) is a happy one. Their sufferings are disciplinary and remedial; they shall live forever and reign hereafter over the nations (Gentiles) (The Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-9); (c) but the lot of the wicked and of their children is a miserable one; the wise (righteous) shall be happy though childless (The Wisdom of Solomon 3:10-19); (d) virtuous childlessness secures immortality before guilty parenthood (The Wisdom of Solomon 4:1-6); (e) though the wise (righteous) die early, yet they have rest in their death, and accomplish their life mission in the allotted time (of Enoch) (The Wisdom of Solomon 4:7-14); (f) the ungodly (unwise) shall come to a wretched end: then they shall see and envy the prosperity of the righteous. Though they shall pass tracelessly away, the righteous shall

rejoice in a life that is endless (The Wisdom of Solomon 4:15 through 5:23); (g) kings ought therefore to rule according to Wisdom and thus attain to immortality (The Wisdom of Solomon 6:1-21).

(3) Wisdom.

Speaking in the name of Solomon, the writer praises Wisdom and commends it to kings ("judges"= "rulers" in The Wisdom of Solomon 6:1, is but a synonym) (The Wisdom of Solomon 6:1 through 11:4).

(a) All men come into the world with the same universal need of Wisdom which leads to true kingship and immortality (The Wisdom of Solomon 6:1-25); (b) I (Solomon) sought Wisdom as the main thing and in obtaining it had along with it every good thing, including knowledge of every kind (The Wisdom of Solomon 7:1 through 8:21); (c) the prayer which Solomon offered for Wisdom (The Wisdom of Solomon 9:1-18); (d) how Wisdom defended the heroes of Hebrew history, from the first man, Adam, to the Israelites at the Red Sea and in the wilderness (The Wisdom of Solomon 10:1 through 11:4).

2. The Historical Section, The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5 through 19:22:

In this second part of the book Solomon no longer speaks in the first person (as in The Wisdom of Solomon 6 through 9), nor is Wisdom once mentioned or for certain referred to, though most writers see in this part the attempt of the author of The Wisdom of Solomon 1:1 through 11:4 to exemplify in concrete instances the working of that Wisdom of which in the first part he describes the nature and issues.

(1) Contrasted treatment by God (not Wisdom) of the Israelites and their foes (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5-12). By what things their foes were punished they were benefited (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5).

(a) The Egyptians (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5 through 12:2): Water a boon to Israel, a bane to Egypt (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:6-14). The Egyptians punished by the animals they worshipped (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:15-20), though there was a relenting on God's part that sinners might repent (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:21 through 12:2). (b) The Canaanites (The Wisdom of Solomon 12:3-27): The abominations of the worship and the divine punishment with the lessons this last teaches.

(2) Idolatry described and condemned (The Wisdom of Solomon 13 through 15). These chapters form a unity in themselves, a digression from the historical survey closed with The Wisdom of Solomon 12:27 and continued in 16:1-19. The digression may of course be due to the allusion in 11:5-12 to the sins of the Egyptians and Canaanites. Kinds of idolatry: (a) Nature-worship (fire, wind, air, water, heavenly bodies), due often to sincere desire to find out God (13:1-9); (b) worship of idols in animal form, a much grosser sin (13:10-19); (c) God's indignation against all forms of idolatry (14:1-11); (d) origin of image-worship (14:15-21); the father mourning for his deceased son makes an image of him and then worships it (14:15); rulers are often flattered and then deified (14:16 f); artists often make images so attractive as to tempt men to regard them as gods (14:18-21); (e) immoral results of idolatry: "The worship of idols a beginning and cause and end of every evil" (14:27) (14:22-31); (f) Israel was free from idolatry and in consequence enjoyed the divine favor (15:1-5); (g) the folly of idolatry: the image man made less capable than man its maker and worshipper; the Egyptians the worst offenders (15:6-19).

(3) In five different respects the fortunes of Egypt and Israel in the past are contrasted, Nature using similar means to punish the Egyptians and to reward the Israelites (The Wisdom of Solomon 16 through 19:22), namely, in respect of the following: (a) animals, quail (The Wisdom of Solomon 16:1-4) and fiery serpents (The Wisdom of Solomon 16:5-14) (The Wisdom of Solomon 16:1-14); (b) fire and water, heat

and cold (The Wisdom of Solomon 16:15-29); (c) light and darkness (The Wisdom of Solomon 17:1 through 18:4); (d) death (The Wisdom of Solomon 18:5-25); (e) passage of the Red Sea (The Wisdom of Solomon 19:1-22).

IV. Literary Form.

There is not so much manifest poetry in this book as in Sirach, though there is large amount of genuine poetry characterized by parallelism, but not by meter in the ordinary sense of the term. In parts of the book, which must be pronounced prose, parallelism is nevertheless often found (see The Wisdom of Solomon 10:1 ff). There are far fewer epigrammatic sentences in Wisdom than in Sirach, but on the other hand there is a far greater number of other rhetorical devices, assonances (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:10; 4:2; 5:15; 7:13), alliterations (The Wisdom of Solomon 2:23; 5:12,18; 6:11; 12:15), antitheses (The Wisdom of Solomon 13:18 f), etc. See for details Speaker's Apocrypha (Farrar), I, 404 ff.

