



# THE HELLRAZER'S APOCRYPHA

A COMPILATION OF PUBLIC DOMAIN TEXTS  
CONTAINING REFERENCES TO JESUS' DESCENT  
INTO, AND HARROWING OF, HELL.

EDITED BY  
PASTOR PHILIP G. MARZEC

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A Compilation of non-canonical Public Domain Texts Containing References to Jesus' Descent into and Harrowing of Hell.

edited by Pastor Philip G. Marzec

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**STOLEN AND FORGOTTEN BOOKS OF THE CHURCH:** This e-book is a collection of the books, important to the Church, which have been neglected, forgotten or slandered to the point that they are not in common usage.

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# Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

I include these writings to show that:

- 1) in the Church, there has been an understanding of Jesus' descent into Hell and the importance of what He did there.
- 2) in the Church there has been concern for the fate of those who died without access to the gospel.
- 3) in the Church there has been considerable thought given to the doctrine of salvation in Hell.

I do not imply that these writings are canonical or of equal worth with those writings accepted in the canon of the Church. I do not argue their authenticity. I simply present them as a resource for information in the Church's study of this topic.

The existence of so much material on this topic, throughout the history of the Church, demonstrates that a concern for the unreached souls in Hell is not a new invention.

I have tried to include the complete text of these documents, as they were available to me in the public domain. I realize that it could be a lot to wade through if you are only interested in the references which are specific to Jesus' descent to Hell. For that reason, I have included subheadings in the index which will lead you directly to such references in the text without scrolling through the entire document.

There is more to these texts than just references to the topic I have chosen. There is more treasure hidden there than I have seen. Search for yourself. Who knows what you will learn.

### The Apocrypha is not Apocryphal

When Martin Luther began his translation of the Bible into German, he chose to collect the books referred to as the Second Canon (Deutero-Canonicals) into a separate section at the end of the Hebrew Tanakh<sup>i</sup> or Proto-Canon. He labeled this section the Apocrypha. The books were of Jewish origin, although written in Greek, during the period between 300 B.C. – 100 B.C..

These books did not enjoy universal acceptance throughout the Church and were usually considered as secondary material to the Tanakh. They were not given equal status but they were regarded as profitable for the faith of the Church. Their placement in a separate section, a ghetto, led to their rejection by many Protestant sects because they did not support their 'sola-fide'- faith alone doctrines. And since they were all in one place rather than scattered throughout the text, it was easy for publishers to leave them out of future printings.

It is worthy of note that there were also New Testament books that were called apocrypha – meaning not universally accepted. These were the books: Epistle to the Hebrews, Epistle of James, 2<sup>nd</sup> Epistle of Peter, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Epistle

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of John, Epistle of Jude and Apocalypse of John or Revelations. Where would our present-day Bibles be without those books? Their acceptance is no longer questioned.

At the Council of Florence in 1442, the Church included in the list of books to be accepted and read in the churches seven books which Martin Luther labeled Apocrypha. I have a much fuller discussion of these books in my book 'The Stolen and Forgotten Books of the Church' so I will not repeat that here.

### Meaning and Connotation of 'Apocrypha'

Apocrypha is a Greek word which simply means: secret or hidden things. The controversy concerning the books labeled 'the Apocrypha' by Luther has led to the connotation of the word apocrypha becoming synonymous with fake or falsified religious writings. In fact, there is an entire genre of writings known as apocryphal books. I do not include the Deutero-Canonical books in this category. I believe that they are truly worthy of meditation and study by the Church.

The genre of apocryphal books includes a very large number of texts. Many of those texts are written under the name of some famous Biblical person who was long dead when the books were written. Many of these works seem fanciful, confusing or downright silly to the modern reader.

In this book I want to introduce to you and make available to you for study some books of this tertiary (3<sup>rd</sup>) source of religious insight. I do not suggest that any of these books be added to the Bible canon. I just want to add them to your library.

### Tabloid Religion

These books reflect the concerns of the common people. They are comparable to our present-day tabloids. They demonstrate the same interest in angels, famous people, UFOs and the End of the World (apocalyptic writings) that manifests in our time. These topics are still followed religiously today by people at the supermarket checkout line just as they were in the centuries before and after the birth of Jesus.

I want to give you access to some of these writings which show that there was a lively interest in what happened to Jesus when he went to Hell. This is known as the Descent to and Harrowing of Hell. There is information to be gleaned from these works about what happened. I do not plan to define for you how much of that information is 'true'. That is not my point. I don't want to argue. I want to inform.

I have shown in the three Hellrazer's Bibles that the first and second canon of the Bible contains a wealth of information on the topic of the Harrowing of Hell and even salvation in Hell. I present these writings to you as supplemental to that.

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These Apocryphal writings demonstrate a lively concern among common people to know more of what is hidden (apocrypha) about Hell and the future. There is a principle of teaching that is taught in the Passover ritual. “When your child asks -say”. the principle is simply that we need to answer the questions people are asking if we want them to be interested in what we are teaching.

People are interested in death, Hell, the future, judgement and justice. They are not concerned with which religious sect is correct about love and truth when they spend their time throwing shade on each other. Only people who want to play with religious theological toys care a hoot about doctrine. The people want to know if God is good, if God likes them and what will happen to them when they die.

What Jesus did to Hell and the whole question of salvation in Hell have a lot to do with what common people are concerned about. If death can prevent God from giving people the chance to decide whether they will accept the offer of salvation through Jesus, then death is stronger than God and God is not very good. Actually, God is pretty incompetent, if He never considered that some people might not get a chance to hear the Gospel before they died.

People in the checkout line don't care who said that there is no salvation after death. All they care about is themselves and the fact that religions are so confusing and so hypocritical that they find it almost impossible to make up their minds about who or what to believe. So, they look for answers in the tabloids to the questions most interesting to them.

Let me introduce you to the tabloids from 300 B.C. to 300 A.D.. They belong to the category of Apocryphal books but don't let that convince you that they are fakes not worth studying. I believe there is a lot to be learned from them.

Some of these books are written under the name of a famous person (pseudonym). Some are Jewish writings that were later added to by Christian writers (interpolation). These were common literary practices in those times.

We are looking for what has been hidden. It is there to be found if we do the work to dig it out and determine its value. We might find treasure buried in these fields.<sup>ii</sup> Sometimes you have to think like a detective to ferret out the nuggets of truth. In other instances, the treasure you can find is in the general interest of the subject which is demonstrated by the frequency of its mention. These texts are valuable for their corroboration of what is revealed in the accepted Biblical scriptures.

### The Apocryphal Texts

In the sections which follow I will provide you access to texts of the Apocryphal genre which have reference to Jesus' descent into Hell and his Harrowing of Hell. I will add subheadings to the index highlighting the relevant



## Introduction

passages and then provide the complete text of the work so that you can examine it for yourself. You can follow the index if you want a faster way through the text.

Some of the works are difficult to follow. Remember, you are dealing with an ancient mindset very unlike your own. That does not mean the writings are pointless or silly. They arise out of a context you are unfamiliar with. The ancients had no cell phones or automobiles so they would find modern writings incomprehensible too.

### Highlighting

I have highlighted portions of the texts in order to draw them to your attention. This will allow you to scroll or skim through the texts more quickly if you do not intend to study the entirety of the material. Texts highlighted in **red** have special reference to salvation in Hell and topics related to that study. Other highlight colours indicate material that I found to be interesting with possible reference to this topic but not necessarily a direct correlation to it.

### Invitation

There is more in these texts than I have discerned. If you discover something important that I have missed I ask you to contact me about it.

[pastorphil@mdirect.net](mailto:pastorphil@mdirect.net) If I agree with you I will include your highlight in future revisions of this work and cite you in a footnote. Thank you.

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs <sup>iii</sup>

**I.— The Testament of Reuben Concerning Thoughts.**

1. The copy of the Testament of Reuben, what things he charged his sons before he died in the hundred and twenty-fifth year of his life. When he was sick two years after the death of Joseph, his sons and his sons' sons were gathered together to visit him. And he said to them, My children, I am dying, and go the way of my fathers. And when he saw there Judah and Gad and Asher, his brethren, he said to them, Raise me up, my brethren, that I may tell to my brethren and to my children what things I have hidden in my heart, for from henceforth my strength fails me. And he arose and kissed them, and said, weeping: Hear, my brethren, give ear to Reuben your father, what things I command you. And, behold, I call to witness against you this day the God of heaven, that you walk not in the ignorance of youth and fornication wherein I ran greedily, and I defiled the bed of Jacob my father. For I tell you that He smote me with a sore plague in my loins for seven months; and had not Jacob our father prayed for me to the Lord, surely the Lord would have destroyed me. For I was thirty years old when I did this evil in the sight of the Lord, and for seven months I was sick even unto death; and I repented for seven years in the set purpose of my soul before the Lord. Wine and strong drink I drank not, and flesh entered not into my mouth, and I tasted not pleasant food, mourning over my sin, for it was great. And it shall not so be done in Israel.

2. And now hear me, my children, what things I saw in my repentance concerning the seven spirits of error. Seven spirits are given against man from Beliar, and they are chief of the works of youth; and seven spirits are given to him at his creation, that in them should be done every work of man. The first (1) spirit is of life, with which man's whole being is created. The second (2) spirit is of sight, with which arises desire. The third (3) spirit is of hearing, with which comes teaching. The fourth (4) spirit is of smelling, with which taste is given to draw air and breath. The fifth (5) spirit is of speech, with which comes knowledge. The sixth (6) spirit is of taste, with which comes the eating of meats and drinks; and by them strength is produced, for in food is the foundation of strength. The seventh (7) spirit is of begetting and sexual intercourse, with which through love of pleasure sin also enters in: wherefore it is the last in order of creation, and the first of youth, because it is filled with ignorance, which leads the young as a blind man to a pit, and as cattle to a precipice.

3. Besides all these, there is an eighth (8) spirit of sleep, with which is created entrancement of man's nature, and the image of death. With these spirits are mingled the spirits of error. The first (1), the spirit of fornication, dwells in the nature and in the senses; the second (2) spirit of insatiation in the belly; the third (3) spirit of fighting in the liver and the gall. The fourth (4) is the spirit of fawning and trickery, that through over-officiousness a man may be fair in seeming. The fifth (5) is the spirit of arrogance, that a man may be stirred up and become high-minded. The sixth (6) is the spirit of lying, in perdition and in jealousy to feign words, and to conceal words from kindred and friends. The

## Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs

seventh (7) is the spirit of injustice, with which are theft and pilferings, that a man may work the desire of his heart; for injustice works together with the other spirits by means of craft. Besides all these, the spirit of sleep, the eighth (8) spirit, is conjoined with error and fantasy. And so perishes every young man, darkening his mind from the truth, and not understanding the law of God, nor obeying the admonitions of his fathers, as befell me also in my youth. And now, children, love the truth, and it shall preserve you. I counsel you, hear ye Reuben your father. Pay no heed to the sight of a woman, nor yet associate privately with a female under the authority of a husband, nor meddle with affairs of womankind. For had I not seen Bilhah bathing in a covered place, I had not fallen into this great iniquity. For my mind, dwelling on the woman's nakedness, suffered me not to sleep until I had done the abominable deed. For while Jacob our father was absent with Isaac his father, when we were in Gader, near to Ephratha in Bethlehem, Bilhah was drunk, and lay asleep uncovered in her chamber; and when I went in and beheld her nakedness, I wrought that impiety, and leaving her sleeping I departed. And immediately an angel of God revealed to my father Jacob concerning my impiety, and he came and mourned over me, and touched her no more.

4. Pay no heed, therefore, to the beauty of women, and muse not upon their doings; but walk in singleness of heart in the fear of the Lord, and be labouring in works, and roaming in study and among your flocks, until the Lord give to you a wife whom He will, that you suffer not as I did. Until my father's death I had not boldness to look steadfastly into the face of Jacob, or to speak to any of my brethren, because of my reproach; and even until now my conscience afflicts me by reason of my sin. And my father comforted me; for he prayed for me unto the Lord, that the anger of the Lord might pass away from me, even as the Lord showed me. From henceforth, then, I was protected, and I sinned not. Therefore, my children, observe all things whatsoever I command you, and you shall not sin. **For fornication is the destruction of the soul, separating it from God, and bringing it near to idols, because it deceives the mind and understanding, and brings down young men into hell before their time.** For many has fornication destroyed; because, though a man be old or noble, it makes him a reproach and a laughing-stock with Beliar and the sons of men. For in that Joseph kept himself from everywoman, and purged his thoughts from all fornication, he found favour before the Lord and men. For the Egyptian woman did many things unto him, and called for magicians, and offered him love potions, and the purpose of his soul admitted no evil desire. Therefore the God of my fathers delivered him from every visible and hidden death. **For if fornication overcome not the mind, neither shall Beliar overcome you.**

5. Hurtful are women, my children; because, since they have no power or strength over the man, they act subtly through outward guise how they may draw him to themselves; and whom they cannot overcome by strength, him they overcome by craft. For moreover the angel of God told me concerning them, and taught me that women are overcome by the spirit of fornication more than men, and they devise in their heart against men; and by means of their adornment they deceive first their minds, and instill the poison by the glance of their eye, and

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then they take them captive by their doings, for a woman cannot overcome a man by force.

Therefore flee fornication, my children, and command your wives and your daughters that they adorn not their heads and their faces; because every woman who acts deceitfully in these things has been reserved to everlasting punishment. For thus they allured the Watchers before the flood; and as these continually beheld them, they fell into desire each of the other, and they conceived the act in their mind, and changed themselves into the shape of men, and appeared to them in their congress with their husbands; and the women, having in their minds desire toward their apparitions, gave birth to giants, for the Watchers appeared to them as reaching even unto heaven. *(note: It was the Watchers, not the women who did evil. The actions and deceptions of the Watchers was premeditated. Women cannot be blamed for their evil.)*

6. Beware, therefore, of fornication; and if you wish to be pure in your mind, guard your senses against every woman. And command them likewise not to company with men, that they also be pure in their mind. For constant meetings, even though the ungodly deed be not wrought, are to them an irremediable disease, and to us an everlasting reproach of Beliar; for fornication has neither understanding nor godliness in itself, and all jealousy dwells in the desire thereof. Therefore you will be jealous against the sons of Levi, and will seek to be exalted over them; but you shall not be able, for God will work their avenging, and you shall die by an evil death. For to Levi the Lord gave the sovereignty, and to Judah, and to me also with them, and to Dan and Joseph, that we should be for rulers. Therefore I command you to hearken to Levi, because he shall know the law of the Lord, and shall give ordinances for judgment and sacrifice for all Israel until the completion of the times of Christ, the High Priest whom the Lord has declared. I adjure you by the God of heaven to work truth each one with his neighbour; and draw near to Levi in humbleness of heart, that you may receive a blessing from his mouth. For he shall bless Israel; and specially Judah, because him has the Lord chosen to rule over all the peoples. And worship we his Seed, because He shall die for us in wars visible and invisible, and shall be among you an everlasting king.

7. And Reuben died after that he had given command to his sons; and they placed him in a coffin until they bore him up from Egypt, and buried him in Hebron in the double cave where his fathers were.

### II.— The Testament of Simeon Concerning Envy.

1. The copy of the words of Simeon, what things he spoke to his sons before he died, in the hundred and twentieth year of his life, in the year in which Joseph died. For they came to visit him when he was sick, and he strengthened himself and sat up and kissed them, and said to them:

2. Hear, O my children, hear Simeon your father, what things I have in my heart. I was born of Jacob my father, his second son; and my mother Leah called me Simeon, because the Lord heard her prayer. **Genesis 29:33** I became strong exceedingly; I shrank from no deed, nor was I afraid of anything. For my heart was hard, and my mind was unmovable, and my bowels unfeeling; because valour also has been given from the Most High to men in soul and in body. And at

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that time I was jealous of Joseph because our father loved him; and I set my mind against him to destroy him, because the prince of deceit sent forth the spirit of jealousy and blinded my mind, that I regarded him not as a brother, and spared not Jacob my father. But his God and the God of his fathers sent forth His angel, and delivered him out of my hands. For when I went into Shechem to bring ointment for the flocks, and Reuben to Dotham, where were our necessities and all our stores, Judah our brother sold him to the Ishmaelites. And when Reuben came he was grieved, for he wished to have restored him safe to his father. But I was angry against Judah in that he let him go away alive, and for five months I continued wrathful against him; but God restrained me, and withheld from me all working of my hands, for my right hand was half withered for seven days. And I knew, my children, that because of Joseph this happened to me, and I repented and wept; and I besought the Lord that He would restore my hand unto me, and that I might be kept from all pollution and envy, and from all folly. For I knew that I had devised an evil deed before the Lord and Jacob my father, on account of Joseph my brother, in that I envied him.

3. And now, children, take heed of the spirit of deceit and of envy. For envy rules over the whole mind of a man, and suffers him neither to eat, nor to drink, nor to do any good thing: it ever suggests to him to destroy him that he envies; and he that is envied ever flourishes, but he that envies fades away. Two years of days I afflicted my soul with fasting in the fear of the Lord, and I learned that deliverance from envy comes by the fear of God. If a man flee to the Lord, the evil spirit runs away from him, and his mind becomes easy. And henceforward he sympathizes with him whom he envied, and condemns not those who love him, and so ceases from his envy.

4. And my father asked concerning me, because he saw that I was sad; and I said, I am pained in my liver. For I mourned more than they all, because I was guilty of the selling of Joseph. And when we went down into Egypt, and he bound me as a spy, I knew that I was suffering justly, and I grieved not. Now Joseph was a good man, and had the Spirit of God within him: compassionate and pitiful, he bore not malice against me; nay, he loved me even as the rest of his brothers.

Take heed, therefore, my children, of all jealousy and envy, and walk in singleness of soul and with good heart, keeping in mind the brother of your father, that God may give to you also grace and glory, and blessing upon your heads, even as you saw in him. All his days he reproached us not concerning this thing, but loved us as his own soul, and beyond his own sons; and he glorified us, and gave riches, and cattle, and fruits freely to us all. Then also, my beloved children, love each one his brother with a good heart, and remove from you the spirit of envy, for this makes savage the soul and destroys the body; it turns his purposes into anger and war, and stirs up unto blood, and leads the mind into frenzy, and suffers not prudence to act in men: moreover, it takes away sleep, and causes tumult to the soul and trembling to the body. For even in sleep some malicious jealousy, deluding him, gnaws at his soul, and with wicked spirits disturbs it, and causes the body to be troubled, and the mind to awake from sleep in confusion; and as though having a wicked and poisonous spirit, so appears it to men.

5. Therefore was Joseph fair in appearance, and goodly to look upon, because

## Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs

there dwelt not in him any wickedness; for in trouble of the spirit the face declares it. And now, my children, make your hearts good before the Lord, and your ways straight before men, and you shall find grace before God and men. And take heed not to commit fornication, for fornication is mother of all evils, separating from God, and bringing near to Beliar. For I have seen it inscribed in the writing of Enoch that your sons shall with you be corrupted in fornication, and shall do wrong against Levi with the sword. But they shall not prevail against Levi, for he shall wage the war of the Lord, and shall conquer all your hosts; and there shall be a few divided in Levi and Judah, and there shall be none of you for sovereignty, even as also my father Jacob prophesied in his blessings.

6. Behold, I have foretold you all things, that I may be clear from the sin of your souls. Now, if you remove from you your envy, and all your stiffneckedness, as a rose shall my bones flourish in Israel, and as a lily my flesh in Jacob, and my odour shall be as the odour of Libanus; and as cedars shall holy ones be multiplied from me forever, and their branches shall stretch afar off. Then shall perish the seed of Canaan, and a remnant shall not be to Amalek, and all the Cappadocians shall perish, and all the Hittites shall be utterly destroyed. Then shall fail the land of Ham, and every people shall perish. Then shall all the earth rest from trouble, and all the world under heaven from war. Then shall Shem be glorified, because the Lord God, the Mighty One of Israel, shall appear upon earth as man, and saved by Him Adam. Then shall all the spirits of deceit be given to be trampled under foot, and men shall rule over the wicked spirits. Then will I arise in joy, and will bless the Most High because of His marvelous works, because God has taken a body and eaten with men and saved men.

7. And now, my children, obey Levi, and in Judah shall you be redeemed: and be not lifted up against these two tribes, for from them shall arise to you the salvation of God. For the Lord shall raise up from Levi as it were a Priest, and from Judah as it were a King, God and man. So shall He save all the Gentiles and the race of Israel. Therefore, I command you all things, in order that you also may command your children, that they may observe them throughout their generations.

8. And Simeon made an end of commanding his sons, and slept with his fathers, being an hundred and twenty years old. And they laid him in a coffin of incorruptible wood, to take up his bones to Hebron. And they carried them up in a war of the Egyptians secretly: for the bones of Joseph the Egyptians guarded in the treasure-house of the palace; for the sorcerers told them that at the departure of the bones of Joseph there should be throughout the whole of Egypt darkness and gloom, and an exceeding great plague to the Egyptians, so that even with a lamp a man should not recognize his brother.

9. And the sons of Simeon bewailed their father according to the law of mourning, and they were in Egypt until the day of their departure from Egypt by the hand of Moses.

### **III.— The Testament of Levi Concerning the Priesthood and Arrogance.**

1. The copy of the words of Levi, what things he appointed to his sons, according

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to all that they should do, and what things should befall them until the day of judgment. He was in sound health when he called them to him, for it had been shown to him that he should die. And when they were gathered together he said to them:

2. I Levi was conceived in Haran and born there, and after that I came with my father to Shechem. And I was young, about twenty years of age, when with Simeon I wrought the vengeance on Hamor for our sister Dinah. And when we were feeding our flocks in Abel-Maul, a spirit of understanding of the Lord came upon me, and **I saw all men corrupting their way, and that \* unrighteousness had built to itself walls, and iniquity sat upon towers;** and I grieved for the race of men, and I prayed to the Lord that I might be saved. Then there fell upon me a sleep, and I beheld a high mountain: this is the mountain of Aspis in Abel-Maul. And behold, the heavens were opened, and an angel of God said to me, Levi, enter. And I entered from the first heaven into the second, and I saw there water hanging between the one and the other. And I saw a third heaven far brighter than those two, for there was in it a height without bounds. And I said to the angel, Wherefore is this? And the angel said to me, Marvel not at these, for you shall see four other heavens brighter than these, and without comparison, when you shall have ascended there: because you shall stand near the Lord, and shall be His minister, and shall declare His mysteries to men, and shall proclaim concerning Him who shall redeem Israel; **Luke 24:21** and by you and Judah shall the Lord appear among men, saving in them every race of men; and of the portion of the Lord shall be your life, and He shall be your field and vineyard, fruits, gold, silver.

### The Seven Heavens

3. Hear, then, concerning the seven heavens. The lowest is for this cause more gloomy, in that it is near all the iniquities of men. The second has fire, snow, ice, ready for the day of the ordinance of the Lord, in the righteous judgment of God: in it are all the spirits of the retributions for vengeance on the wicked. In the third are the hosts of the armies which are ordained for the day of judgment, to work vengeance on the spirits of deceit and of Beliar. And the heavens up to the fourth above these are holy, for in the highest of all dwells the Great Glory, in the holy of holies, far above all holiness. In the heaven next to it are the angels of the presence of the Lord, who minister and make propitiation to the Lord for all the ignorances of the righteous; and they offer to the Lord a reasonable sweet-smelling savour, and a bloodless offering. And in the heaven below this are the angels who bear the answers to the angels of the presence of the Lord. And in the heaven next to this are thrones, dominions, in which hymns are ever offered to God. Therefore, whenever the Lord looks upon us, all of us are shaken; yea, the heavens, and the earth, and the abysses, are shaken at the presence of His majesty; but the sons of men, regarding not these things, sin, and provoke the Most High.

4. Now, therefore, know that the Lord will execute judgment upon the sons of men; because when the rocks are rent, and the sun quenched, and the waters dried up, and the fire trembling, and all creation troubled, and the

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invisible spirits melting away, and the grave spoiled in the suffering of the Most High, men unbelieving will abide in their iniquity, therefore with punishment shall they be judged. Therefore the Most High has heard your prayer, to separate you from iniquity, and that you should become to Him a son, and a servant, and a minister of His presence. A shining light of knowledge shall you shine in Jacob, and as the sun shall you be to all the seed of Israel. And a blessing shall be given to you, and to all your seed, until the Lord shall visit all the heathen in the tender mercies of His Son, even forever. Nevertheless your sons shall lay hands upon Him to crucify Him; and therefore have counsel and understanding been given you, that you might instruct your sons concerning Him, because he that blesses Him shall be blessed, but they that curse Him shall perish.

5. And the angel opened to me the gates of heaven, and I saw the holy temple, and the Most High upon a throne of glory. And He said to me, Levi, I have given you the blessings of the priesthood until that I shall come and sojourn in the midst of Israel. Then the angel brought me to the earth, and gave me a shield and a sword, and said, Work vengeance on Shechem because of Dinah, and I will be with you, because the Lord has sent me. And I destroyed at that time the sons of Hamor, as it is written in the heavenly tablets. And I said to Him, I pray You, O Lord, tell me Your name, that I may call upon You in a day of tribulation. And He said, I am the angel who intercedes for the race of Israel, that He smite them not utterly, because every evil spirit attacks it. And after these things I was as it were awaked, and blessed the Most High, and the angel that intercedes for the race of Israel, and for all the righteous.

6. And when I came to my father I found a brazen shield; wherefore also the name of the mountain is Aspis, which is near Gebal, on the right side of Abila; and I kept these words in my heart. I took counsel with my father, and with Reuben my brother, that he should bid the sons of Hamor that they should be circumcised; for I was jealous because of the abomination which they had wrought in Israel. And I slew Shechem at the first, and Simeon slew Hamor. And after this our brethren came and smote the city with the edge of the sword; and our father heard it and was angry, and he was grieved in that they had received the circumcision, and after that had been put to death, and in his blessings he dealt otherwise *with us*. For we sinned because we had done this thing against his will, and he was sick upon that day. But I knew that the sentence of God was for evil upon Shechem; for they sought to do to Sarah as they did to Dinah our sister, and the Lord hindered them. And so they persecuted Abraham our father when he was a stranger, and they harried his flocks when they were multiplied upon him; and Jeblae his servant, born in his house, they shamefully handled. And thus they did to all strangers, taking away their wives by force, and the men themselves driving into exile. But the wrath of the Lord came suddenly upon them to the uttermost.

7. And I said to my father, Be not angry, sir, because by you will the Lord bring to nought the Canaanites, and will give their land to you, and to your seed after you. For from this day forward shall Shechem be called a city of them that are without understanding; for as a man mocks at a fool, so did we mock them, because they wrought folly in Israel to defile our sister. And we took our sister from thence, and departed, and came to Bethel.



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### **The Robing of Levi**

8. And there I saw a thing again even as the former, after we had passed seventy days. And I saw seven men in white raiment saying to me, Arise, put on the robe of the priesthood, and the crown of righteousness, and the breastplate of understanding, and the garment of truth, and the diadem of faith, and the tiara of miracle, and the ephod of prophecy. And each one of them bearing each of these things put them on me, and said, From henceforth become a priest of the Lord, you and your seed forever. And the first anointed me with holy oil, and gave to me the rod of judgment. The second washed me with pure water, and fed me with bread and wine, the most holy things, and clad me with a holy and glorious robe. The third clothed me with a linen vestment like to an ephod. The fourth put round me a girdle like purple. The fifth gave to me a branch of rich olive. The sixth placed a crown on my head. The seventh placed on my head a diadem of priesthood, and filled my hands with incense, so that I served as a priest to the Lord. And they said to me, Levi, your seed shall be divided into three branches, for a sign of the glory of the Lord who is to come; and first shall he be that has been faithful; no portion shall be greater than his. The second shall be in the priesthood. The third— a new name shall be called over Him, because He shall arise as King from Judah, and shall establish a new priesthood, after the fashion of the Gentiles, to all the Gentiles. And His appearing shall be unutterable, as of an exalted prophet of the seed of Abraham our father. Every desirable thing in Israel shall be for you and for your seed, and everything fair to look upon shall you eat, and the table of the Lord shall your seed apportion, and some of them shall be high priests, and judges, and scribes; for by their mouth shall the holy place be guarded. And when I awoke, I understood that this thing was like the former. And I hid this also in my heart, and told it not to any man upon the earth.

9. And after two days I and Judah went up to Isaac after our father; and the father of my father blessed me according to all the words of the visions which I had seen: and he would not come with us to Bethel. And when we came to Bethel, my father Jacob saw in a vision concerning me, that I should be to them for a priest unto the Lord; and he rose up early in the morning, and paid tithes of all to the Lord through me. And we came to Hebron to dwell there, and Isaac called me continually to put me in remembrance of the law of the Lord, even as the angel of God showed to me. And he taught me the law of the priesthood, of sacrifices, whole burnt-offerings, first-fruits, free-will offerings, thank-offerings. And each day he was instructing me, and was busied for me before the Lord. And he said to me, Take heed, my child, of the spirit of fornication; for this shall continue, and shall by your seed pollute the holy things. Take therefore to yourself, while yet you are young, a wife, not having blemish, nor yet polluted, nor of the race of the Philistines or Gentiles. And before entering into the holy place, bathe; and when you offer the sacrifice, wash; and again when you finish the sacrifice, wash. Of twelve trees ever having leaves, offer up *the fruits* to the Lord, as also Abraham taught me; and of every clean beast and clean bird offer a sacrifice to the Lord, and of every firstling and of wine offer first-fruits; and every sacrifice you shall salt with salt.

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10. Now, therefore, observe whatsoever I command you, children; for whatsoever things I have heard from my fathers I have made known to you. I am clear from all your ungodliness and transgression which you will do in the end of the ages against the Saviour of the world, acting ungodly, deceiving Israel, and raising up against it great evils from the Lord. And you will deal lawlessly with Israel, so that Jerusalem shall not endure your wickedness; but the veil of the temple shall be rent, so as not to cover your shame. And you shall be scattered as captives among the heathen, and shall be for a reproach and for a curse, and for a trampling under foot. For the house which the Lord shall choose shall be called Jerusalem, as is contained in the book of Enoch the righteous.

11. Therefore, when I took a wife I was twenty-eight years old, and her name was Melcha. And she conceived and bare a son, and she called his name Gersham, for we were sojourners in our land: for Gersham is interpreted sojourning. And I saw concerning him that he would not be in the first rank. And Kohath was born in my thirty-fifth year, towards the east. And I saw in a vision that he was standing on high in the midst of all the congregation. Therefore I called his name Kohath, which means, beginning of majesty and instruction. And thirdly, she bare to me Merari, in the fortieth year of my life; and since his mother bare him with difficulty, she called him Merari, which means my bitterness, because he also died. And Jochebed was born in my sixty-fourth year, in Egypt, for I was renowned then in the midst of my brethren.

12. And Gersham took a wife, and she bare to him Lomni and Semei. And the sons of Kohath, Amram, Isaar, Chebro, and Ozel. And the sons of Merari, Mooli and Homusi. And in my ninety-fourth year Amram took Jochebed my daughter to him to wife, for they were born in one day, he and my daughter. Eight years old was I when I went into the land of Canaan, and eighteen years when I slew Shechem, and at nineteen years I became priest, and at twenty-eight years I took a wife, and at forty years I went into Egypt. And behold, you are my children, my children even *of* a third generation. In my hundred and eighteenth year Joseph died.

13. And now, my children, I command you that you fear our Lord with your whole heart, and walk in simplicity according to all His law. And do ye also teach your children learning, that they may have understanding in all their life, reading unceasingly the law of God; for every one who shall know the law of God shall be honoured, and shall not be a stranger wheresoever he goes. Yea, many friends shall he gain more than his forefathers; and many men shall desire to serve him, and to hear the law from his mouth. Work righteousness, my children, upon the earth, that you may find *treasure* in the heavens, and sow good things in your souls, that you may find them in your life. For if you sow evil things, you shall reap all trouble and affliction. Get wisdom in the fear of God with diligence; for though there shall be a leading into captivity, and cities be destroyed, and lands and gold and silver and every possession shall perish, the wisdom of the wise none can take away, save the blindness of ungodliness and the palsy of sin: for even among his enemies shall it be to him glorious, and in a strange country a home, and in the midst of foes shall it be found a friend. If a man teach these things and do them, he shall be enthroned with kings, as was also Joseph our brother.

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14. And now, my children, I have learned from the writing of Enoch that at the last you will deal ungodly, laying your hands upon the Lord in all malice; and your brethren shall be ashamed because of you, and to all the Gentiles shall it become a mocking. For our father Israel shall be pure from the ungodliness of the chief priests who shall lay their hands upon the Saviour of the world. Pure is the heaven above the earth, and you are the lights of the heaven as the sun and the moon. What shall all the Gentiles do if you be darkened in ungodliness? So shall you bring a curse upon our race for whom came the light of the world, which was given among you for the lighting up of every man. Him will you desire to slay, teaching commandments contrary to the ordinances of God. The offerings of the Lord will you rob, and from His portion will you steal; and before ye sacrifice to the Lord, you will take the choicest parts, in despitefulness eating them with harlots. Amid excesses will you teach the commandments of the Lord, the women that have husbands will you pollute, and the virgins of Jerusalem will you defile; and with harlots and adulteresses will you be joined. The daughters of the Gentiles will you take for wives, purifying them with an unlawful purification; and your union shall be like Sodom and Gomorrha in ungodliness. And ye will be puffed up because of the priesthood lifting yourselves up against men. And not only so, but being puffed up also against the commands of God, you will scoff at the holy things, mocking in despitefulness.

15. Therefore the temple which the Lord shall choose shall be desolate in uncleanness, and you shall be captives throughout all nations, and you shall be an abomination among them, and you shall receive reproach and everlasting shame from the righteous judgment of God; and all who see you shall flee from you. And were it not for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob our fathers, not one from my seed should be left upon the earth.

16. And now I have learned in the book of Enoch that for seventy weeks will you go astray, and will profane the priesthood, and pollute the sacrifices, and corrupt the law, and set at nought the words of the prophets. In perverseness you will persecute righteous men, and hate the godly; the words of the faithful will you abhor, and the man who renews the law in the power of the Most High will you call a deceiver; and at last, as you suppose, you will slay Him, not understanding His resurrection, wickedly taking upon your own heads the innocent blood. Because of Him shall your holy places be desolate, polluted even to the ground, and you shall have no place that is clean; but you shall be among the Gentiles a curse and a dispersion, until He shall again look upon you, and in pity shall take you to Himself through faith and water.

17. And because you have heard concerning the seventy weeks, hear also concerning the priesthood; for in each jubilee there shall be a priesthood. In the first jubilee, the first who is anointed into the priesthood shall be great, and shall speak to God as to a Father; and his priesthood shall be filled with the fear of the Lord, and in the day of his gladness shall he arise for the salvation of the world. In the second jubilee, he that is anointed shall be conceived in the sorrow of beloved ones; and his priesthood shall be honoured, and shall be glorified among all. And the third priest shall be held fast in sorrow; and the fourth shall be in grief, because unrighteousness shall be laid upon him exceedingly, and all Israel shall hate each one his neighbour. The fifth shall be

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held fast in darkness, likewise also the sixth and the seventh. And in the seventh there shall be such pollution as I am not able to express, before the Lord and men, for they shall know it who do these things. Therefore shall they be in captivity and for a prey, and their land and their substance shall be destroyed. And in the fifth week they shall return into their desolate country, and shall renew the house of the Lord. And in the seventh week shall come the priests, worshippers of idols, contentious, lovers of money, proud, lawless, lascivious, abusers of children and beasts.

18. And after their punishment shall have come from the Lord, then will the Lord raise up to the priesthood a new Priest, to whom all the words of the Lord shall be revealed; and He shall execute a judgment of truth upon the earth, in the fullness of days. And His star shall arise in heaven, as a king shedding forth the light of knowledge in the sunshine of day, and He shall be magnified in the world until His ascension. He shall shine forth as the sun in the earth, and shall drive away all darkness from the world under heaven, and there shall be peace in all the earth. The heavens shall rejoice in His days, and the earth shall be glad, and the clouds shall be joyful, and the knowledge of the Lord shall be poured forth upon the earth, as the water of seas; and the angels of the glory of the presence of the Lord shall be glad in Him. The heavens shall be opened, and from the temple of glory shall the sanctification come upon Him with the Father's voice, as from Abraham the father of Isaac. And the glory of the Most High shall be uttered over Him, and the spirit of understanding and of sanctification shall rest upon Him in the water. He shall give the majesty of the Lord to His sons in truth for evermore; and there shall none succeed Him for all generations, even forever. And in His priesthood shall all sin come to an end, and the lawless shall rest from evil, and the just shall rest in Him. And He shall open the gates of paradise, and shall remove the threatening sword against Adam; and He shall give to His saints to eat from the tree of life, and the spirit of holiness shall be on them. And Beliar shall be bound by Him, and He shall give power to His children to tread upon the evil spirits. And the Lord shall rejoice in His children, and the Lord shall be well pleased in His beloved forever. Then shall Abraham and Isaac and Jacob be joyful, and I will be glad, and all the saints shall put on gladness.

19. And now, my children, you have heard all; choose therefore for yourselves either the darkness or the light, either the law of the Lord or the works of Beliar. And we answered our father, saying, Before the Lord will we walk according to His law. And our father said, The Lord is witness, and His angels are witnesses, and I am witness, and you are witnesses, concerning the word of your mouth. And we said, We are witnesses. And thus Levi ceased giving charge to his sons; and he stretched out his feet, and was gathered to his fathers, after he had lived a hundred and thirty-seven years. And they laid him in a coffin, and afterwards they buried him in Hebron, by the side of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

### **IV.— The Testament of Judah Concerning Fortitude, and Love of Money, and Fornication.**

1. The copy of the words of Judah, what things he spoke to his sons before he died. They gathered themselves together, and came to him, and he said to them: I

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was the fourth son born to my father, and my mother called me Judah, saying, I give thanks to the Lord, because He has given to me even a fourth son. I was swift and active in my youth, and obedient to my father in everything. And I honoured my mother and my mother's sister. And it came to pass, when I became a man, that my father Jacob prayed over me, saying, You shall be a king, and prosperous in all things.

2. And the Lord showed me favour in all my works both in the field and at home. When I saw that I could run with the hind, then I caught it, and prepared meat for my father. I seized upon the roes in the chase, and all that was in the plains I outran. A wild mare I outran, and I caught it and tamed it; and I slew a lion, and plucked a kid out of its mouth. I took a bear by its paw, and rolled it over a cliff; and if any beast turned upon me, I rent it like a dog. I encountered the wild boar, and overtaking it in the chase, I tore it. A leopard in Hebron leaped upon the dog, and I caught it by the tail, and flung it from me, and it was dashed to pieces in the coasts of Gaza. A wild ox feeding in the field I seized by the horns; and whirling it round and stunning it, I cast it from me, and slew it.

3. And when the two kings of the Canaanites came in warlike array against our flocks, and much people with them, I by myself rushed upon King Sur and seized him; and I beat him upon the legs, and dragged him down, and so I slew him. And the other king, Taphue, I slew as he sat upon his horse, and so I scattered all the people. Achor the king, a man of giant stature, hurling darts before and behind as he sat on horseback, I slew; for I hurled a stone of sixty pounds weight, and cast it upon his horse, and killed him. And I fought with Achor for two hours, and I killed him; and I clave his shield into two parts, and I chopped off his feet. And as I stripped off his breastplate, behold, eight men his companions began to fight with me. I wound round therefore my garment in my hand; and I slang stones at them, and killed four of them, and the rest fled. And Jacob my father slew Beelisa, king of all the kings, a giant in strength, twelve cubits high; and fear fell upon them, and they ceased from making war with us. Therefore my father had no care in the wars when I was among my brethren. For he saw in a vision concerning me, that an angel of might followed me everywhere, that I should not be overcome.

4. And in the south there befell us a greater war than that in Shechem; and I joined in battle array with my brethren, and pursued a thousand men, and slew of them two hundred men and four kings. And I went up against them upon the wall, and two other kings I slew; and so we freed Hebron, and took all the captives of the kings.

5. On the next day we departed to Areta, a city strong and walled and inaccessible, threatening us with death. Therefore I and Gad approached on the east side of the city, and Reuben and Levi on the west and south. And they that were upon the wall, thinking that we were alone, charged down upon us; and so our brethren secretly climbed up the wall on both sides by ladders, and entered into the city, while the men knew it not. And we took it with the edge of the sword; and those who had taken refuge in the tower—we set fire to the tower, and took both it and them. And as we were departing the men of Thaffu set upon our captives, and we took it with our sons, and fought with them even to Thaffu; and we slew them, and burnt their city, and spoiled all the things that were therein.

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6. And when I was at the waters of Chuzeba, the men of Jobel came against us to battle, and we fought with them; and their allies from Selom we slew, and we allowed them no means of escaping, and of coming against us. And the men of Machir came upon us on the fifth day, to carry away our captives; and we attacked them, and overcame them in fierce battle: for they were a host and mighty in themselves, and we slew them before they had gone up the ascent of the hill. And when we came to their city, their women rolled upon us stones from the brow of the hill on which the city stood. And I and Simeon hid ourselves behind the town, and seized upon the heights, and utterly destroyed the whole city.

7. And the next day it was told us that the cities of the two kings with a great host were coming against us. I therefore and Dan feigned ourselves to be Amorites, and went as allies into their city. And in the depth of night our brethren came, and we opened to them the gates; and we destroyed all the men and their substance, and we took for a prey all that was theirs, and their three walls we cast down. And we drew near to Thamna, where was all the refuge of the hostile kings. Then having received hurt I was angry, and charged upon them to the brow of the hill; and they slang at me with stones and darts; and had not Dan my brother aided me, they would have been able to slay me. We came upon them therefore with wrath, and they all fled; and passing by another way, they besought my father, and he made peace with them, and we did to them no hurt, but made a truce with them, and restored to them all the captives. And I built Thamna, and my father built Rhambael. I was twenty years old when this war befell, and the Canaanites feared me and my brethren.

8. Moreover, I had much cattle, and I had for the chief of my herdsmen Iran [Genesis 38:1](#) the Adullamite. And when I went to him I saw Barsan, king of Adullam, and he made us a feast; and he entreated me, and gave me his daughter Bathshua to wife. She bare me Er, and Onan, and Shelah; and the two of them the Lord smote that they died childless: for Shelah lived, and his children are you.

9. Eighteen years we abode at peace, our father and we, with his brother Esau, and his sons with us, after that we came from Mesopotamia, from Laban. And when eighteen years were fulfilled, in the fortieth year of my life, Esau, the brother of my father, came upon us with much people and strong; and he fell by the bow of Jacob, and was taken up dead in Mount Seir: even as he went above Iramna was he slain. And we pursued after the sons of Esau. Now they had a city with walls of iron and gates of brass; and we could not enter into it, and we encamped around, and besieged them. And when they opened not to us after twenty days, I set up a ladder in the sight of all, and with my shield upon my head I climbed up, assailed with stones of three talents' weight; and I climbed up, and slew four who were mighty among them. And the next day Reuben and Gad entered in and slew sixty others. Then they asked from us terms of peace; and being aware of our father's purpose, we received them as tributaries. And they gave us two hundred cors of wheat, five hundred baths of oil, fifteen hundred measures of wine, until we went down into Egypt.

10. After these things, my son Er took to wife Tamar, from Mesopotamia, a daughter of Aram. Now Er was wicked, and he doubted concerning Tamar,

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because she was not of the land of Canaan. And on the third day an angel of the Lord smote him in the night, and he had not known her, according to the evil craftiness of his mother, for he did not wish to have children from her. In the days of the wedding-feast I espoused Onan to her; and he also in wickedness knew her not, though he lived with her a year. And when I threatened him, he lay with her, ...according to the command of his mother, and he also died in his wickedness. And I wished to give Shelah also to her, but my wife Bathshua suffered it not; for she bore a spite against Tamar, because she was not of the daughters of Canaan, as she herself was.

11. And I knew that the race of Canaan was wicked, but the thoughts of youth blinded my heart. And when I saw her pouring out wine, in the drunkenness of wine was I deceived, and I fell before her. And while I was away, she went and took for Shelah a wife from the land of Caanan. And when I knew what she had done, I cursed her in the anguish of my soul, and she also died in the wickedness of her sons.

12. And after these things, while Tamar was a widow, she heard after two years that I was going up to shear my sheep; then she decked herself in bridal array, and sat over against the city by the gate. For it is a law of the Amorites, that she who is about to marry sit in fornication seven days by the gate. I therefore, being drunk at the waters of Chozeb, recognized her not by reason of wine; and her beauty deceived me, through the fashion of her adorning. And I turned aside to her, and said, I would enter in to you. And she said to me, What will you give me? And I gave her my staff, and my girdle, and my royal crown; and I lay with her, and she conceived. I then, not knowing what she had done, wished to slay her; but she privily sent my pledges, and put me to shame. And when I called her, I heard also the secret words which I spoke when lying with her in my drunkenness; and I could not slay her, because it was from the Lord. For I said, Lest haply she did it in subtlety, and received the pledge from another woman: but I came near her no more till my death, because I had done this abomination in all Israel. Moreover, they who were in the city said that there was no bride in the city, because she came from another place, and sat for awhile in the gate, and she thought that no one knew that I had gone in to her. And after this we came into Egypt to Joseph, because of the famine. Forty and six years old was I, and seventy and three years lived I there.

13. And now, my children, in what things so ever I command you hearken to your father, and keep all my sayings to perform the ordinances of the Lord, and to obey the command of the Lord God. And walk not after your lusts, nor in the thoughts of your imaginations in the haughtiness of your heart; and glory not in the works of the strength of youth, for this also is evil in the eyes of the Lord. For since I also gloried that in wars the face of no woman of goodly form ever deceived me, and upbraided Reuben my brother concerning Bilhah, the wife of my father, the spirits of jealousy and of fornication arrayed themselves within me, until I fell before Bathshua the Canaanite, and Tamar who was espoused to my sons. And I said to my father-in-law, I will counsel with my father, and so will I take your daughter. And he showed me a boundless store of gold in his daughter's behalf, for he was a king. And he decked her with gold and pearls, and caused her to pour out wine for us at the feast in womanly beauty. And

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the wine led my eyes astray, and pleasure blinded my heart; and I loved her, and I fell, and transgressed the commandment of the Lord and the commandment of my fathers, and I took her to wife. And the Lord rewarded me according to the thought of my heart, insomuch that I had no joy in her children.

14. And now, my children, be not drunk with wine; for wine turns the mind away from the truth, and kindles in it the passion of lust, and leads the eyes into error. For the spirit of fornication has wine as a minister to give pleasures to the mind; for these two take away the power from a man. For if a man drink wine to drunkenness, he disturbs his mind with filthy thoughts to fornication, and excites his body to carnal union; and if the cause of the desire be present, he works the sin, and is not ashamed. Such is wine, my children; for he who is drunken reverences no man. For, lo, it made me also to err, so that I was not ashamed of the multitude in the city, because before the eyes of all I turned aside unto Tamar, and I worked a great sin, and I uncovered the covering of the shame of my sons. After that I drank wine I revered not the commandment of God, and I took a woman of Canaan to wife. Wherefore, my children, he who drinks wine needs discretion; and herein is discretion in drinking wine, that a man should drink as long as he keeps decency; but if he go beyond this bound, the spirit of deceit attacks his mind and works his will; and it makes the drunkard to talk filthily, and to transgress and not to be ashamed, but even to exult in his dishonour, accounting himself to do well.

15. He that commits fornication, and uncovers his nakedness, has become the servant of fornication, and escapes not from the power thereof, even as I also was uncovered. For I gave my staff, that is, the stay of my tribe; and my girdle, that is, my power; and my diadem, that is, the glory of my kingdom. Then I repented for these things, and took no wine or flesh until my old age, nor did I behold any joy. And the angel of God showed me that for ever do women bear rule over king and beggar alike; and from the king they take away his glory, and from the valiant man his strength, and from the beggar even that little which is the stay of his poverty.

16. Observe therefore, my children, moderation in wine; for there are in it four evil spirits— of (1) lust, of (2) wrath, of (3) riot, of (4) filthy lucre. If you drink wine in gladness, with shamefacedness, with the fear of God, you shall live. For if you drink not with shamefacedness, and the fear of God departs from you, then comes drunkenness, and shamelessness steals in. But *even* if you drink not at all, take heed lest ye sin in words of outrage, and fighting, and slander, and transgression of the commandments of God; so shall you perish before your time. Moreover, wine reveals the mysteries of God and men to aliens, even as I also revealed the commandments of God and the mysteries of Jacob my father to the Canaanitish Bathshua, to whom God forbade to declare them. And wine also is a cause of war and confusion.

17. I charge you, therefore, my children, not to love money, nor to gaze upon the beauty of women; because for the sake of money and beauty I was led astray to Bathshua the Canaanite. For I know that because of these two things shall you who are my race fall into wickedness; for even wise men among my sons shall they mar, and shall cause the kingdom of Judah to be diminished, which the Lord gave me because of my obedience to my father. For I never disobeyed a word



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of Jacob my father, for all things whatsoever he commanded I did. And Abraham, the father of my father, blessed me that I should be king in Israel, and Isaac further blessed me in like manner. And I know that from me shall the kingdom be established.

18. For I have read also in the books of Enoch the righteous what evils you shall do in the last days. Take heed, therefore, my children, of fornication and the love of money; hearken to Judah your father, for these things do withdraw you from the law of God, and blind the understanding of the soul, and teach arrogance, and suffer not a man to have compassion upon his neighbour: they rob his soul of all goodness, and bind him in toils and troubles, and take away his sleep and devour his flesh, and hinder the sacrifices of God; and he remembers not blessing, and he hearkens not to a prophet when he speaks, and is vexed at the word of godliness. For one who serves two passions contrary to the commandments of God cannot obey God, because they have blinded his soul, and he walks in the day-time as in the night.

19. My children, the love of money leads to idols; because, when led astray through money, men make mention of those who are no gods, and it causes him who has it to fall into madness. For the sake of money, I lost my children, and but for the repentance of my flesh, and the humbling of my soul, and the prayers of Jacob my father, I should have died childless. But the God of my fathers, who is pitiful and merciful, pardoned me, because I did it in ignorance. For the prince of deceit blinded me, and I was ignorant as a man and as flesh, being corrupted in sins; and I learned my own weakness while thinking myself unconquerable.

20. Learn therefore, my children, that two spirits wait upon man—the spirit of truth and the spirit of error; and in the midst is the spirit of the understanding of the mind, to which it belongs to turn wherever it will. And the works of truth and the works of error are written upon the breast of men, and each one of them the Lord knows. And there is no time at which the works of men can be hid from Him; for on the bones of his breast has he been written down before the Lord. And the spirit of truth testifies all things, and accuses all; and he who sins is burnt up by his own heart, and cannot raise his face unto the Judge.

21. And now, my children, love Levi, that you may abide, and exalt not yourselves against him, lest ye be utterly destroyed. For to me the Lord gave the kingdom, and to him the priesthood, and He set the kingdom beneath the priesthood. To me He gave the things upon the earth; to him the things in the heavens. As the heaven is higher than the earth, so is the priesthood of God higher than the kingdom upon the earth. For the Lord chose him above you, to draw near to Him, and to eat of His table and first-fruits, even the choice things of the sons of Israel, and you shall be to them as a sea. For as, on the sea, just and unjust are tossed about, some taken into captivity while others are enriched, so also shall every race of men be in you, some are in jeopardy and taken captive, and others shall grow rich by means of plunder. For they who rule will be as great sea-monsters, swallowing up men like fishes: free sons and daughters do they enslave; houses, lands, flocks, money, will they plunder; and with the flesh of many will they wrongfully feed the ravens and the cranes; and they will go on

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further in evil, advancing on still in covetousness. And there shall be false prophets like tempests, and they shall persecute all righteous men.

22. And the Lord shall bring upon them divisions one against another, and there shall be continual wars in Israel; and among men of other race shall my kingdom be brought to an end, until the salvation of Israel shall come, until the appearing of the God of righteousness, that Jacob and all the Gentiles may rest in peace. And he shall guard the might of my kingdom for ever: for the Lord swore to me with an oath that the kingdom should never fail from me, and from my seed for all days, even for ever.

23. Now I have much grief, my children, because of your lewdness, and witchcrafts, and idolatries, which you will work against the kingdom, following them that have familiar spirits; you will make your daughters singing girls and harlots for divinations and demons of error, and you will be mingled in the pollutions of the Gentiles: for which things' sake the Lord shall bring upon you famine and pestilence, death and the sword, avenging siege, and dogs for the rending in pieces of enemies, and revilings of friends, destruction and blighting of eyes, children slaughtered, wives carried off, possessions plundered, temple of God in flames, your land desolated, your own selves enslaved among the Gentiles, and they shall make some of you eunuchs for their wives; and whenever you will return to the Lord with humility of heart, repenting and walking in all the commandments of God, then will the Lord visit you in mercy and in love, bringing you from out of the bondage of your enemies.

24. And after these things shall a Star arise to you from Jacob in peace, and a Man shall rise from my seed, like the Sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of men in meekness and righteousness, and no sin shall be found in Him. And the heavens shall be opened above Him, to shed forth the blessing of the Spirit from the Holy Father; and He shall shed forth a spirit of grace upon you, and you shall be unto Him sons in truth, and you shall walk in His commandments, the first and the last. This is the Branch of God Most High, and this the Well-spring unto life for all flesh. Then shall the sceptre of my kingdom shine forth, and from your root shall arise a stem; and in it shall arise a rod of righteousness to the Gentiles, to judge and to save all that call upon the Lord.

25. And after these things shall Abraham and Isaac and Jacob arise unto life, and I and my brethren will be chiefs, even your sceptre in Israel: Levi first, I the second, Joseph third, Benjamin fourth, Simeon fifth, Issachar sixth, and so all in order. And the Lord blessed Levi; the Angel of the Presence, me; the powers of glory, Simeon; the heaven, Reuben; the earth, Issachar; the sea, Zebulun; the mountains, Joseph; the tabernacle, Benjamin; the lights of heaven, Dan; the fatness of earth, Naphtali; the sun, Gad; the olive, Asher: and there shall be one people of the Lord, and one tongue; **and there shall no more be a spirit of deceit of Beliar, for he shall be cast into the fire for ever.** And they who have died in grief shall arise in joy, and they who have lived in poverty for the Lord's sake shall be made rich, and they who have been in want shall be filled, and they who have been weak shall be made strong, and they who have been put to death for the Lord's sake shall awake in life. And the harts of Jacob shall run in joyfulness, and the eagles of Israel shall fly in gladness; but the ungodly shall

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lament, and sinners all weep, and all the people shall glorify the Lord for ever. 26. Observe, therefore, my children, all the law of the Lord, for there is hope for all them who follow His way aright. And he said to them: I die before your eyes this day, a hundred and nineteen years old. Let no one bury me in costly apparel, nor tear open my bowels, for this shall they who are kings do: and carry me up to Hebron with you. And Judah, when he had said these things, fell asleep; and his sons did according to all whatsoever he commanded them, and they buried him in Hebron with his fathers.

### **V.— The Testament of Issachar Concerning Simplicity.**

1. The record of the words of Issachar. He called his sons, and said to them: Hearken, my children, to Issachar your father; give ear to my words, you who are beloved of the Lord. I was the fifth son born to Jacob, even the hire of the mandrakes. For Reuben brought in mandrakes from the field, and Rachel met him and took them. And Reuben wept, and at his voice Leah my mother came forth. Now these mandrakes were sweet-smelling apples which the land of Aram produced on high ground below a ravine of water. And Rachel said, I will not give them to you, for they shall be to me instead of children. Now there were two apples; and Leah said, Let it suffice you that you have taken the husband of my virginity: will you also take these? And she said, Behold, let Jacob be to you this night instead of the mandrakes of your son. And Leah said to her, Boast not, and vaunt not yourself; for Jacob is mine, and I am the wife of his youth. But Rachel said, How so? For to me was he first espoused, and for my sake he served our father fourteen years. What shall I do to you, because the craft and the subtlety of men are increased, and craft prospers upon the earth? And were it not so, you would not now see the face of Jacob. For you are not his wife, but in craft were taken to him in my stead. And my father deceived me, and removed me on that night, and suffered me not to see him; for had I been there, it had not happened thus. And Rachel said, Take one mandrake, and for the other you shall hire him from me for one night. And Jacob knew Leah, and she conceived and bare me, and on account of the hire I was called Issachar.

2. Then appeared to Jacob an angel of the Lord, saying, Two children shall Rachel bear; for she has refused company with her husband, and has chosen continency. And had not Leah my mother given up the two apples for the sake of his company, she would have borne eight sons; and for this thing she bare six, and Rachel two: because on account of the mandrakes the Lord visited her. For He knew that for the sake of children she wished to company with Jacob, and not for lust of pleasure. For she went further, and on the morrow too gave up Jacob that she might receive also the other mandrake. Therefore the Lord hearkened to Rachel because of the mandrakes: for though she desired them, she ate them not, but brought them to the priest of the Most High who was at that time, and offered them up in the house of the Lord.

3. When, therefore, I grew up, my children, I walked in uprightness of heart, and I became a husbandman for my parents and my brethren, and I brought in fruits from the field according to their season; and my father blessed me, for he saw that I walked in simplicity. And I was not a busybody in my doings,

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nor malicious and slanderous against my neighbour. I never spoke against any one, nor did I censure the life of any man, but walked in the simplicity of my eyes. Therefore when I was thirty years old I took to myself a wife, for my labour wore away my strength, and I never thought upon pleasure with women; but through my labour my sleep sufficed me, and my father always rejoiced in my simplicity. For on whatever I laboured I offered first to the Lord, by the hands of the priests, of all my produce and all first-fruits; then to my father, and then took for myself. And the Lord increased twofold His benefits in my hands; and Jacob also knew that God aided my simplicity, for on every poor man and every one in distress I bestowed the good things of the earth in simplicity of heart.

4. And now hearken to me, my children, and walk in simplicity of heart, for I have seen in it all that is well-pleasing to the Lord. The simple covets not gold, defrauds not his neighbour, longs not after manifold dainties, delights not in varied apparel, does not picture to himself to live a long life, but only waits for the will of God, and the spirits of error have no power against him. For he cannot allow within his mind a thought of female beauty, that he should not pollute his mind in corruption. No envy can enter into his thoughts, no jealousy melts away his soul, nor does he brood over gain with insatiate desire; for he walks in uprightness of life, and beholds all things in simplicity, not admitting in his eyes malice from the error of the world, lest he should see the perversion of any of the commandments of the Lord.

5. Keep therefore the law of God, my children, and get simplicity, and walk in guilelessness, not prying over-curiously into the commands of God and the business of your neighbour; but love the Lord and your neighbour, have compassion on the poor and weak. Bow down your back unto husbandry, and labour in tillage of the ground in all manner of husbandry, offering gifts unto the Lord with thanksgiving; for with the first-fruits of the earth did the Lord bless me, even as He blessed all the saints from Abel even until now. For no other portion is given to you than of the fatness of the earth, whose fruits are raised by toil; for our father Jacob blessed me with blessings of the earth and of first-fruits. And Levi and Judah were glorified by the Lord among the sons of Jacob; for the Lord made choice of them, and to the one He gave the priesthood, to the other the kingdom. Them therefore obey, and walk in the simplicity of your father; for unto Gad has it been given to destroy the temptations that are coming upon Israel.

6. I know, my children, that in the last times your sons will forsake simplicity, and will cleave unto avarice, and leaving guilelessness will draw near to malice, and forsaking the commandments of the Lord will cleave unto Beliar, and leaving husbandry will follow after their wicked devices, and shall be dispersed among the Gentiles, and shall serve their enemies. And do you therefore command these things to your children, that if they sin they may the more quickly return to the Lord; for He is merciful, and will deliver them even to bring them back into their land.

7. I am a hundred and twenty-two years old, and I know not against myself a sin unto death. Except my wife, I have not known any woman. I never committed fornication in the haughtiness of my eyes; I drank not wine, to be led astray thereby; I coveted not any desirable thing that was my neighbour's; guile

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never entered in my heart; a lie never passed through my lips; if any man grieved, I wept with him, and I shared my bread with the poor. I never ate alone; I moved no landmark; in all my days I wrought godliness and truth. I loved the Lord with all my strength; likewise also did I love every man even as my own children. So ye also do these things, my children, and every spirit of Beliar shall flee from you, and no deed of malicious men shall rule over you; and every wild beast shall you subdue, having with yourselves the God of heaven walking with men in simplicity of heart.

And he commanded them that they should carry him up to Hebron, and bury him there in the cave with his fathers. And he stretched out his feet and died, the fifth son of Jacob, in a good old age; and with every limb sound, and with strength unabated, he slept the eternal sleep.

### **VI.— The Testament of Zebulun Concerning Compassion and Mercy.**

1. The record of Zebulun, which he enjoined his children in the hundred and fourteenth year of his life, thirty-two years after the death of Joseph. And he said to them: Harken to me sons of Zebulun, attend to the words of your father. I am Zebulun, a good gift to my parents. For when I was born our father was increased very exceedingly, both in flocks and herds, when with the streaked rods he had his portion. I know not, my children, that in all my days I have sinned, save only in thought. Nor do I remember that I have done any iniquity, except the sin of ignorance which I committed against Joseph; for I screened my brethren, not telling to my father what had been done. And I wept sore in secret, for I feared my brethren, because they had all agreed together, that if anyone should declare the secret, he should be slain with the sword. But when they wished to kill him, I adjured them much with tears not to be guilty of this iniquity.

2. For Simeon and Gad came against Joseph to kill him. And Joseph fell upon his face, and said unto them, Pity me, my brethren, have compassion upon the bowels of Jacob our father: lay not upon me your hands to shed innocent blood, for I have not sinned against you; yea, if I have sinned, with chastening chastise me, but lay not upon me your hand, for the sake of Jacob our father. And as he spoke these words, I pitied him and began to weep, and my heart melted within me, and all the substance of my bowels was loosened within my soul.

And Joseph also wept, and I too wept with him; and my heart throbbed fast, and the joints of my body trembled, and I was not able to stand. And when he saw me weeping with him, and them coming against him to slay him, he fled behind me, beseeching them. And Reuben rose and said, My brethren, let us not slay him, but let us cast him into one of these dry pits which our fathers dug and found no water. For for this cause the Lord forbade that water should rise up in them, in order that Joseph might be preserved; and the Lord appointed it so, until they sold him to the Ishmaelites.

3. For in the price of Joseph, my children, I had no share; but Simeon and Gad and six other of our brethren took the price of Joseph, and bought sandals for themselves, their wives, and their children, saying, We will not eat of it, for it is the price of our brother's blood, but will tread it down under foot, because he said that he was king over us, and so let us see what his dreams mean.

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Therefore is it written in the writing of the law of Enoch, that whosoever will not raise up seed to his brother, his sandal shall be unloosed, and they shall spit into his face. And the brethren of Joseph wished not that their brother should live, and the Lord loosed unto them the sandal of Joseph. For when they came into Egypt they were unloosed by the servants of Joseph before the gate, and so made obeisance to Joseph after the fashion of Pharaoh. And not only did they make obeisance to him, but were spit upon also, falling down before him immediately, and so they were put to shame before the Egyptians; for after this the Egyptians heard all the evils which we had done to Joseph.

4. After these things they brought forth food; for I through two days and two nights tasted nothing, through pity for Joseph. And Juda hate not with them, but watched the pit; for he feared lest Simeon and Gad should run back and slay him. And when they saw that I also ate not, they set me to watch him until he was sold. And **he remained in the pit three days and three nights,** and so was sold famishing. And when Reuben heard that while he was away Joseph had been sold, he rent his clothes about him, and mourned, saying, How shall I look in the face of Jacob my father? And he took the money, and ran after the merchants, and found no one; for they had left the main road, and journeyed hastily through rugged byways. And Reuben ate no food on that day. Dan therefore came to him, and said, Weep not, neither grieve; for I have found what we can say to our father Jacob. Let us slay a kid of the goats, and dip in it the coat of Joseph; and we will say, Look, if this is the coat of your son: for they stripped off from Joseph the coat of our father when they were about to sell him, and put upon him an old garment of a slave. Now Simeon had the coat, and would not give it up, wishing to rend it with his sword; for he was angry that Joseph lived, and that he had not slain him. Then we all rose up together against him, and said, If you give it not up, we will say that you alone did this wickedness in Israel; and so he gave it up, and they did even as Dan had said.

5. And now, my children, I bid you to keep the commands of the Lord, and to show mercy upon your neighbour, and to have compassion towards all, not towards men only, but also towards beasts. For this thing's sake the Lord blessed me; and when all my brethren were sick I escaped without sickness, for the Lord knows the purposes of each. Have therefore compassion in your hearts, my children, because even as a man does to his neighbour, even so also will the Lord do to him. For the sons of my brethren were sickening, were dying on account of Joseph, because they showed not mercy in their hearts; but my sons were preserved without sickness, as you know. And when I was in Canaan, by the sea-coast, I caught spoil of fish for Jacob my father; and when many were choked in the sea, I abode unhurt.

6. I was the first who made a boat to sail upon the sea, for the Lord gave me understanding and wisdom therein; and I let down a rudder behind it, and I stretched a sail on an upright mast in the midst; and sailing therein along the shores, I caught fish for the house of my father until we went into Egypt; and through compassion, I gave of my fish to every stranger. And if any man were a stranger, or sick, or aged, I boiled the fish and dressed them well, and offered them to all men as every man had need, bringing them together and having compassion upon them. Wherefore also the Lord granted me to take much

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fish: for he that imparts unto his neighbour, receives manifold more from the Lord. For five years I caught fish, and gave thereof to every man whom I saw, and brought sufficient for all the house of my father. In the summer I caught fish, and in the winter I kept sheep with my brethren.

7. Now I will declare unto you what I did, I saw a man in distress and nakedness in wintertime, and had compassion upon him, and stole away a garment secretly from my house, and gave it to him who was in distress. Do you therefore, my children, from that which God bestows upon you, show compassion and mercy impartially to all men, and give to every man with a good heart. And if you have not at the time wherewith to give to him that asks you, have compassion for him in bowels of mercy. I know that my hand found not at the time wherewith to give to him that asked me, and I walked with him weeping for more than seven furlongs, and my bowels yearned towards him unto compassion.

8. Have therefore yourselves also, my children, compassion towards every man with mercy, that the Lord also may have compassion upon you, and have mercy upon you; because also in the last days God sends His compassion on the earth, and wheresoever He finds bowels of mercy, He dwells in him. For how much compassion a man has upon his neighbours, so much also has the Lord upon him. For when we went down into Egypt, Joseph bore no malice against us, and when he saw me he was filled with compassion. And looking towards him, do ye also, my children, approve yourselves without malice, and love one another; and reckon not each one the evil of his brother, for this breaks unity, and divides all kindred, and troubles the soul: for he who bears malice has not bowels of mercy.

9. Mark the waters, that they flow together, and sweep along stones, trees, sand; but if they are divided into many streams, the earth sucks them up, and they become of no account. So also shall you be if you be divided. Divide not yourselves into two heads, for everything which the Lord made has but one head; He gave two shoulders, hands, feet, but all the members are subject unto the one head. I have learned by the writing of my fathers, that in the last days you will depart from the Lord, and be divided in Israel, and you will follow two kings, and will work every abomination, and every idol will you worship, and your enemies shall lead you captive, and you shall dwell among the nations with all infirmities and tribulations and anguish of soul. And after these things you will remember the Lord, and will repent, and He will lead you back; for He is merciful and full of compassion, not imputing evil to the sons of men, because they are flesh, and the spirits of error deceive them in all their doings. And after these things shall the Lord Himself arise to you, **Malachi 4:2** the Light of righteousness, and healing and compassion shall be upon His wings. He shall redeem all captivity of the sons of men from Beliar, and every spirit of error shall be trodden down. And He shall bring back all the nations to zeal for Him, and you shall see God in the fashion of a man whom the Lord shall choose, Jerusalem is His name. And again with the wickedness of your words will you provoke Him to anger, and you shall be cast away, even unto the time of consummation.

10. And now, my children, grieve not that I am dying, nor be troubled in that I am passing away from you. For I shall arise once more in the midst of you, as a ruler

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in the midst of his sons; and I will rejoice in the midst of my tribe, as many as have kept the law of the Lord, and the commandments of Zebulun their father. But upon the ungodly shall the Lord bring everlasting fire, and will destroy them throughout all generations. I am hastening away unto my rest, as did my fathers; but do ye fear the Lord your God with all your strength all the days of your life. And when he had said these things he fell calmly asleep, and his sons laid him in a coffin; and afterwards they carried him up to Hebron, and buried him with his fathers.

### **VII.— The Testament of Dan Concerning Anger and Lying.**

1. The record of the words of Dan, which he spoke to his sons in his last days. In the hundred and twenty-fifth year of his life he called together his family, and said: Hearken to my words, you sons of Dan; give heed to the words of the mouth of your father. I have proved in my heart, and in my whole life, that truth with just dealing is good and well-pleasing to God, and that lying and anger are evil, because they teach man all wickedness.

I confess this day to you, my children, that in my heart I rejoiced concerning the death of Joseph, a true and good man; and I rejoiced at the selling of Joseph, because his father loved him more than us. For the spirit of jealousy and of vainglory said to me, You also are his son. And one of the spirits of Beliar wrought with me, saying, Take this sword, and with it slay Joseph; so shall your father love you when he is slain. This is the spirit of anger that counselled me, that even as a leopard devours a kid, so should I devour Joseph. But the God of Jacob our father gave him not over into my hands that I should find him alone, nor suffered me to work this iniquity, that two tribes should be destroyed in Israel.

2. And now, my children, I am dying, and I tell you of a truth, that unless ye keep yourselves from the spirit of lying and of anger, and love truth and long-suffering, you shall perish. There is blindness in anger, my children, and no wrathful man regards any person with truth: for though it be a father or a mother, he behaves towards them as enemies; though it be a brother, he knows him not; though it be a prophet of the Lord, he disobeys him; though a righteous man, he regards him not; a friend he does not acknowledge. For the spirit of anger encompasses him with the nets of deceit, and blinds his natural eyes, and through lying darkens his mind, and gives him a sight of his own making. And wherewith encompasses he his eyes? In hatred of heart; and he gives him a heart of his own against his brother unto envy.

3. My children, mischievous is anger, for it becomes as a soul to the soul itself; and the body of the angry man it makes its own, and over his soul it gets the mastery, and it bestows upon the body its own power, that it may work all iniquity; and whenever the soul does anything, it justifies what has been done, since it sees not. Therefore he who is wrathful, if he be a mighty man, has a treble might in his anger; one by the might and aid of his servants, and a second by his wrath, whereby he persuades and overcomes in injustice: and having a third of the nature of his own body, and of his own self working the evil. And though the wrathful man be weak, yet has he a might twofold of that which is by nature; for wrath ever aids such in mischief. This spirit goes always with lying at the right



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hand of Satan, that his works may be wrought with cruelty and lying.

4. Understand ye therefore the might of wrath, that it is vain. For it first of all stings him in word: then by deeds it strengthens him who is angry, and with bitter punishments disturbs his mind, and so stirs up with great wrath his soul. Therefore, when any one speaks against you, be not ye moved unto anger. And if any man praises you as good, be not lifted up nor elated, either to the feeling or showing of pleasure. For first it pleases the hearing, and so stirs up the understanding to understand the grounds for anger; and then, being wrathful, he thinks that he is justly angry. If you fall into any loss or ruin, my children, be not troubled; for this very spirit makes men desire that which has perished, in order that they may be inflamed by the desire. If you suffer loss willingly, be not vexed, for from vexation he raises up wrath with lying. And wrath with lying is a twofold mischief; and they speak one with another that they may disturb the mind; and when the soul is continually disturbed, the Lord departs from it, and Beliar rules over it.

5. Observe, therefore, my children, the commandments of the Lord, and keep His law; and depart from wrath, and hate lying, that the Lord may dwell among you, and Beliar may flee from you. Speak truth each one with his neighbour, so shall you not fall into lust and confusion; but you shall be in peace, having the God of peace, so shall no war prevail over you. Love the Lord through all your life, and one another with a true heart. For I know that in the last days you will depart from the Lord, and will provoke Levi unto anger, and will fight against Judah; but you shall not prevail against them. For an angel of the Lord shall guide them both; for by them shall Israel stand. And whenever ye depart from the Lord, you will walk in all evil, working the abominations of the Gentiles, going astray with women of them that are ungodly; and the spirits of error shall work in you with all malice. For I have read in the book of Enoch the righteous, that your prince is Satan, and that all the spirits of fornication and pride shall be subject unto Levi, to lay a snare for the sons of Levi, to cause them to sin before the Lord. And my sons will draw near unto Levi, and sin with them in all things; and the sons of Judah will be covetous, plundering other men's goods like lions. Therefore shall you be led away with them in captivity, and there shall you receive all the plagues of Egypt, and all the malice of the Gentiles: and so, when you return to the Lord, you shall obtain mercy, and He shall bring you into His sanctuary, calling peace upon you; and there shall arise unto you from the tribe of Judah and of Levi the salvation of the Lord; and He shall make war against Beliar, and He shall give the vengeance of victory to our coasts. **And the captivity shall He take from Beliar, even the souls of the saints, and shall turn disobedient hearts unto the Lord,** and shall give to them who call upon Him everlasting peace; and the saints shall rest in Eden, and the righteous shall rejoice in the new Jerusalem, which shall be unto the glory of God for ever and ever. And no longer shall Jerusalem endure desolation, nor Israel be led captive; for the Lord shall be in the midst of her, dwelling among men, even the Holy One of Israel reigning over them in humility and in poverty; and he who believes in Him shall reign in truth in the heavens.

6. And now, my children, fear the Lord, and take heed unto yourselves

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of Satan and his spirits; and draw near unto God, and to the Angel that intercedes for you, for He is a Mediator between God and man for the peace of Israel. He shall stand up against the kingdom of the enemy; therefore is the enemy eager to destroy all that call upon the Lord. For he knows that in the day on which Israel shall believe, the kingdom of the enemy shall be brought to an end; and the very angel of peace shall strengthen Israel, that it fall not into the extremity of evil. And it shall be in the time of the iniquity of Israel, that the Lord will depart from them, and will go after him that does His will, for unto none of His angels shall it be as unto him. And His name shall be in every place of Israel, and among the Gentiles— Saviour. Keep therefore yourselves, my children, from every evil work, and cast away wrath and all lying, and love truth and long-suffering; and the things which you have heard from your father, do ye also impart to your children, that the Father of the Gentiles may receive you: for He is true and long-suffering, meek and lowly, and teaches by His works the law of God. Depart, therefore, from all unrighteousness, and cleave unto the righteousness of the law of the Lord: and bury me near my fathers.

7. And when he had said these things he kissed them, and slept the long sleep. And his sons buried him, and after that they carried up his bones to the side of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Nevertheless, as Dan had prophesied unto them that they should forget the law of their God, and should be alienated from the land of their inheritance, and from the race of Israel, and from their kindred, so also it came to pass.

### **VIII.— The Testament of Naphtali Concerning Natural Goodness.**

1. The record of the testament of Naphtali, what things he ordained at the time of his death in the hundred and thirty-second year of his life. When his sons were gathered together in the seventh month, the fourth day of the month, he, being yet in good health, made them a feast and good cheer. And after he was awake in the morning, he said to them, I am dying; and they believed him not. And he blessed the Lord; and affirmed that after yesterday's feast he should die. He began then to say to his sons: Hear, my children; ye sons of Naphtali, hear the words of your father. I was born from Bilhah; and because Rachel dealt craftily, and gave Bilhah in place of herself to Jacob, and she bore me upon Rachel's lap, therefore was I called Naphtali. And Rachel loved me because I was born upon her lap; and when I was of young and tender form, she was wont to kiss me, and say, Would that I might see a brother of yours from my own womb, like you: whence also Joseph was like me in all things, according to the prayers of Rachel. Now my mother was Bilhah, daughter of Rotheus the brother of Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, and she was born on one and the self-same day with Rachel. And Rotheus was of the family of Abraham, a Chaldean, fearing God, free-born and noble; and he was taken captive, and was bought by Laban; and he gave him Aena his handmaid to wife, and she bore a daughter, and called her Zilpah, after the name of the village in which he had been taken captive. And next she bore Bilhah, saying, My daughter is eager after what is new, for immediately that she was born she was eager for the breast.

2. And since I was swift on my feet like a deer, my father Jacob appointed me for all errands and messages, and as a deer **Genesis 49:21** did he give me his blessing.

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For as the potter knows the vessel, what it contains, and brings clay thereto, so also does the Lord make the body in accordance with the spirit, and according to the capacity of the body does He implant the spirit, and the one is not deficient from the other by a third part of a hair; for by weight, and measure, and rule is every creature of the Most High. And as the potter knows the use of each vessel, whereto it suffices, so also does the Lord know the body, how far it is capable for goodness, and when it begins in evil; for there is no created thing and no thought which the Lord knows not, for He created every man after His own image. As man's strength, so also is his work; and as his mind, so also is his work; and as his purpose, so also is his doing; as his heart, so also is his mouth; as his eye, so also is his sleep; as his soul, so also is his word, either in the law of the Lord or in the law of Beliar. And as there is a division between light and darkness, between seeing and hearing, so also is there a division between man and man, and between woman and woman; neither is it to be said that there is any superiority in anything, either of the face or of other like things. For God made all things good in their order, the five senses in the head, and He joins on the neck to the head, the hair also for comeliness, the heart moreover for understanding, the belly for the dividing of the stomach, the calamus for health, the liver for wrath, the gall for bitterness. the spleen for laughter, the reins for craftiness, the loins for power, the ribs for containing, the back for strength, and so forth. So then, my children, be orderly unto good things in the fear of God, and do nothing disorderly in scorn or out of its due season. For if you bid the eye to hear, it cannot; so neither in darkness can you do the works of light.

3. Be not therefore eager to corrupt your doings through excess, or with empty words to deceive your souls; because if you keep silence in purity of heart, you shall be able to hold fast the will of God, and to cast away the will of the devil. Sun and moon and stars change not their order; so also you shall not change the law of God in the disorderliness of your doings. Nations went astray, and forsook the Lord, and changed their order, and followed stones and stocks, following after spirits of error. But you shall not be so, my children, recognizing in the firmament, in the earth, and in the sea, and in all created things, the Lord who made them all, that you become not as Sodom, which changed the order of its nature, **in like manner also the Watchers changed the order of their nature, whom also the Lord cursed at the flood, and for their sakes made desolate the earth,** that it should be uninhabited and fruitless.

4. These things I say, my children, for I have read in the holy writing of Enoch that you yourselves also will depart from the Lord, walking according to all wickedness of the Gentiles, and ye will do according to all the iniquity of Sodom. And the Lord will bring captivity upon you, and there shall you serve your enemies, and you shall be covered with all affliction and tribulation, until the Lord shall have consumed you all. And after that you shall have been diminished and made few, you will return and acknowledge the Lord your God; and He will bring you back into your own land, according to His abundant mercy. And it shall be, after that they shall come into the land of their fathers, they will again forget the Lord and deal wickedly; and the Lord shall scatter them upon the face of all the earth, until the compassion of the Lord shall

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come, a Man working righteousness and showing mercy unto all them that are afar off, and them that are near.

5. For in the fortieth year of my life, I saw *in a vision* that the sun and the moon were standing still on the Mount of Olives, at the east of Jerusalem. And behold Isaac, the father of my father, says to us, Run and lay hold of them, each one according to his strength; and he that seizes them, his shall be the sun and the moon. And we all of us ran together, and Levi laid hold of the sun, and Judah outstripped the others and seized the moon, and they were both of them lifted up with them. And when Levi became as a sun, a certain young man gave to him twelve branches of palm; and Judah was bright as the moon, and under his feet were twelve rays. And Levi and Judah ran, and laid hold each of the other. And, lo, a bull upon the earth, having two great horns, and an eagle's wings upon his back; and we wished to seize him, but could not.

For Joseph outstripped us, and took him, and ascended up with him on high. And I saw, for I was there, and behold a holy writing appeared to us saying: Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Elamites, Gelachæans, Chaldeans, Syrians, shall possess in captivity the twelve tribes of Israel.

6. And again, after seven months, I saw our father Jacob standing by the sea of Jamnia, and we his sons were with him. And, behold, there came a ship sailing by, full of dried flesh, without sailors or pilot: and there was written upon the ship, Jacob. And our father says to us, Let us embark on our ship. And when we had gone on board, there arose a vehement storm, and a tempest of mighty wind; and our father, who was holding the helm, flew away from us. And we, being tost with the tempest, were borne along over the sea; and the ship was filled with water and beaten about with a mighty wave, so that it was nearly broken in pieces. And Joseph fled away upon a little boat, and we all were divided upon twelve boards, and Levi and Judah were together. We therefore all were scattered even unto afar off. Then Levi, girt about with sackcloth, prayed for us all unto the Lord. And when the storm ceased, immediately the ship reached the land, as though in peace. And, lo, Jacob our father came, and we rejoiced with one accord.

7. These two dreams I told to my father; and he said to me, These things must be fulfilled in their season, after that Israel has endured many things. Then my father says unto me, I believe that Joseph lives, for I see always that the Lord numbers him with you. And he said, weeping, You live, Joseph, my child, and I behold you not, and you see not Jacob that begot you. And he caused us also to weep at these words of his, and I burned in my heart to declare that he had been sold, but I feared my brethren.

8. Behold, my children, I have shown unto you the last times, that all shall come to pass in Israel. Do ye also therefore charge your children that they be united to Levi and to Judah. For through Judah shall salvation arise unto Israel, and in Him shall Jacob be blessed. For through his tribe shall God be seen dwelling among men on the earth, to save the race of Israel, and He shall gather together the righteous from the Gentiles. If you work that which is good, my children, both men and angels will bless you; and God will be glorified through you among the Gentiles, and the devil will flee from you, and the wild beasts will fear you, and the angels will cleave to you. For as if a man rear up a child well, he has a kindly remembrance thereof; so also for a good work there is

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a good remembrance with God. But him who does not that which is good, men and angels shall curse and God will be dishonoured among the heathen through him, and the devil makes him his own as his peculiar instrument, and every wild beast shall master him, and the Lord will hate him. For the commandments of the law are twofold, and through prudence must they be fulfilled. For there is a season for a man to embrace his wife, and a season to abstain therefrom for his prayer. So then there are two commandments; and unless they be done in due order, they bring about sin. So also is it with the other commandments. Be therefore wise in God, and prudent, understanding the order of the commandments, and the laws of every work, that the Lord may love you.

9. And when he had charged them with many such words, he exhorted them that they should remove his bones to Hebron, and should bury him with his fathers. And when he had eaten and drunken with a merry heart, he covered his face and died. And his sons did according to all things whatsoever Naphtali their father had charged them.

### **IX.— The Testament of Gad Concerning Hatred.**

1. The record of the testament of Gad, what things he spoke unto his sons, in the hundred and twenty-seventh year of his life, saying: I was the seventh son born to Jacob, and I was valiant in keeping the flocks. I guarded at night the flock; and whenever the lion came, or wolf, or leopard, or bear, or any wild beast against the fold, I pursued it, and with my hand seizing its foot, and whirling it round, I stunned it, and hurled it over two furlongs, and so killed it. Now Joseph was feeding the flock with us for about thirty days, and being tender, he fell sick by reason of the heat. And he returned to Hebron to his father, who made him lie down near him, because he loved him. And Joseph told our father that the sons of Zilpah and Bilhah were slaying the best of the beasts, and devouring them without the knowledge of Judah and Reuben. For he saw that I delivered a lamb out of the mouth of the bear, and I put the bear to death; and the lamb I slew, being grieved concerning it that it could not live, and we ate it, and he told our father. And I was angry with Joseph for that thing until the day that he was sold into Egypt. And the spirit of hatred was in me, and I wished not either to see Joseph or to hear him. And he rebuked us to our faces for having eaten of the flock without Judah. And whatsoever things he told our father, he believed him.

