

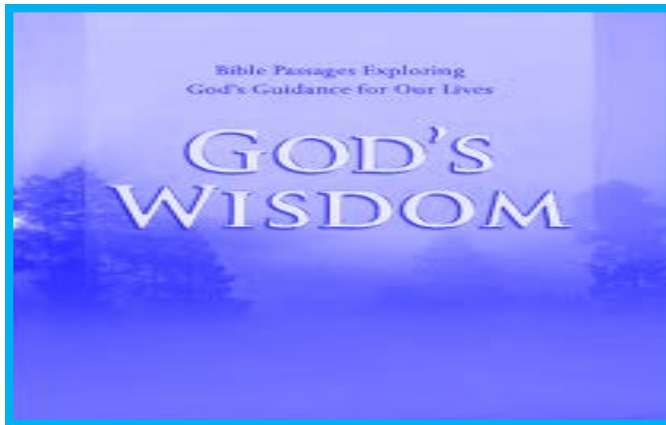
(Verses 26, 27). *However, the multitude of the wise is the welfare of the whole world, as if to say: and you should listen; however, for because; because the multitude of the wise; 'The body of preachers'; is the welfare of the whole world, that is, the cause of its welfare;*

Proverbs 11:14: 'Where there is no governor, the people shall fall, but there is safety where there is much counsel'. Whoever, therefore, hinders the multiplication or multitude of the wise hinders the welfare of the world; and so such a person should be hateful to the whole world.

Such were the people of whom the Apostle in 1 Thessalonians 2:15 says: 'They please not God and are adversaries of all people'. *And a wise king is the upholding of the people;* Sirach 10:1: 'A wise judge shall judge the people and the government of a prudent person shall be steady'. This applies most especially to Christ in whose person there was said: 'I am the salvation of the people'.

Because wisdom is so useful, *receive therefore instruction, that is, wisdom, by my words, vigorously or as occasions arise, but effectively and causally;* so Sirach 1:1: 'All wisdom is from the Lord God'. And it shall be profitable to you because Ecclesiastes 12:11 says: 'The words of the wise are as goads', namely, by provoking to good, 'and as nails deeply fastened in' by preserving from a fall into evil.

### *End of Wisdom 6*



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# ***THE BOOK OF WISDOM***



## ***CHAPTER 6***

The Book of Wisdom never existed among the Hebrews. Its style has rather the fragrance of Greek eloquence. The Jews claim that it is a work of Philo; it is then said to be a work of Wisdom because in it the coming of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, and his passion are clearly expressed. This is the Prologue Jerome put before the Book of Wisdom; he shows firstly the origin of this book saying: 'The Book of Wisdom never existed among the Hebrews. Its style, that is, its language is so elegant that it 'has rather the fragrance of Greek eloquence', that is, its taste is more Greek than Hebrew. The Greeks are more eloquent and deeper in their statements than the Hebrews. So, since this book has a most elegant style with the deepest teachings, it is clear that it was written in Greek rather than in Hebrew. Secondly, Jerome names its author when he says: 'The Jews claim that it', namely, the Book of Wisdom 'is a work of Philo' as its compiler but that Solomon was the person who discovered it. While Philo was a Jew he was highly skilled in the Greek language. Jerome says of him in the book *De viris illustribus* that 'he was a Jew of Alexandria of the class of priests'. Thirdly, he gives the reason for the title when he says: 'it is then said to be a work of Wisdom because in it the coming of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, and his passion are clearly expressed'. The translation is based on the Douay Rheims version of the Bible.

**THE COMMENTARY ON THE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF WISDOM  
ARE THE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SERAPHIC DOCTOR SAINT BONAVENTURE, OFM**

**Chapter 6**

(Verse 1). *Wisdom is better than strength, and a wise person is better than a strong person*, as if to say: from this, stupid powerful people are considered in such a way that *wisdom*, concerning itself with divine things, *is better*, that is, more useful, for, 'it always rules the soul well'; *it is better than a strong person* for strength often leads one to sin; Ecclesiastes 9:16: 'And I said that wisdom is better than strength'. And a person who is wise in human matters, not only in speech, *is better than a strong person*: 'in body'.