V. Unity and Integrity.

Nearly all writers on the book believe it to be one homogeneous whole, the work of one mind. They point for proof to the fact that the whole book is a consistent whole directed against the two evils, apostasy and idolatry; that the language is from beginning to end uniform, such as one writer would be likely to employ.

For a statement of contrary views and a reply to them see the Commentary of Grimm, pp. 9-15. Until about the middle of the 18th century no doubt had been expressed as regards the unity of the book. (1) Houbigant (*Notae criticae in universos New Testament libros*, 1777, 169) divided the book into two parts: The Wisdom of Solomon 1 through 9 written by Solomon in Hebrew, The Wisdom of Solomon 10 through 19 composed in Greek at a later time, perhaps by the translation into Greek of chapters 1 through 9. Against the Solomonian authorship see VIII, below, and against a Hebrew original see X, below. Doederlein adopted Houbigant's division of the book, denying, however, the authorship by Solomon. (2) Eichhorn (*Einleitung in das New Testament*, 142 ff) divided the book also into two parts: The Wisdom of Solomon 1 through 11 and 11:2 through 19. He held that the whole was composed in Greek by two different writers or by the same writer at different times. (3) Nachtigal (*Das Buch der Welshef*, 1799) went much farther, holding that the book is nothing more than anthology, but he has had no followers in this. (4) Bretschneider (*De lib. Sap.*, 1804) ascribes the book to three principal authors and to a final editor. The Wisdom of Solomon 1 through 6:8 was composed in Hebrew in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (died 164 BC) by a Palestinian Jew, though it is an excerpt from a larger work; 6:9 through 10 is the work of an Alexandrian Jew, a contemporary of our Lord; The Wisdom of Solomon 11 was inserted by the final editor as seemingly necessary to connect parts 2 and 3; The Wisdom of Solomon 12 through 19 were written about the same time by a Jewish partisan of slender education and narrow sympathies.

Summary.

Perhaps, on the whole, the arguments in favor of the unity of the book outweigh those against it. But the evidence is by no means decisive. The Wisdom section (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:1 through 11:4) is a much finer bit of writing than the rest of the book, and it bears the general characteristics of the Wisdom literature. Yet even within this larger unity The Wisdom of Solomon 6 through 9 stand out from the rest, since only in them is Solomon made to speak in the first person (compare [Ec 1:12](#) ff); but these

four chapters agree with the rest of the Wisdom section in other respects. Within the historical section (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5 through 19:22) The Wisdom of Solomon 13 through 15 stand together as if a separate treatise on idolatry (see III , above), though if originally independent an editor has logically joined chapter 15 to chapter 12 ; compare "for" (gar), "etc." (13:1). Indeed the book in its present form is made at least externally one, though it is not absolutely certain whether or not this external unity is due to editorial revision. Some scholars have maintained that the book as it stands is a torso (so Eichhorn, etc.). Calmer infers this from the fact that the historical sketch closes with the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan. Others say that the writer's sketch was cut short by some unforeseen event (Grotius, Eichhorn), or that the remainder of the once complete work has been lost in transmission (Heydenreich). But on the other hand it must be remembered that the writer's record is limited by his purpose, and that the history of the Egyptians supplies an admirable and adequate illustration of the wickedness and calamitous results of unfaithfulness to God and His law.

VI. Teaching.

In the treatment of this section it is assumed with some hesitation that the book is throughout the work of one man. The following is a brief statement of the teaching of this book concerning theology, anthropology, deontology, martiology, soteriology, and eschatology.

1. Theology:

Theology in the strict sense, i.e. the doctrine about God: God is incomparably powerful (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:21 f), omni-present (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:7; 12:1) and all-loving (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:24). He made the world out of formless matter (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:17, the doctrine of the Alexandrian Judaism). He did not create the world out of nothing as the Old Testament ([Ge 1:1](#) ff) and even Sirach teach (see SIRACH, BOOK OF, IV , 1). The author's highest conception of creation is the conversion of chaos into cosmos. It is the order and beauty of the universe that amaze the writer, not the stupendous power required to make such a universe out of nothing (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:20; 13:3). Though God is said to be just (The Wisdom of Solomon 12:15), kind (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:13; 11:17-26; 12:13-16; 15:1; 16:7), and is even addressed as Father (The Wisdom of Solomon 14:3), yet He is in a unique sense the Favourer and Protector of Israel (The Wisdom of Solomon 16:2; 18:8; 19:22); yet according to The Wisdom of Solomon 12:2-20 even the calamities He heaps up upon the foes of Israel were designed to lead them to repentance (12:2-20), though in The Wisdom of Solomon 11 f we are clearly taught that while the sufferings of the Israelites were remedial, those of their enemies were purely penal. The conception of God in Wisdom agrees on the whole with that of Alexandrian Judaism (circa 100 BC); i.e. it lays principal stress on His transcendence, His infinite aloofness from man and the material world. We have therefore in this book the beginning of the doctrine of intermediaries which issued in Philo's Powers, the media through which the Absolute One comes into definite relation with men.