2. I confess now my sin, my children, that oftentimes I wished to kill him, because I hated him to the death, and there were in no wise in me bowels of mercy towards him. Moreover, I hated him yet more because of his dreams; and I would have devoured him out of the land of the living, even as a calf devours the grass from the earth. Therefore I and Judah sold him to the Ishmaelites for thirty pieces of gold, and ten of them we hid, and showed the twenty to our brethren: and so through my covetousness I was fully bent on his destruction. And the God of my fathers delivered him from my hands, that I should not work iniquity in Israel.

3. And now, my children, hearken to the words of truth to work righteousness, and all the law of the Most High, and not go astray through the spirit of hatred,

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for it is evil in all the doings of men. Whatsoever a man does, that does the hater abhor: though he works the law of the Lord, he praises him not; though he fears the Lord, and takes pleasure in that which is righteous, he loves him not: he dispises the truth, he envies him that orders his way aright, he delights in evil-speaking, he loves arrogance, for hatred has blinded his soul; even as I also looked on Joseph.

4. Take heed therefore, my children, of hatred; for it works iniquity against the Lord Himself: for it will not hear the words of His commandments concerning the loving of one's neighbour, and it sins against God. For if a brother stumble, immediately it wishes to proclaim it to all men, and is urgent that he should be judged for it, and be punished and slain. And if it be a servant, it accuses him to his master, and with all affliction it devises against him, if it be possible to slay him. For hatred works in envy, and it ever sickens with envy against them that prosper in well-doing, when it sees or hears thereof. **For as love would even restore to life the dead, and would call back them that are condemned to die, so hatred would slay the living, and those that have offended in a small matter it would not suffer to live.** For the spirit of hatred works together with Satan through hastiness of spirit in all things unto men's death; but the spirit of love works together with the law of God in long-suffering unto the salvation of men.

5. Hatred is evil, because it continually abides with lying, speaking against the truth; and it makes small things to be great, and gives heed to darkness as to light, and calls the sweet bitter, and teaches slander, and war, and violence, and every excess of evil; and it fills the heart with devilish poison. And these things I say to you from experience, my children, that you may flee hatred, and cleave to the love of the Lord. Righteousness casts out hatred, humility destroys hatred. For he that is just and humble is ashamed to do wrong, being reprov'd not of another, but of his own heart, because the Lord views his intent: he speaks not against any man, because the fear of the Most High overcomes hatred. For, fearing lest he should offend the Lord, he will not do any wrong to any man, no, not even in thought. These things I learned at last, after that I had repented concerning Joseph. For true repentance after a godly sort destroys unbelief, and drives away the darkness, and enlightens the eyes, and gives knowledge to the soul, and guides the mind to salvation; and those things which it has not learned from man, it knows through repentance. For God brought upon me a disease of the heart; and had not the prayers of Jacob my father intervened, it had hardly failed that my spirit had departed. For by what things a man transgresses, by the same also is he punished. For in that my heart was set mercilessly against Joseph, in my heart too I suffered mercilessly, and was judged for eleven months, for so long a time as I had been envious against Joseph until he was sold.

6. And now, my children, love ye each one his brother, and put away hatred from your hearts, loving one another in deed, and in word, and in thought of the soul. For in the presence of our father I spoke peaceably with Joseph; and when I had gone out, the spirit of hatred darkened my mind, and moved my soul to slay him. Love ye therefore one another from your hearts; and if a man sin against you, tell him of it gently, and drive out the poison of hatred,

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and foster not guile in your soul. And if he confess and repent, forgive him; and if he deny it, strive not with him, lest he swear, and you sin doubly. Let not a stranger hear your secrets amid your striving, lest he hate and become your enemy, and work great sin against you; for oftentimes he will talk guilefully with you, or evilly overreach you, taking his poison from himself. Therefore, if he deny it, and is convicted and put to shame, and is silenced, do not tempt him on. For he who denies repents, so that he no more does wrong against you; yea also, he will honour you, and fear you, and be at peace with you. But if he be shameless, and abides in his wrongdoing, even then forgive him from the heart, and give the vengeance to God.

7. If a man prospers more than you, be not grieved, but pray also for him, that he may have perfect prosperity. For perchance it is expedient for you thus; and if he be further exalted, be not envious, remembering that all flesh shall die: and offer praise to God, who gives things good and profitable to all men. Seek out the judgments of the Lord, and so shall your mind rest and be at peace. And though a man become rich by evil means, even as Esau the brother of my father, be not jealous; but wait for the end of the Lord. For either He takes His benefits away from the wicked, or leaves them still to the repentant, or to the unrepentant reserves punishment for ever. For the poor man who is free from envy, giving thanks to the Lord in all things, is rich among all men, because he has not evil jealousy of men. Put away, therefore, hatred from your souls, and love one another with uprightness of heart.

8. And do ye also tell these things to your children, that they honour Judah and Levi, for from them shall the Lord raise up a Saviour to Israel. For I know that at the last your children shall depart from them, and shall walk in all wickedness, and mischief, and corruption before the Lord. And when he had rested for a little while, he said again to them, My children, obey your father, and bury me near to my fathers. And he drew up his feet, and fell asleep in peace. And after five years they carried him up, and laid him in Hebron with his fathers.

### **X.— The Testament of Asher Concerning Two Faces of Vice and Virtue.**

1. The record of the testament of Asher, what things he spoke to his sons in the hundred and twentieth year of his life. While he was still in health, he said to them: Hearken, you children of Asher, to your father, and I will declare to you all that is right in the sight of God. Two ways has God given to the sons of men, and two minds, and two doings, and two places, and two ends. Therefore, all things are by twos, one corresponding to the other. There are two ways of good and evil, with which are the two minds in our breasts distinguishing them. Therefore, if the soul take pleasure in good, all its actions are in righteousness; and though it sin, it straightway repents. For, having his mind set upon righteousness, and casting away maliciousness, he straightway overthrows the evil, and uproots the sin. But if his mind turn aside in evil, all his doings are in maliciousness, and he drives away the good, and takes unto him the evil, and is ruled by Beliar; and even though he work what is good, he perverts it in evil. For whenever he begins as though to do good, he brings the end of his doing to work evil, seeing that the treasure of the devil is filled with the poison of an evil spirit.

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2. There is then, he says, a soul which speaks the good for the sake of the evil, and the end of the doing leads to mischief. There is a man who shows no compassion upon him who serves his turn in evil; and this thing has two aspects, but the whole is evil. And there is a man that loves him that works evil; he likewise dwells in evil, because he chooses even to die in an evil cause for his sake: and concerning this it is clear that it has two aspects, but the whole is an evil work. And though there is love, it is but wickedness concealing the evil, even as it bears a name that seems good, but the end of the doing tends unto evil. Another steals, works unjustly, plunders, defrauds, and withal pities the poor: this, too, has a twofold aspect, but the whole is evil. Defrauding his neighbour he provokes God, and swears falsely against the Most High, and yet pities the poor: the Lord who commands the law he sets at nought and provokes, and refreshes the poor; he defiles the soul, and makes gay the body; he kills many, and he pities a few: and this, too, has a twofold aspect. Another commits adultery and fornication, and abstains from meats; yet in his fasting he works evil, and by his power and his wealth perverts many, and out of his excessive wickedness works the commandments: this, too, has a twofold aspect, but the whole is evil. Such men are as swine or hares; for they are half clean, but in very deed are unclean. For God in the Heavenly Tablets has thus declared.

3. Do not ye therefore, my children, wear two faces like them, of goodness and of wickedness; but cleave unto goodness only, for in goodness does God rest, and men desire it. From wickedness flee away, destroying the devil by your good works; for they that are double-faced serve not God, but their own lusts, so that they may please Beliar and men like themselves.

4. For good men, even they that are single of face, though they be thought by them that are double-faced to err, are just before God. For many in killing the wicked do two works, an evil by a good; but the whole is good, because he has uprooted and destroyed that which is evil. One man hates him that shows mercy, and does wrong to the adulterer and the thief: this, too, is double-faced, but the whole work is good, because he follows the Lord's example, in that he receives not that which seems good with that which is really bad. Another desires not to see good days with them that riot, lest he defile his mouth and pollute his soul: this, too, is double-faced, but the whole is good, for such men are like to stags and to hinds, because in a wild condition they seem to be unclean, but they are altogether clean; because they walk in a zeal for God, and abstain from what God also hates and forbids by His commandments, and they ward off the evil from the good.

5. You see therefore, my children, how that there are two in all things, one against the other, and the one is hidden by the other. Death succeeds to life, dishonour to glory, night to day, and darkness to light; and all things are under the day, and just things under life: wherefore also everlasting life awaits death. Nor may it be said that truth is a lie, nor right wrong; for all truth is under the light, even as all things are under God. All these things I proved in my life, and I wandered not from the truth of the Lord, and I searched out the commandments of the Most High, walking with singleness of face according to all my strength unto that which is good.

6. Take heed therefore ye also, my children, to the commandments of the Lord,



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following the truth with singleness of face, for they that are double-faced receive twofold punishment. Hate the spirits of error, which strive against men. Keep the law of the Lord, and give not heed unto evil as unto good; but look unto the thing that is good indeed, and keep it in all commandments of the Lord, having your conversation unto Him, and resting in Him: for the ends at which men aim do show their righteousness, and know the angels of the Lord from the angels of Satan. **For if the soul depart troubled, it is tormented by the evil spirit which also it served in lusts and evil works;** but if quietly and with joy it has known the angel of peace, it shall comfort him in life.

7. Become not, my children, as Sodom, which knew not the angels of the Lord, and perished for ever. For I know that you will sin, and you shall be delivered into the hands of your enemies, and your land shall be made desolate, and you shall be scattered unto the four corners of the earth. And you shall be set at nought in the Dispersion as useless water, **until the Most High shall visit the earth; and He shall come as man, with men eating and drinking, and in peace breaking the head of the dragon through water.** He shall save Israel and all nations, God speaking in the person of man. Therefore, tell ye these things to your children, that they disobey Him not. For I have read in the Heavenly Tablets that in very deed you will disobey Him, and act ungodly against Him, not giving heed to the law of God, but to the commandments of men. Therefore shall you be scattered as Gad and as Dan my brethren, who shall know not their own lands, tribe, and tongue. But the Lord will gather you together in faith through the hope of His tender mercy, for the sake of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

8. And when he had said these things unto them, he charged them, saying: Bury me in Hebron. And he fell into a peaceful sleep, and died; and after this his sons did as he had charged them, and they carried him up and buried him with his fathers.

### **XI.— The Testament of Joseph Concerning Sobriety.**

1. The record of the testament of Joseph. When he was about to die he called his sons and his brethren together, and said to them: My children and brethren, hearken to Joseph the beloved of Israel; give ear, my sons, unto your father. I have seen in my life envy and death, and I wandered not in the truth of the Lord. These my brethren hated me, and the Lord loved me: they wished to slay me, and the God of my fathers guarded me: **they let me down into a pit, and the Most High brought me up again.** I was sold for a slave, and the Lord made me free: I was taken into captivity, and His strong hand succoured me: I was kept in hunger, and the Lord Himself nourished me: I was alone, and God comforted me: I was sick, and the Most High visited me: I was in prison, and the Saviour showed favour unto me; in bonds, and He released me; amid slanders, and He pleaded my cause; amid bitter words of the Egyptians, and He rescued me; amid envy and guile, and He exalted me.

2. And thus Potiphar the chief cook of Pharaoh entrusted to me his house, and I struggled against a shameless woman, urging me to transgress with her; but the God of Israel my father guarded me from the burning flame. I was cast into prison, I was beaten, I was mocked; and the Lord granted me to find pity in the sight of the keeper of the prison. For He will in no wise forsake them

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that fear Him, neither in darkness, nor in bonds, nor in tribulations, nor in necessities. For not as man is God ashamed, nor as the son of man is He afraid, nor as one that is earth-born is He weak, or can He be thrust aside; but in all places is He at hand, and in various ways does He comfort, departing for a little to try the purpose of the soul. In ten temptations He showed me approved, and in all of them I endured; for endurance is a mighty charm, and patience gives many good things.

3. How often did the Egyptian threaten me with death! How often did she give me over to punishment, and then call me back, and threaten me when I would not company with her! And she said to me, You shall be lord of me, and all that is mine, if you will give yourself unto me, and you shall be as our master. Therefore I remembered the words of the fathers of my father Jacob, and I entered into my chamber and prayed unto the Lord; and I fasted in those seven years, and I appeared to my master as one living delicately, for they that fast for God's sake receive beauty of face. And if one gave me wine, I drank it not; and I fasted for three days, and took my food and gave it to the poor and sick. And I sought the Lord early, and wept for the Egyptian woman of Memphis, for very unceasingly did she trouble me, and at night she came to me under the pretense of visiting me; and at first, because she had no male child, she feigned to count me as a son. And I prayed unto the Lord, and she bare a male child; therefore for a time she embraced me as a son, and I knew it not. Last of all, she sought to draw me into fornication. And when I perceived it, I sorrowed even unto death; and when she had gone out I came to myself, and I lamented for her many days, because I saw her guile and her deceit. And I declared unto her the words of the Most High, if haply she would turn from her evil lust.

4. How often has she fawned upon me with words as a holy man, with guile in her talk, praising my chastity before her husband, while desiring to destroy me when we were alone. She lauded me openly as chaste, and in secret she said unto me, Fear not my husband; for he is persuaded concerning your chastity, so that even should one tell him concerning us he would in no wise believe. For all these things I lay upon the ground in sackcloth, and I besought God that the Lord would deliver me from the Egyptian. And when she prevailed nothing, she came again to me under the plea of instruction, that she might know the word of the Lord. And she said unto me, If you will that I should leave my idols, be persuaded by me, and I will persuade my husband to depart from his idols, and we will walk in the law of your Lord. And I said unto her, The Lord wills not that those who reverence Him should be in uncleanness, nor does He take pleasure in them that commit adultery. And she held her peace, longing to accomplish her evil desire. And I gave myself yet more to fasting and prayer, that the Lord should deliver me from her.

5. And again at another time she said unto me, If you will not commit adultery, I will kill my husband, and so will I lawfully take you to be my husband. I therefore, when I heard this, rent my garment, and said, Woman, reverence the Lord, and do not this evil deed, lest you be utterly destroyed; for I will declare your ungodly thought unto all men. She therefore, being afraid, besought that I would declare to no one her wickedness. And she departed, soothing me with gifts, and sending to me every delight of the sons of men.

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6. And she sends to me food sprinkled with enchantments. And when the eunuch who brought it came, I looked up and beheld a terrible man giving me with the dish a sword, and I perceived that her scheme was for the deception of my soul. And when he had gone out I wept, nor did I taste that or any other of her food. So then after one day she came to me and observed the food, and said unto me, What is this, that you have not eaten of the food? And I said unto her, It is because you filled it with death; and how did you say, I come not near to idols but to the Lord alone? Now therefore know that the God of my father has revealed unto me by an angel your wickedness, and I have kept it to convict you, if haply you may see it and repent. But that you may learn that the wickedness of the ungodly has no power over them that reverence God in chastity, I took it and ate it before her, saying, The God of my fathers and the Angel of Abraham shall be with me. And she fell upon her face at my feet, and wept; and I raised her up and admonished her, and she promised to do this iniquity no more.

7. But because her heart was set upon me to commit lewdness, she sighed, and her countenance fell. And when her husband saw her, he said unto her, Why is your countenance fallen? And she said, I have a pain at my heart, and the groanings of my spirit do oppress me; and so he comforted her who was not sick. Then she rushed in to me while her husband was yet without, and said unto me, I will hang myself, or cast myself into a well or over a cliff, if you will not consent unto me. And when I saw the spirit of Beliar was troubling her, I prayed unto the Lord, and said unto her, Why are you troubled and disturbed, blinded in sins? Remember that if you kill yourself, Sethon, the concubine of your husband, your rival, will beat your children, and will destroy your memorial from off the earth. And she said unto me, Lo then you love me; this alone is sufficient for me, that you care for my life and my children: I have expectation that I shall enjoy my desire. And she knew not that because of my God I spoke thus, and not because of her. For if a man has fallen before the passion of a wicked desire, then by that has he become enslaved, even as also was she. And if he hear any good thing with regard to the passion whereby he is vanquished, he receives it unto his wicked desire.

8. I declare unto you, my children, that it was about the sixth hour when she departed from me; and I knelt before the Lord all that day, and continued all the night; and about dawn I rose up weeping, and praying for a release from the Egyptian. At last, then, she laid hold of my garments, forcibly dragging me to have connection with her. When, therefore, I saw that in her madness she was forcibly holding my garments, I fled away naked. And she falsely accused me to her husband, and the Egyptian cast me into the prison in his house; and on the morrow, having scourged me, the Egyptian sent me into the prison in his house. When, therefore, I was in fetters, the Egyptian woman fell sick from her vexation, and listened to me how I sang praises unto the Lord while I was in the abode of darkness, and with glad voice rejoiced and glorified my God only because by a pretext I had been rid of the Egyptian woman.

9. How often has she sent unto me, saying, Consent to fulfil my desire, and I will release you from your bonds, and I will free time from the darkness! And not even in thoughts did I incline unto her. For God loves him who in a den of

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darkness fasts with chastity, rather than him who in secret chambers lives delicately without restraint. And whosoever lives in chastity, and desires also glory, and if the Most High knows that it is expedient for him, He bestows this also upon him, even as upon me. How often, though she were sick, did she come down to me at unlooked-for times, and listened to my voice as I prayed! And when I heard her groanings I held my peace. For when I was in her house she was wont to bare her arms, and breasts, and legs, that I might fall before her; for she was very beautiful, splendidly adorned for my deception. And the Lord guarded me from her devices.

10. You see therefore, my children, how great things patience works, and prayer with fasting. And if you therefore follow after sobriety and purity in patience and humility of heart, the Lord will dwell among you, because He loves sobriety. And wheresoever the Most High dwells, even though a man fall into envy, or slavery, or slander, the Lord who dwells in him, for his sobriety's sake not only delivers him from evil, but also exalts and glorifies him, even as me. For in every way the man is guarded, whether in deed, or in word, or in thought. My brethren know how my father loved me, and I was not exalted in my heart; although I was a child, I had the fear of God in my thoughts. For I knew that all things should pass away, and I kept myself within bounds, and I honoured my brethren; and through fear of them I held my peace when I was sold, and revealed not my family to the Ishmaelites, that I was the son of Jacob, a great man and a mighty.

11. Do ye also, therefore, have the fear of God in your works, and honour your brethren. For every one who works the law of the Lord shall be loved by Him. And when I came to the Indocolpitæ with the Ishmaelites, they asked me, and I said that I was a slave from their house, that I might not put my brethren to shame. And the eldest of them said unto me, You are not a slave, for even your appearance does make it manifest concerning you. And he threatened me even unto death. But I said that I was their slave. Now when we came into Egypt, they strove concerning me, which of them should buy me and take me. Therefore it seemed good to all that I should remain in Egypt with a merchant of their trade, until they should return bringing merchandise. And the Lord gave me favour in the eyes of the merchant, and he entrusted unto me his house. And the Lord blessed him by my means, and increased him in silver and gold, and I was with him three months and five days.

12. About that time the Memphian wife of Potiphar passed by with great pomp, and cast her eyes upon me, because her eunuchs told her concerning me. And she told her husband concerning the merchant, that he had become rich by means of a young Hebrew, saying, And they say that men have indeed stolen him out of the land of Canaan. Now therefore execute judgment with him, and take away the youth to be your steward; so shall the God of the Hebrews bless you, for grace from heaven is upon him.

13. And Potiphar was persuaded by her words, and commanded the merchant to be brought, and said unto him, What is this that I hear, that you steal souls out of the land of the Hebrews, and sellest them for slaves? The merchant therefore fell upon his face, and besought him, saying, I beseech you, my lord, I know not what you say. And he said, Whence then is your Hebrew servant? And he said, The

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Ishmaelites entrusted him to me until they should return. And he believed him not, but commanded him to be stripped and beaten. And when he persisted, Potiphar said, Let the youth be brought. And when I was brought in, I did obeisance to the chief of the eunuchs— for he was third in rank with Pharaoh, being chief of all the eunuchs, and having wives and children and concubines. And he took me apart from him, and said unto me, Are you a slave or free? And I said, A slave. And he said unto me, Whose slave are you? And I said unto him, The Ishmaelites'. And again he said unto me, How did you become their slave? And I said, They bought me out of the land of Canaan. And he believed me not, and said, You are lying: and he commanded me to be stripped and beaten.

14. Now the Memphian woman was looking through a window while I was being beaten, and she sent unto her husband, saying, Your judgment is unjust; for you even punish a free man who has been stolen, as though he were a transgressor. And when I gave no other answer though I was beaten, he commanded that we should be kept in guard, until, said he, the owners of the boy shall come. And his wife said unto him, Wherefore do you detain in captivity this noble child, who ought rather to be set at liberty, and wait upon you? For she wished to see me in desire of sin, and I was ignorant concerning all these things. Then said he to his wife, It is not the custom of the Egyptians to take away that which belongs to others before proof is given. This he said concerning the merchant, and concerning me, that I must be imprisoned.

15. Now, after four and twenty days came the Ishmaelites; and having heard that Jacob my father was mourning because of me, they said unto me, How is it that you said that you were a slave? And lo, we have learned that you are the son of a mighty man in the land of Canaan, and your father grieves for you in sackcloth. And again I would have wept, but I restrained myself, that I should not put my brethren to shame. And I said, I know not, I am a slave. Then they take counsel to sell me, that I should not be found in their hands. For they feared Jacob, lest he should work upon them a deadly vengeance. For it had been heard that he was mighty with the Lord and with men. Then said the merchant unto them, Release me from the judgment of Potiphar. They therefore came and asked for me, saying, He was bought by us with money. And he sent us away.

16. Now the Memphian woman pointed me out to her husband, that he should buy me; for I hear, said she, that they are selling him. And she sent a eunuch to the Ishmaelites, and asked them to sell me; and since he was not willing to traffic with them, he returned. So when the eunuch had made trial of them, he made known to his mistress that they asked a large price for their slave. And she sent another eunuch, saying, Even though they demand two minæ of gold, take heed not to spare the gold; only buy the boy, and bring him hither. And he gave them eighty pieces of gold for me, and told his mistress that a hundred had been given for me. And when I saw it I held my peace, that the eunuch should not be punished.

17. You see, my children, what great things I endured that I should not put my brethren to shame. Do ye also love one another, and with long-suffering hide ye one another's faults. For God delights in the unity of brethren, and in the purpose of a heart approved unto love. And when my brethren came into Egypt, and

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learned that I returned their money unto them, and upbraided them not, yea, that I even comforted them, and after the death of Jacob I loved them more abundantly, and all things whatsoever he commanded I did very abundantly, then they marveled. For I suffered them not to be afflicted even unto the smallest matter; and all that was in my hand I gave unto them. Their children were my children, and my children were as their servants; their life was my life, and all their suffering was my suffering, and all their sickness was my infirmity. My land was their land, my counsel their counsel, and I exalted not myself among them in arrogance because of my worldly glory, but I was among them as one of the least.

18. If you also therefore walk in the commandments of the Lord, my children, He will exalt you there, and will bless you with good things for ever and ever. And if any one seeks to do evil unto you, by well-doing pray for him, and you shall be redeemed of the Lord from all evil. For, behold, you see that through long-suffering I took unto wife even the daughter of my master. And a hundred talents of gold were given me with her; for the Lord made them to serve me. And He gave me also beauty as a flower above the beautiful ones of Israel; and He preserved me unto old age in strength and in beauty, because I was like in all things to Jacob.

19. Hear ye also, my children, the visions which I saw. There were twelve deer feeding, and the nine were divided and scattered in the land, likewise also the three. And I saw that from Judah was born a virgin wearing a linen garment, and from her went forth a Lamb, without spot, and on His left hand there was as it were a lion; and all the beasts rushed against Him, and the lamb overcame them, and destroyed them, and trod them under foot. And because of Him the angels rejoiced, and men, and all the earth. And these things shall take place in their season, in the last days. Do ye therefore, my children, observe the commandments of the Lord, and honour Judah and Levi; for from them shall arise unto you the Lamb of God, by grace saving all the Gentiles and Israel. For His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall not be shaken; but my kingdom among you shall come to an end as a watcher's hammock, which after the summer will not appear.

20. I know that after my death the Egyptians will afflict you, but God will undertake your cause, and will bring you into that which He promised to your fathers. But carry ye up my bones with you; for when my bones are taken up, the Lord will be with you in light, and Beliar shall be in darkness with the Egyptians. And carry ye up Zilpah your mother, and lay her near Bilhah, by the hippodrome, by the side of Rachel. And when he had said these things, he stretched out his feet, and slept the long sleep. And all Israel bewailed him, and all Egypt, with a great lamentation. For he felt even for the Egyptians even as his own members, and showed them kindness, aiding them in every work, and counsel, and matter.

### **XII.— The Testament of Benjamin Concerning a Pure Mind.**

1. The record of the words of Benjamin, which he set forth to his sons, after he had lived a hundred and twenty years. And he kissed them, and said:  
As Isaac was born to Abraham in his hundredth year, so also was I to Jacob. Now

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since Rachel died in giving me birth, I had no milk; therefore I was suckled by Bilhah her handmaid. For Rachel remained barren for twelve years after that she had borne Joseph: and she prayed the Lord with fasting twelve days, and she conceived and bare me. For our father loved Rachel dearly, and prayed that he might see two sons born from her: therefore was I called the son of days, which is Benjamin.

2. When therefore I went into Egypt, and Joseph my brother recognized me, he said unto me, What did they tell my father in that they sold me? And I said unto him, They dabbled your coat with blood and sent it, and said, Look if this is the coat of your son. And he said to me, Even so, brother; for when the Ishmaelites took me, one of them stripped off my coat, and gave me a girdle, and scourged me, and bade me run. And as he went away to hide my garment, a lion met him, and slew him; and so his fellows were afraid, and sold me to their companions.

3. Do ye also therefore, my children, love the Lord God of heaven, and keep His commandments, and be followers of the good and holy man Joseph; and let your mind be unto good, even as you know me. He that has his mind good sees all things rightly. Fear ye the Lord, and love your neighbour; and even though the spirits of Beliar allure you into all troublous wickedness, yet shall no troublous wickedness have dominion over you, even as it had not over Joseph my brother. How many men wished to slay him, and God shielded him! For he that fears God and loves his neighbour cannot be smitten by Beliar's spirit of the air, being shielded by the fear of God; nor can he be ruled over by the device of men or of beasts, for he is aided by the love of the Lord which he has towards his neighbour. For he even besought our father Jacob that he would pray for our brethren, that the Lord would not impute to them the evil that they devised concerning Joseph. And thus Jacob cried out, My child Joseph, you have prevailed over the bowels of your father Jacob. And he embraced him, and kissed him for two hours, saying, In you shall be fulfilled the prophecy of heaven concerning the Lamb of God, even the Saviour of the world, that spotless shall He be delivered up for transgressors, and sinless shall He be put to death for ungodly men in the blood of the covenant, for the salvation of the Gentiles and of Israel, and shall destroy Beliar, and them that serve him.

4. Know ye, my children, the end of the good man? Be followers of his compassion in a good mind, that you also may wear crowns of glory. The good man has not a dark eye; for he shows mercy to all men, even though they be sinners, even though they devise evil concerning him. So he that does good overcomes the evil, being shielded by Him that is good; and he loves the righteous as his own soul. If any one is glorified, he envies him not; if any one is enriched, he is not jealous; if any one is valiant, he praises him; he trusts and lauds him that is sober-minded; he shows mercy to the poor; he is kindly disposed toward the weak; he sings the praises of God; as for him who has the fear of God, he protects him as with a shield; him that loves God he aids; him that rejects the Most High he admonishes and turns back; and him that has the grace of a good spirit, he loves even as his own soul.

5. If you have a good mind, my children, then will both wicked men be at peace

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with you, and the profligate will reverence you and turn unto good; and the covetous shall not only cease from their inordinate desire, but shall even give the fruits of their covetousness to them that are afflicted. If you do well, even the unclean spirits shall flee from you; yea, the very beasts shall flee from you in dread. For where the reverence for good works is present unto the mind, darkness flees away from him. For if any one is injurious to a holy man, he repents; for the holy man shows pity on his reviler, and holds his peace. And if any one betray a righteous soul, and the righteous man, though praying, be humbled for a little while, yet not long after he appears far more glorious, even as was Joseph my brother.

6. The mind of the good man is not in the power of the deceit of the spirit of Beliar, for the angel of peace guides his soul. He gazes not passionately on corruptible things, nor gathers together riches unto desire of pleasure; he delights not in pleasure, he hurts not his neighbour, he pampers not himself with food, he errs not in the pride of his eyes, for the Lord is his portion. The good mind admits not the glory and dishonour of men, neither knows it any guile or lie, fighting or reviling; for the Lord dwells in him and lights up his soul, and he rejoices towards all men at every time. The good mind has not two tongues, of blessing and of cursing, of insult and of honour, of sorrow and of joy, of quietness and of trouble, of hypocrisy and of truth, of poverty and of wealth; but it has one disposition, pure and uncorrupt, concerning all men. It has no double sight, nor double hearing; for in everything which he does, or speaks, or sees, he knows that the Lord watches his soul, and he cleanses his mind that he be not condemned by God and men. **But of Beliar every work is twofold, and has no singleness.**

7. Flee ye therefore, my children, the evil-doing of Beliar; for it gives a sword to them that obeys, and the sword is the mother of seven evils. First the mind conceives through Beliar, and first there is envy; secondly, desperation; thirdly, tribulation; fourthly, captivity; fifthly, neediness; sixthly, trouble; seventhly, desolation. Therefore also Cain is delivered over to seven vengeance by God, for in every hundred years the Lord brought one plague upon him. Two hundred years he suffered, and in the nine hundredth year he was brought to desolation at the flood, for Abel his righteous brother's sake. In seven hundred years was Cain judged, and Lamech in seventy times seven; because forever those who are likened unto Cain in envy unto hatred of brethren shall be judged with the same punishment.

8. Do ye also therefore, my children, flee ill-doing, envy, and hatred of brethren, and cleave to goodness and love. He that has a pure mind in love, looks not after a woman unto fornication; for he has no defilement in his heart, because the Spirit of God rests in him. For as the sun is not defiled by shining over dung and mire, but rather dries up both and drives away the ill smell: so also the pure mind, constrained among the defilements of the earth, rather edifies, and itself suffers no defilement.

9. Now I suppose, from the words of the righteous Enoch, that there will be also evil-doings among you: for you will commit fornication with the fornication of Sodom, and shall perish all save a few, and will multiply inordinate lusts with women; and the kingdom of the Lord shall not be among



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you, for immediately He will take it away. Nevertheless the temple of God shall be built in your portion, and shall be glorious among you. For He shall take it, and the twelve tribes shall be gathered together there, and all the Gentiles, until the Most High shall send forth His salvation in the visitation of His only-begotten one. And He shall enter into the front of the temple, and there shall the Lord be treated with outrage, and He shall be lifted up upon a tree. And the veil of the temple shall be rent, and the Spirit of God shall descend upon the Gentiles as fire poured forth. And He shall arise from the grave, and shall ascend from earth into heaven: and I know how lowly He shall be upon the earth, and how glorious in the heaven.

10. Now when Joseph was in Egypt, I longed to see his visage and the form of his countenance; and through the prayers of Jacob my father I saw him, while awake in the daytime, in his full and perfect shape. Know ye therefore, my children, that I am dying. Work therefore truth and righteousness each one with his neighbour, and judgment unto faithful doing, and keep the law of the Lord and His commandments; for these things do I teach you instead of all inheritance. Do ye also therefore give them to your children for an everlasting possession; for so did both Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. All these things they gave us for an inheritance, saying, Keep the commandments of God until the Lord shall reveal His salvation to all nations. Then shall you see Enoch, Noah, and Shem, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, arising on the right hand in gladness. Then shall we also arise, each one over our tribe, worshipping the King of heaven, who appeared upon the earth in the form of a man of humility. And as many as believed on Him on the earth shall rejoice with Him; and then shall all men arise, some unto glory and some unto shame. And the Lord shall judge Israel first, even for the wrong they did unto Him; for when He appeared as a deliverer, God in the flesh, they believed Him not. And then shall He judge all the Gentiles, as many as believed Him not when He appeared upon earth. And He shall reprove Israel among the chosen ones of the Gentiles, even as He reproveth Esau among the Midianites, who deceived their brethren, so that they fell into fornication and idolatry; and they were alienated from God, and became as they that were no children in the portion of them that fear the Lord. But if you walk in holiness in the presence of the Lord, you shall dwell in hope again in me, and all Israel shall be gathered unto the Lord.

11. And I shall no longer be called a ravaging wolf on account of your ravages, but a worker of the Lord, distributing food to them that work what is good. And one shall rise up from my seed in the latter times, beloved of the Lord, hearing upon the earth His voice, enlightening with new knowledge all the Gentiles, bursting in upon Israel for salvation with the light of knowledge, and tearing it away from it like a wolf, and giving it to the synagogue of the Gentiles. And until the consummation of the ages shall he be in the synagogues of the Gentiles, and among their rulers, as a strain of music in the mouth of all; and he shall be inscribed in the holy books, both his work and his word, and he shall be a chosen one of God for ever; and because of him my father Jacob instructed me, saying, He shall fill up that which lacks of your tribe.

12. And when he finished his words, he said: I charge you, my children, carry up my bones out of Egypt, and bury me at Hebron, near my fathers.

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So Benjamin died a hundred and twenty-five years old, in a good old age, and they placed him in a coffin. And in the ninety-first year of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, they and their brethren brought up the bones of their fathers secretly in a place which is called Canaan; and they buried them in Hebron, by the feet of their fathers. And they returned from the land of Canaan, and dwelt in Egypt until the day of their departing from the land of Egypt.

## The Didache or The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles

Translated by Charles H. Hoole

*This book is a treasure! It rings with the purity of Gospel. I will not comment as to whether it really is the writings of the 12 Apostles or not. I will say that it is worthy of meditation by every person in the Church. I have highlighted 9:4 as being a possible reference to Jesus' suffering in Hell.*

### chapter 1

1:1 There are two paths, one of life and one of death, and the difference is great between the two paths.

1:2 Now the path of life is this - first, thou shalt love the God who made thee, thy neighbour as thyself, and all things that thou wouldest not should be done unto thee, do not thou unto another.

1:3 And the doctrine of these maxims is as follows. Bless them that curse you, and pray for your enemies. Fast on behalf of those that persecute you; for what thank is there if ye love them that love you? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? But do ye love them that hate you, and ye will not have an enemy.

1:4 Abstain from fleshly and worldly lusts. If any one give thee a blow on thy right cheek, turn unto him the other also, and thou shalt be perfect; if any one compel thee to go a mile, go with him two; if a man take away thy cloak, give him thy coat also; if a man take from thee what is thine, ask not for it again, for neither art thou able to do so.

1:5 Give to every one that asketh of thee, and ask not again; for the Father wishes that from his own gifts there should be given to all. Blessed is he who giveth according to the commandment, for he is free from guilt; but woe unto him that receiveth. For if a man receive being in need, he shall be free from guilt; but he who receiveth when not in need, shall pay a penalty as to why he received and for what purpose; and when he is in tribulation he shall be examined concerning the things that he has done, and shall not depart thence until he has paid the last farthing.

1:6 For of a truth it has been said on these matters, let thy almsgiving abide in thy hands until thou knowest to whom thou hast given.

### chapter 2

2:1 But the second commandment of the teaching is this.

2:2 Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not corrupt youth; thou shalt not commit fornication; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not use soothsaying; thou shalt not practise sorcery; thou shalt not kill a child by abortion (alt. Do not murder a child by destroying it.), neither shalt thou slay it when born; thou shalt not covet the goods of thy neighbour;

2:3 thou shalt not commit perjury; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not speak evil; thou shalt not bear malice;

2:4 thou shalt not be double-minded or double-tongued, for to be double tongued is the snare of death.

2:5 Thy speech shall not be false or empty, but concerned with action.

2:6 Thou shalt not be covetous, or rapacious, or hypocritical, or malicious, or proud; thou shalt not take up an evil design against thy neighbour;

2:7 thou shalt not hate any man, but some thou shalt confute, concerning some thou shalt pray, and some thou shalt love beyond thine own soul.

### chapter 3

3:1 My child, fly from everything that is evil, and from everything that is like to it.

3:2 Be not wrathful, for wrath leadeth unto slaughter; be not jealous, or contentious, or quarrelsome, for from all these things slaughter ensues.

3:3 My child, be not lustful, for lust leadeth unto fornication; be not a filthy talker; be not a lifter up of the eye, for from all these things come adulteries.

3:4 My child, be not an observer of omens, since it leadeth to idolatry, nor a user of spells, nor an astrologer, nor a travelling purifier, nor wish to see these things, for from all these things idolatry ariseth.

3:5 My child, be not a liar, for lying leadeth unto theft; be not covetous or conceited, for from all these things thefts arise.

3:6 My child, be not a murmurer, since it leadeth unto blasphemy; be not self-willed or evil-minded, for from all these things blasphemies are produced;

3:7 but be thou meek, for the meek shall inherit the earth;

3:8 be thou longsuffering, and compassionate, and harmless, and peaceable, and good, and fearing alway the words that thou hast heard.

3:9 Thou shalt not exalt thyself, neither shalt thou put boldness into thy soul. Thy soul shall not be joined unto the lofty, but thou shalt walk with the just and humble.

3:10 Accept the things that happen to thee as good, knowing that without God nothing happens.

#### chapter 4

4:1 My child, thou shalt remember both night and day him that speaketh unto thee the Word of God; thou shalt honour him as thou dost the Lord, for where the teaching of the Lord is given, there is the Lord;

4:2 thou shalt seek out day by day the favour of the saints, that thou mayest rest in their words;

4:3 thou shalt not desire schism, but shalt set at peace them that contend; thou shalt judge righteously; thou shalt not accept the person of any one to convict him of transgression;

4:4 thou shalt not doubt whether a thing shall be or not.

4:5 Be not a stretcher out of thy hand to receive, and a drawer of it back in giving.

4:6 If thou hast, give by means of thy hands a redemption for thy sins.

4:7 Thou shalt not doubt to give, neither shalt thou murmur when giving; for thou shouldest know who is the fair recompenser of the reward.

4:8 Thou shalt not turn away from him that is in need, but shalt share with thy brother in all things, and shalt not say that things are thine own; for if ye are partners in what is immortal, how much more in what is mortal?

4:9 Thou shalt not remove thine heart from thy son or from thy daughter, but from their youth shalt teach them the fear of God.

4:10 Thou shalt not command with bitterness thy servant or thy handmaid, who hope in the same God as thyself, lest they fear not in consequence the God who is over both; for he cometh not to call with respect of persons, but those whom the Spirit hath prepared.

4:11 And do ye servants submit yourselves to your masters with reverence and fear, as being the type of God.

4:12 Thou shalt hate all hypocrisy and everything that is not pleasing to God;

4:13 thou shalt not abandon the commandments of the Lord, but shalt guard that which thou hast received, neither adding thereto nor taking therefrom;

4:14 thou shalt confess thy transgressions in the Church, and shalt not come unto prayer with an evil conscience. This is the path of life.

#### chapter 5

5:1 But the path of death is this. First of all, it is evil, and full of cursing; there are found murders, adulteries, lusts, fornication, thefts, idolatries, soothsaying, sorceries, robberies,

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false witnessings, hypocrisies, double-mindedness, craft, pride, malice, self-will, covetousness, filthy talking, jealousy, audacity, pride, arrogance;

5:2 there are they who persecute the good - lovers of a lie, not knowing the reward of righteousness, not cleaving to the good nor to righteous judgment, watching not for the good but for the bad, from whom meekness and patience are afar off, loving things that are vain, following after recompense, having no compassion on the needy, nor labouring for him that is in trouble, not knowing him that made them, murderers of children, corrupters of the image of God, who turn away from him that is in need, who oppress him that is in trouble, unjust judges of the poor, erring in all things. From all these, children, may ye be delivered.

### chapter 6

6:1 See that no one make thee to err from this path of doctrine, since he who doeth so teacheth thee apart from God.

6:2 If thou art able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, thou wilt be perfect; but if thou art not able, what thou art able, that do.

6:3 But concerning meat, bear that which thou art able to do. But keep with care from things sacrificed to idols, for it is the worship of the infernal deities.

### chapter 7

7:1 But concerning baptism, thus baptize ye: having first recited all these precepts, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in running water;

7:2 but if thou hast not running water, baptize in some other water, and if thou canst not baptize in cold, in warm water;

7:3 but if thou hast neither, pour water three times on the head, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

7:4 But before the baptism, let him who baptizeth and him who is baptized fast previously, and any others who may be able. And thou shalt command him who is baptized to fast one or two days before.

### chapter 8

8:1 But as for your fasts, let them not be with the hypocrites, for they fast on the second and fifth days of the week, but do ye fast on the fourth and sixth days.

8:2 Neither pray ye as the hypocrites, but as the Lord hath commanded in his gospel so pray ye: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debt, as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil: for thine is the power, and the glory, for ever.

8:3 Thrice a day pray ye in this fashion.

### chapter 9

9:1 But concerning the Eucharist, after this fashion give ye thanks.

9:2 First, concerning the cup. We thank thee, our Father, for the holy vine, David thy Son, which thou hast made known unto us through Jesus Christ thy Son; to thee be the glory for ever.

9:3 And concerning the broken bread. We thank thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou hast made known unto us through Jesus thy Son; to thee be the glory for ever.

9:4 As this broken bread was once scattered on the mountains, and after it had been brought together became one, *(\*Note: This may be a reference to the complete scattering that Jesus bore as the punishment for sin in Hell, followed by His restoration and*

*resurrection.*) so may thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth unto thy kingdom; for thine is the glory, and the power, through Jesus Christ, for ever.

9:5 And let none eat or drink of your Eucharist but such as have been baptized into the name of the Lord, for of a truth the Lord hath said concerning this, Give not that which is holy unto dogs.

#### Chapter 10

10:1 But after it has been completed, so pray ye.

10:2 We thank thee, holy Father, for thy holy name, which thou hast caused to dwell in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which thou hast made known unto us through Jesus thy Son; to thee be the glory for ever.

10:3 Thou, Almighty Master, didst create all things for the sake of thy name, and hast given both meat and drink, for men to enjoy, that we might give thanks unto thee, but to us thou hast given spiritual meat and drink, and life everlasting, through thy Son.

10:4 Above all, we thank thee that thou art able to save; to thee be the glory for ever.

10:5 Remember, Lord, thy Church, to redeem it from every evil, and to perfect it in thy love, and gather it together from the four winds, even that which has been sanctified for thy kingdom which thou hast prepared for it; for thine is the kingdom and the glory for ever.

10:6 Let grace come, and let this world pass away. Hosanna to the Son of David. If any one is holy let him come (to the Eucharist); if any one is not, let him repent. Maranatha. Amen.

10:7 But charge the prophets to give thanks, so far as they are willing to do so.

#### Chapter 11

11:1 Whosoever, therefore, shall come and teach you all these things aforesaid, him do ye receive;

11:2 but if the teacher himself turn and teach another doctrine with a view to subvert you, hearken not to him; but if he come to add to your righteousness, and the knowledge of the Lord, receive him as the Lord.

11:3 But concerning the apostles and prophets, thus do ye according to the doctrine of the Gospel.

11:4 Let every apostle who cometh unto you be received as the Lord.

11:5 He will remain one day, and if it be necessary, a second; but if he remain three days, he is a false prophet.

11:6 And let the apostle when departing take nothing but bread until he arrive at his resting-place; but if he ask for money, he is a false prophet.

11:7 And ye shall not tempt or dispute with any prophet who speaketh in the spirit; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven.

11:8 But not every one who speaketh in the spirit is a prophet, but he is so who hath the disposition of the Lord; by their dispositions they therefore shall be known, the false prophet and the prophet.

11:9 And every prophet who ordereth in the spirit that a table shall be laid, shall not eat of it himself, but if he do otherwise, he is a false prophet;

11:10 and every prophet who teacheth the truth, if he do not what he teacheth is a false prophet;

11:11 and every prophet who is approved and true, and ministering in the visible mystery of the Church, but who teacheth not others to do the things that he doth himself, shall not be judged of you, for with God lieth his judgment, for in this manner also did the ancient prophets.

11:12 But whoever shall say in the spirit, Give me money, or things of that kind, listen not to him; but if he tell you concerning others that are in need that ye should give unto them, let no one judge him.

### Chapter 12

12:1 Let every one that cometh in the name of the Lord be received, but afterwards ye shall examine him and know his character, for ye have knowledge both of good and evil.  
12:2 If the person who cometh be a wayfarer, assist him so far as ye are able; but he will not remain with you more than two or three days, unless there be a necessity.  
12:3 But if he wish to settle with you, being a craftsman, let him work, and so eat;  
12:4 but if he know not any craft, provide ye according to your own discretion, that a Christian may not live idle among you;  
12:5 but if he be not willing to do so, he is a trafficker in Christ. From such keep aloof.

### Chapter 13

13:1 But every true prophet who is willing to dwell among you is worthy of his meat,  
13:2 likewise a true teacher is himself worthy of his meat, even as is a labourer.  
13:3 Thou shalt, therefore, take the firstfruits of every produce of the wine-press and threshing-floor, of oxen and sheep, and shalt give it to the prophets, for they are your chief priests;  
13:4 but if ye have not a prophet, give it unto the poor.  
13:5 If thou makest a feast, take and give the firstfruits according to the commandment;  
13:6 in like manner when thou openest a jar of wine or of oil, take the firstfruits and give it to the prophets;  
13:7 take also the firstfruits of money, of clothes, and of every possession, as it shall seem good unto thee, and give it according to the commandment.

### Chapter 14

14:1 But on the Lord's day, after that ye have assembled together, break bread and give thanks, having in addition confessed your sins, that your sacrifice may be pure.  
14:2 But let not any one who hath a quarrel with his companion join with you, until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be polluted,  
14:3 for it is that which is spoken of by the Lord. In every place and time offer unto me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great King, saith the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the Gentiles.

### Chapter 15

15:1 Elect, therefore, for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men who are meek and not covetous, and true and approved, for they perform for you the service of prophets and teachers.  
15:2 Do not, therefore, despise them, for they are those who are honoured among you, together with the prophets and teachers.  
15:3 Rebuke one another, not in wrath but peaceably, as ye have commandment in the Gospel; and, but let no one speak to any one who walketh disorderly with regard to his neighbour, neither let him be heard by you until he repent.  
15:4 But your prayers and your almsgivings and all your deeds so do, as ye have commandment in the Gospel of our Lord.

### Chapter 16

16:1 Watch concerning your life; let not your lamps be quenched or your loins be loosed, but be ye ready, for ye know not the hour at which our Lord cometh.  
16:2 But be ye gathered together frequently, seeking what is suitable for your souls; for the whole time of your faith shall profit you not, unless ye be found perfect in the last time.  
16:3 For in the last days false prophets and seducers shall be multiplied, and the sheep shall be turned into wolves, and love shall be turned into hate;

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16:4 and because iniquity aboundeth they shall hate each other, and persecute each other, and deliver each other up; and then shall the Deceiver of the world appear as the Son of God, and shall do signs and wonders, and the earth shall be delivered into his hands; and he shall do unlawful things, such as have never happened since the beginning of the world.

16:5 Then shall the creation of man come to the fiery trial of proof, and many shall be offended and shall perish; but they who remain in their faith shall be saved by the rock of offence itself.

16:6 And then shall appear the signs of the truth; first the sign of the appearance in heaven, then the sign of the sound of the trumpet, and thirdly the resurrection of the dead

16:7 - not of all, but as it has been said, The Lord shall come and all his saints with him;

16:8 then shall the world behold the Lord coming on the clouds of heaven.

*(The End of the Didache)*



# Shepherd of Hermas

## SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

*The Shepherd of Hermas was one of the most popular books produced in the early Church, and for a time it was frequently quoted and regarded as inspired. It is primarily a call to repentance and adherence to a life of strict morality, addressed to Christians among whom the memory of persecution is still fresh, and over whom now hangs the shadow of another great tribulation. The genre of Visions 1-4 is that of a Jewish-Christian apocalypse; except that the interpretation of the vision does not concern the end times, but the possibility of repentance because the end is not yet.*

*I have highlighted a section of the Parables/Similitudes #9 verses 109 – 118. These verses speak of the Apostles preaching the gospel to souls who had died before hearing it and them making them a part of the "Great Tower" that is being built by the saints i.e. the Church.*

### I Hermas - First Book: Visions

#### Vision I

1. The master, who reared me, had sold me to one Rhoda in Rome. After many years, I met her again, and began to love her as a sister.
2. After a certain time I saw her bathing in the river Tiber; and I gave her my hand, and led her out of the river. So, seeing her beauty, I reasoned in my heart, saying, "Happy were I, if I had such an one to wife both in beauty and in character." I merely reflected on this and nothing more.
3. After a certain time, as I was journeying to Cumae, and glorifying God's creatures for their greatness and splendor and power, as I walked I fell asleep. And a Spirit took me, and bore me away through a pathless tract, through which no man could pass: for the place was precipitous, and broken into clefts by reason of the waters. When then I had crossed the river, I came into the level country, and knelt down, and began to pray to the Lord and to confess my sins.
4. Now, while I prayed, the heaven was opened, and I see the lady, whom I had desired, greeting me from heaven, saying, "Good morrow, Hermas."
5. And, looking at her, I said to her, "Lady, what doest thou here?" Then she answered me, "I was taken up, that I might convict thee of thy sins before the Lord."
6. I said to her, "Dost thou now convict me?" "Nay, not so," said she, "but hear the words, that I shall say to thee. God, Who dwelleth in the heavens, and created out of nothing the things which are, and increased and multiplied them for His holy Church's sake, is wroth with thee, for that thou didst sin against me."
7. I answered her and said, "Sin against thee? In what way? Did I ever speak an unseemly word unto thee? Did I not always regard thee as a goddess? Did I not always respect thee as a sister? How couldst thou falsely charge me, lady, with such villainy and uncleanness?"
8. "Laughing she saith unto me, "The desire after evil entered into thine heart. Nay, thinkest thou not that it is an evil deed for a righteous man, if the evil desire should enter into his heart? It is indeed a sin and a great one too," saith she; "for the righteous man entertaineth righteous purposes. While then his purposes are righteous, his repute stands steadfast in the heavens, and he finds the Lord easily propitiated in all that he does. But they that entertain evil purposes in their hearts, bring upon themselves death and captivity, especially they that claim for themselves this present work and boast in its riches, and cleave not to the good things that are

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- to come.
9. Their souls shall rue it, seeing that they have no hope, but have abandoned themselves and their life. But do thou pray unto God and He shall heal thine own sins, and those of thy whole house, and of all the saints."
  10. As soon as she had spoken these words the heavens were shut and I was given over to horror and grief. Then I said within myself "If this sin is recorded against me, how can I be saved? Or how shall I propitiate God for my sins which are full-blown? Or with which words shall I entreat the Lord that He may be propitious unto me?"
  11. While I was advising and discussing these matters in my heart, I see, before me a great white chair of snow-white wool; and there came an aged lady in glistening raiment, having a book in her hands, and she sat down alone, and she saluted me, "Good morrow, Hermas." Then I grieved and weeping, said, "Good morrow, lady."
  12. And she said to me "Why so gloomy, Hermas, thou that art patient and good-tempered and art always smiling? Why so downcast in thy looks, and far from cheerful?" And I said to her, "Because of an excellent lady's saying that I had sinned against her."
  13. Then she said, "Far be this thing from the servant of God! Nevertheless the thought did enter into thy heart concerning her. Now to the servants of God such a purpose bringeth sin. For it is an evil and mad purpose to overtake a devout spirit that hath been already approved, that it should desire an evil deed, and especially if it be Hermas the temperate, who abstaineth from every evil desire, and is full of all simplicity and of great guilelessness.
  14. "Yet it is not for this that God is wroth with thee, but that thou mayest convert thy family, that hath done wrong against the Lord and against you their parents. But out of fondness for thy children thou didst not admonish thy family, but didst suffer it to become fearfully corrupt. Therefore the Lord is wroth with thee. But He will heal all thy past sins, which have been committed in thy family; for by reason of their sins and iniquities thou hast been corrupted by the affairs of this world.
  15. But the great mercy of the Lord had pity on thee and thy family, and will strengthen thee, and establish thee in His glory. Only be not thou careless, but take courage, and strengthen thy family. For as the smith hammering his work conquers the task which he wills, so also doth righteous discourse repeated daily conquer all evil. Cease not therefore to reprove thy children; for I know that if they shall repent with all their heart, they shall be written in the books of life with the saints."
  16. After these words of hers had ceased, she saith unto me, "Wilt thou listen to me as I read?" Then say I, "Yes, lady." She saith to me, "Be attentive, and hear the glories of God" I listened with attention and with wonder to that which I had no power to remember; for all the words were terrible, such as man cannot bear. The last words however I remembered, for they were suitable for us and gentle.
  17. "Behold, the God of Hosts, Who by His invisible and mighty power and by His great wisdom created the world, and by His glorious purpose clothed His creation with comeliness, and by His strong word fixed the heaven, and founded the earth upon the waters, and by His own wisdom and providence formed His holy Church, which also He blessed-behold, He removeth the heavens and the mountains and the hills and the seas, and all things are made level for His elect, that He may fulfill to them the promise which He promised with great glory and rejoicing, if so be that they shall keep the ordinances of God, which they received, with great faith."
  18. When then she finished reading and arose from her chair, there came four young men, and they took away the chair, and departed towards the East.
  19. Then she calleth me unto her, and she touched my breast, and saith to me, "Did my reading please thee?" And I say unto her, "Lady, these last words please me, but the former were difficult and hard." Then she spake to me, saying, "These last words are

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for the righteous, but the former are for the heathen and the rebellious."

20. While she yet spake with me, two men appeared, and took her by the arms, and they departed, whither the chair also had gone, towards the East. And she smiled as she departed and, as she was going, she saith to me, "Play the man, Hermas."

### Vision II

1. I was on the way to Cumae, at the same season as last year, and called to mind my last year's vision as I walked; and again a Spirit taketh me, and carrieth me away to the same place as last year.
2. When then I arrived at the place, I fell upon my knees, and began to pray to the Lord, and to glorify His name, for that he counted me worthy, and made known unto me my former sins.
3. But after I had risen up from prayer, I behold before me the aged lady, whom also I had seen last year, walking and reading a little book. And she saith to me, "Canst thou report these things to the elect of God?" I say unto her, "Lady, I cannot recollect so much; but give me the little book, that I may copy it." "Take it," saith she, "and be sure and return it to me."
4. I took it, and retiring to a certain spot in the country I copied it letter for letter: for I could not make out the syllables. When then I had finished the letters of the book, suddenly the book was snatched out of my hand; but by whom I did not see.
5. Now after fifteen days, when I had fasted and entreated the Lord earnestly, the knowledge of the writing was revealed to me. And this is what was written:--
6. "Thy seed, Hermas, have sinned against God, and have blasphemed the Lord, and have betrayed their parents through great wickedness, yea, they have got the name of betrayers of parents, and yet they did not profit by their betrayal; and they still further added to their sins wanton deeds and reckless wickedness; and so the measure of their transgressions was filled up.
7. But make these words known to all thy children, and to thy wife who shall be as thy sister; for she too refraineth not from using her tongue, wherewith she doeth evil. But, when she hears these words, she will refrain, and will find mercy.
8. After that thou hast made known unto them all these words, which the Master commanded me that they should be revealed unto thee, then all their sins which they sinned aforetime are forgiven to them; yea, and to all the saints that have sinned unto this day, if they repent with their whole heart, and remove double-mindedness from their heart.
9. For the Master sware by His own glory, as concerning His elect; that if, now that this day has been set as a limit, sin shall hereafter be committed, they shall not find salvation; for repentance for the righteous hath an end; the days of repentance are accomplished for all the saints; whereas for the Gentiles there is repentance until the last day.
10. Thou shalt therefore say unto the elders of the Church, that they direct their paths in righteousness, that they may receive in full the promises with abundant glory.
11. Ye therefore that work righteousness be steadfast, and be not double-minded, that ye may have admission with the holy angels. Blessed are ye, as many as endure patiently the great tribulation that cometh, and as many as shall not deny their life.
12. For the Lord swear concerning His Son, that those who denied their Lord should be rejected from their life, even they that are now about to deny Him in the coming days; but to those who denied Him aforetime, to them mercy was given of His great loving kindness.
13. "But do thou, Hermas, no longer bear a grudge against thy children, neither suffer thy sister to have her way, so that they may be purified from their former sins. For

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- they shall be chastised with a righteous chastisement, unless thou bear a grudge against them thyself. The bearing of a grudge worketh death. But thou, Hermas, hast had great tribulations of thine own, by reason of the transgressions of thy family, because thou hadst no care for them. For thou wast neglectful of them, and wast mixed up with thine evil transactions.
14. But herein is thy salvation, in that thou didst not depart from the living God, and in thy simplicity and thy great continence. These have saved thee, if thou abidest therein; and they save all who do such things, and walk in guilelessness and simplicity. These men prevail over all wickedness, and continue unto life eternal.
  15. Blessed are all they that work righteousness. They shall never be destroyed.
  16. But thou shalt say to Maximus, "Behold tribulation cometh (upon thee), if thou think fit to deny a second time. *The Lord is nigh unto them that turn unto him*, as it is written in Eldad and Modat, who prophesied to the people in the wilderness."
  17. Now, brethren, a revelation was made unto me in my sleep by a youth of exceeding fair form, who said to me, "Whom thinkest thou the aged woman, from whom thou receivedst the book, to be?" I say, "The Sibyl" "Thou art wrong," saith he, "she is not." "Who then is she?" I say. "The Church," saith he. I said unto him, "Wherefore then is she aged?" "Because," saith he, "she was created before all things; therefore is she aged; and for her sake the world was framed."
  18. And afterwards I saw a vision in my house. The aged woman came, and asked me, if I had already given the book to the elders. I said that I had not given it. "Thou hast done well," she said, "for I have words to add. When then I shall have finished all the words, it shall be made known by thy means to all the elect."
  19. Thou shalt therefore write two little books, and shalt send one to Clement, and one to Grapte. So Clement shall send to the foreign cities, for this is his duty; while Grapte shall instruct the widows and the orphans. But thou shalt read (the book) to this city along with the elders that preside over the Church.

### Vision III

1. The third vision, which I saw, brethren, was as follows.
2. After fasting often, and entreating the Lord to declare unto me the revelation which He promised to show me by the mouth of the aged woman, that very night the aged woman was seen of me, and she said to me, "Seeing that thou art so importunate and eager to know all things, come into the country where thou abidest, and about the fifth hour I will appear, and will show thee what thou oughtest to see."
3. I asked her, saying, "Lady, to what part of the country?" "Where thou wilt," saith she. I selected a beautiful and retired spot; but before I spoke to her and named the spot, she saith to me, "I will come, whither thou willest."
4. I went then, brethren, into the country, and I counted up the hours, and came to the place where I appointed her to come, and I see an ivory couch placed there, and on the couch there lay a linen cushion, and on the cushion was spread a coverlet of fine linen of flax.
5. When I saw these things so ordered, and no one in the place, I was amazed, and a fit of trembling seized me, and my hair stood on end; and a fit of shuddering came upon me, because I was alone. When then I recovered myself, and remembered the glory of God, and took courage, I knelt down and confessed my sins to the Lord once more, as I had done on the former occasion.
6. Then she came with six young men, the same whom I had seen before, and she stood by me, and listened attentively to me, as I prayed and confessed my sins to the Lord. And she touched me, and said: "Hermas, make an end of constantly entreating for thy sins; entreat also for righteousness, that thou mayest take some

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- part forthwith to thy family."
7. Then she raiseth me by the hand, and leadeth me to the couch, and saith to the young men, "Go ye, and build."
  8. And after the young men had retired and we were left alone, she saith to me, "Sit down here." I say to her, "Lady, let the elders sit down first." "Do as I bid thee," saith she, "sit down."
  9. When then I wanted to sit down on the right side, she would not allow me, but beckoned me with her hand that I should sit on the left side. As then I was musing thereon, and was sad because she would not permit me to sit on the right side, she saith to me, "Art thou sad, Hermas? The place on the right side is for others, even for those who have already been well-pleasing to God, and have suffered for the Name's sake. But thou lackest much that thou shouldest sit with them; but as thou abidest in thy simplicity, even so, and thou shalt sit with them, thou and as many as shall have done their deeds, and have suffered what they suffered."
  10. "What did they suffer?" say I. "Listen," saith she. "Stripes, imprisonments, great tribulations, crosses, wild beasts, for the Name's sake. Therefore to them belongs the right side of the Holiness--to them, and to all who shall suffer for the Name. But for the rest is the left side. Howbeit, to both, to them that sit on the right, and to them that sit on the left, are the same gifts, and the same promises, only they sit on the right and have a certain glory."
  11. Thou indeed art very desirous to sit on the right with them, but thy shortcomings are many; yet thou shalt be purified from thy shortcomings; yea, and all that are not double-minded shall be purified from all their sins unto this day."
  12. When she had said this, she wished to depart; but, falling at her feet, I entreated her by the Lord that she would show me the vision which she promised.
  13. The Building of the Tower: Then she again took me by the hand, and raiseth me, and seateth me on the couch at the left hand, while she herself sat on the right. And lifting up a certain glistening rod, she saith to me, "Seest thou a great thing?" I say to her, "Lady, I see nothing." She saith to me, "Look thou; dost thou not see in front of thee a great tower being builded upon the waters, of glistening square stones?"
  14. Now the tower was being builded foursquare by the six young men that came with her. And countless other men were bringing stones, some of them from the deep, and others from the land, and were handing them to the six young men. And they took them and builded.
  15. The stones that were dragged from the deep they placed in every case, just as they were, into the building, for they had been shaped, and they fitted in their joining with the other stones; and they adhered so closely one with another that their joining could not possibly be detected; and the building of the tower appeared as if it were built of one stone.
  16. But of the other stones which were brought from the dry land, some they threw away, and some they put into the building; and others they broke in pieces, and threw to a distance from the tower.
  17. Now many other stones were lying round the tower, and they did not use them for the building; for some of them were mildewed, and others had cracks in them, and others were too short, and others were white and round, and did not fit into the building.
  18. And I saw other stones thrown to a distance from the tower, and coming to the way, and yet not staying in the way, but rolling to where there was no way; and others falling into the fire and burning there; and others falling near the waters, and yet not able to roll into the water, although they desired to roll and to come to the water.
  19. When she had shown me these things, she wished to hurry away. I say to her, "Lady,

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- what advantage is it to me to have seen these things, and yet not to know what the things mean? "She answered and said unto me, "Thou art an over-curious fellow, in desiring to know all that concerns the tower." "Yea, lady," I said, "that I may announce it to my brethren, and that they [may be the more gladdened and] when they hear [these things] they may know the Lord in great glory." Then said she,
20. "Many shall hear; but when they hear, some of them shall be glad, and others shall weep. Yet even these latter, if they hear and repent, shall likewise be glad. Hear thou therefore the parables of the tower; for I will reveal all things unto thee. And trouble me no more about revelation; for these revelations have an end, seeing that they have been completed. Nevertheless thou wilt not cease asking for revelations; for thou art shameless."
  21. The tower, which thou seest building, is myself, the Church, which was seen of thee both now and aforetime. Ask, therefore, what thou wilt concerning the tower, and I will reveal it unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice with the saints."
  22. I say unto her, "Lady, since thou didst hold me worthy once for all, that thou shouldest reveal all things to me, reveal them." Then she saith to me, "Whatsoever is possible to be revealed to thee, shall be revealed. Only let thy heart be with God, and doubt not in thy mind about that which thou seest."
  23. I asked her, "Wherefore is the tower builded upon waters, lady?" "I told thee so before," said she, "and indeed thou dost enquire diligently. So by thy enquiry thou discoverest the truth. Hear then why the tower is builded upon waters; it is because your life is saved and shall be saved by water. But the tower has been founded by the word of the Almighty and Glorious Name, and is strengthened by the unseen power of the Master."
  24. I answered and said unto her, "Lady, this thing is great and marvelous. But the six young men that build, who are they, lady?" "These are the holy angels of God, that were created first of all, unto whom the Lord delivered all His creation to increase and to build it, and to be masters of all creation. By their hands therefore the building of the tower will be accomplished."
  25. "And who are the others who are bringing the stones in?" "They also are holy angels of God; but these six are superior to them. The building of the tower then shall be accomplished, and all alike shall rejoice in the (completed) circle of the tower, and shall glorify God that the building of the tower was accomplished."
  26. I enquired of her, saying, "Lady, I could wish to know concerning the end of the stones, and their power, of what kind it is." She answered and said unto me, "It is not that thou of all men art especially worthy that it should be revealed to thee; for there are others before thee, and better than thou art, unto whom these visions ought to have been revealed. But that the name of God may be glorified, it hath been revealed to thee, all shall be revealed, for the sake of the doubtful-minded, who question in their hearts whether these things are so or not. Tell them that all these things are true, and that there is nothing beside the truth, but that all are steadfast, and valid, and established on a firm foundation."
  27. "Hear now concerning the stones that go to the building The stones that are squared and white, and that fit together in their joints, these are the apostles and bishops and teachers and deacons, who walked after the holiness of God, and exercised their office of bishop and teacher and deacon in purity and sanctity for the elect of God, some of them already fallen on sleep, and others still living. And because they always agreed with one another, they both had peace among themselves and listened one to another. Therefore their joinings fit together in the building of the tower."
  28. "But they that are dragged from the deep, and placed in the building, and that fit together in their joinings with the other stones that are already builded in, who are

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- they?" "These are they that suffered for the name of the Lord."
29. "But the other stones that are brought from the dry land, I would fain know who these are, lady." She said, "Those that go to the building, and yet are not hewn, these the Lord hath approved because they walked in the uprightness of the Lord, and rightly performed His commandments."
30. "But they that are brought and placed in the building, who are they?" "They are young in the faith, and faithful; but they are warned by the angels to do good, because wickedness was found in them."
31. "But those whom they rejected and threw away, who are they?" "These have sinned, and desire to repent, therefore they were not cast to a great distance from the tower, because they will be useful for the building, if they repent. They then that shall repent, if they repent, will be strong in the faith, if they repent now while the tower is building. But if the building shall be finished, they have no more any place, but shall be castaways. This privilege only they have, that they lie near the tower."
32. But wouldst thou know about them that are broken in pieces, and cast away far from the tower? These are the sons of lawlessness. They received the faith in hypocrisy, and no wickedness was absent from them. Therefore they have not salvation, for they are not useful for building by reason of their wickednesses. Therefore they were broken up and thrown far away by reason of the wrath of the Lord, for they excited Him to wrath.
33. But the rest whom thou hast seen lying in great numbers, not going to the building, of these they that are mildewed are they that knew the truth, but did not abide in it, nor cleave to the saints. Therefore they are useless."
34. "But they that have the cracks, who are they?" "These are they that have discord in their hearts against one another, and are not at peace among themselves; who have an appearance of peace, but when they depart from one another, their wickednesses abide in their hearts. These are the cracks which the stones have."
35. But they that are broken off short, these have believed, and have their greater part in righteousness, but have some parts of lawlessness; therefore they are too short, and are not perfect."
36. "But the white and round stones, which did not fit into the building, who are they, lady?" She answered and said to me, "How long art thou foolish and stupid, and enquirest everything, and understandest nothing? These are they that have faith, but have also riches of this world. When tribulation cometh, they deny their Lord by reason of their riches and their business affairs."
37. And I answered and said unto her, "When then, lady, will they be useful for the building?" "When," she replied, "their wealth, which leadeth their souls astray, shall be cut away, then will they be useful for God. For just as the round stone, unless it be cut away, and lose some portion of itself, cannot become square, so also they that are rich in this world, unless their riches be cut away, cannot become useful to the Lord."
38. Learn first from thyself When thou hadst riches, thou wast useless; but now thou art useful and profitable unto life. Be ye useful unto God, for thou thyself also art taken from the same stones.
39. "But the other stones which thou sawest cast far away from the tower and falling into the way and rolling out of the way into the regions where there is no way, these are they that have believed, but by reason of their double heart they abandon their true way. Thus thinking that they can find a better way, they go astray and are sore distressed, as they walk about in the regions where there is no way."
40. But they that fall into the fire and are burned, these are they that finally rebelled from the living God, and it no more entered into their hearts to repent by reason of the lusts of their wantonness and of the wickednesses which they wrought.

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41. But the others, which are near the waters and yet cannot roll into the water, wouldest thou know who are they? These are they that heard the word, and would be baptized unto the name of the Lord. Then, when they call to their remembrance the purity of the truth, they change their minds, and go back again after their evil desires."
42. So she finished the explanation of the tower.
43. Still importunate, I asked her further, whether for all these stones that were rejected and would not fit into the building of the tower that was repentance, and they had a place in this tower. "They can repent," she said, "but they cannot be fitted into this tower.
44. Yet they shall be fitted into another place much more humble, but not until they have undergone torments, and have fulfilled the days of their sins. And they shall be changed for this reason, because they participated in the Righteous Word; and then shall it befall them to be relieved from their torments, if the evil deeds, that they have done, come into their heart; but if these come not into their heart, they are not saved by reason of the hardness of their hearts."
45. When then I ceased asking her concerning all these things, she saith to me; "Wouldest thou see something else?" Being very desirous of beholding, I was greatly rejoiced that I should see it.
46. She looked upon me, and smiled, and she saith to me, "Seest thou seven women round the tower?" "I see them, lady," say I. "This tower is supported by them by commandment of the Lord.
47. Hear now their employments. The first of them, the woman with the strong hands, is called Faith; through her are saved the elect of God.
48. And the second, that is girded about and looketh like a man, is called Contenance; she is the daughter of Faith. Whosoever then shall follow her, becometh happy in his life, for he shall refrain from all evil deeds, believing that, if he refrain from every evil desire, he shall inherit eternal life."
49. "And the others, lady, who be they?" "They are daughters one of the other. The name of the one is Simplicity, of the next, Knowledge, of the next, Guilelessness, of the next, Reverence, of the next, Love. When then thou shalt do all the works of their mother, thou canst live."
50. "I would fain know, lady," I say, "what power each of them possesseth." "Listen then," saith she, "to the powers which they have.
51. Their powers are mastered each by the other, and they follow each other, in the order in which they were born. From Faith is born Contenance, from Contenance Simplicity, from Simplicity Guilelessness, from Guilelessness Reverence, from Reverence Knowledge, from Knowledge Love. Their works then are pure and reverent and divine.
52. Whosoever therefore shall serve these women, and shall have strength to master their works, shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God."
53. Then I asked her concerning the seasons, whether the consummation is even now. But she cried aloud, saying, "Foolish man, seest thou not that the tower is still a-building? Whensoever therefore the tower shall be finished building, the end cometh; but it shall be built up quickly. Ask me no more questions: this reminder is sufficient for you and for the saints, and is the renewal of your spirits.
54. But it was not revealed to thyself alone, but in order that thou mightest show these things unto all. After three days--
55. for thou must understand first, and I charge thee, Hermas, first with these words, which I am about to speak to thee--(I charge thee to) tell all these things into the ears of the saints, that hearing them and doing them they may be purified from their wickednesses, and thyself also with them."



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56. "Hear me, my children. I brought you up in much simplicity and guilelessness and reverence, through the mercy of the Lord, Who instilled righteousness into you, that ye might be justified and sanctified from all wickedness and all crookedness. But ye will not to cease from your wickedness.
57. Now then hear me and be at peace among yourselves, and have regard one to another, and assist one another, and do not partake of the creatures of God alone in abundance, but share them also with those that are in want.
58. For some men through their much eating bring weakness on the flesh, and injure their flesh: whereas the flesh of those who have nought to eat is injured by their not having sufficient nourishment, and their body is ruined.
59. This exclusiveness therefore is hurtful to you that have and do not share with them that are in want.
60. Look ye to the judgment that cometh. Ye then that have more than enough, seek out them that are hungry, while the tower is still unfinished; for after the tower is finished, ye will desire to do good, and will find no place for it.
61. Look ye therefore, ye that exult in your wealth, lest they that are in want shall moan, and their moaning shall go up unto the Lord, and ye with your abundance of good things be shut outside the door of the tower.
62. Now therefore I say unto you that are rulers of the Church, and that occupy the chief seats; be not ye like unto the sorcerers. The sorcerers indeed carry their drugs in boxes, but ye carry your drug and your poison in your heart.
63. Ye are case-hardened, and ye will not cleanse your hearts and mix your wisdom together in a clean heart, that ye may obtain mercy from the Great King.
64. Look ye therefore, children, lest these divisions of yours deprive you of your life.
65. How is it that ye wish to instruct the elect of the Lord, while ye yourselves have no instruction? Instruct one another therefore, and have peace among yourselves, that I also may stand gladsome before the Father, and give an account concerning you all to your Lord."
66. When then she ceased speaking with me, the six young men, who were building, came, and took her away to the tower, and other four lifted the couch, and took it also away to the tower. I saw not the face of these, for they were turned away.
67. And, as she went, I asked her to reveal to me concerning the three forms, in which she had appeared to me. She answered and said to me; "As concerning these things thou must ask another, that they may be revealed to thee."
68. Now she was seen of me, brethren, in my first vision of last year, as a very aged woman and seated on a chair.
69. In the second vision her face was youthful, but her flesh and her hair were aged, and she spake to me standing; and she was more gladsome than before.
70. But in the third vision she was altogether youthful and of exceeding great beauty, and her hair alone was aged; and she was gladsome exceedingly and seated on a couch. Touching these things I was very greatly anxious to learn this revelation.
71. And I see the aged woman in a vision of the night, saying to me, "Every enquiry needs humility. Fast therefore, and thou shalt receive what thou askest from the Lord."
72. So I fasted one day; and that very night there appeared unto me a young man, and he saith to me, "Seeing that thou askest me revelations offhand with entreaty, take heed lest by thy much asking thou injure thy flesh.
73. Sufficient for thee are these revelations. Canst thou see mightier revelations than those thou hast seen?"
74. I say unto him in reply, "Sir, this one thing alone I ask, concerning the three forms of the aged woman, that a complete revelation may be vouchsafed me." He saith to me in answer, How long are ye without understanding? It is your double-

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mindfulness that maketh you of no understanding, and because your heart is not set towards the Lord."

75. I answered and said unto him again, "From thee, Sir, we shall learn the matters more accurately."
76. Listen," saith he, "concerning the three forms, of which thou enquirest.
77. In the first vision wherefore did she appear to thee an aged woman and seated on a chair? Because your spirit was aged, and already decayed, and had no power by reason of your infirmities and acts of double-mindedness.
78. For as aged people, having no longer hope of renewing their youth, expect nothing else but to fall asleep, so ye also, being weakened with the affairs of this world gave yourselves over to repining, and cast not your cares on the Lord; but your spirit was broken, and ye were aged by your sorrows."
79. "Wherefore then she was seated on a chair, I would fain know, Sir." "Because every weak person sits on a chair by reason of his weakness, that the weakness of his body may be supported. So thou hast the symbolism of the first vision."
80. "But in the second vision thou sawest her standing, and with her countenance more youthful and more gladsome than before; but her flesh and her hair aged. Listen to this parable also," saith he.
81. "Imagine an old man, who has now lost all hope of himself by reason of his weakness and his poverty, and expecteth nothing else save the last day of his life. Suddenly an inheritance is left him. He heareth the news, riseth up and full of joy clothes himself with strength, and no longer lieth down, but standeth up, and his spirit, which was now broken by reason of his former circumstances, is renewed again, and he no longer sitteth, but taketh courage; so also was it with you, when you heard the revelation which the Lord revealed unto you.
82. For He had compassion on you, and renewed your spirits, and ye laid aside your maladies, and strength came to you, and ye were made powerful in the faith, and the Lord rejoiced to see you put on your strength. And therefore He showed you the building of the tower; yea, and other things also shall He show you, if with your whole heart ye be at peace among yourselves.
83. But in the third vision ye saw her younger and fair and gladsome, and her form fair.
84. For just as when to some mourner cometh some piece of good tidings, immediately he forgetteth his former sorrows, and admitteth nothing but the tidings which he hath heard, and is strengthened thenceforth unto that which is good, and his spirit is renewed by reason of the joy which he hath received; so also ye have received a renewal of your spirits by seeing these good things.
85. And whereas thou sawest her seated on a couch, the position is a firm one; for the couch has four feet and standeth firmly; for the world too is upheld by means of four elements.
86. They then that have fully repented shall be young again, and founded firmly, seeing that they have repented with their whole heart. There thou hast the revelation entire and complete. Thou shalt ask nothing more as touching revelation-- but if anything be lacking still, it shall be revealed unto thee."

### Vision IV

1. The fourth vision which I saw, brethren, twenty days after the former vision which came unto me, for a type of the impending tribulation.
2. I was going into the country by the Companion Way. From the high road, it is about ten stades; and the place is easy for traveling.
3. While then I am walking alone, I entreat the Lord that He will accomplish the revelations and the visions which He showed me through His holy Church, that He

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may strengthen me and may give repentance to His servants which have stumbled, that His great and glorious Name may be glorified, for that He held me worthy that He should show me His marvels.

4. And as I gave glory and thanksgiving to Him, there answered me as it were the sound of a voice, "Be not of doubtful mind, Hermas." I began to question in myself and to say, "How can I be of doubtful mind, seeing that I am so firmly founded by the Lord, and have seen glorious things?"
5. And I went on a little, brethren, and behold, I see a cloud of dust rising as it were to heaven, and I began to say within myself, "Can it be that cattle are coming, and raising a cloud of dust?" for it was just about a stade from me.
6. As the cloud of dust waxed greater and greater, I suspected that it was something supernatural. Then the sun shone out a little, and behold, I see a huge beast like some sea-monster, and from its mouth fiery locusts issued forth. And the beast was about a hundred feet in length, and its head was as it were of pottery.
7. And I began to weep, and to entreat the Lord that He would rescue me from it. And I remembered the word which I had heard, "Be not of doubtful mind, Hermas."
8. Having therefore, brethren, put on the faith of the Lord and called to mind the mighty works that He had taught me, I took courage and gave myself up to the beast. Now the beast was coming on with such a rush, that it might have ruined a city.
9. I come near it, and, huge monster as it was, it stretcheth itself on the ground, and merely put forth its tongue, and stirred not at all until I had passed by it.
10. And the beast had on its head four colors; black then fire and blood color, then gold, then white.
11. Now after I had passed the beast, and had gone forward about thirty feet, behold, there meeteth me a virgin arrayed as if she were going forth from a bridal-chamber all in white and with white sandals, veiled up to her forehead, and her head-covering consisted of a turban, and her hair was white.
12. I knew from the former Visions that it was the Church, and I became more cheerful. She saluteth me, saying, "Good morrow, my good man"; and I saluted her in turn, "Lady, good morrow."
13. She answered and said unto me, "Did nothing meet thee?" I say unto her, Lady, such a huge beast, that could have destroyed whole peoples: but, by the power of the Lord and by His great mercy, I escaped it."
14. "Thou didst escape it well," saith she, "because thou didst cast thy care upon God, and didst open thy heart to the Lord, believing that thou canst be saved by nothing else but by His great and glorious Name. Therefore the Lord sent His angel, which is over the beasts, whose name is Segri, and *shut his mouth that it might not hurt thee*. Thou hast escaped a great tribulation by reason of thy faith, and because, though thou sawest so huge a beast, thou didst not doubt in thy mind.
15. Go therefore, and declare to the elect of the Lord His mighty works, and tell them that this beast is a type of the great tribulation which is to come. If therefore ye prepare yourselves beforehand, and repent (and turn) unto the Lord with your whole heart, ye shall be able to escape it, if your heart be made pure and without blemish, and if for the remaining days of your life ye serve the Lord blamelessly. Cast your cares upon the Lord and He will set them straight.
16. Trust ye in the Lord, ye men of doubtful mind, for He can do all things, yea, He both turneth away His wrath from you, and again He sendeth forth His plagues upon you that are of doubtful mind. Woe to them that hear these words and are disobedient; it were better for them that they had not been born."
17. I asked her concerning the four colors, which the beast had upon its head. Then she answered me and said, "Again thou art curious about such matters." "Yes, lady,"

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said I, "make known unto me what these things are."

18. "Listen," said she; "the black is this world in which ye dwell;
19. and the fire and blood color showeth that this world must perish by blood and fire;
20. and the golden part are ye that has escaped from this world. For as the gold is tested by the fire and is made useful, so ye also [that dwell in it] are being tested in yourselves. Ye then that abide and pass through the fire will be purified by it. For as the old loses its dross. so ye also shall cast away all sorrow and tribulation, and shall be purified, and shall be useful for the building of the tower.
21. But the white portion is the coming age, in which the elect of God shall dwell; because the elect of God shall be without spot and pure unto life eternal.
22. Wherefore cease not thou to speak in the ears of the saints. Ye have now the symbolism also of the tribulation which is coming in power. But if ye be willing, it shall be nought. Remember ye the things that are written beforehand."
23. With these words she departed, and I saw not in what direction she departed; for a noise was made: and I turned back in fear, thinking that the beast was coming.

### Vision V

1. As I prayed in the house, and sat on the couch, there entered a man glorious in his visage, in the garb of a shepherd, with a white skin wrapped about him, and with a wallet on his shoulders and a staff in his hand. And he saluted me, and I saluted him in return.
2. And he immediately sat down by my side, and he saith unto me, "I was sent by the most holy angel, that I might dwell with thee the remaining days of thy life."
3. I thought he came to tempt me, and I say unto him, "Why, who art thou? For I know," say I, "unto whom I was delivered." He saith to me, "Dost thou not recognize me?" "No," I say. "I," saith he, "am the shepherd, unto whom thou wast delivered."
4. While he was still speaking, his form was changed, and I recognized him as being the same, to whom I was delivered; and straightway I was confounded, and fear seized me, and I was altogether overwhelmed with distress that I had answered him so wickedly and senselessly.
5. But he answered and said unto me, "Be not confounded, but strengthen thyself in my commandments which I am about to command thee. For I was sent," saith he, "that I might show thee again all the things which thou didst see before, merely the heads which are convenient for you. First of all, write down my commandments and my parables; and the other matters thou shalt write down as I shall show them to thee. The reason why," saith he, "I command thee to write down first the commandments and parables is, that thou mayest read them off-hand, and mayest be able to keep them."
6. So I wrote down the commandments and parables, as he commanded me.
7. If then, when ye hear them, ye keep them and walk in them, and do them with a pure heart, ye shall receive from the Lord all things that He promised you; but if, when ye hear them, ye do not repent, but still add to your sins, ye shall receive from the Lord the opposite. All these the shepherd, the angel of repentance commanded me to write.

### II Hermas - Second Book: Commandments or Mandates

#### Commandment/Mandate I

1. "First of all, believe that God is One, even He who created all things and set them in order, and brought all things from non-existence into being, Who comprehendeth

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all things, being alone incomprehensible.

2. Believe Him therefore, and fear Him, and in this fear be continent. Keep these things, and thou shalt cast off all wickedness from thyself, and shalt clothe thyself with every excellence of righteousness, and shalt live unto God, if thou keep this commandment."

### Commandment/Mandate II

1. He saith to me; "Keep simplicity and be guileless, and thou shalt be as little children, that know not the wickedness which destroyeth the life of men.
2. First of all, speak evil of no man, neither take pleasure in listening to a slanderer. Otherwise thou that hearest too shalt be responsible for the sin of him that speaketh the evil, if thou believest the slander, which thou hearest; for in believing it thou thyself also wilt have a grudge against thy brother. So then shalt thou be responsible for the sin of him that speaketh the evil.
3. Slander is evil; it is a restless demon, never at peace, but always having its home among factions. Refrain from it therefore, and thou shalt have success at all times with all men.
4. But clothe thyself in reverence, wherein is no evil stumbling-block, but all things are smooth and gladsome. Work that which is good, and of thy labors, which God giveth thee, give to all that are in want freely, not questioning to whom thou shalt give, and to whom thou shalt not give. Give to all; for to all God desireth that there should be given of His own bounties.
5. They then that receive shall render an account to God why they received it, and to what end; for they that receive in distress shall not be judged, but they that receive by false pretence shall pay the penalty.
6. He then that giveth is guiltless; for as he received from the Lord the ministration to perform it, he hath performed it in sincerity, by making no distinction to whom to give or not to give. This ministration then, when sincerely performed, becomes glorious in the sight of God. He therefore that ministereth thus sincerely shall live unto God.
7. Therefore keep this commandment, as I have told thee, that thine own repentance and that of thy household may be found to be sincere, and [thy] heart pure and undefiled."