So, no one should glory in such strength, according to Jeremiah 9:23: 'Let not a strong person glory in his or her strength'.

But contra: Tobit 12:7: 'It is good to hide the secret of a king'.

It has to be said that it should be hidden from those who tempt [God] but revealed to those who love [God]; so John 15:15: 'I have called you friends because all things whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known to you'. Likewise, it has to be hidden from the proud and wise, but revealed to the little ones who are humble; so Matthew 11:25: 'You have hid these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to little ones', to the humble; likewise, not to the greedy but to the abstemious, as is clear in Daniel 1:8-17.

*I will seek her out from the beginning of her birth*, namely, her human birth, or of wisdom itself, by showing that it proceeds from the Father. *And bring the revelation of the knowledge of her to light* by teaching clearly; Sirach 24:31: 'They that explain me shall have life everlasting'. *And I will not pass over the truth* by mixing in falsehood; Sirach 3:20: 'In all your works let the true word go before you'; 'It is a distinctive feature of good minds to love what is true in words, not words'.

(Verse 25). *Neither will I go with consuming envy*, that is, like one consuming; Proverbs 14:30: 'Envy is the enemy of the bones'; also in Psalm 111:10: 'The wicked shall see and shall be angry, and shall gnash the teeth and pine away'.

*I will go* because envy is the worst companion since, like a wild animal, it devours a person; Genesis 37:33: 'An evil wild beast has eaten him, a beast has devoured Joseph'. Moses was such a person who did not envy for he said in Numbers 11:29: 'Who will grant me that all the people might prophesy and that the Lord would give them his spirit?'

*For such a person*, namely, an envious person, *shall not be partaker of wisdom*; hence above in 1:4: *wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul*; Sirach 14:3: '*Riches*, that is, wisdom, *are not comely for a covetous person*, that is, an envious person; wisdom is described as riches because of its value; Proverbs 3:15: 'She is more precious than all riches'.

## Fourthly, a promise to teach wisdom under four headings

*Now what wisdom is*, as if to say: In this last section he promises to teach wisdom; firstly, he deals with the revealing of the teaching; secondly, the fidelity in teaching: *and bring the knowledge of her to light*; thirdly, the value in listening: *Now the multitude of the wise is the welfare of the whole world*; fourthly, he adds his exhortation to listening: *Receive therefore instruction*.

(Verse 24). *But what wisdom is*, as if to say: I have invited you to wisdom so that you might acquire it, *I will declare and I will not hide from you the mysteries of God, but will seek her out from the beginning of her birth, and bring the knowledge of her to light, and will not pass over the truth*.

Or it can be continued as: up till now I have given advice about wisdom; now *I will declare what wisdom is and what was her origin*. This is indeed a great promise; 'It is hid from the eyes of all living', Job 28:21; nevertheless, it can be known from a revelation of the Holy Spirit. I say, *what uncreated wisdom is*, that is, what sort of a thing it is; what it is in its essence cannot be known nor spoken about, only of what sort of a thing it is, namely, good, eternal, all powerful etc.

But what created wisdom can be known and spoken about;

'Wisdom is knowledge of divine matters'. *And what was her origin*, namely, how it was born from the Father, referring to uncreated Wisdom which is the Son of God; 1 Corinthians 1:24: 'Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God'.

Or: *what was her origin*, that is, of created wisdom if the discussion is about created wisdom; Sirach 1:4: 'Wisdom has been created before all things'; also in the same book 24:14: 'From the beginning and before the world was I created', that is, ready to be created. *I will not hide from you the mysteries of God*, that is, the sacred and secret workings of the wisdom of God.