(1) Spirit of the Lord.

In Wisdom as in the later books of the Old Testament (exilic and post-exilic), the expression "the Spirit of the Lord" denotes the person of God. What God does is done by the Spirit. Thus, it is His Spirit that fills and sustains the world, that observes all human actions (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:7 f), that is present everywhere (The Wisdom of Solomon 12:1). Wisdom does not hypostatize "the Spirit of the Lord," making it an intermediary between God and His creatures, but the way is prepared for this step.

(2) Wisdom.

Much that is said of the Spirit of the Lord in this book is said of Wisdom, but much more, and there is a much closer approach to hypostatization in the case of Wisdom. At the creation of the world Wisdom was with God (compare [Pr 8:22-31](#)), sat by His throne, knew His thoughts and was His associate (The Wisdom of Solomon 8:3; 9:4,9), made all things, taught Solomon the Wisdom for which he prayed (The Wisdom of Solomon 7:22); all powerful, seeing all things (The Wisdom of Solomon 7:23), pervading all things (The Wisdom of Solomon 7:24), an effluence of the glory of the Almighty (The Wisdom of Solomon 7:25); she teaches sobriety, understanding, righteousness and courage (The Wisdom of Solomon 8:7, the four cardinal virtues of the Stoic philosophy). For detailed account of the conception of Wisdom in this book see [WISDOM](#).

(3) The Logos.

In Philo the Logos is the intermediary power next to Deity, but in Wisdom the term keeps to the Old Testament sense, "word," that by which God addresses men. It never means more, though some hold (Gfrorer, Philo, etc., I 225 ff) that in The Wisdom of Solomon 9:1 f; 12:9; 16:12; 18:22, Logos has the technical sense which it bears in Philo; but a careful examination of the passages shows that nothing more than "word" is meant (see [LOGOS](#)). The only other superhuman beings mentioned in the book are the gods of the Gentiles which are distinctly declared to be nonentities, the product of man's folly (14:13 f), and the Devil who is, however, but once referred to as identical with the serpent of [Ge 3:1-24](#). The book does not once speak of a Canon of Scripture or of any divine revelation to man in written form, though it often quotes from the Pentateuch and occasionally from Isaiah and Psalms, never, however, naming them. Wisdom is thus much more universalistic and in harmony with Wisdom literature than Sirach, which identifies Wisdom with the Law and the Prophets and has other distinctly Jewish features.

2. Anthropology:

In its psychology Wisdom follows the dichotomy of Platonism. Man has but two parts, soul and body (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:4; 8:19 f; 9:15), the word soul (psuche) including the reason (nous) and the spirit (pneuma). The Wisdom of Solomon 15:11 is the only passage which seems to teach the doctrine of the trichotomy of man, but in reality it does nothing of the kind, for the parallelism shows that by "soul" and "spirit" the same thing is meant. Philo teaches the same doctrine (see Drummond, Philo, etc., I, 316 ff). Man's soul is breathed into the body (15:11; compare [Ge 2:7](#)) and taken back again by God (15:8). The writer adopts the Platonic theory of the pre-existence of souls (8:20; compare 15:8,11,16), which involves the belief in a kind of predestination, for the previous doings of the soul determine the kind of body into which it enters. Solomon's soul, being good, entered an undefiled body (8:20). R. H. Charles (Eschatology, etc., 254 f) is hardly correct when he says that according to Wisdom (1:4; 9:15, etc.) matter is inherently sinful. This doctrine was definitely taught by Philo, who accepted Heraclitus' epigram, soma sema, "The body is a tomb." So it is said (12:10; 13:1) that man is by nature evil, his wickedness being inborn. But if he sins it is his own affair, for he is free (1:16; 5:6,13). The writer borrows two words from Greek poetry and philosophy which appear to involve a negation of human freedom, namely, anake, "necessity" and dike "justice" "avenging justice". The first blinds the eyes of the ungodly (17:17), but the blindness is judicial, the result of a course of evil (see 19:1-5). The second term is used in Greek philosophy in the sense of nemesis, and it has that sense in The Wisdom of Solomon 1:8, etc. But throughout this book it is assumed that punishment for sin is deserved, since man is free. The author of Wisdom believes in a twofold division into good (wise) and bad (ungodly), and,

unlike the writers of the later parts of the Old Testament, he holds it possible for a person to pass from one class into another. But does not God, according to parts of Wisdom, as of the Old Testament, appear to show undue favoritism to Israel and neglect of other people? Thus Israel is "God's Son" (18:13), His children (sons, 12:19,21; 16:10,26), His sons and daughters (9:7). They are His holy and elect ones (3:9; 4:15; and especially 10:17; 18:1,5). But the Israelites were treated as they were, not because they were Israelites, but because they were morally better than the nations around (see Drummond, *op. cit.*, II, 207 ff).