### Commandment/Mandate III

1. Again he saith to me; "Love truth, and let nothing but truth proceed out of thy mouth, that the Spirit which God made to dwell in this flesh, may be found true in the sight of all men; and thus shall the Lord, Who dwelleth in thee, be glorified; for the Lord is true in every word, and with Him there is no falsehood.
2. They therefore that speak lies set the Lord at nought, and become robbers of the Lord, for they do not deliver up to Him the deposit which they received. For they received of Him a spirit free from lies. Thus if they shall return a lying spirit, they have defiled the commandment of the Lord and have become robbers."
3. When then I heard these things, I wept bitterly. But seeing me weep he saith, "Why weepest thou?" "Because, Sir," say I "I know not if I can be saved." "Why so?" saith he. "Because, Sir," I say, "never in my life spake I a true word, but I always lied deceitfully with all men and dressed up my falsehood as truth before all men; and no man ever contradicted me, but confidence was placed in my word. How then, Sir," say I, "can I live, seeing that I have done these things?"
4. "Your supposition," he saith, "is right and true, for it behoved thee as a servant of

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God to walk in truth, and no complicity with evil should abide with the Spirit of truth, nor bring grief to the Spirit which is holy and true." "Never, Sir," say I, "heard I clearly words such as these."

5. "Now then," saith he, "thou hearest. Guard them, that the former falsehoods also which thou spakest in thy business affairs may themselves become credible, now that these are found true; for they too can become trustworthy. If thou keep these things, and from henceforward speak nothing but truth, thou shalt be able to secure life for thyself And whosoever shall hear this command, and abstain from falsehood, that most pernicious habit, shall live unto God."

### Commandment/Mandate IV

1. "I charge thee," saith he, "to keep purity, and let not a thought enter into thy heart concerning another's wife, or concerning fornication, or concerning any such like evil deeds; for in so doing thou commitest a great sin. But remember thine own wife always, and thou shalt never go wrong.
2. For should this desire enter into thine heart, thou wilt go wrong, and should any other as evil as this, thou commitest sin. For this desire in a servant of God is a great sin; and if any man doeth this evil deed, he worketh out death for himself.
3. Look to it therefore. Abstain from this desire; for, where holiness dwelleth, there lawlessness ought not to enter into the heart of a righteous man."
4. I say to him, "Sir, permit me to ask thee a few more questions" "Say on," saith he. "Sir," say I, "if a man who has a wife that is faithful in the Lord detect her in adultery, doth the husband sin in living with her?"
5. "So long as he is ignorant," saith he, "he sinneth not; but if the husband know of her sin, and the wife repent not, but continue in her fornication, and her husband live with her, he makes himself responsible for her sin and an accomplice in her adultery."
6. "What then, Sir," say I, "shall the husband do, if the wife continue in this case?" "Let him divorce her," saith he, "and let the husband abide alone: but if after divorcing his wife he shall marry another, he likewise committeth adultery."
7. "If then, Sir," say I, "after the wife is divorced, she repent and desire to return to her own husband, shall she not be received?"
8. "Certainly," saith he, "if the husband receiveth her not, he sinneth and bringeth great sin upon himself; nay, one who hath sinned and repented must be received, yet not often; for there is but one repentance for the servants of God. For the sake of her repentance therefore the husband ought not to marry. This is the manner of acting enjoined on husband and wife.
9. Not only," saith he, "is it adultery, if a man pollute his flesh, but whosoever doeth things like unto the heathen committeth adultery. If therefore in such deeds as these likewise a man continue and repent not, keep away from him, and live not with him. Otherwise, thou also art a partaker of his sin.
10. For this cause ye were enjoined to remain single, whether husband or wife; for in such cases repentance is possible.
11. I," said he, "am not giving an excuse that this matter should be concluded thus, but to the end that the sinner should sin no more. But as concerning his former sin, there is One Who is able to give healing; it is He Who hath authority over all things."
12. I asked him again, saying, "Seeing that the Lord held me worthy that thou shouldst always dwell with me, suffer me still to say a few words, since I understand nothing, and my heart has been made dense by my former deeds. Make me to understand, for I am very foolish, and I apprehend absolutely nothing."
13. He answered and said unto me, "I," saith he, "preside over repentance, and I give

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- understanding to all who repent. Nay, thinkest thou not," saith he, "that this very act of repentance is understanding? To repent is great understanding," saith he. "For the man that hath sinned understandeth that he hath done evil before the Lord, and the deed which he hath done entereth into his heart, and he repenteth, and doeth no more evil, but doeth good lavishly, and humbleth his own soul and putteth it to torture because it sinned. Thou seest then that repentance is great understanding."
14. "It is on this account therefore, Sir," say I, "that I enquire everything accurately of thee; first, because I am a sinner; secondly, because I know not what deeds I must do that I may live, for my sins are many and various."
  15. "Thou shalt live," saith he, "if thou keep my commandments and walk in them and whosoever shall hear these commandments and keep them, shall live unto God."
  16. "I will still proceed, Sir," say I, "to ask a further question." "Speak on," saith he. "I have heard, Sir," say I, "from certain teachers, that there is no other repentance, save that which took place when we went down into the water and obtained remission of our former sins."
  17. He saith to me; "Thou hast well heard; for so it is. For he that hath received remission of sins ought no longer to sin, but to dwell in purity."
  18. But, since thou enquirest all things accurately, I will declare unto thee this also, so as to give no excuse to those who shall hereafter believe or those who have already believed, on the Lord. For they that have already believed, or shall hereafter believe, have not repentance for sins, but have only remission of their former sins.
  19. To those then that were called before these days the Lord has appointed repentance. For the Lord, being a discerner of hearts and foreknowing all things, perceived the weakness of men and the manifold wiles of the devil, how that he will be doing some mischief to the servants of God, and will deal wickedly with them.
  20. The Lord then, being very compassionate, had pity on His handiwork, and appointed this (opportunity of) repentance, and to me was given the authority over this repentance.
  21. But I say unto you," saith he, "if after this great and holy calling any one, being tempted of the devil, shall commit sin, he hath only one (opportunity of) repentance. But if he sin off-hand and repent, repentance is unprofitable for such a man; for he shall live with difficulty."
  22. I say unto him, "I was quickened unto life again, when I heard these things from thee so precisely. For I know that, if I shall add no more to my sins, I shall be saved." "Thou shalt be saved," he saith, "thou and all, as many as shall do these things."
  23. I asked him again, saying, "Sir, since once thou dost bear with me, declare unto me this further matter also." "Say on," saith he. "If a wife, Sir," say I, "or, it may be, a husband fall asleep, and one of them marry, doth the one that marrieth sin?"
  24. "He sinneth not," saith he, "but if he remain single, he investeth himself with more exceeding honor and with great glory before the Lord; yet even if he should marry, he sinneth not."
  25. Preserve purity and holiness therefore, and thou shalt live unto God. All these things, which I speak and shall hereafter speak unto thee, guard from this time forward, from the day when thou wast committed unto me, and I will dwell in thy house.
  26. But for thy former transgressions there shall be remission, if thou keepest my commandments. Yea, and all shall have remission, if they keep these my commandments, and walk in this purity."

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1. "Be thou long-suffering and understanding," he saith, "and thou shalt have the mastery over all evil deeds, and shalt work all righteousness.
2. For if thou art long-suffering, the Holy Spirit that abideth in thee shall be pure, not being darkened by another evil spirit, but, dwelling in a large room, shall rejoice and be glad with the vessel in which he dwelleth, and shall serve God with much cheerfulness, having prosperity in himself.
3. But if any angry temper approach, forthwith the Holy Spirit, being delicate, is straitened, not having [the] place clear, and seeketh to retire from the place; for he is being choked by the evil spirit, and has no room to minister unto the Lord, as he desireth, being polluted by angry temper. For the Lord dwelleth in long-suffering, but the devil in angry temper.
4. Thus that both the spirits then should be dwelling together is inconvenient and evil for that man in whom they dwell.
5. For if you take a little wormwood, and pour it into a jar of honey, is not the whole of the honey spoiled, and all that honey ruined by a very small quantity of wormwood? For it destroyeth the sweetness of the honey, and it no longer hath the same attraction for the owner, because it is rendered bitter and hath lost its use. But if the wormwood be not put into the honey, the honey is found sweet and becomes useful to its owner.
6. Thou seest [then] that long-suffering is very sweet, beyond the sweetness of honey, and is useful to the Lord, and He dwelleth in it. But angry, temper is bitter and useless. If then angry temper be mixed with long-suffering, long-suffering is polluted and the man's intercession is no longer useful to God."
7. "I would fain know, Sir," say I, "the working of angry temper, that I may guard myself from it." "Yea, verily," saith he, "if thou guard not thyself from it--thou and thy family--thou hast lost all thy hope. But guard thyself from it; for I am with thee. Yea, and all men shall hold aloof from it, as many as have repented with their whole heart. For I will be with them and will preserve them; for they all were justified by the most holy angel.
8. "Hear now," saith he, "the working of angry temper, how evil it is, and how it subverteth the servants of God by its own working, and how it leadeth them astray from righteousness. But it doth not lead astray them that are full in the faith, nor can it work upon them, because the power of the Lord is with them; but them that are empty and double-minded it leadeth astray.
9. For when it seeth such men in prosperity it insinuates itself into the heart of the man, and for no cause whatever the man or the woman is embittered on account of worldly matters, either about meats, or some triviality, or about some friend, or about giving or receiving, or about follies of this kind. For all these things are foolish and vain and senseless and inexpedient for the servants of God.
10. But long-suffering is great and strong, and has a mighty and vigorous power, and is prosperous in great enlargement, gladsome, exultant, free from care, glorifying the Lord at every season, having no bitterness in itself, remaining always gentle and tranquil. This long-suffering therefore dwelleth with those whose faith is perfect.
11. But angry temper is in the first place foolish, fickle and senseless; then from foolishness is engendered bitterness, and from bitterness wrath, and from wrath anger, and from anger spite; then spite being composed of all these evil elements becometh a great sin and incurable.
12. For when all these spirits dwell in one vessel, where the Holy Spirit also dwelleth, that vessel cannot contain them, but overfloweth.
13. The delicate spirit therefore, as not being accustomed to dwell with an evil spirit nor with harshness, departeth from a man of that kind, and seeketh to dwell with gentleness and tranquillity.



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14. Then, when it hath removed from that man, in whom it dwells, that man becometh emptied of the righteous spirit, and henceforward, being filled with the evil spirits, he is unstable in all his actions, being dragged about hither and thither by the evil spirits, and is altogether blinded and bereft of his good intent. Thus then it happeneth to all persons of angry temper.
15. Refrain therefore from angry temper, the most evil of evil spirits. But clothe thyself in long-suffering, and resist angry temper and bitterness, and thou shalt be round in company with the holiness which is beloved of the Lord. See then that thou never neglect this commandment; for if thou master this commandment, thou shalt be able likewise to keep the remaining commandments, which I am about to give thee. Be strong in them and endowed with power; and let all be endowed with power, as many as desire to walk in them."

### Commandment/Mandate VI

1. Two Angels with us: I charged thee," saith he, "in my first commandment to guard faith and fear and temperance." "Yes, Sir," say I. "But now," saith he, "I wish to show thee their powers also, that thou mayest understand what is the power and effect of each one of them. For their effects are two fold. Now they are prescribed alike to the righteous and the unrighteous.
2. Do thou therefore trust righteousness, but trust not unrighteousness; for the way of righteousness is straight, but the way of unrighteousness is crooked. But walk thou in the straight [and level] path, and leave the crooked one alone.
3. For the crooked way has no tracks, but only pathlessness and many stumbling stones, and is rough and thorny. So it is therefore harmful to those who walk in it.
4. But those who walk in the straight way walk on the level and without stumbling: for it is neither rough nor thorny. Thou seest then that it is more expedient to walk in this way."
5. "I am pleased, Sir," say I, "to walk in this way." "Thou shalt walk," he saith, "yea, and whosoever shall turn unto the Lord with his whole heart shall walk in it.
6. "Hear now," saith he, "concerning faith. **There are two angels with a man, one of righteousness and one of wickedness.**"
7. "How then, Sir," say I, "shall I know their workings, seeing that both angels dwell with me?"
8. "Hear," saith he, "and understand their workings. The angel of righteousness is delicate and bashful and gentle and tranquil. When then this one enters into thy heart, forthwith he speaketh with thee of righteousness, of purity, of holiness, and of contentment, of every righteous deed and of every glorious virtue. When all these things enter into thy heart, know that the angel of righteousness is with thee. [These then are the works of the angel of righteousness.] Trust him therefore and his works.
9. Now see the works of the angel of wickedness also. First of all, he is quick tempered and bitter and senseless, and his works are evil, overthrowing the servants of God. Whenever then he entereth into thy heart, know him by his works."
10. "How I shall discern him, Sir," I reply, "I know not." Listen," saith he. "When a fit of angry temper or bitterness comes upon thee, know that he is in thee. Then the desire of much business and the costliness of many viands and drinking bouts and of many drunken fits and of various luxuries which are unseemly, and the desire of women, and avarice, and haughtiness and boastfulness, and whatsoever things are akin and like to these--when then these things enter into thy heart, know that the angel of wickedness is with thee.
11. Do thou therefore, recognizing his works, stand aloof from him, and trust him in

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nothing, for his works are evil and inexpedient for the servants of God. Here then thou hast the workings of both the angels. Understand them, and trust the angel of righteousness.

12. But from the angel of wickedness stand aloof, for his teaching is evil in every matter; for though one be a man of faith, and the desire of this angel enter into his heart, that man, or that woman, must commit some sin.
13. And if again a man or a woman be exceedingly wicked, and the works of the angel of righteousness come into that man's heart, he must of necessity do something good.
14. Thou seest then," saith he, "that it is good to follow the angel of righteousness, and to bid farewell to the angel of wickedness.
15. This commandment declareth what concerneth faith, that thou mayest trust the works of the angel of righteousness, and doing them mayest live unto God. But believe that the works of the angel of wickedness are difficult; so by not doing them thou shalt live unto God."

### Commandment/Mandate VII

1. "Fear the Lord," saith he, "and keep His commandments. So keeping the commandments of God thou shalt be powerful in every deed, and thy doing shall be incomparable. For whilst thou fearest the Lord, thou shalt do all things well. But this is the fear wherewith thou oughtest to be afraid, and thou shalt be saved.
2. But fear not the devil; for, if thou fear the Lord, thou shalt be master over the devil, for there is no power in him. [For] in whom is no power, neither is there fear of him; but in whom power is glorious, of him is fear likewise. For every one that hath power hath fear, whereas he that hath no power is despised of all.
3. But fear thou the works of the devil, for they are evil. While then thou fearest the Lord, thou wilt fear the works of the devil, and wilt not do them, but abstain from them.
4. Fear therefore is of two kinds. If thou desire to do evil, fear the Lord, and thou shalt not do it. If again thou desire to do good, fear the Lord and thou shalt do it. Therefore the fear of the Lord is powerful and great and glorious. Fear the Lord then, and thou shalt live unto Him; yea, and as many of them that keep His commandments as shall fear Him, shall live unto God."
5. "Wherefore, Sir," say I, "didst thou say concerning those that keep His commandments, "They shall live unto God"?" "Because," saith he, "every creature feareth the Lord, but not every one keepeth His commandments. Those then that fear Him and keep His commandments, they have life unto God; but they that keep not His commandments have no life in them."

### Commandment/Mandate VIII

1. "I told thee," saith he, "that the creatures of God are twofold; for temperance also is twofold. For in some things it is right to be temperate, but in other things it is not right."
2. "Make known unto me, Sir," say I, "in what things it is right to be temperate, and in what things it is not right." "Listen," saith he. "Be temperate as to what is evil, and do it not; but be not temperate as to what is good, but do it. For if thou be temperate as to what is good, so as not to do it, thou committest a great sin; but if thou be temperate as to what is evil, so as not to do it, thou doest great righteousness. Be temperate therefore in abstaining from all wickedness, and do that which is good."
3. "What kinds of wickedness, Sir," say I, "are they from which we must be temperate and abstain?" "Listen," saith he; "from adultery and fornication, from the

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lawlessness of drunkenness, from wicked luxury, from many viands and the costliness of riches, and vaunting and haughtiness and pride, and from falsehood and evil speaking and hypocrisy, malice and all blasphemy.

4. These works are the most wicked of all in the life of men. From these works therefore the servant of God must be temperate and abstain; for he that is not temperate so as to abstain from these cannot live unto God. Listen then to what follows upon these."
5. "Why, are there still other evil deeds, Sir?" say I. "Aye, saith he, "there are many, from which the servant of God must be temperate and abstain; theft, falsehood, deprivation, false witness, avarice, evil desire, deceit, vain-glory, boastfulness, and whatsoever things are like unto these.
6. Thinkest thou not that these things are wrong, yea, very wrong," [saith he,] "for the servants of God? In all these things he that serveth God must exercise temperance. Be thou temperate, therefore, and refrain from all these things, that thou mayest live unto God, and be enrolled among those who exercise self-restraint in them. These then are the things from which thou shouldest restrain thyself
7. Now hear," saith he, "the things, in which thou shouldest not exercise self-restraint, but do them. Exercise no self-restraint in that which is good, but do it."
8. "Sir," say I, "show me the power of the good also, that I may walk in them and serve them, that doing them it may be possible for me to be saved." "Hear," saith he, "the works of the good likewise, which thou must do, and towards which thou must exercise no self-restraint.
9. First of all, there is faith, fear of the Lord, love, concord, words of righteousness, truth, patience; nothing is better than these in the life of men. If a man keep these, and exercise not self-restraint from them, he becomes blessed in his life.
10. Hear now what follow upon these; to minister to widows, to visit the orphans and the needy, to ransom the servants of God from their afflictions, to be hospitable (for in hospitality benevolence from time to time has a place), to resist no man, to be tranquil, to show yourself more submissive than all men, to reverence the aged, to practice righteousness, to observe brotherly feeling, to endure injury, to be long-suffering, to bear no grudge, to exhort those who are sick at soul, not to cast away those that have stumbled from the faith, but to convert them and to put courage into them, to reprove sinners, not to oppress debtors and indigent persons, and whatsoever actions are like these.
11. Do these things," saith he, "seem to thee to be good?" "Why, what, Sir," say I, "can be better than these?" "Then walk in them," saith he, "and abstain not from them, and thou shalt live unto God.
12. Keep this commandment therefore. If thou do good and abstain not from it, thou shalt live unto God; yea, and all shall live unto God who act so. And again if thou do not evil, and abstain from it, thou shalt live unto God; yea, and all shall live unto God, who shall keep these commandments, and walk in them."

### Commandment/Mandate IX

1. Doubtful-mindedness: He saith to me; "Remove from thyself a doubtful mind and doubt not at all whether to ask of God, saying within thyself, "How can I ask thing of the Lord and receive it, seeing that I have committed so many sins against Him?"
2. Reason not thus, but turn to the Lord with thy whole heart, and ask of Him nothing wavering, and thou shalt know His exceeding compassion, that He will surely not abandon thee, but will fulfill the petition of thy soul.
3. For God is not as men who bear a grudge, but Himself is without malice and hath compassion on His creatures.

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4. Do thou therefore cleanse thy heart from all the vanities of this life, and from the things mentioned before; and ask of the Lord, and thou shalt receive all things, and shalt lack nothing of all thy petitions, if thou ask of the Lord nothing wavering.
5. But if thou waver in thy heart, thou shalt surely receive none of thy petitions. For they that waver towards God, these are the doubtful-minded, and they never obtain any of their petitions.
6. But they that are complete in the faith make all their petitions trusting in the Lord, and they receive, because they ask without wavering, nothing doubting; for every doubtful-minded man, if he repent not, shall hardly be saved.
7. Cleanse therefore thy heart from doubtful-mindedness, and put on faith, for it is strong, and trust God that thou wilt receive all thy petitions which thou askest; and if after asking anything of the Lord, thou receive thy petition somewhat tardily, be not of doubtful mind because thou didst not receive the petition of thy soul at once. For assuredly it is by reason of some temptation or some transgression, of which thou art ignorant, that thou receivest thy petition so tardily.
8. Do thou therefore cease not to make thy soul's petition, and thou shalt receive it. But if thou grow weary, and doubt as thou askest, blame thyself and not Him that giveth unto thee. See to this doubtful-mindedness; for it is evil and senseless, and uprooteth many from the faith, yea, even very faithful and strong men. For indeed this doubtful-mindedness is a daughter of the devil, and worketh great wickedness against the servants of God.
9. Therefore despise doubtful-mindedness and gain the mastery over it in everything, clothing thyself with faith which is strong and powerful. For faith promiseth all things, accomplisheth all things; but doubtful-mindedness, as having no confidence in itself, fails in all the works which it doeth.
10. Thou seest then," saith he, "that faith is from above from the Lord, and hath great power; but doubtful-mindedness is an earthly spirit from the devil, and hath no power.
11. Do thou therefore serve that faith which hath power, and hold aloof from the doubtful-mindedness which hath no power; and thou shalt live unto God; yea, and all those shall live unto God who are so minded."

### Commandment/Mandate X

1. "Put away sorrow from thyself," saith he, "for she is the sister of doubtful-mindedness and of angry temper."
2. "How, Sir," say I, "is she the sister of these? For angry temper seems to me to be one thing, doubtful-mindedness another, sorrow another." "Thou art a foolish fellow," saith he, "[and] perceivest not that sorrow is more evil than all the spirits, and is most fatal to the servants of God, and beyond all the spirits destroys a man, and crushes out the Holy Spirit and yet again saves it."
3. "I, Sir," say I, "am without understanding, and I understand not these parables. For how it can crush out and again save, I do not comprehend."
4. "Listen," saith he. "Those who have never investigated concerning the truth, nor enquired concerning the deity, but have merely believed, and have been mixed up in business affairs and riches and heathen friendships, and many other affairs of this world, as many, I say, as devote themselves to these things, comprehend not the parables of the deity; for they are darkened by these actions, and are corrupted and become barren.
5. As good vineyards, when they are treated with neglect, are made barren by the thorns and weeds of various kinds, so men who after they have believed fall into these many occupations which were mentioned before, lose their understanding and

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comprehend nothing at all concerning righteousness; for if they hear concerning the deity and truth, their mind is absorbed in their occupations, and they perceive nothing at all.

6. But they that have the fear of God, and investigate concerning deity and truth, and direct their heart towards the Lord, perceive and understand everything that is said to them more quickly, because they have the fear of the Lord in themselves; for where the Lord dwelleth, there too is great understanding. Cleave therefore unto the Lord, and thou shalt understand and perceive all things.
7. "Hear now, senseless man," saith he, "How sorrow crusheth out the Holy Spirit, and again saveth it.
8. When the man of doubtful mind sets his hand to any action, and fails in it owing to his doubtful-mindedness, grief at this entereth into the man, and grieveth the Holy Spirit, and crusheth it out.
9. Then again when angry temper cleaveth to a man concerning any matter, and he is much embittered, again sorrow entereth into the heart of the man that was ill-tempered, and he is grieved at the deed which he hath done, and repenteth that he did evil.
10. This sadness therefore seemeth to bring salvation, because he repented at having done the evil. So both the operations sadden the Spirit; first, the doubtful mind saddens the Spirit, because it succeeded not in its business, and the angry temper again, because it did what was evil. Thus both are saddening to the Holy Spirit, the doubtful mind and the angry temper.
11. Put away therefore from thyself sadness, and afflict not the Holy Spirit that dwelleth in thee, lest haply He intercede with God [against thee], and depart from thee.
12. For the Spirit of God, that was given unto this flesh, endureth not sadness neither constraint.
13. "Therefore clothe thyself in cheerfulness, which hath favor with God always, and is acceptable to Him, and rejoice in it. For every cheerful man worketh good, and thinketh good, and despiseth sadness;
14. But the sad man is always committing sin. In the first place he committeth sin, because he grieveth the Holy Spirit, which was given to the man being a cheerful spirit; and in the second place, by grieving the Holy Spirit he doeth lawlessness, in that he doth not intercede with, neither confess unto, God. For the intercession of a sad man hath never at any time power to ascend to the altar of God."
15. "Wherefore," say I, "doth not the intercession of him that is saddened ascend to the altar?" "Because," saith he, "sadness is seated at his heart. Thus sadness mingled with the intercession doth not suffer the intercession to ascend pure to the altar. For as vinegar when mingled with wine in the same (vessel) hath not the same pleasant taste, so likewise sadness mingled with the Holy Spirit hath not the same intercession.
16. Therefore cleanse thyself from this wicked sadness, and thou shalt live unto God; yea, and all they shall live unto God, who shall cast away sadness from themselves and clothe themselves in all cheerfulness."

### Commandment/Mandate XI

1. False and True prophets: He shewed me men seated on a couch, and another man seated on a chair. And he saith to me, "Seest thou those that are seated on the couch?" "I see them, Sir," say I. "These," saith he, "are faithful, but he that sitteth on the chair is a false prophet who destroyeth the mind of the servants of God, I mean, of the doubtful-minded, not of the faithful.
2. These doubtful-minded ones then come to him as to a soothsayer and enquire of

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- him what shall befall them. And he, the false prophet, having no power of a divine Spirit in himself, speaketh with them according to their enquiries [and according to the lusts of their wickedness], and filleth their souls as they themselves wish.
3. For being empty himself he giveth empty answers to empty enquirers; for whatever enquiry may be made of him, he answereth according to the emptiness of the man. But he speaketh also some true words; for the devil filleth him with his own spirit, if so be he shall be able to break down some of the righteous.
  4. So many therefore as are strong in the faith of the Lord, clothed with the truth, cleave not to such spirits, but hold aloof from them; but as many as are doubters and frequently change their minds, practice soothsaying like the Gentiles, and bring upon themselves greater sin by their idolatries. For he that consulteth a false prophet on any matter is an idolater and emptied of the truth, and senseless.
  5. For no Spirit given of God needeth to be consulted; but, having the power of deity, speaketh all things of itself, because it is from above, even from the power of the divine Spirit.
  6. But the spirit which is consulted, and speaketh according to the desires of men, is earthly and fickle, having no power; and it speaketh not at all, unless it be consulted."
  7. "How then, Sir," say I, "shall a man know who of them is a prophet, and who a false prophet?" "Hear," saith he, "concerning both the prophets; and, as I shall tell thee, so shalt thou test the prophet and the false prophet. By his life test the man that hath the divine Spirit.
  8. In the first place, he that hath the [divine] Spirit, which is from above, is gentle and tranquil and humble-minded, and abstaineth from all wickedness and vain desire of this present world, and holdeth himself inferior to all men, and giveth no answer to any man when enquired of, nor speaketh in solitude (for neither doth the Holy Spirit speak when a man wisheth Him to speak); but the man speaketh then when God wisheth him to speak.
  9. When then the man who hath the divine Spirit cometh into an assembly of righteous men, who have faith in a divine Spirit, and intercession is made to God by the gathering of those men, then the angel of the prophetic spirit, who is attached to him, filleth the man, and the man, being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaketh to the multitude, according as the Lord willeth.
  10. In this way then the Spirit of the deity shall be manifest. This then is the greatness of the power as touching the Spirit of the deity of the Lord.
  11. False prophets: Hear now," saith he, "concerning the earthly and vain spirit, which hath no power but is foolish.
  12. In the first place, that man who seemeth to have a spirit exalteth himself, and desireth to have a chief place, and straightway he is impudent and shameless and talkative and conversant in many luxuries and in many other deceits and receiveth money for his prophesying, and if he receiveth not, he prophesieth not. Now can a divine Spirit receive money and prophesy? It is not possible for a prophet of God to do this, but the spirit of such prophets is earthly.
  13. In the next place, it never approacheth an assembly of righteous men; but avoideth them, and cleaveth to the doubtful-minded and empty, and prophesieth to them in corners, and deceiveth them, speaking all things in emptiness to gratify their desires; for they too are empty whom it answereth. For the empty vessel placed together with the empty is not broken, but they agree one with the other.
  14. But when he comes into an assembly full of righteous men who have a Spirit of deity, and intercession is made from them, that man is emptied, and the earthly spirit fleeth from him in fear, and that man is struck dumb and is altogether broken in pieces, being unable to utter a word.

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15. For, if you pack wine or oil into a closet, and place an empty vessel among them, and again desire to unpack the closet, the vessel which you place there empty, empty in like manner you will find it. Thus also the empty prophets, whenever they come unto the spirits of righteous men, are found just such as they came.
16. I have given thee the life of both kinds of prophets. Therefore test, by his life and his works, the man who says that he is moved by the Spirit.
17. But do thou trust the Spirit that cometh from God, and hath power; but in the earthly and empty spirit put no trust at all; for in it there is no power, for it cometh from the devil.
18. Listen [then] to the parable which I shall tell thee. Take a stone, and throw it up to heaven, see if thou canst reach it; or again, take a squirt of water, and squirt it up to heaven, see if thou canst bore through the heaven."
19. "How, Sir," say I, "can these things be? For both these things which thou hast mentioned are beyond our power." "Well then," saith he, "just as these things are beyond our power, so likewise the earthly spirits have no power and are feeble.
20. Now take the power which cometh from above. The hail is a very, small grain, and yet, when it falleth on a man's head, what pain it causeth! Or again, take a drop which falls on the ground from the tiles, and bores through the stone.
21. Thou seest then that the smallest things from above falling on the earth have great power. So likewise the divine Spirit coming from above is powerful. This Spirit therefore trust, but from the other hold aloof."

### Commandment/Mandate XII

1. He saith to me; "Remove from thyself all evil desire, and clothe thyself in the desire which is good and holy; for clothed with this desire thou shalt hate the evil desire, and shalt bridle and direct it as thou wilt.
2. For the evil desire is wild, and only tamed with difficulty; for it is terrible, and by its wildness is very costly to men; more especially if a servant of God get entangled in it, and have no understanding, he is put to fearful costs by it. But it is costly to such men as are not clothed in the good desire, but are mixed up with this life "These men then it hands over to death."
3. "Of what sort, Sir," say I, "are the works of the evil desire, which hand over men to death? Make them known to me, that I may hold aloof from them." Listen," [saith he,] "through what works the evil desire bringeth death to the servants of God.
4. "Before all is desire for the wife or husband of another, and for extravagance of wealth, and for many needless dainties, and for drinks and other luxuries, many and foolish. For even luxury is foolish and vain for the servants of God.
5. These desires then are evil, and bring death to the servants of God. For this evil desire is a daughter of the devil. Ye must, therefore, abstain from the evil desires, that so abstaining ye may live unto God.
6. But as many as are mastered by them, and resist them not, are done to death utterly; for these desires are deadly.
7. But do thou clothe thyself in the desire of righteousness, and, having armed thyself with the fear of the Lord, resist them. For the fear of God dwelleth in the good desire. If the evil desire shall see thee armed with the fear of God and resisting itself, it shall flee far from thee, and shall no more be seen of thee, being in fear of thine arms.
8. Do thou therefore, when thou art crowned for thy victory over it, come to the desire of righteousness, and deliver to her the victor's prize which thou hast received, and serve her, according as she herself desireth. If thou serve the good desire, and art subject to her, thou shalt have power to master the evil desire, and to subject her,

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according as thou wilt."

9. "I would fain know, Sir," say I, "in what ways I ought to serve the good desire."  
"Listen," saith he; "practice righteousness and virtue, truth and the fear of the Lord, faith and gentleness, and as many good deeds as are like these. Practicing these thou shalt be well-pleasing as a servant of God, and shalt live unto Him; yea, and every one who shall serve the good desire shall live unto God."
10. So he completed the twelve commandments, and he saith to me; Thou hast these commandments; walk in them, and exhort thy hearers that their repentance may become pure for the rest of the days of their life.
11. This ministration, which I give thee, fulfill thou with all diligence to the end, and thou shalt effect much. For thou shalt find favor among those who are about to repent, and they shall obey thy words. For I will be with thee, and will compel them to obey thee."
12. I say to him; "Sir, these commandments are great and beautiful and glorious, and are able to gladden the heart of the man who is able to observe them. But I know not whether these commandments can be kept by a man, for they are very hard."
13. He answered and said unto me; "If thou set it before thyself that they can be kept, thou wilt easily keep them, and they will not be hard; but if it once enter into thy heart that they cannot be kept by a man, thou wilt not keep them."
14. But now I say unto thee; if thou keep them not, but neglect them thou shalt not have salvation, neither thy children nor thy household, since thou hast already pronounced judgment against thyself that these commandments cannot be kept by a man."
15. And these things he said to me very angrily, so that I was confounded, and feared him exceedingly; for his form was changed, so that a man could not endure his anger.
16. And when he saw that I was altogether disturbed and confounded, he began to speak more kindly [and cheerfully] to me, and he saith; "Foolish fellow, void of understanding and of doubtful mind, perceivest thou not the glory of God, how great and mighty and marvelous it is, how that He created the world for man's sake, and subjected all His creation to man, and gave all authority to him, that he should be master over all things under the heaven?"
17. If then," [he saith,] "man is lord of all the creatures of God and mastereth all things, cannot he also master these commandments Aye," saith he, "the man that hath the Lord in his heart can master [all things and] all these commandments."
18. But they that have the Lord on their lips, while their heart is hardened, and are far from the Lord, to them these commandments are hard and inaccessible."
19. Therefore do ye, who are empty and fickle in the faith, set your Lord in your heart, and ye shall perceive that nothing is easier than these commandments, nor sweeter, nor more gentle.
20. Be ye converted, ye that walk after the commandments of the devil, (the commandments which are so) difficult and bitter and wild and riotous; and fear not the devil, for there is no power in him against you.
21. For I will be with you, I, the angel of repentance, who have the mastery over him. The devil hath fear alone, but his fear hath no force. Fear him not therefore; and he will flee from you."
22. I say to him, "Sir, listen to a few words from me." "Say what thou wilt," saith he. "Man, Sir," I say, "is eager to keep the commandments of God, and there is no one that asketh not of the Lord that he may be strengthened in His commandments, and be subject to them; but the devil is hard and overmastereth them."
23. "He cannot," saith he, "overmaster the servants of God, who set their hope on Him with their whole heart. The devil can wrestle with them, but he cannot overthrow



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them. If then ye resist him, he will be vanquished and will flee from you disgraced. But as many," saith he, "as are utterly empty, fear the devil as if he had power.

24. When a man has filled amply sufficient jars with good wine, and among these jars a few are quite empty, he comes to the jars, and does not examine the full ones, for he knows that they are full; but he examineth the empty ones, fearing lest they have turned sour. For empty jars soon turn sour, and the taste of the wine is spoilt.
25. So also the devil cometh to all the servants of God tempting them. As many then as are complete in the faith, oppose him mightily, and he departeth from them, not having a place where he can find an entrance. So he cometh next to the empty ones, and finding a place goeth into them, and further he doeth what he willet in them, and they become submissive slaves to him.
26. "But I, the angel of repentance, say unto you; Fear not the devil; for I was sent," saith he, "to be with you who repent with your whole heart, and to strengthen you in the faith.
27. Believe, therefore, on God, ye who by reason of your sins have despaired of your life, and are adding to your sins, and weighing down your life; for if ye turn unto the Lord with your whole heart, and work righteousness the remaining days of your life, and serve Him rightly according to His will, He will give healing to your former sins, and ye shall have power to master the works of the devil. But of the threatening of the devil fear not at all; for he is unstrung, like the sinews of a dead man.
28. Hear me therefore, and fear Him, *Who is able to do all things, to save and to destroy*, and observe these commandments, and ye shall live unto God."
29. I say to him, "Sir, now am I strengthened in all the ordinances of the Lord, because thou art with me; and I know that thou wilt crush all the power of the devil, and we shall be masters over him, and shall prevail over all his works. And I hope, Sir, that I am now able to keep these commandments which thou hast commanded, the Lord enabling me."
30. "Thou shalt keep them," saith he, "if thy heart be found pure with the Lord; yea, and all shall keep them, as many as shall purify their hearts from the vain desires of this world, and shall live unto God."

### III Hermas - Third Book: Parables or Similitudes

#### Parable/Similitude I

1. He saith to me; "Ye know that ye, who are the servants of God, are dwelling in a foreign land; for your city is far from this city. If then ye know your city, in which ye shall dwell, why do ye here prepare fields and expensive displays and buildings and dwelling-chambers which are superfluous?
2. He, therefore, that prepareth these things for this city does not purpose to return to his own city.
3. O foolish and double-minded and miserable man, perceivest thou not that all these things are foreign, and are under the power of another. For the lord of this city shall say, "I do not wish thee to dwell in my city; go forth from this city, for thou dost not conform to my laws."
4. Thou, therefor who hast fields and dwellings and many other possessions, when thou art cast out by him, what wilt thou do with thy field and thy house am all the other things that thou preparedst for thyself? For the lord of this country saith to thee justly, "Either conform to my laws, or depart from my country."
5. What then shalt thou do, who art under law in thine own city? For the sake of thy fields and the rest of thy possessions wilt thou altogether repudiate thy law, and walk according to the law of this city? Take heed, lest it be inexpedient to repudiate

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the law; for if thou shouldest desire to return again to thy city, thou shall surely not be received [because thou didst repudiate the law of the city], and shalt be shut out from it.

6. Take heed therefore; as dwelling in a strange land prepare nothing more for thyself but a competency which is sufficient for thee, and make ready that, whensoever the master of this city may desire to cast thee out for thine opposition to his law, thou mayest go forth from his city and depart into thine own city and use thine own law joyfully, free from all insult.
7. Take heed therefore, ye that serve God and have Him in your heart: work the "works of God being mindful of His commandments and of the promises which He made, and believe Him that He will perform them, if His commandments be kept.
8. Therefore, instead of fields buy ye souls that are in trouble, as each is able, and visit widows and orphans, and neglect them not; and spend your riches and all your displays, which ye received from God, on fields and houses of this kind.
9. For to this end the Master enriched you, that ye might perform these ministrations for Him. It is much better to purchase fields [and possessions] and houses of this kind, which thou wilt find in thine own city, when thou visitest it.
10. This lavish expenditure is beautiful and joyous, not bringing sadness or fear, but bringing joy. The expenditure of the heathen then practice not ye; for it is not convenient for you the servants of God.
11. But practice your own expenditure, in which ye can rejoice; and do not corrupt, neither touch that which is another man's, nor lust after it for it is wicked to lust after other men's possessions. But perform thine own task, and thou shalt be saved."

### Parable/Similitude II

1. As I walked in the field, and noticed an elm and a vine, and was distinguishing them and their fruits, the shepherd appeareth to me and saith; "What art thou meditating within thyself?" "I am thinking, [Sir,]" say I, "about the elm and the vine, that they are excellently suited the one to the other."
2. "These two trees," saith he, "are appointed for a type to the servants of God." "I would fain know, [Sir,]" say I, "the type contained in these trees, of which thou speakest." "Seest thou," saith he, "the elm and the vine?" "I see them, Sir," say I.
3. "This vine," saith he, "beareth fruit, but the elm is an unfruitful stock. Yet this vine, except it climb up the elm, cannot bear much fruit when it is spread on the ground; and such fruit as it beareth is rotten, because it is not suspended upon the elm. When then the vine is attached to the elm, it beareth fruit both from itself and from the elm.
4. Thou seest then that the elm also beareth [much] fruit, not less than the vine, but rather more." How more, Sir?" say I. "Because," saith he, "the vine, when hanging upon the elm, bears its fruit in abundance, and in good condition; but, when spread on the ground, it beareth little fruit, and that rotten. This parable therefore is applicable to the servants of God, to poor and to rich alike."
5. "How, Sir?" say I; "instruct me." "Listen," saith he; the rich man hath much wealth, but in the things of the Lord he is poor, being distracted about his riches, and his confession and intercession with the Lord is very scanty; and even that which he giveth is small and weak and hath not power above. When then the rich man goeth up to the poor, and assisteth him in his needs, believing that for what he doth to the poor man he shall be able to obtain a reward with God, because the poor man is rich in intercession [and confession], and his intercession hath great power with God, the rich man then supplieth all things to the poor man without wavering.
6. But the poor man being supplied by the rich maketh intercession for him, thanking

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God for him that gave to him. And the other is still more zealous to assist the poor man, that he may be continuous in his life: for he knoweth that the intercession of the poor man is acceptable and rich before God.

7. They both then accomplish their work; the poor man maketh intercession, wherein he is rich [which he received of the Lord]; this he rendereth again to the Lord Who supplieth him with it. The rich man too in like manner furnisheth to the poor man, nothing doubting, the riches which he received from the Lord. And this work great and acceptable with God, because (the rich man) hath understanding concerning his riches, and worketh for the poor man from the bounties of the Lord, and accomplisheth the ministration of the Lord rightly.
8. In the sight of men then the elm seemeth not to bear fruit, and they know not, neither perceive, that if there cometh a drought the elm having water nutureth the vine, and the vine having a constant supply of water beareth fruit two fold, both for itself and for the elm. So likewise the poor, by interceding with the Lord for the rich, establish their riches, and again the rich, supplying their needs to the poor, establish their souls.
9. So then both are made partners in the righteous work. He then that doeth these things shall not be abandoned of God, but shall be written in the books of the living.
10. Blessed are the rich, who understand also that they are enriched from the Lord. For they that have this mind shall be able to do some good work."

### Parable/Similitude III

1. He showed me many trees which had no leaves, but they seemed to me to be, as it were, withered; for they were all alike. And he saith to me; "Seest thou these trees?" "I see them, Sir," I say, "they are all alike, and are withered." He answered and said to me; "These trees that thou seest are they that dwell in this world."
2. "Wherefore then, Sir," say I, "are they as if they were withered, and alike?" "Because," saith he, "neither the righteous are distinguishable, nor the sinners in this world, but they are alike. For this world is winter to the righteous, and they are not distinguishable, as they dwell with the sinners."
3. For as in the winter the trees, having shed their leaves, are alike, and are not distinguishable, which are withered, and which alive, so also in this world neither the just nor the sinners are distinguishable, but they are all alike."

### Parable/Similitude IV

1. He showed me many trees again, some of them sprouting, and others withered, and he saith to me; "Seest thou," saith he, "these trees?" "I see them, Sir," say I, "some of them sprouting, and others withered."
2. "These trees," saith he, "that are sprouting are the righteous, who shall dwell in the world to come; for the world to come is summer to the righteous, but winter to the sinners. When then the mercy of the Lord shall shine forth, then they that serve God shall be made manifest; yea, and all men shall be made manifest."
3. For as in summer the fruits of each several tree are made manifest, and are recognized of what sort they are, so also the fruits of the righteous shall be manifest, and all [even the very smallest] shall be known to be flourishing in that world.
4. But the Gentiles and the sinners, just as thou sawest the trees which were withered, even such shall they be found, withered and unfruitful in that world, and shall be burnt up as fuel, and shall be manifest, because their practice in their life hath been evil. For the sinners shall be burned, because they sinned and repented not; and the Gentiles shall be burned, because they knew not Him that created them."

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5. Do thou therefore bear fruit, that in that summer thy fruit may be known. But abstain from overmuch business, and thou shalt never fall into any sin. For they that busy themselves overmuch, sin much also, being distracted about their business, and in no wise serving their own Lord.
6. How then," saith he, "can such a man ask anything of the Lord and receive it, seeing that he serveth not the Lord? [For] they that serve Him, these shall receive their petitions, but they that serve not the Lord, these shall receive nothing.
7. But if any one work one single action, he is able also to serve the Lord; for his mind shall not be corrupted from (following) the Lord, but he shall serve Him, because he keepeth his mind pure.
8. If therefore thou doest these things, thou shalt be able to bear fruit unto the world to come; yea, and whosoever shall do these things, shall bear fruit."

### Parable/Similitude V

1. As I was fasting and seated on a certain mountain, and giving thanks to the Lord for all that He had done unto me, I see the shepherd seated by me and saying; "Why hast thou come hither in the early morn?" "Because, Sir," say I, "I am keeping a station."
2. "What," saith he, "is a station?" "I am fasting, Sir," say I. "And what," saith he, "is this fast [that ye are fasting]?" "As I was accustomed, Sir," say I, "so I fast."
3. "Ye know not," saith he, "how to fast unto the Lord, neither is this a fast, this unprofitable fast which ye make unto Him." "wherefore, Sir," say I, "sayest thou this?" "I tell thee," saith he, "that this is not a fast, wherein ye think to fast; but I will teach thee what is a complete fast and acceptable to the Lord. Listen," saith he;
4. "God desireth not such a vain fast; for by so fasting unto God thou shalt do nothing for righteousness. But fast thou [unto God] such a fast as this;
5. Do no wickedness in thy life, and serve the Lord with a pure heart; observe His commandments and walk in His ordinances, and let no evil desire rise up in thy heart; but believe God. Then, if thou shalt do these things, and fear Him, and control thyself from every evil deed, thou shalt live unto God; and if thou do these things, thou shalt accomplish a great fast, and one acceptable to God.
6. "Hear the parable which I shall tell thee relating to fasting.
7. A certain man had an estate, and many slaves, and a portion of his estate he planted as a vineyard; and choosing out a certain slave who was trusty and well-pleasing (and) held in honor, he called him to him and saith unto him; "Take this vineyard [which I have planted], and fence it [till I come], but do nothing else to the vineyard. Now keep this my commandment, and thou shalt be free in my house." Then the master of the servant went away to travel abroad.
8. When then he had gone away, the servant took and fenced the vineyard; and having finished the fencing of the vineyard, he noticed that the vineyard was full of weeds.
9. So he reasoned within himself, saying, "This command of my lord I have carried out I will next dig this vineyard, and it shall be neater when it is digged; and when it hath no weeds it will yield more fruit, because not choked by the weeds." He took and digged the vineyard, and all the weeds that were in the vineyard he plucked up. And that vineyard became very neat and flourishing, when it had no weeds to choke it.
10. After a time the master of the servant [and of the estate] came, and he went into the vineyard. And seeing the vineyard fenced neatly, and digged as well, and [all] the weeds plucked up, and the vines flourishing, he rejoiced [exceedingly] at what his servant had done.
11. So he called his beloved son, who was his heir, and the friends who were his

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advisers, and told them what he had commanded his servant, and how much he had found done. And they rejoiced with the servant at the testimony which his master had borne to him.

12. And he saith to them; "I promised this servant his freedom, if he should keep the commandment which I commanded him; but he kept my commandment and did a good work besides to my vineyard, and pleased me greatly. For this work therefore which he has done, I desire to make him joint-heir with my son, because, when the good thought struck him, he did not neglect it, but fulfilled it."
13. In this purpose the son of the master agreed with him, that the servant should be made joint-heir with the son.
14. After some few days, his master made a feast, and sent to him many dainties from the feast. But when the servant received [the dainties sent to him by the master], he took what was sufficient for him, and distributed the rest to his fellow servants.
15. And his fellow-servants, when they received the dainties, rejoiced, and began to pray for him, that he might find greater favor with the master, because he had treated them so handsomely.
16. All these things which had taken place his master heard, and again rejoiced greatly at his deed. So the master called together again his friends and his son, and announced to them the deed that he had done with regard to his dainties which he had received; and they still more approved of his resolve, that his servant should be made joint-heir with his son."
17. I say, "Sir, I understand not these parables, neither can I apprehend them, unless thou explain them for me."
18. "I will explain everything to thee," saith he; "and will show thee whatsoever things I shall speak with thee. Keep the commandments of the Lord, and thou shalt be well-pleasing to God, and shalt be enrolled among the number of them that keep His commandments.
19. But if thou do any good thing outside the commandment of God, thou shalt win for thyself more exceeding glory, and shalt be more glorious in the sight of God than thou wouldest otherwise have been. If then, while thou keepest the commandments of God, thou add these services likewise, thou shalt rejoice, if thou observe them according to my commandment."
20. I say to him, "Sir, whatsoever thou commandest me, I will keep it; for I know that thou art with me." "I will be with thee," saith he, "because thou hast so great zeal for doing good; yea, and I will be with all," saith he, "whosoever have such zeal as this.
21. This fasting," saith he, "if the commandments of the Lord are kept, is very good. This then is the way, that thou shalt keep this fast which thou art about to observe.
22. First of all, keep thyself from every evil word and every evil desire, and purify thy heart from all the vanities of this world. If thou keep these things, this fast shall be perfect for thee.
23. And thus shalt thou do. Having fulfilled what is written, on that day on which thou fastest thou shalt taste nothing but bread and water; and from thy meats, which thou wouldest have eaten, thou shalt reckon up the amount of that day's expenditure, which thou wouldest have incurred, and shalt give it to a widow, or an orphan, or to one in want, and so shalt thou humble thy soul, that he that hath received from thy humiliation may satisfy his own soul, and may pray for thee to the Lord.
24. If then thou shalt so accomplish this fast, as I have commanded thee, thy sacrifice shall be acceptable in the sight of God, and this fasting shall be recorded; and the service so performed is beautiful and joyous and acceptable to the Lord.
25. These things thou shalt so observe, thou and thy children and thy whole household; and, observing them, thou shalt be blessed; yea, and all those, who shall hear and

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- observe them, shall be blessed, and whatsoever things they shall ask of the Lord, they shall receive."
26. I entreated him earnestly, that he would show me the parable of the estate, and of the master, and of the vineyard, and of the servant that fenced the vineyard, [and of the fence,] and of the weeds which were plucked up out of the vineyard, and of the son, and of the friends, the advisers. For I understood that all these things are a parable.
27. But he answered and said unto me; "Thou art exceedingly importunate in enquiries. Thou oughtest not," [saith he,] "to make any enquiry at all; for if it be right that a thing be explained unto thee, it shall be explained." I say to him; "Sir, whatsoever things thou showest unto me and dost not explain, I shall have seen them in vain, and without understanding what they are. In like manner also, if thou speak parables to me and interpret them not, I shall have heard a thing in vain from thee."
28. But he again answered, and said unto me; "Whosoever," saith he, "is a servant of God, and hath his own Lord in his heart, asketh understanding of Him, and receiveth it, and interpreteth every parable, and the words of the Lord which are spoken in parables are made known unto him. But as many as are sluggish and idle in intercession, these hesitate to ask of the Lord.
29. But the Lord is abundant in compassion, and giveth to them that ask of Him without ceasing. But thou who hast been strengthened by the holy angel, and hast received from him such powers of intercession and art not idle, wherefore dost thou not ask understanding of the Lord, and obtain it from Him."
30. I say to him, "Sir, I that have thee with me have (but) need to ask thee and enquire of thee; for thou showest me all things, and speakest with me; but if I had seen or heard them apart from thee I should have asked of the Lord, that they might be shown to me."
31. "I told thee just now," saith he, "that thou art unscrupulous and importunate, in enquiring for the interpretations of the parables. But since thou art so obstinate, I will interpret to thee the parable of the estate and all the accompaniments thereof, that thou mayest make them known unto all. Hear now," saith he, "and understand them.
32. The estate is this world, and the lord of the estate is He that created all things, and set them in order, and endowed them with power; and the servant is the Son of God, and the vines are this people whom He Himself planted;
33. and the fences are the [holy] angels of the Lord who keep together His people; and the weeds, which are plucked up from the vineyard, are the transgressions of the servants of God; and the dainties which He sent to him from the feast are the commandments which He gave to His people through His Son; and the friends and advisers are the holy angels which were first created; and the absence of the master is the time which remaineth over until His coming."
34. I say to him; "Sir, great and marvelous are all things and all things are glorious; was it likely then," say I, "that I could have apprehended them?" "Nay, nor can any other man, though he be full of understanding, apprehend them." "Yet again, Sir," say I, "explain to me what I am about to enquire of thee."
35. "Say on," he saith, "if thou desirest anything." "Wherefore, Sir," say I, "is the Son of God represented in the parable in the guise of a servant?"
36. "Listen," said he; "the Son of God is not represented in the guise of a servant, but is represented in great power and lordship." "How, Sir?" say I; "I comprehend not."
37. "Because," saith he, "God planted the vineyard, that is, He created the people, and delivered them over to His Son. And the Son placed the angels in charge of them, to watch over them; and the Son Himself cleansed their sins, by laboring much and enduring many toils; for no one can dig without toil or labor.

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38. Having Himself then cleansed the sins of His people, He showed them the paths of life, giving them the law which He received from His Father. Thou seest," saith he, "that He is Himself Lord of the people, having received all power from His Father.
39. But how that the lord took his son and the glorious angels as advisers concerning the inheritance of the servant, listen.
40. The Holy Pre-existent Spirit, which created the whole creation, God made to dwell in flesh that He desired. This flesh, therefore, in which the Holy Spirit dwelt, was subject unto the Spirit, walking honorably in holiness and purity, without in any way defiling the Spirit.
41. When then it had lived honorably in chastity, and had labored with the Spirit, and had cooperated with it in everything, behaving itself boldly and bravely, He chose it as a partner with the Holy Spirit; for the career of this flesh pleased [the Lord], seeing that, as possessing the Holy Spirit, it was not defiled upon the earth.
42. He therefore took the son as adviser and the glorious angels also, that this flesh too, having served the Spirit unblamably, might have some place of sojourn, and might not seem to have lost the reward, shall receive a reward for its service; for all flesh, which is found undefiled and unspotted, wherein the Holy Spirit dwelt,
43. Now thou hast the interpretation of this parable also."
44. "I was right glad, Sir," say I, "to hear this interpretation." "Listen now," saith he, "Keep this thy flesh pure and undefiled, that the Spirit which dwelleth in it may bear witness to it, and thy flesh may be justified.
45. See that it never enter into thine heart that this flesh of thine is perishable, and so thou abuse it in some defilement. [For] if thou defile thy flesh, thou shalt defile the Holy Spirit also; but if thou defile the flesh, thou shalt not live."
46. "But if, Sir," say I, "there has been any ignorance in times past, before these words were heard, how shall a man who has defiled his flesh be saved?" "For the former deeds of ignorance," saith he, "God alone hath power to give healing; for all authority is His.
47. [But now keep thyself, and the Lord Almighty, Who is full of compassion, will give healing for thy former deeds of ignorance,] if henceforth thou defile not thy flesh, neither the Spirit, for both share in common, and the one cannot be defiled without the other. Therefore keep both pure, and thou shalt live unto God."

### Parable/Similitude VI

1. As I sat in my house, and glorified the Lord for all things that I had seen, and was considering concerning the commandments, how that they were beautiful and powerful and gladsome and glorious and able to save a man's soul, I said within myself; "Blessed shall I be, if I walk in these commandments; yea, and whosoever shall walk in them shall be blessed."
2. As I spake these things within myself, I see him suddenly seated by me, and saying as follows; "Why art thou of a doubtful mind concerning the commandments, which I commanded thee? They are beautiful. Doubt not at all; but clothe thyself in the faith of the Lord, and thou shalt walk in them. For I will strengthen thee in them.
3. These commandments are suitable for those who meditate repentance; for if they walk not in them, their repentance is in vain.
4. Ye then that repent, cast away the evil doings of this world which crush you; and, by putting on every excellence of righteousness, ye shall be able to observe these commandments, and to add no more to your sins. If then ye add no further sin at all, ye will depart from your former sins. Walk then in these my commandments, and ye shall live unto God. These things have [all] been told you from me."
5. And after he had told these things to me, he saith to me, "Let us go into the country,

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- and I will show thee the shepherds of the sheep." "Let us go, Sir," say I. And we came to a certain plain, and he showeth me a young man, a shepherd, clothed in a light cloak, of saffron color;
6. and he was feeding a great number of sheep, and these sheep were, as it were, well fed and very frisky, and were gladsome as they skipped about hither and thither; and the shepherd himself was all gladsome over his flock; and the very visage of the shepherd was exceedingly gladsome; and he ran about among the sheep.
  7. And he saith to me; "Seest thou this shepherd?" "I see him Sir," I say. "This," saith he, "is the angel of self-indulgence and of deceit. He crusheth the souls of the servants of God, and perverteth them from the truth, leading them astray with evil desires, wherein they perish.
  8. For they forget the commandments of the living God, and walk in vain deceits and acts of self-indulgence, and are destroyed by this angel, some of them unto death, and others unto corruption."
  9. I say to him, "Sir, I comprehend not what means "unto death," and what "unto corruption". "Listen," saith he; "the sheep which thou sawest gladsome and skipping about, these are they who have been turned asunder from God utterly, and have delivered themselves over to the lusts of this world. In these, therefore, there is not repentance unto life. For the Name of God is being blasphemed through them. The life of such persons is death.
  10. But the sheep, which thou sawest not skipping about, but feeding in one place, these are they that have delivered themselves over to acts of self-indulgence and deceit, but have not uttered any blasphemy against the Lord. These then have been corrupted from the truth. In these there is hope of repentance, wherein they can live. Corruption then hath hope of a possible renewal, but death hath eternal destruction."
  11. Again we went forward a little way, and he showeth me a great shepherd like a wild man in appearance, with a white goatskin thrown about him; and he had a kind of wallet on his shoulders, and a staff very hard and with knots in it, and a great whip. And his look was very sour, so that I was afraid of him because of his look.
  12. This shepherd then kept receiving from the young man, the shepherd, those sheep that were frisky and well fed, but not skipping about, and putting them in a certain spot, which was precipitous and covered with thorns and briars, so that the sheep could not disentangle themselves from the thorns and briars, but [became entangled among the thorns and briars.
  13. And so they] pastured entangled in the thorns and briars, and were in great misery with being beaten by him; and he kept driving them about to and fro, and giving them no rest, and all together those sheep had not a happy time.
  14. When then I saw them so lashed with the whip and vexed, I was sorry for their sakes, because they were so tortured and had no rest at all.
  15. I say to the shepherd who was speaking with me; "Sir, who is this shepherd, who is [so] hard-hearted and severe, and has no compassion at all for these sheep?" "This," saith he, "is the angel of punishment, and he is one of the just angels, and presides over punishment.
  16. So he receiveth those who wander away from God, and walk after the lusts and deceits of this life, and punisheth them, as they deserve, with fearful and various punishments."
  17. "I would fain learn, Sir," said I, "of what sort are these various punishments." "Listen," saith he; "the various tortures and punishments are tortures belonging to the present life; for some are punished with losses, and others with want, and others with divers maladies, and others with [every kind] of unsettlement, and others with insults from unworthy persons and with suffering in many other respects.



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18. For many, being unsettled in their plans, set their hands to many things, and nothing ever goes forward with them. And then they say that they do not prosper in their doings, and it doth not enter into their hearts that they have done evil deeds, but they blame the Lord.
19. When then they are afflicted with every kind of affliction, then they are delivered over to me for good instruction, and are strengthened in the faith of the Lord, and serve the Lord with a pure heart the remaining days of their life. But, if they repent, the evil works which they have done rise up in their hearts, and then they glorify God, saying that He is a just Judge, and that they suffered justly each according to his doings. And they serve the Lord thenceforward with a pure heart, and are prosperous in all their doings, receiving from the Lord whatsoever things they may ask; and then they glorify the Lord because they were delivered over unto me, and they no longer suffer any evil thing."
20. I say unto him; "Sir, declare unto me this further matter." "What enquirest thou yet?" saith he. "Whether, Sir," say I, "they that live in self-indulgence and are deceived undergo torments during the same length of time as they live in self-indulgence and are deceived." He saith to me, "They undergo torments for the same length of time."
21. "Then, Sir," say I, "they undergo very slight torments; for those who are living thus in self-indulgence and forget God ought to have been tormented seven-fold."
22. He saith to me, "Thou art foolish, and comprehendest not the power of the torment" "True," say I, "for if I had comprehended it, I should not have asked thee to declare it to me." "Listen," saith he, "to the power of both, [of the self-indulgence and of the torment]."
23. The time of the self-indulgence and deceit is one hour. But an hour of the torment hath the power of thirty days. If then one live in self indulgence and be deceived for one day, and be tormented for one day, the day of the torment is equivalent to a whole year. For as many days then as a man lives in self-indulgence, for so many years is he tormented. Thou seest then," saith he, "that the time of the self-indulgence and deceit is very short, but the time of the punishment and torment is long."
24. "Inasmuch, Sir," say I, "as I do not quite comprehend concerning the time of the deceit and self-indulgence and torment, show me more clearly."
25. He answered and said unto me; "Thy stupidity cleaveth to thee; and thou wilt not cleanse thy heart and serve God Take heed," [saith he,] "lest haply the time be fulfilled, and thou be found in thy foolishness. Listen then," [saith he,] "even as thou wishest, that thou mayest comprehend the matter."
26. He that liveth in self-indulgence and is deceived for one day, and doeth what he wisheth, is clothed in much folly and comprehendeth not the thing which he doeth; for on the morrow he forgetteth what he did the day before. For self-indulgence and deceit have no memories, by reason of the folly, wherewith each is clothed; but when punishment and torment cling to a man for a single day, he is punished and tormented for a whole year long; for punishment and torment have long memories.
27. So being tormented and punished for the whole year, the man remembers at length the self-indulgence and deceit, and perceiveth that it is on their account that he is suffering these ills. Every man, therefore, that liveth in self-indulgence and is deceived, is tormented in this way because, though possessing life, they have delivered themselves over unto death."
28. "What kinds of self-indulgence, Sir," say I, "are harmful?" "Every action," saith he, "is self-indulgence to a man, which he does with pleasure; for the irascible man, when he gives the reins to his passion, is self-indulgent; and the adulterer and the drunkard and the slanderer and the liar and the miser and the defrauder and he that

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doeth things akin to these, giveth the reins to his peculiar passion; therefore he is self-indulgent in his action.

29. All these habits of self-indulgence are harmful to the servants of God; on account of these deceits therefore they so suffer who are punished and tormented.
30. But there are habits of self-indulgence like-wise which save men; for many are self-indulgent in doing good, being carried away by the pleasure it gives to themselves. This self-indulgence then is expedient for the servants of God, and bringeth life to a man of this disposition; but the harmful self-indulgences afore-mentioned bring to men torments and punishments; and if they continue in them and repent not, they bring death upon themselves."

### Parable/Similitude VII

1. After a few days I saw him on the same plain, where also I had seen the shepherds, and he saith to me, "What seekest thou?" "I am here, Sir," say I, "that thou mayest bid the shepherd that punisheth go out of my house; for he afflicteth me much." "It is necessary for thee," saith he, "to be afflicted; for so," saith he, "the glorious angel ordered as concerning thee, for he wisheth thee to be proved." "Why, what so evil thing have I done, Sir," say I, "that I should be delivered over to this angel?"
2. "Listen," saith he. "Thy sins are many, yet not so many that thou shouldest be delivered over to this angel; but thy house has committed great iniquities and sins, and the glorious angel was embittered at their deeds, and for this cause he bade thee be afflicted for a certain time, that they also might repent and cleanse themselves from every lust of this world. When therefore they shall repent and be cleansed, then shall the angel of punishment depart."
3. I say to him; "Sir, if they perpetrated such deeds that the glorious angel is embittered, what have I done?" "They cannot be afflicted otherwise," saith he, "unless thou, the head of the [whole] house, be afflicted; for if thou be afflicted, they also of necessity will be afflicted; but if thou be prosperous, they can suffer no affliction."
4. "But behold, Sir," say I, "they have repented with their whole heart." "I am quite aware myself," saith he, "that they have repented with their whole heart; well, thinkest thou that the sins of those who repent are forgiven forthwith? Certainly not; but the person who repents must torture his own soul, and must be thoroughly humble in his every action, and be afflicted with all the divers kinds of affliction; and if he endure the afflictions which come upon him, assuredly He Who created all things and endowed them with power will be moved with compassion and will bestow some remedy.
5. And this (will God do), if in any way He perceive the heart of the penitent pure from every evil thing. But it is expedient for thee and for thy house that thou shouldest be afflicted now. But why speak I many words to thee? Thou must be afflicted as the angel of the Lord commanded, even he that delivered thee unto me; and for this give thanks to the Lord, in that He deemed thee worthy that I should reveal unto thee beforehand the affliction, that foreknowing it thou might endure it with fortitude."
6. I say to him; "Sir, be thou with me, and I shall be able to endure all affliction [easily]." "I will be with thee," saith he; "and I will ask the angel that punisheth to afflict thee more lightly; but thou shalt be afflicted for a short time, and thou shalt be restored again to thy house. Only continue to be humble and to minister unto the Lord with a pure heart, thou and thy children and thy house, and walk in my commandments which I command thee, and thus it will be possible for thy repentance to be strong and pure.
7. And if thou keep these commandments with thy household, all affliction shall hold

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aloof from thee; yea, and affliction," saith he, "shall hold aloof from all whosoever shall walk in these my commandments."

### Parable/Similitude VIII

1. He showed me a [great] willow, overshadowing plains and mountains, and under the shadow of the willow all have come who are called by the name of the Lord.
2. And by the willow there stood an angel of the Lord, glorious and very tall, having a great sickle, and he was lopping branches from the willow, and giving them to the people that sheltered beneath the willow; and he gave them little rods about a cubit long.
3. And after all had taken the rods, the angel laid aside the sickle, and the tree was sound, just as I had seen it.
4. Then I marvelled within myself, saying, "How is the tree sound after so many branches have been lopped off?" The shepherd saith to me, "Marvel not that the tree remained sound, after so many branches were lopped off but wait until thou seest all things, and it shall be shown to thee what it is."
5. The angel who gave the rods to the people demanded them back from them again, and according as they had received them, so also they were summoned to him, and each of them returned the several rods. But the angel of the Lord took them, and examined them.
6. From some he received the rods withered and eaten as it were by grubs: the angel ordered those who gave up rods like these to stand apart.
7. And others gave them up withered, but not grub-eaten; and these again he ordered to stand apart.
8. And others gave them up half-withered; these also stood apart.
9. And others gave up their rods half-withered and with cracks; these also stood apart.
10. And others gave up their rods green and with cracks; these also stood apart. And others gave up their rods one half withered and one half green; these also stood apart.
11. And others brought their rods two parts of the rod green, and the third part withered; these also stood apart. And others gave them up two parts withered, and the third part green; these also stood apart.
12. And others gave up their rods nearly all green, but a very small portion of their rods was withered, just the end; but they had cracks in them; these also stood apart.
13. And in those of others there was a very small portion green, but the rest of the rods was withered; these also stood apart.
14. And others came bringing their rods green, as they received them from the angel; and the most part of the multitude gave up their rods in this state; and the angel rejoiced exceedingly at these; these also stood apart.
15. And others gave up their rods green and with shoots, these also stood apart; and at these again the angel rejoiced exceedingly.
16. And others gave up their rods green and with shoots; and their shoots had, as it were, a kind of fruit. And those men were exceeding gladsome, whose rods were found in this state. And over them the angel exulted, and the shepherd was very gladsome over them.
17. And the angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought. And crowns were brought, made as it were of palm branches; and he crowned the men that had given up the rods which had the shoots and some fruit, and sent them away into the tower.
18. And the others also he sent into the tower, even those who had given up the rods green and with shoots, but the shoots were without fruit; and he set a seal upon

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them.

19. And all they that went into the tower had the same raiment, white as snow.
20. And those that had given up their rods green as they received them, he sent away, giving them a [white] robe, and seals.
21. After the angel had finished these things, he saith to the shepherd; "I go away; but these thou shalt send away to (their places within) the walls, according as each deserveth to dwell; but examine their rods carefully), and so send them away. But be careful in examining them. Take heed lest any escape thee," saith he. "Still if any escape thee, I will test them at the altar." When he had thus spoken to the shepherd, he departed.
22. And, after the angel had departed, the shepherd saith to me; "Let us take the rods of all and plant them, to see whether any of them shall be able to live." I say unto him, "Sir, these withered things, how can they live?"
23. He answered and said unto me; "This tree is a willow, and this class of trees clingeth to life. If then the rods shall be planted and get a little moisture, many of them will live. And afterwards let us try to pour some water also over them. If any of them shall be able to live, I will rejoice with it; but if it live not, I at least shall not be found neglectful."
24. So the shepherd bade me call them, just as each one of them was stationed. And they came row after row, and they delivered up the rods to the shepherd. And the shepherd took the rods, and planted them in rows, and after he had planted them, he poured much water over them, so that the rods could not be seen for the water.
25. And after he had watered the rods, he saith to me; "Let us go now and after days let us return and inspect all the rods; for He Who created this tree willeth that all those who have received rods from this tree should live. And I myself hope that these little rods, after they have got moisture and been watered, will live the greater part of them."
26. I say to him; "Sir, inform me what this tree is. For I am perplexed herewith, because, though so many branches were cut off, the tree is sound, and nothing appears to have been cut from it; I am therefore perplexed thereat."
27. "Listen," saith he; "this great tree which overshadows plains and mountains and all the earth is the law of God which was given to the whole world; and this law is the Son of God preached unto the ends of the earth. But the people that are under the shadow are they that have heard the preaching, and believed on Him;
28. But the great and glorious angel is Michael, who hath the power over this people and is their captain. For this is he that putteth the law into the hearts of the believers; therefore he himself inspecteth them to whom he gave it, to see whether they have observed it.
29. But thou seest the rods of every one; for the rods are the law. Thou seest these many rods rendered useless, and thou shalt notice all those that have not observed the law, and shalt see the abode of each severally."
30. I say unto him; "Sir, wherefore did he send away some into the tower, and leave others for thee?" "As many," saith he, "as transgressed the law which they received from him, these he left under my authority for repentance; but as many as already satisfied the law and have observed it, these he has under his own authority."
31. "Who then, Sir," say I, "are they that have been crowned and go into the tower?" ("As many," saith he, "as wrestled with the devil and overcame him in their wrestling, are crowned:) these are they that suffered for the law.
32. But the others, who likewise gave up their rods green and with shoots, though not with fruit, are they that were persecuted for the law, but did not suffer nor yet deny their law.
33. But they that gave them up green just as they received them are sober and righteous

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men, who walked altogether in a pure heart and have kept the commandments of the Lord. But all else thou shalt know, when I have examined these rods that have been planted and watered."

34. And after a few days we came to the place, and the shepherd sat down in the place of the angel, while I stood by him. And he saith to me; "Gird thyself with a garment of raw flax, and minister to me." So I girded myself with a clean garment of raw flax made of coarse material.
35. And when he saw me girded and ready to minister to him "Call," saith he, "the men whose rods have been planted, according to the rank as each presented their rods." And I went away to the plain, and called them all; and they stood all of them according to their ranks.
36. He saith to them; "Let each man pluck out his own rod, and bring it to me." Those gave them up first, who had the withered and chipped rods, and they were found accordingly withered and chipped. He ordered them to stand apart.
37. Then those gave them up, who had the withered but not chipped; and some of them gave up the rods green, and others withered and chipped as by grubs. Those then that gave them up green he ordered to stand apart; but those that gave them up withered and chipped he ordered to stand with the first.
38. Then those gave them up who had the half-withered and with cracks; and many of them gave them up green and without cracks; and some gave them up green and with shoots, and fruits on the shoots, such as those had who went into the tower crowned; and some gave them up withered and eaten, and some withered and uneaten, and some such as they were, half-withered and with cracks. He ordered them to stand each one apart, some in their proper ranks, and others apart.
39. Then those gave them up who had their rods green, but with cracks. These all gave them up green, and stood in their own company. And the shepherd rejoiced over these, because they all were changed and had put away their cracks.
40. And those gave them up likewise who had the one half green and the other half withered. The rods of some were found entirely green, of some half-withered, of some withered and eaten, and of some green and with shoots. These were all sent away each to his company.
41. Then those gave them up who had two parts green and the third withered; many of them gave them up green, and many half-withered, and others withered and eaten. These all stood in their own company.
42. Then those gave them up who had two parts withered and the third part green. Many of them gave them up half-withered, but some withered and eaten, others half-withered and with cracks, and a few green. These all stood in their own company.
43. Then those gave them up who had their rods green, but a very small part [withered] and with cracks. Of these some gave them up green, and others green and with shoots. These also went away to their own company.
44. Then those gave them up who had a very small part green and the other parts withered. The rods of these were found for the most part green and with shoots and fruit on the shoots, and others altogether green. At these rods the shepherd rejoiced very [greatly], because they were found so. And these went away each to his own company.
45. After [the shepherd] had examined the rods of all, he saith to me, "I told thee that this tree clingeth to life. Seest thou," saith he, "how many repented and were saved?" "I see, Sir," say I. "It is," saith he, that thou mayest see the abundant compassion of the Lord, how great and glorious it is, and He hath given (His) Spirit to those that are worthy of repentance."
46. "Wherefore then, Sir," say I, "did they not all repent?" "To those, whose heart He

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saw about to become pure and to serve Him with all the heart, to them He gave repentance; but those whose craftiness and wickedness He saw, who intend to repent in hypocrisy, to them He gave not repentance, lest haply they should again profane His name."

47. I say unto him, "Sir, now then show me concerning those that have given up their rods, what manner of man each of them is, and their abode, that when they hear this, they that believed and have received the seal and have broken it and did not keep it sound may fully understand what they are doing, and repent, receiving from thee a seal, and may glorify the Lord, that He had compassion upon them and sent thee to renew their spirits."
48. "Listen," saith he; "those whose rods were found withered and grub-eaten, these are the renegades and traitors to the Church, that blasphemed the Lord in their sins, and still further were ashamed of the Name of the Lord, which was invoked upon them. These then perished altogether unto God. But thou seest how not one of them repented, although they heard the words which thou spakest to them, which I commanded thee. From men of this kind life departed."
49. But those that gave up the withered and undecayed (rods), these also are near them; for they were hypocrites, and brought in strange doctrines, and perverted the servants of God, especially them that had sinned, not permitting them to repent, but persuading them with their foolish doctrines. These then have hope of repenting.
50. But thou seest that many of them have indeed repented from the time when thou spakest to them my commandments; yea, and (others) still will repent. And as many as shall not repent, have lost their life; but as many of them as repented, became good; and their dwelling was placed within the first walls, and some of them even ascended into the tower. Thou seest then," [saith he,] "that repentance from sins bringeth life, but not to repent bringeth death."
51. "But as many as gave up (the rods) half-withered, and with cracks in them, hear also concerning these. Those whose rods were half-withered throughout are the double-minded; for they neither live nor are dead."
52. But those that have them half-withered and cracks in them, these are both double-minded and slanderers, and are never at peace among themselves but always causing dissensions. Yet even to these," [saith he,] "repentance is given. Thou seest," [saith he,] "that some of them have repented; and there is still," saith he, "hope of repentance among them."
53. And as many of them," saith he, "as have repented, have their abode within the tower; but as many of them as have repented tardily shall abide within the walls; and as many as repent not, but continue in their doings, shall die the death."
54. But they that have given up their rods green and with cracks, these were found faithful and good at all times, [but] they have a certain emulation one with another about first places and about glory of some kind or other; but all these are foolish in having (emulation) one with another about first places.
55. Yet these also, when they heard my commandments, being good, purified themselves and repented quickly. They have their habitation, therefore, within the tower. But if any one shall again turn to dissension, he shall be cast out from the tower and shall lose his life."
56. Life is for all those that keep the commandments of the Lord. But in the commandments there is nothing about first places, or about glory of any kind, but about long-suffering and humility in man. In such men, therefore, is the life of the Lord, but in factious and lawless men is death."
57. "But they that gave up their rods half green and half withered, these are they that are mixed up in business and cleave not to the saints. Therefore the one half of them liveth, but the other half is dead."

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58. Many then when they heard my commandments repented. As many then as repented, have their abode within the tower. But some of them altogether stood aloof. These then have no repentance; for by reason of their business affairs they blasphemed the Lord and denied Him. So they lost their life for the wickedness that they committed.
59. But many of them were doubtful-minded. These still have place for repentance, if they repent quickly, and their dwelling shall be within the tower; and if they repent tardily, they shall dwell within the walls; but if they repent not, they too have lost their life.
60. But they that have given up two parts green and the third part withered, these are they that have denied with manifold denials.
61. Many of them therefore repented and departed to dwell inside the tower; but many utterly rebelled from God; these lost their life finally. And some of them were double-minded and caused dissensions. For these then there is repentance, if they repent speedily and continue not in their pleasures; but if they continue in their doings, they likewise procure for themselves death.
62. "But they that have given up their rods two thirds withered and one third green, these are men who have been believers, but grew rich and became renowned among the Gentiles. They clothed themselves with great pride and became high-minded, and abandoned the truth and did not cleave to the righteous, but lived together after the manner of the Gentiles, and this path appeared the more pleasant unto them; yet they departed not from God, but continued in the faith, though they wrought not the works of the faith.
63. Many of them therefore repented, and they had their habitation within the tower.
64. But others at the last living with the Gentiles, and being corrupted by the vain opinions of the Gentiles, departed from God, and worked the works of the Gentiles. These therefore were numbered with the Gentiles.
65. But others of them were doubtful-minded, not hoping to be saved by reason of the deeds that they had done; and others were double-minded and made divisions among themselves. For these then that were double-minded by reason of their doings there is still repentance; but their repentance ought to be speedy, that their dwelling may be within the tower; but for those who repent not, but continue in their pleasures, death is nigh.
66. "But they that gave up their rods green, yet with the extreme ends withered and with cracks; these were found at all times good and faithful and glorious in the sight of God, but they sinned to a very slight degree by reason of little desires and because they had somewhat against one another. But, when they heard my words, the greater part quickly repented, and their dwelling was assigned within the tower.
67. But some of them were double-minded, and some being double-minded made a greater dissension. In these then there is still a hope of repentance, because they were found always good; and hardly shall one of them die.
68. But they that gave up their rods withered, yet with a very small part green, these are they that believed, but practiced the works of lawlessness. Still they never separated from God, but bore the Name gladly, and gladly received into their houses the servants of God. So hearing of this repentance they repented without wavering, and they practice all excellence and righteousness.
69. And some of them even suffer persecution willingly, knowing the deeds that they did. All these then shall have their dwelling within the tower."
70. And after he had completed the interpretations of all the rods, he saith unto me; "Go, and tell all men to repent, and they shall live unto God; for the Lord in His compassion sent me to give repentance to all, though some of them do not deserve it for their deeds; but being long-suffering the Lord willeth them that were called

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through His Son to be saved."

71. I say to him; "Sir, I hope that all when they hear these words will repent; for I am persuaded that each one, when he fully knows his own deeds and fears God, will repent."
72. He answered and said unto me; "As many," [saith he,] "as [shall repent] from their whole heart [and] shall cleanse themselves from all the evil deeds aforementioned, and shall add nothing further to their sins, shall receive healing from the Lord for their former sins, unless they be double-minded concerning these commandments, and they shall live unto God. [But as many," saith he, "as shall add to their sins and walk in the lusts of this world, shall condemn themselves to death.]
73. But do thou walk in my commandments, and live [unto God; yea, and as many as shall walk in them and shall do rightly, shall live unto God.]"
74. Having shown me all these things [and told me them] he saith to me; "Now the rest will I declare (unto thee) after a few days."

### Parable/Similitude IX

1. After I had written down the commandments and parables of the shepherd, the angel of repentance, he came to me and saith to me; "I wish to show thee all things that the Holy Spirit, which spake with thee in the form of the Church, showed unto thee. For that Spirit is the Son of God.
2. For when thou wast weaker in the flesh, it was not declared unto thee through an angel; but when thou wast enabled through the Spirit, and didst grow mighty in thy strength so that thou couldest even see an angel, then at length was manifested unto thee, through the Church, the building of the tower. In fair and seemly manner hast thou seen all things, (instructed) as it were by a virgin; but now thou seest (being instructed) by an angel, though by the same Spirit;
3. yet must thou learn everything more accurately from me. For to this end also was I appointed by the glorious angel to dwell in thy house, that thou mightest see all things mightily, in nothing terrified, even as before."
4. And he took me away into Arcadia, to a certain rounded mountain, and set me on the top of the mountain, and showed me a great plain, and round the plain twelve mountains, the mountains having each a different appearance.
5. The first was black as soot; the second was bare, without vegetation; the third was thorny and full of briars;
6. the fourth had the vegetation half-withered, the upper part of the grass green, but the part by the roots withered, and some of the grass became withered, whenever the sun had scorched it;
7. the fifth mountain had green grass and was rugged; the sixth mountain was full with clefts throughout, some small and some great, and the clefts had vegetation, but the grass was not very luxuriant, but rather as if it had been withered;
8. the seventh mountain had smiling vegetation, and the whole mountain was in a thriving condition, and cattle and birds of every kind did feed upon that mountain; and the more the cattle and the birds did feed, so much the more did the herbage of that mountain flourish. The eighth mountain was full of springs, and every kind of creature of the Lord did drink of the springs on that mountain.
9. the ninth mountain had no water at all, and was entirely desert; and it had in it wild beasts and deadly reptiles, which destroy mankind. The tenth mountain had very large trees and was umbrageous throughout, and beneath the shade lay sheep resting and feeding.
10. the eleventh mountain was thickly wooded all over, and the trees thereon were very productive, decked with divers kinds of fruits, so that one seeing them would desire



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to eat of their fruits. The twelfth mountain was altogether white and its aspect was cheerful; and the mountain was most beautiful in itself.

11. And in the middle of the plain he showed me a great white rock, rising up from the plain. The rock was loftier than the mountains, being four-square, so that it could contain the whole world.
12. Now this rock was ancient, and had a gate hewn out of it; but the gate seemed to me to have been hewed out quite recently. And the gate glistened beyond the brightness of the sun, so that I marvelled at the brightness of the gate.
13. And around the gate stood twelve virgins. The four then that stood at the corners seemed to me to be more glorious (than the rest); but the others likewise were glorious; and they stood at the four quarters of the gate, and virgins stood in pairs between them.
14. And they were clothed in linen tunics and girt about in seemly fashion, having their right shoulders free, as if they intended to carry some burden. Thus were they prepared, for they were very cheerful and eager.
15. After I had seen these things, I marvelled in myself at the greatness and the glory of what I was seeing. And again I was perplexed concerning the virgins, that delicate as they were they stood up like men, as if they intended to carry the whole heaven.
16. And the shepherd saith unto me; "Why questionest thou within thyself and art perplexed, and bringest sadness on thyself? For whatsoever things thou canst not comprehend, attempt them not, if thou art prudent; but entreat the Lord, that thou mayest receive understanding to comprehend them.
17. What is behind thee thou canst not see, but what is before thee thou beholdest. The things therefore which thou canst not see, let alone, and trouble not thyself (about them); but the things which thou seest, these master, and be not over curious about the rest; but I will explain unto thee all things whatsoever I shall show thee. Have an eye therefore to what remaineth."
18. The Building of the Tower: I saw six men come, tall and glorious and alike in appearance and they summoned a multitude of men. And the others also which came were tall men and handsome and powerful. And the six men ordered them to build a tower above the gate. And there arose a great noise from those men who had come to build the tower, as they ran hither and thither round the gate.
19. For the virgins standing round the gate told the men to hasten to build the tower. Now the virgins had spread out their hands, as if they would take something from the men.
20. And the six men ordered stones to come up from a certain deep place, and to go to the building of the tower. And there went up ten stones square and polished, [not] hewn from a quarry.
21. And the six men called to the virgins, and ordered them to carry all the stones which should go unto the building of the tower, and to pass through the gate and to hand them to the men that were about to build the tower.
22. And the virgins laid the first ten stones that rose out of the deep on each other, and they carried them together, stone by stone.
23. And just as they stood together around the gate, in that order they carried them that seemed to be strong enough and had stooped under the corners of the stone, while the others stooped at the sides of the stone. And so they carried all the stones. And they carried them right through the gate, as they were ordered, and handed them to the men for the tower; and these took the stones and builded.
24. Now the building of the tower was upon the great rock and above the gate. Those ten stones then were joined together, and they covered the whole rock. And these formed a foundation for the building of the tower. And [the rock and] the gate supported the whole tower.

