

**THE WISDOM OF  
SOLOMON, IN  
THE REV. VERSION**

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The Wisdom of Solomon, in the Rev. version by J. A. F. Gregg

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## PREFACE

BY THE

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE present General Editor for the Old Testament in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges desires to say that, in accordance with the policy of his predecessor the Bishop of Worcester, he does not hold himself responsible for the particular interpretations adopted or for the opinions expressed by the editors of the several Books, nor has he endeavoured to bring them into agreement with one another. It is inevitable that there should be differences of opinion in regard to many questions of criticism and interpretation, and it seems best that these differences should find free expression in different volumes. He has endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, that the general scope and character of the series should be observed, and that views which have a reasonable claim to consideration should not be ignored, but he has felt it best that the final responsibility should, in general, rest with the individual contributors.

A. F. KIRKPATRICK.

FROM YOUTH TO OLD AGE TAKE WISDOM  
FOR THY SUSTENANCE: OF ALL POSSESSIONS  
IT ALONE ABIDETH

*BIAS.*



Wisdom is a breath of the power of God, and a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty; therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into her. For she is an effulgence from everlasting light, and an unspotted mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness. And she, being one, hath power to do all things; and remaining in herself, reneweth all things: and from generation to generation passing into holy souls she maketh *men* friends of God and prophets.

Wisdom vii. 25--27.

## INTRODUCTION.

### § 1. *Title.*

The book is known as the *Wisdom of Solomon* in the three oldest extant Gk. MSS.,  $\aleph$ AB, and in each case occupies the same position relatively to the other Wisdom-books, i.e. it follows Proverbs, Ecclesiastes (and Song of Solomon), and precedes Ecclesiasticus, the position of Job being variable<sup>1</sup>.

In the Syriac Version, it is known as the "Book of the Great Wisdom of Solomon, son of David," and in the Arabic, as the "Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, son of King David, who ruled over the children of Israel."

Cyprian (d. 258) quotes Wisdom frequently, and habitually refers to it as *Solomon*, or the *Wisdom of Solomon*: Tertullian (*praescr. haer.* vii.) had cited it under the latter title. Jerome (*praef. in libr. Salom.*) unhesitatingly describes it as pseudepigraphic, and, doubtless under his influence, the title given to it in the Vulgate was simply *Liber Sapientiae*: while St Augustine (*Civ. Dei* xvii. 20), though aware of the tradition of the Solomonic authorship, acknowledged that the best writers denied its truth, although an early ecclesiastical custom in the West had lent authority to it (see also Aug. *de doct. Chr.* ii. 13).

The reference in the Western "Muratorian Canon" (about 220 A.D.?) to "Wisdom, written by the friends of Solomon in his honour," is very obscure; but cp. Intr. p. xx, n. 1.

Among the Greek fathers, Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* iv.

<sup>1</sup> The title varies thus:— $\Sigma\phi\iota\alpha$   $\Sigma\alpha\lambda\omega\mu\acute{\omega}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  B.  $\Sigma$ .  $\Sigma\alpha\lambda\omega\mu\acute{\omega}\nu\omicron\varsigma$   $\aleph$ .  $\Sigma$ .  $\Sigma\omicron\lambda\omicron\mu\acute{\omega}\nu\omicron\varsigma$  A and Cod. Ven. For the names given to *Wisdom* in Patristic and Synodical lists of the Eastern and Western Church, see Dr Swete's *Introd. to O.T. in Greek*, pp. 203—214.

16) and Origen (*Ep. ad Rom.* vii. 14) both call it the *Divine Wisdom*, although the former also knows it as the *Wisdom of Solomon* (*Str.* vi.), and the latter refers to it as the "Wisdom named that of Solomon" (*adv. Cels.* v. 29). The *Wisdom* mentioned by Melito (*Eus. H. E.* iv. 26) is almost certainly the Book of Proverbs, the canon to which he refers being Palestinian (cp. that of Origen, *Eus. H. E.* vi. 25). Epiphanius (*de mens. et pond.* § 4) and John of Damascus (*de fid. orth.* iv. 17) call it ἡ πανάρετος, "The Wisdom which comprises all virtues<sup>1</sup>." This title was probably given in connection with the series of attributes ascribed to Wisdom in ch. vii. 22 f, and is also accorded to *Proverbs* by Clement of Rome (*Ep. ad Cor.* § 57), and by Hege-sippus and Irenaeus (*Eus. H. E.* iv. 22), and to *Ecclesiasticus* by Jerome (*praef. in libr. Salom.*).

### § 2. Date.

As will be seen below, the Solomonic date for the Book of Wisdom is impossible. Some writers have placed it as early as the end of the 3rd cent. B.C., others as late as the middle of the 1st cent. A.D.

Wisdom could not have been written before the beginning of the 2nd cent. B.C. This is proved by its relation to the Greek version of the prophets and hagiographa. Undoubted use is made of the Greek version of Isaiah (ii. 12, cp. Is. iii. 10; xv. 10, cp. Is. xlv. 20), the author quoting from the Greek where it differs from the Hebrew; and of Job (xii. 12, cp. Job ix. 12, 19): accordingly Wisdom was written after these books were translated. But, inasmuch as the LXX. version of the Pentateuch was not made until the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (284—246 B.C.), it is unlikely that the canon of the prophetic and historical books which was not fixed until about 300—250 B.C. (see Hastings, *D. B.* iii. 612), and still less the canon of the hagiographa, would call for translation into Greek, either in whole or in part, until some considerable time later. Therefore, the

<sup>1</sup> Πανάρετος is the alternative title given to *Wisdom* in the list of books prefixed to Cod. A. Epiphanius calls it "The Wisdom of Solomon called ἡ πανάρετος"; John of Damascus "ἡ πανάρετος, that is, the Wisdom of Solomon."