3. Deontology:

Under the term "deontology" here, religious and ethical practice is included. (1) As might be expected in a Wisdom book, little importance is attached to the Law of Moses and its requirements. Though historical allusions are made to the offering of sacrifices, the singing of psalms and the taking upon themselves of the obligation of the covenant of the Law (The Wisdom of Solomon 18:9); though, moreover, reference is made to the offering of incense by Aaron (The Wisdom of Solomon 18:21), and Solomon is made to utter the words "temple," "altar," "tabernacle" (The Wisdom of Solomon 9:8), yet in other respects nothing is said of the temple and its feasts, of the priesthood, of sacrifice, or of the laws of clean and unclean. Yet the duty of worshipping the one true God and Him only and the evil results of worshipping idols are strongly and constantly insisted upon, especially in the second or historical part of the book (The Wisdom of Solomon 11:5 to end). (2) The cardinal virtues inculcated are those of the Stoic philosophy, namely, prudence (*sophrosune*), common-sense (*phronesis*), justice (*dikaiosune*) and courage (*andreia*), showing that the writer was influenced by the philosophy of the Greeks.

4. Hamartiology:

As a historical fact, the writer adopts the account in [Ge 3:1-24](#) of the entrance of sin into the world. "By the envy of the Devil, death (i.e. as the connection proves, spiritual death) entered into the world" (The Wisdom of Solomon 2:24). In The Wisdom of Solomon 14:27, however, sin is made to have its root in idolatry, meaning perhaps that all sin consists in not giving-proper heed to the one true God, and that the moral monstrosities of his time were outgrowths of idolatrous worship. The freedom of the will is taught explicitly or implicitly throughout the book (see above VI , 2).

5. Soteriology:

The book is silent as to a Messiah who shall deliver his people. It is Wisdom that saves man: "Because of her I shall have immortality" (The Wisdom of Solomon 8:13); immortality lies in kinship to Wisdom (The Wisdom of Solomon 8:17); all who give heed to the commands of Wisdom have the assurance of incorruption, and incorruption brings men near to God (The Wisdom of Solomon 6:18 f). The knowledge of God's power is the root of immortality (The Wisdom of Solomon 15:2).

6. Eschatology:

The doctrine of individual immortality is explicitly taught in this book. Man (= all men) was created for incorruption (The Wisdom of Solomon 2:23; 6:19; 12:1). The righteous have the full hope of immortality (The Wisdom of Solomon 3:4) and shall live forever (The Wisdom of Solomon 5:15). When the wicked die they have no hope (The Wisdom of Solomon 3:18), since they suffer for their sins in this present world as well as in that which is to come (The Wisdom of Solomon 3:16,18). The doctrine of a resurrection of the body is not taught. If the author accepted Philo's doctrine of the inherent sinfulness

of matter (see above VI, 2), as R. H. Charles holds, he could not believe in a bodily resurrection. After death there is to be a day of decision (diagnosis, the word used in [Ac 25:21](#); see The Wisdom of Solomon 3:18); there will be an examination (exetasis) into the counsels of the ungodly. The sins of the wicked shall be reckoned up (The Wisdom of Solomon 4:20), but the righteous man shall stand in great boldness before the face of them that afflicted him (The Wisdom of Solomon 5:1). The teaching of the book as to the future of the righteous does not seem to be consistent. According to The Wisdom of Solomon 3:1 ff, the righteous pass at death immediately into the bliss of God; but the teaching of 4:20 ff is that the wicked and the righteous shall be assembled in one place to receive their sentence.

VII. Aim.

The writer's purpose appears to have been to recommend to his fellow-countrymen in Alexandria the claims of religion under the names of Wisdom, Righteousness, etc., and to warn them against falling into the idolatry of the Egyptians. In addition to glorifying Wisdom, he gives an ironical account of the rise of idolatry, and he uses strong language in pointing out the disastrous consequences in this world and the next of a life away from the true God (see above, III). The book is ostensibly addressed to rulers, but they are mentioned only in The Wisdom of Solomon 6:1-11, 20-25, and the appeal of the book is to men as such. In addressing rulers the author uses a rhetorical device. It might be argued that if rulers with their superior advantages need such exhortations and warnings, how much more ordinary men!

Plumptre (Ecclesiastes, 70) and Siegfried (HDB, iv, 928) contend that the Solomon of this book is made to answer the Solomon of Ecclesiastes. But the author does not show any acquaintance with Ecclesiastes, and it is hardly likely that this last book was known at the time in Alexandria, for though composed about 200 BC, it was not put into Greek for a long time afterward. Besides, there is nothing about idolatry in Ecclesiastes. The conclusion reached in the genuine parts of this last book is a counsel of despair: "All is vanity." A reply to that book would seek to show that life is worth living for the sake of the present and the future. The Book of Wisdom denounces idolatry in the most scathing language: how can this and the like be a polemic against Ecclesiastes?

VIII. Author.

The author was an Alexandrian Jew, well read in the Septuagint whose phrases he often uses, fairly acquainted with Greek philosophy as taught at Alexandria and also with physical science as known at the time (see The Wisdom of Solomon 7:17-20; 8:8). He was beyond all doubt a Jew, for the views he advocates are those of an enlightened but strong Judaism; his interests are even narrowly Jewish (note the fiercely anti-Gentile sentiments of The Wisdom of Solomon 11:10-13, 17-23), and his style is largely tinged by the vocabulary and the phraseology of the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures. That he was an Alexandrian or at least an Egyptian Jew is equally probable. No Palestinian could have written the language of this work with its rhetorical devices (see above, IV), or have displayed the acquaintance which the book reveals with Greek philosophy as modified by Jewish-Alexandrian thought.