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25. And, after the ten stones, other twenty-five stones came up from the deep, and these were fitted into the building of the tower, being carried by the virgins, like the former. And after these thirty-five stones came up. And these likewise were fitted into the tower. And after these came up other forty stones. And these all were put into the building of the tower. So four rows were made in the foundations of the tower.
26. And (the stones) ceased coming up from the deep, and the builders likewise ceased for a little. And again the six men ordered the multitude of the people to bring in stones from the mountains for the building of the tower.
27. They were brought in accordingly from all the mountains, of various colors, shaped by the men, and were handed to the virgins; and the virgins carried them right through the gate, and handed them in for the building of the tower. And when the various stones were placed in the building, they became all alike and white, and they lost their various colors.
28. But some stones were handed in by the men for the building, and these did not become bright; but just as they were placed, such likewise were they found; for they were not handed in by the virgins, nor had they been carried in through the gate. These stones then were unsightly in the building of the tower.
29. Then the six men, seeing the stones that were unsightly in the building, ordered them to be removed and carried [below] into their own place whence they were brought.
30. And they say to the men who were bringing the stones in; "Abstain for your parts altogether from handing in stones for the building; but place them by the tower, that the virgins may carry them through the gate, and hand them in for the building. For if," [say they,] they be not carried in through the gate by the hands of these virgins, they cannot change their colors. Labor not therefore," [say they,] "in vain."
31. And the building was finished on that day, yet was not the tower finally completed, for it was to be carried up [still] higher; and there was a cessation in the building. And the six men ordered the builders to retire for a short time [all of them], and to rest; but the virgins they ordered not to retire from the tower. And methought the virgins were left to guard the tower.
32. And after all had retired [and rested], I say to the shepherd; "How is it, Sir," say I, "that the building of the tower was not completed?" "The tower," he saith, "cannot yet be finally completed, until its master come and test this building, that if any stones be found crumbling, he may change them; for the tower is being built according to His will."
33. "I would fain know, Sir," say I, "what is this building of this tower, and concerning the rock and gate, and the mountains, and the virgins, and the stones that came up from the deep, and were not shaped, but went just as they were into the building;
34. And wherefore ten stones were first placed in the foundations, then twenty-five, then thirty-five, then forty, and concerning the stones that had gone to the building and were removed again and put away in their own place, concerning all these things set my soul at rest, Sir, and explain them to me."
35. "If," saith he, "thou be not found possessed of an idle curiosity, thou shalt know all things. For after a few days we shall come here, and thou shalt see the sequel that overtaketh this tower and shalt understand all the parables accurately."
36. And after a few days we came to the place where we had sat, and he saith to me, "Let us go to the tower; for the owner of the tower cometh to inspect it." And we came to the tower, and there was no one at all by it, save the virgins alone.
37. And the shepherd asked the virgins whether the master of the tower had arrived. And they said that he would be there directly to inspect the building.
38. And, behold, after a little while I see an array of many men coming, and in the midst

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- a man of such lofty stature that he overtopped the tower.
39. And the six men who superintended the building walked with him on the right hand and on the left, and all they that worked at the building were with him, and many other glorious attendants around him. And the virgins that watched the tower ran up and kissed him, and they began to walk by his side round the tower.
  40. And that man inspected the building so carefully, that he felt each single stone; and he held a rod in his hand and struck each single stone that was built in.
  41. And when he smote, some of the stones became black as soot, others mildewed, others cracked, others broke off short, others became neither white nor black, others rough and not fitting in with the other stones, and others with many spots; these were the varied aspects of the stones which were found unsound for the building.
  42. So he ordered all these to be removed from the tower, and to be placed by the side of the tower, and other stones to be brought and put into their place.
  43. And the builders asked him from what mountain he desired stones to be brought and put into their place. And he would not have them brought from the mountains, but ordered them to be brought from a certain plain that was nigh at hand.
  44. And the plain was dug, and stones were found there bright and square, but some of them too were round. And all the stones which there were anywhere in that plain were brought every one of them, and were carried through the gate by the virgins.
  45. And the square stones were hewed, and set in the place of those which had been removed; but the round ones were not placed in the building, because they were too hard to be shaped, and to work on them was slow. So they were placed by the side of the tower, as though they were intended to be shaped and placed in the building; for they were very bright.
  46. So then, having accomplished these things, the glorious man who was lord of the whole tower called the shepherd to him, and delivered unto him all the stones which lay by the side of the tower, which were cast out from the building, and saith unto him;
  47. "Clean these stones carefully, and set them in the building of the tower, these, I mean, which can fit with the rest; but those which will not fit, throw far away from the tower."
  48. Having given these orders to the shepherd, he departed from the tower with all those with whom he had come. And the virgins stood round the tower watching it.
  49. I say to the shepherd, "How can these stones go again to the building of the tower, seeing that they have been disapproved?" He saith unto me in answer; "Seest thou", saith he, "these stones?" I see them, Sir," say I. "I myself," saith he, "will shape the greater part of these stones and put them into the building, and they shall fit in with the remaining stones."
  50. "How, Sir," say I, "can they, when they are chiseled, fill the same space?" He saith unto me in answer, "As many as shall be found small, shall be put into the middle of the building; but as many as are larger, shall be placed nearer the outside, and they will bind them together."
  51. With these words he saith to me, "Let us go away, and after two days let us come and clean these stones, and put them into the building; for all things round the tower must be made clean, lest haply the master come suddenly and find the circuit of the tower dirty, and he be wroth, and so these stones shall not go to the building of the tower, and I shall appear to be careless in my master's sight."
  52. And after two days we came to the tower, and he saith unto me; "Let us inspect all the stones, and see those which can go to the building." I say to him, "Sir, let us inspect them."
  53. And so commencing first we began to inspect the black stones; and just as they were

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- when set-aside from the building, such also they were found. And the shepherd ordered them to be removed from the tower and to be put on one side.
54. Then he inspected those that were mildewed, and he took and shaped many of them, and ordered the virgins to take them up and put them into the building. And the virgins took them up and placed them in the building of the tower in a middle position. But the rest he ordered to be placed with the black ones; for these also were found black.
  55. Then he began to inspect those that had the cracks; and of these he shaped many, and he ordered them to be carried away by the hands of the virgins for the building. And they were placed towards the outside, because they were found to be sounder. But the rest could not be shaped owing to the number of the cracks. For this reason therefore they were cast aside from the building of the tower.
  56. Then he proceeded to inspect the stunted (stones), and many among them were found black, and some had contracted great cracks; and he ordered these also to be placed with those that had been cast aside. But those of them which remained he cleaned and shaped, and ordered to be placed in the building. So the virgins took them up, and fitted them into the middle of the building of the tower; for they were somewhat weak.
  57. Then he began to inspect those that were half white and half black, and many of them were (now) found black; and he ordered these also to be taken up with those that had been cast aside. But all the rest were [found white, and were] taken up by the virgins; for being white they were fitted by [the virgins] them[selves] into the building. But they were placed towards the outside, because they were found sound, so that they could hold together those that were placed in the middle; for not a single one of them was too short.
  58. Then he began to inspect the hard and rough; and a few of them were cast away, because they could not be shaped; for they were found very hard. But the rest of them were shaped [and taken up by the virgins] and fitted into the middle of the building of the tower; for they were somewhat weak.
  59. Then he proceeded to inspect those that had the spots, and of these some few had turned black and were cast away among the rest; but the remainder were found bright and sound, and these were fitted by the virgins into the building; but they were placed towards the outside, owing to their strength.
  60. Then he came to inspect the white and round stones, and he saith unto me; "What shall we do with these stones?" "How do I know, Sir?" say I [And he saith to me,] "Perceivest thou nothing concerning them?"
  61. "I, Sir," say I, "do not possess this art, neither am I a mason, nor can I understand." Seest thou not," saith he, "that they are very round; and if I wish to make them square, very much must needs be chiseled off from them? Yet some of them must of necessity be placed into the building."
  62. "If then, Sir," say I, "it must needs be so, why distress thyself, and why not choose out for the building those thou wilt, and fit them into it?" He chose out from them the large and the bright ones, and shaped them; and the virgins took them up, and fitted them into the outer parts of the building.
  63. But the rest, which remained over, were taken up, and put aside into the plain whence they were brought; they were not however cast away, "Because," saith he, there remaineth still a little of the tower to be builded. And the master of the tower is exceedingly anxious that these stones be fitted into the building, for they are very bright."
  64. So twelve women were called, most beautiful in form, clad in black, [girded about and having the shoulders bare,] with their hair hanging loose. And these women, methought, had a savage look. And the shepherd ordered them to take up the stones

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- which had been cast away from the building, and to carry them off to the same mountains from which also they had been brought;
65. And they took them up joyfully, and carried away all the stones and put them in the place whence they had been taken. And after all the stones had been taken up, and not a single stone still lay round the tower, the shepherd saith unto me; "Let us go round the tower, and see that there is no defect in it." And I proceeded to go round it with him.
  66. And when the shepherd saw that the tower was very comely in the building, he was exceedingly glad; for the tower was so well builded, that when I saw it I coveted the building of it; for it was builded, as it were, of one stone, having one fitting in it. And the stone-work appeared as if hewn out of the rock; for it seemed to me to be all a single stone.
  67. And I, as I walked with him, was glad to see so brave a sight. And the shepherd saith to me; "Go and bring plaster and fine clay, that I may fill up the shapes of the stones that have been taken up and put into the building; for all the circuit of the tower must be made smooth."
  68. And I did as he bade, and brought them to him. "Assist me," saith he, "and the work will speedily be accomplished." So he filled in the shapes of the stones which had gone to the building, and ordered the circuit of the tower to be swept and made clean.
  69. And the virgins took brooms and swept, and they removed all the rubbish from the tower, and sprinkled water, and the site of the tower was made cheerful and very seemly.
  70. The shepherd saith unto me, "All," saith he, "hath now been cleaned. If the lord come to inspect the tower, he hath nothing for which to blame us." Saying this, he desired to go away.
  71. But I caught hold of his wallet, and began to adjure him by the Lord that he would explain to me [all] what he had showed me. He saith to me; "I am busy for a little while, and then I will explain everything to thee. Await me here till I come."
  72. I say to him; "Sir, when I am here alone what shall I do?" "Thou art not alone," saith he; "for these virgins are here with thee." "Commend me then to them," say I. The shepherd calleth them to him and saith to them; "I commend this man to you till I come," and he departed.
  73. So I was alone with the virgins; and they were most cheerful, and kindly disposed to me especially the four of them that were the more glorious in appearance.
  74. The virgins say to me; "Today the shepherd cometh not here." "What then shall I do?" say I. "Stay for him," say they, "till eventide; and if he come, he will speak with thee; but if he come not, thou shalt stay here with us till he cometh."
  75. I say to them; "I will await him till evening, and if he come not, I will depart home and return early in the morning." But they answered and said unto me; "To us thou wast entrusted; thou canst not depart from us."
  76. "Where then," say I, "shall I remain?" "Thou shalt pass the night with us," say they as a brother, not as a husband; for thou art our brother, and henceforward we will dwell with thee; for we love thee dearly." But I was ashamed to abide with them.
  77. And she that seemed to be the chief of them began to kiss and to embrace me; and the others seeing her embrace me, they too began to kiss me, and to lead me round the tower, and to sport with me.
  78. And I had become as it were a younger man, and I commenced myself likewise to sport with them. For some of them began to dance, [others to skip,] others to sing. But I kept silence and walked with them round the tower, and was glad with them.
  79. But when evening came I wished to go away home; but they would not let me go, but detained me. And I stayed the night with them, and I slept by the side of the tower.

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80. For the virgins spread their linen tunics on the ground, and made me lie down in the midst of them, and they did nothing else but pray; and I prayed with them without ceasing, and not less than they. And the virgins rejoiced that I so prayed. And I stayed there with the virgins until the morning till the second hour.
81. Then came the shepherd, and saith to the virgins; "Have ye done him any injury?" "Ask him," say they. I say to him, "Sir, I was rejoiced to stay with them." "On what didst thou sup?" saith he "I supped, Sir," say I, "on the words of the Lord the whole night through." "Did they treat thee well?" saith he. "Yes, Sir," say I.
82. "Now," saith he, "what wouldest thou hear first?" "In the order as thou showedst to me, Sir, from the beginning," say I; "I request thee, Sir, to explain to me exactly in the order that I shall enquire of thee." According as thou desirest," saith he, "even so will I interpret to thee, and I will conceal nothing whatever from thee."
83. "First of all, Sir," say I, "explain this to me. The rock and the gate, what is it?" "This rock," saith he, "and gate is the Son of God." "How, Sir," say I, "is the rock ancient, but the gate recent?" "Listen," saith he, "and understand, foolish man.
84. The Son of God is older than all His creation, so that He became the Father's adviser in His creation. Therefore also He is ancient." "But the gate, why is it recent, Sir?" say I.
85. "Because," saith he, "He was made manifest in the last days of the consummation; therefore the gate was made recent, that they which are to be saved may enter through it into the kingdom of God.
86. Didst thou see," saith he, "that the stones which came through the gate have gone to the building of the tower, but those which came not through it were cast away again to their own place?" "I saw, Sir," say I. "Thus," saith he, "no one shall enter into the kingdom of God, except he receive the name of His Son.
87. For if thou wishest to enter into any city, and that city is walled all round and has one gate only, canst thou enter into that city except through the gate which it hath?" "Why, how, Sir," say I, "is it possible otherwise?" "If then thou canst not enter into the city except through the gate itself, even so," saith he, "a man cannot enter into the kingdom of God except by the name of His Son that is beloved by Him.
88. Didst thou see," saith he, "the multitude that is building the tower?" "I saw it, Sir," say I. "They," saith he, are all glorious angels. With these then the Lord is walled around. But the gate is the Son of God; there is this one entrance only to the Lord. No one then shall enter in unto Him otherwise than through His Son.
89. Didst thou see," saith he, "the six men, and the glorious and mighty man in the midst of them, him that walked about the tower and rejected the stones from the building?" "I saw him, Sir," say I.
90. "The glorious man," saith he, "is the Son of God, and those six are the glorious angels who guard Him on the right hand and on the left. Of these glorious angels not one," saith he, "shall enter in unto God without Him; whosoever shall not receive His name, shall not enter into the kingdom of God."
91. "But the tower," say I, "what is it?" "The tower," saith he, "why, this is the Church.
92. "And these virgins, who are they?" "They," saith he, "are holy spirits; and no man can otherwise be found in the kingdom of God, unless these shall clothe him with their garment; for if thou receive only the name, but receive not the garment from them, thou profitest nothing. For these virgins are powers of the Son of God. If [therefore] thou bear the Name, and bear not His power, thou shalt bear His Name to none effect.
93. And the stones," saith he, "which thou didst see cast away, these bare the Name, but clothed not themselves with the raiment of the virgins." "Of what sort, Sir," say I, "is their raiment?" "The names themselves," saith he, "are their raiment. Whosoever beareth the Name of the Son of God, ought to bear the names of these also; for even

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- the Son Himself beareth the names of these virgins.
94. As many stones," saith he, "as thou sawest enter into the building of the tower, being given in by their hands and waiting for the building, they have been clothed in the power of these virgins.
95. For this cause thou seest the tower made a single stone with the rock. So also they that have believed in the Lord through His Son and clothe themselves in these spirits, shall become one spirit and one body, and their garments all of one color. But such persons as bear the names of the virgins have their dwelling in the tower."
96. "The stones then, Sir," say I, "which are cast aside, wherefore were they cast aside? For they passed through the gate and were placed in the building of the tower by the hands of the virgins." "Since all these things interest thee," saith he, "and thou enquirest diligently, listen as touching the stones that have been cast aside.
97. These all," [saith he,] "received the name of the Son of God, and received likewise the power of these virgins. When then they received these spirits, they were strengthened, and were with the servants of God, and they had one spirit and one body [and one garment]; for they had the same mind, and they wrought righteousness.
98. After a certain time then they were persuaded by the women whom thou sawest clad in black raiment, and having their shoulders bare and their hair loose, and beautiful in form. When they saw them they desired them, and they clothed themselves with their power, but they stripped off from themselves the power of the virgins.
99. They then were cast away from the house of God, and delivered to these (women). But they that were not deceived by the beauty of these women remained in the house of God. So thou hast," saith he, "the interpretation of them that were cast aside."
100. What then, Sir," say I, "if these men, being such as they are, should repent and put away their desire for these women, and return unto the virgins, and walk in their power and in their works? Shall they not enter into the house of God?"
101. "They shall enter," saith he, "if they shall put away the works of these women, and take again the power of the virgins, and walk in their works. For this is the reason why there was also a cessation in the building, that, if these repent, they may go into the building of the tower; but if they repent not, then others will go, and these shall be cast away finally."
102. For all these things I gave thanks unto the Lord, because He had compassion on all that called upon His name, and sent forth the angel of repentance to us that had sinned against Him, and refreshed our spirit, and, when we were already ruined and had no hope of life, restored our life.
103. "Now, Sir," say I, "show me why the tower is not built upon the ground, but upon the rock and upon the gate." "Because thou art senseless," saith he, "and without understanding [thou askest the question]." "I am obliged, Sir," say I, "to ask all questions of thee, because I am absolutely unable to comprehend anything at all; for all are great and glorious and difficult for men to understand."
104. "Listen," saith he. "The name of the Son of God is great and incomprehensible, and sustaineth the whole world. If then all creation is sustained by the Son [of God], what thinkest thou of those that are called by Him, and bear the name of the Son of God, and walk according to His commandments?"
105. Seest thou then what manner of men He sustaineth? Even those that bear His name with their whole heart. He Himself then is become their foundation, and He sustaineth them gladly, because they are not ashamed to bear His name."
106. "Declare to me, Sir," say I, "the names of the virgins, and of the women that are clothed in the black garments." "Hear," saith he, "the names of the more powerful virgins, those that are stationed at the corners.

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107. The first is Faith, and the second, Contenance, and the third, Power, and the fourth, Long-suffering. But the others stationed between them have these names-- Simplicity, Guilelessness, Purity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Understanding, Concord, Love. He that beareth these names and the name of the Son of God shall be able to enter into the kingdom of God.
108. Hear," saith he, "likewise the names of the women that wear the black garments. Of these also four are more powerful than the rest; the first is Unbelief; the second, Intemperance; the third, Disobedience; the fourth, Deceit; and their followers are called, Sadness, Wickedness, Wantonness, Irascibility, Falsehood, Folly, Slander, Hatred. The servant of God that beareth these names shall see the kingdom of God, but shall not enter into it."

This section 109 –118 refers to the 'apostles and teachers' who preached in Hell resulting in the salvation of those who heard.

109. The Ten, the twenty-five, God's prophets and His Ministers who were released from Paradise when Jesus preached there: "But the stones, Sir," say I, "that came from the deep, and were fitted into the building, who are they?" "The first," saith he, "even the ten, that were placed in the foundations, are the first generation; the twenty-five are the second generation of righteous men; the thirty-five are God's prophets and His ministers; the forty are apostles and teachers of the preaching of the Son of God." (note: see IX: 20,25-26. 'The deep' refers to Paradise/Sheol/Hell.)
110. "Wherefore then, Sir," say I, "did the virgins give in these stones also for the building of the tower and carry them through the gate?"
111. "Because these first," saith he, "bore these spirits, and they never separated the one from the other, neither the spirits from the men nor the men from the spirits, but the spirits abode with them till they fell asleep; and if they had not had these spirits with them, they would not have been found useful for the building of this tower."
112. "Show me still further, Sir," say I. "What desirest thou to know besides?" saith he. "Wherefore, Sir," say I, "did the stones come up from the deep, and wherefore were they placed into the building, though they bore these spirits?"
113. "It was necessary for them," saith he, "to rise up through water, that they might be made alive; for otherwise they could not enter into the kingdom of God, except they had put aside the deadness of their [former] life.
114. So these likewise that had fallen asleep received the seal of the Son of God and entered into the kingdom of God. For before a man," saith he, "has borne the name of [the Son of] God, he is dead; but when he has received the seal, he layeth aside his deadness, and resumeth life.
115. The seal then is the water: so they go down into the water dead, and they come up alive. "thus to them also this seal was preached, and they availed themselves of it that they might enter into the kingdom of God." (note: This refers to the covenant saints, prophets and ministers of God who had borne the spirit of God by faith but had never had the opportunity to confess the Name of Jesus so that they could enter through the One Door into Heaven.)
116. The Apostles and Teachers of the Son of God who saved souls from Hell: "Wherefore, Sir," say I, "did the forty stones also come up with them from the deep, though they had already received the seal?" "Because," saith he, "these, the apostles and the teachers who preached the name of the Son of God, after they had fallen asleep in the power and faith of the Son of God, preached also to them that had fallen asleep before them, and themselves gave unto them the seal of the preaching.



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117. **Therefore they went down with them into the water, and came up again. But these went down alive [and again came up alive]; whereas the others that had fallen asleep before them went down dead and came up alive.** *(note: The forty Apostles and teachers of the Son of God were alive when they preached the gospel to the dead souls who had been unable to hear before death.)*
118. **So by their means they were quickened into life, and came to the full knowledge of the name of the Son of God. For this cause also they came up with them, and were fitted with them into the building of the tower and were builded with them, without being shaped; for they fell asleep in righteousness and in great purity. Only they had not this seal. Thou hast then the interpretation of these things also.** "I have, Sir," say I. *(note: This is a very clear reference to apostles and preachers of the early church who preached to those who had died before hearing about Jesus. They preached while alive. They were conscious of what they were doing. Through their intercession, the dead were raised to life in God's Kingdom/Tower and were made a part of the Church. This teaching is quite plain and would have been well known in the early church. The church did not reject it, as being heretical, because the book, Shepherd of Hermas, was very widely read and accepted.)*
119. "Now then, Sir, explain to me concerning the mountains. Wherefore are their forms diverse the one from the other, and various?" "Listen," saith he. "These twelve mountains are [twelve] tribes that inhabit the whole world. To these (tribes) then the Son of God was preached by the Apostles."
120. But explain to me, Sir, why they are various--these mountains--and each has a different appearance." "Listen," saith he. "These twelve tribes which inhabit the whole world are twelve nations; and they are various in understanding and in mind. As various, then, as thou sawest these mountains to be, such also are the varieties in the mind of these nations, and such their understanding. And I will show unto thee the conduct of each."
121. **"First, Sir," say I, "show me this, why the mountains being so various, yet, when their stones were set into the building, became bright and of one color, just like the stones that had come up from the deep."**
122. "Because," saith he, "all the nations that dwell under heaven, when they heard and believed, were called by the one name of [the Son of] God. So having received the seal, they had one understanding and one mind, and one faith became theirs and [one] love, and they bore the spirits of the virgins along with the Name; therefore the building of the tower became of one color, even bright as the sun."
123. But after they entered in together, and became one body, some of them defiled themselves, and were cast out from the society of the righteous, and became again such as they were before, or rather even worse."
124. "How, Sir," say I, "did they become worse, after they had fully known God?" "He that knoweth not God," saith he, "and committeth wickedness, hath a certain punishment for his wickedness; but he that knoweth God fully ought not any longer to commit wickedness, but to do good."
125. If then he that ought to do good committeth wickedness, does he not seem to do greater wickedness than the man that knoweth not God? Therefore they that have not known God, and commit wickedness, are condemned to death; but they that have known God and seen His mighty works, and yet commit wickedness, shall receive a double punishment, and shall die eternally. In this way therefore shall the Church of God be purified.
126. And as thou sawest the stones removed from the tower and delivered over to the evil spirits, they too shall be cast out; and there shall be one body of them that are purified, just as the tower, after it had been purified, became made as it were of

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one stone. Thus shall it be with the Church of God also, after she hath been purified, and the wicked and hypocrites and blasphemers and double-minded and they that commit various kinds of wickedness have been cast out.

127. When these have been cast out, the Church of God shall be one body, one understanding, one mind, one faith, one love. And then the Son of God shall rejoice and be glad in them, for that He hath received back His people pure." "Great and glorious, Sir," say I, "are all these things.
128. Once more, Sir," [say I,] "show me the force and the doings of each one of the mountains, that every soul that trusteth in the Lord, when it heareth, may glorify His great and marvelous and glorious name." "Listen," saith he, "to the variety of the mountains and of the twelve nations.
129. "From the first mountain, which was black, they that have believed are such as these; rebels and blasphemers against the Lord, and betrayers of the servants of God. For these there is no repentance, but there is death. For this cause also they are black; for their race is lawless.
130. And from the second mountain, the bare one, they that believed are such as these; hypocrites and teachers of wickedness. And these then are like the former in not having the fruit of righteousness. For, even as their mountain is unfruitful, so likewise such men as these have a name indeed, but they are void of the faith, and there is no fruit of truth in them. For these then repentance is offered, if they repent quickly; but if they delay, they will have their death with the former."
131. "Wherefore, Sir," say I, "is repentance possible for them, but not for the former? For their doings are almost the same." "On this account," he saith, "is repentance offered for them, because they blasphemed not their Lord, nor became betrayers of the servants of God; yet from desire of gain they played the hypocrite, and taught each other [after] the desires of sinful men. But they shall pay a certain penalty; yet repentance is ordained for them, because they are not become blasphemers or betrayers.
132. "And from the third mountain, which had thorns and briars, they that believed are such as these; some of them are wealthy and others are entangled in many business affairs. The briars are the wealthy, and the thorns are they that are mixed up in various business affairs.
133. These [then, that are mixed up in many and various business affairs,] cleave [not] to the servants of God, but go astray, being choked by their affairs, but the wealthy unwillingly cleave to the servants of God, fearing lest they may be asked for something by them. Such men therefore *shall hardly enter into the kingdom of God*.
134. For as *it is difficult* to walk on briars with bare feet, so also it is difficult for such men *to enter the kingdom of God*.
135. But for all these repentance is possible, but it must be speedy, that in respect to what they omitted to do in the former times, they may now revert to (past) days, and do some good. If then they shall repent and do some good, they shall live unto God; but if they continue in their doings, they shall be delivered over to those women, the which shall put them to death.
136. "And from the fourth mountain, which had much vegetation, the upper part of the grass green and the part towards the roots withered, and some of it dried up by the sun, they that believed are such as these; the double-minded, and they that have the Lord on their lips, but have Him not in their heart.
137. Therefore their foundations are dry and without power, and their words only live, but their works are dead. Such men are neither alive nor dead. They are, therefore, like unto the double-minded; for the double-minded are neither green nor withered; for they are neither alive nor dead.

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138. For as their grass was withered up when it saw the sun, so also the double-minded, when they hear of tribulation, through their cowardice worship idols and are ashamed of the name of their Lord.
139. Such are neither alive nor dead. Yet these also, if they repent quickly, shall be able to live; but if they repent not, they are delivered over already to the women who deprive them of their life.
140. "And from the fifth mountain, which had green grass and was rugged, they that believed are such as these; they are faithful, but slow to learn and stubborn and self-pleasers, desiring to know all things, and yet they know nothing at all.
141. By reason of this their stubbornness, understanding stood aloof from them, and a foolish senselessness entered into them; and they praise themselves as having understanding, and they desire to be self-appointed teachers, senseless though they are.
142. Owing then to this pride of heart many, while they exalted themselves, have been made empty; for a mighty demon is stubbornness and vain confidence. Of these then many were cast away, but some repented and believed, and submitted themselves to those that had understanding, having learnt their own senselessness.
143. Yea, and to the rest that belong to this class repentance is offered; for they did not become wicked, but rather foolish and without understanding. If these then shall repent, they shall live unto God; but if they repent not, they shall have their abode with the women who work evil against them.
144. "But they that believed from the sixth mountain, which had clefts great and small, and in the clefts herbage withered, are such as these;
145. They that have the small clefts, these are they that have aught against one another, and from their backbitings they are withered in the faith; but many of these repented Yea, and the rest shall repent, when they hear my commandments; for their backbitings are but small, and they shall quickly repent.
146. But they that have great clefts, these are persistent in their backbitings and bear grudges, nursing wrath against one another. These then were thrown right away from the tower and rejected from its building. Such persons therefore shall with difficulty live.
147. If God and our Lord, Who ruleth over all things and hath the authority over all His creation, beareth no grudge against them that confess their sins, but is propitiated, doth man, who is mortal and full of sins, bear a grudge against man, as though he were able to destroy or save him?
148. I say unto you--I, the angel of repentance--unto as many as hold this heresy, put it away from you and repent, and the Lord shall heal your former sins, if ye shall purify yourselves from this demon; but if not, ye shall be delivered unto him to be put to death.
149. " And from the seventh mountain, on which was herbage green and smiling, and the whole mountain thriving, and cattle of every kind and the fowls of heaven were feeding on the herbage on that mountain, and the green herbage, on which they fed, only grew the more luxuriant, they that believed are such as these;
150. They were ever simple and guileless and blessed, having nothing against one another, but rejoicing always in the servants of God, and clothed in the Holy Spirit of these virgins, and having compassion always on every man, and out of their labors they supplied every man's need without reproach and without misgiving.
151. The Lord then seeing their simplicity and entire childliness made them to abound in the labors of their hands, and bestowed favor on them in all their doings.
152. But I say unto you that are such--I, the angel of repentance--remain to the end such as ye are, and your seed shall never be blotted out. For the Lord hath put you to the proof, and enrolled you among our number, and your whole seed shall

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- dwell with the Son of God; for of His Spirit did ye receive.
153. "And from the eighth mountain, where were the many springs, and all the creatures of the Lord did drink of the springs, they that believed are such as these;
154. Apostles and teachers, who preached unto the whole world, and who taught the word of the Lord in soberness and purity, and kept back no part at all for evil desire, but walked always in righteousness and truth, even as also they received the Holy Spirit. Such therefore shall have their entrance with the angels.
155. "And from the ninth mountain, which was desert, which had [the] reptiles and wild beasts in it which destroy mankind, they that believed are such as these;
156. They that have the spots are deacons that exercised their office ill, and plundered the livelihood of widows and orphans, and made gain for themselves from the ministrations which they had received to perform. If then they abide in the same evil desire, they are dead and there is no hope of life for them; but if they turn again and fulfill their ministrations in purity, it shall be possible for them to live.
157. But they that are mildewed, these are they that denied and turned not again unto their Lord, but having become barren and desert, because they cleave not unto the servants of God but remain alone, they destroy their own souls.
158. For as a vine left alone in a hedge, if it meet with neglect, is destroyed and wasted by the weeds, and in time becometh wild and is no longer useful to its owner, so also men of this kind have given themselves up in despair and become useless to their Lord, by growing wild.
159. To these then repentance cometh, unless they be found to have denied from the heart; but if a man be found to have denied from the heart, I know not whether it is possible for him to live.
160. And this I say not in reference to these days, that a man after denying should receive repentance; for it is impossible for him to be saved who shall now deny his Lord; but for those who denied Him long ago repentance seemeth to be possible. If a man therefore will repent, let him do so speedily before the tower is completed; but if not, he shall be destroyed by the women and put to death.
161. And the stunted, these are the treacherous and backbiters; and the wild beasts which thou sawest on the mountain are these. For as wild beasts with their venom poison and kill a man, so also do the words of such men poison and kill a man.
162. These then are broken off short from their faith through the conduct which they have in themselves; but some of them repented and were saved; and the rest that are of this kind can be saved, if they repent; but if they repent not, they shall meet their death from those women of whose power they are possessed.
163. "And from the tenth mountain, where were trees sheltering certain sheep, they that believed are such as these;
164. Bishops, hospitable persons, who gladly received into their houses at all times the servants of God without hypocrisy. [These bishops] at all times without ceasing sheltered the needy and the widows in their ministration and conducted themselves in purity at all times.
165. These [all] then shall be sheltered by the Lord forever. They therefore that have done these things are glorious in the sight of God, and their place is even now with the angels, if they shall continue unto the end serving the Lord.
166. "And from the eleventh mountain, where were trees full of fruit, decked with divers kinds of fruits, they that believed are such as these;
167. They that suffered for the Name [of the Son of God], who also suffered readily with their whole heart, and yielded up their lives."
168. "Wherefore then, Sir," say I, "have all the trees fruits, but some of their fruits are more beautiful than others?" "Listen," saith he; "all as many as ever suffered for

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- the Name's sake are glorious in the sight of God, and the sins of all these were taken away, because they suffered for the name of the Son of God. Now here why their fruits are various, and some surpassing others.
169. "As many," saith he, "as were tortured and denied not, when brought before the magistry, but suffered readily, these are the more glorious in the sight of the Lord; their fruit is that which surpasseth. But as many as become cowards, and were lost in uncertainty, and considered in their hearts whether they should deny or confess, and yet suffered, their fruits are less, because this design entered into their heart; for this design is evil, that a servant should deny his own lord.
170. See to it, therefore, ye who entertain this idea, lest this design remain in your hearts, and ye die unto God. But ye that suffer for the Name's sake ought to glorify God, because God deemed you worthy that ye should bear this name, and that all your sins should be healed.
171. Reckon yourselves blessed therefore; yea, rather think that ye have done a great work, if any of you shall suffer for God's sake. The Lord bestoweth life upon you, and ye perceived it not; for your sins weighed you down, and if ye had not suffered for the Name [of the Lord], ye had died unto God by reason of your sins.
172. These things I say unto you that waver as touching denial and confession. Confess that ye have the Lord, lest denying Him ye be delivered into prison.
173. If the Gentiles punish their slaves, if any one deny his lord, what think ye the Lord will do unto you, He who has authority over all things? Away with these designs from your hearts, that ye may live forever unto God."
174. "And from the twelfth mountain, which was white, they that believed are such as these; they that are as very babes, into whose heart no guile entereth, neither learnt they what wickedness is, but they remained as babes forever.
175. Such as these then dwell without doubt in the kingdom of God, because they defiled the commandments of God in nothing, but continued as babes all the days of their life in the same mind.
176. As many of you therefore as shall continue," saith he, "and shall be as infants not having guile, shall be glorious [even] than all them that have been mentioned before; for all infants are glorious in the sight of God, and stand first in His sight. Blessed then are ye, as many as have put away wickedness from you, and have clothed yourselves in guilelessness: ye shall live unto God cheifest of all."
177. After he had finished the parables of the mountains, I say unto him, "Sir, now explain to me concerning the stones that were taken from the plain and placed in the building in the room of the stones that were taken from the tower, and concerning the round (stones) which were placed in the building, and concerning those that were still round".
178. "Hear," saith he, "likewise concerning all these things. The stones which were taken from the plain and placed in the building of the tower in the room of those that were rejected, are the roots of this white mountain.
179. When then they that believed from this mountain were all found guiltless, the lord of the tower ordered these from the roots of the mountain to be put into the building of the tower. For He knew that if these stones should go into the building [of the tower], they would remain bright and not one of them would turn black.
180. But if he added (stones) from other mountains, he would have been obliged to visit the tower again, and to purify it. Now all these have been found white, who have believed and who shall believe; for they are of the same kind. Blessed is this kind, for it is innocent!
181. Hear now likewise concerning those round and bright stones. All these are from the white mountain. Now here wherefore they have been found round. Their riches have darkened and obscured them a little from the truth.

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182. When therefore the Lord perceived their mind, 'that they could favor the truth,' and likewise remain good, He commanded their possessions to be cut off from them, yet not to be taken away altogether, so that they might be able to do some good with that which hath been left to them, and might live unto God for that they come of a good kind. So therefore they have been cut away a little, and placed in the building of this tower".
183. "But the other (stones), which have remained round and have not been fitted into the building, because they have not yet received the seal, have been replaced in their own possession, for they were found very round.
184. For this world and the vanities of their possessions must be cut off from them, and then they will fit into the kingdom of God. For it is necessary that they should enter into the kingdom of God; because the Lord hath blessed this innocent kind. Of this kind then not one shall perish. Yea, even though any one of them being tempted by the most wicked devil have committed any fault, he shall return speedily unto his Lord.
185. Blessed I pronounced you all to be, 'I the angel of repentance', whoever of you are guileless as infants, because your part is good and honorable in the sight of God.
186. Moreover I bid all of you, whoever have received this seal, keep guilelessness, and bear no grudge, and continue not in your wickedness nor in the memory of the offenses of bitterness; but become of one spirit, and heal these evil clefts and take them away from among you, that the owner of the flocks may rejoice concerning them.
187. For he will rejoice, if he find all things whole. But if he find any part of the flock scattered, woe unto the shepherds.
188. For if the shepherds themselves shall have been found scattered, how will they answer for the flocks? Will they say that they were harassed by the flock? No credence will be given them. For it is an incredible thing that a shepherd should be injured by his flock; and he will be punished the more because of his falsehood. And I am the shepherd, and it behoveth me most strongly to render an account for you.
189. "Amend yourselves therefore, while the tower is still in course of building.
190. The Lord dwelleth in men that love peace; for to Him peace is dear; but from the contentious and them that are given up to wickedness He keepeth afar off. Restore therefore to Him your spirit whole as ye received it.
191. For suppose thou hast given to a fuller a new garment whole, and desirest to receive it back again whole, but the fuller give it back to thee torn, wilt thou receive it thus? Wilt thou not at once blaze out and attack him with reproaches, saying; "The garment which I gave thee was whole; wherefore hast thou rent it and made it useless? See, by reason of the rent, which thou hast made in it, it cannot be of use." Wilt thou not then say all this to a fuller even about a rent which he has made in thy garment?
192. If therefore thou art thus vexed in the matter of thy garment, and complainest because thou receivest it not back whole, what thinkest thou the Lord will do to thee, He, Who gave thee the spirit whole, and thou hast made it absolutely useless, so that it cannot be of any use at all to its Lord? For its use began to be useless, when it was corrupted by thee. Will not therefore the Lord of this spirit for this thy deed punish [thee with death]?"
193. "Certainly," I said, "all those, whomsoever He shall find continuing to bear malice, He will punish." "Trample not," said he, "upon His mercy, but rather glorify Him, because He is so long-suffering with your sins, and is not like unto you. Practice then repentance which is expedient for you.
194. "All these things which are written above I, the shepherd, the angel of

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repentance, have declared and spoken to the servants of God. If then ye shall believe and hear my words, and walk in them, and amend your ways, ye shall be able to live. But if ye continue in wickedness and in bearing malice, no one of this kind shall live unto God. All things which were to be spoken by me have (now) been spoken to you."

195. The shepherd said to me, "Hast thou asked me all thy questions?" And I said, "Yes, Sir." "Why then hast thou not enquired of me concerning the shape of the stones placed in the building, in that we filled up their shapes?" And I said, "I forgot, Sir."
196. "Listen now," said he, "concerning them. These are they that have heard my commandments now, and have practiced repentance with their whole heart. So when the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure, and that they could continue therein, he ordered their former sins to be blotted out. These shapes then were their former sins, and they have been chiseled away that they might not appear."

### Parable/Similitude X

1. After I had written out this book completely, the angel who had delivered me to the shepherd came to the house where I was, and sat upon a couch, and the shepherd stood at his right hand. Then he called me, and spake thus unto me;
2. "I delivered thee," said he, "and thy house to this shepherd, that thou mightest be protected by him." "True, Sir," I said "If therefore," said he, "thou desirest to be protected from all annoyance and all cruelty, to have also success in every good work and word, and all the power of righteousness, walk in his commandments, which I have given thee, and thou shalt be able to get the mastery over all wickedness.
3. For if thou keep his commandments, all evil desire and the sweetness of this world shall be subject unto thee; moreover success shall attend thee in every good undertaking. Embrace his gravity and self-restraint, and tell it out unto all men that he is held in great honor and dignity with the Lord, and is a ruler of great authority, and powerful in his office. To him alone in the whole world hath authority over repentance been assigned. Seemeth he to thee to be powerful? Yet ye despise the gravity and moderation which he useth towards you."
4. I say unto him; "Ask him, Sir, himself, whether from the time that he hath been in my house, I have done ought out of order, whereby I have offended him."
5. "I myself know," said he, "that thou hast done nothing out of order, nor art about to do so. And so I speak these things unto thee, that thou mayest persevere. For he hath given a good account of thee unto me. Thou therefore shalt speak these words to others, that they too who have practiced or shall practice repentance may be of the same mind as thou art; and he may give a good report of them to me, and I unto the Lord."
6. "I too, Sir," I say, "declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord; for I hope that all who have sinned in the past, if they hear these things, will gladly repent and recover life."
7. "Continue therefore," said he, "in this ministry, and complete it unto the end. For whosoever fulfill his commandments shall have life; yea such a man (shall have) great honor with the Lord. But whosoever keep not his commandments, fly from their life, and oppose him, and follow not his commandments, but deliver themselves over to death; and each one becometh guilty of his own blood. But I bid thee obey these commandments, and thou shalt have a remedy for thy sins.
8. "Moreover, I have sent these virgins unto thee, that they may dwell with thee; for I

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- have seen that they are friendly towards thee. Thou hast them therefore as helpers, that thou mayest be the better able to keep his commandments; for it is impossible that these commandments be kept without the help of these virgins. I see too that they are glad to be with thee. But I will charge them that they depart not at all from thy house.
9. Only do thou purify thy house; for in a clean house they will gladly dwell. For they are clean and chaste and industrious, and have favor in the sight of the Lord. If, therefore, they shall find thy house pure, they will continue with thee; but if the slightest pollution arise, they will depart from thy house at once. For these virgins love not pollution in any form."
  10. I said unto him, "I hope, Sir, that I shall please them, so that they may gladly dwell in my house for ever; and just as he to whom thou didst deliver me maketh no complaint against me, so they likewise shall make no complaint."
  11. He saith unto the shepherd, "I perceive," saith he, "that he wishes to live as the servant of God, and that he will keep these commandments, and will place these virgins in a clean habitation."
  12. With these words he again delivered me over to the shepherd, and called the virgins, and said to them; "Inasmuch as I see that ye are glad to dwell in this man's house, I commend to you him and his house, that ye depart not at all from his house." But they heard these words gladly.
  13. He said then to me, "Quit you like a man in this ministry; declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord, and thou shalt have favor in this ministry. Whosoever therefore shall walk in these commandments shall live and be happy in his life; but whosoever shall neglect them, shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life."
  14. Charge all men who are able to do right, that they cease not to practice good works; for it is useful for them. I say moreover that every man ought to be rescued from misfortune; for he that hath need, and suffereth misfortune in his daily life, is in great torment and want.
  15. Whosoever therefore rescueth from penury a life of this kind, winneth great joy for himself. For he who is harassed by misfortune of this sort is afflicted and tortured with equal torment as one who is in chains. For many men on account of calamities of this kind, because they can bear them no longer, lay violent hands on themselves. He then who knows the calamity of a man of this kind and rescueth him not, committeth great sin, and becometh guilty of the man's blood.
  16. Do therefore good works, whoever of you have received (benefits) from the Lord, lest, while ye delay to do them, the building of the tower be completed. For it is on your account that the work of the building has been interrupted. Unless then ye hasten to do right, the tower will be completed, and ye shut out."
  17. When then he had finished speaking with me, he rose from the couch and departed, taking with him the shepherd and the virgins. He said however unto me, that he would send the shepherd and the virgins back again to my house.



## Gospel of Nicodemus

### The GOSPEL of NICODEMUS, also called the ACTS of PONTIUS PILATE.

*I have highlighted chapters 13 – 20 as being particularly relevant to the knowledge of the early Church about Jesus' Harrowing of Hell on Holy Saturday. Whether this book is canonical or not, it is of very great antiquity, and is appealed to by several of the ancient Christian Church Fathers.*

The present translation is made from the Gospel of Nicodemus published by J.J. Grynæus in the *Orthodoxographa*, vol. i. tom. ii. p. 643, 1569.

The Gospel of NICODEMUS the disciple, concerning the Sufferings and Resurrection of our Master and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

*Christ accused to Pilate by the Jews of healing on the sabbath, 9 summoned before Pilate by a messenger who does him honour, 20 worshipped by the standards bowing down to him.*

1 ANNAS and Caiaphas, and Summas, and Datam, Gamaliel, Judas, Levi, Nepthalim, Alexander, Cyrus, and other Jews, went to Pilate about Jesus, accusing him with many bad crimes.

2 And said, We are assured that Jesus is the son of Joseph the carpenter, and born of Mary, and that he declares himself the Son of God, and a king; and not only so, but attempts the dissolution of the sabbath, and the laws of our fathers.

3 Pilate replied; What is it which he declares? and what is it which he attempts dissolving?

4 The Jews told him, We have a law which forbids doing cures on the sabbath day; but he cures both the lame and the deaf, those afflicted with the palsy, the blind, and lepers, and demoniacs, on that day by wicked methods.

5 Pilate replied, How can he do this by wicked methods? They answered, He is a conjurer, and casts out devils by the prince of the devils; and so all things become subject to him.

6 Then said Pilate, Casting out devils seems not to be the work of an unclean spirit, but to proceed from the power of God.

7 The Jews replied to Pilate, We entreat your highness to summon him to appear before your tribunal, and hear him yourself.

8 Then Pilate called a messenger and said to him, By what means will Christ be brought hither?

9 Then went the messenger forth, and knowing Christ, worshipped him; and having spread the cloak which he had in his hand upon the ground, he said, Lord, walk upon this, and go in, for the governor calls thee.

10 When the Jews perceived what the messenger had done, they exclaimed (against him) to Pilate, and said, Why did you not give him his summons by a beadle, and not by a messenger? For the messenger, when he saw him, worshipped him, and spread the cloak which he had in his hand upon the ground before him, and said to him, Lord, the governor calls thee.

11 Then Pilate called the messenger, and said, Why hast thou done thus?

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12 The messenger replied, When thou sentest me from Jerusalem to Alexander, I saw Jesus sitting in a mean figure upon a she-ass, and the children of the Hebrews cried out, Hosannah, holding boughs of trees in their hands.

13 Others spread their garments in the way, and said, Save us, thou who art in heaven; blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 Then the Jews cried out, against the messenger, and said, The children of the Hebrews made their acclamations in the Hebrew language; and how couldst thou, who art a Greek, understand the Hebrew?

15 The messenger answered them and said, I asked one of the Jews and said, What is this which the children do cry out in the Hebrew language?

16 And he explained it to me, saying, they cry out Hosannah, which being interpreted, is, O, Lord, save me; or, O Lord, save.

17 Pilate then said to them, Why do you yourselves testify to the words spoken by the children, namely, by your silence? In what has the messenger done amiss? And they were silent.

18 Then the governor said unto the messenger, Go forth and endeavour by any means to bring him in.

19 But the messenger went forth, and did as before; and said, Lord, come in, for the governor calleth thee.

20 And as Jesus was going in by the ensigns, who carried the standards, the tops of them bowed down and worshipped Jesus.

21 Whereupon the Jews exclaimed more vehemently against the ensigns.

22 But Pilate said to the Jews, I know it is not pleasing to you that the tops of the standards did of themselves bow and worship Jesus; but why do ye exclaim against the ensigns, as if they had bowed and worshipped?

23 They replied to Pilate, We saw the ensigns themselves bowing and worshipping Jesus.

24 Then the governor called the ensigns and said unto them, Why did you do thus?

25 The ensigns said to Pilate, We are all Pagans and worship the gods in temples; and how should we think anything about worshipping him? We only held the standards in our hands and they bowed themselves and worshipped him.

26 Then said Pilate to the rulers of the synagogue, Do ye yourselves choose some strong men, and let them hold the standards, and we shall see whether they will then bend of themselves.

27 So the elders of the Jews sought out twelve of the most strong and able old men, and made them hold the standards and they stood in the presence of the governor.

28 Then Pilate said to the messenger, Take Jesus out, and by some means bring him in again. And Jesus and the messenger went out of the hall.

29 And Pilate called the ensigns who before had borne the standards, and swore to them, that if they had not borne the standards in that manner when Jesus before entered in, he would cut off their heads.

30 Then the governor commanded Jesus to come in again.

31 And the messenger did as he had done before, and very much entreated Jesus that he would go upon his cloak, and walk on it, and he did walk upon it, and went in.

32 And when Jesus went in, the standards bowed themselves as before, and worshipped him.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

### CHAP. II.

*Is compassionated by Pilate's wife, 7 charged with being born in fornication. 12 Testimony to the betrothing of his parents. Hatred of the Jews to him.*

1 NOW when Pilate saw this, he was afraid, and was about to rise from his seat.

2 But while he thought to rise, his own wife who stood at a distance, sent to him, saying Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered much concerning him in a vision this night.

3 When the Jews heard this they said to Pilate, Did we not say unto thee, He is a conjuror? Behold, he hath caused thy wife to dream.

4 Pilate then calling Jesus, said, thou hast heard what they testify against thee, and makest no answer?

5 Jesus replied, If they had not a power of speaking, they could not have spoke; but because every one has the command of his own tongue, to speak both good and bad, let him look to it.

6 But the elders of the Jews answered, and said to Jesus, What shall we look to?

7 In the first place, we know this concerning thee, that thou wast born through fornication; secondly, that upon the account of thy birth the infants were slain in Bethlehem; thirdly, that thy father and mother Mary fled into Egypt, because they could not trust their own people.

8 Some of the Jews who stood by spake more favourably, We cannot say that he was born through fornication; but we know that his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, and so he was not born through fornication.

9 Then said Pilate to the Jews who affirmed him to be born through fornication, This your account is not true, seeing there was a betrothment, as they testify who are of your own nation.

10 Annas and Caiaphas spake to Pilate, All this multitude of people is to be regarded, who cry out, that he was born through fornication, and is a conjuror; but they who deny him to be born through fornication, are his proselytes and disciples.

11 Pilate answered Annas and Caiaphas, Who are the proselytes? They answered, They are those who are the children of Pagans, and are not become Jews, but followers of him.

12 Then replied Eleazer, and Asterius, and Antonius, and James, Caras and Samuel, Isaac and Phinees, Crispus and Agrippa, Annas and Judas, We are not proselytes, but children of Jews, and speak the truth, and were present when Mary was betrothed.

13 Then Pilate addressing himself to the twelve men who spake this, said to them, I conjure you by the life of Cæsar, that ye faithfully declare whether he was born through fornication, and those things be true which ye have related.

14 They answered Pilate, We have a law, whereby we are forbid to swear, it being a sin: Let them swear by the life of Cæsar that it is not as we have said, and we will be contented to be put to death.

15 Then said Annas and Caiaphas to Pilate, Those twelve men will not believe that we know him to be basely born, and to be a conjuror, although he pretends that he is the son of God, and a king: which we are so far from believing, that we tremble to hear.

16 Then Pilate commanded every one to go out except the twelve men who said he was not born through fornication, and Jesus to withdraw to a distance, and said to them, Why have the Jews a mind to kill Jesus?

## Gospel of Nicodemus

17 They answered him, They are angry because he wrought cures on the Sabbath day. Pilate said, Will they kill him for good work? They say unto him, Yes, Sir.

### CHAP. III.

*Is exonerated by Pilate. 11 Disputes with Pilate concerning Truth.*

1 THEN Pilate, filled with anger, went out of the hall, and said to the Jews, I call the whole world to witness that I find no fault in that man.

2 The Jews replied to Pilate, If he had not been a wicked person, we had not brought him before thee.

3 Pilate said to them, Do ye take him and try him by your law.

4 Then the Jews said, It is not lawful for us to put any one to death.

5 Pilate said to the Jews, The command, therefore thou shalt not kill, belongs to you, but not to me.

6 And he went again into the hall, and called Jesus by himself, and said to him, Art thou the king of the Jews?

7 And Jesus answering, said to Pilate, Dost thou speak this of thyself, or did the Jews tell it thee concerning me?

8 Pilate answering, said to Jesus, Am I a Jew? The whole nation and rulers of the Jews have delivered thee up to me. What hast thou done?

9 Jesus answering, said, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, and I should not have been delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from hence.

10 Pilate said, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king: to this end was I born, and for this end came I into the world; and for this purpose I came, that I should bear witness to the truth; and every one who is of the truth, heareth my voice.

11 Pilate saith to him, What is truth?

12 Jesus said, Truth is from heaven.

13 Pilate said, Therefore truth is not on earth.

14 Jesus said to Pilate, Believe that truth is on earth among those, who when they have the power of judgment, are governed by truth, and form right judgment.

### CHAP. IV.

*Pilate finds no fault in Jesus. 16 The Jews demand his crucifixion.*

1 THEN Pilate left Jesus in the hall, and went out to the Jews, and said, I find not any one fault in Jesus.

2 The Jews say unto him, But he said, I can destroy the temple of God, and in three days build it up again.

3 Pilate saith unto them, What sort of temple is that of which he speaketh?

4 The Jews say unto him, That which Solomon was forty-six years in building, he said he would destroy, and in three days build up.

5 Pilate said to them again, I am innocent from the blood of that man; do ye look to it.

6 The Jews say to him, His blood be upon us and our children. Then Pilate calling together the elders and scribes, priests and Levites, saith to them privately, Do not act thus; I have found nothing in your charge (against him) concerning his curing sick persons, and breaking the sabbath, worthy of death.

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- 7 The Priests and Levites replied to Pilate, By the life of Cæsar, if any one be a blasphemer, he is worthy of death; but this man hath blasphemed against the Lord.
- 8 Then the governor again commanded the Jews to depart out of the hall; and calling Jesus, said to him, What shall I do with thee?
- 9 Jesus answered him, Do according as it is written.
- 10 Pilate said to him, How is it written?
- 11 Jesus saith to him, Moses and the prophets have prophesied concerning my suffering and resurrection.
- 12 The Jews hearing this, were provoked, and said to Pilate, Why wilt thou any longer hear the blasphemy of that man?
- 13 Pilate saith to them, If these words seem to you blasphemy, do ye take him, bring him to your court, and try him according to your law.
- 14 The Jews reply to Pilate, Our law saith, he shall be obliged to receive nine and thirty stripes, but if after this manner he shall blaspheme against the Lord, he shall be stoned.
- 15 Pilate saith unto them, If that speech of his was blasphemy, do ye try him according to your law.
- 16 The Jews say to Pilate, Our law commands us not to put any one to death: we desire that he may be crucified, because he deserves the death of the cross.
- 17 Pilate saith to them, It is not fit he should be crucified: let him be only whipped and sent away.
- 18 But when the governor looked upon the people that were present and the Jews, he saw many of the Jews in tears, and said to the chief priests of the Jews, All the people do not desire his death.
- 19 The elders of the Jews answered to Pilate, We and all the people came hither for this very purpose, that he should die.
- 20 Pilate saith to them, Why should he die?
- 21 They said to him, Because he declares himself to be the Son of God, and a King.

### CHAP. V.

*Nicodemus speaks in defence of Christ, and relates his miracles. 12 Another Jew, 26 with Veronica, 34 Centurio, and others, testify of other miracles.*

- 1 BUT Nicodemus, a certain Jew, stood before the governor, and said, I entreat thee, O righteous judge, that thou wouldst favour me with the liberty of speaking a few words.
- 2 Pilate said to him, Speak on.
- 3 Nicodemus said, I spake to the elders of the Jews, and the scribes, and priests and Levites, and all the multitude of the Jews, in their assembly; What is it ye would do with this man?
- 4 He is a man who hath wrought many useful and glorious miracles, such as no man on earth ever wrought before, nor will ever work. Let him go, and do him no harm; if he cometh from God, his miracles, (his miraculous cures) will continue; but if from men, they will come to nought.
- 5 Thus Moses, when he was sent by God into Egypt, wrought the miracles which God commanded him, before Pharaoh king of Egypt; and though the magicians of that country, Jannes and Jambres, wrought by their magic the same miracles which Moses did, yet they could not work all which he did;
- 6 And the miracles which the magicians wrought, were not of God, as ye know, O Scribes and Pharisees; but they who wrought them perished, and all who believed them.

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7 And now let this man go; because the very miracles for which ye accuse him, are from God; and he is not worthy of death.

8 The Jews then said to Nicodemus, Art thou become his disciple, and making speeches in his favour?

9 Nicodemus said to them, Is the governor become his disciple also, and does he make speeches for him? Did not Cæsar place him in that high post?

10 When the Jews heard this they trembled, and gnashed their teeth at Nicodemus, and said to him, Mayest thou receive his doctrine for truth, and have thy lot with Christ!

11 Nicodemus replied, Amen; I will receive his doctrine, and my lot with him, as ye have said.

12 ¶ Then another certain Jew rose up, and desired leave of the governor to hear him a few words.

13 And the governor said, Speak what thou hast a mind.

14 And he said, I lay for thirty-eight years by the sheep-pool at Jerusalem, labouring under a great infirmity, and waiting for a cure which should be wrought by the coming of an angel, who at a certain time troubled the water; and whosoever first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

15 And when Jesus saw me languishing there, he said to me, Wilt thou be made whole? And I answered, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool.

16 And he said unto me, Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And I was immediately made whole, and took up my bed and walked.

17 The Jews then said to Pilate, Our Lord Governor, pray ask him what day it was on which he was cured of his infirmity.

18 The infirm person replied, It was on the sabbath.

19 The Jews said to Pilate, Did we not say that he wrought his cures on the sabbath, and cast out devils by the prince of devils?

20 Then another certain Jew came forth, and said, I was blind, could hear sounds, but could not see any one; and as Jesus was going along, I heard the multitude passing by, and I asked what was there?

21 They told me that Jesus was passing by: then I cried out, saying, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. And he stood still, and commanded that I should be brought to him, and said to me, What wilt thou?

22 I said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

23 He said to me, Receive thy sight: and presently I saw, and followed him, rejoicing and giving thanks.

24 Another Jew also came forth, and said, I was a leper, and he cured me by his word only, saying, I will, be thou clean; and presently I was cleansed from my leprosy.

25 And another Jew came forth, and said, I was crooked, and he made me straight by his word.

26 ¶ And a certain woman named Veronica, said, I was afflicted with an issue of blood twelve years, and I touched the hem of his garments, and presently the issue of my blood stopped.

27 The Jews then said, We have a law, that a woman shall not be allowed as an evidence.

28 And, after other things, another Jew said, I saw Jesus invited to a wedding with his disciples, and there was a want of wine in Cana of Galilee;

29 And when the wine was all drunk, he commanded the servants that they should fill six pots which were there with water, and they filled them up to the brim, and he blessed

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them, and turned the water into wine, and all the people drank, being surprised at this miracle.

30 And another Jew stood forth, and said, I saw Jesus teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum; and there was in the synagogue a certain man who had a devil; and he cried out, saying, let me alone; what have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know that thou art the Holy One of God.

31 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, unclean spirit, and come out of the man; and presently he came out of him, and did not at all hurt him.

32 The following things were also said by a Pharisee; I saw that a great company came to Jesus from Galilee and Judaea, and the sea-coast, and many countries about Jordan, and many infirm persons came to him, and he healed them all.

33 And I heard the unclean spirits crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And Jesus strictly charged them, that they should not make him known.

34 ¶ After this another person, whose name was Centurio, said, I saw Jesus in Capernaum, and I entreated him, saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy.

35 And Jesus said to me, I will come and cure him.

36 But I said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant shall be healed.

37 And Jesus said unto me, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And my servant was healed from that same hour.

38 Then a certain nobleman said, I had a son in Capernaum, who lay at the point of death; and when I heard that Jesus was come into Galilee, I went and besought him that he would come down to my house, and heal my son, for he was at the point of death.

39 He said to me, Go thy way, thy son liveth.

40 And my son was cured from that hour.

41 Besides these, also many others of the Jews, both men and women, cried out and said, He is truly the Son of God, who cures all diseases only by his word, and to whom the devils are altogether subject.

42 Some of them farther said, This power can proceed from none but God.

43 Pilate said to the Jews Why are not the devils subject your doctors?

44 Some of them said, The power of subjecting devils can not proceed but from God.

45 But others said to Pilate That he had raised Lazarus from the dead, after he had been four days in his grave.

46 The governor hearing this, trembling said to the multitude of the Jews, What will it profit you to shed innocent blood?

### CHAP. VI.

*Pilate dismayed by the turbulence of the Jews, 5 who demand Barabbas to be released, and Christ to be crucified, 9 Pilate warmly expostulates with them, 20 washes his hands of Christ's blood, 23 and sentences him to be whipped and crucified.*

1 THEN Pilate having called together Nicodemus, and the fifteen men who said that Jesus was not born through fornication, said to them, What shall I do, seeing there is like to be a tumult among the people.

2 They said unto him, We know not; let them look to it who raise the tumult.

3 Pilate then called the multitude again, and said to them, Ye know that ye have a custom, that I should release to you one prisoner at the feast of the Passover;

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4 I have a noted prisoner, a murderer, who is called Barabbas, and Jesus who is called Christ, in whom I find nothing that deserves death; which of them therefore have you a mind that I should release to you?

5 They all cry out, and say, Release to us Barabbas.

6 Pilate saith to them, What then shall I do with Jesus who, is called Christ?

7 They all answer, Let him be crucified.

8 Again they cry out and say to Pilate, You are not the friend of Cæsar, if you release this man? for he hath declared that he is the Son of God, and a king. But are you inclined that he should be king, and not Cæsar?

9 Then Pilate filled with anger said to them, Your nation hath always been seditious, and you are always against those who have been serviceable to you?

10 The Jews replied, Who are those who have been serviceable to us?

11 Pilate answered them, Your God who delivered you from the hard bondage of the Egyptians, and brought you over the Red Sea as though it had been dry land, and fed you in the wilderness with manna and the flesh of quails, and brought water out of the rock, and gave you a law from heaven:

12 Ye provoked him all ways, and desired for yourselves a molten calf, and worshipped it, and sacrificed to it, and said, These are Thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt

13 On account of which your God was inclined to destroy you; but Moses interceded for you, and your God heard him, and forgave your iniquity.

14 Afterwards ye were enraged against, and would have killed your prophets, Moses and Aaron, when they fled to the tabernacle, and ye were always murmuring against God and his prophets.

15 And arising from his judgment seat, he would have gone out; but the Jews all cried out, We acknowledge Cæsar to be king, and not Jesus.

16 Whereas this person, as soon as he was born, the wise men came and offered gifts unto him; which when Herod heard, he was exceedingly troubled, and would have killed him.

17 When his father knew this, he fled with him and his mother Mary into Egypt. Herod, when he heard he was born, would have slain him; and accordingly sent and slew all the children which were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under.

18 When Pilate heard this account, he was afraid; and commanding silence among the people, who made a noise, he said to Jesus, Art thou therefore a king?

19 All the Jews replied to Pilate, he is the very person whom Herod sought to have slain.

20 Then Pilate taking water, washed his hands before the people and said, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; look ye to it .

21 The Jews answered and said, His blood be upon us and our children.

22 Then Pilate commanded Jesus to be brought before him, and spake to him in the following words:

23 Thy own nation hath charged thee as making thyself a king; wherefore I, Pilate, sentence thee to be whipped according to the laws of former governors; and that thou be first bound, then hanged upon a cross in that place where thou art now a prisoner; and also two criminals with thee, whose names are Dimas and Gestas.

CHAP. VII.



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*Manner of Christ's crucifixion with the two thieves.*

1 THEN Jesus went out of the hall, and the two thieves with him.

2 And when they came to the place which is called Golgotha, they stript him of his raiment, and girt him about with a linen cloth, and put a crown of thorns upon his head, and put a reed in his hand.

3 And in like manner did they to the two thieves who were crucified with him, Dimas on his right hand and Gestas on his left.

4 But Jesus said, My Father, forgive them; For they know not what they do.

5 And they divided his garments, and upon his vesture they cast lots.

6 The people in the mean time stood by, and the chief priests and elders of the Jews mocked him, saying, he saved others, let him now save himself if he can; if he be the son of God, let him now come down from the cross.

7 The soldiers also mocked him, and taking vinegar and gall offered it to him to drink, and said to him, If thou art king of the Jews deliver thyself.

8 Then Longinus, a certain soldier, taking a spear, pierced his side, and presently there came forth blood and water.

9 And Pilate wrote the title upon the cross in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek letters, viz. This is the king of the Jews.

10 But one of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus, whose name was Gestas, said to Jesus, If thou art the Christ, deliver thyself and us.

11 But the thief who was crucified on his right hand, whose name was Dimas, answering, rebuked him, and said, Dost not thou fear God, who art condemned to this punishment? We indeed receive rightly and justly the demerit of our actions; but this Jesus, what evil hath he done?

12 After this groaning, he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

13 Jesus answering, said to him, Verily I say unto thee, that this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

### CHAP. VIII.

*Miraculous appearance at his death. 10 The Jews say the eclipse was natural. 12 Joseph of Arimathæa embalms Christ's body and buries it.*

1 AND it was about the sixth hour, and darkness was upon the face of the whole earth until the ninth hour.

2 And while the sun was eclipsed, behold the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom; and the rocks also were rent, and the graves opened, and many bodies of saints, which slept, arose.

3 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, Hely, Hely, lama zabachani? which being interpreted, is, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?

4 And after these things, Jesus said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said this, he gave up the ghost.

5 But when the centurion saw that Jesus thus crying out gave up the ghost, he glorified God, and said, Of a truth this was a just man.

6 And all the people who stood by, were exceedingly troubled at the sight; and reflecting upon what had passed, smote upon their breasts, and then returned to the city of Jerusalem.

7 The centurion went to the governor, and related to him all that had passed;

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8 And when he had heard all these things, he was exceeding sorrowful;  
9 And calling the Jews together, said to them, Have ye seen the miracle of the sun's eclipse, and the other things which came to pass, while Jesus was dying?  
10 Which when the Jews heard, they answered to the governor, The eclipse of the sun happened according to its usual custom.  
11 But all those who were the acquaintance of Christ, stood at a distance, as did the women who had followed Jesus from Galilee, observing all these things.  
12 And behold a certain man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus, but not openly so, for fear of the Jews, came to the governor, and entreated the governor that he would give him leave to take away the body of Jesus from the cross.  
13 And the governor gave him leave.  
14 And Nicodemus came, bringing with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes about a hundred pound weight; and they took down Jesus from the cross with tears, and bound him with linen cloths with spices, according to the custom of burying among the Jews,  
15 And placed him in a new tomb, which Joseph had built, and caused to be cut out of a rock, in which never any man had been put; and they rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre.

### CHAP. IX.

*The Jews angry with Nicodemus; 5 and with Joseph of Arimathæa, 7 whom they imprison.*

1 WHEN the unjust Jews heard that Joseph had begged and buried the body of Jesus, they sought after Nicodemus; and those fifteen men who had testified before the Governor, that Jesus was not born through fornication, and other good persons who had shewn any good actions towards him.

2 But when they all concealed themselves through fear of the Jews Nicodemus alone shewed himself to them, and said, How can such persons as these enter into the synagogue?

3 The Jews answered him, But how durst thou enter into the synagogue who wast a confederate with Christ? Let thy lot be along with him in the other world.

4 Nicodemus answered, Amen; so may it be, that I may have my lot with him in his kingdom.

5 In like manner Joseph, when he came to the Jews, said to them Why are ye angry with me for desiring the body of Jesus of Pilate? Behold, I have put him in my tomb, and wrapped him up in clean linen, and put a stone at the door of the sepulchre:

6 I have acted rightly towards him; but ye have acted unjustly against that just person, in crucifying him, giving him vinegar to drink, crowning him with thorns, tearing his body with whips, and prayed down the guilt of his blood upon you.

7 The Jews at the hearing of this were disquieted, and troubled; and they seized Joseph, and commanded him to be put in custody before the sabbath, and kept there till the sabbath was over.

8 And they said to him, Make confession; for at this time it is not lawful to do thee any harm, till the first day of the week come. But we know that thou wilt not be thought worthy of a burial; but we will give thy flesh to the birds of the air, and the beasts of the earth.

9 Joseph answered, That speech is like the speech of proud Goliath, who reproached the living God in speaking against David. But ye scribes and doctors know that God saith by

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the prophet, Vengeance is mine, and I will repay to you evil equal to that which ye have threatened to me.

10 The God whom you have hanged upon the cross, is able to deliver me out of your hands. All your wickedness will return upon you.

11 For the governor, when he washed his hands, said, I am clear from the blood of this just person. But ye answered and cried out, His blood be upon us and our children. According as ye have said, may ye perish for ever.

12 The elders of the Jews hearing these words, were exceedingly enraged; and seizing Joseph, they put him into a chamber where there was no window; they fastened the door, and put a seal upon the lock;

13 And Annas and Caiaphas placed a guard upon it, and took counsel with the priests and Levites, that they should all meet after the sabbath, and they contrived to what death they should put Joseph.

14 When they had done this, the rulers, Annas and Caiaphas, ordered Joseph to be brought forth.

(¶ *In this place there is a portion of the Gospel lost or omitted, which cannot be supplied.*)

### CHAP. X.

*Joseph's escape. 2 The soldiers relate Christ's resurrection. 18 Christ is seen preaching in Galilee. 21 The Jews repent of their cruelty to him.*

1 WHEN all the assembly heard this, they admired and were astonished, because they found the same seal upon the lock of the chamber, and could not find Joseph.

2 Then Annas and Caiaphas went forth, and while they were all admiring at Joseph's being gone, behold one of the soldiers, who kept the sepulchre of Jesus, spake in the assembly.

3 That while they were guarding the sepulchre of Jesus, there was an earthquake; and we saw an angel of God roll away the stone of the sepulchre and sit upon it;

4 And his countenance was like lightning and his garment like snow; and we became through fear like persons dead.

5 And we heard an angel saying to the women at the sepulchre of Jesus, Do not fear; I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified; he is risen as he foretold.

6 Come and see the place where he was laid; and go presently, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and he will go before you into Galilee; there ye shall see him as he told you.

7 Then the Jews called together all the soldiers who kept the sepulchre of Jesus, and said to them, Who are those women, to whom the angel spoke? Why did ye not seize them?

8 The soldiers answered and said, We know not whom the women were; besides we became as dead persons through fear, and how could we seize those women?

9 The Jews said to them, As the Lord liveth we do not believe you.

10 The soldiers answering said to the Jews, when ye saw and heard Jesus working so many miracles, and did not believe him, how should ye believe us? Ye well said, As the Lord liveth, for the Lord truly does live.

11 We have heard that ye shut up Joseph, who buried the body of Jesus, in a chamber, under a lock which was sealed; and when ye opened it, found him not there.

12 Do ye then produce Joseph whom ye put under guard in the chamber, and we will produce Jesus whom we guarded in the sepulchre.

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13 The Jews answered and said, We will produce Joseph, do ye produce Jesus. But Joseph is in his own city of Arimathæa.

14 The soldiers replied, If Joseph be in Arimathæa, and Jesus in Galilee, we heard the angel inform the women.

15 The Jews hearing this, were afraid, and said among themselves, If by any means these things should become public, then every body will believe in Jesus.

16 Then they gathered a large sum of money, and gave it to the soldiers, saying, Do ye tell the people that the disciples of Jesus came in the night when ye were asleep and stole away the body of Jesus; and if Pilate the governor should hear of this, we will satisfy him and secure you.

17 The soldiers accordingly took the money, and said as they were instructed by the Jews; and their report was spread abroad among the people.

18 ¶ But a certain priest Phinees, Ada a schoolmaster, and a Levite, named Ageus, they three came from Galilee to Jerusalem, and told the chief priests and all who were in the synagogues, saying,

19 We have seen Jesus, whom ye crucified, talking with his eleven disciples, and sitting in the midst of them in Mount Olivet, and saying to them,

20 Go forth into the whole world, preach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and whosoever shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved.

21 And when he had said these things to his disciples, we saw him ascending up to heaven.

22 When the chief priests, and elders, and Levites heard these things, they said to these three men, Give glory to the God of Israel, and make confession to him, whether those things are true, which ye say ye have seen and heard.

23 They answering said, As the Lord of our fathers liveth, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, according as we heard Jesus talking with his disciples, and according as we saw him ascending up to heaven, so we have related the truth to you.

24 And the three men farther answered, and said, adding these words, If we should not own the words which we heard Jesus speak, and that we saw him ascending into heaven, we should be guilty of sin.

25 Then the chief priests immediately rose up, and holding the book of the law in their hands, conjured these men, saying, Ye shall no more hereafter declare those things which ye have spoke concerning Jesus.

26 And they gave them a large sum of money, and sent other persons along with them, who should conduct them to their own country, that they might not by any means make any stay at Jerusalem.

27 Then the Jews did assemble all together, and having expressed the most lamentable concern, said, What is this extraordinary thing which is come to pass in Jerusalem?

28 But Annas and Caiaphas comforted them, saying, Why should we believe the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre of Jesus, in telling us, that an angel rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

29 Perhaps his own disciples told them this, and gave them money that they should say so, and they themselves took away the body of Jesus.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

30 Besides, consider this, that there is no credit to be given to foreigners, because they also took a large sum of us, and they have declared to us according to the instructions which we gave them. They must either be faithful to us, or to the disciples of Jesus.

### CHAP. XI.

*Nicodemus counsels the Jews. 6 Joseph found. 11 Invited by the Jews to return. 19 Relates the manner of his miraculous escape.*

1 THEN Nicodemus arose, and said, Ye say right, O sons of Israel, ye have heard what those three men have sworn by the Law of God, who said, We have seen Jesus speaking with his disciples upon Mount Olivet, and we saw him ascending up to heaven.

2 And the scripture teacheth us that the blessed prophet Elijah was taken up to heaven; and Elisha being asked by the sons of the prophets, Where is our father Elijah? He said to them, that he is taken up to heaven.

3 And the sons of the prophets said to him, Perhaps the spirit hath carried him into one of the mountains of Israel, there perhaps we shall find him. And they besought Elisha, and he walked about with them three days, and they could not find him.

4 And now hear me, O sons of Israel, and let us send men into the mountains of Israel, lest perhaps the spirit hath carried away Jesus, and there perhaps we shall find him, and be satisfied.

5 And the counsel of Nicodemus pleased all the people; and they sent forth men who sought for Jesus, but could not find him: and they returning, said, We went all about, but could not find Jesus, but we have found Joseph in his city of Arimathæa.

6 The rulers hearing this, and all the people, were glad, and praised the God of Israel, because Joseph was found, whom they had shut up in a chamber, and could not find.

7 And when they had formed a large assembly, the chief priests said, By what means shall we bring Joseph to us to speak with him?

8 And taking a piece of paper, they wrote to him, and said, Peace be with thee, and all thy family. We know that we have offended against God and thee. Be pleased to give a visit to us your fathers, for we were perfectly surprised at your escape from prison.

9 We know that it was malicious counsel which we took against thee, and that the Lord took care of thee, and the Lord himself delivered thee from our designs. Peace be unto thee, Joseph, who art honourable among all the people.

10 And they chose seven of Joseph's friends, and said to them, When ye come to Joseph, salute him in peace, and give him this letter.

11 Accordingly, when the men came to Joseph, they did salute him in peace, and gave him the letter.

12 And when Joseph had read it, he said, Blessed be the Lord God, who didst deliver me from the Israelites, that they could not shed my blood. Blessed be God, who has protected me under thy wings.

13 And Joseph kissed them, and took them into his house. And on the morrow, Joseph mounted his ass, and went along with them to Jerusalem.

14 And when all the Jews heard these things, they went out to meet him, and cried out, saying, Peace attend thy coming hither, father Joseph.

15 To which he answered, Prosperity from the Lord attend all the people.

16 And they all kissed him; and Nicodemus took him to his house, having prepared a large entertainment.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

17 But on the morrow, being a preparation-day, Annas, and Caiaphas, and Nicodemus, said to Joseph, Make confession to the God of Israel, and answer to us all those questions which we shall ask thee;

18 For we have been very much troubled, that thou didst bury the body of Jesus; and that when we had locked thee in a chamber, we could not find thee; and we have been afraid ever since, till this time of thy appearing among us. Tell us therefore before God, all that came to pass.

19 Then Joseph answering, said, Ye did indeed put me under confinement, on the day of preparation, till the morning.

20 But while I was standing at prayer in the middle of the night, the house was surrounded with four angels; and I saw Jesus as the brightness of the sun, and fell down upon the earth for fear.

21 But Jesus laying hold on my hand, lifted me from the ground, and the dew was then sprinkled upon me; but he, wiping my face, kissed me, and said unto me, Fear not, Joseph; look upon me, for it is I.

22 Then I looked upon him, and said, Rabboni Elias! He answered me, I am not Elias, but Jesus of Nazareth, whose body thou didst bury.

23 I said to him, Shew me the tomb in which I laid thee.

24 Then Jesus, taking me by the hand, led me unto the place where I laid him, and shewed me the linen clothes, and napkin which I put round his head. Then I knew that it was Jesus, and worshipped him, and said, Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord.

25 Jesus again taking me by the hand, led me to Arimathæa to my own house, and said to me, Peace be to thee; but go not out of thy house till the fortieth day; but I must go to my disciples.

### CHAP. XII.

*The Jews astonished and confounded. 17 Simeon's two sons, Charinus and Lenthius, rise from the dead at Christ's crucifixion. 19 Joseph proposes to get them to relate the mysteries of their resurrection. 21 They are sought and found, 22 brought to the synagogue, 23 privately sworn to secrecy, 25 and undertake to write what they had seen.*

1 WHEN the chief priests and heard all these things, they were astonished, and fell down with their faces on the ground as dead men, and crying out to one another said, What is this extraordinary sign which is come to pass in Jerusalem? We know the father and mother of Jesus.

2 And a certain Levite said, I know many of his relations, religious persons, who are wont to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings to the God of Israel, in the temple, with prayers.

3 And when the high priest Simeon took him up in his arms. he said to him, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

4 Simeon in like manner blessed Mary the mother of Jesus, and said to her, I declare to thee concerning that child; He is appointed for the fall and rising again of many, and for a sign which shall be spoken against.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

5 Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also, and the thoughts of many hearts shall be revealed.

6 Then said all the Jews, Let us send to those three men, who said they saw him talking with his disciples in Mount Olivet.

7 After this, they asked them what they had seen; who answered with one accord, In the presence of the God of Israel we affirm, that we plainly saw Jesus talking with his disciples in Mount Olivet, and ascending up to heaven.

8 Then Annas and Caiaphas took them into separate places, and examined them separately; who unanimously confessed the truth, and said, they had seen Jesus.

9 Then Annas and Caiaphas said "Our law saith, By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established."

10 But what have we said? The blessed Enoch pleased God, and was translated by the word of God; and the burying-place of the blessed Moses is known.

11 But Jesus was delivered to Pilate, whipped, crowned with thorns, spit upon, pierced with a spear, crucified, died upon the cross, and was buried, and his body the honorable Joseph buried in a new sepulchre, and he testifies that he saw him alive.

12 And besides these men have declared, that they saw him talking with his disciples in Mount Olivet, and ascending up to heaven.

13 ¶ Then Joseph rising up. said to Annas and Caiaphas, Ye may be justly under a great surprise, that you have been told, that Jesus is alive, and gone up to heaven.

14 It is indeed a thing really surprising, that he should not only himself arise from the dead, but also raise others from their graves, who have been seen by many in Jerusalem. 3

15 And now hear me a little: We all knew the blessed Simeon, the high-priest, who took Jesus when an infant into his arms in the temple.

16 This same Simeon had two sons of his own, and we were all present at their death and funeral.

17 Go therefore and see their tombs, for these are open, and they are risen: and behold, they are in the city of Arimathæa, spending their time together in offices of devotion.

18 Some, indeed, have heard the sound of their voices in prayer, but they will not discourse with any one, but they continue as mute as dead men.

19 But come, let us go to them, and behave ourselves towards them with all due respect and caution. And if we can bring them to swear, perhaps they will tell us some of the mysteries of their resurrection.

20 When the Jews heard this, they were exceedingly rejoiced.

21 Then Annas and Caiaphas, Nicodemus, Joseph, and Gamaliel, went to Arimathæa, but did not find them in their graves; but walking about the city, they found them on their bended knees at their devotions:

22 Then saluting them with all respect and deference to God, they brought them to the synagogue at Jerusalem: and having shut the gates, they took the book of the law of the Lord,

23 And putting it in their hands, swore them by God Adonai, and the God of Israel, who spake to our fathers by the law and the prophets, saying, If ye believe him who raised you from the dead, to be Jesus, tell us what ye have seen, and how ye were raised from the dead.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

24 Charinus and Lenthius, the two sons of Simeon, trembled when they heard these things, and were disturbed, and groaned; and at the same time looking up to heaven, they made the sign of the cross with their fingers on their tongues.

25 And immediately they spake, and said, Give each of us some paper, and we will write down for you all those things which we have seen. And they each sat down and wrote, saying,

### Part II Accounts of Jesus' descent into Hell

#### CHAP. XIII.

*The narrative of Charinus and Lenthius commences. 3 A great light in hell. 7 Simeon arrives, and announces the coming of Christ.*

1 O LORD Jesus and Father, who art God, also the resurrection and life of the dead, give us leave to declare thy mysteries, which we saw after death, belonging to thy cross; for we are sworn by thy name.

2 For thou hast forbid thy servants to declare the secret things, which were wrought by thy divine power in hell.

3 When we were placed with our fathers in the depth of hell, in the blackness of darkness, on a sudden there appeared the colour of the sun like gold, and a substantial purple-coloured light enlightening the place.

4 Presently upon this, Adam, the father of all mankind, with all the patriarchs and prophets, rejoiced and said, That light is the author of everlasting light, who hath promised to translate us to everlasting light.

5 Then Isaiah the prophet cried out, and said, This is the light of the Father, and the Son of God, according to my prophecy, when I was alive upon earth.

6 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim beyond Jordan, a people who walked in darkness, saw a great light; and to them who dwelled in the region of the shadow of death, light is arisen. And now he is come, and hath enlightened us who sat in death.

7 And while we were all rejoicing in the light which shone upon us, our father Simeon came among us, and congratulating all the company, said, Glorify the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God.

8 Whom I took up in my arms when an infant in the temple, and being moved by the Holy Ghost, said to him, and acknowledged, that now mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.

9 All the saints who were in the depth of hell, hearing this, rejoiced the more.

10 Afterwards there came forth one like a little hermit, and was asked by every one, Who art thou?

11 To which he replied, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, John the Baptist, and the prophet of the Most High, who went before his coming to prepare his way, to give the knowledge of salvation to his people for the forgiveness of sins.

12 And I John, when I saw Jesus coming to me, being moved by the Holy Ghost, I said, Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.

13 And I baptized him in the river Jordan, and saw the Holy Ghost descending upon him in the form of a dove, and heard a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.



## Gospel of Nicodemus

14 And now while I was going before him, I came down hither to acquaint you, that the Son of God will next visit us, and, as the day-spring from on high, will come to us, who are in darkness and the shadow of death.

### CHAP. XIV.

*Adam causes Seth to relate what he heard from Michael the archangel, when he sent him to Paradise to entreat God to anoint his head in his sickness.*

1 BUT when the first man our father Adam heard these things, that Jesus was baptized in Jordan, he called out to his son, Seth, and said,

2 Declare to your sons, the patriarchs and prophets, all those things, which thou didst hear from Michael, the archangel, when I sent thee to the gates of Paradise, to entreat God that he would anoint my head when I was sick.

3 Then Seth, coming near to the patriarchs and prophets, said, I Seth, when I was praying to God at the gates of Paradise, beheld the angel of the Lord, Michael appeared unto me saying, I am sent unto thee from the Lord; I am appointed to preside over human bodies.

4 I tell thee Seth, do not pray to God in tears, and entreat him for the oil of the tree of mercy wherewith to anoint thy father Adam for his head-ache;

5 Because thou canst not by any means obtain it till the last day and times, namely, till five thousand and five hundred years be past,

6 Then will Christ, the most merciful Son of God, come on earth to raise again the human body of Adam, and at the same time to raise the bodies of the dead, and when he cometh he will be baptized in Jordan:

7 Then with the oil of his mercy he will anoint all those who believe on him; and the oil of his mercy will continue to future generations, for those who shall be born of the water and the Holy Ghost unto eternal life.

8 And when at that time the most merciful Son of God, Christ Jesus, shall come down on earth, he will introduce our father Adam into Paradise, to the tree of mercy.

