

¹الصَّبِيحُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّهْنِ الطَّيِّبِ، وَيَوْمُ الْمَمَاتِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ
يَوْمِ الْوِلَادَةِ.²الدَّهَابُ إِلَى بَيْتِ التَّوَجُّ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدَّهَابِ
إِلَى بَيْتِ الْوَلِيمَةِ، لِأَنَّ ذَاكَ نِهَائُهُ كُلِّ إِنْسَانٍ، وَالْحَيَّ
يَضَعُهُ فِي قَلْبِهِ.³الْخُرُوجُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الصَّحَرِ، لِأَنَّهُ يَكَابِتُهُ
الْوَجْهُ يُضِلُّهُ الْقَلْبُ.⁴قَلْبُ الْحُكَمَاءِ فِي بَيْتِ التَّوَجُّ،
وَقَلْبُ الْجُهَالِ فِي بَيْتِ الْفَرَحِ.⁵سَمِعَ الْإِنْتِهَارُ مِنَ الْحَكِيمِ
خَيْرٌ لِلْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ سَمْعِ غِنَاءِ الْجُهَالِ، لِأَنَّهُ كَصَوْتِ
السُّوْكِ تَحْتَ الْفِدْرِ هَكَذَا ضُحْكُ الْجُهَالِ. هَذَا أَيْضاً
بَاطِلٌ.⁷لِأَنَّ الظُّلْمَ يَحْمِقُ الْحَكِيمَ، وَالْعَطِيَّةُ تُفْسِدُ
الْقَلْبَ.⁸نِهَائُهُ أَمْرٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ بَدَائِهِ. طُولُ الرُّوحِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ
تَكْثِيرِ الرُّوحِ. لَا تُسْرِعْ بِرُوجِكَ إِلَى الْعَصَبِ، لِأَنَّ الْعَصَبَ
يَسْتَفِرُّ فِي حِصْنِ الْجُهَالِ.¹⁰لَا تَقُلْ، لِمَاذَا كَانَتْ أَيَّامُ
الْأُولَى خَيْراً مِنْ هَذِهِ. لِأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ عَنْ جُكْمَةٍ تَسْأَلُ عَنْ
هَذَا.¹¹الْحِكْمَةُ صَالِحَةٌ مِثْلُ الْمِيزَانِ، بَلْ أَفْضَلُ لِتَاطِرِي
السَّمَاسِ. لِأَنَّ الَّذِي فِي ظِلِّ الْحِكْمَةِ هُوَ فِي ظِلِّ
الْفِصَّةِ، وَقَفْضُ الْمَعْرِفَةِ هُوَ أَنَّ الْحِكْمَةَ تُخَيِّ
أَصْحَابَهَا.¹³أَنْظُرْ عَمَلَ اللَّهِ، لِأَنَّهُ مَنْ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى تَقْوِيمِ مَا
قَدْ عَوَّجَهُ.¹⁴فِي يَوْمِ الْخَيْرِ كُنْ بِخَيْرٍ، وَفِي يَوْمِ الشَّرِّ
اعْتَبِرْ. إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَعَلَ هَذَا مَعَ ذَاكَ لِكَيْلَا يَجِدَ الْإِنْسَانُ شَيْئاً
بَعْدَهُ.¹⁵قَدْ رَأَيْتُ الْكُلَّ فِي أَيَّامِ بَطْلِي. قَدْ يَكُونُ بَارٌّ يَبِيدُ
فِي بَرِّهِ، وَقَدْ يَكُونُ شَرِيرٌ يَطُولُ فِي شَرِّهِ.¹⁶لَا تَكُنْ بَارّاً
كَثِيراً وَلَا تَكُنْ حَكِيماً بِزِيَادَةٍ. لِمَاذَا تَحْرُبُ نَفْسَكَ.¹⁷لَا
تَكُنْ شَرِيراً كَثِيراً وَلَا تَكُنْ جَاهِلاً. لِمَاذَا تَمُوتُ فِي غَيْرِ
وَقْتِكَ.¹⁸حَسَنٌ أَنْ تَتَمَسَّكَ بِهِذَا وَأَيْضاً أَنْ لَا تُرْخِي يَدَكَ
عَنْ ذَاكَ، لِأَنَّ مُتَّبِعِي اللَّهِ يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا كِلَيْهِمَا.¹⁹الْحِكْمَةُ
تُقَوِّي الْحَكِيمَ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ عَشْرَةِ مُسَلِّطِينَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي
الْمَدِينَةِ. لِأَنَّهُ لَا إِنْسَانٌ صَدِيقٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَعْمَلُ صِلَاحاً
وَلَا يُخْطِئُ.²¹أَيْضاً لَا تَضَعْ قَلْبَكَ عَلَى كُلِّ الْكَلَامِ الَّذِي
يُقَالُ، لِئَلَّا تَسْمَعَ عَبْدَكَ بِسَبْتِكَ.²²لِأَنَّ قَلْبَكَ أَيْضاً يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ
أَنْتَ كَذَلِكَ مِزَاراً كَثِيراً سَبَبْتَ آخَرِينَ.²³كُلُّ هَذَا امْتَحَنُهُ
بِالْحِكْمَةِ. فُلْتُ، أَكُونُ حَكِيماً. أَمَّا هِيَ فَبَعِيدَةٌ عَنِّي.²⁴بَعِيدٌ
مَا كَانَ بَعِيداً، وَالْعَمِيقُ الْعَمِيقُ مَنْ يَجِدُهُ.²⁵دُرْتُ أَنَا
وَقَلْبِي لَا عِلْمَ وَلَا بَحْثَ وَلَا طَلَبَ حِكْمَةٍ وَعَقْلاً، وَلَا عَرِفَ
السِّرَّ أَنَّهُ جَهَالَةٌ، وَالْحَقَاقَةُ أَنَّهَا جُنُونٌ.²⁶فَوَجَدْتُ أَمْرَ مِنَ
الْمَوْتِ، الْمَرْأَةُ الَّتِي هِيَ شَبَابٌ، وَقَلْبُهَا أَشْرَاكٌ، وَبَدَاهَا
فُيُودٌ. الصَّالِحُ قُدَّامَ اللَّهِ يَنْجُو مِنْهَا. أَمَّا الْخَاطِئُ فَيُؤْخَذُ
بِهَا.²⁷أَنْظُرْ. هَذَا وَجَدْتُهُ قَالَ الْجَامِعَةُ، وَاجِدَةٌ فَوَاجِدَةٌ
لَا جِدَ النَّيْجَةَ²⁸الَّتِي لَمْ تَزَلْ تَفْسِي تَطْلُبُهَا فَلَمْ أَجِدْهَا.

¹ A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.² It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.³ Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.⁴ The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.⁵ It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.⁶ For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.⁷ Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.⁸ Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.⁹ Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.¹⁰ Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.¹¹ Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.¹² For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.¹³ Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?¹⁴ In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.¹⁵ All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his

رَجُلًا وَاحِدًا يَبْنَ أَلْفِي وَجَدْتُ. أَمَّا امْرَأَةٌ، فَتَيْنِ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ
لَمْ أَجِدْ. ²⁹أَنْظُرْ. هَذَا وَجَدْتُ فَقَطُّ، أَنَّ اللَّهَ صَنَعَ الْإِنْسَانَ
مُسْتَقِيمًا، أَمَّا هُمْ فَطَلَّوْا اخْتِرَاعَاتٍ كَثِيرَةً.

righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.¹⁶ Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?¹⁷ Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?¹⁸ It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.¹⁹ Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.²⁰ For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.²¹ Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:²² For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.²³ All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me.²⁴ That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?²⁵ I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:²⁶ And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.²⁷ Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account:²⁸ Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.²⁹ Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.