Other Views.

These include: (1) that Solomon is the author: see above, II. No modern scholar takes this view seriously, though singularly enough it has been revived by D. S. Margoliouth; (2) that Zerubbabel is the author (J. M. Faber); (3) that the author was one of the translators of the Septuagint; (4) that the author belonged to the Therapeutae: so Gfrorer (Philo, II, 265), Dahne (Philo, II, 270); compare Jost (Geschichte des

Judaismus, I, 378). This has been inferred from The Wisdom of Solomon 16:28, the Therapeutae being, it is said, a Jewish sect which, like the Zarathustrians, worshipped toward the rising sun. But we know very little about this sect, and there is no decisive evidence that it ever existed. If, however, Eusebius (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, 17) is right in saying that Philo's Therapeutae were Christians (the earliest Christian sect of Alexandria), it is clear that no member of this sect wrote Wisdom, for the book is wholly free from Christian influence; (5) that Ben Sira is the author (Augustine); (6) that Apollos is the author: so Noack (*Der Ursprung des Christenthums*, I, 222); Plumptre (*Expositor*, I, 329 ff, 409 ff); see summary of grounds in *Speaker's Apocrypha* (Farrar), I, 413 ff; but the author must have been a Jew and he wrote too early to allow of this hypothesis; (7) that Philo is the author: thus Jerome writes (*Praef. in lib. Sol.*): *Nonnulli scriptorum hunt ease Judaei Philonis affirmant*. This view was supported by Luther and other scholars; compare the Muratorian Fragment (in Zahn's text) in XI, below. But the teaching of this book represents an earlier stage of Alexandrian Jewish speculation than that found in Philo's works, and the allegorical method of interpretation so rampant in the latter is almost wholly absent from Wisdom. (8) It has been held by some (Kirschbaum, Weisse, etc.) that whoever the author was he must have been a Christian, but the whole trend and spirit of the book prove the contrary.

IX. Date.

1. Literary:

The book was probably composed about 120-100 BC. The evidence is literary, historical and philosophical. The book must have been written after the Septuagint version of the Pentateuch and Isaiah had been made, since the author has evidently used this version of both books and perhaps of the Psalms as well (compare The Wisdom of Solomon 3:1 and [Ps 31:5](#)(6); and also The Wisdom of Solomon 15:15 f and [Ps 115:4-7](#) (= [Ps 135:15-18](#))). Now we know from Sirach (*Prolegomena*) that the Septuagint of the Pentateuch, the Prophets and of at least a portion of the Writings (*Hagiographa*) was completed by 132 BC, when the younger Siracide finished his translation of Sirach (see *SIRACH, BOOK OF, VIII*). It may therefore be inferred that Wisdom was written after 132 BC. Moreover, in The Wisdom of Solomon 4:1 the author shows an acquaintance with Sirach 16:1-4 in Greek, for the pseudo-Solomon does not seem to have known Hebrew, or he would sometimes at least have quoted from the Hebrew text. This confirms the conclusion drawn from the use of the Septuagint that this book is at least as late as, say, 130 BC, and almost certainly later. The book was composed earlier than any of the New Testament writings, or some of the latter would have been quoted or referred to. Moreover, it may be assumed that the Greek Canon was complete in the time of our Lord, and thus included Wisdom as well as the rest of the Old Testament Apocrypha. But see *International Journal of Apocrypha*, October, 1913, p. 77, article by the present writer. It must have taken a long time after writing for the book to gain the respect which secured its canonization. A date 100 BC agrees with all the facts.

2. Historical:

The Wisdom of Solomon 3:1; 5:1; 6:5-9 imply that at the time of writing the Jews addressed were suffering under the lash of persecution, and we have the resulting feeling of, animosity against the Egyptians, the persecuting power, expressed in 11:16-19. Now we know that the early Ptolemies treated the Jews with consideration, and Ptolemy VII (Physcon, 145-117 BC) was the first to adopt a contrary policy toward the Jews of Egypt, owing to the support they had given to Cleopatra. Josephus (*Apion*, II, 5) gives an account of the vengeance which this king wreaked upon the Jews of Alexandria at this time. Nevertheless, the literary manner and the restrained spirit with which these matters are referred to

show that the writer is describing a state of things which belongs to the past, though to a recent past. A date about 100 BC would admirably suit the situation of the author at the time of composition.

3. Philosophical:

The teaching of the book (see above, VI) belongs to that stage in the development of Alexandrian Judaism which existed about 100BC. We have not in this book the allegorization characteristic of Philo (born 20 BC, died 40 AD), nor had his Logos doctrine as yet become a part of the creed of Alexandrian Jews.