## Part II. Exhortation to wisdom

*Hear therefore, you kings, and understand: learn, you that are judges of the ends of the earth*. Having advised kings and rulers about justice, here he begins to advise them on seeking and loving wisdom, and, firstly, by an argument drawn from the danger of the office of those he is advising; secondly, by an argument drawn from an example from those whom he is advising, namely, in chapter seven; thirdly, by an argument taken from the many benefits of wisdom which he recommends, namely, from chapter ten to the end.

### Firstly, he draws an argument from the danger of the office of superiors

In the first argument he touches, firstly, on the guilt and punishment of stupid rulers; secondly, on the opposite, namely, on the reward for wise rulers: *To you, therefore, O kings*; thirdly, he advises both to desire wisdom: *Covet you therefore my words, and love them, and you shall have instruction*; fourthly, he promises to teach it: *Now what wisdom is, and what was her origin, I will declare*.

### Firstly, on the guilt of stupid rulers

In the first argument, he requests, firstly, that the rulers listen; secondly, he gives the reason for listening: *For power is given you by the Lord, and strength by the most High, who will examine your works, and search out your thoughts*.

(Verses 2, 3). *Hear therefore, you kings, and understand*, as if to say: because wisdom is so useful, *hear therefore*, with external hearing, *you kings*; 'Prelates'; *and understand*, with your inner hearing; Proverbs 1:5: 'A wise person shall hear and be wiser, and whoever understands shall possess governments'; Matthew 13:9: 'Let anyone with ears, listen'. *Learn, you that are judges of the ends of the earth*, that is, of particular lands or provinces. *Kings* are called prelates so as to lead to good; *judges*, so as to discern between good and evil. I say, *learn wisdom*, because it is necessary in judges; so Deuteronomy 1:13: 'Let me have from among you, individuals who are wise and understanding'.

However, *give your ears*, namely, both exterior and inner, *you that rule*, by holding back from evil the *multitudes of nations entrusted to you*; Proverbs 14:28: 'In the multitude of people is the dignity of the king'. *And that please yourselves in multitudes of nations*, that is, you glory in your office as prelates. This is against what Saint Gregory says in his *Regula pastoralis*: 'As often as a prelate falls into the sin of apostasy, it is always from taking delight in being over people'.

*For power is given you by the Lord, and strength by the most High, who will examine your works, and search out your thoughts*. Here he adds the reason for listening, namely, to avoid the punishment to be inflicted for an abuse of power. Firstly, he treats of the giving of power; secondly, the abuse of the power given: *Because being ministers*; thirdly, the judgment for the abuse: *Horribly and speedily will God appear to you*; fourthly, the equity of the judgment: *For God will not except anyone's person*.

(Verse 4). *For power is given you by the Lord*. You should listen because *power is given you by the Lord*; so Romans 13:1: 'There is no power but from God'; *power*,: 'Judicial power on earth', namely, for pronouncing sentence;

John 19:11: 'You would have no power against me, unless it were given you from above'. *And strength*,: 'To punish' by carrying out a sentence. Or: *power* in civil cases, *strength* in criminal cases. *By the Lord*, namely, from God who is above us;

Psalms 82:19: 'You Lord are the most High above all the earth'. *Who will examine*, : 'In judgment'; Luke 16:2: 'Give an account of your stewardship'. *Your works*, namely, exterior;

Ecclesiastes 12:14: 'All things that are done, God will bring into judgment for every error, whether it be for good or evil'. God did not give power without demanding a reckoning; so

Sirach 18:20: 'Before judgment, examine yourself and you shall find mercy before God'. *And search out your thoughts*, that is, interior works; :

'As if to be judged in everything'; above in Wisdom 1:9: *For inquisition shall be made into the thoughts of the ungodly. And search out*;

Zephaniah 1:12: 'I will search Jerusalem with lamps'; God will not only search but will make known; so

1 Corinthians 4:5: 'The Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts'.

(Verses 20, 21, 22). *Incorruptibility brings near to God*, and so there is sung of the virgins that 'they follow the Lamb wherever he goes', Revelation 14:4. - *Therefore the desire of wisdom*, which is its beginning, *brings to the everlasting kingdom*; 'Which consists in the knowledge of the Divinity', according to John 17:3: 'This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent'.

