

The Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures was produced by Roman Catholics in England.

WISDOM 12

the infants, thou gavest to thine abundant water unlooked for: ⁹Shewing by the thirst that was then, how thou didst exalt thine, and didst kill their adversaries. ¹⁰For when they were tried, and chastised with mercy, they knew how the wicked were judged with wrath and tormented. ¹¹For thou didst admonish and try them as a father: but the others, as a severe king, thou didst examine and condemn. ¹²For whether absent or present, they were tormented alike. ¹³For a double affliction came upon them, and a groaning for the remembrance of things past. ¹⁴For when they heard that by their punishments the others were benefited, they remembered the Lord, wondering at the end of what was come to pass. ¹⁵For whom they scorned before, when he was thrown out at the time of his being wickedly exposed to perish, him they admired in the end, when they saw the event: their thirsting being unlike to that of the just. ¹⁶But for the foolish devices of their iniquity, because some being deceived worshipped dumb serpents and worthless beasts, thou didst send upon them a multitude of dumb beasts for vengeance: ¹⁷That they might know that by what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented. ¹⁸For thy almighty hand, which made the world of matter without form, was not unable to send upon them a multitude of bears, or fierce lions, ¹⁹Or unknown beasts of a new kind, full of rage: either breathing out a fiery vapour, or sending forth a stinking smoke, or shooting horrible sparks out of their eyes: ²⁰Whereof not only the hurt might be able to destroy them, but also the very sight might kill them through fear. ²¹Yea and without these, they might have been slain with one blast, persecuted by their own deeds, and scattered by the breath of thy power: but thou hast ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight.

²²For great power always belonged to thee alone: and who shall resist the strength of thy arm? ²³For the whole world before thee is as the least grain of the balance, and as a drop of the morning dew, that falleth down upon the earth: ²⁴But thou hast mercy upon all, because thou canst do all things, and overlookest the sins of men for the sake of repentance. ²⁵For

thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made: for thou didst not appoint, or make any thing hating it. ²⁶And how could any thing endure, if thou wouldst not? or be preserved, if not called by thee. ²⁷But thou sparest all: because they are thine, O Lord, who lovest souls.

12 O how good and sweet is thy spirit, O Lord, in all things! ²And therefore thou chastisest them that err, by little and little: and admonishest them, and speakest to them, concerning the things wherein they offend: that leaving their wickedness, they may believe in thee, O Lord.

The Chanaanites: God's forbearance

³For those ancient inhabitants of thy holy land, whom thou didst abhor; ⁴Because they did works hateful to thee by their sorceries, and wicked sacrifices, ⁵And those merciless murderers of their own children, and eaters of men's bowels, and devourers of blood from the midst of thy consecration, ⁶And those parents sacrificing with their own hands helpless souls, it was thy will to destroy by the hands of our parents, ⁷That the land which of all is most dear to thee might receive a worthy colony of the children of God. ⁸Yet even those thou sparedst as men, and didst send wasps, forerunners of thy host, to destroy them by little and little. ⁹Not that thou wast unable to bring the wicked under the just by war, or by cruel beasts, or with one rough word to destroy them at once: ¹⁰But executing thy judgments by degrees thou gavest them place of repentance, not being ignorant that they were a wicked generation, and their malice natural, and that their thought could never be changed. ¹¹For it was a cursed seed from the beginning: neither didst thou for fear of any one give pardon to their sins. ¹²For who shall say to thee: What hast thou done? or who shall withstand thy judgment? or who shall come before thee to be a revenger of wicked men? or who shall accuse thee, if the nations perish, which thou hast made? ¹³For there is no other God but thou, who hast care of all, that thou shouldst shew that thou dost not give judgment unjustly. ¹⁴Neither shall king, nor

22—12:2 The author, at a moment when we least expect it, proclaims magnificently God's universal love and compassion. Punishment is given only that sinners may 'leave their wickedness and believe in thee, O Lord' (12:2). 12:1 'For thine incorruptible

spirit is in all things' giving and maintaining life.

12:5 from the midst etc.: the text is corrupt; perhaps 'confederates in an impious fellowship'.