X. Original Languages.

Scholars are practically agreed that the book was composed in Greek. D. S. Margoliouth attempted to prove a Hebrew original (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1890, 263-97; see reply by Freudenthal, *JQR*, III, 722-53), but the evidence he offers has convinced nobody.

(1) The Greek of Wisdom is free, spontaneous and idiomatic. There are a few Hebraisms, but only such as characterize Hellenistic Greek in general; Wisdom is very different in this from Sirach which abounds with Hebraisms, due no doubt to translation from a Hebrew original. (2) The rhetorical devices so common in the Greek of the book can be due only to the original text; they could hardly occur in such profusion in a translation. In addition to those mentioned above in IV, note the Greek rhetorical figures chiasmus (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:1 through 4:8; 3:15) and sorites (The Wisdom of Solomon 6:7-20). (3) The translation of Sirach into Hebrew before the discovery of the Hebrew fragments had been often attempted and found comparatively easy; but it is very difficult to put Wisdom into Hebrew because the style is so thoroughly Greek. (4) No trace of a Hebrew original has thus far been found. What Nachmanides saw was not the original Hebrew, but a translation in Hebrew from the original text. Jerome (*Praef. in lib. Sol.*) says that though he had himself seen Sirach in Hebrew, a Hebrew text of Wisdom was not to be found.

XI. Use of Wisdom by Christian Writers.

It has been thought that the following parts of the New Testament have been influenced by Wisdom: [Lu 2:7](#) (compare The Wisdom of Solomon 7:4); [Lu 12:20](#) (compare The Wisdom of Solomon 15:8); [Lu 9:31](#) (compare The Wisdom of Solomon 3:2); [Lu 19:44](#) (compare The Wisdom of Solomon 3:7). The Logos doctrine of John (see [Joh 1:1](#), etc.) has certainly a connection with the doctrine of Wisdom in Wisdom (see Gregg, *Commentary*, liv ff). Grafe (*Theologische Abhandlungen*, Freiburg in B., 1892) endeavors to prove that Paul made large use of Wisdom (see also Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 51 f, 267-69); but this has been denied; see further Dearie (*Commentary*, 15 ff). The book was certainly known to Clement of Rome, Tatian, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Hippolytus. The Muratorian Fragment states the work to have been "composed by the friends of Solomon in his honor" (ll. 69-71). Zahn (*Gesch. Kan.*, II, 101, following a suggestion of Tregelles) prefers to read "composed by Philo in Solomon's honor"--an easy change in the Greek (*philonos* for *philon*). Origen (*Contra Celsus*, v.29) calls it "the work entitled Wisdom of Solomon," so intimating doubt as to the authorship.

XII. Text and Versions.

The text in Codex Vaticanus pointed with collations in Swete's Old Testament in Greek, is on the whole the best, though both Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Ephraemi (which is incomplete) have good texts, Codex Alexandrinus being fairly trustworthy. The text is found also in fair preservation in many cursives.

1. Latin:

The Vulgate (Jerome's Latin Bible, 390-405 A.D.) is identical with, but has slight variations from, the Old Latin Lagarde (Mittheilungen, 243-86) gives the Latin version of Sirach and Wisdom found in Codex Amiaut. This last is a literal rendering from the Greek.

2. Syriac:

The Syriac (Peshitta) version found in the London Polyglot and in Lagarde (Lib. Apocrypha Syr) was made immediately from the Greek, but apparently from the text in Codex Alexandrinus or in one like it.

LITERATURE.

Besides the works cited in the course of the foregoing article and the general works (commentaries, etc.) on the Apocrypha mentioned under APOCRYPHA (which see), the following are to be noted:

(1) Commentaries: Bauermeister, Commentary in Sap. Sol. libr., 1828; Grimm, Komm. uber das Buch der Weisheit, 1857, also his excellent commentary in the Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch, series 1860; J.H. Schmid, Das Buch der Welsheit: Uebersetzt und erklart, 1857; Gutberlet, Das Buch der Weisheit, 1874; W. J. Deane, The Book of Wisdom, Greek Vulgate and the King James Version with "Commentary." (1881, full and fairly scholarly); Speaker's Apocrypha (Farrar) is interesting and often helpful; Siegfried's "Introduction" and "Commentary" in Kautzsch's Die Apocrypha is slight, but also often helpful; The Wisdom of Solomon by J. A. E. Gregg (the Revised Version (British and American) with "Introduction" and "Commentary," Cambridge Bible) is brief and popular, but trustworthy; A. T. S. Goodrick, The Book of Wisdom, 1913 (admirable); S. Holmes (in the Oxford Apocrypha, with Introduction and Comm.).

(2) Of the dict. arts., that in Encyclopedia Biblica (by C. H. Toy) is perhaps the best; that in HDB (Siegfried) is fair but defective.

(3) In addition to the works by Gfrorer and Dahne discussing the philosophy of the book, the following works may be mentioned: Bruch, Weisheits-Lehre der Hebraer, 1851 (322-78); Zeller, Die Philosophic der Griechen (1881), III, part 2, 271-74, 4th edition, 272-96; Kubel, "Die ethischen Grundanschauungen der Weisheit Salomos," in Theologische Studien und Kritiken, 1865, 690-722; Menzel, Der griechische Einfluss auf Prediger und Weisheit Salomos, 1889, 39-70; Bois, Essai sur les origines de la philosophic judeo-alexandrine, 1890, 211-309, 337-412. The work by Drummond, often quoted, has been carefully done and is interestingly written (Philo Judaeus, 1888, 2 volumes; see I, 177-229).