*If then your delight be in thrones and sceptres, O you kings of the people, love wisdom*, as if to say: from which comes an everlasting kingdom, therefore, *if your delight be in thrones and sceptres*; 'He warns kings to love wisdom without which they cannot rule; a republic is well governed when philosophers rule and kings philosophise. Rightly then should the rulers of the Church be zealous in meditation on the divine law; whoever pursues it by learning, teaching and doing will gain the crown of the heavenly kingdom'. *If then your delight be in thrones of judiciary power and sceptres* of royal dignity, according to Matthew 23:6: 'They love the first places at feasts and the first chairs in the synagogues'; another translation has: *in understanding*, in matters of discretion, and *in wreaths* for dignity; I say, *if your delight, O you kings of the people*, that is, senior rulers and prelates, both secular and ecclesiastical; *love wisdom, that you may reign forever*; Proverbs 8:15: 'By me kings reign'.

(Verse 23). *Love the light of wisdom*, for the enlightenment of souls; below in Wisdom 7:29: *being compared with the light, she is found before it*; because she illumines spiritual matters, something more than to illumine bodily matters. *All you who bear rule over peoples*, that is, also even you lesser princes and prelates.

(Verse 18). This is what he wants to say: *For the beginning of her*, that is, of wisdom, *is the truest desire of discipline*; as if to say: wisdom so goes out to meet and show herself. Her show and meeting is not useless. *For*, meaning because, *the beginning of her*, namely, by which a person begins to become wise; 'no one suddenly becomes perfect', *is the truest desire of discipline*, that is, of wisdom. It is said in Psalm 118:20 of such discipline: 'My soul has longed to desire your justifications at all times'.

The desire for wisdom is already a part of wisdom according to Sirach 6:34: 'If you love to hear, you shall be wise'. But it would seem that fear, not love, is the beginning of wisdom, because Sirach 1:16 has: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom'. It has to be said that fear is the first beginning, but love is the next; or: the fear of the Lord is the outward beginning, love the inner beginning.

It is here called the *truest* desire against a triple vain desire of which 1 John 2:16 says: 'For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world'. This is the triple vanity of which Ecclesiastes 1:2 says: 'Vanity of vanities, said Ecclesiastes, vanity of vanity and all is vanity'.

(Verse 19). *And the care*, as if to say: the reason why *the desire of discipline is the beginning of wisdom is the care of discipline*, that is, the desire of discipline *is love*, that is, the cause of the love of this wisdom; for what we desire we love when we possess it. And note, that wisdom and discipline have the same meaning because they are in fact the same thing even though they differ in the way they work; wisdom is so called because it affects the inner mind sweetly, discipline in so far as it orders and arranges external actions. Or in this way: *the care of discipline is love*, that is, the cause of divine love; further on in 7:28 he says: *For God loves none but those who dwell with wisdom*; Hebrews 12:8: 'For if you are without discipline then you are not [God's] children but you are illegitimate'. *And love is the keeping of her laws*, that is, the cause for keeping; Romans 13:10: 'Love therefore is the culmination of the law', that is, the cause for fulfilling the divine law; 1 Timothy 1:5: 'Now the end of the commandment is charity'; of the laws, the natural, Mosaic and Gospel laws, of which Isaiah 24:5 says: 'They have transgressed the laws, they have changed the ordinance, they have broken the everlasting covenant'.

