Sirach 6-8

Sir.6

[1] and do not become an enemy instead of a friend; for a bad name incurs shame and reproach: so fares the double-tongued sinner. [2] Do not exalt yourself through your soul's counsel, lest your soul be torn in pieces like a bull. [3] You will devour your leaves and destroy your fruit, and will be left like a withered tree. [4] An evil soul will destroy him who has it, and make him the laughingstock of his enemies. [5] A pleasant voice multiplies friends, and a gracious tongue multiplies courtesies. [6] Let those that are at peace with you be many, but let your advisers be one in a thousand. [7] When you gain a friend, gain him through testing, and do not trust him hastily. [8] For there is a friend who is such at his own convenience, but will not stand by you in your day of trouble. [9] And there is a friend who changes into an enemy, and will disclose a quarrel to your is grace. [10] And there is a friend who is a table companion, but will not stand by you in your day of trouble. [11] In prosperity he will make himself your equal, and be bold with your servants; [12] but if you are brought low he will turn against you, and will hide himself from your presence. [13] Keep yourself far from your enemies, and be on guard toward your friends. [14] A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter: he that has found one has found a treasure. [15] There is nothing so precious as a faithful friend, and no scales can measure his excellence. [16] A faithful friend is an elixir of life; and those who fear the Lord will find him. [17] Whoever fears the Lord directs his friendship aright, for as he is, so is his neighbor also. [18] My son, from your youth up choose instruction, and until you are old you will keep finding wisdom. [19] Come to her like one who plows and sows, and wait for her good harvest. For in her service you will toil a little while, and soon you will eat of her produce. [20] She seems very harsh to the uninstructed; a weakling will not remain with her. [21] She will weigh him down like a heavy testing stone, and he will not be slow to cast her off. [22] For wisdom is like her name, and is not manifest to many. [23] Listen, my son, and accept my judgment; do not reject my counsel. [24] Put your feet into her fetters, and your neck into her collar. [25] Put your shoulder under her and carry her, and do not fret under her bonds. [26] Come to her with all your soul, and keep her ways with all your might. [27] Search out and seek, and she will become known to you; and when you get hold of her, do not let her go. [28] For at last you will find the rest she gives, and she will be changed into joy for you. [29] Then her fetters will become for you a strong protection, and her collar a glorious robe. [30] Her yoke is a golden ornament, and her bonds are a cord of blue. [31] You will wear her like a glorious robe, and put her on like a crown of gladness. [32] If you are willing, my son, you will be taught, and if you apply yourself you will become clever. [33] If you love to listen you will gain knowledge, and if you incline your ear you will become wise. [34] Stand in the assembly of the elders. Who is wise? Cleave to him. [35] Be ready to listen to every narrative, and do not get wise proverbs escape you. [36] If you see an intelligent man, visit him early; let your foot wear out his doorstep. [37] Reflect on the statutes of the Lord, and meditate at all times on his commandments. It is he who will give insight to your mind, and your desire for wisdom will be granted.