For detailed bibliography see Schurer, GJV 4, 1909, III, 508 ff; HJP, 1886, II, 3, pp. 236 f, is necessarily very defective.

T. Witton Davies

WISDOM (Hebr. חכמה; Greek, σοφία): (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906)

By: [Kaufmann Kohler](#)

Table of Contents

- [Wisdom in the Bible.](#)
- [The Hokmah Literature.](#)
- [Wisdom in the Apocrypha.](#)
- [Traces in Post-Biblical Literature.](#)

Practical intelligence; the mental grasp which observes and penetrates into the nature of things, and also the ability skilfully to perform difficult tasks. The former faculty is intuitive, the latter creative. Hence the word connotes both deep understanding and artistic skill. Wisdom is at once a human and a divine property.

Wisdom in the Bible.

All human wisdom and skill come from God. The spirit of God made Joseph discreet and wise (Gen. xli. 38-39), inspired and prepared Bezaleel and other artists for the work of the Tabernacle (Ex. xxxi. 3-6), and was also the source of the wisdom of Joshua (Deut. xxxiv. 9) and Solomon (I Kings iii. 12, 28). "The Lord giveth wisdom" (Prov. ii. 6; comp. Job xxxviii. 36; Ps. li. 8 [A. V. 6]; Dan. ii. 21), and He annuls the wisdom of the wise (Isa. xxix. 14). Great blame, therefore, attaches to those who disregard the divine source of their wisdom and become conceited and sinful (Isa. v. 21, xxix. 14; Jer. iv. 22, viii. 8-9, ix. 22). Wisdom is acquired, moreover, by the observation of nature (Prov. vi. 6; Job xxxv. 11) and of history (Deut. xxxii. 29; Hos. xiv. 10 [A. V. 9]; Prov. viii. 33, xix. 20), as well as by study and by association with the wise (Prov. ix. 9, xiii. 20; Job xxxii. 7).

The wise were sought out for their counsel (Deut. i. 13, 15; II Sam. xiv. 20, xvi. 23; Prov. xii. 18, xiii. 14), so that, like the priest with his Torah and the prophet with his revealed word of God, they formed a special class (Jer. xviii. 18). In more primitive times "wise women" were consulted (II Sam. xiv. 2; xx. 16, 22), and at a later period females who were skilled in the art of music and song were called "wise women" (Jer. ix. 17).

The Hokmah Literature.

As contrasted with the Law and the Prophets, which were intended for the people of Israel exclusively, wisdom was less restricted. "The children of the east country," as well as of Egypt and the south, were regarded as the possessors of wisdom from of old (comp. I Kings v. 10-11 [A. V. 30-31]; Jer. xlix. 7), and Daniel was considered a representative of them (Ezek. xxviii. 3). This spirit of universal wisdom was also typified by King Solomon (I Kings v. 9-14 [A. V. iv. 29-34], x. 1-24; Eccl. i. 13, 16); and to him, accordingly, was ascribed the entire Wisdom-literature preserved in the form of proverbs, secular songs (Song of Solomon), philosophic thought (Ecclesiastes), and, later, the Wisdom of Solomon. As soon as monotheism was firmly established as a result of the labors of the Prophets, the wisdom of the East could be consulted by Israel's sages, and questions concerning the origin of all things could be answered, in both poetry and prose, far more intelligently than had been possible for the ancient Babylonians. This was done occasionally by the Deutero-Isaiah (xl. and elsewhere), by the interpolator of Amos iv. 13 and v. 8, by the authors of Proverbs (viii. 22-31), of Job (xxviii. and elsewhere), and of Ps. civ., and, most authoritatively of all, by the composers of Gen. i.-x. Wisdom, which dwelt, according to the Babylonian cosmology, in the depths of the sea with Ea, the creative deity, became in Biblical literature the all-encompassing intelligence of God, the helper of the Creator, the foundation of the world (comp. Jeremias, "Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients," 1904, pp. 29, 80). In exact proportion as Israel's God was believed to be the God of the universe, wisdom was regarded as the cosmic power, God's master workman (Prov. viii. 30), the first of His works (*ib.* viii. 22), and His designer (*ib.* iii. 19; Ps. civ. 24), while at the same time wisdom became the law of life and the divine guide and ruler of man. Virtue, or the fear of God which is the avoidance of evil, was developed into the dominant teaching of the Proverbs and Job.

The ceremonial laws are scarcely mentioned, and only the ethical side of religion is considered. At times the ethics assumes too worldly an aspect and becomes commonplace morality (Prov. vi. 34, xiv. 22, xxiv. 17-18, xxix. 3), although other passages point to high ideals (Job xxix. 15-16, xxxi.; Prov. x. 12).