*The keeping of her laws is the firm foundation of incorruptibility*, that is, the cause of perfect spiritual incorruptibility both of mind and body at the present time; or: *of incorruptibility*, that is, in the future. Proverbs 3:21-22: 'Keep my law and my counsel and there shall be life to your soul'.

Note that there is a triple questioning of a prelate: the first is how he has entered; Matthew 22:12: 'friend, how did you come in here not having a wedding garment?'

The second: how has he lived; Isaiah 22:16: 'What do you do here, or as if you were somebody here?'

The third, how has he ruled and guarded the flock committed to him; Jeremiah 13:20: 'Where is the flock that was given to you, your beautiful cattle?'

(Verse 5). *Because being ministers of his kingdom, you have not judged rightly, nor kept the law of justice, nor walked according to the will of God*. I have said well that the Lord *will examine your works*; and rightly, *because being ministers*, not of the Lord but *of his kingdom*, that is of the Church militant;

1 Peter 5:3: 'Neither as lording it over the clergy, but being made a pattern of the flock from the heart';

also 1 Corinthians 4:1: 'Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God'. *You have not judged others rightly*; so Isaiah 1:23: 'They judge not the fatherless, and the widow's cause does not come in to them';

also Jeremiah 5:28: 'They have not judged the cause of the widow, they have not managed the cause of the fatherless'. *Nor kept the law of justice*, namely, in themselves;

Psalm 77:10: 'They kept not the covenant of God and in God's law they would not walk';

Isaiah 59:14: 'Judgment is turned away backward, and justice has stood far off';

also Jeremiah 5:5: 'These have altogether broken the yoke more, and have burst the bonds'. *Nor walked according to the will of God*, by sinning against God;

Jeremiah 7:24: 'but walked in pleasures and in the perversity of their wicked heart'.

Or it can be said, that he treats of the triple way in which an unjust sentence is given: firstly, from its cause, namely, when there is no just cause; secondly, from order, so that the order of law is not observed; thirdly, from the mind, so that when a sentence comes from a corrupt intention against anyone; against this is Deuteronomy 16:20: 'You shall follow justly after that which is just'.

(Verse 6). *Horribly*, that is, terribly; Hebrews 10:31: 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God'; *and speedily will he appear to you*; hence Zephaniah 1:14: 'The great day of the Lord is near and exceeding swift'. Although the day of general judgment may be far off, however, the day of particular judgment, that is, of death is close; so Sirach 38:23: 'Remember my judgment, for yours also shall be so: yesterday for me, and today for you'. Indeed, *horribly will he appear to you prelates, for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule*. It will be severe, indeed, because they took office wrongly; more severe because they lived badly; most severe because they ruled wrongly. Or: severe because of the sins of the subjects; more severe because of the sins of the ministers; most severe because of the large number and enormity of their own sins.

Prelates are punished more severely than others, firstly, on account of what is entrusted to them, according to Luke 12:48: 'To whom much will have been given, much shall be required'. On account of sin because, other things being equal, the sin of a prelate is graver than the sin of a subject; Jeremiah 5:5: 'These have broken the yoke more and have broken the bonds'. On account of the damage because they corrupt others by their example;

Gregory : 'When a pastor walks through rough places, it is necessary for the flock to follow to the precipice'. On account of scandal because he scandalizes the Church;

so Malachi 2:8: 'You have caused many to stumble by your instruction'. On account of judgment, namely, because here they are not judged, according to the text of Psalm 50:6: 'To you only have I sinned and have done evil before you, that they may be justified in your words and may overcome when you are judged'; and so in the future they will be judged more severely together and completely, according to 2 Maccabees 6:14: 'For, not as with other nations whom the Lord patiently expects, that when the day of judgment shall come, he may punish them in the fullness of their sins'. On account of their office, because they sin by unworthily exceeding their office; Romans 2:1: 'For when you judge another, you condemn yourself'.

