

Wisdom passages most meaningful to the Fathers

Proverbs 8

The Lord possessed¹ me in the beginning of his ways, before he made anything from the beginning. [23] I was set up from eternity, and of old before the earth was made. [24] The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived. neither had the fountains of waters as yet sprung out: [25] The mountains with their huge bulk had not as yet been established: before the hills I was brought forth:

[26] He had not yet made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the poles of the world. [27] When he prepared the heavens, I was present: when with a certain law and compass he enclosed the depths: [28] When he established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters: [29] When he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits: when he balanced the foundations of the earth; [30] I was with him forming all things: and was delighted every day, playing before him at all times; [31] Playing in the world: and my delights were to be with the children of men.

[32] Now therefore, ye children, hear me: Blessed are they that keep my ways. [33] Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. [34] Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my doors. [35] He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord: [36] But he that shall sin against me, shall hurt his own soul. All that hate me love death.

Sirach 24

Wisdom shall praise her own self, and shall be honoured in God, and shall glory in the midst of her people, [2] And shall open her mouth in the churches of the most High, and shall glorify herself in the sight of his power, [3] And in the midst of her own people she shall be exalted, and shall be admired in the holy assembly. [4] And in the multitude of the elect she shall have praise, and among the blessed she shall be blessed, saying: [5] I came out of the mouth of the most High, the firstborn before all creatures:

[6] I made that in the heavens there should rise light that never faileth, and as a cloud I covered all the earth: [7] I dwelt in the highest places, and my throne is in a pillar of a cloud. [8] I alone have compassed the circuit of heaven, and have penetrated into the bottom of the deep, and have walked in the waves of the sea, [9] And have stood in all the earth: and in every people, [10] And in every nation I have had the chief rule:

[11] And by my power I have trodden under my feet the hearts of all the high and low: and in all these I sought rest, and I shall abide in the inheritance of the Lord. [12] Then the creator of all things commanded, and said to me: and he that made me, rested in my tabernacle, [13] And he said to me: Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thy inheritance in Israel, and take root in my elect. [14] From the beginning, and before the world, was I created, and unto the world to come I shall not cease to be, and in the holy dwelling place I have ministered before him. [15] And so was I established in Sion, and in the holy city likewise I rested, and my power was in Jerusalem. [16] And I took root in an honourable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and my abode is in the full assembly of saints.

Wisdom 7

For wisdom is more active than all active things: and reacheth everywhere by reason of her purity. [25] For she is a vapour of the power of God, and a certain pure emanation of the glory of the almighty God: and therefore no defiled thing cometh into her.

[26] For she is the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of his goodness. [27] And being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself the same, she reneweth all things, and through nations conveyeth herself into holy souls, she maketh the friends of God and prophets. [28] For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom. [29] For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it. [30] For after this cometh night, but no evil can overcome wisdom.

¹ alternative verbs used by the Fathers: made, created