The Book of Ecclesiastes, written by some Sadducean pessimist under the influence of Greek Epicureanism and skepticism, reflects the impressions made by a worldly wisdom no longer permeated by the spirit of the Torah, so that the Solomonic wisdom, which had lost sight of the ethical ideal, was mocked and shown to be a failure.

Wisdom in the Apocrypha.

In the main, wisdom was greatly valued and eagerly sought during the Second Temple, and the wise became the teachers of the young and the models of the old. An extensive Wisdom-literature, of which large portions may have been lost, sprang up in continuation of the Proverbs of Solomon. Ecclesiasticus ([Sirach](#)) proves, on analysis, to be a compilation of writings which belong in part to an older generation; and the [Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs](#), which recent research has reclaimed for Jewish literature, may also be classed among these Wisdom-books. Concerning the Book of Wisdom [see Wisdom, Book of](#). The table-talk of the wise men of Jerusalem at the court of King Ptolemy of Egypt in the Letter of Aristeeus, §§ 187-300, as well as the answer of Zerubbabel, the page of King Darius (I Esdras ii. -iii.), indicates the Jewish longing to appear as wise men like Daniel and Joseph before the kings of the world.

In all these books wisdom is extolled and invested with divine attributes (Ecclus. [Sirach] i. 1-26, iv. 11-29, li. 13-30, and especially xxiv. 1-29, where it is identified with the law of Moses; Test. Patr., Levi, 13; Enoch, xlii. 1-2). The book on astronomy and cosmography in the writings of Enoch is described as celestial wisdom (Enoch, xxxvii. 2, xlix. 1-3, lxxxii. 2-3; comp. Book of Jubilees, iv. 17, xxi. 10), and Noah's book on healing (Book of Jubilees, x. 13) belongs to the same class.

Traces in Post-Biblical Literature.

Under the influence of Greek philosophy wisdom became a divine agency of a personal character (Wisdom vii. 22-30), so that Philo terms it the daughter of God, "the mother of the creative Word" ("De Profugis," §§ 9, 20), while as the creative principle of the world, wisdom occurs in Targ. Yer. to Gen. i. 1 (comp. Hag. 11b; Gen. R. i., where the Torah takes the place of wisdom; see also the midrash on Prov. iii. 19 in Jellinek, "B. H." ii. 23-39, v. 63-69). In Christian and Gentile Gnosticism, wisdom became the center of speculation ([see Gnosticism](#)). The so-called Fourth Book of Maccabees, a philosophical sermon on self-control with reference to the seven martyred sons of the Maccabean heroine, is another contribution to the Hellenistic Wisdom-literature.

"The wise man" was the title of the early master of the Law (Ab. i. 4, ii. 15), but at a later period the masters bore the epithet of "rabbi," and only those who had died retained the name of "the wise," while the learned were called "disciples of the wise" (see Levy, "Neuhebr. Wörterb." s.v. חכם). In general, "wisdom" ("ḥokmah") connotes universal or worldly wisdom, and is thus contrasted with the Torah (Kid. 49b; Niddah 69b Sanh. 104b; Yer. Mak. ii. 31d). There are records of disputations between Jewish masters and Gentile sages, such as the one between R. Joshua b. Hananiah and the men of Athens (Bek. 8-9; Lam. R. i. 4 *et seq.* [comp. Athenians](#); Tamid 32a, b). In Pes. 94b (comp. R. H. 12a) the opinion of the wise men of the Gentiles is preferred to that of the Jewish sages. At the sight of Gentile sages one should recite the benediction: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast imparted of Thy wisdom to flesh and blood" (Ber. 58b). "Ten measures of wisdom came down from heaven, and nine of them fell to the lot of the Holy Land" (Kid. 49b). "Since the destruction of the Temple the wise have taken the place of the Prophets" (B. B. 12a). "Who is wise? He who learneth from every one" (Ab. iv. 1). "The Shekinah rests only upon the wise, the strong, the rich, and the tall" (Shab. 92b); but the members of the Sanhedrin must possess universal wisdom (Sanh. 17a). Among the masters of the Mishnah, R. Johanan b. Zakkai and R. Akiba were considered the paragons of universal wisdom (Soṭah ix. 15, 49b). "Greek wisdom" was fostered in the house of Gamaliel, but was forbidden elsewhere after the Hasmonean war (B. Ḳ. 82b-83a; Soṭah 49b). The sciences of music (R. H. 29b) and astronomy (Shab. 75a) are called "wisdom," and the midwife is termed the "wise woman" (Shab. xviii. 3), while the fourth benediction in the "Shemoneh 'Esreh" is called the "Benediction of Wisdom" (Ber. 33a).

In rabbinical and philosophical literature the various sciences are termed "ḥokmot"; and as the seven sciences of the medieval university ("trivia" and "quadrivia") were based on Prov. ix. 1, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars," so Jewish writers allude to the seven branches of wisdom (see Joseph Kimḥi on Prov. ix. 1; Steinschneider, "Jüdische Literatur," in Ersch and Gruber, "Encyc." section ii., part 27, pp. 424, 434-435, where the various "ḥokmot" are enumerated).