9 When all the patriarchs and prophets heard all these things from Seth, they rejoiced more.

### CHAP. XV.

*Quarrel between Satan and the prince of hell concerning the expected arrival of Christ in hell.*

1 WHILE all the saints were vv rejoicing, behold Satan, the prince and captain of death, said to the prince of hell,

2 Prepare to receive Jesus of Nazareth himself, who boasted that he was the Son of God, and yet was a man afraid of death, and said, My soul is sorrowful even to death.

3 Besides he did many injuries to me and to many others; for those whom I made blind and lame and those also whom I tormented with several devils, he cured by his word; yea, and those whom I brought dead to thee, he by force takes away from thee.

4 To this the prince of hell replied to Satan, Who is that so-powerful prince, and yet a man who is afraid of death?

5 For all the potentates of the earth are subject to my power, whom thou broughtest to subjection by thy power.

6 But if he be so powerful in his human nature, I affirm to thee for truth, that he is almighty in his divine nature, and no man can resist his power.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

7 When therefore he said he was afraid of death, he designed to ensnare thee, and unhappy it will be to thee for everlasting ages.

8 Then Satan replying, said to the prince of hell, Why didst thou express a doubt, and wast afraid to receive that Jesus of Nazareth, both thy adversary and mine?

9 As for me, I tempted him and stirred up my old people the Jews with zeal and anger against him?

10 I sharpened the spear for his suffering; I mixed the gall and vinegar, and commanded that he should drink it; I prepared the cross to crucify him, and the nails to pierce through Ibis hands and feet; and now his death is near at hand, I will bring him hither, subject both to thee and me.

11 Then the prince of hell answering, said, Thou saidst to me just now, that he took away the dead from me by force.

12 They who have been kept here till they should live again upon earth, were taken away hence, not by their own power, but by prayers made to God, and their almighty God took them from me.

13 Who then is that Jesus of Nazareth that by his word hath taken away the dead from me without prayer to God?

14 Perhaps it is the same who took away from me Lazarus, after he had been four days dead, and did both stink and was rotten, and of whom I had possession as a dead person, yet he brought him to life again by his power.

15 Satan answering, replied to the prince of hell, It is the very same person, Jesus of Nazareth.

16 Which when the prince of hell heard, he said to him, I adjure thee by the powers which belong to thee and me, that thou bring him not to me.

17 For when I heard of the power of his word, I trembled for fear, and all my impious company were at the same time disturbed;

18 And we were not able to detain Lazarus, but he gave himself a shake, and with all the signs of malice, he immediately went away from us; and the very earth, in which the dead body of Lazarus was lodged, presently turned him out alive.

19 And I know now that he is Almighty God who could perform such things, who is mighty in his dominion, and mighty in his human nature, who is the Saviour of mankind.

20 Bring not therefore this person hither, for he will set at liberty all those whom I hold in prison under unbelief, and bound with the fetters of their sins, and will conduct them to everlasting life.

### CHAP. XVI.

*Christ's arrival at hell-gates; the confusion thereupon. 10 He descends into hell.*

1 AND while Satan and the prince of hell were discoursing thus to each other, on a sudden there was a voice as of thunder and the rushing of winds, saying, Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lift up, O everlasting gates, and the King of Glory shall come in.

2 When the prince of hell heard this, he said to Satan, Depart from me, and begone out of my habitations; if thou art a powerful warrior, fight with the King of Glory. But what hast thou to do with him?

3 And he cast him forth from his habitations.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

4 And the prince said to his impious officers, Shut the brass gates of cruelty, and make them fast with iron bars, and fight courageously, lest we be taken captives.

5 But when all the company of the saints heard this they spake with a loud voice of anger to the prince of hell:

6 Open thy gates that the King of Glory may come in.

7 And the divine prophet David, cried out saying, Did not I when on earth truly prophesy and say, O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

8 For he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder. He hath taken them because of their iniquity, and because of their unrighteousness they are afflicted.

9 After this another prophet, namely, holy Isaiah, spake in like manner to all the saints, did not

I rightly prophesy to you when I was alive on earth?

10 The dead men shall live, and they shall rise again who are in their graves, and they shall rejoice who are in earth; for the dew which is from the Lord shall bring deliverance to them.

11 And I said in another place, O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?

12 When all the saints heard these things spoken by Isaiah, they said to the prince of hell, Open now thy gates, and take away thine iron bars; for thou wilt now be bound, and have no power.

13 Then there was a great voice, as of the sound of thunder saying, Lift up your gates, O princes; and be ye lifted up, ye gates of hell, and the King of Glory will enter in.

14 The prince of hell perceiving the same voice repeated, cried out as though he had been ignorant, Who is that King of Glory?

15 David replied to the prince of hell, and said, I understand the words of that voice, because I spake them by his spirit. And now, as I have above said, I say unto thee, the Lord strong and powerful, the Lord mighty in battle: he is the King of Glory, and he is the Lord in heaven and in earth;

16 He hath looked down to hear the groans of the prisoners, and to set loose those that are appointed to death.

17 And now, thou filthy and stinking prince of hell, open thy gates, that the King of Glory may enter in; for he is the Lord of heaven and earth.

18 While David was saying this, the mighty Lord appeared in the form of a man, and enlightened those places which had ever before been in darkness.

19 And broke asunder the fetters which before could not be broken; and with his invincible power visited those who sate in the deep darkness by iniquity, and the shadow of death by sin.

### CHAP. XVII.

*Death and the devils in great horror at Christ's coming. 13 He tramples on death, seizes the prince of hell, and takes Adam with him to heaven.*

1 IMPIOUS Death and her cruel officers hearing these things, were seized with fear in their several kingdoms, when they saw the clearness of the light,

2 And Christ himself on a sudden appearing in their habitations; they cried out therefore, and said, We are bound by thee; thou seemest to intend our confusion before the Lord.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

3 Who art thou, who hast no sign of corruption, but that bright appearance which is a full proof of thy greatness, of which yet thou seemest to take no notice?

4 Who art thou, so powerful and so weak, so great and so little, a mean and yet a soldier of the first rank, who can command in the form of a servant as a common soldier?

5 The King of Glory, dead and alive, though once slain upon the cross?

6 Who layest dead in the grave, and art come down alive to us, and in thy death all the creatures trembled, and all the stars were moved, and now hast thou thy liberty among the dead, and givest disturbance to our legions?

7 Who art thou, who dost release the captives that were held in chains by original sin, and bringest them into their former liberty?

8 Who art thou, who dost spread so glorious and divine a light over those who were made blind by the darkness of sin?

9 In like manner all the legions of devils were seized with the like horror, and with the most submissive fear cried out, and said,

10 Whence comes it, O thou Jesus Christ, that thou art a man so powerful and glorious in majesty, so bright as to have no spot, and so pure as to have no crime? For that lower world of earth, which was ever till now subject to us, and from whence we received tribute, never sent us such a dead man before, never sent such presents as these to the princes of hell.

11 Who therefore art thou, who with such courage enterest among our abodes, and art not only not afraid to threaten us with the greatest punishments, but also

**endeavourest to rescue all others from the chains in which we hold them?**

12 Perhaps thou art that Jesus, of whom Satan just now spoke to our prince, that by the death of the cross thou wert about to receive the power of death.

13 Then the King of Glory trampling upon death, seized the prince of hell, deprived him of all his power, and took our earthly father Adam with him to his glory.

### CHAP. XVIII.

*Beelzebub, prince of hell, vehemently upbraids Satan for persecuting Christ and bringing him to hell. 4. Christ gives Beelzebub dominion over Satan for ever, as a recompense for taking away Adam and his sons.*

1 THEN the prince of hell took Satan, and with great indication said to him, O thou prince of destruction, author of Beelzebub's defeat and banishment, the scorn of God's angels and loathed by all righteous persons! What inclined thee to act thus?

2 Thou wouldst crucify the King of Glory, and by his destruction, hast made us promises of very large advantages, but as a fool wert ignorant of what thou wast about.

3 For behold now that Jesus of Nazareth, with the brightness of his glorious divinity, puts to flight all the horrid powers of darkness and death;

4 He has broken down our prisons from top to bottom, dismissed all the captives, released all who were bound, and all who were wont formerly to groan under the weight of their torments have now insulted us, and we are like to be defeated by their prayers.

5 Our impious dominions are subdued, and no part of mankind is now left in our subjection, but on the other hand, they all boldly defy us;

6 Though, before, the dead never durst behave themselves insolently towards us, nor, being prisoners, could ever on any occasion be merry.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

7 O Satan, thou prince of all the wicked, father of the impious and abandoned, why wouldest thou attempt this exploit, seeing our prisoners were hitherto always without the least hopes of salvation and life?

8 But now there is not one of them does ever groan, nor is there the least appearance of a tear in any of their faces.

9 O prince Satan, thou great keeper of the infernal regions, all thy advantages which thou didst acquire by the forbidden tree, and the loss of Paradise, thou hast now lost by the wood of the cross;

10 And thy happiness all then expired, when thou didst crucify Jesus Christ the King of Glory.

11 Thou hast acted against thine own interest and mine, as thou wilt presently perceive by those large torments and infinite punishments which thou art about to suffer.

12 O Satan, prince of all evil, author of death, and source of all pride, thou shouldest first have inquired into the evil crimes of Jesus of Nazareth, and then thou wouldest have found that he was guilty of no fault worthy of death.

13 Why didst thou venture, without either reason or justice, to crucify him, and hast brought down to our regions a person innocent and righteous, and thereby hast lost all the sinners, impious and unrighteous persons in the whole world?

14 While the prince of hell was thus speaking to Satan, the King of Glory said to Beelzebub, the prince of hell, Satan, the prince shall be subject to thy dominion for ever, in the room of Adam and his righteous sons, who are mine.

### CHAP. XIX.

*Christ takes Adam by the hand, the rest of the saints join hands, and they all ascend with him to Paradise.*

1 THEN Jesus stretched forth his hand, and said, Come to me, all ye my saints, who were created in my image, who were condemned by the tree of forbidden fruit, and by the devil and death;

2 Live now by the wood of my cross; the devil, the prince of this world, is overcome, and death is conquered.

3 Then presently all the saints were joined together under the hand of the most high God; and the Lord Jesus laid hold on Adam's hand and said to him, Peace be to thee, and all thy righteous posterity, which is mine.

4 Then Adam, casting himself at the feet of Jesus, addressed himself to him, with tears, in humble language, and a loud voice, saying,

5 I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

6 O Lord thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

7 Sing unto the Lord, all ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. For his anger endureth but for a moment; in his favour is life.

8 In like manner all the saints, prostrate at the feet of Jesus, said with one voice, Thou art come, O Redeemer of the world, and hast actually accomplished all things, which thou didst foretell by the law and thy holy prophets.

9 Thou hast redeemed the living by thy cross, and art come down to us, that by the death of the cross thou mightest deliver us from hell, and by thy power from death.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

10 O, Lord, as thou hast put the ensigns of thy glory in heaven, and hast set up the sign of thy redemption, even thy cross on earth! so, Lord, set the sign of the victory of thy cross in hell, that death may have dominion no longer.

11 Then the Lord stretching forth his hand, made the sign of the cross upon Adam, and upon all his saints.

12 And taking hold of Adam by his right hand, he ascended from hell, and all the saints of God followed him.

13 Then the royal prophet David boldly cried, and said, O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things; his right hand and his holy arm have gotten him the victory.

14 The Lord hath made known his salvation, his righteousness hath he openly shewn in the sight of the heathen.

15 And the whole multitude of saints answered, saying, This honour have all his saints, Amen, Praise ye the Lord.

16 Afterwards, the prophet Habakkuk cried out, and said, Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for the salvation of thy people.

17 And all the saints said, Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord; for the Lord hath enlightened us. This is our God for ever and ever; he shall reign over us to everlasting ages, Amen.

18 In like manner all the prophets spake the sacred things of his praise, and followed the Lord.

### CHAP. XX.

*Christ delivers Adam to Michael the archangel. 3. They meet Enoch and Elijah in heaven, 5 and also the blessed thief, who relates how he came to Paradise.*

1 THEN the Lord holding Adam by the hand, delivered him to Michael the archangel; and he led them into Paradise, filled with mercy and glory;

2 And two very ancient men met them, and were asked by the saints, Who are ye, who have not yet been with us in hell, and have had your bodies placed in Paradise?

3 One of them answering, said, I am Enoch, who was translated by the word of God: and this man who is with me, is Elijah the Tishbite, who was translated in a fiery chariot.

4 Here we have hitherto been, and have not tasted death, but are now about to return at the coming of Antichrist, being armed with divine signs and miracles, to engage with him in battle, and to be slain by him at Jerusalem, and to be taken up alive again into the clouds, after three days and a half.

5 And while the holy Enoch and Elias were relating this, behold there came another man in a miserable figure carrying the sign of the cross upon his shoulders.

6 And when all the saints saw him, they said to him, Who art thou? For thy countenance is like a thief's; and why dost thou carry a cross upon thy shoulders?

7 To which he answering, said, Ye say right, for I was a thief who committed all sorts of wickedness upon earth.

8 And the Jews crucified me with Jesus; and I observed the surprising things which happened in the creation at the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus.

9 And I believed him to be the Creator of all things, and the Almighty King; and I prayed to him, saying, Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom.

10 He presently regarded my supplication, and said to me, Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

## Gospel of Nicodemus

11 And he gave me this sign of the cross saying, Carry this, and go to Paradise; and if the angel who is the guard of Paradise will not admit thee, shew him the sign of the cross, and say unto him: Jesus Christ who is now crucified, hath sent me hither to thee.

12 When I did this, and told the angel who is the guard of Paradise all these things, and he heard them, he presently opened the gates, introduced me, and placed me on the right-hand in Paradise.

13 Saying, Stay here a little time, till Adam, the father of all mankind, shall enter in, with all his sons, who are the holy and righteous servants of Jesus Christ, who was crucified.

14 When they heard all this account from the thief, all the patriarchs said with one voice, Blessed be thou, O Almighty God, the Father of everlasting goodness, and the Father of mercies, who hast shewn such favour to those who were sinners against him, and hast brought them to the mercy of Paradise, and hast placed them amidst thy large and spiritual provisions, in a spiritual and holy life. Amen.

### CHAP. XXI.

*Charinus and Lenthius being only allowed three days to remain on earth, 7 deliver in their narratives, which miraculously correspond; they vanish, 13 and Pilate records these transactions.*

1 THESE are the divine and sacred mysteries which we saw and heard. I, Charinus and Lenthius are not allowed to declare the other mysteries of God, as the archangel Michael ordered us,

2 Saying, ye shall go with my brethren to Jerusalem, and shall continue in prayers, declaring and glorifying the resurrection of Jesus Christ, seeing he hath raised you from the dead at the same time with himself.

3 And ye shall not talk with any man, but sit as dumb persons till the time come when the Lord will allow you to relate the mysteries of his divinity.

4 The archangel Michael farther commanded us to go beyond Jordan, to an excellent and fat country, where there are many who rose from the dead along with us for the proof of the resurrection of Christ.

5 For we have only three days allowed us from the dead, who arose to celebrate the Passover of our Lord with our parents, and to bear our testimony for Christ the Lord, and we have been baptized in the holy river of Jordan. And now they are not seen by any one.

6 This is as much as God allowed us to relate to you; give ye therefore praise and honour to him, and repent, and he will have mercy upon you. Peace be to you from the Lord God Jesus Christ, and the Saviour of us all. Amen, Amen, Amen.

7 And after they had made an end of writing and had wrote in two distinct pieces of paper, Charinus gave what he wrote into the hands of Annas, and Caiaphas, and Gamaliel.

8 Lenthius likewise gave what he wrote into the hands of Nicodemus and Joseph; and immediately they were changed into exceeding white forms and were seen no more.

9 But what they had wrote was found perfectly to agree, the one not containing one letter more or less than the other.

10 When all the assembly of the Jews heard all these surprising relations of Charinus and Lenthius, they said to each other, Truly all these things were wrought by God, and blessed be the Lord Jesus for ever and ever, Amen.

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11 And they went about with great concern, and fear, and trembling, and smote upon their breasts and went away every one to his home.

12 But immediately all these things which were related by the Jews in their synagogues concerning Jesus, were presently told by Joseph and Nicodemus to the governor.

13 And Pilate wrote down all these transactions, and placed all these accounts in the public records of his hall.

### CHAP. XXII.

*Pilate goes to the temple; calls together the rulers, and scribes, and doctors. 2 Commands the gates to be shut; orders the book of the Scripture; and causes the Jews to relate what they really knew concerning Christ. 14 They declare that they crucified Christ in ignorance, and that they now know him to be the Son of God, according to the testimony of the Scriptures; which, after they put him to death, they are examined.*

1 AFTER these things Pilate went to the temple of the Jews, and called together all the rulers and scribes, and doctors of the law, and went with them into a chapel of the temple.

2 And commanding that all the gates should be shut, said to them, I have heard that ye have a certain large book in this temple; I desire you therefore, that it may be brought before me.

3 And when the great book, carried by four ministers of the temple, and adorned with gold and precious stones, was brought, Pilate said to them all, I adjure you by the God of your Fathers, who made and commanded this temple to be built, that ye conceal not the truth from me.

4 Ye know all the things which are written in that book; tell me therefore now, if ye in the Scriptures have found any thing of that Jesus whom ye crucified, and at what time of the world he ought to have come: shew it me.

5 Then having sworn Annas and Caiaphas, they commanded all the rest who were with them to go out of the chapel.

6 And they shut the gates of the temple and of the chapel, and said to Pilate, Thou hast made us to swear, O judge, by the building of this temple, to declare to thee that which is true and right.

7 After we had crucified Jesus, not knowing that he was the Son of God, but supposing he wrought his miracles by some magical arts, we summoned a large assembly in this temple.

8 And when we were deliberating among one another about the miracles which Jesus had wrought, we found many witnesses of our own country, who declared that they had seen him alive after his death, and that they heard him discoursing with his disciples, and saw him ascending unto the height of the heavens, and entering into them;

9 And we saw two witnesses, whose bodies Jesus raised from the dead, who told us of many strange things which Jesus did among the dead, of which we have a written account in our hands.

10 And it is our custom annually to open this holy book before an assembly, and to search there for the counsel of God.

11 And we found in the first of the seventy books, where Michael the archangel is speaking to the third son of Adam the first man, an account that after five thousand five hundred years, Christ the most beloved Son of God was come on earth,



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12 And we further considered, that perhaps he was the very God of Israel who spoke to Moses, Thou shalt make the ark of the testimony; two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

13 By these five cubits and a half for the building of the ark of the Old Testament, we perceived and knew that in five thousand years and a half (one thousand) years, Jesus Christ was to come in the ark or tabernacle of a body;

14 And so our scriptures testify that he is the son of God, and the Lord and King of Israel.

15 And because after his suffering, our chief priests were surprised at the signs which were wrought by his means, we opened that book to search all the generations down to the generation of Joseph and Mary the mother of Jesus, supposing him to be of the seed of David;

16 And we found the account of the creation, and at what time he made the heaven and the earth and the first man Adam, and that from thence to the flood, were two thousand, two hundred and twelve years.

17 And from the flood to Abraham, nine hundred and twelve. And from Abraham to Moses, four hundred and thirty. And from Moses to David the king, five hundred and ten.

18 And from David to the Babylonish captivity, five hundred years. And from the Babylonish captivity to the incarnation of Christ, four hundred years.

19 The sum of all which amounts to five thousand and half (a thousand).

20 And so it appears, that Jesus whom we crucified, is Jesus Christ the Son of God, and true and Almighty God. Amen.

*In the name of the Holy Trinity, thus end the Acts of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which the Emperor Theodosius the Great found at Jerusalem, in the hall of Pontius Pilate among the public records; the things were acted in the nineteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, Emperor of the Romans, and in the seventeenth year of the government of Herod the son of Herod king of Galilee, on the eighth of the calends of April, which is the twenty-third day of the month of March, in the CCIIId Olympiad, when Joseph and Caiaphas were Rulers of the Jews; being a History written in Hebrew by Nicodemus, of what happened after our Saviour's crucifixion.*

### Acts of Pilate: part ii. The Descent into Hell

This writing, or the nucleus of it, the story of the Descent into Hell, was not originally part of the Acts of Pilate. It is, apart from its setting, probably an older document. When it was first attached to the Acts of Pilate is uncertain.

The object of this prefatory note is to say that we have the text in three forms, however, only the Latin A text will be given here. For a complete listing of all three texts see M.R. James apocryphal New Testament. <sup>iv</sup>

#### I (XVII)

1 And Joseph arose and said unto Annas and Caiaphas: Truly and of right do ye marvel because ye have heard that Jesus hath been seen alive after death, and that he hath

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ascended into heaven. Nevertheless, it is more marvelous that he rose not alone from the dead, but did raise up alive many other dead out of their sepulchres, and they have been seen of many in Jerusalem. And now hearken unto me; for we all know the blessed Simeon, the high priest which received the child Jesus in his hands in the temple. And this Simeon had two sons, brothers in blood and we all were at their falling asleep and at their burial. Go therefore and look upon their sepulchres: for they are open, because they have risen, and behold they are in the city of Arimathaea dwelling together in prayer. And indeed, men hear them crying out, yet they speak with no man, but are silent as dead men. But come, let us go unto them and with all honour and gentleness bring them unto us, and if we adjure them, perchance they will tell us concerning the mystery of their rising again.

2 When they heard these things, they all rejoiced. And Annas and Caiaphas, Nicodemus and Joseph and Gamaliel went and found them not in their sepulchre, but they went unto the city of Arimathaea, and found them there, kneeling on their knees and giving themselves unto prayer. And they kissed them, and with all reverence and in the fear of God they brought them to Jerusalem into the synagogue. And they shut the doors and took the law of the Lord and put it into their hands, and adjured them by the God Adonai and the God of Israel which spake unto our fathers by the prophets, saying: Believe ye that it is Jesus which raised you from the dead? Tell us how ye have arisen from the dead.

3 And when Karinus and Leucius heard this adjuration, they trembled in their body and groaned, being troubled in heart. And looking up together unto heaven they made the seal of the cross with their fingers upon their tongues, and forthwith they spake both of them, saying: Give us each a volume of paper, and let us write that which we have seen and heard. And they gave them unto them, and each of them sat down and wrote, saying:

II (XVIII)

1 O Lord Jesu Christ, the life and resurrection of the dead (alt. resurrection of the dead and the life of the living), suffer us to speak of the mysteries of thy majesty which thou didst perform after thy death upon the cross, inasmuch as we have been adjured by thy Name. For thou didst command us, thy servants, to tell no man the secrets of thy divine majesty which thou wroughtest in hell.

Now when we were set together with all our fathers in the deep, in obscurity of darkness, on a sudden there came a golden heat of the sun and a purple and royal light shining upon us. And immediately the father of the whole race of men, together with all the patriarchs and prophets, rejoiced, saying: This light is the beginning (author) of everlasting light which did promise to send unto us his co-eternal light. And Esaias cried out and said: This is the light of the Father, even the Son of God, according as I prophesied when I lived upon the earth: The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim beyond Jordan, of Galilee of the Gentiles, the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them did the light shine. And now hath it come and shone upon us that sit in death.

2 And as we all rejoiced in the light which shined upon us, there came unto us our father Simeon, and he rejoicing said unto us: Glorify ye the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; for I received him in my hands in the temple when he was born a child, and being moved of the Holy Ghost I made confession and said unto him: Now have mine eyes seen thy

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salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel. And when they heard these things, the whole multitude of the saints rejoiced yet more.

3 And after that there came one as it were a dweller in the wilderness, and he was inquired of by all: Who art thou? And he answered them and said: I am John, the voice and the prophet of the Most High, which came before the face of his advent to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, for the remission of their sins. And when I saw him coming unto me, being moved of the Holy Ghost, I said: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him that taketh away the sins of the world. And I baptized him in the river of Jordan, and saw the Holy Ghost descending upon him in the likeness of a dove, and heard a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And now have I come before his face, and come down to declare unto you that he is at hand to visit us, even the day spring, the Son of God, coming from on high unto us that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

### III (XIX)

1 And when father Adam that was first created heard this, even that Jesus was baptized in Jordan, he cried out to Seth his son, saying: Declare unto thy sons the patriarchs and the prophets all that thou didst hear from Michael the archangel, when I sent thee unto the gates of paradise that thou mightest entreat God to send thee his angel to give thee the oil of the tree of mercy to anoint my body when I was sick. Then Seth drew near unto the holy patriarchs and prophets, and said: When I, Seth, was praying at the gates of paradise, behold Michael the angel of the Lord appeared unto me, saying: I am sent unto thee from the Lord: it is I that am set over the body of man. And I say unto thee, Seth, vex not thyself with tears, praying and entreating for the oil of the tree of mercy, that thou mayest anoint thy father Adam for the pain of his body: for thou wilt not be able to receive it save in the last days and times, save when five thousand and five hundred (alt. 5,952) years are accomplished: then shall the most beloved Son of God come upon the earth to raise up the body of Adam and the bodies of the dead, and he shall come and be baptized in Jordan. And when he is come forth of the water of Jordan, then shall he anoint with the oil of mercy all that believe on him, and that oil of mercy shall be unto all generations of them that shall be born of water and of the Holy Ghost, unto life eternal. Then shall the most beloved Son of God, even Christ Jesus, come down upon the earth and shall bring in our father Adam into paradise unto the tree of mercy. And when they heard all these things of Seth, all the patriarchs and prophets rejoiced with a great rejoicing.

### IV (XX)

1 And while all the saints were rejoicing, behold Satan the prince and chief of death said unto Hell: Make thyself ready to receive Jesus who boasteth himself that he is the Son of God, whereas he is a man that feareth death, and sayeth: My soul is sorrowful even unto death. And he hath been much mine enemy, doing me great hurt, and many that I had made blind, lame, dumb, leprous, and possessed he hath healed with a word: and some whom I have brought unto thee dead, them hath he taken away from thee.

2 Hell answered and said unto Satan the prince: Who is he that is so mighty, if he be a man that feareth death? for all the mighty ones of the earth are held in subjection by my power, even they whom thou hast brought me subdued by thy power. If, then, thou art mighty, what manner of man is this Jesus who, though he fear death, resisteth thy power? If he be so mighty in his manhood, verily I say unto thee he is almighty in his

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god-head, and no man can withstand his power. And when he saith that he feareth death, he would ensnare thee, and woe shall be unto thee for everlasting ages. But Satan the prince of Tartarus said: Why doubtest thou and fearest to receive this Jesus which is thine adversary and mine? For I tempted him and have stirred up mine ancient people of the Jews with envy and wrath against him. I have sharpened a spear to thrust him through, gall and vinegar have I mingled to give him to drink, and I have prepared a cross to crucify him and nails to pierce him: and his death is nigh at hand, that I may bring him unto thee to be subject unto thee and me.

3 Hell answered and said: Thou hast told me that it is he that hath taken away dead men from me. For there be many which while they lived on the earth have taken dead men from me, yet not by their own power but by prayer to God, and their almighty God hath taken them from me. Who is this Jesus which by his own word without prayer hath drawn dead men from me? Perchance it is he, which by the word of his command did restore to life Lazarus which was four days dead and stank and was corrupt, whom I held here dead. Satan the prince of death answered and said: It is that same Jesus. When Hell heard that he said unto him: I adjure thee by thy strength and mine own that thou bring him not unto me. For at that time I, when I heard the command of his word, did quake and was overwhelmed with fear, and all my ministries with me were troubled. Neither could we keep Lazarus, but he like an eagle shaking himself leaped forth with all agility and swiftness, and departed from us, and the earth also which held the dead body of Lazarus straightway gave him up alive. Wherefore now I know that that man which was able to do these things is a God strong in command and mighty in manhood, and that he is the saviour of mankind. And if thou bring him unto me he will set free all that are here shut up in the hard prison and bound in the chains of their sins that cannot be broken, and will bring them unto the life of his god head for ever.

V (XXI)

1 And as Satan the prince, and Hell, spoke this together, suddenly there came a voice as of thunder and a spiritual cry: Remove, O princes, your gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. When Hell heard that he said unto Satan the prince: Depart from me and go out of mine abode: if thou be a mighty man of war, fight thou against the King of glory. But what hast thou to do with him? And Hell cast Satan forth out of his dwelling. Then said Hell unto his wicked ministers: Shut ye the hard gates of brass and put on them the bars of iron and withstand stoutly, lest we that hold captivity be taken captive.

2 But when all the multitude of the saints heard it, they spake with a voice of rebuking unto Hell: Open thy gates that the King of glory may come in. And David cried out, saying: Did I not when I was alive upon earth, foretell unto you: Let them give thanks unto the Lord, even his mercies and his wonders unto the children of men; who hath broken the gates of brass and smitten the bars of iron in sunder? He hath taken them out of the way of their iniquity. And thereafter in like manner Esaias said: Did not I when I was alive upon earth foretell unto you: The dead shall arise, and they that are in the tombs shall rise again, and they that are in the earth shall rejoice, for the dew which cometh of the Lord is their healing? And again I said: O death, where is thy sting? O Hell, where is thy victory?

3 When they heard that of Esaias, all the saints said unto Hell: Open thy gates: now shalt thou be overcome and weak and without strength. And there came a great voice as of thunder, saying: Remove, O princes, your gates, and be ye lift up ye doors of hell, and

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the King of glory shall come in. And when Hell saw that they so cried out twice, he said, as if he knew it not: Who is the King of glory? And David answered Hell and said: The words of this cry do I know, for by his spirit I prophesied the same; and now I say unto thee that which I said before: The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, he is the King of glory. And: The Lord looked down from heaven that he might hear the groanings of them that are in fetters and deliver the children of them that have been slain. And now, O thou most foul and stinking Hell, open thy gates that the King of glory may come in. And as David spake thus unto Hell, the Lord of majesty appeared in the form of a man and lightened the eternal darkness and brake the bonds that could not be loosed: and the succour of his everlasting might visited us that sat in the deep darkness of our transgressions and in the shadow of death of our sins.

### VI (XXII)

1 When Hell and death and their wicked ministers saw that, they were stricken with fear, they and their cruel officers, at the sight of the brightness of so great light in their own realm, seeing Christ of a sudden in their abode, and they cried out, saying: We are overcome by thee. Who art thou that art sent by the Lord for our confusion? Who art thou that without all damage of corruption, and with the signs (?) of thy majesty unblemished, dost in wrath condemn our power? Who art thou that art so great and so small, both humble and exalted, both soldier and commander, a marvelous warrior in the shape of a bondsman, and a King of glory dead and living, whom the cross bare slain upon it? Thou that didst lie dead in the sepulchre hast come down unto us living and at thy death all creation quaked and all the stars were shaken and thou hast become free among the dead and dost rout our legions. Who art thou that settest free the prisoners that are held bound by original sin and restorest them into their former liberty? Who art thou that sheddest thy divine and bright light upon them that were blinded with the darkness of their sins? After the same manner all the legions of devils were stricken with like fear and cried out all together in the terror of their confusion, saying: Whence art thou, Jesus, a man so mighty and bright in majesty, so excellent without spot and clean from sin? For that world of earth which hath been always subject unto us until now, and did pay tribute to our profit, hath never sent unto us a dead man like thee, nor ever dispatched such a gift unto Hell. Who then art thou that so fearlessly enterest our borders, and not only fearest not our torments, but besides essayest to bear away all men out of our bonds? Peradventure thou art that Jesus, of whom Satan our prince said that by thy death of the cross thou shouldst receive the dominion of the whole world.

2 Then did the King of glory in his majesty trample upon death, and laid hold on Satan the prince and delivered him unto the power of Hell, and drew Adam to him unto his own brightness.

### VII (XXIII)

Then Hell, receiving Satan the prince, with sore reproach said unto him: O prince of perdition and chief of destruction, Beelzebub, the scorn of the angels and spitting of the righteous why wouldest thou do this? Thou wouldest crucify the King of glory and at his decease didst promise us great spoils of his death: like a fool thou knewest not what thou didst. For behold now, this Jesus putteth to flight by the brightness of his majesty all the darkness of death, and hath broken the strong depths of the prisons, and let out the prisoners and loosed them that were bound. And all that were sighing in our torments do rejoice against us, and at their prayers our dominions are vanquished and our realms conquered, and now no nation of men feareth us any more. And beside this,

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the dead which were never wont to be proud triumph over us, and the captives which never could be joyful do threaten us. O prince Satan, father of all the wicked and ungodly and renegades wherefore wouldest thou do this? They that from the beginning until now have despaired of life and salvation-now is none of their wonted roarings heard, neither doth any groan from them sound in our ears, nor is there any sign of tears upon the face of any of them. O prince Satan, holder of the keys of hell, those thy riches which thou hadst gained by the tree of transgression and the losing of paradise, thou hast lost by the tree of the cross, and all thy gladness hath perished. When thou didst hang up Christ Jesus the King of glory thou wroughtest against thyself and against me. Henceforth thou shalt know what eternal torments and infinite pains thou art to suffer in my keeping forever. O prince Satan, author of death and head of all pride, thou oughtest first to have sought out matter of evil in this Jesus: Wherefore didst thou adventure without cause to crucify him unjustly against whom thou foundest no blame, and to bring into our realm the innocent and righteous one, and to lose the guilty and the ungodly and unrighteous of the whole world? And when Hell had spoken thus unto Satan the prince, then said the King of glory unto Hell: Satan the prince shall be in thy power unto all ages in the stead of Adam and his children, even those that are my righteous ones.

### VIII (XXIV)

1 And the Lord stretching forth his hand, said: Come unto me, all ye my saints which bear mine image and my likeness. Ye that by the tree and the devil and death were condemned, behold now the devil and death condemned by the tree. And forthwith all the saints were gathered in one under the hand of the Lord. And the Lord holding the right hand of Adam, said unto him: Peace be unto thee with all thy children that are my righteous ones. But Adam, casting himself at the knees of the Lord entreated him with tears and beseechings, and said with a loud voice: I will magnify thee, O Lord, for thou hast set me up and not made my foes to triumph over me: O Lord my God I cried unto thee and thou hast healed me; Lord, thou hast brought my soul out of hell, thou hast delivered me from them that go down to the pit. Sing praises unto the Lord all ye saints of his, and give thanks unto him for the remembrance of his holiness. For there is wrath in his indignation and life is in his good pleasure. In like manner all the saints of God kneeled and cast themselves at the feet of the Lord, saying with one accord: Thou art come, O redeemer of the world: that which thou didst foretell by the law and by thy prophets, that hast thou accomplished in deed. Thou hast redeemed the living by thy cross, and by the death of the cross thou hast come down unto us, that thou mightest save us out of hell and death through thy majesty. O Lord, like as thou hast set the name of thy glory in the heavens and set up thy cross for a token of redemption upon the earth, so, Lord, set thou up the sign of the victory of thy cross in hell, that death may have no more dominion.

2 And the Lord stretched forth his hand and made the sign of the cross over Adam and over all his saints, and he took the right hand of Adam and went up out of hell, and all the saints followed him. Then did holy David cry aloud and say: Sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvelous things. His right hand hath wrought salvation for him and his holy arm. The Lord hath made known his saving health; before the face of all nations hath he revealed his righteousness. And the whole multitude of the saints answered, saying: Such honour have all his saints. Amen, Alleluia.

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3 And thereafter Habacuc the prophet cried out and said: Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people to set free thy chosen. And all the saints answered, saying: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. God is the Lord and hath showed us light. Amen, Alleluia. Likewise after that the prophet Micheas also cried, saying: What God is like thee, O Lord, taking away iniquity and removing sins? And now thou withholdest thy wrath for a testimony that thou art merciful of free will, and thou dost turn away and have mercy on us. Thou forgivest all our iniquities and hast sunk all our sins in the depths of the sea, as thou swarest unto our fathers in the days of old. And all the saints answered, saying: This is our God forever and ever, he shall be our guide, world without end. Amen, Alleluia. And so spake all the prophets, making mention of holy words out of their praises, and all the saints followed the Lord, crying Amen, Alleluia.

### IX (XXV)

But the Lord holding the hand of Adam delivered him unto Michael the archangel, and all the saints followed Michael the archangel, and he brought them all into the glory and beauty (grace) of paradise. And there met with them two men, ancients of days, and when they were asked of the saints: Who are ye that have not yet been dead in hell with us and are set in paradise in the body? Then one of them answering, said: I am Enoch which was translated hither by the word of the Lord, and this that is with me is Elias the Thesbite which was taken up in a chariot of fire: and up to this day we have not tasted death, but we are received unto the coming of Antichrist to fight against him with signs and wonders of God, and to be slain of him in Jerusalem, and after three days and a half to be taken up again alive on the clouds.

### X (XXVI)

And as Enoch and Elias spake thus with the saints, behold there came another man of vile habit, bearing upon his shoulders the sign of the cross; whom when they beheld, all the saints said unto him: Who art thou? For thine appearance is as of a robber; and wherefore is it that thou bearest a sign upon thy shoulders? And he answered them and said: Ye have rightly said: for I was a robber, doing all manner of evil upon the earth. And the Jews crucified me with Jesus, and I beheld the wonders in the creation which came to pass through the cross of Jesus when he was crucified, and I believed that he was the maker of all creatures and the almighty king, and I besought him, saying: Remember me, Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom. And forthwith he received my prayer, and said unto me: Verily I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in paradise: and he gave me the sign of the cross, saying: Bear this and go unto paradise, and if the angel that keepeth paradise suffer thee not to enter in, show him the sign of the cross; and thou shalt say unto him: Jesus Christ the Son of God who now is crucified hath sent me. And when I had so done, I spake all these things unto the angel that keepeth paradise; and when he heard this of me, forthwith he opened the door and brought me in and set me at the right hand of paradise, saying: Lo now, tarry a little, and Adam the father of all mankind will enter in with all his children that are holy and righteous, after the triumph and glory of the ascending up of Christ the Lord that is crucified. When they heard all these words of the robber, all the holy patriarchs and prophets said with one voice: Blessed be the Lord Almighty, the Father of eternal good things, the Father of mercies, thou that hast given such grace unto thy sinners and hast brought them again into the beauty of paradise and into thy good pastures: for this is the most holy life of the spirit. Amen, Amen.

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### XI (XXVII)

These are the divine and holy mysteries which we saw and heard, even I, Karinus, and Leucius: but we were not suffered to relate further the rest of the mysteries of God, according as Michael the archangel strictly charged us, saying: Ye shall go with your brethren unto Jerusalem and remain in prayer, crying out and glorifying the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath raised you from the dead together with him: and ye shall not be speaking with any man, but sit as dumb men, until the hour come when the Lord himself suffereth you to declare the mysteries of his god head. But unto us Michael the archangel gave commandment that we should go over Jordan unto a place rich and fertile, where are many, which rose again together with us for a testimony of the resurrection of Christ the Lord. For three days only were allowed unto us who rose from the dead, to keep the Passover of the Lord in Jerusalem with our kindred (parents) that are living for a testimony of the resurrection of Christ the Lord: and we were baptized in the holy river of Jordan and received white robes, every one of us. And after the three days, when we had kept the Passover of the Lord, all they were caught up in the clouds which had risen again with us, and were taken over Jordan and were no more seen of any man. But unto us it was said that we should remain in the city of Arimathaea and continue in prayer.

These be all things which the Lord bade us declare unto you: give praise and thanksgiving (confession) unto him, and repent that he may have mercy upon you. Peace be unto you from the same Lord Jesus Christ which is the Saviour of us all. Amen. And when they had finished writing all things in the several volumes of paper they arose; and Karinus gave that which he had written into the hands of Annas and Caiaphas and Gamaliel; likewise, Leucius gave that which he had written into the hands of Nicodemus and Joseph. And suddenly they were transfigured and became white exceedingly and were no more seen. But their writings were found to be the same (lit. equal), neither more nor less by one letter.

And when all the synagogue of the Jews heard all these marvelous sayings of Karinus and Leucius, they said one to another: Of a truth all these things were wrought by the Lord, and blessed be the Lord, world without end, Amen. And they went out all of them in great trouble of mind, smiting their breasts with fear and trembling, and departed every man unto his own home.

And all these things, which were spoken by the Jews in their synagogue, did Joseph and Nicodemus forthwith declare unto the governor. And Pilate himself wrote all the things that were done and said concerning Jesus by the Jews, and laid up all the words in the public books of his judgment hall (praetorium).

### Reports of Saints Who Rose from the Dead with Jesus on Easter

The Ante-Nicene Library is a collection of manuscripts written by important Christians from the time of Jesus Christ to the Council of Nicea (325 AD). These manuscripts were not included in the Christian Bible, so they are non-canonical (not included in the list of books accepted to be read in the Churches).

Within this library are numerous writings about how Jesus descended into Hades while His body lay in the tomb, and that numerous saints (one report 12,000) rose from the dead with Jesus on Easter Sunday. These reportedly remained on earth for the 40 days



# Gospel of Nicodemus

Jesus remained after having risen and ascended into Heaven with Jesus. There are many reports of these risen saints having been seen in Jerusalem after Easter Sunday.

## The Gospel of Nicodemus Volume 8 Chapter 1

Then Rabbi Addas and Rabbi Finees, and Rabbi Egias, the three men who had come from Galilee, testifying that they had seen Jesus taken up into heaven, rose up in the midst of the multitude of the chiefs of the Jews, and said before the priests and the Levites, who had been called together to the council of the Lord: "When we were coming from Galilee we met at the Jordan a very great multitude of men, fathers who had been some time dead" ...And they went, and walked around all the region of the Jordan and of the mountains, and they were coming back without finding them. And, behold, suddenly there appeared coming down from Mount Amalech a very great number, as it were, twelve thousand men, who had risen with the Lord. And though they recognized every many there, they were not able to say anything to them for fear and the angelic vision; and they stood at a distance gazing and hearing them, how they walked along singing praises, and saying; "The Lord has risen again from the dead, as He has said; let us all exult and be glad, since He reigns for ever. Then those who had been sent were astonished and fell to the ground for fear, and received the answer from them, that they should see Karinus and Leucius in their own houses. And they rose up and went to their houses, and found them spending their time in prayer.

Concerning the King of Edessa, Vol 8, Page 653:

"He humbled and emptied and abased Himself, and was crucified, and descended to Hades and broke through the enclosure which had never been broken through before, and raised up the dead, and descended alone, and ascended with a great multitude to His Father".

The Report of Pilate the Procurator Concerning Our Lord Jesus Christ. v

Sent to the August Cæsar in Rome.

(First Greek Form)

In those days, our Lord Jesus Christ having been crucified under Pontius Pilate, procurator of Palestine and Phœnicia, these records were made in Jerusalem as to what was done by the Jews against the Lord. Pilate therefore, along with his private report, sent them to the Cæsar in Rome, writing thus:

To the most mighty, venerable, most divine, and most terrible, the august Cæsar, Pilate the governor of the East sends greeting. I have, O most mighty, a narrative to give you, on account of which I am seized with fear and trembling. For in this government of mine, of which one of the cities is called Jerusalem, all the people of the Jews have delivered to me a man named Jesus, bringing many charges against him, which they were not able to convict him of by the consistency of their evidence. And one of the heresies they had against him was, that Jesus said that their Sabbath should not be a

## Gospel of Nicodemus

day of leisure, and should not be observed. For he performed many cures on that day: he made the blind receive their sight, the lame walk; he raised up the dead, he cleansed the lepers; he healed paralytics that were not at all able to make any movement of their body, or to keep their nerves steady, but who had only speech and the modulation of their voice, and he gave them the power of walking and running, removing their illness by a single word. Another thing again, more powerful still, which is strange even with our gods: he raised up one that had been dead four days, summoning him by a single word, when the dead man had his blood corrupted, and when his body was destroyed by the worms produced in it, and when it had the stink of a dog. And seeing him lying in the tomb, he ordered him to run. Nor had he anything of a dead body about him at all; but as a bridegroom from the bridal chamber, so he came forth from the tomb filled with very great fragrance. And strangers that were manifestly demoniac, and that had their dwelling in deserts, and ate their own flesh, living like beasts and creeping things, even these he made to be dwellers in cities, and by his word restored them to soundness of mind, and rendered them wise and able and reputable, eating with all the enemies of the unclean spirits that dwelt in them for their destruction, which he cast down into the depths of the sea. And again there was another having a withered hand; and not the hand only, but rather the half of the body of the man, was petrified, so that he had not the form of a man, or the power of moving his body. And him by a word he healed, and made sound. And a woman that had an issue of blood for many years, and whose joints and veins were drained by the flowing of the blood, so that she did not present the appearance of a human being, but was like a corpse, and was speechless every day, so that all the physicians of the district could not cure her. For there was not any hope of life left to her. And when Jesus passed by, she mysteriously received strength through his overshadowing her; and she took hold of his fringe behind, and immediately in the same hour power filled up what in her was empty, so that, no longer suffering any pain, she began to run swiftly to her own city Kepharnaum, so as to accomplish the journey in six days.

And these are the things which I lately had in my mind to report, which Jesus accomplished on the Sabbath. And other signs greater than these he did, so that I have perceived that the wonderful works done by him are greater than can be done by the gods whom we worship.

And him Herod and Archelaus and Philip, Annas and Caiaphas, with all the people, delivered to me, making a great uproar against me that I should try him. I therefore ordered him to be crucified, having first scourged him, and having found against him no cause of evil accusations or deeds.

And at the time he was crucified there was darkness over all the world, the sun being darkened at mid-day, and the stars appearing, but in them there appeared no lustre; and the moon, as if turned into blood, failed in her light. And the world was swallowed up by the lower regions, so that the very sanctuary of the temple, as they call it, could not be seen by the Jews in their fall; and they saw below them a chasm of the earth, with the roar of the thunders that fell upon it. And in that terror dead men were seen that had risen, as the Jews themselves testified; and they said that it was Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, and Moses and Job, that had died, as they say,

## Gospel of Nicodemus

three thousand five hundred years before. And there were very many whom I also saw appearing in the body; and they were making a lamentation about the Jews, on account of the wickedness that had come to pass through them, and the destruction of the Jews and of their law.

And the fear of the earthquake remained from the sixth hour of the preparation until the ninth hour. And on the evening of the first day of the week there was a sound out of the heaven, so that the heaven became enlightened sevenfold more than all the days. And at the third hour of the night also the sun was seen brighter than it had ever shone before, lighting up all the heaven. And as lightnings come suddenly in winter, so majestic men appeared in glorious robes, an innumerable multitude, whose voice was heard as that of a very great thunder, crying out: **Jesus that was crucified is risen: come up out of Hades, you that have been enslaved in the underground regions of Hades. And the chasm of the earth was as if it had no bottom; but it was as if the very foundations of the earth appeared along with those that cried out in the heavens, and walked about in the body in the midst of the dead that had risen. And he that raised up all the dead, and bound Hades,** said: Say to my disciples, He goes before you into Galilee; there shall you see him.

And all that night the light did not cease shining. And many of the Jews died, swallowed up in the chasm of the earth, so that on the following day most of those who had been against Jesus could not be found. Others saw the appearing of those that had risen, whom no one of us had ever seen. And only one synagogue of the Jews was left in this Jerusalem, since all disappeared in that fall.

With that terror, being in perplexity, and seized with a most frightful trembling, I have written what I saw at that time, and have reported to your majesty. Having set in order also what was done by the Jews against Jesus, I have sent it, my lord, to your divinity.

# Gospel of Peter

## The Gospel of Peter:

### Introduction<sup>vi</sup>

The early testimonies about this book have been set forth already. The present fragment was discovered in 1884 in a tomb at Akhmimin Egypt. The manuscript, in which it is a little book, contains a portion of the Book of Enoch in Greek, this fragment on the Passion and another, a description of Heaven and Hell, which is either (as I now think) a second fragment of the Gospel,

We have seen that the Gospel of Peter is quoted by writers of the latter end of the second century. It has been contended that Justin Martyr also used it soon after the middle of that century, but the evidence is not demonstrative. I believe it is not safe to date the book much earlier than A. D. 150.

It uses all four canonical Gospels, and is the earliest non-canonical account of the Passion that exists. It is not wholly orthodox: for it throws doubt on the reality of the Lord's sufferings, and by consequence upon the reality of his human body. In other words, it is, as Serapion of Antioch indicated, of a Docetic character.

Another characteristic of it is its extremely anti-Jewish attitude. Blame is thrown on the Jews wherever possible, and Pilate is white-washed.

### **FRAGMENT I**

I. 1 But of the Jews no man washed his hands, neither did Herod nor any one of his judges: and whereas they would not 2 wash, Pilate rose up. And then Herod the king commanded that the Lord should be taken into their hands, saying unto them: All that I commanded you to do unto him, do ye

II. 3 Now there stood there Joseph the friend of Pilate and of the Lord, and he, knowing that they were about to crucify him, came unto Pilate and begged the body of Jesus for burial. And Pilate sending unto Herod, begged his body. 5 And Herod said: Brother Pilate, even if none had begged for him, we should have buried him, since also the Sabbath dawneth; for it is written in the law that the sun should not set upon one that hath been slain (murdered).

III. 6 And he delivered him unto the people before the first day of (or on the day before the) unleavened bread, even their feast. And they having taken the Lord pushed him as they ran, and said: Let us hale the Son of God, now that 7 we have gotten authority over him. And they put on him a purple robe, and made him sit upon the seat of judgement, 8 saying: Give righteous judgement, thou King of Israel. And one of them brought a crown of thorns and set it upon the 9 Lord's head; and others stood and did spit in his eyes, and others buffeted his cheeks; and others did prick him with a reed, and some of them scourged him, saying With this honour let us honour (or at this price let us value) the son of God.

IV. 10 And they brought two malefactors, and crucified the 11 Lord between them. But he kept silence, as one feeling no pain. And when they set the cross upright, they wrote 12 thereon: This is the King of Israel. And they laid his garments before him, and divided them among themselves and 13 cast the lot upon them. But one of those malefactors reproached them, saying: We have thus suffered for the evils which we have done; but this man which hath become the 14 saviour of men, wherein hath he injured

## Gospel of Peter

you? And they were wroth with him, and commanded that his legs should not be broken, that so he might die in torment.

V. 15 Now it was noonday, and darkness prevailed over all Judaea: and they were troubled and, in an agony, lest the sun should have set, for that he yet lived: for it is written for them that the sun should not set upon him that hath been 16 slain (murdered). And one of them said: Give ye him to drink gall with vinegar: and they mingled it and gave him 17 to drink: and they fulfilled all things and accomplished 18 their sins upon their own heads. And many went about with 19 lamps, supposing that it was night: and some fell. And the Lord cried out aloud saying: My power, my power, thou hast forsaken me. And when he had so said, he was taken up.

20 And in the same hour was the veil of the temple of Jerusalem rent in two.

VI. 21 And then they plucked the nails from the hands of the Lord and laid him upon the earth: and the whole earth was shaken, and there came a great fear on all.

22 Then the sun shone forth, and it was found to be the ninth 23 hour. And the Jews rejoiced, and gave his body unto Joseph to bury it, because he had beheld all the good things which 24 he did. And he took the Lord and washed him and wrapped him in linen and brought him unto his own sepulchre, which is called the Garden of Joseph.

VII. 25 Then the Jews and the elders and the priests, when they perceived how great evil they had done themselves, began to lament and to say: Woe unto our sins: the judgement and the end of Jerusalem is drawn nigh.

26 But I with my fellows was in grief, and we were wounded in our minds and would have hid ourselves; for we were sought after by them as malefactors, and as thinking to set 27 the temple on fire. And beside all these things we were fasting, and we sat mourning and weeping night and day until the Sabbath.

VIII. 28 But the scribes and Pharisees and elders gathered one with another, for they had heard that all the people were murmuring and beating their breasts, saying: If these very great signs have come to pass at his death, behold how 29 righteous he was. And the elders were afraid and came unto 30 Pilate, entreating him and saying: Give us soldiers that we (or they) may watch his sepulchre for three days, lest his disciples come and steal him away and the people suppose 31 that he is risen from the dead, and do us hurt. And Pilate gave them Petronius the centurion with soldiers to watch the sepulchre; and the elders and scribes came with them unto 32 the tomb, and when they had rolled a great stone to keep out (al. together with) the centurion and the soldiers, then all 33 that were there together set it upon the door of the tomb; and plastered thereon seven seals; and they pitched a tent there and kept watch.

IX. 34 And early in the morning as the Sabbath dawned, there came a multitude from Jerusalem and the region roundabout to see the sepulchre that had been sealed.

35 Now in the night whereon the Lord's Day dawned, as the soldiers were keeping guard two by two in every watch, 36 there came a great sound in the heaven, and they saw the heavens opened and two men descend thence, shining with (lit. having) a great light, and drawing near unto the sepulchre. 37 And that stone which had been set on the door rolled away of itself and went back to the side, and the sepulchre was

X. 38 opened and both of the young men entered in. When therefore those soldiers saw that, they waked up the centurion and the elders (for they also were there keeping 39 watch); and while they were yet telling them the things which they had seen, they saw again three men come out of the sepulchre, and two of them sustaining the other (lit. the 40 one), and a cross following, after them. And of the two they saw that their heads

## Gospel of Peter

reached unto heaven, but of him that 41 was led by them that it overpassed the heavens. And they 42 heard a voice out of the heavens saying: Hast thou (or Thou hast) preached unto them that sleep? And an answer was heard from the cross, saying: Yea.

XI. 43 Those men therefore took counsel one with another to go and report these things unto Pilate. And while they yet thought thereof, again the heavens were opened and a 45 man descended and entered into the tomb. And they that were with the centurion (or the centurion and they that were with him) when they saw that, hastened to go by night unto Pilate and left the sepulchre whereon they were keeping watch, and told all that they had seen, and were in great agony, saying: Of a truth he was the son of God.

46 Pilate answered and said: I am clear from the blood of 47 the son of God, but thus it seemed good unto you. Then all they came and besought him and exhorted him to charge the centurion and the soldiers to tell nothing of that they had 48 seen: For, said they, it is expedient for us to incur the greatest sin before God, rather than to (and not to) fall into 49 the hands of the people of the Jews and to be stoned. Pilate therefore charged the centurion and the soldiers that they should say nothing.

XII. 50 Now early on the Lord's Day Mary Magdalene, a disciple (fem.) of the Lord-which, being afraid because of the Jews, for they were inflamed with anger, had not performed at the sepulchre of the Lord those things which women are accustomed to do unto them that die and are 51 beloved of them-took with her the women her friends and 52 came unto the tomb where he was laid. And they feared lest the Jews should see them, and said: Even if we were not able to weep and lament him on that day whereon he was 53 crucified, yet let us now do so at his tomb. But who will roll away for us the stone also that is set upon the door of the tomb, that we may enter in and sit beside him and perform 54 that which is due? for the stone was great, and we fear lest any man see us. And if we cannot do so, yet let us cast down at the door these things which we bring for a memorial of him, and we will weep and lament until we come unto our house.

XIII. 55 And they went and found the sepulchre open: and they drew near and looked in there, and saw there a young man sitting in the midst of the sepulchre, of a fair countenance and clad in very bright raiment, which said unto them: 56 Wherefore are ye come? whom seek ye? not him that was crucified? He is risen and is departed; but if ye believe it not, look in and see the place where he lay, that he is not here: for he is risen and is departed thither whence he was sent. 57 Then the women were affrighted and fled.

XV. 58 Now it was the last day of unleavened bread, and many were coming forth of the city and returning unto their 59 own homes because the feast was at an end. But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, were weeping and were in sorrow, and each one being grieved for that which had befallen 60 departed unto his own house. But I, Simon Peter, and Andrew my brother, took our nets and went unto the sea: and there was with us Levi the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord (For Fragment II see Apocalypse of Peter.)

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Scanned and edited by Joshua Williams  
Northwest Nazarene College, 1995

This is a clear reference to Jesus preaching to the souls in Paradise.

# Gospel of Peter

## Apocalypse of Peter

An article in Wikipedia shares this about the concerning the document.

### Prayers for those in hell

One theological issue of note appears only in the version of the text in the 3rd century Rainer Fragment, the earliest fragment of the text. Its chapter 14 describes the salvation of condemned sinners for whom the righteous pray:

Then I will grant to my called and elect ones whomsoever they request from me, out of the punishment. And I will give them [i.e. those for whom the elect pray] a [fine](#) baptism in salvation from Acherousian lake which is, they say, in the Elysian field, a portion of righteousness with my holy ones.<sup>[18]</sup>

While not found in later manuscripts, this reading was likely original to the text, as it agrees with a quotation in the Sibylline Oracles:<sup>[18]</sup>

To these pious ones imperishable God, the universal ruler, will also give another thing. Whenever they ask the imperishable God to save men from the raging fire and deathless gnashing he will grant it, and he will do this. For he will pick them out again from the undying fire and set them elsewhere and send them on account of his own people to another eternal life with the immortals in the Elysian plain where he has the long waves of the deep perennial Acherusian lake.

— [Sibylline Oracles](#), Book 2, 330–338<sup>[19]</sup>

Other 2nd century parallel passages possibly influenced by this are found in the [Epistle of the Apostles](#), the Coptic [Apocalypse of Elijah](#), and possibly the [Acts of Paul](#).<sup>[20][21]</sup>

The passage also makes literary sense, as it is a follow up to a passage in Chapter 3 where Jesus initially rebukes Peter who expresses horror at the suffering in hell; Richard Bauckham suggests that this is because it must be the victims who were harmed that request mercy, not Peter. While not directly endorsing [universal salvation](#), it does suggest that salvation will eventually reach as far as the compassion of the elect.<sup>[18]</sup> Some of the Ethiopic manuscripts written in the 9th century and beyond include new extensions that also describe a great act of divine mercy to come that will rescue (some? all?) sinners from hell.<sup>[21]</sup>

### THE APOCALYPSE OF PETER: Text

1 . . . . many of them will be false prophets, and will teach divers ways and doctrines of perdition: but these will become sons of perdition. 3. And then God will come unto my faithful ones who hunger and thirst and are afflicted and purify their souls in this life; and he will judge the sons of lawlessness.

# Gospel of Peter

## The Transfiguration

4. And furthermore the Lord said: Let us go into the mountain: Let us pray.. And going with him, we, the twelve disciples, begged that he would show us one of our brethren, the righteous who are gone forth out of the world, in order that we might see of what manner of form they are, and having taken courage, might also encourage the men who hear us.

6. And as we prayed, suddenly there appeared two men standing before the Lord towards the East, on whom we were not able to look; 7, for there came forth from their countenance a ray as of the sun, and their raiment was shining, such as eye of man never saw; for no mouth is able to express or heart to conceive the glory with which they were endued, and the beauty of their appearance. 8. And as we looked upon them, we were astounded; for their bodies were whiter than any snow and ruddier than any rose; 9, and the red thereof was mingled with the white, and I am utterly unable to express their beauty; 10, for their hair was curly and bright and seemly both on their face and shoulders, as it were a wreath woven of spikenard and divers-coloured flowers, or like a rainbow in the sky, such was their seemliness.

11. Seeing therefore their beauty we became astounded at them, since they appeared suddenly. 12. And I approached the Lord and said: Who are these? 13. He saith to me: These are your brethren the righteous, whose forms ye desired to see.

## Vision of Abraham's Bosom or Paradise

14. And I said to him: And where are all the righteous ones and what is the aeon in which they are and have this glory?

15. And the Lord showed me a very great country outside of this world, exceeding bright with light, and the air there lighted with the rays of the sun, and the earth itself blooming with unfading flowers and full of spices and plants, fair-flowering and incorruptible and bearing blessed fruit. 16. And so great was the perfume that it was borne thence even unto us. 17. And the dwellers in that place were clad in the raiment of shining angels and their raiment was like unto their country; and angels hovered about them there. 18. And the glory of the dwellers there was equal, and with one voice they sang praises alternately to the Lord God, rejoicing in that place. 19. The Lord saith to us: This is the place of your high-priests, the righteous men.

## Vision of Hell( or Sheol)

20. And over against that place I saw another, squalid, and it was the place of punishment; and those who were punished there and the punishing angels had their raiment dark like the air of the place.

21. And there were certain there hanging by the tongue: and these were the blasphemers of the way of righteousness; and under them lay fire, burning and punishing them. 22. And there was a great lake, full of flaming mire, in which were certain men that pervert righteousness, and tormenting angels afflicted them.

23. And there were also others, women, hanged by their hair over that mire that bubbled up: and these were they who adorned themselves for adultery; and the men who mingled with them in the defilement of adultery, were hanging by the feet and their heads in that mire. And I said: I did not believe that I should come into this place.



## Gospel of Peter

24. And I saw the murderers and those who conspired with them, cast into a certain strait place, full of evil snakes, and smitten by those beasts, and thus turning to and fro in that punishment; and worms, as it were clouds of darkness, afflicted them. And the souls of the murdered stood and looked upon the punishment of those murderers and said: O God, thy judgment is just.

25. And near that place I saw another strait place into which the gore and the filth of those who were being punished ran down and became there as it were a lake: and there sat women having the gore up to their necks, and over against them sat many children who were born to them out of due time, crying; and there came forth from them sparks of fire and smote the women in the eyes: and these were the accursed who conceived and caused abortion.

26. And other men and women were burning up to the middle and were cast into a dark place and were beaten by evil spirits, and their inwards were eaten by restless worms: and these were they who persecuted the righteous and delivered them up.

27. And near those there were again women and men gnawing their own lips, and being punished and receiving a red-hot iron in their eyes: and these were they who blasphemed and slandered the way of righteousness.

28. And over against these again other men and women gnawing their tongues and having flaming fire in their mouths: and these were the false witnesses.

29. And in a certain other place there were pebbles sharper than swords or any spit, red-hot, and women and men in tattered and filthy raiment rolled about on them in punishment: and these were the rich who trusted in their riches and had no pity for orphans and widows, and despised the commandment of God.

30. And in another great lake, full of pitch and blood and mire bubbling up, there stood men and women up to their knees: and these were the usurers and those who take interest on interest.

31. And other men and women were being hurled down from a great cliff and reached the bottom, and again were driven by those who were set over them to climb up upon the cliff, and thence were hurled down again, and had no rest from this punishment: and these were they who defiled their bodies acting as women; and the women who were with them were those who lay with one another as a man with a woman.

32. And alongside of that cliff there was a place full of much fire, and there stood men who with their own hands had made for themselves carven images instead of God. And alongside of these were other men and women, having rods and striking each other and never ceasing from such punishment.

33. And others again near them, women and men, burning and turning themselves and roasting: and these were they that leaving the way of God

# Gospel of Bartholomew

## The (Gospel) Questions of St. Bartholomew

Introduction by M. R. James<sup>vii</sup>

This copy is of the eleventh century and came from the monastery of Monte Amiata. The Latin is exceedingly incorrect, and there are many corruptions, and interpolations, which extend to whole pages of closely printed text. I cite it as Lat. 2.

I take the Greek and Slavonic, where they exist, as the basis of my version, and add some passages from the Latin. The main topics, common to two or more of the texts, are:

- i. The descent into Hell: the number of souls saved and lost.
- ii. The Virgin's account of the Annunciation.
- iii. The apostles see the bottomless pit.
- iv. The devil is summoned and gives an account of his doings.
- v. Questions about the deadly sins.
- vi. Commission of the apostles to preach.
- vii. Departure of Christ. (This reads like a late addition.)

### **I have only included section 1.**

Latin 1. At that time, before the Lord Jesus Christ suffered, all the disciples were gathered together, questioning him and saying: Lord, show us the mystery in the heavens.

2 But Jesus answered and said unto them: If I put not off the body of flesh I cannot tell you.

3 But after that he had suffered and risen again, all the apostles, looking upon him, durst not question him, because his countenance was not as it had been aforetime, but showed forth the fullness of power.

Greek. 4 Bartholomew therefore drew near unto the Lord and said: I have a word to speak unto thee, Lord.

5 And Jesus said to him: I know what thou art about to say; say then what thou wilt, and I will answer thee.

6 And Bartholomew said: Lord, when thou wentest to be hanged upon the cross, I followed thee afar off and saw thee hung upon the cross, and the angels coming down from heaven and worshipping thee. And when there came darkness, 7 I beheld, and I saw thee that thou wast vanished away from the cross and I heard only a voice in the parts under the earth, and great wailing and gnashing of teeth on a sudden. Tell me, Lord, whither wentest thou from the cross?

8 And Jesus answered and said: Blessed art thou, Bartholomew, my beloved, because thou sawest this mystery, and now will I tell thee all things whatsoever thou askest me. 9 For when I vanished away from the cross, then went I down into Hades that I might bring up Adam and all them that were with him, according to the supplication of Michael the archangel.

10 Then said Bartholomew: Lord, what was the voice which was heard?

11 Jesus saith unto him: Hades said unto Beliar: As I perceive, a God cometh hither.

## Gospel of Bartholomew

[Slavonic and Latin 2 continue:] And the angels cried unto the powers, saying: Remove your gates, ye princes, remove the everlasting doors, for behold the King of glory cometh down.

12 Hades said: Who is the King of glory, that cometh down from heaven unto us?

13 And when I had descended five hundred steps, Hades was troubled, saying: I hear the breathing of the Most High, and I cannot endure it. (Latin 2. He cometh with great fragrance and I cannot bear it.) 14 But the devil answered and said: Submit not thyself, O Hades, but be strong: for God himself hath not descended upon the earth. 15 But when I had descended yet five hundred steps, the angels and the powers cried out: Take hold, remove the doors, for behold the King of glory cometh down. And Hades said: O, woe unto me, for I hear the breath of God.

Greek. 16-17 And Beliar said unto Hades: Look carefully who it is, for it is Elias, or Enoch, or one of the prophets that this man seemeth to me to be. But Hades answered Death and said: Not yet are six thousand years accomplished. And whence are these, O Beliar; for the sum of the number is in mine hands.

Slavonic. 16 And the devil said unto Hades: Why affrightest thou me, Hades? it is a prophet, and he hath made himself like unto God: this prophet will we take and bring him hither unto those that think to ascend into heaven. 17 And Hades said: Which of the prophets is it? Show me: Is it Enoch the scribe of righteousness? But God hath not suffered him to come down upon the earth before the end of the six thousand years. Sayest thou that it is Elias, the avenger? But before he cometh not down. What shall I do, whereas the destruction is of God: for surely our end is at hand? For I have the number (of the years) in mine hands.

Greek. 18: Be not troubled, make safe thy gates and strengthen thy bars: consider, God cometh not down upon the earth.

19 Hades saith unto him: These be no good words that I hear from thee: my belly is rent, and mine inward parts are pained: it cannot be but that God cometh hither. Alas, whither shall I flee before the face of the power of the great king? Suffer me to enter into myself (Latin -thyself) for before (Latin - of,) thee was I formed.

20 Then did I enter in and scourged him and bound him with chains that cannot be loosed, and brought forth thence all the patriarchs and came again unto the cross.

21 Bartholomew saith unto him: (Latin 2) I saw thee again, hanging upon the cross, and all the dead arising and worshipping thee, and going up again into their sepulchres. Tell me, Lord, who was he whom the angels bare up in their hands, even that man that was very great of stature? (Slavonic, Latin. 2) And what spakest thou unto him that he sighed so sore?

22 Jesus answered and said unto him: It was Adam the first-formed, for whose sake I came down from heaven upon earth. And I said unto him: I was hung upon the cross for thee and for thy children's sake. And he, when he heard it, groaned and said: So was thy good pleasure, O Lord.

23 Again Bartholomew said: Lord, I saw the angels ascending before Adam and singing praises.

24 But one of the angels, which was very great, above the rest, would not ascend up with them: and there was in his hand a sword of fire, and he was looking steadfastly upon thee only.

## Gospel of Bartholomew

Slavonic 25 And all the angels besought him that he would go up with them, but he would not. But when thou didst command him to go up, I beheld a flame of fire issuing out of his hands and going even unto the city of Jerusalem.

26 And Jesus said unto him: Blessed art thou, Bartholomew my beloved because thou sawest these mysteries. This was one of the angels of vengeance, which stand before my Father's throne: and this angel sent he unto me.

27 And for this cause he would not ascend up, because he desired to destroy all the powers of the world. But when I commanded him to ascend up, there went a flame out of his hand and rent asunder the veil of the temple, and parted it in two pieces for a witness unto the children of Israel for my passion because they crucified me.

Latin 1 But the flame which thou sawest issuing out of his hands smote the house of the synagogue of the Jews, for a testimony of me wherein they crucified me.

Greek 28 And when he had thus spoken, he said unto the apostles: Tarry for me in this place, for today a sacrifice is offered in paradise. 29 And Bartholomew answered and said unto Jesus: Lord, what is the sacrifice, which is offered in paradise? And Jesus said: There be souls of the righteous which today have departed out of the body and go unto paradise.

30 And Bartholomew said: Lord, how many souls depart out of the world daily? Jesus saith unto him: Thirty thousand.

(Latin 1 30 Bartholomew said: How many are the souls which depart out of the body every day? Jesus said: Verily I say unto thee, twelve (thousand) eight hundred, four score and three souls depart out of the body every day.)

31 Bartholomew saith unto him: Lord, when thou wast with us teaching the word, didst thou receive the sacrifices in paradise? Jesus answered and said unto him: Verily I say unto thee, my beloved, that I both taught the word with you and continually sat with my Father, and received the sacrifices in paradise everyday. 32 Bartholomew answered and said unto him: Lord, if thirty thousand souls depart out of the world every day, how many souls out of them are found righteous? Jesus saith unto him: Hardly fifty [three] my beloved. 33 Again Bartholomew saith: And how do three only enter into paradise? Jesus saith unto him: The [fifty] three enter into paradise or are laid up in Abraham's bosom: but the others go into the place of the resurrection, for the three are not like unto the fifty.

34 Bartholomew saith unto him: Lord, how many souls above the number are born into the world daily? Jesus saith unto him: One soul only is born above the number of them that depart.

35 And when he had said this he gave them the peace, and vanished away from them. <sup>viii</sup>

# Gospel of Gamaliel

## Gospel of Gamaliel

### Account of the Raising of the Penitent Thief. ix

*This is a highly symbolic account with traces of anti-Semitism. I include it to show the popularity of this form of writing about the harrowing of Hell. It also shows the popularity of casting Pilate as a heroic figure in the early church, not a weak-willed persecutor of the Church as he is now generally perceived.*

Then they took the wrappings that belonged to the Lord Jesus and shrouded 5 the body of that dead man with them. And Pilate and his soldiers lifted it and placed it in the tomb in which Jesus lay. And he ordered the people to place the stone at the entrance of the tomb as they had done in the case of Jesus. Then Pilate stretched his hands and prayed at the door of the sepulchre and said thus : "I implore you to-day, O Lord Jesus. You are the resurrection and the life, **the giver of life to all and to the dead**. I believe that you rose again as you appeared to me. Do not judge me, O my Lord, because I am doing this. I have not done it from fear of the Jews, nor to test your resurrection. O my Lord, I have confidence in your words and in the miracles, which you have wrought. You are living because **you raised many dead men**. Now, O my Lord, do not be angry with me because I placed a foreign corpse in the place in which lay your body. I did this to put to shame and confusion those who deny your resurrection. To them belong shame and confusion for ever and ever, and to you are due glory and honour from the mouth of your servant Pilate for ever and for ever and ever." When Pilate recited this prayer with outstretched hands at the tomb, a voice came from the dead man saying: " O my lord Pilate, open to me the door of the tomb in order that I may come out. **I was the first to open the door of Paradise**. Lift the stone, O my lord Pilate, so that I may come out by the power of my Lord Jesus Christ who rose from the dead. And Pilate shouted with jubilation on account of the joy and happiness, which filled his heart and his soul, to such an extent that the rocks echoed his voice. And he then ordered the people that were standing to lift the stone from the door of the tomb, and immediately the dead man came out walking, and he bowed before Pilate, the Governor. As to the Jews who were present, they were seized with panic, shame, and confusion, and ran away wailing secretly from their fear of the Governor. And Pilate ordered all the soldiers to pursue the Jews and strike them with the swords, which they were holding, and they wounded many of them. Then Pilate turned to the dead man and said to him: " O my son, who raised you in this short time? It is only in case Jesus was with you that He would have been able to raise you so quickly." And the dead man " said to him: " Did you not see the great light that shone? The Lord Jesus raised me while you were praying, and spoke to me saying, ' Tell my beloved Pilate to fight for my resurrection because I have decided to appoint him his portion in Paradise 3 as I appointed to you. (It is imperative that they should condemn him as they have condemned me, before they take off his head.'[?]) 'And Pilate said to him: " From where are you, 4 and who threw you in this well? " And the robber replied, saying: " **I am the robber who has been crucified at His right**. I have been deemed worthy of all favours and gifts before my Lord Jesus Christ because of the few comforting words that I uttered while He was on the wood of the cross. I was the first one to rise from the tomb of Jesus, O my lord Pilate, and as you opened to me the

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door of His sepulchre, so He opened to me the door of Paradise. I recognize this high perfume as it is from the tree of life which my soul is enjoying."

### Martyrdom of Pilate

#### Account of Jesus' Releasing Adam from Paradise <sup>x</sup>

Then the Virgin Mary began to ask the Saviour, her Son, concerning the events that took place at the hands of the wicked Jews on the day of the Crucifixion, when He was hanging on the wood of the Cross and she was standing near Him and weeping, and He explained to her all the events that she had witnessed, one by one. She said to Him : " O my beloved Son, O Life of my spirit and Master of my soul and body, why did you cry and say on the wood of the Cross, ' Eloi, Eloi, why hast thou forsaken me ? ' 3 And also, ' Scripture is fulfilled,' and also ' Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.' " 4 And He answered and said to her: " O my beloved mother, I cried to the Father with a sigh, like an only Son to His Father, and asked Him to allow Me to die, 5 in order to redeem with My death, the death of Adam whom sin had killed and whom the sentence of death had cast into Hades. Yes, O mother, I cried to the Father and implored Him to look upon My humiliation and have pity on Adam and grant him another grace. And when I remembered his hunger and thirst I said, ' I thirst,' 6 and asked the Father on his behalf to quench his thirst from the water of the eternal life. When my side was pierced with a spear, 7 and I drank the cup 8 which all men are bound to drink, I asked the Father that on the day of my rising from the dead I might raise Adam from the death of sin, since I was pierced in my side because of him." O my mother, the hierarchies of Heaven scoffed at Adam and complained about him to the Father saying, ' All this happened to your only Son because of an earthly man on whom you breathed the breath of life.' The Father, however, rebuked them and said ' This is the creation of my hand and I love Him more than you.' Hades complained about him to Me and said, ' Let me cast him into the bottom of the pit,' but I rebuked it and said ' Shut up your mouth, you will no more rise and seize Adam and cast him into the depths. He does not deserve now to be with you for one single hour. I came now to break up and smash your doors and throw you to the lowest depths, and to raise Adam to the heights." The tormenting angels of Hell whose habit is to turn towards the west began then to vociferate, and they kindled fires which they inflamed with pitch and sulphur and shouted concerning the sin of Adam and said: ' Let us destroy him and throw him to the great sufferings of the fire of Hell.' Further, when they heard my conversation with him at the time I was lifted on the wood of the Cross and my saying to him: ' O Adam, it is for your sake that all this has happened to me 'they cried and said, ' Deliver him into our hands, sir, and we will do to him what he rightly deserves, and we will destroy him as if he had never existed.' ( a reference to *Obliteration of a soul*) I rebuked them, however, and sternly reproved them, and I disclosed to them the fact that I have shed My precious blood for him so that I might save him and give him a share in My Kingdom." O my mother, I remembered the sadness and sorrowfulness that fell to the lot of Paradise. I recalled, O my mother, the mournfulness of Paradise and the fact that it was empty from the time 18 in which Adam was driven out of it. Through My Passion and My Crucifixion, I meant to restore Adam to Paradise. Did you not know, then, O my mother, why I remained nine months in your womb, and do you not understand the cause of my coming into this world? Did

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you not know that the events about which the ancient prophets have prophesied had to take place? **Did you not realize that all this had to happen and that I had to deliver the rest of the captives from the hands of the enemy, and bring them out of the prison of Hades?**" I suffered all what I did suffer in order to elevate the elect to the heights of Heaven. I interceded with the Father on their behalf, not only by words but (also) by the shedding of My blood on the Cross before you, 1 in order to deliver them and Adam their father from the evil consequences of his transgression. I do not hold him, therefore, responsible for the blasphemies uttered against Me for his sins, nor answerable for My thirst, for the crown of thorns which was placed on my head, for the hanging of my body on the wood of the Cross, and for the death which I accepted for him. On the contrary I asked the Father to forgive him all his sins. Have patience, O my mother, and **I will ask the Father to tear up the written document of the slavery of Adam.** O my mother, what would be the utility of this shedding of My blood on the earth if I did not raise this body to Heaven? In this day the heavenly beings will be reconciled with the terrestrial ones. Go now, in joy, O my mother, because I rose from the dead. I have demolished the wall of partitions 2 of Hades, and I have opened the door of Paradise for the thief at My right. I have also opened the door of Heaven before the angels 3 and they flapped their wings, the archangels girded their loins with their shining and majestic girdles, the heavenly powers danced with hymns and canticles, the Cherubim 4 and Seraphim began their glorifications, the Dominions desired to contemplate intensely the glory of My divinity, and the Thrones stood before the Throne.

### Account of the Resurrection of Caesar's Son <sup>xi</sup>

The vizier took then Joseph and Nicodemus from prison and handed to them the body of the son of the Emperor and his coffin; he handed also to them 2 the letter of the Emperor, and they read it and were amazed at his wisdom, his deep humility and great faith. Then they lifted their eyes to heaven and said: " O Lord our God, O resurrection of the living and the dead, make manifest your power in the son of the Emperor Tiberius and accept the supplications of his father and have pity on him as you had pity on the son of the widow in the town of Nain. With your great power raise his son alive in order that he may glorify your holy name. Accept, O Lord, the strong faith of his father as you accepted the strong faith of Mary and Martha and raised for them their brother Lazarus. Have pity on him, O Lord Jesus Christ, and comfort the heart of the father by the resurrection of the son; give him life, and let your holy sepulchre make him live again, in order that his faith in you may be strengthened like the rest, and in order that he may ascertain your resurrection from the dead. "The blessed ones spoke these words over the coffin of the son of the Emperor while dead; then they took him and placed him in the tomb of the Saviour, and adjusted the stone to the door of the tomb. And the son of the Emperor remained four days in the tomb with a closed door, and they experienced deep sorrow at his long stay in the tomb and at his not having risen quickly. On the fourth day, however, he rose from the dead, the stone that was at the door of the tomb rolled away backwards, and the guards, terrified at the sight, went in haste to Pilate and began shouting and saying: " Come, our lord Pilate, and see how the son of the Emperor, who was in the tomb of Jesus, has risen, and how the stone rolled away without the help of a human hand. "Pilate then bowed himself to the ground, together with Joseph and Nicodemus, and worshipped in great joy; then they all of them with the vizier of the

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Emperor and all the army repaired to the tomb of the Saviour, and they observed that Caesar, the son of the Emperor, had risen and was sitting over the coffin in which his body lay. He appeared bewildered with eyes fixed on the royal garment, which he was wearing. They cried to him, saying: " O Caesar, come out with the power of the One who raised you. Let our joy be perfect in this day as in the day in which our Saviour rose from the dead." At that very moment he jumped and came out of the tomb and sat on the stone. Then the vizier of his father approached him, bowed down and worshipped before him and said to him: " O my lord, what happened to you and why are you in a state of stupefaction? " And he answered saying: I am bewildered at the greatness of the glory, kingdom and power of my Lord Jesus who raised me from the dead, and I do not see the like of Him in any one of the men that are standing here, ' nor do I see in them anything like His Majesty. His glory and His Majesty are indeed great. What is the honour of my father in comparison with this King? This is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. What is the diadem of my father in comparison with His glory and the light of His Cross? What are the sweet scents of my father in comparison with the sublime perfume that exhales from this Jesus? 3 All the rulers of the earth cannot live after their death, but this powerful ruler, Jesus, has the power to do it. No one fears any king after he dies, but this Jesus, King of Kings, all angels, human beings and demons fear His name, and the doors of hell tremble from their dread of Him. All the tormenting spirits who take the souls of the wicked ones, and who are more wicked than the beasts of prey, dragons and vipers, I saw that they were terrified when a voice came to them, saying: ' **Jesus orders you to take up this soul from amongst you, because He wants it.**' They did not see Him, but only heard the one who pronounced His name." I was then taken forthwith out of the torments in which I was lying, and He called me by my name saying: " O Caesar, rise up; I have given you to your parents on account of their faith in Me, and in order that they might fight for My resurrection." Then He placed His cross on the coffin in which I was lying, and my bones adhered to one another, and my soul recognized its body. When my soul was united to my body I experienced a great joy, but fear overtook me after that lest He should deliver me again to them. "This is what the son of the Emperor said while sitting on the stone that was placed on the tomb of the Saviour. Then he asked those who were standing near him, saying: " What is the name of this town? " And they answered him: " Jerusalem." Then he inquired about his father and mother, and they informed him that they were alive and that they were in the Capital of the Empire. After this Pilate, Joseph and Nicodemus cried and said: Honour and glory be to you, O our Lord Jesus Christ, You who have revived dead bones and given life to those who love You! "



### The Sibylline Oracles

As the translator notes, this collection should more properly be titled 'the Pseudo-Sibylline Oracles'. The original Sibylline Books were closely-guarded oracular scrolls written by prophetic priestesses (the Sibylls) in the Etruscan and early Roman Era as far back as the 6th Century B.C.E. These books were destroyed, partially in a fire in 83 B.C.E., and finally burned by order of the Roman General Flavius Stilicho (365-408 C.E.).

There is very little knowledge of the actual contents of the original Sibylline Books. The texts which are presented here are forgeries, probably composed between the second to sixth century C.E. They purport to predict events which were already history or mythological history at the time of composition, as well as vague all-purpose predictions, especially woe for various cities and countries such as Rome and Assyria. They are an odd pastiche of Hellenistic and Roman Pagan mythology, including Homer and Hesiod; Jewish legends such as the Garden of Eden, Noah and the Tower of Babel; thinly veiled references to historical figures such as Alexander the Great and Cleopatra, as well as a long list of Roman Emperors; and last but not least, Gnostic and early Christian homilies and eschatological writings, all in no particular order. There may be actual residue of the original Sibylline books wedged in here and there, but this is dubious.

As prophecy, the Pseudo-Sibyllines never rise to the level of Nostradamus. However, they are a gold mine for students of Classical mythology and early first millennium Jewish, Gnostic and Christian beliefs. Notable are apocalyptic passages scattered throughout which at times seem like a first draft of the Biblical Book of Revelation. The Pseudo-Sibyllines were referenced by the early Church fathers and in one instance have a Christian code-phrase in successive first letters on each line (an 'acrostic').

These books, in spite of their Pagan content, have been described as part of the *Apocrypha*, although they do not appear on any of the canonical lists.

### The Text

## THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES.

### BOOK I.

#### CONTENTS OF BOOK I.<sup>1</sup>

Announcement, **1-5**. Creation of the earth and man, **6-47**. First sin and penalty, **48-81**.

Condition of the first race, **82-107**. The second race of men, **108-129**. Third and fourth races,

**130-148**. The race of giants, **149-153**. Call and preaching of Noah, **154-243**. Entrance into the ark, and the flood, **244-281**. Abatement of the waters, **282-319**. Exit from the ark, **320-343**.

The sixth race and the Titans, **344-386**.

## Sibylline Oracles

Prophecy of Christ, **387-468**. Dispersion of the Hebrews, **469-485**.