(Verse 16). *To think therefore upon her*, as if to say: she is given not only to one who watches and seeks but to one who thinks upon her, not with a simple thought but with an affectionate thought; : 'With a desire for divine contemplation'. Sirach 14:22: 'Blessed are they that shall continue in wisdom, and that shall meditate in their justice, and in their minds shall think of the all seeing eye of God', for such *is perfect understanding*, that is, it is perfect because wisdom perfects the human mind, because, according to Hugh of St Victor, 'It is in wisdom that the form of perfect good consists'. Or: *To think therefore upon her is perfect understanding*, that is, the mind is perfectly ordered when it thinks on wisdom, according to Augustine: 'The goal of people on earth is to search perfectly for wisdom'. *And whoever watches*; : 'With an intention of the mind', *for her*, to acquire and protect her, *shall quickly be secure*, namely, from evil; because to obtain her is true security', Proverbs 11:15: 'One who is aware of the snares shall be secure'. This is a good security of which Proverbs 15:15 says: 'A secure mind is like a continual feast'.

(Verse 17). *Such as are worthy of her*; as if to say: I have said well that *they shall quickly be secure, for she goes about seeking such as are worthy of her*, namely, the pure in heart and body; so he said in 1:4: *Wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins. She goes about seeking*, that is by offering herself continuously and unceasingly from every side. That he means continuously and unceasingly is understood by the words: *she goes about*; movement straight ahead cannot be continued as can circular movement. Incarnate Wisdom went about in this way through the villages, as is clear in Mark 6:6. *And in her ways*, namely, in precepts and counsels observed, of which Proverbs 3:17 says: 'Her ways are beautiful ways and all her paths are peaceable'; *she shows herself to them*, according to Psalm 118:104: 'By your commandment I have had understanding'; *cheerfully*, by making them happy from the fact that she gives herself to them free of cost; 2 Corinthians 9:7: 'For God', like us, 'loves a cheerful giver'; 'The more you add to the delay, the more you take from the gift'. *And with all providence* for the future she perfectly provides for them everything necessary for salvation; *she meets them*; Matthew 28:9.

*For the beginning of her is the truest desire of discipline*. Here are treated the levels of glory acquired through wisdom; and, firstly, he treats the beginning; secondly, the progress as in: *the care of discipline*; thirdly, its ending: *the keeping of her laws is the firm foundation of incorruptibility*; fourthly, therefore the desire of wisdom brings to the everlasting kingdom. So, the first level, that is, the beginning of wisdom, is *a desire for discipline*; from a desire for discipline comes *love*; from love, *the keeping of the law of God*; from keeping the law of God, *incorruptibility* of mind and closeness to a divine likeness; from a divine likeness, the glory of the heavenly kingdom: therefore, from the first level, the desire of wisdom, comes heavenly glory.

(Verse 14). *She prevents*, namely, she is soon found by the zeal of one seeking her; 'She offers herself for free; for she is the way, the truth and the life, so that by her one goes to her and reaches her'. I say, *she prevents*, that is, anticipates them, *that covet her, so that she first shows herself unto them*; because they could not anticipate her unless they were anticipated and enlightened by her, just as the light of the sun enlightens so that she can be seen; 'The true wisdom which is Christ can be found but not anticipated'.

(Verse 15). *One who wakes early to seek her, shall not labour: but will find her sitting at the door*. I said well that she is found by those who seek her, because whoever seeks her *early*, that is, immediately the light rises; 'From the first light of faith', not by night like sinners who remain always in the night, but like the just, of whom Proverbs 4:18 says: 'But the path of the just, as a shining light, goes forward and increases even to perfect day'; 1 Thessalonians 5:5: 'You are all children of light'. *One who wakes early to seek her* against negligence; Proverbs 8:17: 'They that in the morning early watch for me, shall find me'. *Shall not labour* because the sweetness of what is sought and found lightens the work; Sirach 6:20: 'For in working about her you shall work a little, and shall quickly eat of her fruits'. *But will find her sitting at the door*, that is, in quiet and still ready to enter just as a ray of the sun falls on a closed window. I say, *will find her sitting at the door*, namely, the spiritual door of the mind and affections; Revelation 3:20: 'Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock. If you shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to you, and will sup with you, and you with me'. For she has gates through which one enters into her; so Proverbs 8:34: 'Blessed is the person who hears me and watches daily at my gates' which are faith and charity; through faith the mind enters into her, the affections through charity.