Sir.7

[1] Do no evil, and evil will never befall you. [2] Stay away from wrong, and it will turn away from you. [3] My son, do not sow the furrows of injustice, and you will not reap a sevenfold crop. [4] Do not seek from the Lord the highest office, nor the seat of honor from the king. [5] Do not assert your righteousness before the Lord, nor display your wisdom before the king. [6] Do not seek to become a judge, lest you be unable to remove iniquity, lest you be partial to a powerful man, and thus put a blot on your integrity. [7] Do not offend against the public, and do not disgrace yourself among the people. [8] Do not commit a sin twice; even for one you will not go unpunished. [9] Do not say, "He will consider the multitude of my gifts, and when I make an offering to the Most High God he will accept it." [10] Do not be fainthearted in your prayer, nor neglect to give alms. [11] Do not ridicule a man who is bitter in soul, for there is One who abases and exalts. [12] Do not devise a lie against your brother, nor do the like to a friend. [13] Refuse to utter any lie, for the habit of lying serves no good. [14] Do not prattle in the assembly of the elders, nor repeat yourself in your prayer. [15] Do not hate toilsome labor, or farm work, which were created by the Most High. [16] Do not count yourself among the crowd of sinners; remember that wrath does not delay. [17] Humble yourself greatly, for the punishment of the ungodly is fire and worms. [18] Do not exchange a friend for money, or a real brother for the gold of Ophir.
[19] Do not deprive yourself of a wise and good wife, for her charm is worth more than gold. [20] Do not abuse a servant who performs his work faithfully, or a hired laborer who devotes himself to you. [21] Let your soul love an intelligent servant; do not withhold from him his freedom. [22] Do you have cattle? Look after them; if they are profitable to you, keep them. [23] Do you have children? Discipline them, and make them obedient from their youth. [24] Do you have daughters? Be concerned for their chastity, and do not show yourself too indulgent with them. [25] Give a daughter in marriage; you will have finished a great task. But give her to a man of understanding. [26] If you have a wife who pleases you, do not cast her out; but do not trust yourself to one whom you detest. [27] With all your heart honor your father, and do not forget the birth pangs of your mother. [28] Remember that through your parents you were born; and what can you give back to them that equals their gift to you? [29] With all your soul fear the Lord, and honor his priests. [30] With all your might love your Maker, and do not forsake his ministers. [31] Fear the Lord and honor the priest, and give him his portion, as is commanded you: the first fruits, the guilt offering, the gift of the shoulders, the sacrifice of sanctification, and the first fruits of the holy things. [32] Stretch forth your hand to the poor, so that your blessing may be complete. [33] Give graciously to all the living, and withhold not kindness from the dead. [34] Do not fail those who weep, but mourn with those who mourn. [35] Do not shrink from visiting a sick man, because for such deeds you will be loved. [36] In all you do, remember the end of your life, and then you will never sin.

Sir.8

[1] Do not contend with a powerful man, lest you fall into his hands. [2] Do not quarrel with a rich man, lest his resources outweigh yours; for gold has ruined many, and has perverted the minds of kings. [3] Do not argue with a chatterer, nor heap wood on his fire. [4] Do not jest with an ill-bred person, lest your ancestors be disgraced. [5] Do not reproach a man who is turning away from sin; remember that we all deserve punishment. [6] Do not disdain a man when he is old, for some of us are growing old. [7] Do not rejoice over any one's death; remember that we all must die. [8] Do not slight the discourse of the sages, but busy yourself with their maxims; because from them you will gain instruction and learn how to serve great men. [9] Do not disregard the discourse of the aged, for they themselves learned from their fathers; because from them you will gain understanding and learn how to give an answer in time of need. [10] Do not kindle the coals of a sinner, lest you be burned in his flaming fire. [11] Do not get up and leave an insolent fellow, lest he lie in ambush against your words. [12] Do not lend to a man who is stronger than you; but if you do lend anything, be as one who has lost it. [13] Do not give surety beyond your means, but if you give surety, be concerned as one who must pay. [14] Do not go to law against a judge, for the decision will favor him because of his standing. [15] Do not travel on the road with a foolhardy fellow, lest he be burdensome to you; for he will act as he pleases, and through his folly you will perish with him. [16] Do not fight with a wrathful man, and do not cross the wilderness with him; because blood is as nothing in his sight, and where no help is at hand, he will strike you down. [17] Do not consult with a fool, for he will not be able to keep a secret. [18] In the presence of a stranger do nothing that is to be kept secret, for you do not know what he will divulge. [19] Do not reveal your thoughts to every one, lest you drive away your good luck.