**1** BEGINNING with the generation first  
Of mortal men down to the very last  
I'll prophesy each thing: what erst<sup>2</sup> has been,  
And what is now, and what shall yet befall  
**5** The world through the impiety of men.  
First now God urges on me to relate  
Truly how into being came the world.  
And thou, shrewd mortal, prudently make known,  
Lest ever thou should'st my commands neglect,  
**10** The King most high, who brought into existence  
The whole world, saying, "Let there be," and there was.  
For he the earth established, placing it  
Round about Tartarus<sup>3</sup>, and he himself

<sup>1</sup> This book appears to be one of the latest in composition of this entire collection of oracles, but it was placed first on account of its contents, which relate to the creation and the earliest races of mankind. It is evidently of Christian origin, and was written probably as late as the third century

<sup>2</sup> 3 At a previous time

<sup>3</sup> 14 *Tartartus*, the prison of the Titans, is here conceived as encompassed by the earth and forming its interior. Hesiod (*Theog.*, 720, *ff*) represents it as surrounded by a brazen fence and situated as far beneath the earth as earth is beneath the heaven; it would require nine days and nights, he says, for an anvil to fall from heaven to earth, and as many more for it to fall from earth to Tartarus. Comp. Homer, *Il.*, viii, 13-16. Verg., *Æn.*, vi, 577-581. It will be seen in line 127 and elsewhere that Gehenna is

Gave the sweet light; he raised the heaven on high,  
**15** Spread out the gleaming sea, and crowned the sky  
With an abundance of bright-shining stars,  
And decked the earth with plants, and mingled sea  
With rivers, and the air with zephyrs mixed  
And watery clouds; and then, another race  
**20** Appointing, he gave fishes to the seas  
And birds unto the winds, and to the woods  
The beasts of shaggy neck, and snakes that crawl,  
And all things which now on the earth appear.  
These by his word he made, and every thing  
**25** Was speedily and with precision done;  
For he was self-caused and from heaven looked down  
And finished was the world exceeding well.  
And then thereafter fashioned he again  
A living product, copying a new man  
**30** From his own image, beautiful, divine,  
And bade him in ambrosial garden dwell,  
That labors beautiful might be his care.

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But in that fertile field of Paradise  
He longed for conversation, being alone,  
**35** And prayed that he might see another form  
Such as he had. And forthwith, from man's side  
Taking a bone, God himself made fair Eve,  
A wedded spouse, and in that Paradise  
Gave her to dwell with him. And, when he gazed  
**40** Upon her, on a sudden filled with joy  
Great admiration held his soul, he saw  
A pattern so exact; and with wise words  
Spontaneous flowing answered he in turn  
For God had care for all things. For the mind  
**45** They darkened not with passion, nor concealed  
Their nakedness, but with hearts far from evil  
Even like wild beasts they walked with limbs exposed.  
And afterwards delivering them commands<sup>4</sup>  
God showed them not to touch a certain tree;  
**50** But the dread serpent drew them off by guile  
To go away unto the fate of death  
And to gain knowledge of both good and evil.  
But the wife then first traitress proved to God;  
She gave, and urged the unknowing man to sin.  
**55** And he, persuaded by the woman's words,  
Forgot the immortal Maker utterly,  
regarded as a part of Tartarus or identical with it, while  
Hades (line 106) comprehends the abode of all the dead.  
<sup>4</sup> 48-52. Cited by Lact., *Div. Inst.*, ii, 13. [L., 6, 325.]  
10  
And treated plain commandments with neglect.  
Therefore, instead of good, received they evil  
According to their deed. And then the leaves  
**60** Of the sweet fig-tree piercing they made clothes  
And put them on each other, and concealed  
The sexual parts, because they were ashamed.  
But on them the Immortal set his wrath  
And cast them out of the immortal land.  
**65** For their abiding now in mortal land  
Was brought to pass, since hearing they kept not  
The word of the immortal mighty God.  
And straightway they, upon the fruitful soil  
Forthgoing, with their tears and groans were wet;  
**70** And to them then the immortal God himself  
A word more excellent spoke: "Multiply,  
Increase, work constantly upon the earth,  
That with the sweat of labor ye may have  
Sufficient food." Thus he spoke; and he made  
**75** The author of deceit to press the ground  
On belly and on side, a crawling snake,

## Sibylline Oracles

Driving him out severely; and he sent  
Dire enmity between them and the one  
Is on the look-out to preserve his head,  
**80** But man his heel; for death is neighbor near  
Of evil-plotting vipers and of men.  
And then indeed the race was multiplied  
As the Almighty himself gave command,  
And there grew up one people on another  
**85** Innumerable. And houses they adorned  
Of all kinds and made cities and their walls  
Well and expertly; and to them was given  
A day of long time<sup>1</sup> for a life much-loved;  
For they did not worn out with troubles die,  
**90** But as subdued by sleep; most happy men  
Of great heart, whom the immortal Saviour loved,  
The King, God. But they also did transgress,  
Smitten with folly. For with impudence  
They mocked their fathers and their mothers scorned;  
**95** Kinsmen they knew not, and they formed intrigues  
Against their brothers. And they were impure,  
Having defiled themselves with human gore,  
And they made wars. And then upon them came  
The last calamity sent forth from heaven,  
**100** Which snatched the dreadful men away from life;  
And Hades then received them; it was called  
<sup>188</sup> *Day of long time*.--Allusion to the remark the  
patriarchs as recorded in Gen. v.  
Hades<sup>2</sup> since Adam, having tasted death,  
Went first and earth encompassed him around.  
And therefore all men born upon the earth  
**105** Are in abodes of Hades called to go.  
But even in Hades all these when they came  
Had honor, since they were the earliest race.  
But when Hades received these, secondly  
[Of the surviving and most righteous men]<sup>3</sup>  
**110** God formed another very subtle race  
That cared for lovely works, and noble toils,  
Distinguished reverence and solid wisdom;  
And they were trained in arts of every kind,  
Finding inventions by their lack of means.  
**115** And one devised to till the land with plows,  
Another worked in wood, another cared  
For sailing, and another watched the stars  
And practiced augury with winged fowls;  
And use of drugs had interest for one,  
**120** While for another magic had a charm;  
And others were in every other art

## Sibylline Oracles

Which men care for instructed, wide awake,  
Industrious, worthy of that eponym  
Because they had a sleepless mind within  
**125** And a huge body; stout with mighty form  
They were; but, notwithstanding, down they went  
Into Tartarean chamber terrible,  
Kept in firm chains to pay full penalty  
In Gehenna of strong, furious, quenchless fire.

**130** And after these a third strong-minded race<sup>4</sup>  
Appeared, a race of overbearing men  
And terrible, who wrought among themselves  
Many an evil. And fights, homicides,  
And battles did continually destroy

**135** Those men possessed of overweening heart,  
And from these afterward another race

<sup>2</sup> 102 *Hades*. The conception of Hades here set forth, as the great receptacle of the souls of men after death, is in essential harmony with both the Jewish and the Christian doctrines. The derivation of the name from Adam is noticeable as a purely arbitrary conjecture. Cp. Book iii, 30, note; cp. Plato's explanation of the word in *Cratylus*, 404.

<sup>3</sup> 104 Lines thus inclosed in brackets are believed to be spurious interpolations, but have too much MS. authority to be omitted from the text.

<sup>4</sup> 130 *Third strong-minded race*.--The successive races here mentioned appear to be in imitation of Hesiod's ages or races of mankind. Hesiod applies to them the epithets of golden, silver, bronze, and iron. See *Works and Days*, 108-190, and cp. Aratus, *Phænom.*, 100-134; Ovid, *Met.*, i. 89-150; Juvenal, *Sat.*, xiii, 27-30.

11

Proceeded, late-completed, youngest born,  
Blood-stained, perverse in counsel; of men these  
Were in the fourth race; much the blood they spilled,

**140** Nor feared they God nor had regard for men,  
For maddening wrath and sore impiety  
Were sent upon them. And wars, homicides,  
And battles sent some into Erebus<sup>1</sup>,  
Since they were overweening impious men.

**145** But the rest did the heavenly God himself  
In anger afterwards change from his world,  
Casting them into mighty Tartarus  
Down under the foundation of the earth.

And later yet another race much worse

**150** [Of men he made, to whom no good thereafter]  
The Immortal formed, since they wrought many evils.  
For they were much more violent than those,  
Giants<sup>2</sup> perverse, foul language pouring out.  
Single among all men, most just and true,

## Sibylline Oracles

**155** Was the most faithful Noah, full of care  
For noblest works. And to him God himself  
From heaven thus spoke: "Noah, be of good cheer  
In thyself and to all the people preach  
Repentance, so that they may all be saved.

**160** But if, with shameless soul, they heed me not  
The whole race I will utterly destroy  
With mighty floods of waters. Quickly now  
An undecaying house I bid thee frame  
Of planks strong and impervious to the wet.

**165** I will put understanding in thy heart,  
And subtle skill, and rule of measurement  
And order; and for all things will I care  
That thou be saved, and all who dwell with thee.  
And I am He who is, and in thy heart

**170** Do thou discern. I clothe me with the heaven,  
And cast the sea around me, and for me  
Earth is a footstool, and the air is poured  
Around my body; and on every side  
Around me runs the chorus of the stars.

**175** Nine letters<sup>3</sup> have I; of four syllables  
<sup>1</sup>144 *Erebus* appears to be here employed merely as  
another name for the underworld, and interchangeable  
with Hades. Cp. Homer, *Il.*, viii. 368. Tartarus is  
conceived as a still lower deep

<sup>2</sup>153 *Giants*.--The *nephilim* of Gen. vi, 4.

<sup>3</sup>175. *Nine letters*.--The connection shows that the name  
intended must be some title or designation of the Creator,  
but no word has been discovered that fully meets the  
conditions of the puzzle. The nearest solution is found in  
the word {Grk *ane'kfwnows*}. This word has nine  
letters, four syllables, and five mutes, or consonants. The  
I am; discern me. The first three have each  
Two letters, the remaining one the rest,  
And five are mates; and of the entire sum

The hundreds are twice eight and thrice three tens  
**180** Along with seven. Now, knowing who I am,  
Be thou not uninitiated in my lore."

Thus he spoke; and great trembling seized on him  
At what he heard. And then, within his mind  
Having contrived each matter, he besought<sup>4</sup>

**185** The people and began with words like these:  
"O men insatiate, smite with madness great,  
Whatever things ye practiced they shall not  
Escape God's notice; for he knows all things,  
Immortal Saviour overseeing all,

**190** Who bade me warn you, that ye perish not.  
Be sober, cut off badness, do not fight  
Perforce each other with blood-guilty heart,

## Sibylline Oracles

Nor irrigate much land with human gore.

Revere, O mortals, the supremely great

**195** And fearless heavenly Creator, God

Imperishable, whose dwelling is the sky;

first three syllables have two letters each, and the sum of all the letters taken at their numerical value is 1,696. But the number stated in the text is twice 800, plus three times thirty (= 90) and seven = 1,697. {Grk

*?ane'kfwnows*} must also be supposed to be a shortened form for {Grk *?anekfw'nhtos*}, used in ecclesiastical Greek writers to denote the unutterable name, Jehovah. Another name proposed is {Grk *Qeo`s Swth'r*}, but an obvious objection is that we have here two words, not, as the text suggests, one word of four syllables. Besides, these letters amount to only 1,692. There is, perhaps, an error in the text. If for the words with seven (line 180) we read with two, the numerical difficulty of the last-named solution would be met; or if we read with six, then the word {Grk *?ane'kfwnos*} solves the problem. Comp. the similar puzzle in lines 395-399 of this same book, and the well-known {footnote line 184} enigma of the number of the beast in Rev. xiii, 18. A like example is also found in Capella (Book ii, 193), who thus addresses the sun: "Hail, thou veritable face and paternal countenance of God, eight and six hundred in number, whose first letter forms a sacred name, a surname, and a sign;" which Kopp explains by the letters {Grk *frh*} (= 608), representative of the Egyptian name of the sun. Comp. also the designation of the Roman emperors in Book v, 16, and following.]

<sup>4</sup>184. *Besought the people*.--The O. T. narrative of the flood records nothing of Noah's preaching, but in 2 Pet. ii he is called a "preacher of righteousness" (comp. 1 Pet. iii, 20), and Josephus (*Ant.*, i, iii, 1) confirms this tradition of the Jews. Comp. also Theophilus, *ad Autol.*, iii, 19 [G., 61 1.145]

12

And do ye all entreat him--he is kind--

For life of cities and of all the world,

And of four-footed beasts and flying fowls;

**200** Entreat him to be gracious unto all.

For when the whole unbounded world of men

Shall be destroyed by waters loud ye'll raise

A fearful cry. And suddenly for you

The air shall be disordered, and from heaven

**205** The fury of the mighty God shall come

Upon you. And it certainly shall be

That the immortal Saviour against men

Will send wrath if ye do not placate God

And from this time repent; and nothing more

**210** Fretful and evil lawlessly shall ye

One to another do, but let there be

## Sibylline Oracles

A guarding of one's self by holy life."  
But when they heard him each turned up his nose,  
Calling him mad, a frenzy-smitten man.

**215** And then again did Noah sound this strain:

"O men exceeding wretched, base in heart,  
Unstable, leaving modesty behind

And loving shamelessness, rapacious lords,  
Fierce sinners, false, insatiate, mischievous,

**220** In nothing true, stealthy adulterers,  
Flippant in language, pouring forth foul words,  
The wrath of God most high not fearing, kept  
To the fifth generation to atone!

In no way do ye wail, harsh men, but laugh;

**225** Sardonic smile<sup>1</sup> shall ye laugh, when shall come  
That which I speak--God's dire incoming flood,  
When Eve's polluted race, in the great earth

Blooming perennial in impervious stem,  
Shall, root and branch, in one night disappear,

**230** And cities, men and all, shall the Earth-shaker<sup>2</sup>  
From the depths scatter and their walls destroy.

And then the whole world of unnumbered men  
Shall die. But how shall I weep, how lament  
In wooden house, how mingle tears with waves?

**235** For, if this water bidden of God shall come,  
Earth shall float, hills float, and even sky shall float;  
Everything shall be water, and all things  
Shall be destroyed by waters. And the winds

<sup>1</sup> 225. *Sardonic smile*--Expression supposed to have originated from a Sardinian plant so bitter as to cause the face of the cater to writhe in pain, though he might attempt to laugh. Comp. Hom. *Od.*, xx, 302.

<sup>2</sup> 230. *Earth-shaker*--the Greek poets an epithet of Poseidon (Neptune), the god of the sea, here evidently applied to the God of Noah.

Shall stand still, and a second age shall come.

**240** O Phrygia<sup>3</sup>, thou shalt from the water's crest  
First rise up, and thou first another race  
Of men shalt nourish, once again anew  
Beginning; and thou shalt be nurse for all."

But when now to the lawless generation

**245** He had thus vainly spoken, the Most High  
Appeared, and once more cried aloud and said:

"The time is now come, Noah, to proclaim  
Each thing, even all which I that day to thee  
Did promise and confirm, and to complete,

**250** Because of a people disobedient,  
Throughout the boundless world even all the things  
Which generations of a former time



## Sibylline Oracles

Did practice, evil things innumerable.  
But do thou quickly enter with thy sons  
**255** And the wives. Call as many as I bid,  
Of tribes of beasts and creeping things and birds,  
And in as many as I ordain for life  
Will I then put a willingness to go."  
Thus spoke he; forth went (Noah) and aloud  
**260** Cried out and called. And then wife, sons and  
brides,  
Entered the house of wood; then also went  
The other things, as many as God willed  
To shut in. But when fitting bolt was put  
About the lid, and in its polished place  
**265** Was fitted sideways, then was brought to pass  
Forthwith the purpose of the God of heaven.  
And he massed clouds, and bid the sun's bright disk,  
And moon, and stars, and circle of the heaven,  
Obscuring all things round; he thundered loud,  
**270** Terror of mortals, sending lightnings forth;  
And all the winds together were aroused,  
And all the veins of water were unloosed  
By opening of great cataracts from heaven,  
And from earth's caverns and the tireless deep  
**275** Appeared the myriad waters, and the whole  
Illimitable earth was covered o'er.  
But on the water swam that wondrous house;  
And torn by many furious waves, and struck  
By force of winds, it rushed on fearfully;  
**280** But with its keel it cut the mass of foam  
While the loud-babbling waters dashed around.  
But when God deluged all the world with rains  
<sup>3</sup>240. *Phrygia* . . . *first*.--Comp. the statement of  
Herodotus (ii, 2), that the Phrygians were the most  
ancient of mankind  
13  
Then also Noah took thought to observe  
By counsels of the Immortal; for he now  
**285** Had had enough of Nereus<sup>1</sup>. And straightway  
The house he opened from the polished wall,  
That crosswise was bound fast with skillful stays.  
And looking out upon the mighty mass  
Of boundless waters Noah on all sides--  
**290** And 'twas his fortune with his eyes to see!--<sup>2</sup>  
Fear possessed and shook mightily his heart.  
And then the air became a little calm,  
Since it was weary wetting all the world  
Many days; parting, then, it brought to light  
**295** How pale and blood-red was the mighty sky

## Sibylline Oracles

And sun's bright disk awearied; scarcely held  
Noah his courage. And then forth afar  
Sent he a dove alone, that he might learn  
If yet firm land appeared. But with tired wing,  
**300** Flying round all things, she again returned;  
For not yet had the water ebbed away;  
For it was deeply filling every place.  
But after resting quietly for days  
He sent the dove once more, to learn if yet  
**305** Had ceased the many waters. And she flew  
And flew on, and went o'er the earth and, resting  
Her body lightly on the humid ground,  
Again to Noah back she came and bore  
An olive branch--of tidings a great sign.  
**310** Courage now filled them all, and great delight,  
Because they hoped to look upon the land.  
But then thereafter yet another bird,  
Of black wing, sent he forth as hastily;  
Which, trusting to its wings, flew willingly,  
**315** And coming to the land continued there.  
And Noah knew the land was nearer now.  
But when on dashing waves the craft divine  
Had here and there o'er ocean's billows swum,  
It was made fast upon the narrow strand.  
**320** There is in Phrygia on the dark mainland  
<sup>1</sup>285. *Nereus*.--A sea god supposed to dwell in the  
bottom of the ocean, and called in Homer (*Il.* i, 556) the  
"old man of the sea." His daughters were called Nereids.  
Nereus is here put by metonymy for the sea itself, and the  
Sibyl means to say that Noah had been long enough in  
the water.  
<sup>2</sup>290. An aposiopesis. (i.e. a breaking off in the middle  
of a sentence (as by writers of realistic  
conversations))The poet is so appalled at the thought of  
what Noah saw that she leaves her sentence unfinished  
A steep, tall mountain; Ararat<sup>3</sup> its name,  
Because upon it all were to be saved  
From death<sup>4</sup>, and there was great desire of heart;  
Thence streams of the great river Marsyas<sup>5</sup> spring.  
**325** There on a lofty peak the ark abode  
When the waters ceased, and then again from heaven  
The voice divine of the great God this word  
Proclaimed: "O Noah, guarded, faithful, just,  
Come boldly forth, with thy sons and thy wife  
**330** And the three brides, and fill ye all the earth,  
Increasing, multiplying, rendering justice  
To one another through all generations,  
Until to judgment every race of men

## Sibylline Oracles

Shall come; for judgment shall be unto all."

**335** Thus spoke the voice divine. Then from his couch  
Noah, encouraged, hastened on the land,  
And with him went his sons and wife and brides,  
And creeping things, and birds and quadrupeds,  
And all things else went from the wooden house

**340** Into one place. And then went Noah forth  
As eighth, most just of men, when on the waters  
He had made full twice twenty days and ones  
Because of counsels of the mighty God.

Then a new stock of life again arose,

**345** Golden first, which indeed was sixth, and best,  
From the time when the first-formed man appeared;  
Heavenly its name, because all things to God  
Shall be a care. O first race of sixth<sup>7</sup> age!

O mighty joy which I thereafter shared,

**350** When I escaped sheer ruin, by the waves  
Much tossed, with husband and with brothers-in-law,  
Stepfather and stepmother, and with wives  
Of husband's brothers suffering terribly.

Fitting things now will I sing: There shall be  
<sup>3</sup> 321. *Ararat*.--Comp. the legends of this mountain and  
of the remains of the ark in Josephus, *Ant.*, i, iii, 6.

<sup>4</sup> 323. *From death*.--A reading proposed by  
Mendelssohn, and approved by Rzach in his *Addenda et  
corrigenda*

<sup>5</sup> 324. River Marsyas.--Two rivers of antiquity bear this  
name, one a branch of the Mæander in Asia Minor, the  
other a branch of the Orontes in Syria. Neither of these  
seems to meet the conditions of our text

<sup>6</sup> 342. *Twice twenty days and one*.--According to the  
statement in Gen. vii, 12

<sup>7</sup> 348. *Sixth*.--"The Erythræan Sibyl says that she lived in  
the sixth age after the flood," writes Eusebius, *Orat. ad  
Sanct.*, xviii [G., 20, 1285]. Here we note that she  
assumes to be a daughter-in-law of Noah. Comp. close of  
Book iii.

14

**355** On the fig-tree a many-colored flower<sup>1</sup>,  
And afterward the royal power and sway  
Shall Cronos have. For three kings<sup>2</sup> of great soul,  
Men most just, shall distribute portions then,  
And many a year rule, rendering what is just

**360** To men who care for toil and deeds of love.  
And earth shall glory in her many fruits  
Self-growing, yielding much corn for the race.

And the foster-fathers, ageless all their days,  
Shall from diseases chill and dreadful be

**365** Far aloof; they shall die as fallen on sleep,  
And unto Acheron<sup>3</sup> in the abodes

## Sibylline Oracles

Of Hades they shall go away, and there  
Shall they have honor, since they were a race  
Of blessed ones, fortunate heroes, whom  
**370** The Lord of Sabaoth<sup>4</sup> gave a noble mind,  
And with whom always he his counsels shared.  
But blessed shall they be even when they go  
In Hades. And then afterward again  
Oppressive, strong, another second race

**375** Of earth-born men, the Titans<sup>5</sup>. All excel  
In figure, stature, growth; and there shall be  
One language, as of old from the first race  
God in their breasts implanted. But even these,  
Having a haughty heart and rushing on

**380** To ruin, shall at last resolve to fight  
Against the starry heaven. And then the stream  
Of the great ocean shall upon them pour  
Its raging waters. But the mighty Lord  
Of Sabaoth though enraged shall check his wrath,  
**385** Because he promised that again no flood  
Should be brought upon men of evil soul.

### Prophecy of Christ

But when the great high-thundering God shall cause  
<sup>1</sup>355 *Many-colored flower*.--Here employed as an image  
of the fertility of the royal race of whom she is about to  
sing.

<sup>2</sup>357. *Three kings*.--The three sons of Noah would seem to  
have been identified in the Sibyl's thought with Cronos, Titan,  
and Iapetus of the Greek mythology. Cp. book iii, 130.

<sup>3</sup>366. Acheron was a river of the lower world. Verg.,  
*Æn.*, vi, 295.

<sup>4</sup>384 Sabaoth (plural) hosts or armies; used in the book  
of Romans in the New Testament

<sup>5</sup>375. *Titans*.--Mythical sons of heaven and earth who  
figure much in Greek legend and poetry. See Book iii, 130-  
185. Lactantius records a number of the legends and  
observes: "The truth of this history is taught by the  
Erythræan Sibyl, who says almost the same things,  
varying only in a few unimportant details." *Div. Inst.*, i,  
xiv [L., 6, 190]

The boundless swelling of the many waters--  
With their waves hither and thither rising high--  
**390** To cease from wrath, and into other depths  
Of sea their measure lessen, setting bounds  
By harbors and rough headlands round the land;

Then also shall a child of the great God  
Come, clothed in flesh, to men, and fashioned like  
**395** To mortals in the earth; and he doth hear

Four vowels<sup>6</sup>, and two consonants in him  
Are twice announced; the whole sum I will name:

## Sibylline Oracles

For eight ones, and as many tens on these,  
And yet eight hundred will reveal the name

**400** To men insatiate; and do thou discern

In thine own understanding that **the Christ**

**Is child of the immortal God most high.**

**And he shall fulfill God's law, not destroy,**

Bearing his very image, and all things

**405** Shall he teach. Unto him shall priests convey

And offer gold, and myrrh<sup>7</sup>, and frankincense;

For all these things he'll also bring to pass.

But when a voice<sup>8</sup> shall through the desert land

Come bearing tidings to men, and to all

**410** Shall call to make straight paths, and from the heart

Cast wickedness out and illuminate<sup>9</sup>

With water all the bodies of mankind,

That being born again they may no more

From what is righteous go at all astray--

**415** And one of barbarous mind, by dances<sup>10</sup> bound,

Cutting that (voice) off shall bestow reward--

Then on a sudden there shall be a sign

To mortals, when, watched over<sup>11</sup>, there shall come

<sup>6</sup> 396. *Four vowels*.--The name Jesus in Greek, {Grk *?Ihsou~s*}, contains four vowels and the consonant is twice told, and the numerical value of all the letters is 888. Comp. line 175, and note.

<sup>7</sup> 406. *Gold . . . myrrh*.--Comp. Matt. ii, 11

<sup>8</sup> 408. *A voice*.--Comp. Isa. xl, 3; Matt. iii, 3

<sup>9</sup> 411. *Illuminate*.--An expression relating to Christian baptism quite common with the early fathers, many of whom understood the word {Grk *fw'tis-qe'nte's*} in Heb. vi, 4, as referring to baptism. Justin Martyr, 1 *Apol.*, lxi [G., 6, 421], says: "This washing is called illumination, inasmuch as those who learn these things have their understanding illuminated." Cyril of Jerusalem wrote eighteen books of religious instruction, which are entitled Catechesis of the Illuminated [G., 33, 369-1060]. See also *Apost. Const.*, viii, 8. For other references see Suicer, Thesaurus, under {Greek *fw'tisma*}

<sup>10</sup> 415. *Dances*.--See Matt. xiv, 6-10.

<sup>11</sup> 418. *Watched over*.--By God and angels, as told in Matt. ii.

15

Out of the land of Egypt<sup>1</sup> a fair stone;

**420** And on it shall the Hebrew people stumble;

But by his guiding nations shall be brought

Together; for the God who rules on high

They also shall know through him, and the way

In common light<sup>2</sup>. For unto chosen men

**425** Will he show life eternal, but the fire

Will be for ages on the lawless bring.

## Sibylline Oracles

And then shall he the sickly heal, and all  
Who are blameworthy who shall trust in him.  
And then the blind shall see, the lame shall walk<sup>3</sup>,  
**430** The deaf shall hearken, and the dumb shall speak.  
Demons shall he drive out, and of the dead  
There shall be an uprising; on the waves  
Shall he walk; also in a desert place  
Shall he five thousand satisfy with food  
**435** From five loaves and a fish out of the sea,  
And with the remnants of them, for the hope  
Of peoples, shall he fill twelve baskets full.  
And then shall Israel, drunken, not discern,  
Nor shall they hear, oppressed with feeble cars.

### Jesus' Crucifixion, Descent into Hell and Resurrection

**440** But when the maddening wrath of the Most High  
Shall come upon the Hebrews, and take faith  
Away from them, because they slew the Son  
Of the heavenly God; then also with foul lips  
Shall Israel give him cuffs and spittle<sup>4</sup> drugged.  
**445** And gall for food and vinegar unmixed  
For drink will they, with evil madness smitten  
In bosom and in heart, give impiously,  
Not seeing with their eyes, more blind than moles,  
More terrible than crawling poisonous beasts,  
**450** Fast bound by heavy sleep. But when his hands  
He shall spread forth and measure out all things,  
And bear the crown of thorns, and they shall pierce  
His side with reeds, for which dark monstrous night  
Shall be for three hours in the midst of day,  
**455** Then also shall the temple of Solomon  
Bring to an end a mighty sign<sup>5</sup> for men,  
When he shall to the house of Hades go  
Proclaiming resurrection to the dead.  
But when in three days he shall come again  
**460** Unto the light, and show his form to men

<sup>1</sup>419. *Egypt*.--See Matt. ii, 13-15, 21. *Stone*.--Comp.

Matt. xxi, 42, 44, and I Pet. ii, 4-8; Zech. iii, 9

<sup>2</sup>424. *Common light*.--Comp. John i, 4-9

<sup>3</sup>429-437. Comp. Book viii, 270-274 and 361-369. Cited  
also by Lactantius in *Div. Inst.* iv, 16 [L., 6, 493

<sup>4</sup>444. *Cuffs* . . . *spittle*.--Comp. Matt. xxvii, 30.

<sup>5</sup>456. *Sign*.--Comp. Matt. xxvii, 51

And teach all things, ascending in the clouds  
Unto the house of heaven shall he go  
Leaving the world a Gospel covenant.

And in his name shall blossom a new shoot  
**465** From nations that are guided by the law  
Of the Mighty One. But also after this

## Sibylline Oracles

There shall be wise guides, and then afterward  
There shall be a cessation of the prophets.  
After that, when the Hebrew people reap  
**470** Their evil harvest, shall a Roman king<sup>6</sup>  
Much gold and silver utterly destroy.  
And afterward shall other royal powers  
Continuously arise as kingdoms perish,  
And they will oppress mortals. But great fall  
**475** Shall be for those men, when they shall begin  
Unrighteous arrogance. But when the temple  
Of Solomon in the holy land shall fall,  
Cast down by barbarous men in brazen mail,  
And from the land the Hebrews shall be driven  
**480** Wandering and wasted, and among the wheat  
They shall much darnel mingle, there shall be  
Evil contention among, all mankind;  
And the cities suffering outrage shall bewail  
Each other, in their breasts receiving wrath  
**485** Of the great God, since they wrought evil work.

### **BOOK II.**<sup>7</sup>

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK II.**

Introduction, **1-6**. A time of plagues and wickedness, **7-15**. The tenth race, **16-28**. A time of peace, **29-36**. Great sign and contest, **37-63**. A chapter of proverbs, **64-188**. The contest, **189-195**. Woes of the last generation, **196-222**. Events of the last day, **223-263**. Resurrection and judgment, **264-312**. Punishment of the wicked, **313-383**. Blessedness of the righteous, **384-403**. Some saved from the fire, **404-415**. The Sibyl's wail, **416-427**.

<sup>6</sup> 470. *Roman king*.--Titus, who carried the spoils of the temple to Rome.

<sup>7</sup> This second book appears to be a continuation of the preceding, and was probably written by the same author. In several manuscripts the two books are found united and placed after the third book. The appropriation of verses from the third and eighth books shows the later composition of these first two books, which our compiler assigned to their present position on account of their contents

16

**1** Now while I much entreated God restrained  
My wise song, also in my breast again  
He put the charming voice of words divine.  
In my whole body terror-stricken these  
**5** I follow; for I know not<sup>1</sup> that I speak,  
But God impels me to proclaim each thing.  
But when on earth come shocks, fierce thunderbolts,

## Sibylline Oracles

Thunders and lightnings, storms, and evil blight,  
And rage of jackals and of wolves, manslaughter,  
**10** Destruction of men and of lowing kine,  
Four-footed cattle and laborious mules,  
And goats and sheep, then shall the ample field  
Be barren from neglect, and fruits shall fail,  
And there shall be a selling of their freedom  
**15** Among most men, and robbery of temples.  
And then shall, after these, appear of men  
The tenth race, when the earth-shaking Lightener  
Shall break the zeal for idols and shall shake  
The people of seven-hilled Rome, and riches great  
**20** Shall perish, burned by Vulcan's fiery flame.  
And then shall bloody signs from heaven descend<sup>2--</sup>

.....

But yet the whole world of unnumbered men  
Enraged shall kill each other, and in tumult  
Shall God send famines, plagues, and thunderbolts  
**25** On men who, without justice, judge of rights.  
And lack of men shall be in all the world,  
So that if anyone beheld a trace  
Of man on earth, he would be wonder-struck.  
And then shall the great God who dwells in heaven  
**30** Saviour of pious men in all things prove.  
And then shall there be peace and wisdom deep,  
And the fruit-bearing land shall yield again  
Abundant fruits, divided not in parts  
Nor yet enslaved. And every harbor then,  
**35** And every haven, shall be free to men  
As formerly, and shamelessness shall perish.  
And then will God show mortals a great sign:  
For like a lustrous crown shall shine a star,  
Bright, all-resplendent, from the radiant heaven  
<sup>15</sup> *I know not.*--Comp. Plato, *Apol.*, 22, where Socrates  
observes that "not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but  
by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like diviners  
who also say many fine things, but do not understand the  
meaning of them."  
<sup>21</sup> There seems to be a lacuna of one line after this,  
containing perhaps a mention of omens and drops of  
blood, as in book xii, 73, where a similar thought is  
found  
**40** Days not a few; and then will he display  
From heaven a crown for contest unto men  
Who wrestle. And then there shall be again  
A mighty contest of triumphal marches  
Into the heavenly sky, and it shall be  
**45** For all men in the world, and have the fame



## Sibylline Oracles

Of immortality. And every people  
Shall then in the immortal contests strive  
For splendid victory. For no one there  
Can shamelessly with silver buy a crown.  
**50** For unto them will the pure Christ adjudge  
That which is due, and crown the ones approved,  
And give his martyrs an immortal prize  
Who carry on the contest unto death.

And unto chaste men who run their race well  
**55** Will he the incorruptible reward  
Of the prize give, and to all men allot  
That which is due, and also to strange nations  
That live a holy life and know one God.

And those who have regard for marriages  
**60** And keep themselves far from adulteries,  
To them rich gifts, eternal hope, he'll give.  
For every human soul is God's free gift,  
And 'tis not right men stain it with vile deeds<sup>4</sup>.

[Do not be rich unrighteously, but lead  
<sup>4</sup>43. *Contest of triumphal march.*--Allusion to the  
Iselastic ({{Grk *ei'selastiko's* }}) contests, the victors in  
which were conducted into their own city through a  
broken part of the wall. See Pliny, book x, Epis. 119 and  
120, in which these games are mentioned. Alexandre  
conjectures that this whole passage (lines 37-63)  
concerning contests and crowns was first written in a  
time of persecution to inspire to fidelity; but after  
persecution had ceased it was accommodated to the more  
common struggles of the Christian life

<sup>4</sup>64. The passage beginning here and ending with line  
188, and consisting mainly of proverbs, has every  
appearance of an interpolation. It breaks the connection  
of thought and the figure of the Iselastic contest, which is  
continued in lines 189-195. The passage is for the most  
part taken from a poem of 217 lines in hexameter verse,  
entitled {Grk *poi'hma nouqetiko'n* } (*admonitory  
poem*), and attributed to Phocylides, a gnomic poet of  
Miletus (born about B. C. 560). Very few, however, will  
seriously accept these lines as a genuine production of a  
contemporary of Theognis. They are without much doubt  
the composition of a Christian writer, and possibly, but  
not probably, by the author of the second book of the  
Sibylline Oracles. The variations between the two texts  
are considerable, the Sibyllines adding many lines not  
found in Phocylides, and Phocylides having a few not  
found in the Sibyllines

17

**65** A life of probity. Be satisfied  
With what thou hast and keep thyself from that  
Which is another's. Speak not what is false,  
But have a care for all things that are true.  
Revere not idols vainly; but the God

## Sibylline Oracles

**70** Imperishable honor always first,  
And next thy parents. Render all things due,  
And into unjust judgment come thou not.  
Do not cast out the poor unrighteously,  
Nor judge by outward show; if wickedly  
**75** thou judgest, God hereafter will judge thee.  
Avoid false testimony; tell the truth.  
Maintain thy virgin purity, and guard  
Love among all. Deal measures that are just;  
For beautiful is measure full to all.  
**80** Strike not the scales one side, but draw them equal.  
Forswear not ignorantly nor willingly;  
God hates the perjured man in that he swore.  
A gift proceeding out of unjust deeds  
Never receive in hand. Do not steal seed;  
**85** Accursed through many generations he  
Who took it unto scattering of life.  
Indulge not vile lusts, slander not, nor kill.  
Give the toil-worn his hire; do not afflict  
The poor man. Unto orphans help afford  
**90** And to widows and the needy. Talk with sense;  
Hold fast in heart a secret. Be unwilling  
To act unjustly nor yet tolerate  
Unrighteous men. Give to the poor at once  
And say not, "Come to-morrow." Of thy grain  
**95** Give to the needy with perspiring hand.  
He who gives alms knows how to lend to God.  
Mercy redeems from death when judgment comes.  
Not sacrifice, but mercy God desires  
Rather than sacrifice. The naked clothe,  
**100** Share thy bread with the hungry, in thy house  
Receive the shelterless and lead the blind.  
Pity the shipwrecked; for the voyage is  
Uncertain. To the fallen give a hand;  
And save the man that stands without defense.  
**105** Common to all is suffering, life's a wheel,  
Riches unstable. Having wealth, reach out  
To the poor thy hand. Of what God gave to thee  
Bestow thou also on the needy one.  
Common is the whole life of mortal men;  
**110** But it comes out unequal. When thou seest  
<sup>195</sup>. With *perspiring hand*.--So Mendelssohn,  
*Philologus*, xlix, 2, p. 246. Comp. Rzach, p. xix  
A poor man never banter him with words,  
Nor harshly accost a man who may be blamed.  
One's life in death is proven; if one did  
The unlawful or just, it shall be decided

## Sibylline Oracles

**115** When he to judgment comes. Disable not  
Thy mind with wine nor drink excessively.  
Eat not blood, and abstain from things  
Offered to idols. Gird not on the sword  
For slaughter, but defense; and would thou might

**120** It neither lawlessly nor justly use:  
For if thou kill an enemy thy hand  
Thou dost defile. Keep from thy neighbor's field,  
Nor trespass on it; just is every landmark,  
And trespass painful. Useful is possession

**125** Of lawful wealth, but of unrighteous gains  
'Tis worthless. Harm not any growing fruit  
Of the field. And let strangers be esteemed  
In equal honor with the citizens;  
For much-enduring hospitality

**130** Shall all experience as each other's guests;  
But let there not be anyone a stranger  
Among you, since, ye mortals, all of you  
Are of one 'blood, and no land has for men  
Any sure place. Wish not nor pray for wealth;

**135** But pray to live from few things and possess  
Nothing at all unjust. The love of gain  
Is mother of all evil. Do not long  
For gold or silver; in them there will be  
A double-edged and soul-destroying iron.

**140** A snare to men continually are gold  
And silver. Gold, of evils source, of life  
Destructive, troubling all things, would that thou  
Wert, not to mortals such a longed-for bane!  
For wars, because of thee, and pillaging

**145** And murders come, and children hate their sires,  
And brothers and sisters those of their own blood.  
Plot no deceit, and do not arm thy heart  
Against a friend. Keep not concealed within  
A different thought from what thou speakest forth;

**150** Nor, like rock-clinging polyp, change with place.  
But with all be frank, and things from the soul  
Speak thou forth. Whosoever willfully  
Commits a wrong, an evil man is he;  
But he that does it under force, the end

**155** I tell not; but let each man's will be right.  
Pride not thyself in wisdom, power, or wealth;  
God only is the wise and mighty one  
And full of riches. Do not vex thy heart  
With evils that are past; for what is done

18

**160** Can never be undone. Let not thy hand

## Sibylline Oracles

Be hasty, but ferocious passion curb;  
For many times has one in striking done  
Murder without design. Let suffering  
Be common, neither great nor overmuch.  
**165** Excessive good has not brought forth to men  
That which is helpful. And much luxury  
Leads to immoderate lusts. Much wealth is prowl,  
And makes one grow to wanton violence.  
Passionate feeling, creeping in, effects  
**170** Destructive madness. Anger is a lust,  
And when it is excessive it is wrath.  
The zeal of good men is a noble thing,  
But of the base is base. Of wicked men  
The boldness is destructive, but renown  
**175** Follows that of the good. To be revered  
Is virtuous love, but that of Cypris works  
Increase of shame. A silly man is called  
Very agreeable among his fellows.  
With moderation eat, drink, and converse;  
**180** Of all things moderation is the best;  
But trespass of its limit brings to grief.  
Be not thou envious, faithless, or abusive,  
Or evil-minded, or a false deceiver.  
Be prudent and abstain from shameless deeds.  
**185** Imitate not what's evil, but leave thou  
Vengeance to justice; for persuasion is  
A useful thing, but strife engenders strife.  
Trust not too quickly ere thou see the end.]  
This is the contest<sup>2</sup>, these are the rewards;  
**190** These are the prizes; this the gate of life  
And entrance into immortality,  
Which God in heaven unto most righteous men  
Appointed a reward for victory;  
And through this gate shall gloriously pass  
**195** Those who shall then receive the victor's crown.

### Woes of the last Generation

But when this sign shall everywhere appear--  
<sup>1</sup>176. *Cypris*.--Another name for Aphrodite (or Venus),  
love. She is fabled to have sprung from the foam of the  
sea and to have first stepped ashore on the island of  
Cyprus, The love of *Cypris* here means impure sexual  
love

<sup>2</sup>189. *This is the contest*.--Obvious allusion to the  
Iselastic contest described in lines 42-63 above, and  
showing the passage 64-188 to be an interpolation. The  
compiler who inserted the passage here probably  
considered these proverbs so many precepts to guide one  
in the great contest for immortality.

## Sibylline Oracles

Children with gray hair<sup>3</sup> on their temples born--  
And human sufferings, famines, plagues, and wars,  
And change of times, and many a tearful wail,  
**200** Ah! of how many parents in the lands  
Will children mourn and piteously weep,  
And with shrouds bury flesh and limbs in earth,  
Mother of peoples, with the blood and dust  
Themselves defiling. O ye wretched men  
**205** Of the last generation, evil doers,  
Terrible, childish, not perceiving this,  
That when the tribes of women do not bear  
The harvest time of mortal men is come.  
Near is the ruin when impostors come  
**210** Instead of prophets speaking on the earth.  
And Beliar<sup>4</sup> shall come and many signs  
Perform for men. And then of holy men,  
Elect and faithful, there shall be confusion,  
And pillaging of them and of the Hebrews.  
**215**<sup>5</sup> And there shall be upon them fearful wrath  
When from the east a people of twelve tribes  
Shall come in search of kindred Hebrew people  
Whom Assyrian shoot destroyed; and over these  
Shall nations perish. But they afterwards  
**220** Shall over men exceeding mighty rule,  
Elect and faithful Hebrews, and enslave  
Them as before, since their power ne'er shall fail.

### Resurrection and judgment

He that is highest of all, the all-surveying,  
Dwelling in heaven, will scatter sleep on men,  
**225** Covering the eyelids o'er. O blessed servants  
Whom when the Master comes he finds awake!  
And they all watch at all times and expect  
With sleepless eyes<sup>7</sup>. For it will be at dawn  
Or eve or midday; but he sure shall come,  
**230** And it shall be as I say, it shall be,  
To them that sleep, that from the starry heaven

<sup>3</sup> 197. *Children with gray hair*.--Comp. a similar passage in Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 181. Children will become prematurely old by reason of the woes destined to visit the race in the last generation.

<sup>4</sup> 211. *Beliar*.--Same as Belial, named here for antichrist, whose coming in the last time is depicted in harmony with Paul's doctrine in 2 Thess. ii. 8-10

<sup>5</sup> 215-222. A passage inexplicably obscure in its historical allusions, but apparently connected with the notion of the ten tribes of the Assyrian exile, who, according to 2 Esdras xiii, 40-50, are concealed in the far East, and to be restored in the last time.

<sup>6</sup> 226. Comp. Matt. xxiv, 46.

## Sibylline Oracles

<sup>7</sup>228. Comp. Mark xiii, 35; Homer, Il., xxi, 111  
19

The stars at midday will to all appear<sup>1</sup>  
With the two lights as the time hastens on.  
And then the Tishbite, urging from the heaven  
**235** His chariot<sup>2</sup> celestial, and on earth  
Arriving, shall to all the world display  
Three evil signs of life to be destroyed.  
Alas for all the women in that day<sup>3</sup>  
Who shall be found with burden in the womb!  
**240** Alas for all who suckle tender babes!  
Alas for all who shall dwell on the waves!  
Alas for women who shall see that day!  
For a dark mist shall hide the boundless world,  
East, west, and south, and north. And then shall flow  
**245** A mighty stream of burning fire from heaven  
And every place consume, earth, ocean vast,  
And gleaming sea, and lakes and rivers, springs,  
And cruel Hades and the heavenly sky.  
And heavenly lights shall break up into one  
**250** And into outward form all-desolate.  
For stars from heaven shall fall into all seas.  
And all the souls of men shall gnash their teeth  
Burned both by sulphur stream and force of fire  
In ravenous soil, and ashes hide all things.  
**255** And then of the world all the elements  
Shall be bereft, air, earth, sea, light, sky, days,  
Nights; and no longer in the air shall fly  
Birds without number, nor shall living things  
That swim the sea swim any more at all,  
**260** Nor freighted vessel o'er the billows pass,  
Nor kine straight-guiding plow the field, nor sound  
Of furious winds; but he shall fuse all things<sup>4</sup>  
Together, and shall pick out what is pure.

### Punishment of the wicked

But when the immortal God's eternal angels<sup>5</sup>  
**265** Arakiel, Ramiel, Uriel, Samiel,  
And Azael, they that know how many evils  
Anyone did before, shall from dark gloom  
Then lead to judgment all the souls of men  
Before the judgment-seat of the great God  
**270** Immortal; for imperishable is

<sup>1</sup>233. Comp. Matt. xxiv, 29

<sup>2</sup>234. *Tishbite* . . . *chariot*. Cp. 2 Kings ii, 11; Mal. iv, 5.

<sup>3</sup>238. Comp. Matt. xxiv, 19

<sup>4</sup>263. Comp. book iii, 106; viii, 646.

<sup>5</sup>264-266. These names of the angels differ somewhat  
from those found in the Book of Enoch, where, in chap.

## Sibylline Oracles

ix, we find Michael, Gabriel, Surjan, and Urjan (the Greek fragment has Michael, Uriel, Raphael, and Gabriel); in chap. xx we have Uriel, Rufael, Raguel, Michael, Saraquel, and Gabriel; and in xl we meet the name Fanuel

One only, himself the almighty, One,  
Who shall be judge of mortals; and to them  
That dwell beneath will then the heavenly One  
Give souls and spirit and voice, and also bones  
**275** Fitted with joints unto all kinds of flesh,  
And both the flesh and sinews, veins and skin  
About the body, and hair as before;  
Divinely fashioned and with breathing moved  
Shall bodies of those on earth one day be raised.  
**280** And then shall Uriel, mighty angel, break  
The bolts of stern and lasting adamant  
Which, monstrous, bold the brazen gates of Hades,  
Straight cast them down, and unto judgment lead  
All forms that have endured much suffering,  
**285** Chiefly the shapes of Titans born of old,  
And giants, and all whom the deluge whelmed,  
And all that perished in the billowy seas,  
And all that furnished banquet for the beasts  
And creeping things and fowls, these in a mass  
**290** Shall (Uriel) summon to the judgment-seat;  
And also those whom flesh-devouring fire  
Destroyed in flame, even these shall he collect  
And place before the judgment-seat of God.  
And when the high-thundering Lord of Sabaoth  
**295** Making an end of fate shall raise the dead,  
Sit on his heavenly throne, and firmly fix  
The mighty pillar, then amid the clouds  
Christ, who himself is incorruptible,  
Shall come unto the Incorruptible  
**300** In glory with pure angels, and shall sit  
At the right hand on the great judgment-seat  
To judge the life of pious and the way  
Of impious men. And Moses, the great friend  
Of the Most High, shall come enrobed in flesh  
**305** Also great Abraham himself shall come,  
Isaac and Jacob, Joshua, Daniel,  
Elijah, Habakkuk and Jonah, and  
Those whom the Hebrews slew. But he'll destroy  
The Hebrews after Jeremiah, all  
**310** Who are to be judged at the judgment-seat,  
**Blessedness of the righteous**  
That worthy recompense they may receive  
And pay for all each did in mortal life.

## Sibylline Oracles

And then shall all pass through the burning stream  
Of flame unquenchable; but all the just

**315** Shall be saved; and the godless furthermore  
Shall to all ages perish, all who did  
Evils aforetime, and committed murders,

6 297. *Pillar*--Comp. lines 351 and 362, also bk vii, 36.

20

And all who are accomplices therein,  
Liars and thieves, and ruiners of home,

**320** Crafty and terrible, and parasites,  
And marriage-breakers pouring forth vile words,  
Dread, wanton, lawless, and idolaters;  
And all who left the great immortal God,  
Became blasphemers did the pious harm,

**325** Destroying faith and killing righteous men  
And all that with a shamelessness deceitful  
And double-faced rush in as presbyters  
And reverend ministers, who knowingly  
Give unjust judgments, yielding to false words

**330** More hurtful than the leopards and the wolves  
And more vile; and ill that are grossly proud  
And usurers, who gains on gains amass  
And damage orphans and widows in each thing;  
And all that give to widows and to orphans

**335** The fruit of unjust deeds, and all that cast  
Reproach in giving from their own hard toils;  
And all that left their parents in old age,  
Not paying them at all, nor offering  
To parents filial duty, and all who

**340** Were disobedient and against their sires  
Spoke a harsh word; and all that pledges took  
And then denied them; and the servants all  
Who were against their masters, and again  
Those who licentiously defiled the flesh;

**345** And all who loosed the girdle of the maid  
For secret intercourse, and all who caused  
Abortions, and all who their offspring cast  
Unlawfully away; and sorcerers  
And sorceresses with them, and these wrath

**350** Of the heavenly and immortal God shall drive  
Against a pillar where shall all around  
In a circle flow a restless stream of fire;  
And deathless angels of the immortal God,  
Who ever is, shall bind with lasting bonds

**355** In chains of flaming fire and from above  
Punish them all by scourge most terribly;  
And in Gehenna, in the gloom of night,



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Shall they be cast 'neath many horrid beasts  
Of Tartarus, where darkness is immense.

**360** But when there shall be many punishments  
Enforced on all who had an evil heart,  
Yet afterward shall there a fiery wheel  
From a great river circle them around,  
Because they had a care for wicked deeds.

**365** And then one here, another there, shall sires,  
Young children, mothers, nursing babes, in tears  
Wail their most piteous fate. No fill of tears  
Shall be for them, nor piteous voice be heard  
Of them that moan, one here, another there,

**370** But long worn under dark, dank Tartarus  
Aloud shall they cry; and they shall repay  
In cursed places thrice as much as all  
The evil work they did, burned with much fire;  
And all of them, consumed by raging thirst

**375** And hunger, shall in anguish gnash their teeth  
And call death beautiful, and death shall flee  
Away from them. For neither death nor night  
Shall ever give them rest. And many things in vain  
Will they ask of the God that rules on high,

**380** And then will he his face turn openly  
Away from them. For he to erring men  
Gave, in seven ages for repentance, signs  
By the hands of a virgin undefiled.

### Some saved from the fire

But the others, all to whom right and fair works

**385** And piety and thoughts most just were dear,  
Shall angels, bearing through the burning stream,  
Lead unto light and life exempt from care,  
Where comes the immortal way of the great God  
And fountains three--of honey, wine, and milk.

**390** And equal land for all, divided not  
By walls or fences, more abundant fruits  
Spontaneous shall then bear, and the course  
Of life be common and wealth unapportioned.  
For there no longer will be poor nor rich,

**395** Tyrant nor slave, nor any great nor small,  
Nor kings nor leaders; all alike in common.  
No more at all will one say, "night has come,"  
Nor "morrow comes," nor "yesterday has been;  
Nor shall there many days of anxious care,

**400** Nor spring, nor winter, nor the summer-heat,  
Nor autumn be [nor marriage, nor yet death,  
Nor sales, nor purchases], nor set of sun  
Nor rising; for a long day will God make.

## Sibylline Oracles

### And to the pious will the almighty God

<sup>1</sup> 376.--Comp. viii, 468; and xiii, 166

<sup>2</sup> 381-383.--Comp. viii, 473-475

<sup>3</sup> 394-395.--Comp. viii, 145

<sup>4</sup> 397-400.--Comp. viii, 561-565

<sup>5</sup> 404-416.--This passage, which savors of a final restoration from future punishment, has been thought to be contrary to orthodox teaching; and we find appended to some manuscripts the following lines, headed, "Contradiction of the 'To the pious will the Almighty,'" and professedly a disproof of the doctrine of Origen on this subject:

False manifestly; for the penal fire Shall never cease from those who are condemned.  
For also I might pray to have it thus,  
Branded with greatest scars of trespasses,  
Which need more kindness. But let Origen  
Of his presumptuous babble be ashamed,  
Saying there shall be end of punishments.

**405** Imperishable grant another thing,

When they shall ask the imperishable God:

That he will suffer men from raging fire

And endless gnawing anguish to be saved;

And this will he do. For hereafter he

**410** Will pluck them from the restless flame, elsewhere

Remove them, and for his own people's sake

Send them to other and eternal life

With the immortals, in Elysian field,

Where move far-stretching billows of the lake

**415** Of ever-flowing Acheron profound.

Ah<sup>2</sup>, miserable woman that I am!

What shall I be in that day? for I sinned--

Being busy foolishly about all things,

Caring for neither marriage-bond nor reason;

**420** But even in my wealthy husband's house

I shut the needy out; and formerly

I knowingly performed unlawful things.

But, Saviour, though I shameless things performed,

Do thou from my tormentors rescue me,

**425** A shameless woman. And I pray thee now

Make me to rest a little from my song,

Holy Giver of manna, King of the great realm.

<sup>1</sup> 413. *Elysian field*.--In Homer (*Od.*, iv, 563) the Elysian fields are represented as situated on the western border of the earth by the ocean stream. Hesiod (*Works and Days*, 169) speaks of "the Isles of the blessed, beside deepeddying ocean." But later, and with the Roman poets, Elysium was in the lower world, the blessed part of Hades, and is here conceived as bordering on the Acheronian lake

<sup>2</sup> 416-425.--Comp. the conclusion of book vii

## Sibylline Oracles

### **BOOK III<sub>3</sub>.**

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK III.**

Introduction, **1-10**. Unity and power of God extolled, **11-34**. Oracle against idolatry and sin, **35-64**. Coming and judgment of the great King, **55-76**. Coming of Beliar, **76-90**. Reign of the woman and end of the world, **90-111**. All things subject to Christ, **112-116**. The tower of Babel, **117-132**. Cronos, Titan, and Iapetus, **132-154**. Cronos, Rhea, and the Titans, **155-187**. End of the Titans and rise of many kingdoms, **188-196**. The Sibyl's message, **196-201**. Rule of the house of Solomon, **202-207**. Rule of the Hellenes, **208-212**. The Western Kingdom, **213-235**. The Sibyl's burden, **236-241**. Woes on the Titans and on many nations, **242-260**. The righteous race, **261-303**. The exodus and giving of the law, **304-325**. Desolation and exile, **325-351**. Restoration from exile, **352-361**. The Sibyl ceases and begins again, **362-371**. Woe on Babylon, **372-386**. Woe on Egypt, **387-392**. Woe on Gog and Magog, **393-397**. Woe on Libya, **399-412**. Great signs and woes on many cities, **413-433**. Retributive judgment on Rome, **434-450**. Doom of Smyrna, Samos, Delos, and Rome, **461-456**. Peace of Asia and Europe, **33**

*This third book of the Oracles is the most interesting and important of the entire collection. It is by far the longest, containing in the Greek text 829 verses. It is believed to be mainly of Jewish origin. In its present form, however, it is obviously a compilation of several distinct groups of oracles, one of which, lines 117-361 (Greek text, 97-294), contains the oldest portion of the Sibylline Oracles as they now exist. Two quite extensive fragments which have been preserved by Theophilus are by him said to have stood at the beginning of the Sibyl's prophecy and probably formed an introduction to this section of our third book. In place of this more ancient introduction the compiler of our collection has inserted the first 116 lines of this book, which may be again subdivided into three parts, which appear to be so many separate fragments; lines 1-75, 76-111, 112-116. In some editions the first 75 lines (Greek text, 1-62) are appended to the preceding book, and some MSS. preface this book with the words, "Again in her third tome she says these things from the second discourse concerning God." Other*

## Sibylline Oracles

*clearly distinguishable sections of this book are the following: lines 362-616, 616-1003, 1004-1031 (Greek text, 295-488, 489-808, 809-827). The last section purports to be a personal vindication of the Sibyl*  
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**457-473.** The Macedonian woe, **474-482.** The unnamed rulers. **483-499.** The sign for Phrygia, **600-615.** The fate of Ilium, **516-522.** songs of the blind old man, **523-541.** Woes of Lycia, Chalcedon, Cyzicus, Byzantium, Rhodes, Lydia, Samos, Cyprus, and Trallis, **642-582.** Italy's tribal wars, **683-590.** Woes of Laodicea, Campania, Corsica, and Sardinia, **591-607.** Woes of Mysia, Chalcedon, Galatia, Tenedos, Sicyon, and Corinth, **608-615.** The Sibyl ceases and begins again, **616-619.** Woes of Phoenicia, Crete, Thrace, Gog, Magog, Maurians, Ethiopians, and provinces of Asia Minor, **620-656.** Oracles against Greece, **657-723.** The holy race, **724-756,** Egypt subdued, **766-774.** Time of blessedness, **775-783.** Exhortation to worship God, **184-794.** Time of judgment, **795-816.** The god-sent king, **817-829.** Fearful time of judgment, **830-871.** The Sibyl's testimony, **872-876.** A Jewish millennium, **877-911.** Exhortation to the Greeks, **912-928.** Day of prosperity and peace, **928-947.** Exhortation to serve God, **948-953.** The Messianic day, **954-988.** Signs of the end, **989-1003.** The Sibyl's account of herself, **1004-1031**

**1** O THOU high-thundering blessed heavenly One,  
Who hast set in their place the cherubim,  
I, who have uttered what is all too true,  
Entreat thee, let me have a little rest;

**5** For my heart has grown weary from within.  
But why again leaps my heart, and my soul  
With a whip smitten from within constrained  
To utter forth its message unto all?

But yet again will I proclaim all things  
**10** Which God commands me to proclaim to men.  
O men, that in your image have a form  
Fashioned of God, why do ye vainly stray  
And walk not in the straight way, always mindful  
Of the immortal Maker? God is one,

**15** Sovereign, ineffable, dwelling in heaven,  
The self-existent and invisible,  
Himself alone beholding everything;

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Him sculptor's handmade not, nor is his form  
Shown by man's art from gold or ivory;

**20** But he, eternal Lord, proclaims himself  
As one who is and was erst and shall be  
Again hereafter. For who being mortal  
Can see God with his eyes? Or who shall bear  
To hear the only name of heaven's great God,

**25** The ruler of the world? He by his word  
Created all things, even heaven and sea,  
And tireless sun, and full moon and bright stars,  
And mighty mother Tethys<sup>1</sup>, springs and rivers,  
Imperishable fire, and days and nights.

**30** This is the God who formed four-lettered Adam<sup>2</sup>,  
The first one formed, and filling with his name  
East, west, and south, and north. The same is he  
Who fixed the pattern of the human form,  
And made wild beasts, and creeping things, and  
fowls.

**35** Ye do not worship neither fear ye God,  
But vainly go astray and bow the knee  
To serpents, and make offering to cats,  
And idols, and stone images of men,  
And sit before the doors of godless temples;

**40** Ye guard him who is God, who keeps all things,  
And merry with the wickedness of stones  
Forget the judgment of the immortal Saviour  
Who made the heaven and earth. Alas! a race  
That has delight in blood, deceitful, vile,

**45** Ungodly, of false, double-tongued, immoral men,  
Adulterous, idolatrous, designing fraud,  
An evil madness raving in their hearts,  
For themselves plundering, having shameless soul;

For no one who has riches will impart  
**50** To another, but dire wickedness shall be  
Among all mortals, and for sake of gain  
Will many widows not at all keep faith,  
But secretly love others, and the bond  
Of life those who have husbands do not keep.

**55** But when Rome shall o'er Egypt also rule<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>28. *Mother Tethys*.--Wife of Oceanus, mother of the rivers, and the nymphs, 3,000 in number. See Hesiod, *Theog.*, 335, ff

<sup>2</sup>30. *Four-lettered Adam*.--The ingenuity which seer, in the four letters of this name the Greek initials of the words for east, west, north, and south surpasses even that noted in book i, 102, where Hades is traced in the word Adam. But Augustine adopts this, and says: "According to the Greek tongue, Adam himself signifies the whole world. For there are four letters, A, D, A, M, and in

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Greek speech these are the initial letters of the four quarters of the earth." {Grk ?Anatolh}, east; {Grk Du'sis}, west; {Grk ?Arktos}, north; {Grk Meshmbri'a} south. Eharratio in Psalmum, xcvi, 15 [L., 37, 1236]. See also Tractatus in Joannis, ix, 14, and x, 12 [L., 35, 1465, 1473

<sup>3</sup> 55. The time when Rome obtained full control of Egypt was when Augustus became the undisputed master of the  
23

Governing always, then shall there appear  
The greatest kingdom of the immortal King  
Over men. And a holy Lord shall come<sup>1</sup>  
To hold the scepter over every land  
**60** Unto all ages of fast-hastening time.  
And then shall come inexorable wrath  
On Latin men; three<sup>2</sup> shall by piteous fate  
Endamage Rome. And perish shall all men,  
With their own houses, when from heaven shall flow  
**65** A fiery cataract. Ah, wretched me!  
When shall that day and when shall judgment come  
Of the immortal God, the mighty King?  
But just now, O ye cities, ye are built  
And all adorned with temples and race-grounds,  
**70** Markets, and images of wood, of gold,  
Of silver and of stone, that ye may come  
Unto the bitter day. For it shall come,  
When there shall pass among all men a stench  
Of brimstone. Yet each thing will I declare,  
**75** In all the cities where men suffer ill.

.....

From the Sebastenes<sup>3</sup> Beliar shall come  
Hereafter, and the height of hills shall he  
Establish, and shall make the sea stand still  
And the great fiery sun and the bright moon  
**80** And he shall raise the dead, and many signs  
Work before men: but nothing shall be brought  
By him unto completion but deceit,  
And many mortals shall be lead astray  
Hebrews both true and choice, and lawless men  
**85** Besides who never gave ear to God's word.  
regions all about the Mediterranean Sea, and the Roman  
empire became fully established. This empire the Sibyl  
recognizes as beginning about the time of the appearance  
of the Christ, who was born during the reign of Augustus.  
<sup>1</sup> 58. *Holy Lord shall come.*--The Messiah, for no other  
ruler could be described by such language as the writer  
here employs. This passage is evidence that at least lines  
55-75 are of Christian or Jewish Christian authorship  
<sup>2</sup> 62. *Three.*--One most naturally thinks here of the  
famous triumvirate of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus;

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but it is difficult to explain the "fiery cataract" (line 65) and other pictures of judgment in immediate connection with those historic names.

<sup>3</sup> 76. The *Sebastenes* are most naturally understood of the inhabitants of Sebaste, or Samaria, and a Jewish writer living in the time of Augustus might have been readily disposed to think of a Beliar--antichrist--as issuing from among the hated Samaritans. Comp. the miracle-working antichrist of Dan. vii 25; viii, 23-25; xi, 36; and also 2 Thess. ii, 8-10.

But when the threatenings of the mighty God  
Shall draw near, and a flaming power shall come  
By billow to the earth, it shall consume

Both Beliar and all the haughty men  
**90** Who put their trust in him. And thereupon  
Shall the whole world be governed by the hands  
Of a woman<sup>4</sup> and obedient everywhere.

Then when a widow shall o'er all the world  
Gain the rule, and cast in the mighty sea

**95** Both gold and silver, also brass and iron  
Of short-lived men into the deep shall cast,  
Then all the elements shall be bereft

Of order, when the God who dwells on high  
Shall roll the heaven, even as a scroll is rolled;

**100** And to the mighty earth and sea shall fall  
The entire multiform sky; and there shall flow  
A tireless cataract of raging fire,

And it shall burn the land, and burn the sea,  
And heavenly sky, and night, and day, and melt

**105** Creation itself together and pick out  
What is pure. No more laughing spheres of light,  
Nor night, nor dawn, nor many days of care,  
Nor spring, nor winter, nor the summer-time,  
Nor autumn. And then of the mighty God

**110** The judgment midway in a mighty age  
Shall come, when all these things shall come to pass<sup>5</sup>.

.....

O navigable waters and each land  
Of the Orient and of the Occident,  
Subject shall all things be to him who comes

**115** Into the world again, and therefore he  
Himself became first conscious of his power<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup>92-93. *A woman ... a widow.*--If we find in the "three" of line 62 a reference to the triumvirs Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus, it is but natural to understand this "widow" as Cleopatra of Egypt, who captivated by her charms both Julius Caesar and Antony. But here again the picture of world-judgment which immediately follows is difficult to account for in connection with such a mention of Cleopatra. Is not the entire passage rather an ideal

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apocalyptic concept, to be understood somewhat after the manner of the woman portrayed in John's Apocalypse, xvii, 3; xviii, 7; a symbol of Rome herself conceived as the mistress of nations? Cp. bk viii, 263; 165, Cp. bk ii, 263; viii, 646

¶112-116. This fragment has no necessary connection with what precedes or follows, and the MSS. are defective at this point.

¶117-129. This passage is cited in Theophilus, *ad Autol.*, ii, 31 [G., 6, 1101]; Josephus, *Ant.*, i, iv, 3. Comp. Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.*, ix, 14 [G., 21, 702, 703]. See 24

.....

But when the threatenings of the mighty God  
Are fulfilled, which he threatened mortals once,  
When in Assyrian land they built a tower;--  
**120** (And they all spoke one language, and resolved  
To mount aloft into the starry heaven;  
But on the air the Immortal straightway put  
A mighty force; and then winds<sub>1</sub> from above  
Cast down the great tower and stirred mortals up  
**125** To wrangling with each other; therefore men  
Gave to that city the name of Babylon);--  
Now when the tower fell and the tongues of men  
Turned to all sorts of sounds, straightway all earth  
Was filled with men and kingdoms were divided;  
**130** And then the generation tenth<sub>2</sub> appeared  
Of mortal men, from the time when the flood  
Came upon earlier men. And Cronos<sub>3</sub> reigned,  
And Titan and Iapetus; and men called them  
Best offspring of Gaia and of Uranus,  
**135** Giving to them names both of earth and heaven,  
Since they were very first of mortal men.  
So there were three divisions of the earth  
According to the allotment of each man,  
And each one having his own portion reigned  
**140** And fought not; for a father's oaths were there  
And equal were their portions. But the time  
Complete of old age on the father came,  
And he died; and the sons infringing oaths  
Stirred up against each other bitter strife,  
**145** Which one should have the royal rank and rule  
Gen. xi, 1-9. It is one of the oldest portions of the  
Sibyllines, but begins abruptly, as if its natural preceding  
context had been omitted.

¶123 *Winds*.--"The idea that God threw down the tower by means of the winds was probably first written down by our poet, but it is really nothing but a subtile interpretation of Gen. xi, 7."--*Ewald*, p. 33

¶130. *Generation tenth*.--Cited by Athenagoras, *Legatio*



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*pro Christianis*, xxx. [G., 6, 960], and Tertul., *ad Nationes*, ii, 12 [L., 1, 603]. In citing this passage Tertullian thus speaks of the Sibyl: "The Sibyl was earlier than all literature, that Sibyl, I mean, who was the true propheticess of truth. In hexameter verse she thus expounds the descent and exploits of Saturn."

3 132. *Cronos*.--Greek name for the more familiar Latin title Saturn. The story of the Titans in the following lines (132-187) is familiar to students of Greek mythology, but the old myth exists with numerous minor variations, and, according to Hesiod (*Theog.*, 453-500), the birth and preservation of Zeus were somewhat different from this story

Over all mortals; and against each other  
Cronos and Titan fought. But Rhea and Gaia,  
And Aphrodite fond of crowns, Demeter,  
And Hestia and Dione of fair locks  
**150** Brought them to friendship, and together called  
All who were kings, both brothers and near kin,  
And others of the same ancestral blood,  
And they judged Cronos should reign king of all,  
For he was oldest and of noblest form.  
**155** But Titan laid on Cronos mighty oaths  
To rear no male posterity, that he  
Himself might reign when age and fate should come  
To Cronos. And whenever Rhea bore  
Beside her sat the Titans, and all males  
**160** In pieces tore, but let the females live  
To be reared by the mother. But When now  
At the third birth the august Rhea bore,  
She brought forth Hera first; and when they saw  
A female offspring, the fierce Titan men  
**165** Betook them to their homes. And thereupon  
Rhea a male child bore, and having bound  
Three men of Crete by oath she quickly sent  
Him into Phrygia to be reared apart  
In secret; therefore, did they name him Zeus,  
**170** For he was sent away. And thus she sent  
Poseidon also secretly away.  
And Pluto, third, did Rhea yet again,  
Noblest of women, at Dodona<sup>4</sup> bear,  
Whence flows Europus' river's liquid course,  
**175** And with Peneus mixed pours in the sea  
Its water, and men call it Stygian.  
But when the Titans heard that there were sons  
Kept secretly, whom Cronos and his wife  
Rhea begat, then Titan sixty youths  
**180** Together gathered, and held fast in chains  
Cronos and his wife Rhea, and concealed

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Them in the earth and guarded them in bonds.  
And then the sons of powerful Cronos heard,  
And a great war and uproar they aroused.

<sup>4</sup>173-176. There was a *Dodona* in Epirus, ruins of which found near Jaunina were excavated in 1896; there was also a *Dodona* in northern Thessaly, and each of these places was the seat of an ancient and celebrated oracle. The Sibylline writer does not distinguish between the two. *Europus* is another name for the Titaresius, which, according to Strabo (*Geog.* ix, 5, 19; and *Fragment* 15) was a tributary to the Peneus, and flowed with it through the vale of Tempe to the sea. Comp. Homer, *Iliad* ii, 750-755, where mention is made of "wintry Dodona," and "lovely Titaresius," which, however, does not mingle with the Peneus, because it is a broken-off portion of the Styx.

25

**185** And this is the beginning of dire war  
Among all mortals. [For it is indeed  
With mortals the prime origin of war.]  
And then did God award the Titans evil.  
And all of Titans and of Cronos born  
**190** Died. But then as time rolled around there rose  
The Egyptian kingdom, then that of the Persians  
And of the Medes, and Ethiopians,  
And of Assyria and Babylon,  
And then that of the Macedonians,  
**195** Egyptian yet again, then that of Rome.  
And then a message of the mighty God  
Was set within my breast, and it bade me  
Proclaim through all earth and in royal hearts  
Plant things which are to be. And to my mind  
**200** This God imparted first, bow many kingdoms  
Have been together gathered of mankind.  
For first of all the house of Solomon  
Shall include horsemen of Phoenicia  
And Syria, and of the islands too,  
**205** And the race of Pamphylians and Persians  
And Phrygians, Carians, and Mysians  
And the race of the Lydians rich in gold.  
And then shall Hellenes<sup>2</sup>, proud and impure,  
Then shall a Macedonian nation rule,  
**210** Great, shrewd, who as a fearful cloud of war  
Shall come to mortals. But the God of heaven  
Shall utterly destroy them from the depth.  
And then shall be another kingdom<sup>3</sup>, white  
And many-headed, from the western sea,  
**215** Which shall rule much land, and shake many  
men,  
And to all kings bring terror afterwards,  
And out of many cities shall destroy

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Much gold and silver; but in the vast earth

<sup>1</sup>202. *House of Solomon.*--The kingdom of Solomon is here made to rule over nations which Old Testament history never mentions as subject to Israel. Comp. 1 Kings iv, 21. But the poet wishes to magnify that realm

<sup>2</sup>208. *Hellenes.*--The Græco-Macedonian kingdom is here evidently intended

<sup>3</sup>213. *Another kingdom.*--That of Rome, here called *white*, or brilliant, in allusion to the white toga worn by the Roman magistrates. Competitors for office were called *candidati*, because of the white robe in which they presented themselves. Martial (*Epig.*, viii, 65, 6) speaks of *candida cultu Roma*--"Rome white in apparel," The epithet *many-headed* has been supposed to point to Rome while she was yet a republic and had her hundred or more senators as rulers. But there may be an allusion to the biblical symbolism of Dan. vii, 6, and Rev. xiii, 1

There will again be gold, and silver too,

**220** And ornament. And they will oppress mortals;

And to those men shall great disaster be,

When they begin unrighteous arrogance.

And forthwith in them there shall be a force

Of wickedness, male will consort with male,

**225** And children they will place in dens of shame;

And in those days there shall be among men

A great affliction, and it shall disturb

All things, and break all things, and fill all things

With evils by a shameful covetousness,

**230** And by ill-gotten wealth in many lands,

But most of all in Macedonia.

And it shall stir up hatred, and all guile

Shalt be with them even to the seventh kingdom<sup>4</sup>,

Of which a king of Egypt shall be king

**235** Who shall be a descendant from the Greeks.

And then the nation of the mighty God

Shall be again strong<sup>5</sup> and they shall be guides

Of life to all men. But why did God place

This also in my mind to tell: what first,

**240** And what next, and what evil last shall be

On all men? Which of these shall take the lead?

First<sup>6</sup> on the Titans will God visit evil.

For they shall pay to mighty Chronos's sons

The penal satisfaction, since they bound

**245** Both Cronos and the mother dearly loved.

Again shall there be tyrants for the Greeks

And fierce kings overweening and impure,

Adulterous and altogether bad;

And for men shall be no more rest from war.

**250** And the dread Phrygians shall perish all,

And unto Troy shall evil come that day.

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And to the Persians and Assyrians  
Evil shall straightaway come, and to all Egypt  
And Libya and the Ethiopians,

**255** And to the Carians and Pamphylians--

<sup>4</sup> 233. *Seventh kingdom*.--Or seventh king (comp. line 765) of the Greek Egyptian dynasty. This would point to Ptolemy Philometer if we reckon Alexander the Great as the first king, but Ptolemy Physcon if the line of the Ptolemies alone are reckoned. Ewald adopts this latter view, Alexandre the former. All the Ptolemies were of Greek (or Macedonian) origin

<sup>5</sup> 237. *Again strong*.--The writer seems in the spirit and hope of Old Testament prophets to conceive a triumph for the chosen people, is following hard upon the evils of his own time.

<sup>6</sup> 242-245.--This passage is in part a repetition of lines 188-190 above

26

Evil to pass from one place to another,  
And to all mortals. Why now one by one  
Do I speak forth? But when the first receive  
Fulfillment, then straightway shall come on men

**260** The second. So the very first I'll tell.

There shall an evil come to pious men  
Who dwell by the great temple of Solomon  
And who are progeny of righteous men.  
Alike of all these also I will tell

**265** The tribe and line of fathers and homeland--  
All things with care, O mortal shrewd; in mind.

There is a city . . . 2 on the earth,  
Ur of the Chaldees, whence there is a race  
Of men most righteous, to whom both good will

**270** And noble deeds have ever been a care.  
For they have no concern about the course  
Of the sun's revolution, nor the moon's,  
Nor wondrous things beneath the earth, nor depth  
Of joy-imparting sea Oceanus,

**275** Nor signs of sneezing, nor the wings of birds,  
Nor soothsayers, nor wizards, nor enchanters,  
Nor tricks of dull words of ventriloquists,  
Neither do they astrologize with skill

**280** Of the Chaldeans, nor astronomize;  
O For these are all deceptive, in so far  
As foolish men go seeking day by day  
Training their souls unto no useful work;  
And then did they teach miserable men

Deceptions, whence to mortals on the earth

**285** Come many evils leading them astray  
From good ways and just deeds. But they have care

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For righteousness and virtue, and not greed,  
Which breeds unnumbered ills to mortal men,  
War and unending famine. But with them  
**290** Just measure, both in fields and cities, holds,  
Nor steal they from each other in the night,  
Nor drive off herds of cattle, sheep, and goats,  
Nor neighbor remove landmarks of a neighbor,  
Nor any man of great wealth grieve the one  
**295** Less favored, nor to widows cause distress,  
But rather aids them, ever helping them

<sup>1</sup>266. *Mortal shrewd.*--Comp. i, 8.

<sup>2</sup>267.--The passage is corrupt, and the reading adopted in our version is to some extent conjectural, but has some support in manuscripts and suits the context. The critical student should consult Alexandre's note in his edition of 1841, p. 111. On "Ur of the Chaldees" see Gen. xi, 31.

Others, however, following another conjectural reading, understand the city to be Jerusalem. So Ewald, p. 21

With wheat and wine and oil; and always does  
The rich man in the country send a share  
At the time of the harvests unto them  
**300** That have not, but are needy, thus fulfilling  
The saying of the mighty God, a hymn  
In legal setting; for the Heavenly One  
Finished the earth a common good<sup>3</sup> for all.

Now when the people of twelve tribes depart

**305** From Egypt, and with leaders sent of God  
Nightly pursue their way by a pillar of fire  
And during all the day by one of cloud,  
For them then God a leader will appoint--

A great man, Moses, whom a princess found  
**310** Beside a marsh, and carried off and reared  
And called her son. And at the time he came  
As leader for the people whom God led

From Egypt unto the steel Sinai mount,  
His own law God delivered them from heaven  
**315** Writing on two flat stones all righteous things  
Which he enjoined to do; and if, perchance,  
One give no heed, he must unto the law  
Make satisfaction, either at men's hands  
Or, if men's notice he escape, he shall

**320** By ample satisfaction he destroyed.  
[For the Heavenly finished earth a common good  
For all, and in all hearts as best gift thought.]

To them alone the bounteous field yields fruit  
A hundredfold<sup>4</sup> from one, and thus completes  
**325** God's measure. But to them shall also come  
Misfortune, nor do they escape from plague.

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And even thou, forsaking thy fair shrine,  
Shalt flee away when it becomes thy lot  
To leave the holy land. And thou shalt be  
**330** Carried to the Assyrians, and shalt see  
Young children and wives serving hostile men;  
And every means of life and wealth shall perish;  
And every land shall be filled up with thee,  
And every sea; and everyone shall be  
**335** Offended with thy customs; and thy land  
Shall all be desert; and the altar fenced  
And temple of the great God and long walls  
Shall all fall to the ground, since in thy heart  
The holy law of the immortal God  
**340** Thou didst not keep, but, erring, thou didst serve  
Unseemly images, and didst not fear

<sup>3</sup> 303. Repeated in line 321 below

<sup>4</sup> 324. *Hundredfold* . . . *God's measure*.--Comp. Gen.  
xxvi, 12; 2 Sam. xxiv, 3; Matt. xix, 29; Luke viii, 8.  
27

The immortal Father, God of all mankind,  
Nor will to honor him; but images  
Of mortals thou didst honor Therefore now  
**345** Of time seven decades<sup>1</sup> shall thy fruitful land  
And the wonders of thy temple all be waste.  
But there remains for thee a goodly end  
And greatest glory, as the immortal God  
Granted thee. But do thou wait and confide  
**350** In the great God's pure laws, when he shall lift  
Thy wearied knee upright unto the light.  
And then will God from heaven send a king<sup>2</sup>  
To judge each man in blood and light of fire.  
There is a royal tribe<sup>3</sup>, the race of which  
**355** Shall be unfailing; and as times revolve  
This race shall bear rule and begin to build  
God's temple new. And all the Persian kings  
Shall aid<sup>4</sup> with bronze and gold and well-wrought  
iron.

For God himself will give the holy dreams<sup>5</sup>  
**360** By night. And then the temple shall again  
Be, as it was before. . . .  
Now when my soul had rest<sup>6</sup> from inspired song,  
And I prayed the great Father for a rest  
From constraint; even in my heart again  
**365** Was set a message of the mighty God

<sup>1</sup>345. *Seven decades*.--See Jer. xxv, 9-12.

<sup>2</sup>352. The king here referred to is perhaps best explained of  
Cyrus, and the description should be compared with Isa. xliv,  
28; xliv, 14. Ewald (p. 32) understands the king to be the

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Messiah, and, indeed, the language of lines 352 and 353 (Greek text, 286, 287), taken apart from the context, naturally suggests a supernatural ruler and judge. The poet may have intended to connect the advent of the Messiah with the restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of their temple. But the context here and in the parallel passage, lines 817-826 below, points rather to Cyrus, whom Isaiah calls the anointed one of Jehovah and represents as the conqueror of nations, "saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."

354. *Royal tribe*.--Judah, which returned from Babylonian exile, and under Zerubbabel, a descendant of the house of David (Matt. i, 12; Luke iii, 27), rebuilt the temple.

357, 358 *Kings shall aid*. Cp. Ezra i, 4; vi, 8; vii, 15, 16, 22

359. *The holy dream*.--Perhaps alluding to the visions and prophecies of Zechariah and Haggai (comp. Ezra v, i

362. *When my soul had rest*.--Comp. similar exordium in lines 1-10, 196-201, and 616-619. The passage beginning here and ending with line 615 forms a section by itself, and is regarded by Alexandre as an interpolation belonging to the times of the Antonines. Others, however, find in it evidences of a pre-Christian date.

And he bade me proclaim through all the earth  
And plant in royal minds things yet to be.  
And in my mind God put this first to say  
How many lamentable sufferings

**370** The Immortal purposed upon Babylon  
Because she his great temple had destroyed.

Alas, alas for thee! O Babylon,

And for the offspring of the Assyrian men!

Through all the earth the rush of sinful men

**375** Shall some time come, and shout of mortal men

And stroke of the great God, who inspires songs,

Shall ruin every land. For high in air to thee

O Babylon, shall it come from above,

And out of heaven from holy ones to thee

**380** Shall it come down, and the soul in thy children

Shall the Eternal utterly destroy.

And then shalt thou be, as thou wast before,

As one not born; and then shalt thou be filled

Again with blood, as thou thyself before

**385** Didst shed that of good, just, and holy men,

Whose blood yet cries out to the lofty heaven.

To thee, O Egypt, shall a great blows come

And dreadful, to thy homes, which thou didst hope

Might never fall on thee. For through thy midst

**390** A sword shall pass, and scattering and death

And famine shall prevail until of kings

The seventh<sup>9</sup> generation, and then cease.

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Alas for thee, O land of Gog and Magog<sup>10</sup>  
In the midst of the rivers of Ethiopia!

**395** What pouring out of blood shalt thou receive,  
And house of judgment among men be called,  
And thy land of much dew shall drink black blood!

Alas for thee, O Libya, and alas,  
Both sea and land! O daughters of the west<sup>11</sup>,

**400** So shall ye come unto a bitter day.

And ye shall come pursued by grievous strife,  
Dreadful and grievous; there shall be again  
A dreadful judgment, and ye all shall come  
By force unto destruction, for ye tore

<sup>7</sup> 372. *Babylon*.--Comp. how Jeremiah (xxv, 12) passes  
from the Jews' calamities to the penal visitation of  
Babylon

<sup>8</sup> 387. *Blow*.--The constant wars of the times of the  
Ptolemies

<sup>9</sup> 392. *Seventh*.--See line 233, and note

<sup>10</sup> 393. *Gog and Magog*.--Names derived from Ezek.  
xxxviii, 2. Comp. Rev. xx, 8. Here apparently applied as  
symbolical names to the Ethiopians of the Upper Nile

<sup>11</sup> 399. *Daughters of the west*.--Roman. cities lying west  
of Egypt on or near the Mediterranean sea

28

**405** In pieces the great house<sup>1</sup> of the Immortal,  
And with iron teeth<sup>2</sup> ye chewed it dreadfully.

Therefore shalt thou then look upon thy land  
Full of the dead, some of them fallen by war  
And by the demon of all violence,

**410** Famine and plague, and some by barbarous foes.

And all thy land shall be a wilderness,

And desolations<sup>3</sup> shall thy cities be.

And in the west there shall a star shine forth

Which they will call a comet<sup>4</sup>, sign to men

**415** Of the sword and of famine and of death,

And murder of great leaders and chief men.

And yet again there shall be among men

Greatest signs; for deep-eddying Tanais<sup>5</sup>

Shall leave Mæotis's lake, and there shall be

**420** Down the deep stream a fruitful, furrow's track,

And the vast flow shall hold a neck of land.

And there are hollow chasms and yawning pits;

And many cities, men and all, shall fall:--

In Asia<sup>6</sup>--Iassus, Cebren, Pandonia,

**425** Colophon, Ephesus, Nicæa, Antioch,

Syagra, Sinope, Smyrna, Myrina,

Most happy Gaza, Hierapolis, .

Astypalaia; and in Europe--Tanagra,

Clitor, Basilis, Meropeia, Antigone,



## Sibylline Oracles

**430** Magnessa, Mykene, Oiantheia.

Know then that the destructive race of Egypt  
Is near destruction, and the past year then  
Is better for the Alexandrians.