*To think therefore upon her, is perfect understanding: and whoever watches for her, shall quickly be secure*. Here he shows the value in acquiring her, firstly, in the present and, secondly, in the future: *For the beginning of her is the truest desire of discipline*. – The value in the present is shown in four ways: firstly, understanding in the mind; secondly, security in anger: *and whoever watches for her, shall quickly be secure*; thirdly, cheerfulness in passion: *she shows herself to them cheerfully in the ways*; fourthly, providence for the future: *and meets them with all providence*.

(Verse 7). *For to him that is little*, that is, to the infirm and the humble; 'To those who sinned through ignorance, or weakness, or necessity and have wiped it away by humble penitence'; *mercy is granted*, 'The remission of sins', with respect to their penalty either totally or partially, here or in the future; Isaiah 66:2: 'But to whom shall I have respect but to whoever is poor and little, and of a contrite heart and that trembles at my words?' *But the mighty*, that is those who used power to sin, *shall be mightily tormented*, that is, strongly afflicted, for their own sins and for the sins of their subjects; so Numbers 25:4: 'Take all the princes of the people and hang them up on gibbets against the sun'; also 1 Kings 20:39: 'Keep this man and if he shall slip away your life shall be for his life'; also Ezekiel 32:21: 'The most mighty among the strong ones shall speak to him from the midst of hell'.

(Verses 8, 9). *For God will not stand in awe of any person*, from punishment and torment, whether a person be little or great, empty of love; Ezekiel 18:30: 'I will judge everyone according to their ways, O house of Israel, says the Lord God'. Acts 10:34: 'God is not a respecter of persons'. *Who is*, that is, because God is *the ruler of all*; Revelation 19:16: 'King of kings and Lord of lords'. *Neither will God stand in awe of anyone's greatness*, namely, from fear since God is 'a great God and a great king above all gods', as stated in Psalm 94:3, and again in Psalm 144:3: 'Of the Lord's greatness there is no end'; so God overcomes without limit all other greatness. *For God made the little and the great*; Malachi 2:10: 'Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us?' Because God created all, both little and great, all will be judged by God as creatures of God; Revelation 20:12: 'I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne'. *And God has equally care of all*.

But contra: 1 Corinthians 9:9: 'Does God take care for oxen', as if to say: no. It has to be said that God takes a care of discipline only for rational creatures, but God has a care of providence for all.

But if God has a providential care for good and bad, then it does not matter to God whether one is good or bad.

I respond: it has to be said that there is question of a natural providence, not one freely given. Or: *equally*, that is, similarly.

And while God may care equally for all, not all may be punished equally. But for the mightier in evil, *a greater punishment is ready* as a penalty, as is clear in Lucifer and the other demons.

**Secondly, on the reward for wise rulers**

*To you, therefore, O kings, are these my words, that you may learn wisdom, and not fall from it.* Here he determines and shows the reward for wise rulers; firstly, he spurs one on to wisdom, secondly, he adds the reward or the declaration of the reward for the wise.