Ecclesiasticus 9-10

9 Do not be jealous of the wife of your bosom, or you will teach her an evil lesson to your own hurt.  
2 Do not give yourself to a woman and let her trample down your strength.  
3 Do not go near a loose woman, or you will fall into her snares.  
4 Do not dally with a singing girl, or you will be caught by her tricks.  
5 Do not look intently at a virgin, or you may stumble and incur penalties for her.  
6 Do not give yourself to prostitutes, or you may lose your inheritance.  
7 Do not look around in the streets of a city, or wander about in its deserted sections.  
8 Turn away your eyes from a shapely woman, and do not gaze at beauty belonging to another; many have been seduced by a woman’s beauty, and by it passion is kindled like a fire.  
9 Never dine with another man’s wife, or revel with her at wine; or your heart may turn aside to her, and in blood you may be plunged into destruction.  
10 Do not abandon old friends, for new ones cannot equal them. A new
friend is like new wine; when it has aged, you can drink it with pleasure. 11 Do not envy the success of sinners, for you do not know what their end will be like. 12 Do not delight in what pleases the ungodly; remember that they will not be held guiltless all their lives. 13 Keep far from those who have power to kill, and you will not be haunted by the fear of death. But if you approach them, make no misstep, or they may rob you of your life. Know that you are stepping among snares, and that you are walking on the city battlements. 14 As much as you can, aim to know your neighbors, and consult with the wise. 15 Let your conversation be with intelligent people, and let all your discussion be about the law of the Most High. 16 Let the righteous be your dinner companions, and let your glory be in the fear of the Lord. 17 A work is praised for the skill of the artisan; so a people’s leader is proved wise by his words. 18 The loud of mouth are feared in their city, and the one who is reckless in speech is hated.

10 A wise magistrate educates his people, and the rule of an intelligent person is well ordered. 2 As the people’s judge is, so are his officials; as the ruler of the city is, so are all its inhabitants. 3 An undisciplined king ruins his people, but a city becomes fit to live in through the understanding of its rulers. 4 The government of the earth is in the hand of the Lord, and over it he will raise up the right leader for the time. 5 Human success is in the hand of the Lord, and it is he who confers honor upon the lawgiver. 6 Do not get angry with your neighbor for every injury, and do not resort to acts of insolence. 7 Arrogance is hateful to the Lord and to mortals, and injustice is outrageous to both. 8 Sovereignty passes from nation to nation on account of injustice and insolence and wealth. 9 How can dust and ashes be proud? Even in life the human body decays. A long illness baffles the physician; the king of today will die tomorrow. 11 For when one is dead he inherits maggots and vermin and worms. 12 The beginning of human pride is to forsake the Lord; the heart has withdrawn from its Maker. 13 For the beginning of pride is sin, and the one who clings to it pours out abominations. Therefore the Lord brings upon them unheard-of calamities, and destroys them completely. 14 The Lord overthrows the thrones of rulers, and enthrones the lowly in their place. 15 The Lord plucks up the roots of the nations, and plants the humble in their place. 16 The Lord lays waste the lands of the nations, and destroys them to the foundations of the earth. 17 He removes some of them and destroys them, and erases the memory of them from the earth. 18 Pride was not created for human beings, or violent anger for those born of women. 19 Whose offspring are worthy of honor? Human offspring. Whose offspring are worthy of honor? Those who fear the Lord. Whose offspring are worthy of honor? Those who break the commandments. 20 Among family members their leader is worthy of honor, but those who fear the Lord are worthy of honor in his eyes. 22 The rich, and the eminent, and the poor— their glory is the fear of the Lord. 23 It is not right to despise one who is intelligent but poor, and it is not proper to honor one who is sinful. 24 The prince and the judge and the ruler are honored, but none of them is greater than the one who fears the Lord. 25 Free citizens will serve a wise servant, and an intelligent person will not complain. 26 Do not make a display of your wisdom when you do your work, and do not boast when you are in need. 27 Better is the worker who has goods in plenty than the boaster who lacks bread. 28 My child, honor yourself with humility, and give yourself the esteem you deserve. 29 Who will acquit those who condemn themselves? And who will honor those who dishonor themselves? 30 The poor are honored for their knowledge, while the rich are honored for their wealth. 31 One who is honored in poverty, how much more in wealth! And one dishonored in wealth, how much more in poverty!