As much of tribute as Rome<sup>7</sup> did receive

<sup>1</sup> 405. *Great house*.--Obvious allusion to the temple at Jerusalem and its destruction by the Romans

<sup>2</sup> 406. *Iron teeth*.--Comp. Dan. vii, 7, 19.

<sup>3</sup> 412. *Desolations*.--Rzach's text here proposed the reading {Greek *e?pma* }, support, prop; but in his Corrigenda he concedes that the reading {Greek *e?phma po'lmes* }, proposed by Gomperz, is far preferable.  
Comp. Isa. i, 7

<sup>4</sup> 414. Among most nations the appearance of a comet has been regarded by the superstitious as a sign of the evils here specified.

<sup>5</sup> 418. *Tanais*.--Ancient classic name of the Don, which empties into the modern sea of Azof, the ancient Lake Mæotis.

<sup>6</sup> 424-430. These names of cities are inserted in the translation in the order in which they stand in Rzach's text. Of course no rhythmic arrangement is practicable.

<sup>7</sup> 434-450. This prophecy of the subjugation of Rome by Asia is referred to by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 15 [L., 6, 787-790], who declares that "the Sibyls openly say that Rome shall perish, and that too by the judgment of God,

**435** Of Asia, even thrice as many goods  
Shall Asia back again from Rome receive,  
And her destructive outrage pay her back.  
As many as from Asia ever served

A house of the Italians, twenty times

**440** As many Italians shall in Asia serve

In poverty, and numerous debts incur.

O virgin, soft rich child of Latin Rome,

Oft at thy much-remembered marriage feasts

Drunken with wine, now shalt thou be a slave

**445** And wedded in no honorable way.

And oft shall mistress shear thy pretty hair,

And wreaking satisfaction cast thee down

From heaven to earth, and from the earth again

Raise thee to heaven, for mortals of low rank

**450** And of unrighteous life are held fast bound.

And of avenging Smyrna overthrown

There shall be no thought, but by evil plans

And wickedness of them that have command

Shall Samos be sand, Delos shall be dulls,

**455** And Rome a room; but the decrees of God

Shall all of them be perfectly fulfilled.

And a calm peace to Asian land shall go.

And Europe shall be happy then, well fed,

## Sibylline Oracles

Pure air, full of years, strong, and undisturbed  
**460** By wintry storms and hail, bearing, all things,  
Even birds and creeping things and beasts of earth.

O happy upon earth shall that man be  
Or woman; what a home unspeakable

Of happy ones! For from the starry heaven  
because she held his name in contempt, was an enemy of  
righteousness, and slew a people that was a keeper of  
truth." Previously, in the same chapter, he says: "The  
Roman name by which the world is now ruled shall be  
taken from the earth, and the power will revert to Asia,  
and the East will again rule, and the West will be in  
subjection." The "virgin" addressed in line 442, being a  
"child of Latin Rome," cannot without unnatural violence  
be understood of "the virgin daughter of the true God, the  
community of Israel, which, while inflicting divine  
punishment, also contributes to the true welfare" (Ewald,  
p. 19), but is rather a poetical name for Rome herself.  
The "mistress," in line 446, is understood by Alexandre  
of the goddess Fortune, whom Horace (*Od.*, i, 35)  
addresses as able "in a moment either to lift a mortal  
body from the lowest place, or to turn the noblest  
triumphs into funeral scenes."]

8 454, 455. These lines contain a notable play on the names  
Samos, Delos, and Rome. Comp. also book iv, 126, and viii,  
218. Comp. also Tertullian, *De Pallio*, ii [L., 2, 1034];  
Lactantius, vii, 25 [6, 812]; Palladius, *Lausiaca*, cxviii [G.,  
34, 1227].

29

**465** Shall all good order come upon mankind,  
And justice, and the prudent unity  
Which of all things is excellent for men,  
And kindness, confidence, and love of guests;  
But far from them shall lawlessness depart,  
**470** Blame, envy, wrath, and folly; poverty  
Shall flee away from men, and force shall flee,  
And murder, baneful strifes and bitter feuds,  
And theft, and every evil in those days.

But Macedonia<sub>1</sub> shall to Asia bear

**475** A grievous suffering, and the greatest sore  
To Europe shall spring up from Cronian stock,  
A family of bastards and of slaves.

And she shall tame fenced city Babylon,  
And of each land the sun looks down upon

**480** Call herself mistress, and then come to naught  
By ruinous misfortunes, having fame  
In later generations distant far.

And sometime into Asia's prosperous land<sub>2</sub>  
Shall come a man unheard of, shoulder-clad

**485** With purple robe, fierce, unjust, fiery;  
And this man he who wields the thunderbolt

## Sibylline Oracles

Roused forwards; and all Asia shall sustain  
An evil yoke, and her soil wet with rain  
Shall drink much murder. But even so shall Hades  
**490** Destroy the unknown king; and that man's  
offspring

Shall forthwith perish by the race of those  
Whose offspring he himself would fain destroy;<sup>3</sup>  
Producing one root which the bane of men

<sup>1</sup> 474-482. This passage is most naturally explained as referring to the Macedonian rule of Alexander and his successors, who endeavored to appear as haughty, worldruling sons of Cronos (Saturn), but were, as a matter of fact, of heathen origin, ignoble, and really a bastard race. Perseus, the last of them, was truly a bastard. So Ewald, *Abhandlung*, p. 12

<sup>2</sup> 483-489. This passage seems best to describe Antiochus Epiphanes, but Alexandre understands it of Hadrian. The "thunderbolt," in line 486 (Greek {Greek *kerano's*}), is thought by Ewald (p. 13) to be a manifest allusion to Seleucus Ceraunus, one of the predecessors of Antiochus Epiphanes, but the epithet seems more properly to denote the god of the thunder

<sup>3</sup> 493-499. Here, too, the exact references are uncertain, but the imagery of being cut from ten horns is manifestly from Daniel (vii, 7, 8, 20,24), and favors the opinion that the writer had in mind one of the Syrian kings. We must not suppose, however, that these Sibylline authors were always accurate in their knowledge or exact in their descriptions

Shall cut from ten horns, and plant by their side

**495** Another plant. A father purple-clad  
Shall cut a warlike father off, and Ares,  
Baneful and hostile, by a grandson's hand  
Shall himself perish; and then shall the horn  
Planted beside them forthwith bear the rule.

**500** And unto life-sustaining Phrygia  
Straightway shall there a certain token be,  
When Rhea's blood-stained race, in the great earth  
Blooming perennial in impervious roots,  
Shall, root and branch, in one night disappear

**505** With a city, men and all, of the Earth-shaker  
Poseidon; which place they shall sometime call  
Dorylæum<sup>4</sup>, of dark ancient Phrygia,  
Much-bewailed. Therefore, shall that time be called  
Earth-shaker; dens of earth shall he break up

**510** And walls demolish. And not signs of good  
But a beginning of evil shall be made;  
The baneful violence of general war  
Ye'll have, sons of Æneas, Dative blood  
Of Ilus from the soil. But afterwards

## Sibylline Oracles

**515** A spoil shalt thou become for greedy men.  
O Ilium, I pity thee; for there shall bloom  
In Sparta an Erinys<sup>5</sup> very fair,  
Ever-famed, noblest scion, and shall leave  
On Asia and Europe a wide-spreading wave;  
**520** But to thee most of all she'll bear and cause  
Wailings and toils and groans; but there shall be  
Undying fame with those who are to come.

And there shall be an aged mortal<sup>6</sup> then,  
False writer and of doubtful native land;  
**525** And in his eyes the light shall fade away;  
Large mind and verses measured with great skill  
Shall he have and be blended with two names<sup>7</sup>,  
Shall call himself a Chian and shall write

<sup>4507.</sup> *Dorylæum*.--Situated on the river Thymbris, in Phrygia, and noted for its hot baths. The entire region round about has suffered fearfully from earthquakes. That time, according to the poet, would be so noted for earthquakes as to take the title of the Earth-shaker himself

<sup>517.</sup> *An Erinys*.--Here referring to Helen, wife of Menelaus of Sparta, who was the occasion of the Trojan war, and is called by Virgil (*Æn.*, ii, 573) "the common Erinys of Troy and native land." Comp. book xi, 166.

<sup>6523.</sup> *Aged mortal*.--Reference to the blind Homer

<sup>7527.</sup> *Two names*.--Besides his common name, Homer is also called "a Chian" because the island Chios was said to be his birthplace. Possibly the reference is to Melesigenes and Mæonides, two names often applied to Homer

30  
Of Ilium, not truthfully, indeed,  
**530** But skillfully; for of my verse and meters  
He will be master; for he first my books  
Will open with his hands; but he himself  
Will much embellish helmed chiefs of war,  
Hector of Priam and Achilles, son  
**535** Of Peleus, and the others who have care  
For warlike deeds. And also by their side  
Will he make gods stand, empty-headed men,  
False-writing every way. And it shall be  
Glory the rather, widely spread, for them

**540** To die at Ilium; but he himself  
Shall also works of recompense receive.  
Also to Lycia shall a Locrian race  
Cause many evils. And thee, Chalcedon,  
Holding by lot a strait of narrow sea,  
**545** Shall an Ætolian youth sometime despoil.  
Cyzicus, also thy vast wealth the sea  
Shall break off. And, Byzantium of Ares,  
Thou some time shalt by Asia be laid waste,

## Sibylline Oracles

And also groans and blood immeasurable  
**550** Shalt thou receive. And Cragus, lofty mount  
Of Lycia, from thy peaks by yawning chasms  
Of opened rock shall babbling water flow,  
Until even Patara's<sup>1</sup> oracles shall cease.  
O Cyzicus, that dwellest by Propontis  
**555** The wine-producing, round thee Rhyndacus  
Shall crash the crested billow. And thou, Rhodes<sup>2</sup>,  
Daughter of day, shalt long be unenslaved,  
And great shall be thy happiness hereafter,  
And on the sea thy power shall be supreme.  
**560** But afterwards a spoil shalt thou become  
For greedy men, and put upon thy neck  
By beauty and by wealth a fearful yoke.  
A Lydian earthquake shall again despoil  
The power of Persia, and most horribly  
**565** Shall the people of Europe and Asia suffer pain.  
And Sidon's hurtful king with battle-din  
Dreadful shall work a mournful overthrow  
<sup>1</sup> 553. *Patara*.--A chief city of Lycia and place of a very famous oracle of Apollo  
<sup>2</sup> 556. *Rhodes*.--The famous island off the southern coast of Caria, where now, as of old, it is said there is scarcely a day of the whole year in which the sun is not visible. Not mingling in the quarrels of Alexander's successors, Rhodes enjoyed a considerable period of peace and prosperity, and carried an extensive commerce with Egypt. Its subsequent enslavement and downfall were mainly due to the fact that it was such a tempting spoil for greedy conquerors  
To the seafaring Samians. On the soil  
Shall slain men's dark blood babble to the sea;  
**570** And wives together with the noble brides  
Shall their outrageous insolence lament,  
Some for their bridegrooms, some for fallen sons.  
O sign of Cyprus, may an earthquake waste  
Thy phalanxes away, and many souls  
**575** With one accord shall Hades bold in charge.  
And Trallis near by Ephesus, and walls  
Well made, and very precious wealth<sup>3</sup> of men  
Shall be dissolved by earthquake; and the land  
Shall burst out with hot water; and the earth  
**580** Shall swallow down those who are by the fire  
And stench of brimstone heavily oppressed.  
And Samos shall in time build royal houses.  
But to thee, Italy, no foreign war  
Shall come, but lamentable tribal blood  
**585** Not easily exhausted, much renowned,  
Shall make thee, impudent one, desolate.

## Sibylline Oracles

And thou thyself beside hot ashes<sup>4</sup> stretched,  
As thou in thine own heart didst not foresee,  
Shalt slay thyself. And thou shalt not of men  
**590** Be mother, but a nurse of beasts of prey.  
But when from Italy shall come a man,  
A spoiler<sup>5</sup>, then, Laodicea, thou,  
Beautiful city of the Carians  
By Lycus's wondrous water, falling prone,  
**595** Shalt weep in silence for thy boastful sire<sup>6</sup>.  
Thracian Crobyzi<sup>7</sup> shall rise up on Hæmus.

Chatter of teeth to the Campanians<sup>8</sup> comes  
<sup>3</sup> 577. *Very precious wealth.*--Mendelssohn's emendation  
approved by Rzach in his *Corrigenda*. The common  
reading of MSS. is, *wealth of heavy-hearted men*  
<sup>4</sup> 587. *Hot ashes.*--Allusion to eruptions of Vesuvius.  
Comp. book. iv, 172

<sup>5</sup> 592. *Spoiler.*--L. Scipio, according to some; Nero,  
according to others; but the reference is uncertain. "The  
entire picture," says Ewald (p. 38), "is so vast and so  
general that we cannot think of it as referring to an event  
that had already taken place." *Laodicea.*--Situated on the  
Lycus as here described, and on the borders of Lydia,  
Caria, and Phrygia. It suffered much by wars and  
earthquakes

<sup>6</sup> 595. *Boastful sire.*--Antiochus Theos, who named it in  
honor of his wife Laodice

<sup>7</sup> 596. *Crobyzi.*--Mentioned by Strabo (vii, 5, 12) as  
occupying the district near Mt. Hæmus and south of the  
Danube.

<sup>8</sup> 597. *Campanians.*--Campania was the district of Italy  
south of Latium, on the seacoast. Vesuvius was near its  
central part

31

Because of wasting famine; Corsica  
Weeps her old father, and Sardinia  
**600** Shall by great storms of winter and the strokes  
of a holy God sink down in ocean depths,  
Great wonder to the of the sea.  
Alas, alas, how many virgin maids  
Will Hades wed, and of as many youths  
**605** Will the deep take without funeral rites!  
Alas, alas, the helpless little ones  
And the vast riches swimming in the sea!  
O happy land of Mysians, suddenly  
A royal race shall be formed. Truly now  
**610** Not for a long time shall Chalcedon be.  
And there shall be a very bitter grief  
To the Galatians. And to Tenedos  
Shall there a last but greatest evil come.  
And Sicyon, with strong yells, and Corinth, thou  
**615** Shalt boast o'er all, but flute shall sound like

## Sibylline Oracles

strain.

. . . . . 1.

Now, when my soul had rest from inspired song,  
Even again within my heart was set  
A message of the mighty God, and he  
Commanded me to prophesy on earth.

**620** Woe, woe to the race of Phoenician men<sup>2</sup>  
And women, and all cities by the sea;  
Not one of you shall in the common light  
Abide before the shining of the sun,  
Nor of life shall there any longer be

**625** Number and tribe, because of unjust speech  
And lawless life impure which they lived,  
Opening a mouth impure, and fearful words  
Deceitful and unrighteous forth,  
And stood against the God, the King,

**630** And opened loathsome month deceitfully  
Therefore may he subdue them terribly  
By strokes o'er all the earth, and bitter fate  
Shall God send on them burning from the ground.  
Cities and of the cities the foundations.

**635** Woe, woe to thee, O Crete! To thee shall come  
A very painful stroke, and terribly  
Shall the Eternal sack thee; and again  
Shall every land behold thee black with smoke,

<sup>1</sup> 616. Here a new section begins, and has an exordium  
similar to those of lines 1-10, 196-201 and 362-371

<sup>2</sup> 620. *Phoenician men.*--Famed for their extensive  
commerce. Ewald (p. 38) sees in this oracle an evidence  
of the bitter feeling of the author toward Phoenicia,  
chiefly on account of commercial rivalry

Fire ne'er shall leave thee, but thou shalt be burned.

**640** Woe, woe to thee, O Thrace! So shalt thou  
come

Beneath a servile yoke, when the Galatians  
United with the sons of Dardanus  
Rush on to ravage Hellas, thine shall be  
The evil; and unto a foreign land

**645** Much shalt thou give, not anything receive.

Woe to thee, Gog and Magog, and to all,  
One after another, Mardians and Daians;  
How many evils fate, shall bring on thee!

Woe also to the soil of Lycia,

**650** And those of Mysia and Phrygia.

And many nations of Pamphylians,  
And Lydians, Carians, Cappadocians,  
And Ethiopian and Arabian men

Of a strange tongue shall fall. How now may I

## Sibylline Oracles

**655** Of each speak fitly? For on all the nations  
Which dwell on earth the Highest shall send dire  
plague.

When<sup>4</sup> now again a barbarous nation comes  
Against the Greeks it shall slay many heads  
Of chosen men; and they shall tear in pieces

**660** Many fat flocks of sheep of men, and herds  
Of horses and of mules and lowing kine;  
And well-made houses shall they burn with fire  
Lawlessly; and unto a foreign land

Shall they by force lead many slaves away,  
**665** And children, and deep-girded women soft  
From bridal chambers creeping on before  
With delicate feet; and they shall be bound fast  
With fetters by their foes of foreign tongue,  
Suffering all fearful outrage; and to them

**670** There shall not be one to supply the toil  
Of battle and come to their help in life.  
And they shall see their goods and all their wealth  
Enrich the enemy; and there shall be  
A trembling of the knees. And there shall fly

**675** A hundred, and one shall destroy them all<sup>5</sup>;  
And five shall rout a mighty company;

<sup>3</sup> 647. *Mardians and Daians*.--The Mardians were a  
warlike tribe which occupied the southern shore of the  
Caspian Sea, and the Daians, or Dahæ, were a great  
Scythian people whose territory lay on the southeast of  
the same sea. They were naturally associated in thought  
with Gog and Magog. Comp. line 391 above

<sup>4</sup> 657. The passage beginning here is best explained as  
referring to the subjugation of Greece by the Romans, B.  
C. 146

<sup>5</sup> 675. Comp. Lev. xxvi, 8; Dent. xxxii, 30; Isa. xxx, 17  
32

But they, among themselves mixed shamefully,  
Shall by war and dire tumult bring delight  
To enemies, but sorrow to the Greeks.

**680** And then upon all Hellas there shall be  
A servile yoke; and war and pestilence  
Together shall upon all mortals come.

And God will make the mighty heaven on high  
Like brass and over all the earth a drought,

**685** And earth itself like iron. And thereupon  
Shall mortals all lament the barrenness  
And lack of cultivation; and on earth  
Shall he set, who created heaven and earth,  
A much-distressing fire; and of all men

**690** The third part<sup>1</sup> only shall thereafter be.  
O<sup>2</sup> Greece, why hast thou trusted mortal men



## Sibylline Oracles

As leaders, who cannot escape from death?  
And wherefore bringest thou thy foolish gifts  
Unto the dead and sacrifice to idols?  
**695** Who put the error in thy heart to do  
These things and leave the face of God the mighty?  
Honor the All-Father's name, and let it not  
Escape thee. It is now a thousand years,  
Yea, and five hundred more, since haughty kings  
**700** Ruled o'er the Greeks, who first to mortal men  
Introduced evils, setting up for worship  
Images many of gods that are dead,  
Because of which ye were taught foolish thoughts.  
But when the anger of the mighty God  
**705** Shall come upon you, then ye'll recognize  
The face of God the mighty. And all souls  
Of men, with mighty groaning lifting up  
Their hands to the broad heaven, shall begin  
To call the great King helper, and to seek  
**710** The rescuer from great wrath who is to be.  
But come and learn this and store in your hearts,  
What troubles in the rolling years shall come.  
And what as whole burnt-offering Hellas brought  
Of cows and bellowing bulls unto the temple  
**715** Of the great God, she from ill-sounding war  
And fear and pestilence shall flee away  
And from the servile yoke escape again.  
<sup>1</sup> 690. *Third part.*--Comp. Ezek. v, 2; Zech. xiii, 8; Rev.  
viii, 7-9. Also Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 16 [L., 6, 792  
<sup>2</sup> 691-697. Quoted (omitting one line) by Lactantius, *Div.  
Inst.*, i, 15 [L., 6, 196]. 698. The number here given seems  
to be intended not as an exact, but as a general and  
vaguely oracular, designation. The prophetess seems to  
forget her time and place as the daughter-in-law of Noah,  
to which she pretends in the closing lines of this book  
But until that time there shall be a race  
Of godless men, even when that fated day  
**720** Shall reach its end. For offering to God  
Ye should not make till all things come to pass,  
Which God alone shall purpose not in vain  
To be all fulfilled; and strong force shall urge.  
And there shall be again a holy race  
**725** Of godly men who, keeping to the counsels  
And mind of the Most High, shall honor much  
The great God's temple with drink-offerings,  
Burnt-offerings, and holy hecatombs,  
With sacrifices of fat bulls, choice rams,  
**730** Firstlings of sheep and the fat thighs<sup>3</sup> of lambs,  
Sacredly offering whole burnt-offerings

## Sibylline Oracles

On the great altar. And in righteousness,  
Having obtained the law of the Most High,  
Blest shall they dwell in cities and rich fields.  
**735** And prophets shall be set on high for them  
By the Immortal, bringing great delight  
Unto all mortals. For to them alone  
The mighty God his gracious counsel gave  
And faith and noblest thought within their hearts;

**740** They have not by vain things been led astray,  
Nor<sup>4</sup> pay they honor to the works of men  
Made of gold, brass, silver, and ivory,  
Nor statues of dead gods of wood and stone  
[Besmeared clay, figures of the painter's art],

**745** And all that empty-minded mortals will;  
But they lift up their pure arms unto heaven,  
Rise from the couch at daybreak, always hands  
With water cleanse, and honor only Him  
Who is immortal and who ever rules,

**750** And then their parents; and above all men  
Do they respect the lawful marriage-bed;  
And they have not base intercourse with boys,  
As do Phoenicians, Latins, and Egyptians  
And spacious Greece, and nations many more

**755** Of Persians and Galatians and all Asia,  
Transgressing the immortal God's pure law  
Which they were under. Therefore on all men<sup>5</sup>  
Will the Immortal put bane, famine, pains,  
Groans, war, and pestilence and mournful woes;

**760** Because they would not honor piously  
The immortal Sire of all men, but revered  
<sup>3</sup> 730. Fat thighs.--This conjectural reading of Mendelssohn  
({Greek *mh~ra*} instead of {Greek *mh~la*}) is approved by  
Rzach in his *Addenda et Corrigenda*

<sup>4</sup> 741-750. Cited by Clem. Alex., *Cohort.*, vi [G., 8, 176

<sup>5</sup> 757. For the text see Rzach's *Addenda et Corrigenda*.

33

And worshiped idols made with hands, which things  
Mortals themselves will cast down and for shame  
Conceal in clefts of rocks, when a young king<sup>1</sup>,

**765** The seventh of Egypt, shall rule his own land,  
Reckoned from the dominion of the Greeks,  
Which countless Macedonian men shall rule;  
And there shall come from Asia a great king<sup>2</sup>,  
A fiery eagle, who with foot and horse

**770** Shall cover all the land, cut up all things,  
And fill all things with evils; he will cast  
The Egyptian kingdom down; and taking off  
All its possessions carry them away

## Sibylline Oracles

Over the spacious surface of the sea.

**775** And then shall they before, the mighty God,  
The King immortal, bend the fair white knee  
On the much-nourishing earth; and all the works  
Made with hands shall fall by a flame of fire.

And then will God bestow great joy on men;

**780** For land and trees and countless flocks of sheep  
Their genuine fruit to men shall offer--wine,  
And the sweet honey, and white milk, and wheat,  
Which is for mortals of all things the best.

But thou, O mortal full of various wiles,

**785** Do not delay and loiter, but do thou,  
Tossed to and fro, turn and propitiate God.

Offer to God Your hecatombs of bulls  
And firstling lambs and goats, as times revolve.

But him propitiate, the immortal God,

**790** If haply he show mercy. For he is  
The only God, and other there is none.

And honor justice and oppress no man.

For these things the Immortal doth enjoin  
On miserable men. But do thou heed

**795** The cause of the wrath of the mighty God,  
When on all mortals there shall come the height  
Of pestilence and conquered they shall meet  
A fearful judgment, and king shall seize king

And wrest his land away, and nations bring

**800** Ruin on nations and lords plunder tribes,  
And chiefs all flee into another land,

And the land change its men, and foreign rule

<sup>1</sup>764. *Young king*.--Or new king; Ptolemy Philometer,  
the seventh from Alexander, including the latter, as the  
poet evidently intends

<sup>2</sup>768. *Great king*.--Antiochus Epiphanes, who invaded  
Egypt B. C. 170, and carried off Ptolemy Philometer as  
prisoner

<sup>3</sup>779-783. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 24 [L., 6,  
811

Ravage all Hellas and drain the rich land.

Of its wealth, and to strife among themselves

**805** Because of gold and silver they shall come--

The<sup>4</sup> love of gain an evil shepherdess

Will be for cities--in a foreign land.

And they shall all be without burial,

And vultures and wild beasts of earth shall spoil

**810** Their flesh; and when these things are brought  
to pass,

Vast earth shall waste the relics of the dead.

And all unsown shall it be and unplowed,

## Sibylline Oracles

Proclaiming sad the filth of men defiled  
Many<sup>5</sup> lengths of time in the revolving years,  
**815** And shields and javelins and all sorts of arms;  
Nor shall the forest wood be cut for fire.  
And then shall God send from the East a king<sup>6</sup>,  
Who shall make all earth cease from evil war,  
Killing some, others binding with strong oaths.  
**820** And he will not by his own counsels do  
All these things, but obey the good decrees  
Of God the mighty. And with goodly wealth,  
With gold and silver and purple ornament,  
The temple of the mighty God again  
**825** Shall be weighed down; and the full-bearing earth  
And the sea shall be filled full of good things.  
And kings against each other shall begin  
To hold ill will, in heart abetting evils.  
Envy is not a good to wretched men.

### Armageddon

**830**<sup>7</sup> But again kings of nations on this land  
Shall rush in masses, bringing on themselves  
Destruction; for they'll purpose to despoil

<sup>4</sup> 806, 807. A parenthetic statement, occasioned by the reference to gold and silver. Comp. book ii, 136-143; viii, 21-26

<sup>5</sup> 814-816. Comp. a similar statement in Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 26 [L., 6, 814]. See also Isa. ix, 5, and Ezek. xxxix, 9, 10, and lines 907-911, where we have the fuller form of what seems here to be fragmentary

<sup>6</sup> 817. *Send from the East a king.*--Best explained by Cyrus. Comp. line 352 above, and Isa. xli, 2, 25

<sup>7</sup> 830. Here assuredly a new paragraph ought to begin, though Rzach's text allows none. After the prophecy of the restoration of the temple the writer turns (lines 830-836) to the wars of the post-exile period, and the despoiling of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes. With such attempts to destroy the holy people he conceives, after the manner of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. xl, 40-45), that the sudden judgment of heaven intercepts the daring and impious transgressor. Hence the sublime apocalyptic passage, lines 837-871, follows in the regular order of prophetic thought

34

The great God's temple and the noblest men.  
What time they reach the land, polluted kings  
**835** Shall set around the city each his throne  
And have his people that obey not God.  
And then shall God speak with a mighty voice  
To all rude people of an empty mind,  
And judgment from the mighty God shall come  
**840** Upon them, and they all shall be destroyed

## Sibylline Oracles

By his immortal arm. And fiery swords  
Shall fall front heaven on earth; and great bright lights  
Shall come down flaming in the midst of men.  
And in those days shall earth, all-mother, reel  
**845** By his immortal arm, and shoals of fish  
In the deep sea, and all wild, beasts of earth,  
And countless tribes of winged fowl, and all  
The souls of men and every sea shall tremble  
Before the face of the Immortal One,  
**850** And there shall be dismay. High mountain peaks  
And monstrous hills shall he asunder break,  
And to all shall dark Erebus appear.  
And misty gorges in the lofty hills  
Shall be full of the dead; and rocks shall stream  
**855** With blood and every torrent fill the plain.  
And well-built walls of evil-minded men  
Shall all fall to the earth, since they knew not  
The law nor judgment of the mighty God,  
But with a senseless soul all hurried on  
**860** Against the temple and raised up their spears.  
And God shall judge all by war and by sword  
And by fire and by overwhelming storm;  
And brimstone there shall be from heaven, and  
stones  
And great and grievous hail; and death shall come  
**865** Upon the quadrupeds. And then shall they  
Know God, the Immortal, who performs these things;  
And wailing, and upon the boundless earth  
Shall be at once a shout of perishing men;  
And all the unholy shall be bathed in blood;  
**870** And earth herself shall also drink the blood  
Of the perishing, and beasts be gorged with flesh.  
And all these things the great eternal God  
Himself bade me proclaim. And that shall not  
Be unaccomplished, or be unfulfilled,  
**875** Whatever only in my heart he put;  
For truthful is God's spirit in the world.  
But children of the mighty God shall all  
Again around the temple live in peace,  
Rejoicing in those things which he shall give  
**880** Who is Creator, righteous Judge and King.  
For he himself, great, present far and wide,  
Shall be a shelter, as on all sides round  
A wall of flaming fire. And they shall be  
In cities and in country without war.  
**885** For not the hand of evil war, but rather  
The Immortal shall himself be their defender

## Sibylline Oracles

And the hand of the Holy One. And then shall all  
The islands and the cities tell how much  
The immortal God loves those men; for all things  
**890** Help them in conflict and deliver them  
Heaven, and divinely fashioned sun, and moon.  
[And in those days shall earth, all-mother, reel.]  
Sweet word shall they send from their mouths in  
hymns:

"Come, falling on the earth let us all pray  
**895** The immortal King, and great eternal God.  
To the temple let its in procession go,  
Since he alone is Lord; and let us all  
Meditate on the law of God most high,  
Which is most righteous of all (laws) on earth.  
**900**<sub>1</sub> And from the path of the Immortal we  
Have wandered and with senseless soul we honor  
Works made by hand and wooden images  
Of dead men." These things souls of faithful melt  
Shall cry out: "Come, having, at the house of God  
**905** Fallen on our faces, let its with our hymns  
Make joy to God the Father at our homes,  
Supplied<sub>2</sub> through all our land with arms of foes  
Seven lengths of time in the revolving years;  
Even shields and helmets and all sorts of arms,  
**910** And a great store of bows and arrows barbed;  
For forest wood shall not be cut for  
But, wretched Hellas<sub>3</sub>, stop thy arrogance  
And be wise; and entreat the Immortal One  
Magnanimous, and be upon thy guard.

**915** Send now against this city<sub>4</sub> yet again  
<sub>1</sub>900-903. Cited by Justin Martyr, *Cohort. ad Græcos*,  
xvi [G., 6, 273  
<sub>2</sub>907-911. Comp. lines 815-816 above, and note  
<sub>3</sub>912. *Wretched Hellas*.--Addressed apparently to the  
Greek dominion of Egypt under the Ptolemies  
<sub>4</sub>915. *Send now against this city*.--Several critics have  
proposed to read, "Send *not*," and understand the passage as  
an exhortation to the Greeks of Egypt not to send to  
Jerusalem an army of Alexandrine Jews, who might be  
excited by bad counsel to mix up with the Palestinian wars  
so constantly raging between the Seleucids and the  
Ptolemies. Such ill-advised action would be "moving  
Camarina," or provoking a fierce leopard in his lair.  
Another view is that the oracle dates about the beginning of  
35

The people inconsiderate, who are come  
Out of the holy land of the mighty One.  
Do not move Camarina; for 'tis better  
She be unmoved; a leopard from the lair,

## Sibylline Oracles

**920** Do thou not let an evil meet with thee.  
But keep off, do not hold within thy breast  
An arrogant and overbearing soul,  
Ready for mighty contest. And serve God  
The mighty, that thou mayest share those things;  
**925** And when that fated day shall reach its end  
[And judgment of the immortal God shall come  
To mortals], judgment great and power shall come  
Upon men. For all-mother earth shall yield  
To mortals best fruit boundless, wheat, wine, oil;  
**930** Also from heaven a delightful drink  
Of honey and trees shall give their fruit,  
And fatted sheep and cattle there shall be,  
Young lambs and kids of goats; earth shall break forth  
With sweet springs of white milk; and of good things  
**935** The cities shall be full and fat the fields;  
Nor sword nor uproar shall be on the earth;  
No more shall earth groan heavily and quake;  
Nor shall war longer be on earth, nor drought,  
Nor famine, nor the fruit-destroying hail;  
**940** But great peace, shall be upon all the earth,  
And king to king be friend until the end  
Of the age, and o'er all earth common law  
Will the Immortal in the starry heaven  
Perfect for men, touching whatever things  
**945** Have been by miserable mortals done;  
For he alone is God, there is no other;  
And the stern rage of men he'll burn with fire.  
But change entirely the thoughts in thy heart,  
And flee unrighteous worship; serve the One  
**950** Who liveth; guard against adultery  
the rise of the Maccabees, and is an exhortation to the  
Ptolemies to send to Jerusalem Jewish forces, numerous in  
Alexandria, to help their brethren in the Holy Land. But all  
the attempts to make the passage fit particular persons and  
events involve so much of fancy and conjecture that one  
may well hesitate to adopt any of them  
1918. *Camarina*.--The allusion is to the well-known  
story of draining the marsh of Camarina, a city of  
southern Sicily. The inhabitants, disregarding the oracle,  
drained the neighboring marsh, which was believed to  
breed pestilence, and by so doing they opened a way for  
their enemies to come and destroy their city. Hence the  
proverb, "Move not Camarina," was equivalent to: Do  
not seek to remove one evil in a way that is likely to  
bring on another and greater one. Cp. Virgil, *Æn.*, iii, 701  
2 948-950. Cited by Lactantius, *de Ira Dei*, i, xxii [L., 7, 143  
And deeds of lewdness; thine own offspring rear  
And do not murder; for the Immortal One  
Is angry with him who in these things sins.

## Sibylline Oracles

And then a kingdom over all mankind

**955** Shall he raise up for ages, who once gave  
Holy law to the pious, unto whom  
He pledged to open every land, the world  
And portals of the blessed, and all joys,  
And mind immortal and eternal bliss.

**960** And out of every land unto the house  
Of the great God shall they bring frankincense  
And gifts, and there shall be no other house  
To be inquired of by men yet to be,  
But what God gave for faithful men to honor;

**965** For mortal temple of the mighty God  
Shall call it. And all pathways of the plain  
And rough hills and high mountains and wild waves  
Of the deep shall be easy in those days  
For crossing and for sailing; for all peace

**970** On the land of the good shall come; and sword  
Shall prophets of the mighty God remove;  
For they are judges and the righteous kings  
Of mortals. And there shall be righteous wealth  
Among mankind; for of the mighty God

**975** This is the judgment and also the power.  
Be of good cheer, O maiden, and be glad;  
For he who made the heaven and earth gave thee  
Joy in thy age. And he will dwell in thee;  
And thine shall be immortal and wolves<sup>5</sup>

**980** And lambs shall in the mountains feed on grass  
Together, and with kids shall leopards graze;  
And bears shall lodge among the pasturing calves;  
And the carnivorous lion shall eat chaff  
At the manger like the cow; and little children

**985** In bonds shall lead them; for he will make beasts  
Helpless on earth. With babes shall fall asleep  
Serpents, along with asps, and do no harm;  
For over them shall be the hand of God.

Now tell I thee a sign exceeding clear,

**990** That thou may'st know when the end of all things  
On earth shall be. When in the starry heaven<sup>6</sup>  
Swords shall by night point straight toward west and  
east,

Straightway shalt there be also from the heaven

<sup>3</sup> 964. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 6 [L., 6, 462]

<sup>4</sup> 976. Comp. Zech. ii, 10; ix, 9

<sup>5</sup> 979-987. Comp. Isa. xi, 6-9. Cited also, with some verbal  
variations, by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 24 [L., 6, 811]

<sup>6</sup> 991-1000. Cp. with this section Josephus, *Wars*, vi, v, 3  
36

A cloud of dust borne forth to all the earth,



## Sibylline Oracles

**995** And the sun's brightness in the midst of heaven  
Shall be eclipsed, and the moon's beams appear  
And come again on earth; by drops of blood  
Distilling from the rocks a sign shalt be;  
And in the cloud shalt ye behold a war  
**1000** Of foot and horse, like the chase of wild beasts  
In the dense fog. This end of all things God  
Shalt consummate, whose dwelling is in heaven.  
But all must sacrifice to the great King.  
These things I show thee, I who madly left  
**1005** The long walls of Assyrian Babylon;  
For Hellas to proclaim to all the wrath  
Of God, fire sent. . . .

.....  
And that I might to mortals prophesy  
Of mysteries divine. And men shalt say  
**1010** In Hellas that I am of foreign Land,  
Of Erythre born, shameless; others say  
That I'm a Sibyl, born of mother Circe  
And father Gnostos<sup>2</sup> raving mad and false;  
But<sup>3</sup> at that time when all things come to pass  
**1015** Ye shall remember me, and no one more  
Shall call me mad, the great God's prophetess,  
For he showed me what happened formerly  
To my ancestors; what things were the first  
Those God made known to me; and in my mind  
**1020** Did God put all things to be afterwards,  
That I might prophesy of things to come,  
And things that were, and tell them unto men.  
For when the world was deluged with a flood  
Of waters, and one man of good repute  
**1025** Alone was left and in a wooden house  
Sailed o'er the waters with the beasts and birds,  
In order that the world might be refilled,  
I was his son's bride<sup>4</sup> and was of his race

<sup>1</sup> 1005. *Babylon*.--Lactantius understood the Sibyl to predict that she would be called Erythræan, "although she was born in Babylon." *Div. Inst.*, i, 6 [L., 6, 145].

<sup>2</sup> 1013. *Gnostos*.--Some have thought that *Glaucus* is intended, the seagod and father of Deiphobe. See Vergil, *Æn.*, vi, 36

<sup>3</sup> 1014-1016. Cited by Lactantius, *Div.*, iv, 15 [L., 6, 495]

<sup>4</sup> 1028. *His son's bride*.--Literally and strictly, I was his bride (Greek *nu'mfh*) but the word is probably employed here as in the later Greek usage, in the use of daughter-in-law. Nevertheless, in book vii, 219, the Sibyl says she had a son by her father. Compare, however, book i, 350-353; ii, 416-425. In book v, 15, she calls herself sister of Isis

## Sibylline Oracles

To whom the first things happened, and the last  
**1030** Were all made known; and thus from mine  
own mouth

Let all these truthful things remain declared.

### **BOOK IV**<sup>5</sup>.

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK IV.**

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righteous, **29-60**. The Assyrian kingdom, **61-  
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Exhortations and threatening, **210-230**.  
Resurrection, judgment, and reward, **231-248**.

**1** PEOPLE of boastful Asia and of Europe,  
Hear how much, all too true, I am about,  
Through a month many-toned, from my great hall  
To prophesy; no oracle am I

**5**<sup>6</sup> Of lying Phoebus<sup>7</sup> whom vain men called god,  
And further falsified by calling seer;  
But of the mighty God, whom hands of men  
Formed not like speechless idols carved of stone.  
For he has not for his abode a stone

**10** Most dumb and toothless to a temple drawn,  
Of immortals a dishonor very sore;  
For he may not be seen from earth nor measured  
By mortal eyes, nor formed by mortal hand;  
He, looking down at once on all, is seen

<sup>5</sup> 1. This fourth book was probably written by a Jew who  
lived during the latter part of the first century A. D. In  
lines 162-165 we find allusion to the destruction of  
Jerusalem by the Romans, and lines 169-174 are most  
naturally explained as referring to the eruption of  
Vesuvius in 79 A. D., which overwhelmed the cities of  
Pompeii and Herculaneum. The Nero legends also appear  
in this book (lines 154-159, 178-180), and serve to prove  
the date not earlier than about 80 A. D.

<sup>6</sup> 5-8. Cited by Clem. Alex., *Cohort. ad Græcos*, iv [G., 8, 111]

<sup>7</sup> 5. Phoebus.--The god of archery, prophecy, and music,  
who had temples at Delos, Delphi, Patara, Claros,  
Miletus, Grynium, and other places, in all of which he  
gave forth oracles of the future. His oracles were,  
according to Herodotus (i, 66, 75), often ambiguous and  
misleading

37

**15** Himself by no one; his are murky night,

## Sibylline Oracles

And day, and sun, and stars, and moon, and seas  
With fish, and land, and rivers, and the month  
Of springs perennial, creatures meant for life,  
And rains at once producing fruit of field  
**20** And tree and vine and oil. This God a whip  
Struck through my heart within to make me tell  
Truly to men what things have now befallen  
And how much shall befall them yet again  
From the first generation to the eleventh;  
**25** For he himself by bringing them to pass  
Will prove all things. But do thou in all things,  
O people, to the Sibyl give all ear,  
Who pours from hallowed mouth a truthful voice.  
Blessed<sup>2</sup> of men shall they be on the earth  
**30** As many as shall love the mighty God,  
Offering him praise before they drink and eat;  
Trusting in piety. When they behold  
Temples and altars, figures of dumb stones,  
[Stone images and statues made with hands]  
**35** Polluted with the blood of living things  
And sacrifices of four-footed beasts,  
They will reject them all; and they will look  
To the great glory of one God and not  
Commit presumptuous murder nor dispose  
**40** Of stolen gain, which things most horrid are;  
Nor<sup>3</sup> shameful longing for another's bed  
Have they, nor vile and hateful lust of males.  
Their manner, piety, and character  
Shall other men, that love a shameless life,  
**45** Not ever imitate; but, mocking them  
With jest and joke like babes in senselessness,  
They'll falsely charge to them as many deeds  
Blameful and wicked as they do themselves.  
For<sup>4</sup> slow is the whole race of human kind  
**50** To believe. But when judgment of the world  
And mortals comes which God himself shall bring  
Judging at once the impious and the pious,  
Then indeed shall he send the ungodly back  
<sup>1</sup>24. *Eleventh*.--Or *tenth*? Comp. lines 58 and 110. The  
reckoning begins with the first generation after the flood.  
Comp. lines 64 and 65. By generation the author  
evidently means a long period, an age, but its duration is  
left indefinite  
<sup>2</sup>29-37. Cited by Justin Martyr, *Cohort. ad Græcos*, xvi [G., 6,  
273]; also by Clem. Alex., *Cohort. ad Græcos*, iv [G., 8, 161].  
<sup>3</sup>41,42. Cited by Clem. Alex., *Pæd.*, ii, 10 [G., 8, 516]  
<sup>4</sup>49-67. Cited with verbal variations by Lactantius, *Div.*  
*Inst.*, vii, 23 [L., 6, 807]  
To lower darkness [and then they shall know

## Sibylline Oracles

**55** How much impiety they wrought]; but the pious  
Shall still remain upon the fruitful land,  
God giving to them breath and life and grace<sup>5</sup>.

But these things all in the tenth generation  
Shall come to pass; and now what things shall be

**60** From the first generation, those I'll tell.

First over all mortal shall Assyrians<sup>6</sup> rule,  
And for six generations hold the power  
Of the world, from the time the God of heaven  
Being wroth against the cities and all men

**65** Sea with a bursting deluge covered earth.

Them shall the Medes o'erpower<sup>7</sup>, but on the throne  
For two generations only shall exult;

In which times those events shall come to pass:.

Dark night shall come at the mid hour of days

**70** And from the heaven the stars and circling moon  
Shall disappear; and earth in tumult shaken

By a great earthquake shall throw many cities  
And works of men headlong; and from the deep  
They shall peer out the islands of the Sea.

**75** But when the great Euphrates shall with blood  
Be surging, then shall there be also set

Between the Medes and Persians dreadful strife  
In battle; and the, Medes shall fall and fly

'Neath Persian spears beyond the mighty water

**80** Of Tigris. And the Persian power shall be  
Greatest in all the world, and they shall have  
One generation of most prosperous rule.

And there shall be as many evil deeds

As men shall wish away--the din of war,

**85** And murders, and disputes, and banishments,  
And overthrow of towers and waste of cities,

When Hellas<sup>9</sup> very glorious shall sail

<sup>5</sup> 57. *Comp. Acts xvii, 25*

<sup>6</sup> 61. *First ... Assyrians.*--*Comp. Gen. x, 11. 63-65. Cited by Lactantius, de Ira Dei, xxiii [L., 7, 144].*

<sup>7</sup> 66. *The Medes o'erpower.*--*Comp. Herod., i, 95: "When the Assyrians had ruled over upper Asia five hundred and twenty years, first the Medes began to revolt from them, and, having thrown off their slavery, became free."*

<sup>8</sup> 69. *Night . . . day.*--Probably to be understood of a notable eclipse of the sun. Herodotus (i, 74) relates that during the wars of the Medes and Lydians it happened that in the heat of battle the day was suddenly turned into night. This event, he observes, Thales had foretold, designating beforehand the very year in which it actually occurred

<sup>9</sup> 87-89. Reference to the Trojan War according to most critics, but according to Badt (*Das vierte Buch d. Sibyl. Orakel*, 10) to the beginning, of the Persian War by the

## Sibylline Oracles

38

Over broad Hellespont, and shall convey  
To Phrygia sorrow and to Asia doom.

**90** And unto Egypt, land of many furrows,  
Shall sorry famine come, and barrenness  
Shall during twenty circling years prevail,  
What time the Nile, corn-nourisher, shall hide  
His dark wave somewhere underneath the earth.

**95** <sup>1</sup>And there shall come from Asia a great king  
Bearing a spear, with ships innumerable,  
And he shall walk the wet paths of the deep,  
And shall sail after he has cut the mount  
Of lofty summit; him a fugitive

**100** From battle fearful Asia shall receive.  
And Sicily the wretched shall a stream  
Of powerful fire set all aflame while Etna  
Her flame disgorges; and in the deep chasm  
Down shall the mighty city Croton<sup>2</sup> fall.

**105** And<sup>3</sup> strife shall be in Hellas; they shall rage  
Against each other, cast down many cities,  
And fighting make an end of many men;  
But equally balanced is the strife with both.  
But, when the race of mortal men shall come

**110** To the tenth generation, also then  
Upon the Persians shall a servile yoke  
And terror be. But when the Macedonians<sup>4</sup>  
Shall boast the scepter there shall be for Thebes<sup>5</sup>  
An evil conquest from behind, and Carians

**115** Shall dwell in Tyre, and Tyrians be destroyed.  
And Babylon, great to see but small to fight,  
Shall stand with walls that were in vain hopes built.  
In Bactria<sup>6</sup> Macedonians shall dwell;

revolt of southwestern Asia Minor, and the attack on  
Sardis by the Greeks

<sup>1</sup>95-100. Reference to Xerxes' invasion of Greece

<sup>2</sup>104. *Croton*.--No city of this name is known to have existed in  
Sicily, and the well-known Croton, or Croto, in southern Italy,  
cannot be thought of as perishing by lava streams of Etna.  
Another reading {Greek *Brotw^n*} is, "the great city of men."

<sup>3</sup>105-108. Reference to the Peloponnesian War

<sup>4</sup>110-120. Reference to the Macedonian power, which,  
under Alexander the Great, subdued the Persian Empire,  
and spread Greek colonies over its broad territory. The  
illusions are to be understood poetically, and were  
probably not designed to be altogether strict statements  
of fact

<sup>5</sup>113. *Thebes*, in Boeotia, which was razed to the ground  
by Alexander before his expedition into Asia

<sup>6</sup>118. *Bactria*.--The northeastern extreme of the Persian  
Empire, bordering on northern India

## Sibylline Oracles

But those from Susa<sup>7</sup> and from Bactria  
**120** Shall all into the land of Hellas flee.  
It shall take place among those yet to be,  
When silver-eddying Pyramus<sup>8</sup> his banks  
O'erpouring, to the sacred isle<sup>9</sup> shall come.  
And Cibyra<sup>10</sup> shall fall and Cyzicus,  
**125** When, earth being shaken by earthquakes, cities  
fall.  
And sand shall hide all Samos under banks.  
And Delos<sup>11</sup> visible no more, but things  
Of Delos shall all be invisible.  
And to Rhodes shall come evil last, but greatest.  
**130** The Macedonian power shall not abide;  
But from the west a great Italian war  
Shall flourish, under which the world shall bear  
A servile yoke and the Italians serve.  
And thou, O wretched Corinth<sup>12</sup>, thou shalt look  
**135** Sometime upon thy conquest. And thy tower,  
O Carthage, shall press lowly on the ground.  
Wretched Laodicea, thee sometime  
Shall earthquake lay low<sup>13</sup>, casting headlong down,  
But thou, a city firmly set, again  
**140** Shalt stand. O Lycia Myra<sup>14</sup> beautiful,  
Thee never shall the agitated earth  
Set fast; but falling headlong down on earth  
Shalt thou, in manner like an alien, pray  
To flee away into another land,  
**145** When sometime the dark water of the sea  
With thunders and earthquakes shall stop the din  
Of Patara<sup>15</sup> for its impieties.

<sup>7</sup> 119. *Susa*.--The biblical Shushan, one of the capital cities of the Persian Empire.

<sup>8</sup> 122. *Pyramus*.--A river of Cilicia flowing southward from Mount Taurus and emptying into the Mediterranean. Strabo (book i, chap. iii, 7) describes it and quotes these lines of the Sibyl as all ancient oracle

<sup>9</sup> 123. *Sacred isle*.--Referring probably to Cyprus, which word Strabo here reads.

<sup>10</sup> 124. *Cibyra*.--City of Asia Minor, in Phrygia, near the border of Caria. *Cyzicus* was a city of Mysia, on an island of the same name in the Propontis

<sup>11</sup> 126, 127. On *Samos* and *Delos* comp. book iii, 454

<sup>12</sup> 134. *Corinth*.--Destroyed by the Romans the same year as Carthage, B. C. 146

<sup>13</sup> 138. *Lay low*.--Read {Greek *strw'sei*}. Comp. book v, 587 (Greek text, 438). So Mendelssohn, favored by Rzach

<sup>14</sup> 140. *Myra*.--Chief city of Lycia, on the southern coast, about a league from the sea. Its ruins witness to its ancient wealth and beauty

## Sibylline Oracles

<sup>15</sup> 147. *Patara*.--Sec book iii, 551

39

Also for thee, Armenia<sup>1</sup>, there remains  
A slavish fate; and there shall also come

**150** To Solyma<sup>2</sup> an evil blast of war  
From Italy, and God's great temple spoil.  
But when these, trusting folly, shall cast off  
Their piety and murders consummate  
Around the temple, then front Italy

**155** A mighty king<sup>3</sup> shall like a runaway slave  
Flee over the Euphrates' stream unseen,  
Unknown, who shall some time dare loathsome guilt  
Of matricide, and many other things,  
Having confidence in his most wicked hands.

**160** And many for the throne with blood  
Rome's soil while he flees over Parthian land.  
And out of Syria shall come Rome's foremost man<sup>4</sup>,  
Who having burned the temple of Solyma,  
And having slaughtered many of the Jews,

**165** Shall destruction on their great broad land.  
And then too shall an earthquake overthrow  
Both Salamis and Paphos<sup>5</sup>, when dark water  
Shall dash o'er Cyprus washed by many a wave.  
But when from deep cleft of Italian land

**170** Fire shall come flashing forth in the broad  
heaven,  
And many cities burn<sup>6</sup> and men destroy,  
And much black ashes shall fill the great sky,  
And small drops like red earth shall fall from heaven,  
Then know the anger of the God of heaven,

<sup>1</sup> 148. *Armenia*.--There was Armenia Major, the vast territory south of the Caucasus Mountains and between the Euxine and Caspian Seas; and Armenia Minor, a small section on the west of Armenia Major, and east of Cappadocia. All these lands were subject to Alexander, then to the Syrian princes, and were made a Roman province under Trajan

<sup>2</sup> 150. *Solyma*.--That is, Jerusalem

<sup>3</sup> 155. *Mighty king*.--Nero, whose murder of his mother is notorious, and whose flight beyond the Euphrates and expected return as antichrist was a superstitious tradition long maintained

<sup>4</sup> 162-165. This evidently refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the subjugation of all Palestine by the Romans under Vespasian and Titus

<sup>5</sup> 167. *Salamis and Paphos*.--Famous cities, one at the east and the other at the west end of Cyprus. "How often," says Seneca (*Epist.* 91), "has this calamity (earthquake) laid Cyprus waste? How often has Paphos fallen into ruin?"

<sup>6</sup> 171-176. The great eruption of Vesuvius, which

## Sibylline Oracles

destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum, A. D. 79, is construed by the Sibyl as a sign of God's anger against the Romans for the slaughter of the Jews.

**175** For that they without reason shall destroy  
The nation of the pious. And then strife  
Awakened of war shall come to the West,  
Shall also come the fugitive of Rome<sup>7</sup>,  
Bearing a great spear, having marched across

**180** Euphrates with his many myriads.  
O wretched Antioch, they shall call thee  
No more a city when around their spears  
Because of thine own follies thou shalt fall.

And then on Scyross shall a pestilence  
**185** And dreadful battle-din destruction bring.

Alas, alas! O wretched Cyprus, thee  
Shall a broad wave of the sea cover, thee  
Tossed on high by the whirling stormy winds.  
And into Asia there shall come great wealth,

**190** Which Rome herself once, plundering, put away  
In her luxurious homes; and twice as much<sup>9</sup>  
And more shall she to Asia render back,  
And then there shall be an excess of war.

And Carian cities by Mæander's<sup>10</sup> waters,  
**195** Girded with towers and very beautiful,  
Shall by a bitter famine be destroyed,  
When the Mæander his dark water hides.

But when piety shall perish from mankind,  
And faith and right be hidden in the world,  
**200** . . . Fickle . . . and in unhallowed boldness

Living shall practice wanton violence,  
And reckless evil deeds, and of the pious  
No one shall make account, but even them all  
From thoughtlessness they utterly destroy

**205** In childish folly, in their violence  
Exulting and in blood holding their bands;  
Then know thou that God is no longer mild,  
But gnashing with fury and destroying all  
The<sup>11</sup> race of men by conflagration great.

### Exhortations and threatening

**210** Ah! miserable mortals, change these things,  
Nor lead the mighty God to wrath extreme;

<sup>7</sup> 178. Fugitive of Rome.--Nero, referred to in lines 154-159 above

<sup>8</sup> 184. *Scyros*.--Large island of the Ægean Sea east of Euboea

<sup>9</sup> 191. *Twice as much*.--Comp. book iii, 434-441

<sup>10</sup> 194. *Mæander*.--This stream, having its sources in Phrygia, ran westward between Caria and Lydia, and was famous for its many windings. Comp. Ovid, *Metam.*, viii,



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162-166

<sup>11</sup> 209. See lines 224-230, and comp. 2 Pet. iii, 7; Cicero, *de Natura Deorum*, ii, 49; Ovid, *Metam.* i, 256-258.

Justin Martyr refers to this passage in his first Apology, chap. xx.

40

But giving up your swords and pointed knives<sup>1</sup>,  
And homicides and wanton violence,  
Wash<sup>2</sup> your whole body in perennial streams,  
**215** And lifting up your hands to heaven seek pardon  
For former deeds and expiate with praise  
Bitter impiety; and God will give  
Repentances; he will not destroy; and wrath  
Will he again restrain, if in your hearts  
**220** Ye all will practice honored piety.  
But if, ill-disposed, ye obey me not,  
But with a fondness for strange lack of sense  
Receive all these things with an evil ear,  
There shall be over all the world a fire  
**225** And greatest omen with sword and with trump  
At sunrise; the whole world shall hear the roar  
And mighty sound. And he shall burn all earth,  
And destroy the whole race of men, and all  
The cities and the rivers and the sea;  
**230** All things he'll burn, and it shall be black dust.  
But<sup>4</sup> when now all things shall have been reduced  
To dust and ashes, and God shall have calmed  
The fire unspeakable which he lit up,

### Resurrection, judgment, and reward

The bones and ashes of men God himself  
**235** Again will fashion, and he will again  
Raise mortals up, even as they were before.  
And then shall be the judgment, at which God  
Himself as judge shall judge the world again;  
And all who sinned with impious hearts, even them,  
**240** Shall he again hide under mounds of earth  
[Dark Tartarus and Stygian Gehenna].  
But all who shall be pious shall again  
Live on the earth [and (shall inherit there)  
The great immortal God's unwasting bliss.]  
**245** God giving spirit life and joy to them  
[The pious; and they all shall see themselves  
Beholding the sun's sweet and cheering light.  
O happy on the earth shall be that man].

<sup>1</sup> 212. *Knives*.--Read {Greek *sto'nuxas* } instead of {Greek *stonaxa's* }. This emendation proposed by Mendelssohn seems more suitable than the reading *groanings*, and finds favor with Rzach

<sup>2</sup> 214. *Wash*.--Reference to Christian baptism

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<sup>3</sup> 218-220. Cited in Lactantius, *de Ira Dei*, xxiii

<sup>4</sup> 231-248. This picture of resurrection, judgment, and awarding of punishments and rewards embodies the substance of familiar Christian doctrine. This passage is quoted in the *Apostolical Constitutions*, book v, 7 [G., 1, 844], where we find a somewhat abbreviated text

### **BOOK V<sup>5</sup>.**

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK V.**

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**1** BUT come, now, hear of me the mournful time  
Of sons of Latium. And first of all,  
After the kings of Egypt were destroyed  
And the like earth had downwards borne them all,  
**5** And after Pella's townsmen, under whom  
The whole East and the rich West were cast down,  
whom Babylon dishonored, and stretched out  
For Philip a dead body (not of Zeus,

<sup>5</sup> 1. Next to the third, this fifth book is the longest in our present collection of oracles. It is clearly a composite of Jewish and Christian material, and as the three Antonines

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are referred to in line 72, we cannot suppose that the book in its present form existed prior to the middle of the second century of the Christian era.

<sup>6</sup>5 *Pella's townsman*.--Alexander the Great

41

Of Ammon not true things<sup>1</sup> were prophesied),

**10** And after that one of the race and blood

Of king Assaracus<sup>2</sup>, who came from Troy,

Even he who cleft the violence of fire,

And after many lords, and after men

To Ares dear, and after the young babes<sup>3</sup>,

**15** The children of the beast that feeds on sheep,

The very first lord<sup>4</sup> shall be, who shall sum

Twice ten with the first letter of his name;

In wars exceeding powerful shall he be;

And he shall have the initial sign of ten;

**20** And in like manner after him to reign

Is one who has the alphabet's first letter<sup>5</sup>;

Before him Thrace and Sicily shall crouch,

Then Memphis, Memphis cast headlong to earth

By reason of the cowardice of rulers

**25** And of a woman<sup>6</sup> unenslaved who falls

Upon the wave. And laws will he ordain

For peoples and put all things under him;

But after a long time shall he transmit

His power unto another, who shall have

**30** Three hundred<sup>7</sup> for his first initial sign,

And of a river the beloved name,

And the Persians he shall rule and Babylon;

And then shall he smite Medians with his spear.

Then shall one rule who has the initial sign

**35** Of the number three<sup>8</sup>. And then shall be a lord

Who shall for first initial have twice ten<sup>9</sup>;

<sup>1</sup>9. Not true things.--In this parenthetic way the Sibyl

declares that the popular traditions of Alexander as

having sprung from Zeus or from Ammon were proven

untrue

<sup>2</sup>11. *Assaracus*.--Ancestor of Æneas.

<sup>3</sup>14. *Babes*.--Romulus and Remus

<sup>4</sup>16. *The very first lord*.--First in the line of Cæsars or emperors. This Sibylline writer, as well as Suetonius, the Roman historian, begins the list with Julius Cæsar, who is designated by the numerical value of the initial letters of his name. The Greek letter Kappa (K) stands for twenty, and Iota (I) stands for ten.

<sup>5</sup>21. *First letter*.--Alpha, initial of Augustus

<sup>6</sup>25. *Woman*.--Allusion to Cleopatra of Egypt. Her falling upon the wave is ambiguous, and probably the text is an error. In the parallel in book xii, 29, the reading is *under the spear*

<sup>7</sup>30. *Three hundred*.--Represented by the letter T, the

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initial of Tiberius, as well as of the river Tiber

<sup>8</sup> 35. *Three*.--The letter {Greek G}, Greek initial of Caius (Gaius) Cæsar, commonly known as Caligula

<sup>9</sup> 36. *Twice ten*.--As in line 16, but here designating Claudius (Greek, *Klaudios*).

And he shall come to Ocean's utmost water

And by Ausonia cleave the refluent tide.

And one whose mark is fifty<sup>10</sup> shall be lord,

**40** A dreadful serpent breathing grievous war,  
Who sometime stretching forth his hands shall make

An end of his own race and stir all things,

Acting the athlete, driving chariots,

Putting to death and daring countless things;

**45** And he shall cleave the mountain of two seas<sup>11</sup>

And sprinkle it with gore; but out of sight

Shall also vanish the destructive man;

Then, making himself equal unto God,

Shall he return; but God will prove him naught.

**50** And after him shall three kings<sup>12</sup> be destroyed

By one another. Then a great destroyer

Of pious men shall come, whom seven times ten<sup>13</sup>

Shall point out clearly. But from him a son,

Whom the first letter of three hundred<sup>14</sup> proves,

**55** Shall take the power. And after him shall be

A ruler, of the initial sign of four<sup>15</sup>,

A life-destroyer. Then a reverend man

Of the number fifty. Next, succeeding him

Who has the first mark of the initial sign

**60** Three hundred<sup>16</sup>, shall a Celtic mountaineer,

Into the strife of battle pressing on,

Escape not fate unseemly, but shall be

Worn weary unto death; him foreign dust,

But dust that of Nemea's flower<sup>17</sup> has name,

**65** Shall hide a corpse. And after him shall rule

Another man, with silver helmet decked;

<sup>10</sup> 39. *Fifty*.--The letter N, here denoting Nero, and Nerva in line 58

<sup>11</sup> 45. *Mountain of two seas*.--Isthmus of Corinth, which Nero attempted to open to the two adjoining bodies of water

<sup>12</sup> 50. *Three kings*.--Galba, Otho, and Vitellius

<sup>13</sup> 52. *Seven times ten*.--This number is denoted by the Greek {Greek O}, initial of the Greek form of the name of Vespasian ({Greek *Ou?espasiano's*})

<sup>14</sup> 54. *Three hundred*.--Here denoting Titus

<sup>15</sup> 56. *Four*.--The letter A, initial of Domitian

<sup>16</sup> 60. Three hundred. --Here denoting Trajan, who was of Spanish origin, and so reckoned by the Sibyl as a "Celtic mountaineer," not accurately, but in a loose, general way as a Western

<sup>17</sup> 64. *Nemea's flower*.--Nemea in Argolis was the spot

## Sibylline Oracles

where biennial games were celebrated by the Greeks, and the victors were crowned with parsley, the Greek name of which is *selinon*. The emperor Trajan died in Selinus, a city of Cilicia, in Asia Minor; hence the allusion of the Sibyl

42

And unto him shall be the name of a sea<sup>1</sup>;  
And he shall be a man the best of all  
And in all things discreet. And upon thee,  
**70** Thou best of all, above all, dark-haired one,  
And upon thy shoots shall be all these days.  
After him three<sup>2</sup> shall rule; but the third one  
Shall at a late time hold the royal power.  
Worn out am I, thrice-miserable one,  
**75** Sister of Isis<sup>3</sup>, to lay up in heart  
An evil message, and an inspired song  
Of oracles. First<sup>4</sup> Mænades shall dart  
Around thy much-lamented temple's<sup>5</sup> steps,  
And thou shalt be in evil hands<sup>6</sup> that day  
**80** When the Nile some time shall fill the whole land  
Of Egypt even to sixteen cubits<sup>7</sup> deep;  
It shall wash all the land, and water it  
For mortals; and the pleasure of the land  
Shall be still and the glory of her face.

**85** Memphis<sup>8</sup>, thou most shalt over Egypt wail;

<sup>1</sup>67. *Name of a sea.*--The Adriatic (or Hadriatic), from which it is apparent Hadrian is referred to.

<sup>2</sup>72. *Three.*--The three Antonines, namely, Antonius Pius, M. Aurelius, and I. Verus. This last named, being only seven years old at the time of his adoption, was thought by the Sibyl to be likely to come late to the throne. Comp. book viii, 85

<sup>3</sup>75. *Sister of Isis.*--The Sibyl, who elsewhere (book iii, 1028) represents herself as a daughter-in-law of Noah, here assumes to be sister or friend (Greek *gnwsth'*) of the Egyptian goddess Isis, sadly prophesying the doom of Egypt, and especially of Memphis

<sup>4</sup>77. *First.*--Lactantius seems to have had this passage in mind when he says: "First of all, Egypt shall stiffer punishment for her foolish superstitions, and will be covered with blood as if with a river." *Div. Inst.*, vii, 15 [L., 6, 786]. *Mænades.*--A name applied to the priestesses of Bacchus, who were wont to work themselves into mad frenzy, and are here named as avenging furies, fit to execute judgment. Comp. line 651

<sup>5</sup>78. *Thy much-lamented temple.* The temple of Isis is referred to

<sup>6</sup>79. *Evil hands.* Allusion perhaps to the tearing in pieces of Pentheus by the hands of his mother and aunts, to whom Bacchus made him appear as a wild beast

<sup>7</sup>81. *Sixteen cubits.*--The elevation of the Nile, in the vicinity of Memphis, is about twenty-three feet, according to Humboldt, which would be equivalent to the

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ordinary estimate of sixteen cubits. It is interesting to note that the famous piece of statuary in the Vatican, representing the Nile as a reclining human figure, has the childlike forms of sixteen genii climbing about it, as if to represent the sixteen cubits of the usual annual overflow  
85. *Memphis*.--Ancient capital of lower Egypt. Comp. line 243.

For of old ruling mightily the land  
Thou shalt become poor, so that out of heaven  
The Thunderer shall himself with great voice cry:  
"O mighty Memphis, who didst boast of old  
**90** O'er craven mortals greatly, thou shalt wail  
Full of pain and all-hapless, so that thou  
Thyself shalt the eternal God perceive  
Immortal in the clouds. Where among men  
Is now thy mighty pride? Because thou didst  
**95** Against my God-anointed children<sup>9</sup> rave,  
And didst urge evil forward on good men,  
Thou shalt for such things suffer penalty  
In some like manner. No more openly  
For thee shall there be right among the blessed;  
**100** Fallen from the stars<sup>10</sup>, thou shalt not rise to  
heaven."

Now these things unto Egypt God bade me  
Speak out for the last time, when men shall be  
Utterly evil. But they labor hard,  
Evil men evil things awaiting, wrath  
**105** Of the immortal Thunderer in heaven,  
Worshipping stones and beasts instead of God,  
And also fearing many things besides  
Which have no speech, nor mind, nor power to hear;  
Which things it is not right for me to mention,  
**110** Each one an idol, formed by mortal hands;  
Of their own labors and presumptuous thoughts  
Did men receive gods made of wood and stone  
And brass, and gold and silver, foolish too,  
Without life and dumb, molten in the fire  
**115** They made them, vainly trusting such things. . . .  
Thmois and Xoïs<sup>11</sup> are in sore distress,  
And smitten is the hall of Heracles<sup>12</sup>  
And Zeus and Hermes (king). And as for thee,  
O Alexandria, famed nourisher  
**120** (Of cities) war shall not leave, nor (plague) . . .  
For thy pride thou shalt pay as many things  
As thou before didst. Silent shalt thou be  
A long age, and the day of thy return . . .

<sup>9</sup>95. *God-anointed children*.--The Jewish people. Comp. Psa. cv, 16; Hub. iii, 13

<sup>10</sup>100. Comp. Isa. xiv, 12,13; Matt. xi, 23.

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<sup>11</sup> 116. *Thmois and Xoïs*.--Cities of Egypt, the former mentioned by Herodotus (ii, 166), the latter by Strabo (xvii, 1, 19).

<sup>12</sup> 117. Heracles.--Son of Zeus, as was also *Hermes*, and these deities are thus naturally associated in the Sibyl's thought with their halls or temples of worship in Egypt. The corruption in the Greek text of this passage is indicated by the lacunæ visible in the translation

43

.....

No more for thee shall flow luxurious drink . . .

.....

**125** For there shall come a Persian<sup>1</sup> on thy dale,  
And like hail shall he all the land destroy,  
And artful men, with blood and corpses. . . .

By sacred altars one of barbarous mind,  
Strong, full of blood and raging senselessly,

**130** With countless numbers rushing to destruction.

And then shalt thou, in cities very rich,  
Be very weary. Falling on the earth

All Asia shall wail on account of gifts  
Crowning her head with which she was by thee

**135** Delighted. But, as he himself obtained  
The Persian land by lot, he shall make war  
And killing every man destroy all life,

So that there shall remain for wretched mortals  
A third part. But with nimble leap shall he

**140** Himself speed from the West, and all the land  
Besiege and waste. But when he shall possess

The height of power and odious reverence,  
He shall come, wishing to destroy the city  
Even of the blessed. And a certain king<sup>2</sup>

**145** Sent forth from God against him shall destroy  
All mighty kings and bravest men. And thus  
Shall judgement by the Immortal come to men.

Alas, alas for thee, unhappy heart!  
Why dost thou move me to declare these things,

**150** The painful rule of Egypt over many?  
Go to the East, to races of the Persians

Who lack in understanding, and show them  
That which is now and that which is to be.

The river of Euphrates shall bring on

**155** A deluge, and it shall destroy the Persians,  
Iberians<sup>3</sup> and Babylonians

And the Massagetæ that relish war  
And trust in bows. All Asia fire-ablaze

Shall to the isles beam brightly. Pergamos,

<sup>1</sup> 125. *A Persian*.--The allusion is uncertain. According to the scholium found in a Paris codex, he is one who is to

## Sibylline Oracles

be associated with the coming of antichrist. Much in the description corresponds to what is said of Nero in lines 39-49 above.

<sup>2</sup> 144-147. A Messianic passage quoted by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 18 6, 796]

<sup>3</sup> 156. *Iberians*.--Those north of Armenia, and between the Euxine and Caspian Seas, are probably intended; but they, as well as the *Massagetæ* mentioned in the next line, were in no contact with the Euphrates. The *Massagetæ* were east of the Caspian, in Scythia.

**160** Revered of old, shall perish from its base,  
And Pitane<sup>4</sup> among men shall appear  
All-desolate. All Lesbos<sup>5</sup> shall sink deep  
Into the deep, and thus shall be destroyed.  
Smyrna<sup>6</sup>, whirled down her cliffs, shall wail aloud,

**165** She that was once revered and given a name  
Shall perish utterly. Bithynians  
Shall over their own country, then reduced  
To ashes, wail, and o'er great Syria,  
And o'er Phoenicia that has many tribes.

**170** Alas, alas for thee, O Lycia<sup>7</sup>;  
How many evils does the sea contrive  
Against thee, mounting up of its own will  
Upon the painful land! And it shall dash  
With evil earthquake and with bitter streams

**175** On the rough Lycian land that once breathed  
perfume.

And there shall be for Phrygia fearful wrath  
Because of sorrow for which Rhea<sup>8</sup> came,  
Mother of Zeus, and there continued long.  
The sea shall overthrow the Centaur race<sup>9</sup>

**180** And barbarous nation, and beneath the earth  
Shall tear away the Lapithæan land<sup>10</sup>.  
The river of deep eddies and deep flow,  
Peneus, shall destroy Thessalian land,  
Snatching men from the earth. Eridanus

**185** (Pretending once to bear the forms, of beasts)<sup>11</sup>.  
Hellas thrice wretched shall the poets weep,  
When one from Italy<sup>12</sup> shall smite the neck  
Of the isthmus, mighty king of mighty Rome,  
A man made equal to God, whom, they say,

**190** Zeus himself and the august Hera bore

<sup>4</sup> 161. *Pitane*.--A city on the east coast of Mysia,  
southwest of Pergamos

<sup>5</sup> 162. *Lesbos*.--Large island near the coast of Mysia

<sup>6</sup> 164. *Smyrna*.--Well-known city on the coast of Lydia,  
distinguished for its commerce in ancient and modern times

<sup>7</sup> 170. *Lycia*.--Province on the southern coast of Asia  
Minor, having Phrygia to the north

<sup>8</sup> 177. *Rhea*.--Comp. book iii, 165-182



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<sup>9</sup>179. *Centaur race*.--Fabulous race in Thessaly,  
represented as half man and half horse

<sup>10</sup>181. *Lapithæan land*.--The mountainous parts of  
Thessaly, so called from a fabulous people, the Lapithæ,  
who are said to have once dwelt there

<sup>11</sup>185. The Greek text is here corrupt, and the words in  
parentheses are conjectural

<sup>12</sup>187. *One from Italy*.--Another picture of Nero (comp.  
lines 39-49) who is here represented as the author of the  
Roman war which resulted in the overthrow of Jerusalem  
and the temple

44

He, courting by his voice all-musical  
Applause for his sweet Songs, shall put to death  
With his own wretched mother many men.  
From Babylon shall flee the fearful lord  
**195** And shameless whom all mortals and best men  
Abhor; for he slew many and laid hands  
Upon the womb; against his wives he sinned  
And of men stained with blood had he been formed.  
And he shall come to monarchs of the Medes  
**200** And Persians, first whom he loved and to whom  
He brought renown, while with those wicked men  
He lurked against a nation not desired  
And on the temple made by God he seized  
And citizens and people going in,  
**205** Of whom I justly sang the praise, he burned;  
For when this man appeared the whole creation  
Was shaken and kings perished--and yet power  
Remained among them, and they quite destroyed  
The mighty city and the righteous people.  
**210** But when the fourth year<sup>1</sup> a great star shall  
shine,  
Which alone shall the whole earth overpower  
Because of honor, which was first assigned  
To lord Poseidon<sup>2</sup>; then a great star<sup>3</sup> shall come  
From heaven into the dreadful sea and burn  
**215** The vast deep, and Babylon<sup>4</sup> itself,  
And the land of Italy, because, of which  
There perished many holy faithful men  
Among the Hebrews and a people true.  
Thou<sup>5</sup> shalt be among evil mortals made  
**220** To suffer evils, but thou shalt remain  
All-desolate whole ages by thyself<sup>6</sup>  
Hating thy soil; for thou didst have desire

<sup>1</sup>210. *Fourth year*.--Perhaps in allusion to the time,  
times, and dividing of time (three and a half years) in  
Dan. vii. 25, a symbolic number for a period of woe.

<sup>2</sup>213. *To lord Poseidon*.--Reading doubtful. Some MSS. read,  
Poseidon who is in the sea. Mendelssohn proposes the Homeric

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phrase, {Greek *E?nuali'wj a?ndreifo'nth* }the man-slaying, warlike one

<sup>3</sup> 213, 214. *Star . . . into the . . . sea.*--Comp. Rev. viii, 8; xvi, 3. This passage is an apocalyptic prophecy of judgment to come on Rome, and is so interpreted by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 15 [L., 6, 790]

<sup>4</sup> 215. *Babylon.*--Here used as a symbolic name for Rome

<sup>5</sup> 219. *Thou.*--Direct address to Rome

<sup>6</sup> 221. This line is in substance repeated in the codices and editions of the Greek text, but is so evidently a corruption that we omit the repetition from our text

For sorcery, adulteries were with thee<sup>7</sup>

And lawless carnal intercourse with boys,

**225** Thou evil city, womanish, unjust,

Ill-fated above all. Alas, alas!

Thou city of the Latin land, unclean

In all things, Mænad having joy in snakes,

Over thy banks a widow<sup>8</sup> shalt thou sit

**230** And the river Tiber shall lament for thee,

His consort thee, who hast a blood-stained heart

And impious soul. Didst thou not understand

What God can do, and what he doth devise?

But thou saidst, "I'm alone, and me no one

**235** Shall sack." But now shall God, who ever is,

Thee and all thine destroy, and in that land

No longer shall thy ensign yet remain,

As of old, when the mighty God received

Thy honors. Stay, O lawless one, alone,

**240** And mixed with burning fire inhabit thou

In Hades the Tartarean lawless land.

And now again, O Egypt<sup>9</sup>, I bewail

Thy blind delusion; Memphis, first in toils,

Thou shalt be filled up with the dead; in thee

**245** The pyramids shall speak a ruthless sound.

O Python<sup>10</sup>, who wast justly called of old

The double city, be for ages silent,

So that thou mayest cease from wickedness.

Reckless in evils, treasury of toils,

**250** Much-wailing Mænad<sup>11</sup>, suffering, dire ills,

Much-weeping, thou a widow shalt remain

Through all time. Thou didst full of years become

While thou alone wast ruling o'er the world;

But when the white dress<sup>12</sup> Barea round herself

**255** Shall put on over that which is defiled,

Would that I neither were nor had been born

O Thebes<sup>13</sup>, where is thy great strength? A fierce

<sup>7</sup> 223, 224. Cited by Clement of Alex., *Pæd.*, ii, 10 [G., 8, 616]

<sup>8</sup> 229. *Widow.*--Comp. Lam. i, 1

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<sup>9</sup>242. *Again, O Egypt.*--Comp. lines 74-100

<sup>10</sup> 246. *Python.*--This name seems to be here applied to Memphis as a symbolical name, equivalent to "oracle city," in allusion to the famous Delphic oracle in Greece

<sup>11</sup> 250. *Mænad.*--A raving priestess of Bacchus, Comp. lines 77 and 228.

<sup>12</sup> 254. *White dress.*--According to Alexandre, the nomad population of Barca, in the northern part of Africa, were wont to put on a white garment over their sunburned and filthy bodies when about to go into battle.

<sup>13</sup> 257. *Thebes.*--The ancient and famous capital of Upper Egypt, as Memphis was of Lower. The *fierce man* of this line and the *mighty man*, of line 264 are both understood  
45

man

Shall slay the people; but thou, wretched one,  
Grasping thy dusky dress shalt wail alone,  
**260** And thou shalt make atonement for all things  
Which thou aforetime with a shameless soul  
Didst perpetrate. They also shall behold  
A mourning on account of lawless deeds.  
And a mighty man of the Ethiopians  
**265** Shall overthrow Syene; by their might  
Shall swarthy Indians occupy Teuchairai.  
Pentapolis, a man of mighty, strength  
Shall burn thee whole. All-tearful Libya,  
Who shall explain thy follies? And Cyrene,  
**270** Of mortals who shall pitiably weep  
For thee? Thou shalt not even to the time  
Of thy destruction cease thy hateful wail.  
Among<sup>2</sup> the Britons and among the Gauls,  
Rich in gold, Ocean shall be roaring loud  
**275** Filled with much blood; for evil things  
Did they unto God's children, when a king  
Of the Sidonians, a Phoenician, led  
A mighty Gallic host from Syria;  
And he shall slaughter thee, thyself, Ravenna,  
**280** And unto slaughter shall he lead the way.  
O Indians and great-hearted Ethiops,  
Together<sup>3</sup> fear; for when with these the course  
Of Capricorn and Taurus in the Twins  
Shall wind about the middle of the heaven,  
**285** Virgo then rising, and about his front  
Fastening a belt the sun shall lead all heaven,  
There shall be moving downwards to the earth  
A mighty conflagration high in air,

by Alexandre to refer to antichrist, but it is better perhaps to understand this whole passage as apocalyptic in the broad, general way, and so no particular person known in history need be supposed

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<sup>1</sup> 266. *Teucheira*.--Doubtful reading

<sup>2</sup> 273-280. In these verses the Sibyl foretells punishment on the Britons and Gauls, who are supposed to have furnished soldiers for the legions led by Vespasian against the Jews. These last are to be understood by "God's children" in line 276. The Phoenician king is Vespasian, who led his forces out of Ptolemais in Syria to carry the war into Galilee. See Josephus, *Mars*, iii, vi, 2, 3, and Tacitus, *Hist.*, iv, 39; v, 1. Ravenna, the great naval station of the Romans on the Adriatic, comes in for its share of the curse, for it was a chief city of Cisalpine Gaul, and was naturally associated with the military operations of Rome in the time of the Cæsars

<sup>3</sup> 282-291. Comp. the war of the constellations in lines 690-711 below

And a new nature in the warlike stars,

**290** 'so that the whole land of the Ethiops  
Shall perish in the midst of fire and groans.

And weep thou, Corinth, the destruction sad  
Which is ill thee; for when with pliant threads  
The Fates<sup>4</sup> three sisters, spinning shall aloft

**295** Lead him who flees<sup>5</sup> by guile against the voice  
Of the isthmus, until all shall look at him

Who once cut out the rock with ductile brass,  
He also shall destroy and smite thy land,  
As it hath been appointed. For to him

**300** God gave strength to accomplish that which could  
No earlier of all the kings together.

And first with sickle cleaving off the roots  
From three heads<sup>6</sup> he shall give food in excess  
To others, so that kings unclean shall eat

**305** The flesh of parents. For unto all men  
Slaughter and terrors are laid up in store  
because of the great city<sup>7</sup> and just people  
Saved through all time, whom Providence held high.

O<sup>8</sup> thou unstable one and ill-advised,

**310** By evil fates surrounded, for mankind  
Both a beginning and great end of toil,--  
Of suffering creation and of part  
Restored again,--thou leader insolent

Of evils, and for men a great curse, who  
**315** Of mortals wished for thee? Who has not been  
Embittered from within? Cast down ill thee  
A king his honored life lost. Evilly

Hast thou disposed all things and washed away  
All that is fair, and by thee have been changed

**320** The world's fair folds. In strife with us perhaps  
Thou hast brought forward these unstable things;  
And how dost thou say, "I will thee persuade,"

## Sibylline Oracles

And "If in any thing thou blame me, speak?"

There was once among men the sun's bright light

<sup>4</sup> 294. *Fates*.--These, according to popular mythology, were three sisters, named Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, who are continually spinning out the destiny of mortals. Clotho, it was said, held the distaff, Lachesis spun out the thread of existence, and Atropos cut it off

<sup>5</sup> 295. *Him who sees*.--The reference seems to be to Nero and his cleaving the isthmus (comp. lines 45 and 188). His return from the East as antichrist was a superstitious apprehension prevalent for some time after his death.

<sup>6</sup> 303. *Three heads*.--Comp. Dan. vii, 8, 24; 2 Esdras xi, 23; xii, 22. Hippolytus, de Christo et Antichristo, lii [G., 10, 772].

<sup>7</sup> 307. *City ... people*.--Jerusalem and the Jews

<sup>8</sup> 309-334. A prophetic curse against Rome as the greatest source of misery to men

46

**325** The prophets' common ray being spread abroad;

Speech dripping honey, fair drink for all men,

Appeared and grew, and day arose on all.

Because of this, thou narrow-minded one

Leader of greatest evils, both a sword

**330** And grief shall come in that day. For mankind

Both a beginning and great end of toil,--

Of suffering creation and of part

Restored again,--hear, O thou curse of men,

The bitter oracle intolerable.

**335** But when the Persian land<sup>1</sup> shall keep away

From war and plague and groaning, in that day

A race divine of blessed heavenly Jews<sup>2</sup>

Shall offer prayers<sup>3</sup>, who shall dwell round about

God's city in mid portions of the land,

**340** And even as far as Joppa building round

A great wall they shall carry it aloft

Unto the gloomy clouds. No more shall trump

Sound battle--din nor by a foe's mad hands

Shall they be cut off; but they shall set up

**345** Their trophies for an age of evil men.

And<sup>4</sup> one shall come again from heaven, a man

Preeminent, whose hands on fruitful tree

By far the noblest of the Hebrews stretched,

Who at one time did make the sun stand still

**350** When he spoke with fair word and holy lips,

No longer vex thy soul within thy breast

By reason of the sword, rich child of God,

Flower longed for by him only, goodly light

And noble branch, a scion much beloved,

**355** Pleasant Judea, city beautiful,

Inspired by hymns. No more shall unclean foot

<sup>1</sup> 335. *Persian land*.--All western Asia, which the Roman

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and other wars destructive to the Jews had long ravaged, and which was also often visited with pestilence. In the midst of this land, namely, at Jerusalem, the re-stored Jewish race, according to the Sibyl, are to dwell in peace and glory

<sup>2</sup>337. *Heavenly Jews*.--This line is cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 20 [L., 6, 516].