(Verse 10). *To you, therefore, O kings, are these my words, that you may learn wisdom, and not fall from it.* Because a greater punishment is ready for the mightier, *to you, therefore, O kings;* Having finished the words to the powerful, he takes up an exhortation to the rulers of the Church; ‘*O kings*, that is, rulers of the Church, or all to whom the direction of souls is committed’. *To you are these my words*, namely, on the study of and love for wisdom; hence he adds: *that you may learn wisdom;* ‘Divine’, not earthly; 1 Corinthians 3:18 says of both: ‘If any think that you are wise in this world, you should become fools so as to become wise’. *These words*, are to be heard, remembered and put into practice, according to Jeremiah 15:16: ‘Your words were found and I did eat them’. *And not fall from it*, namely, from justice ‘by a transgression of the commandments of God’. For wisdom is salt preventing the corruption of sin; and negligence of wisdom causes one to fall into sin; so Proverbs 17:16 says: ‘Whoever refuses to learn, shall fall into evils’, because into an evil of sin and an evil of punishment.

(Verse 11). *And I have said well: that you may learn wisdom, and not fall from justice; for they that have kept justice* which is the way to wisdom, according to Sirach 1:33: ‘Son, if you desire wisdom, keep justice’; *justly, shall be justified*, ‘They shall receive the reward of their justice’, namely, in good; so Isaiah 3:10: ‘Say to the just that it is well, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings’; also Ezekiel 18:20: ‘The justice of the just shall be upon them’; Luke 6:38: ‘In what measure you shall measure, it shall be measured to you again’. *And they that have learned*, namely, by wisdom, *just things*; : ‘Right faith and works’ *shall find what to answer*, namely, in the judgment of sins laid against them; Habakkuk 2:1: ‘I will stand upon my watch and fix my foot upon the tower, and I will watch to see what will be said to me, and what I may answer to him that reproves me’.

*Covet you therefore my words, and love them.* Here he advised rulers, both good and bad, to desire wisdom; and, firstly, he gives an exhortation to desire it; secondly, ease in acquiring it: *Wisdom is glorious, and never fades away, and is easily seen by them that love her, and is found by them that seek her;* thirdly, the value in acquiring it: *To think therefore upon her, is perfect understanding: and they that watch for her, shall quickly be secure;* fourthly, he advises to love her in the words: *If then your delight be in thrones, and sceptres, O you kings of the people, love wisdom, that you may reign forever.*

(Verse 12). *Covet you therefore my words, and love them, and you shall have instruction.* Wisdom is so useful because it keeps one from failing in justice; *Covet you therefore my words*, as you listen to wisdom; Sirach 24:26: ‘Come over to me, all you that desire me’. *And love them*, namely, once you have heard them, according to Psalm 118:127: ‘I have loved your commandments above gold and topaz’. *And you shall have instruction*, namely, by my very words; ‘Whoever loves wisdom, maintains discipline in behaviour’, according to John 14:15: ‘If you love me, keep my commandments’. *Wisdom is glorious.* Here he shows the ease in acquiring wisdom, firstly, because it is clearly seen; secondly, because it is ready to show itself: *She prevents them that covet her;* thirdly, because she is ready to enter: *One who wakes early to seek her, shall not labour: but will find her sitting at the door.*

(Verse 13). *Wisdom is glorious*, as if to say: you should desire her because *wisdom is glorious*, from her beauty and clarity because she is light; so further on it says in 7:10: *I chose to have her instead of light. And never fades away*, that is, never fails in her beauty; ‘The beauty of wisdom does not fade’. It is not subject to time but, like divine wisdom, is above time. *And is easily seen by them that love her*, as if to say: one must not despair of acquiring her because *she is easily seen*, namely, with the eye of the mind *by them that seek her*, namely, with affection; so John 14:21: ‘The one who loves me, shall be loved by my Father, and I will love and manifest myself to that person’. For love purifies and enlightens the inner eye for seeing; so Sirach 2:10: ‘You who fear the Lord, love him and your hearts shall be enlightened’. *And*, as a consequence, *is found by them that seek her;* Luke 11:9: ‘Seek, and you shall find’ provided you search where you should. For it is not ‘found in the land of them that live in delights’ Job 28:13, but in roughness of provisions and in penitence; so Daniel found wisdom in his abstinence as is clear in Daniel 1:8-17.