<sup>3</sup>338. *Shall offer prayer*.--This reading, {Grk *eu?ksetai*}, as in book xiii, 206 (Greek text, 153), Rzach now prefers to the {Grk *e?ssetai*} of the MSS., and his own former conjecture of {Grk *a?rgh'setai*}, shall he raised up <sup>4</sup>346-350. In this passage the Messiah is conceived as both Moses and Joshua coming down out of the heavens. The allusions are to Moses stretching out his hands with the wonder-working rod (comp. Exod. vii, 17-20, and xvii, 9-12), the rod that put forth buds and fruit (Num. xvii, 8), and Joshua commanding the sun to stand still (Josh. x, 12)

Of Greeks keep revel round about thy land,  
Who held within their breast a lawless mind;  
But thee shall glorious children honor much  
**360** [And be expert in songs and holy tongues],  
With sacrifices of all kinds and prayers  
Honored of God. All who endure the toils  
Of small affliction and the just shall have  
More that is altogether beautiful;  
**365** But the wicked, who to heaven sent lawless  
speech,  
Shall cease their speaking one against another,  
And hide themselves until the world be changed.  
And there shall be a rain of gleaming fire  
From the clouds; and no more shall mortals reap  
**370** The fair corn from the earth; all things unsown  
And unplowed, until mortal men shall know  
The Lord of all things, the immortal God  
Always existing, and no more revere  
Mortal things, neither dogs nor vultures' nests,  
**375** And what things Egypt taught to magnify  
With dumb mouths and dull lips. But all these things  
The holy land of the only pious men  
Shall bring forth, from the honey-dripping rock  
A stream and from a spring ambrosial milk  
**380** Shall flow for all the just; for in one God,  
One Father, who alone is glorious,  
Having great piety and faith they hoped.  
But why does the wise mind grant me these  
things?  
And now thee, wretched Asia, piteously  
**385** I mourn and the race of Ionians  
And Carians and Lydians rich in gold.

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Alas, alas for thee, O Sardis; and alas  
For Trallis much beloved; alas, alas,  
Laodicea, city beautiful;  
**390** Thus shalt thou be by earthquakes overthrown  
And ruined, and be also changed to dust.  
And to Asia gloomy. . . .

Artemis' temple fixed at Ephesus . . .  
By chasms, and earthquakes come headlong down

**395** Sometime into the dreadful sea, is storms  
<sup>5</sup> 376-380. These lines are cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*,  
vii, 42 [L., 6, 811]; comp. Joel iii, 18.

<sup>6</sup> 383-398. The Sibyl here pronounces woe on several  
well-known provinces and cities of Asia Minor, all which  
have been repeatedly shaken by earthquakes. Especially  
interesting is the mention of the famous temple of  
Artemis (Diana) at Ephesus. Comp. Acts xix, 24-28  
47

Overwhelm ships. And<sup>1</sup> up-turned Ephesus  
Shall wail aloud, lament beside her banks,  
And for her temple search which is no more.  
And then incensed shall God the imperishable,  
**400** Who dwells on high, hurl thunderbolts from  
heaven

Down on the head of him that is impure.  
And in the place of winter there shall be  
In that day summer. And to mortal men  
Shall then be great woe; for the Thunderer  
**405** Shall utterly destroy all shameless men  
And with his thunders and with lightning-flames  
And blazing thunderbolts men of ill-will,  
And thus shall he destroy the impious ones,  
So that there shall remain upon the earth

**410** Dead bodies more in number than the sand.  
For Smyrna also, weeping her Lycurgus,  
Shall come unto the gates of Ephesus  
And she herself shall perish even more.

And foolish Cyme<sup>2</sup> with her inspired streams  
**415** Cast down by hands of godless men unjust  
And lawless, shall to heaven not so much  
As a word utter; but she shall remain  
Dead in Cymæan streams. And then shall they  
Together weep, awaiting evil things.

**420** Cyme's rough populace and shameless tribe,  
Having a sign, shall know for what they toiled.  
And then, when they shall have bewailed their land  
Reduced to ashes, by Eridanus<sup>3</sup>  
Shall Lesbos be forever overthrown.

**425** Alas, Corcyra<sup>4</sup>, city beautiful,

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Alas for thee, cease from thy revelry.  
Thou also, Hierapolis, sole land  
With riches mixed, what thou hast longed to have  
Thou shalt have, even a land of many tears,

**430** Since thou wast angry towards a land beside

<sup>1</sup> 396-398. These lines are cited by Clem. Alex., Cohort.,  
iv [G., 8, 141

<sup>2</sup> 414. *Cyme*.--Situated some fifteen miles north of  
Smyrna. Its rough populace (line 420) is said by Strabo  
(xiii, iii, 6) to have been ridiculed for their stupidity

<sup>3</sup> 423. *Eridanus*.--Usually understood as a mythical name  
of the river Po; but in this passage it is apparently  
intended as the name of a destructive sea-god. Comp.

Hesiod, *Theog.*, 338

<sup>4</sup> 425. *Corcyra*.--City on an island of the same name off  
the coast of Epirus, identical with the modern Corfu

<sup>5</sup> 427. *Hierapolis*.--Phrygia, not far from Laodicea and  
Colossæ.

Thermodon's<sup>6</sup> streams. Rock-clinging Tripolis,  
Beside the waters of Mæander, thee  
Shall by the nightly surges under shore  
God's wrath and foresight utterly destroy.

**435** Take me not, willing, to the neighboring land  
Of Phoebus; sometime shall a thunderbolt  
Dainty Miletus<sup>7</sup> from above destroy,  
Because she seized on Phoebus' crafty song  
And the wise care and prudent plan of men.

**440** Father of all, be gracious to the land  
Of Judah, well fed, fruit-abounding, great,  
In order that thy judgments we may see.

For thou, O God, in kindness didst regard  
This land first that it might appear to be

**445** Thy gracious gift unto all mortal men  
And to hold fast what God put in their charge.  
The works thrice wretched of the Thracians<sup>8</sup>

I yearn to see, and wall between two seas  
Trailed in the dust along beneath the mist,

**450** Even like a river for the swimming fish.

O wretched Hellespont, sometime a child  
Of the Assyrians<sup>9</sup> shall throw a yoke

Across thee; battle of the Thracians comes  
And shall despoil thy strength. And there shall rule

**455** Over the land of Macedonia

A king of Egypt<sup>10</sup>, and a barbarous clime  
Shall waste the strength of captains. Lydians,  
And the Galatians, and Pamphylians

With the Pisidians, all equipped for war

<sup>6</sup> 431. *Thermodon*.--River of Pontus, emptying in the  
Euxine, *Tripolis*.--Northwest of Hierapolis, on the  
Mæander



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<sup>7</sup> 437. *Miletus*.--Said to have been founded by, and named after, a son of Phoebus (that is, Apollo; see note on book iv, line 5), and hence called land of Phoebus, as in this passage. According to Strabo (book xiv, i, 6), the Milesians invoke Phoebus as the dispenser of health and healer of diseases

<sup>8</sup> 447. *Works . . . of the Thracians*.--Reference probably to the wall, mentioned in next line, built by Miltiades across the isthmus of the Thracian Chersonese. See Herodotus, book vi, 36.

<sup>9</sup> 452. *Assyrians*.--Here put for Persians, who occupied the Assyrian territory. The reference is manifestly to Xerxes, who bridged the Hellespont, as described by Herodotus, book vii, 34-36

<sup>10</sup> 456. *King of Egypt*.--Lysimachus seems to be referred to, and is thought of as being Egyptian because of his marriage with Ptolemy's daughter. The provinces of Asia Minor named in lines 457-459 were all involved in the wars of Lysimachus.

48

**460** Shall in a mass bring evil strife to pass.  
Thrice wretched Italy, then shalt remain  
All-desolate, unwept, in blooming land  
By deadly sting to perish utterly.  
And sometime high in the broad heaven above  
**465** Like thunder-roaring shall God's voice be heard.  
And the unwasting flames of the sun himself  
Shall be no more, nor shall the brilliant light  
Of the moon again be in the latest time,  
When God shall be the ruler. And dark gloom  
**470** Shall be o'er all the earth, and blinded men  
And evil beasts and woe; that day shall be  
A long time, so that men shall see that God  
Himself is Lord, the overseer of all  
In front of heaven. And then will he himself  
**475** Not pity hostile men, who sacrifice  
Their herds of lambs and sheep and calves and goats  
And bellowing golden-horned bulls, offering them  
To lifeless Hermæ<sup>1</sup> and to gods of stone.  
But let the law of wisdom be your guide  
**480** And<sup>2</sup> the glory of the righteous; lest sometime  
The imperishable God incensed destroy  
Each race of men and shameless tribe of life,  
It doth behoove them faithfully to love  
The Father, the wise God who ever is.  
**485** In the last time, at the turning of the moon,  
There shall be raging through the world a war  
And carried on with cunning, and in guile.  
And<sup>3</sup> from the limits of the earth shall come  
Fleeing and pondering sharp things in his mind,

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**490** A matricidal man who every land  
Shall overpower and over all things rule,  
And see all things more wisely than all men;  
And<sup>4</sup> that for whose sake he himself was slain  
Shall he seize forthwith. And he shall destroy

<sup>1</sup> 478. *Hermæ.*--statues surmounted with ahead of  
Hermes, the god of arts and of traffic. They were  
numerous in Athens and Rome, and many specimens are  
to be seen in the museums of Europe

<sup>2</sup> 480-484. Cited by Lactantius, *de Ira Dei*, xxiii [L., 7, 144

<sup>3</sup> 488-490. Reference to Nero, here conceived as  
returning from his flight beyond the Euphrates (see book  
iv, 156) and embodying the traits of the vile king  
described in Dan. viii, 23-25. This passage is quoted by  
Lactantius, *de Morte Persec.*, ii [L., 7, 197], and he says  
that some persons of his own time understood it of Nero,  
who was supposed to be still living in Nero distant region  
whither he had been secretly conveyed

<sup>4</sup> 493. That for which he perished, and which the  
returning Nero would again seize, was the sovereignty

**495** Many men and great tyrants and shall burn  
All of them, as none other ever did,

And he shall raise up them that are afraid  
For emulation's sake. And from the West  
Much war shall come to men, and blood shall flow

**500** Down hill till it becomes deep-eddying streams.  
And<sup>5</sup> in the plains of Macedonia

Shall wrath distil and give help from the West,  
But to the king destruction. And a wind  
Of winter then shall blow upon the earth,

**505** And the plain be filled with evil war again.  
For fire shall rain down from the heavenly plains  
On mortals, and therewith blood, water, flash  
Of lightning, murky darkness, night in heaven,

And waste in war and o'er the slaughter mist,

**510** And these together shall destroy all kings  
And noblest men. Thus shall be made to cease  
Then the destruction pitiable of war.

And no more shall one fight with swords or iron  
Or even darts, which things shall not again

**515** Be lawful. But wise people shall have peace,  
Who were left, having made proof of wickedness,  
That they might at the last be filled with joy.

Ye matricides<sup>6</sup>, leave off your impudence  
And evil-working boldness, who of old

**520** provided lawlessly lewd couch with boys,  
And placed as harlots maidens pure before  
In brothels by assault and punishment  
And by much-laboring indecency.

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For in thee mother with her child did hold  
**525** Unlawful intercourse, and daughter was  
With her own father wedded as a bride;  
And in thee kings have their ill-fated mouth  
Polluted, and in thee have wicked men  
Found couch with cattle. Be in silence hushed,  
**530** Thou wicked city all-bewailed, possessed  
Of revelry; for by thee virgin maids  
Shall care no longer for the fire divine<sup>7</sup>  
Of sacred wood that fondly nourisheth;

<sup>5</sup> 501-503. The exact import of these lines is quite  
unintelligible, except that by various concurring forces  
the Nero antichrist is to be destroyed.

<sup>6</sup> 518. *Infanticides*.--The Romans are thus addressed, as if  
they were conceived in the Sibyl's mind as so many  
Neros. Comp. line 490

<sup>7</sup> 532. *Fire divine*.--This was kept burning in the temple  
of Vesta at Rome, and attended by six virgin priestesses  
known as Vestal virgins. The safety of the city was  
believed to depend on keeping this fire ever burning  
49

Before thee was a much-loved house<sup>1</sup> of old  
**535** Extinguished, when I saw the second house  
Cast headlong down and overwhelmed with fire  
By an unholy hand, house ever flourishing,  
God's watchful temple, brought forth of his saints  
And being always indestructible,  
**540** By the soul hoped for and the body itself.  
For not without the rites of burial  
Shall one praise God out of the unseen earth,  
Nor did wise workman make a stone by them,  
Nor had he fear of gold, cheat of the world  
**545** And of souls, but the mighty Father, God  
Of all things God-inspired, did he revere  
With holy offerings and fair hecatombs.  
But now an unseen and unholy king<sup>2</sup>  
With multitude great and with men renowned  
**550** Rose into power and cast his dwelling down  
And let it go unbuilt. But he himself  
When he set foot on the immortal land  
Destroyed the ground. And such a sign no more  
Was wrought upon men, so that it appeared  
**555** That others the great city should destroy.  
For<sup>3</sup> there came from the heavenly plains a man,  
One blessed, with a scepter in his hand,  
Which God gave him, and he ruled all things well,  
And unto all the good did he restore  
**560** The riches which the earlier men had seized.  
And many cities with much fire he took

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From their foundations, and he set on fire  
The towns of mortals who before did evil,  
And<sup>4</sup> he did make that city, which God loved,  
**565** More radiant than stars and sun and moon,  
And he set order, and a holy house  
Incarnate made, pure, very fair, and formed  
In many stades a great and boundless tower  
Touching the clouds themselves and seen by all,  
**570** So that all holy and all righteous men  
Might see the glory of the eternal God,  
A sight that has been longed for. Rising sun  
And setting day hymned forth the praise of God.

<sup>1</sup> 534. *Loved house*.--The temple in Jerusalem, laid waste first by the Chaldeans (2 Kings xxv, 8-11) and a second time by the Romans under Titus

<sup>2</sup> 548. *Unholy king*.--The reference seems to be to Nero, under whom was begun the Jewish war which ended in the destruction of the temple. Comp. lines 187-209 above  
<sup>3</sup> 556-580. A Messianic passage depicting the ideal period of future glory, a golden age to come.

<sup>4</sup> 564-565. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 24 [L., 6, 809]

For there are then no longer fearful things  
**575** For wretched mortals, nor adulteries  
And lawless love of boys, nor homicide  
Nor tumult, but a righteous strife in all.  
It is the last time of the saints when God  
Accomplisheth these things, high Thunderer,  
**580** Founder of temple most magnificent.  
Alas, alas for thee, O Babylon<sup>5</sup>,  
For golden throne and golden sandal famed,  
Kingdom of many years and of the world  
Sole ruler, who wast great in olden time  
**585** And city of all cities, thou no more  
Shalt lie in golden mountains and by streams  
Of the Euphrates; thou shalt be laid low  
By rout of earthquake. But the Parthians dire  
Caused thee to stiffer all things. Hold thou fast  
**590** Thy unknown speech, impure Chaldean race;  
Ask not nor be concerned how thou shalt lead  
The Persians or how thou shalt rule the Medes;  
For on account of thy supremacy,  
Which thou hadst, sending hostages to Rome<sup>6</sup>  
**595** And serving Asia, thou that formerly  
Didst also think thyself a queen, shalt come  
Unto the judgment of antagonists,  
Because of whom thou hast suffered baneful things;  
And thou shalt give instead of crooked words  
**600** Bitter vexation to the enemies,

## Sibylline Oracles

And in the last time shall the sea be dry  
And ships no longer sail to Italy,  
And Asia the great then, all-hapless, shall  
Be water, and then Crete shall be a plain.

**605** And Cyprus shall endure great misery  
And Paphos shall bewail a dreadful fate,  
So that even Salamis, great city, shall  
Be seen to undergo great misery;  
And now the dry land shall be fruitless sand

**610** Upon the shore. And locusts not a few  
Shall utterly destroy the Cyprian land.

Looking at Tyre, doomed mortals, ye shall weep.  
<sup>5</sup>581. *Babylon*.--Here put for Ctesiphon on the Tigris, the  
metropolis of the Parthian Empire. This empire was one  
of the great powers of the East, and, after long conflict  
with the Syrian king, spread its dominion over western  
Asia, and very successfully resisted the Romans until the  
third century of our era.

<sup>6</sup>594. *Hostages to Rome*.--A little while before the  
beginning of the Christian era the Parthian king Phraates  
sent four of his sons to Rome, and the Roman writers  
speak of them as hostages to Augustus. See Rawlinson,  
*Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, chap. xiii

50

Phoenicia, dreadful wrath remains for thee,  
Until thou to a worthless ruin fall,

**615** So that even Sirens truly may lament.

In<sup>2</sup> the fifth generation, when the ruin  
Of Egypt has ceased, it shall come to pass  
That shameless kings shall be together joined,  
And races of Pamphylians shall encamp

**620** In Egypt, and in Macedonia

And in Asia and among the Libyans  
Shall in the dust be a world-maddening war  
Exceeding bloody, which the king of Rome  
And rulers of the West shall make to cease.

**625** When wintry storm shall drop down like the  
snow,

While frozen are great river and vast lakes,  
Forthwith a barbarous race shall make their way  
Into the Asian land and shall destroy  
The race of dreadful Thracians, hard to quell.

**630** And then shall mortals feeding lawlessly  
Devour their parents, being by hunger worn,  
And shall gulp down the entrails. And wild beasts  
Shall devour from all houses table-food,  
And they and birds all mortals shall devour.

**635** The ocean with dead bodies shall be filled  
From the river and be red with flesh and blood

## Sibylline Oracles

Of the foolish ones. Then thus a feebleness  
Shall be on earth, so that of men the number  
May be seen and the measure of the women,  
**640** And the dire race shall wail for myriad things  
At last when the sun sets to rise no more,  
But to remain submerged in Ocean's waves;  
For it beheld the wickedness unclean  
Of many mortals. And a moonless night  
**645** Shall be a fame around the mighty heaven,  
And no small mist shall hide the world's ravines  
A second time; then afterwards God's light  
Shall guide the good men, who sang praise to God.  
Isis<sup>3</sup>, thrice wretched goddess, thou alone  
**650** Shalt on the waters of the Nile remain,  
A Mænad out of order on the sands  
Of Acheron, and no longer shall remain  
Remembrance of thee over all the earth.

<sup>1</sup> 615. *Sirens . . . Lament.*--Terrible indeed must be a  
destruction which moves the cruel Sirens to lamentation  
<sup>2</sup> 616-624. This passage seems to refer to the series of  
wars in Europe, Asia, and Egypt which put an end to the  
Greek domination of the Orient

<sup>3</sup> 649. *Isis.*--Comp. lines 75-84 above

And also thou, Sarapis<sup>4</sup>, who art placed  
**655** On many glistening stones, a ruin vast  
Shalt thou in thrice unhappy Egypt lie.  
But those whom love of Egypt led to thee  
Shall all lament thee badly; but who put  
Imperishable reason in their breast,  
**660** And who praised God, shall know thee to be  
naught.

And sometime shall a linen-vested man,  
A priest, say: "Come, let us raise up of God  
A beautiful true temple; come, let us  
The fearful law of our forefathers change,  
**665** Because of which they did not understand  
That they were unto gods of stone and clay  
Making processions and religions rites.  
Let us turn our souls, giving praise to God  
The imperishable, who himself is Father,  
**670** The everlasting One, the Lord of all,  
The true One, the King, life-sustaining Father,  
The mighty God existing evermore."

And then shall there a great pure temple<sup>5</sup> be  
In Egypt, and the people made by God

**675** Shall into it their sacrifices bring.  
And to them God shall give life incorrupt.  
But when the Ethiopians, forsaking

## Sibylline Oracles

The shameless tribes of the Triballians<sup>6</sup>,  
Shall cultivate their Egypt, they will then  
**680** Begin their baseness, that the later things  
May all occur. For they shall overthrow  
The mighty temple of the Egyptian land;  
And God shall rain down on the earth dire wrath

<sup>4</sup> 654. *Sarapis*.--Another Egyptian deity, like Isis, and  
having many attributes of Osiris

<sup>5</sup> 673. *Temple*.--Commonly supposed to refer to the  
Jewish temple at Leontopolis in Egypt. See Josephus,  
*Wars*, vii, x, 2, 3; *Ant.*, xiii, 3. Alexandre, however,  
controverts this explanation, and maintains that this  
writer, being subsequent to the closing of the temple at  
Leontopolis and the abolishing of its worship by order of  
the Roman emperor (Josephus, *Wars*, vii, x, 4), could not  
have thus spoken of this temple, nor prophesied its  
overthrow by Ethiopians. Hence the plausible  
supposition that the entire passage about a temple in  
Egypt is a poetical amplification of the prophecy of Isa.  
xix, 18-22.

<sup>6</sup> 678. *Triballians*.--These were a powerful and savage  
tribe near the Danube in Europe (comp. book xii, 91),  
and are here strangely associated with the Ethiopians.  
But probably both names are here used symbolically, like  
Gog and Magog in book iii, 193

51

**685** And all without sense perish. And no more  
Shall there be any sparing in that land,  
Because they did not keep that which God gave.  
I saw the threatening of the shining Sun  
Among the stars, and in the lightning flash  
**690** The dire wrath of the Moon; the stars travailed  
With battle; and God gave them up to light.  
For long fire-flames rebelled against the Sun;  
Lucifer treading upon Leo's back  
Began the fight; and the Moon's double horn  
**695** Changed its shape; Capricorn smote Taurus' neck;  
And Taurus took away from Capricorn  
Returning day. Orion would no more  
Abide his yoke; the lot of Gemini  
Did Virgo change in Aries; no more shone  
**700** The Pleiades; Draco disavowed his zone;  
Down into Leo's girdle Pisces went.  
Cancer remained not, for he feared Orion;  
Scorpio down on dire Leo backwards moved;  
And from the Sun's flame Sirius slipped away;  
**705** And the strength of the mighty Shining One  
Aquarius kindled. Uranus himself  
Was roused, until he shook the warring ones;

## Sibylline Oracles

And being incensed he hurled them down on earth.  
Then swiftly smitten down upon the baths  
**710** Of Ocean they set all the earth on fire;  
And the high heaven remained without a star.

### **BOOK VI.**<sup>2</sup>

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK VI.**

Preexistence, incarnation, and baptism of the  
Son of God, **1-9**. His teaching and his miracles,  
**10-25**. Miseries in store for the guilty land, **26-**  
**32**. The blessed cross, **33-36**

**1** The great Son of the Immortal famed in song  
I from the heart proclaim, to whom a throne<sup>3</sup>,  
To be held fast the most Father gave  
Ere, he was brought forth; then was he raised up  
**5** According to flesh given, washed, at the mouth  
Of the river Jordan, which goes rushing on

<sup>1</sup> 688-711. Comp. lines 282-291 and book viii, 261. Also  
Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 16 [L., 6, 192

1. This book is scarcely entitled to a place among the  
Sibylline Oracles, or to be called a book. It is a brief  
hymn in honor of Christ and the cross, and probably of  
later date than any other portion of the present collection  
<sup>3</sup> 2-4. Comp. John xvii, 5

Trailing its gleaming billows, from the fire  
Escaping he first shall see God's sweet Spirit  
Descending with the wings of a white dove<sup>4</sup>.  
**10** And a pure flower<sup>5</sup> shall bloom, and springs be  
full.

And he shall show the ways to men, and show  
The heavenly paths, and teach all with wise  
And he shall come for judgement and persuade  
A disobedient people while he boasts

**15** Descent praiseworthy from a heavenly Sire.  
Billows shall he tread<sup>6</sup>, sickness of mankind<sup>7</sup>  
Shall he destroy, he shall raise up the dead,  
And many sufferings shall he drive away;  
And from one scrip shall be men's fill of bread,  
**20** When the house of David shall bring forth a child<sup>8</sup>;  
And in his hand the whole world, earth, heaven, sea.

And he shall flash upon the earth, as once  
The two begotten from each other's ribs<sup>9</sup>  
Saw human form appearing. It shall be  
**25** When earth shall be glad in the hope of child.

But for thee only, Sodomitic land<sup>10</sup>,  
Are<sup>11</sup> evil woes laid up; for thou thyself  
Ill-disposed didst not apprehend thy God  
Who mocks at mortal schemes; but from a thorn  
**30** Didst crown him with a crown, and fearful gall



## Sibylline Oracles

Didst mingle unto insolence and spirit.  
This shall bring evil woes about for thee.  
O<sup>12</sup> the Wood, O so blessed, upon which  
God was outstretched; the earth shall not have thee,  
**35** But thou shalt look upon a heavenly house,  
When thou, O God, shalt flash thine eye of fire.

<sup>4</sup> 9. Comp. Matt. iii, 16.

<sup>5</sup> 10. *Pure flower*.--Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 13 [L., G, 486], and comp. Isa, xi, 1, 2, where the Septuagint reads *blossom*.

<sup>6</sup> 16. *Tread*.--See Matt. xlv, 25

<sup>7</sup> 16-19. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 15 [L., 6, 494].

<sup>8</sup> 20. *Child*.--Or a plant; a shoot. Comp. Isa. xi, 1

<sup>9</sup> 23. Comp. Gen. ii, 21-23

<sup>10</sup> 26. *Sodomitic land*.--Judea, so called on account of her wickedness. Comp. Isa. i, **10**; Ezek. xvi, 48,49

<sup>11</sup> 27-31. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 18 [L., 6, 507]

<sup>12</sup> 33. Cited by Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.*, ii, 1 [G., 67, 933]  
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### BOOK VII

#### CONTENTS OF BOOK VII.

Woes of Rhodes, Delos, Cyprus, and Sicily, **1-9**. The deluge, **10-15**. Ruin of Phrygia, Ethiopia, and Egypt, **16-28**. Woe of Laodicea, **29-31**. Signs and powers of Messiah, **32-49**. The new shoot, **50-52**. Persian wars, **53-67**. Fall of Ilias, **68-72**. Doom of Colophon, Thessaly, Corinth, and Tyre, **73-86**. Coele-Syria accursed, **87-102**. Rules for sacrifice and alms giving, **103-130**. Doom of Sardinia, Mygdonia, the Celtic land, Rome, Syria, and Thebes, **131-161**. The devouring fire, **162-190**. Long night followed by a better time, **101-205**. Confession and doom of the Sibyl, **206-221**.

**1** O RHODES, thou art unhappy; for first thee,  
Thee will I mourn; and thou shalt be the first  
Of cities, and first shalt thou be destroyed,  
Bereft of men, but of the means of life  
**5** Not wholly destitute. And thou shalt sail,  
Delos, and be unstable on the water;  
Cyprus, a billow of thy gleaming sea  
Shall sometime thee destroy; thee, Sicily,  
The fire that burns within thee shall consume.

.....

**10** Nor heed God's terrible and foreign water<sup>2</sup>.

.....

Noah sole fugitive from all men came.

## Sibylline Oracles

.....

Earth shall float, hills float, and even sky shall float,  
Everything shall be water and all things  
Shall be destroyed by waters. And the winds  
**15** Shall stand still and a second age shall be.  
O Phrygia, first shalt thou flame from the crest  
Of the water; and first in impiety  
Thou shalt deny God himself, courting favor  
With false gods, which shall utterly destroy  
**20** Thee, wretched one, while many years roll round.  
The hapless Ethiopians under pain,  
Suffering things lamentable, shall by swords

<sup>1</sup>1. This book is brief and fragmentary, and mainly of  
Christian origin. Its composition may be properly  
assigned to the close of the 2nd or the early part of the  
3rd century.

<sup>2</sup>10-15. Here we have the fragment of a passage referring  
to Noah and the flood, in which the language is  
appropriated from book i, 226-240

Be smitten whilst they crouch upon the ground.  
Rich Egypt ever caring for her corn,  
**25** Which Nilus by his seven swimming streams  
Intoxicates, shall in intestine strife  
Destroy; and thence men unexpectedly  
Shall drive out Apis<sup>3</sup>, not the god for men.  
Alas, alas, Laodicea<sup>4</sup>! thou  
**30** Not ever seeing God shalt lie, bold one;  
And over thee shall dash a wave of Lycus.

.....

He himself who is born the mighty God,  
Who shall work many signs, shall through heaven  
hang  
An axles in the midst, and place for men  
**35** A mighty terror to be seen on high,  
Measuring a column with a mighty fire  
Whose drops shall slay the races of mankind  
That have dared evils. But a common Lord<sup>6</sup>  
There shall at some time be, and then shall men  
**40** Propitiate God, but shall not make an end  
Of fruitless sorrows. And through David's house  
Shall all things come to pass. For God himself  
Gave him the power and put it in his hand;  
Under his feet shall sleep his messengers,  
**45** And some shall kindle fires, and some shall make  
Rivers appear, and some shall rescue towns,  
And some shall send forth winds. But furthermore  
A grievous life shall come on many men,  
Entering their souls and changing human hearts.

## Sibylline Oracles

**50** But when a new shoot shall out of a root  
Put forth eyes, the creation, which to all  
Once gave abundant food . . . 7

.....

And it shall with the times be full. But when  
Others shall rule, a tribe of warlike Persians,  
<sup>3</sup>28. *Apis*.--The sacred bull, worshiped by the Egyptians.  
<sup>4</sup>29. *Laodicea*.--Comp. book iii, 592-595.  
<sup>5</sup>34-36. *Axle . . . column*.--This idea of a column, axle, or  
pillar, to be reared on high in connection with the final  
judgment, is peculiar to the Sibyl. Comp. book ii, 297,  
361, and 362

<sup>6</sup>38. *A common Lord*.--The Messiah, common in the  
same sense that Jude (epistle, verse 3) speaks of the  
"common salvation."

<sup>7</sup>52. The Greek text is at this point so broken as to leave  
the entire passage obscure

<sup>8</sup>54. *Warlike Persians*.--Ewald understands this term as a  
symbolical name for the incestuous Romans; but it is  
more probably a designation of the Parthians who in their  
wars with Crassus and Antony captured many of the  
Roman standards

53

**55** Bride-chambers straightway shall be terrible  
Because of lawless deeds. For her own son  
Will mother have as husband; son will be  
The ruin of his mother; and with sire  
Shall daughter lie down and shall put to sleep

**60** This foreign law. But to them afterwards  
Shall Roman Ares flash from many a spear;  
And they shall mix much land with human blood.  
But then a chief of Italy shall flee

From the force of the spear. But they shall leave

**65** Upon the land a lance inscribed with gold,  
Which as the signal ensign of their rule  
The foremost fighters carry constantly.

And it shall be, when evil and ill-starred  
Ilias<sup>1</sup> shall piteously complete for all

**70** A tomb, not marriage, then shall brides weep sore,  
Because they knew not God, but always gave  
By kettle-drums and cymbals boisterous sound.  
Consult the oracle, O Colophon<sup>2</sup>;

For a great fearful fire hangs over thee.

**75** Ill-wedded<sup>3</sup> Thessaly, the earth no more  
Shall see thee, nor thy ashes, and alone  
Escaping from the mainland thou shalt swim;  
Thus, O thou wretched one, shalt thou of war  
Be melancholy refuse, having fallen

**80** By swiftly flowing rivers and by swords.  
And thou, O wretched Corinth, shalt receive

## Sibylline Oracles

Around thyself stern Ares, hapless one,  
And ye shall perish one upon another.  
Tyre, thou, unhappy, shalt be left alone;  
**85** For, made a widow by the feebleness  
Of pious men, thou shalt be brought to naught.

Ah, Coele-Syria<sup>4</sup>, of Phoenician men  
The last hold, upon whom the briny sea  
Of Berytus<sup>5</sup> disgorging is poured forth,

**90** O wretched one, thou didst not know thy God,  
Who once in the mouth of Jordan washed himself,  
--And the Spirit spread his wings in flight towards

<sup>1</sup>69. *Ilias*.--Here apparently put for all the region round  
about ancient Ilium, or Troy, or perhaps for Perganum in  
the neighboring province

<sup>2</sup>73. Colophon.--Situating a little to the north of Ephesus, and  
the seat of an ancient oracle of Apollo (Strabo xiv, i, 27)

<sup>3</sup>75. *Ill-wedded*.--Unfortunate in the marriages of the  
inhabitants. Comp. line 67

<sup>4</sup>87. *Coele-Syria*.--That part of Syria which lies between  
the Libanus and Antilibanus mountain ranges.

<sup>5</sup>89. *Berytus*.--On the Phoenician sea-coast north of  
Zidon, the modern Beyrout. The sea of Berytus is the  
Mediterranean along this coast

him--

Who before both the earth and starry heaven  
Was, actual Word, begotten by his Father,

**95** And by the Holy Spirit donning flesh  
He quickly flew unto his Father's house.

And for him three towers<sup>6</sup> did the mighty heaven  
Establish, in which dwell God's noble guides,  
Hope, piety, and reverence much-desired,

**100** Not having in gold or in silver joy,  
But in the reverential acts of men--

Both sacrifices and most righteous thoughts.

And<sup>7</sup> thou shalt sacrifice to the immortal  
And mighty God august, not melting grains

**105** Of frankincense in fire, nor with the sword  
Slaying the shaggy-haired lamb, but with all  
Who bear thy blood take wild fowls, offer prayer,  
And fixing eyes on heaven send them away;

And thou shalt sprinkle water on pure fire

**110** Having cried: "As the Father did beget  
Thee, the Word, Father, I sent forth a bird,  
Swift messenger of words, with holy waters  
Besprinkling thy baptism, O Word, through which  
Thou didst make thyself manifest in fire."

**115** Thou shalt not shut thy door, when there shall  
come

A stranger unto thee in need to curb

## Sibylline Oracles

His hunger which comes from his poverty,  
But taking hold of that man sprinkle him  
With water and pray thrice; and to thy God  
**120** Do thou thus cry: "I do not long for wealth;  
A suppliant I once publicly received  
A suppliant; Father, thou provider, hear."  
When thou hast prayed thou shalt give unto him;  
And the man went away thereafter. . . 8.

.....

**125** Do not afflict me, holy fear of God  
And righteous, as to birth pure, unenslaved,  
Attested. . . .

Do thou, O Father, make my wretched heart

<sup>6</sup> 97. *Three towers*.--Corresponding with the three virtues named in line 99. Comp. Hermas's vision of the one tower which was explained to him as a revelation of the Church. *Hermæ Pastor*, book 1, vision iii [G., 2, 899-909].

<sup>7</sup> 103-130. This passage contains a series of precepts which are strictly neither Jewish nor Christian. Some of the precepts suggest certain doctrines of the Essenes (comp. Josephus, *Ant.*, xviii, i, 5); others bear a manifest Christian character, and lines 110-114 contain allusions to the baptism of Jesus, as lines 91 and 92 above

<sup>8</sup> 124-130. These lines are too fragmentary to yield sense  
54

Stand still; to thee have I looked, unto thee,  
**130** The undefiled, whom hands did not produce.  
Sardinia, weighty now, thou shalt be changed  
To ashes. Thou shalt be no more an isle,

When the tenth time shall come. Amid the waves  
Shall sailors seek thee when thou art no more,  
**135** And o'er thee shall kingfishers wail sad dirge.

Rugged Mygdonia<sup>1</sup>, beacon of the sea  
Hard to get out of, ages shalt thou boast  
And unto ages shalt be all destroyed  
With a hot wind, and rave with many woes.

**140** O Celtic land, on mountain range so great,  
Beyond impassable Alp, thee deep sand  
Shall altogether bury; thou shalt give  
Tribute no more, nor corn, nor pasturage;  
And thou from peoples ever far away

**145** Shalt be all-desolate, and becoming thick  
With chill ice thou shalt for an outrage pay,  
Which thou didst not perceive, unholy one.  
Stout-hearted Rome, thou to Olympus shalt  
Flash lightning after Macedonian spears;

**150** But God shall make thee utterly unknown,  
When thou wouldst to the eye seem to remain  
Much more firm. Then to thee such things I'll cry.

## Sibylline Oracles

Perishing thou shalt then cry out and boil  
In pain; a second time to thee, O Rome,  
**155** Again a second time I am to speak.  
And now for thee, O wretched Syria,  
Do I wail bitterly in pitying grief.  
O Thebans ill-advised, an evil sound  
Is over you while flutes speak out their tones;  
**160** For you shall trumpet sound an evil sound  
And ye shall see the entire land destroyed  
Alas, alas for thee, thou wretched one;  
Alas, alas thou evil-minded sea!  
Thou shalt be wholly eaten up of fire  
**165** And people with thy brine shalt thou destroy.  
For there shall be such raging fire on earth  
As flows like water, and it shall destroy  
The whole land. It shall set the hills on fire,  
Shall burn the rivers, and exhaust the springs.  
**170** The<sup>2</sup> world shall be disordered whilst mankind  
Are perishing. And then the wretched ones,  
Burned badly, shall look unto heaven inwrought  
Not with stars, but with fire. Not speedily  
<sup>1</sup>136. *Rugged Mygdonia*.--Region of Macedonia north of  
the Thermaic gulf and connecting with the peninsula of  
Chalcidice  
<sup>2</sup>170. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 16 [L., 6, 792]  
Shall they be made to perish, but dissolved  
**175** From under flesh, and burning in the spirit  
For age-long years, they shall know that God's law  
Is always hard to put to test and not  
To be deceived; and then earth, seized by force,  
Daring whatever god she did admit  
**180** Unto her altars, cheated, turned to smoke  
Through the changed air; and they shall undergo  
Much suffering who for gain shall prophesy  
Shameful things, nourishing the evil time.  
And the Hebrews who put on the shaggy skins  
**185** Of sheep shall prove false, in which race  
Obtained no portion by inheritance,  
But talking mere words over sorrows they  
Are misers, who shall change their course of life  
And not mislead the just, who through the heart  
**190** All-faithfully propitiate their God.  
But in the third lot of revolving years,  
Eighth the first<sup>3</sup>, shall another world appear.  
Night shall be all . . . long and without light.  
And then shall pass around the dreadful stench  
**195** Of brimstone, messenger of homicides,  
When they shall be by night and hunger slain.

## Sibylline Oracles

Then a pure mind shall God beget in men,  
And shall the race establish, as it was  
Aforetime; longer shall not any one  
**200** Deep furrow cut with round plow, nor two oxen  
Straight guiding dip the iron down; nor vines  
Shall be nor ears of corn; but all shall eat  
Together dewy manna with white teeth.  
And then among them God shall also be,  
**205** And he shall teach them as he has taught me,  
The sad one. For how many evil things  
I did with knowledge once, and many things  
Heedless I also wickedly performed.  
Countless my couches, but no marriage-bond  
**210** Was cared for; and I, all-unfaithful, brought  
To all a savage oath. I turned away  
Those in need and among the foremost went  
Into like glen and minded not God's word.

Therefore did fire consume me and shall gnaw;  
**215** For I shall not live always, but a time  
<sup>3</sup>192. *Eighth the first.*--That is, the eighth being the first  
of "the third lot." The Sibyl reckons all the years as  
divided into ten periods or times (line 133 above); of  
these ten times the eighth is supposed to be the first of  
the third portion; namely, the eighth, ninth, and tenth,  
during which shall take place what is written in lines  
193-205, immediately following

55

Of evil shall destroy me<sup>1</sup>, when for me  
Men shall beside the margin of the sea  
Construct a tomb, and shall slay me with stones;  
For lying with my father a dear son  
**220** Did I present him. Smite me, smite me all;  
For thus shall I live and fix eyes on heaven.

### **BOOK VIII.**<sup>2</sup>

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK VIII.**

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Lust of gain, **21-46**. Doom of Rome, **47-63**. The  
gray-haired prince, **61-83**. The three rulers, **84-  
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sixth race of Latin kings, **174-182**. Appearance of  
the Phoenix, **183-186**. Fall of Rome, **187-210**.  
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Samos, and the Persians, **211-222**. The Messianic  
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## Sibylline Oracles

**331-337.** The Messianic Saviour portrayed, **338-379.** The crucifixion, **380-410.** Entrance into Hades and resurrection, **411-429.** Exhortation to honor the Messianic king, **430-447.** Another picture of the day of doom, **448-475.** Self-declaration of the Creator through the Sibyl, **476-568.** The heavenly Ruler addressed, **569-607.** The incarnation of the Word, **608-641.** Additional Christian precepts, **642-669.**

**1** GOD'S<sup>3</sup> declarations of great wrath to come  
In the last age upon the faithless world  
I make known, prophesying to all men  
According to their cities. From the time

**5** When the great tower<sup>4</sup> fell and the tongues of men

<sup>1</sup>216. *Destroy me.*--Had Arnobius this passage in mind when he wrote: "If the Sibyl, when she was uttering her prophecies and oracular responses, and was filled with Apollo's power, had been cut down and slain by impious robbers, would Apollo have been slain in her?" *Adv. Gentes*, bk i, 62 [L., 5, 802]. Cp. the conclusion of bk ii

<sup>2</sup>1. This eighth book is remarkably fragmentary, and touches on a wide range of topics. It is obviously of Christian authorship, and contains (lines 284-330) the famous Sibylline acrostic of the name of Jesus Christ  
<sup>3</sup>1-4. Cited by Lactantius, *de Ira Dei*, xxiii [L., 7, 143].

<sup>4</sup>5. *Tower-Comp.* book iii, 119

Were parted into many languages  
Of mortals<sup>5</sup>, first was Egypt's royal power  
Established, that of Persians and of Medes  
And also of the Ethiopians

**10** And of Assyria and Babylon,  
Then the great pride of boasting Macedon,  
Then, fifth, the famous lawless kingdom last  
Of the Italians shall show many evils

Unto all mortals and shall spend the toils  
**15** Of men of every land. And it shall lead  
The untamed kings of nations to the West,  
Make laws for peoples and subject all things.  
Late do the mills of God grind the fine flour<sup>6</sup>.

Fire then shall destroy all things and give back  
**20** To fine dust the heads of the high-leaved hills  
And of all flesh. First<sup>7</sup> cause of ills to all  
Are covetousness and a lack of sense.

For there shall be love of deceitful gold  
And silver; for than these did mortals choose  
**25** Naught greater, neither light of sun nor heaven,  
Nor sea, nor broad-backed earth whence all things  
grow,

Nor God who giveth all things, of all things



## Sibylline Oracles

The Father, nor yet faith and piety  
Chose they before them. Of impiety  
**30** A fount, and of disorder forward guide,  
An instrument of wars and foe of peace  
Is lack of sense, that sets at enmity  
Parents and children. And along with gold  
Shall marriage not be honorable at all.  
**35** And the land shall have its borders and each sea  
Its watchers craftily distributed  
To all those that have gold; for ages thus  
Shall those who purpose to possess the land  
That feedeth many plunder laboring men,  
**40** In order that, procuring larger space,  
They may enslave them by a false pretense.  
And if the huge earth from the starry heaven  
Held not her throne far off there had not been  
For men an equal light, but, bought with gold,  
**45** It had belonged to rich men and God must  
For poor men have prepared another world.  
There shall come to thee sometime from above  
A heavenly stroke deserved, O haughty Rome.  
And thou shalt be the first to bend thy neck  
<sup>5</sup> 7-13. Comp. book iii, 190-195  
<sup>6</sup> 18. A proverb found also in Plutarch, *de Sera Num. Vind.*, and Sextus Empiricus, *Contra Mathem.*, i, 13  
<sup>7</sup> 21, 22. Comp. 1 Tim. vi, 10  
56  
**50** And be razed to the ground, and thee shall fire  
Destructive utterly consume, cast down  
Upon thy pavements, and thy wealth shall perish,  
And wolves and foxes dwell in thy foundations.  
And then shalt thou be wholly desolate,  
**55** As if not born. Where thy Palladium then?  
What god shall save thee, whether wrought of gold  
Or stone or brass? Or then where thy decrees  
Of senate? Where shall be the race of Rhea,  
Of Cronus, or of Zeus, and of all those  
**60** Whom<sup>1</sup> thou didst worship, demons without life,  
Images of the worn-out dead, whose tombs  
Crete the ill-starred shall hold a cause of pride,  
And honor the unconscious dead with thrones?  
But when thou shalt have had voluptuous kings  
**65** Thrice five<sup>2</sup>, enslaving the world from the east  
Unto the west, there shall be then a lord  
Gray-headed<sup>3</sup>, having name of the near sea,  
The world inspecting with a nimble foot,  
Bringing gifts, having large amount of gold  
**70** And plundering hateful silver even more,

## Sibylline Oracles

And stripping it off he shall pick it up.  
And he shall have part in all mysteries  
Of Magian shrines, display his child as god<sup>4</sup>,  
Abolish all things sacred, and disclose  
**75** The ancient mysteries of deceit to all.  
Sad then the time when he himself, sad one,  
Shall perish. And yet shall the people say:  
"Thy mighty strength, O city, shall fall down,"  
At once perceiving that the evil day  
**80** Is coming on. And, thy most piteous fate  
Foreseeing, fathers and young children then  
Shall mourn together; they alas, alas! Shall wail  
Beside the Tiber's lamentable banks.  
After him at the latest day of all  
**85** Shall three<sup>5</sup> rule, filling out a name of God  
The heavenly, of whom is the power both now  
And to all ages. One of them being old<sup>6</sup>  
The scepter long shall wield, most piteous king,  
Who in his houses shall shut up and guard  
<sup>1</sup>60-62. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, book 1, xl [L., 6, 179]  
<sup>2</sup>65. *Thrice five*.--Emperors from Julius to Hadrian; a  
round number, but inexact. Comp. the first part of bk v.  
<sup>3</sup>67. *Gray-headed*.--Hadrian. Comp. book v, 66.  
<sup>4</sup>73. *Child as god*.--Reference to the beautiful youth  
Antoninus, whom Hadrian sought to deify  
<sup>5</sup>85. *Three*.--The Antonines. See book v, 72. Name.--  
Allusion probably to the Hebrew name *Adonai*, which it  
was thought to resemble.  
<sup>6</sup>87. *One of them . . . old*.--Antoninus Pius.  
**90** All the goods of the world, in order that,  
When from the utmost limits of the earth  
That man, the matricidal fugitive<sup>7</sup>,  
Shall come again, he may bestow these things  
On all and furnish Asia with great wealth.  
**95** And then shalt thou mourn and shalt put aside  
The luster of the broad-striped purple robe  
Of thy commanders and wear mourning dress,  
O haughty queen, off spring of Latin Rome;  
The glory of that arrogance of thine  
**100** Shall be for thee no longer, nor shalt thou,  
Ill-fated, ever be raised up again,  
But shalt lie prostrate. For the glory also  
Of eagle-bearing legions shall fall low.  
Where then thy power? What allied land shall be  
**105** Subjected by thy follies lawlessly?  
For<sup>8</sup> then in all earth shall confusion be  
Of mortals, when the Almighty shall himself  
To the tribunal come to judge the souls  
Of the living and the dead and all the world.

## Sibylline Oracles

**110** And parents shall not be to children dear  
Nor children to their parents, on account  
Of their impiety and their distress  
Unlooked-for. Thine thenceforth shall gnashing be  
And scattering and conquest, and when the fall

**115** Of cities comes and yawnings of the earth.  
When a dragon charged with fire in both his eyes,<sup>9</sup>  
And with full belly shall come on the waves  
And shall afflict thy children, and there be  
Famine and war of kinsmen, near at hand

**120** Is the end of the world and the last day  
And judgment of the immortal God for them  
That are approved and chosen. And there shall  
Against the Romans first of all be wrath  
Implacable, and there, come a time

**125** Of drinking blood and wretched course of life.  
Alas, alas for thee, thou reckless land,  
Great barbarous nation; thou didst not perceive  
Whence naked and unworthy thou didst come  
To the sun's light, that to that place again

**130** Naked thou mightest withdraw and afterwards  
Come unto judgment, as unjustly judging. . . .  
With hands gigantic coming from on high  
Alone through all the world thou, shalt abide

<sup>7</sup>92. *Matricidal fugitive*.--Nero. Comp. book v, 490  
<sup>8</sup>106-109. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Ind.*, vii, 24 [L., 6, 808  
<sup>9</sup>116. Perhaps an allusion to the imagery of Rev. xii, 17;  
xiii, 1, as associated in the thought of the writer with the  
end of the world

57

Under the earth. By naphtha and asphalt

**135** And brimstone and much fire thou utterly  
Shalt disappear and shalt be burning dust  
For ages; and each one who sees shall hear  
From Hades a great mournful bellowing  
And gnashing of teeth, and thee noisily

**140** Beating with thine own hands thy godless breast.  
For all together there is equal night;  
For rich and poor; and naked from the earth  
Naked again to earth they haste away  
And cease from life when they complete their time.

**145** No slave is there, nor any lord, nor tyrant,  
Nor king, nor leader having much conceit,  
Nor speaker learned in law, nor magistrate  
Judging for money; nor do they pour out  
The blood of sacrifices in libations

**150** Upon the altars; there sounds not a drum  
Nor cymbal. . . .

## Sibylline Oracles

Nor perforated flute that has a power  
To madden mind itself, nor sound of pipe  
That bean the likeness of a crooked snake,  
**155** Nor trumpet, harsh-toned messenger of wars;  
Nor those made drunken in the lawless feasts  
Of revelry, nor in the choral dance;  
Nor sound of harp, nor harmful instrument;  
Nor strife, nor anger manifold, nor sword

**160** Is with the dead; but an eternity  
Common to all is keeper of the key  
Of the great prison before God's judgment-seat  
With<sup>2</sup> images of gold and silver and stone  
Ye are ready, that unto the bitter day

**165** Ye may come to see your first punishment,  
O Rome, and gnashing of teeth. And no more  
Shall Syrian or Greek lay down his neck  
Beneath thy servile yoke, nor foreigner,  
Nor other nation. Plundered thou shalt be

**170** And made to suffer what thou didst exact,  
And in fear wailing thou shalt give, until  
Thou pay back all things; and thou for the world  
Shalt be a triumph and reproach of all.

Then shall the sixth race<sup>3</sup> of the Latin kings  
**175** End life at last and scepters leave behind

<sup>1</sup> 142. Comp. Job. i, 21

<sup>2</sup> 163-165. Comp. book iii, 68-72.

<sup>3</sup> 174. *Sixth race*.--Referring to the Antonines, and reckoning the preceding generations as (1) the Cæsars; (2) the Flavii; (3) Nerva; (4) Trajan; and (5) Hadrian.

From the same race another king<sup>4</sup> shall reign,  
Who shall rule every land and scepters wield;  
And having full power, and by the decrees  
Of God most mighty, shall his children rule,

**180** And of unshaken children is his race;  
For thus it is decreed while time moves round,  
When there shall be of Egypt thrice five<sup>5</sup> kings.

Thereafter when the limit of the time  
Of the Phoenix<sup>6</sup> shall come round, there shall a race  
**185** Of peoples come to plunder, tribes confused,

Enemy of the Hebrews. Then shall Ares  
Go plundering Ares; and he shall himself  
Destroy the haughty threatening of the Romans.  
For Rome's power perished then while in its bloom;

**190** An ancient queen with cities dwelling round,  
No longer shall the land of fertile Rome  
Prevail, when out of Asia one shall come  
To rule with Ares<sup>7</sup>. And when he has wrought  
All these things, to the city afterwards

## Sibylline Oracles

**195** Shall he come. And three times three hundred  
And eight and forty<sup>s</sup> shalt thou make complete,  
When, taking thee by force, an ill-starred fate  
Shall come upon thee and complete thy name.

Ah me, I the thrice wretched<sup>9</sup>, shall I see

**200** Sometime that day to thee destructive, Rome,  
But to all Latins most? It honors him  
With counsels who goes, up on Trojan car  
With hidden children from the Asian land<sup>10</sup>,  
Having a fiery soul. But when he shall

<sup>4</sup>176. *Another king.*--Referring perhaps to Septemius Severus.

<sup>5</sup>182. *Thrice five.*--The same as those referred to in line 65

<sup>6</sup>184. *Phoenix.*--Fabulous Egyptian bird, said to appear once in, five hundred years. See Herod., ii, 73; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, x, 2; Clem. Rom., 1 *Cor.*, xxv [G., 1, 261-276], According to Tacitus (*Annal.*, vi, 28), the 4<sup>th</sup> appearance, of the Phoenix occurred in the reign of Tiberius

<sup>7</sup>193. *To rule with Ares.*--The matricidal fugitive of line 92, returning as antichrist. This whole passage is apocalyptic, and no exact conformity to history need be sought

<sup>8</sup>195.6. The number 948 is the numerical value of the Greek letters in the name Rome ({Grk r}=100, {Grk w}=800, {Grk m}=40, {Grk h}=8, = {Grk R<sup>w</sup>mh}). 948 years after the founding of Rome extends to about 196 of our era, and the reign of Septimius Severus

<sup>9</sup>199. *Wretched.*--Cp. bk v, 74, and the close of bk vii

<sup>10</sup>203. *From the Asian land.*--Another allusion to Nero. His ascending the Trojan car is metaphorical of his supposed coming with war chariots from the east, and all the force and fury of Ares

58

**205** Cut through the isthmus looking wistfully,  
Moving against all, passing o'er the sea,  
Then shall dark blood pursue the mighty beast.  
And a dog chased the lion which destroys

The shepherds. And then shall they take away

**210** His scepter and to Hades he shall pass.

And<sup>2</sup> unto Rhodes shall come an evil last,

But greatest, There shall also be for Thebes

An evil conquest afterwards, And Egypt

Shall perish by the wickedness of rulers,

**215** And he who, being mortal, even so

Escaped headlong destruction afterwards,

Thrice blessed was, even four times happy man.

And Rome shall be a room, and Delos dull,

And Samos sand. . . .

**220** Later again thereafter there shall come

An evil to the Persians for their pride,

And all their insolence shall come to naught.

## Sibylline Oracles

And then a holy Lord<sup>3</sup> of all the earth  
Having raised up the dead shall wield the scepter  
**225** Unto all ages. Thrice then unto Rome  
Will the Most High bring pitiable fate  
And unto all men, and by their own works  
They'll perish; but they would not be persuaded,  
Which would have been much more, to be desired.  
**230** But when forthwith there shall increase for ill  
An evil day of famine and of plague  
And of intolerable battle-din,  
Even then again the former daring lord  
Shall, having called the senate, counsel take  
**235** How he shall utterly destroy. . . .

.....

Dry land shall bloom together with the leaves  
Appearing; and the, heavenly firmament  
Shall bring to light upon the solid rock  
Rainstorm and flame, and much wind on the land,  
**240** And over all the earth a multitude  
Of poisonous sowings. But with shameless soul  
Shall they again act, fearing not the wrath  
Of<sup>4</sup> God or men, forsaking modesty,  
Longing for and greedy tyrants  
**245** And violent sinners, false, insatiate,  
Workers of evil and in nothing true,  
Destroyers of faith, on foul speech  
<sup>1</sup>208-209. Comp. book xiv, 21, 22  
<sup>2</sup>211, 222. Fragments of sentiments found in other  
books. Comp. iii, 453-455  
<sup>3</sup>223. *A holy Lord*.--The Messiah. Comp. book iii, 58  
<sup>4</sup>243-247. Comp. book i, 217-221  
In false words; they shall have no fill of wealth;  
But shamelessly will they strip off still more;  
**250** Under the rule of tyrants they shall perish.  
The<sup>5</sup> stars shall all fall forwards in the sea,  
All one by one, yet shall men see in heaven  
A brilliant cornet, sign of much distress  
About to come, of war and battle-strife.  
**255** Let me not live when the gay woman reigns,  
But then when heavenly grace shall reign within,  
And when the holy child shall crush<sup>6</sup> with bonds  
The mischievous destroyer of all men,  
Opening the depth to view, and suddenly  
**260** The wooden house<sup>7</sup> shall cover mortals round.  
But when the generation tenths<sup>8</sup> shall be  
Within the house of Hades, afterwards  
The mighty sway of one of female<sup>9</sup> sex;  
And God himself shall increase many evils

## Sibylline Oracles

**265** When she with royal honor has been crowned;  
And altogether then an impious age.

The sun obscurely looking shines by night;  
The stars shall leave the sky; and with much storm  
A hurricane shall desolate the earth;

**270** And<sup>10</sup> there shall be a rising of the dead;  
The running of the lame shall be most swift,  
The deaf shall bear, the blind shall see, and those  
That talk not shall talk, and to all  
Shall life and wealth be common. And the land

**275** Alike for all, divided not by walls  
Or<sup>11</sup> fences, shall bear more abundant fruits.  
And fountains of sweet wine and of white milk  
And honey it shall give. . . .

.....

And judgment of the immortal God (great king).

**280** But when God shall change times . . .

<sup>5</sup> 251. Comp. book ii, 251, and Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 16 [L., 6, 191, 792].

<sup>6</sup> 257. Apparent allusion to Rev. xx, 1-3.

<sup>7</sup> 260. *Wooden house.*--A coffin

<sup>8</sup> 261. *Generation tenth.*--Supposed by the Sybil to be the last. Comp. book vii, 133.

<sup>9</sup> 263. *Female.*--The woman symbolically portrayed in Rev. xvii, 1-6. Comp. book iii, 92, note.]

<sup>10</sup> 270-274. Comp. book i, 427-432.

<sup>11</sup> 276-281. Comp. book iii, 781-783, and Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 24 [L., 6, 811]. What follows between these lines and the acrostic is fragmentary. The remaining words, translated in our text, show that the general subject was that of judgment of God and the end of the world.

59

Winter producing summer<sup>1</sup>, then shall be  
Oracles (all fulfilled) . . .

But when the world has perished . . .

**Christian Acrostic concerning the last day**

**JESUS CHRIST SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR, CROSS.**

And<sup>2</sup> the earth shall perspire, when there shall be

**285** The sign of judgment. And from heaven shall come  
The King who for the ages is to be,  
Present to judge all flesh and the whole world.

Faithful and faithless mortals shall see God  
The Most High with the saints at the end of time.

**290** And of men bearing flesh he judges souls  
Upon his throne, when sometime the whole world  
Shall be a desert and a place of thorns.

And<sup>3</sup> mortals shall their idols cast away  
And all wealth. **And the searching fire shall burn**

## Sibylline Oracles

**295** Earth, heaven, and sea; and it shall burn the gates,  
Of Hades' prison. Then shall come all flesh  
Of the dead to the free light of the saints;  
But the lawless shall that fire whirl round and round.

For ages. Howsoever much one did

**300** In secret, then shall he all things declare;  
For God shall open dark breasts to the light.  
And lamentation shall there be from all  
And gnashing of teeth. Brightness of the, sun  
Shall be eclipsed and dances of the stars.

**305** He shall roll up the heaven; and of the moon  
The light shall perish. And he shall exalt  
The valleys and destroy the heights of hills,

<sup>1</sup>281. *Winter . . . summer.*--Cited in Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 16 [L., 61 792]. 282 appears in full, book xiv, 381.

<sup>2</sup> *284-330. This passage is celebrated as being an acrostic of 34 lines in the Greek text, the first letters of which lines form the title given above, namely, JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR, CROSS. It is quoted in full by Eusebius in his report of Constantine's Oration to the Assembly of the Saints, xviii [G., 20, 1288, 1289], and, excepting the 7 lines representing the word CROSS, by Augustine, de Civitate Dei, xviii, 123 [L., 41, 5791. We give in our text a faithful translation of the Greek without any attempt to transfer it into a corresponding English acrostic, but in the Appendix of this volume the reader may find several English translations which aim to reproduce the acrostic form of the original. To the picture of the day of judgment as given in this acrostic there is obvious allusion at the beginning of the famous medieval hymn:*

*Dies iræ, dies illa,  
Solvat sæclum in favilla,  
Teste David cum Sibylla.*

<sup>3</sup>293, 294. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 19 [L., 6, 798]

And height no longer shall appear remaining  
Among men. And the hills shall with the plains  
**310** Be level and no more on any sea  
Shall there be sailing. For the earth shall then  
With heat be shriveled and the dashing streams  
Shall with the fountains fall. The trump shall send<sup>4</sup>  
From heaven a very lamentable sound,

**315** Howling the loathsomeness of wretched men  
And the world's woes. And then the yawning earth<sup>5</sup>  
Shall show Tartarean chaos. And all kings  
Shall come unto the judgement seat of God.



## Sibylline Oracles

And there shall out of heaven a stream of fire  
**320** And brimstone flow. But for all mortals then  
Shall there a sign be, a distinguished seal,  
The Wood<sup>6</sup> among believers, and the horn  
Fondly desired, the life of pious men,  
But it shall be stumbling block of the world,  
**325** Giving illumination<sup>7</sup> to the elect  
By water in twelve springs; and there shall rule  
A shepherding iron rod. This one who now  
Is in acrostics which give signs of God  
Thus written openly, the Saviour is,  
**330** Immortal King, who suffered for our sake;  
Him Moses typified when he stretched out  
Holy arms, conquering Amalek by faith,  
That the people might know him to be elect  
And honorable before his Father God,  
**335** The rod of David and the very stone  
Which he indeed aid promise, and in which  
He that believes shall have eternal life.

For not in glory, but as mortal man  
Shall<sup>8</sup> he come to creation, pitiable,  
**340** Unhonored, without seemly form, to give  
Hope to the pitiable; and he will give  
Fair form to mortal flesh, and heavenly faith  
To those without faith, and he'll give fair form  
To the man who was fashioned from the first  
**345** By the holy hands of God, and whom by guile  
The serpent led astray unto the fate  
Of death to go and knowledge to receive  
Of good and evil, so that leaving God  
He serves the ways of mortals. For at first

**350** Receiving him as fellow-counsellor  
<sup>4</sup>313, 314. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 16 [L., 6, 792]  
<sup>5</sup>316-318. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 20 [L., 6, 798].  
<sup>6</sup>322. *The Wood*.--The Cross. Comp. book vi, 33-36  
<sup>7</sup>325. *Illumination*.--The grace of baptism. Comp. line  
360 below, and note on book i, 411  
<sup>8</sup>339-341. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 16 [L., 6, 498]  
60

From the beginning the Almighty said:  
"Let both of us, O Son, make mortal tribes--  
Stamping them with the impress of our image;  
I now by my hands, and thou by the Word  
**355** In after time shalt for our form provide  
That we may jointly cause it to arise."  
Keeping in mind this purpose he shall come  
To the creation, to a holy virgin  
Bringing the likeness antitypical,

## Sibylline Oracles

**360** Baptizing with water by the elders' hands,  
And by the Word accomplishing all things,  
And healing every sickness. By his word  
The winds shall he make cease, and with his foot  
Shall calm the raging sea, walking thereon  
**365** In peaceful faith. And from five loaves of bread  
And a fish of the sea live thousand men  
Shall he fill in the desert, and then taking  
All the remaining fragments for the hope  
Of peoples shall he fill twelve baskets full.  
**370** And the souls of the blessed he shall call,  
And love the pitiable, who, being mocked,  
Beaten, and whipped, shall evil do for good<sup>2</sup>  
Desiring poverty. He who perceives  
All things and sees all things and hears all things  
**375** Shall search the heart and bare it to conviction;  
For of all things is he himself the ear  
And mind and sight, and Word that maketh forms  
To whom all things submit, and he preserves  
Them that are dead and every sickness heals.  
**380** Into<sup>3</sup> the hands of lawless men, at last,  
And faithless he shall come, and they will give  
To God rude buffetings with impure hands  
And poisonous spittle with polluted mouths.  
And he to whips will openly give then  
**385** His holy back; [for he unto the world  
A holy virgin shall himself commit.]  
And silent he will be when buffeted  
Lest anyone should know whose son he is  
Or whence he came, that he may talk to the dead.  
**390** And he shall also wear a crown of thorns;  
For of thorns is the crown an ornament  
Elect, eternal. They shall pierce his side  
With a reed that they may fulfill their law;  
For of reeds shaken by another spirit  
<sup>1</sup>363-369. Comp. book i, 432-431  
<sup>2</sup>372. *Evil for good.*--Several MSS. here read *good for evil*. The sense is doubtful  
<sup>3</sup>380-386, also 387-390, are cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 18 [L., 6, 506]. 12 (279-801.)  
**395** Were nourished inclinations of the soul,  
Of anger and revenge. But when these things  
Shall be accomplished, of the which I spoke,  
Then unto him shall every law be loosed  
Which from the first by the decrees of men  
**400** Was given because of disobedient people.  
He'll spread his hands and measure<sup>4</sup> all the world.  
But gall for food and vinegar to drink

## Sibylline Oracles

They gave him; this inhospitable board  
They'll show him. But the curtain of the temples  
**405** Shall be asunder rent and in midday  
There shall be for three hours dark, monstrous night.  
For it was no more pointed out again  
How to serve secret temple and the law,  
Which had been covered with the world's displays,

### Entrance into Hades and resurrection

**410** When the Eternal came himself on earth,  
And into Hades<sup>6</sup> shall he come announcing  
Hope unto all the saints, the end of ages  
And the last day, and having fallen asleep  
The third day he shall end the lot of death;  
**415** Then from the dead departing he shall come  
To light, the first to show forth to the elect  
Beginning of resurrection, and wash off  
By means of waters of immortal spring  
Their former wickedness, that, being born  
**420** From above, they might be no more enslaved  
To the unlawful customs of the world.  
And first then openly unto his own  
Shall he as Lord in flesh be visible,  
As he before was, and in hands and feet

**425** Exhibit four marks fixed in his own limbs,

<sup>4</sup>401. *Measure*.--"In his suffering," says Lactantius, "he stretched forth his hands and measured out the world, that even then he might show that a great multitude, collected out of all languages and tribes, from the rising of the sun even to the setting, was about to come under his wings and to receive on their foreheads that great and lofty sign." *Div. Inst.*, iv, 26 [L., 6, 530].

<sup>5</sup>404-406. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 19 [L., 6, 511]

<sup>6</sup>411. *Into Hades*.--This doctrine of Christ's descent into Hades is found in the well-known clause of the Apostles' Creed, and claims for its biblical support the language of Psa. xvi, 9 (comp. Acts ii, 25-27); Rom. x, 7; Eph. iv, 8-10; 1 Pet. iii, 18-20. It is found also in Justin Martyr, *Trypho*, 72 [G., 6, 645]; Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iii, xx, 4 [G., 7, 945], and iv, xxvii, 2 [G., 7, 1058]; Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, vi, chap. vi [G., 9, 265-275]; Tertullian, *de Anima*, chaps. vii [L., 2, 657] and lv [L., 2, 742-745]; Origen, *adv. Celsus*, ii, 43 [G., 11, 864].

<sup>7</sup>414-417. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, iv, 19 [L., 6, 513]

61

Denoting<sup>1</sup> east and west and south and north;  
For of the world so many royal powers  
Shall against our Exemplar consummate  
The deed so lawless and condemnable.

**430** Daughter of Zion, holy one, rejoice<sup>2</sup>,  
Who hast suffered many things; thy king himself

## Sibylline Oracles

Mounted upon a foal is hastening on;  
Behold, meek he shall come, that he may lift  
Our slavish yoke, so grievous to be borne  
**435** Lying upon our neck, and may annul  
Our godless laws and bonds compulsory.  
Know thou thy God himself, who is God's Son;  
Him glorify and hold within thy heart,  
From thy soul love him and extol his name.  
**440** Put off thy former friends and wash thyself  
From their blood; for he is not by thy songs  
Nor by thy prayers appeased, nor does he give  
To perishable sacrifices heed,  
Being imperishable; but present  
**445** The holy hymn of understanding mouths  
And know who this one is, and thou shalt then  
Behold the Father. . . .

.....

And<sup>4</sup> then shall all the elements of the world  
Abide in solitude, air, earth, sea, light  
**450** Of gleaming fire, and heavenly sky and night  
And all days into one shall run together  
And into outward form all-desolate.  
For from heaven shall the stars of light all fall.  
And there shall fly no longer in the air  
**455** The well-winged birds, nor stepping be on earth;  
For wild beasts shall all perish. Nor shall be  
Voices of men, nor of beasts, nor of birds.  
The world shall hear no serviceable sound,  
Being disordered; but a mighty sound  
**460** Of threatening shall the deep sea sound aloud,  
And swimming trembling creatures of the sea  
Shall all die; and no longer on the waves  
Shall sail the freighted ship. And earth shall groan  
Blood-stained by wars; and all the souls of men  
**465** Shall gnash with their teeth, [of the lawless souls  
Both by loud crying and by fear,] dissolved  
<sup>1</sup> 426. Comp. book iii, 30, note.  
<sup>2</sup> 430. *Rejoice*.--Cp. Zech. ix, 9; Matt. xxi, 6; John xii, 15  
<sup>3</sup> 433-436. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 18 [L., 6, 796]  
<sup>4</sup> 448-475. Comp. similar passage in bk ii, 243-263, and  
bk iii, 97-111; and also Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 16 [L.,  
6, 791, 792]. All these prophecies are obviously derived  
from corresponding Scripture passages  
By thirst, by famine, and by plague and murders,  
And they shall call death beautiful and death  
Shall flee away from them; for death no more  
**470** Nor night shall give them rest. And many things  
Will they in vain ask God who rules on high,

## Sibylline Oracles

And then will he his face turn openly  
Away from them. For he to erring men  
Gave in seven ages for repentance signs  
**475** By the hands of a virgin undefiled.  
All these things in my mind God himself showed  
And all that have been spoken by my mouth  
Will he accomplish; and I know the number  
Of the sands and the measures of the sea,

### Messiah's Knowledge of Tartarus and the dead

**480** I know the inmost places of the earth  
And gloomy Tartarus, I know the numbers  
Of the stars, and the trees, and all the tribes  
Of quadrupeds, and of the swimming things  
And flying birds, and of men who are now  
**485** And of those yet to be, and of the dead;  
For I myself the forms and mind of men  
Did fashion, and right reason did I give  
And knowledge taught; I who formed eyes and ears,  
Who see and hear and every thought discern,  
**490** And who within am conscious of all things,  
I am still; and hereafter will convict  
[And punishing what any mortal did  
In secret, and upon God's judgment seat  
Coming and speaking unto mortal men].  
**495** I understand the dumb man and I hear  
Him that speaks not, and how great the whole height  
From earth to heaven is, and the beginning  
And end I know, who made the heaven and earth.  
[For all things have proceeded from him, things  
**500** From the beginning to the end he knows.]

For I alone am God and other Gods  
There is not. They my image formed of wood  
Treat as divine, and shaping it by hand  
They sing their praises over idols dumb  
**505** With supplications and unholy rites.  
Forsaking the Creator they were slaves  
To lewdness. Men possessing everything  
Bestow their gifts on things which cannot aid,  
<sup>5</sup> 478. At this point the Sibyl assumes to represent God  
himself as speaking, and continues this strain to line 567,  
throwing in occasional observations of her own, as if  
forgetful of the part she holds. Lines 478, 479, and 496,  
are identical with two lines attributed to the oracle of  
Delphi by Herodotus, i, 47

<sup>6</sup> 501. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, i, 6 [L., 6, 148]  
62

As if they for my honors deemed these things  
**510** All useful, with the smell of sacrifice

## Sibylline Oracles

Filling the feast, as if for their own dead.  
For they flesh and bones full of marrow burn  
Offering on altars, and they pour out blood  
To demons, and they kindle lights to me  
**515** The giver of light, and as to a god  
That thirsts do mortals drunken pour out wine  
For nought to idols that can give no aid.  
I have no need of your burnt offerings,  
Nor your libations, nor polluted smoke,  
**520** Nor blood most hateful. For in memory  
Of kings and tyrants they will do these things  
Unto dead demons, as to heavenly beings,  
Performing service godless and destructive.  
And godless they their images call gods,  
**525** Forsaking the Creator, having faith  
That from them they derive all hope and life,  
Deaf and dumb, in the evil putting trust,  
But they are wholly ignorant of good.  
Two ways did I myself before them set,  
**530** Of life and of death<sup>1</sup>, and before them set  
Judgment to choose good life; but they themselves  
Hastened to death and to eternal fire.  
Man is my image, having upright reason.  
For him a table pure and without blood  
**535** Make ready and with good things fill it up,  
And give the hungry bread, the thirsty drink,  
And to the body that is naked clothes  
From thine own labors with unsullied hands  
Providing. Recreate the afflicted man,  
**540** And help the weary, and provide for me  
The living One a living sacrifice  
Sowing piety, that also I to thee  
Sometime may give immortal fruits, and light  
Eternal thou shalt have and fadeless life<sup>2</sup>  
**545** When I shall prove all by fire. For all things  
I shall fuse and shall pick out what is pure,  
Heaven<sup>3</sup> will I roll up and the depths of earth  
Lay open, and then will I raise the dead  
Making an end of fate and sting of death,  
**550** And afterward for judgment will I come  
Judging the manner both of pious men  
And impious; I will set ram close to ram,  
<sup>1</sup> 530. *Life and of death.*--Cp. Deut. xxx, 15, 19, and also  
the opening words of the "Teaching of the Twelve  
Apostles."  
<sup>2</sup> 546. Comp. book ii, 363; iii, 105.  
<sup>3</sup> 547-551. Cited by Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 20 [L., 6, 799].  
Shepherd to shepherd, calf to calf, for test,

## Sibylline Oracles

Close<sup>4</sup> to each other; whosoever were  
**555** Exalted, proven by trial, and who stopped  
The mouth of every one, that they themselves  
Vying with them that lead a holy life  
May likewise bring them into slavery,  
Enjoining silence, urged by love of gain,  
**560** Not proved before me, then shall all withdraw.  
No<sup>5</sup> longer henceforth shalt thou grieving say  
"Morrow shall be," nor "yesterday has been;"  
Not many days of care, nor spring, nor winter,  
Nor summer then, nor autumn, nor sunset  
**565** Nor sunrise; for a long day I will make.  
And unto ages there shall be the light  
Longed for of the great . . .  
(Christ Jesus, of ages) . . . .

.....  
.....

Thou who art self-begotten, undefiled,  
**570** True and eternal, measuring by thy power  
From heaven the fiery blast, and with rough torch  
From clashing doth the scepter keep, and calm  
The crashings of the heavy-sounding thunders,  
And driving earth into confusion dost  
**575** Hold back the rushing noises. . . .  
And the fire-blazing scourges thou dost blunt  
Of lightnings, and the vast outpour of storms  
And of autumnal hail, and chilling stroke  
Of clouds and shock of winter. For of these  
**580** Each one indeed is marked out in thy mind,  
Whatever seems good to thyself to do  
Thy Son nods his assent to, having been  
Begotten in thy bosom before all  
Creation, fellow-counselor with thee,  
**585** Former of mortals and creator of life.  
Him with the first sweet utterance of mouth  
Thou didst address: "Behold, let us make man  
In a form altogether like our own,  
And let us give him life-sustaining breath;  
**590** Him being yet mortal all things of the world  
Shall serve, and unto him formed out of clay  
We will subject all things." And thou didst speak  
These things by word, and all things came to pass  
According to thy heart; and thy command  
**595** Together all the elements obeyed,

<sup>4</sup> 554-560. The import of these lines is very obscure and uncertain.

<sup>5</sup> 561-565. Comp. book ii, 397-403

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## Sibylline Oracles

And an eternal creature was arranged  
In mortal figure, also heaven, air, fire,  
And earth and water of the sea, sun, moon,  
Chorus of stars, hills . . .

**600** Both night and day, sleeping and waking up,  
Spirit and passion, soul and understanding,  
Art, might and strength, and the wild tribes  
Of living things both swimming things and fowls,  
And of those walking, and amphibia,

**605** And those that creep and those of double nature;  
For acting in accord with his own will  
Under thy leading he arranged all things.  
But in the latest times the earth he passed,

And coming late from the virgin Mary's womb  
**610** A new light rose, and going forth from heaven  
Put on a mortal form. First then did Gabriel show  
His strong pure form; and bearing his own news  
He next addressed the maiden with his voice:

"O virgin, in thy bosom undefiled  
**615** Receive thou God." Thus speaking he inbreathed  
God's grace on the sweet maiden; and straightway  
Alarm and wonder seized her as she heard,  
And she stood trembling; and her mind was wild  
With flutter of excitement while at heart

**620** She quivered at the unlooked-for things she heard.  
But she again was gladdened and her heart  
Was cheered by the voice, and the maiden laughed  
And her cheek reddened with a sense of joy,  
And spell-bound was her heart with sense of shame.

**625** And confidence came to her. And the Word  
Flew into the womb, and in course of time  
Having become flesh and endued with life  
Was made a human form and came to be  
A boy distinguished by his virgin birth;

**630** For this was a great wonder to mankind,  
But it was no great wonder unto God  
The Father, nor was it to God the Son.  
And the glad earth received the new born babe,  
The heavenly throne laughed and the world rejoiced.

**635** And the prophetic new-appearing star  
'Was honored by the wise men, and the babe  
Born was shown in a manger unto them  
That obeyed God, and keepers of the herds,  
And goatherds and to shepherds of the lambs;

**640** And Bethlehem called by God the fatherland  
Of the Word was chosen. . . .1

1642-669. These lines, which conclude the book, are a



## Sibylline Oracles

fragment, which may have once been naturally connected

.....

.....

And in heart practice lowliness of mind  
And cruel deeds hate, and thy neighbor love  
Wholly, even as thyself; and from thy soul  
**645** Love God and do him service. Therefore we  
Sprung from the holy race of the heavenly Christ  
Are called of common blood, and we restrain  
In worship recollection of good cheer,  
And walk the paths of piety and truth.

**650** Not ever are we suffered to approach  
The inmost sanctuary of the temples,  
Nor pour libations to carved images,  
Nor honor them with prayers, nor with the smells  
Much-pleasing of flowers, nor with light of lamps,

**655** Nor yet with shining votive offerings  
Adorn them, nor with smoke of frankincense  
That sends forth flame of altars; nor do thou,  
Adding unto the sacrifice of bulls  
And taking pleasure in defilement send

**660** Blood of sheep-slaughtering outrage, thus to give  
Ransom for penalty beneath the earth;  
Nor by the smoke of flesh-consuming pyre  
And odors foul pollute the light of heaven;  
But joyful with pure minds and cheerful soul,

**665** With love abounding and with generous hands,  
With soothing psalms and songs that honor God,  
We are commanded to sing praise to thee,  
The imperishable and without deceit,  
All-father God, of understanding mind,

.....

with what now precedes by intervening lines no longer  
extant. As they now stand, they have no natural  
connection with the preceding passage, and appear  
mutilated both at beginning and end.

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### **BOOK XI.**

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK XI.**

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**1** O WORLD of men wide-scattered, and long walls,  
The cities huge and nations numberless,  
Throughout the east and west and south and north,  
Divided off by various languages

**5** And kingdoms; other things, the very worst,  
Against you I am now about to speak.

For<sup>2</sup> from the time when on the earlier men  
The flood came and the Almighty One himself  
Destroyed that race by many waters, then

**10** Brought he in yet another race of men  
Untiring; and they, setting themselves up

<sup>1</sup>1. The four following books were first published by Angelo Mai, in 1828, and in the manuscripts and in the editions of Alexandre and Rzach are numbered xi-xiv. There would seem, therefore, to have existed two other books, ix and x, which may yet come to light, as did books xi-xiv after various printed editions of the first eight books had appeared. We deem it better, therefore, to adhere to the numbering of the manuscripts and the two principal editions of the Greek text than with Friedlieb to number these later books as ix-xii. This eleventh book deals largely with matters of Egyptian history, but contains also various oracles against other nations. Its date and authorship are uncertain.

<sup>2</sup> 7-20. Comp. book, iii, 117-132

Against heaven, built to height unspeakable  
A tower; and tongues of all were loosed again;  
And on them hurled came wrath of God most high,

**15** By which the tower unutterably great  
Fell; and against each other they stirred up  
An evil strife. And then of mortal men

Was the tenth race since these things came to pass;  
And the whole earth was among foreign men

**20** And various languages distributed,  
Whose numbers I will tell and in acrostics  
Of the initial letter show the name.

## Sibylline Oracles

And first shall Egypt<sup>3</sup> royal power receive  
Preeminent and just; and then in her  
**25** Shall many-counseling men be governors;  
Moreover then a fearful man shall rule,  
Close-fighter very strong; and he shall have  
This letter<sup>4</sup> of the acrostic of his name:  
Sword shall he stretch out against pious men.  
**30** And while this one is ruler there shall be  
A fearful sign in the Egyptian land,  
Which, gladdening very greatly, shall with corn  
Souls perishing with famine then supply;  
The law-giver, himself a prisoner,  
**35** The East and offspring of Assyrian<sup>5</sup> men  
Shall nourish; and his name know thou . . .  
. . . of the measure of the number ten<sup>6</sup>.  
But when there shall come from the radiant heaven  
Ten strokes of judgment upon Egypt, then  
**40** Will I again proclaim these things to thee.  
Memphis, alas, alas for thee! alas,  
Great royal one! the Erythræan sea  
Shall thy much people utterly destroy.  
Then when the people of twelve tribes shall leave  
**45** The fruitful land of ruin by command  
Of the Immortal, the Lord God himself  
Will also give a law unto mankind.  
And<sup>7</sup> o'er the Hebrews then a mighty king  
<sup>3</sup> 23. *First* . . . *Egypt*.--Comp. book iii, 191-195, and the  
names and order of kingdoms then given with lines 57,  
80, 86, 106, 138, and 144.  
<sup>4</sup> 28. *This letter*.--Referring to the letter *Phi*, which  
begins the next line in the Greek text (in the word {Greek  
*fa'sgana* }, sword), the initial of the name Pharaoh  
<sup>5</sup> 35. Assyrian.--The Sibyl thinks of the Hebrews as  
emigrants from Assyria, or the far East. So again in line  
106 below  
<sup>6</sup> 37. Ten.--The Greek letter for ten is {Greek *I*}, the  
initial of the Greek form of the name *Joseph*  
<sup>7</sup> 48-105. The historical references in these lines are so  
uncertain that we essay no comments  
65  
Magnanimous shall rule, and have a name  
**50** Derived from sandy Egypt, Theban man  
Of doubtful native land; and Memphis he,  
Dread serpent, will show outward signs of love,  
And he will watch o'er many things in wars.  
Now the tenth kingdom being twelve times  
complete  
**55** Seven besides and even unto the tenth hundred,  
Others being altogether left behind,

## Sibylline Oracles

Then shall arise the Persian sovereignty.  
And then an evil shall befall the Jews,  
Famine and pestilence intolerable  
**60** They do not make escape from in that day.  
But when a Persian shall rule, and a son  
Of his son's son shall lay the scepter down,  
While years roll round to five fours, and to these  
A hundred more, and thou a hundred nines  
**65** Shalt finish and all things shalt thou repay;  
And then unto the Persians and the Medes  
Shalt thou be given over as a slave,  
Destroyed with blows by reason of hard fights.  
Straightway to Persians and Assyrians  
**70** And to all Egypt shall an evil come,  
And to Libya and the Ethiopians,  
And to the Carians and Pamphylians  
And to all other mortals. And he then  
Shall to the grandsons give the royal power,  
**75** Who again snatching the whole earth away  
Shall plunder races for their many spoils,  
Not having fellow-feeling. Mournful dirges  
Shall the sad Persians by the Tigris wail,  
And Egypt water many a land with tears.  
**80** And then to thee, O Median land, a man  
Of wealth abundant and of Indian birth  
Shall many evils do, till thou repay  
All things which thou, possessed of shameless soul,  
Hast done before. Alas, alas for thee,  
**85** Thou Median nation; thou shalt afterwards  
Be servant unto Ethiopian men  
Beyond the land of Meroe; wretched thou  
Shalt from the first seven and a hundred years  
Complete, and put thy neck beneath the yoke.  
**90** And then an Indian of dark countenance  
And gray hair and great soul shall afterwards  
Become lord, who shall many evils bring  
Upon the East by reason of hard fights;  
And he shall treat thee more despitefully  
**95** And shall destroy all thy men. But when he  
The twentieth and the tenth year shall be king,  
Among them, also seven and the tenth,  
Then every nation of a royal power  
Shall be mad and declare their liberty,  
**100** And during three years leave their servile blood.  
But he shall come again and every nation  
Of valiant men shall put their neck again  
Under the yoke, serve the king as before,

## Sibylline Oracles

And of its own free will again obey.

**105** There shall be great peace throughout all the world.

And then o'er the Assyrians there shall rule  
A mighty king<sup>1</sup>, a man preeminent,  
And shall persuade all to speak pleasing things,  
Which God ordained according to the law;

**110** Then all kings arrogant with pointed spears  
Timid and speechless shall before him quail,  
And him shall very powerful rulers serve  
Because of counsels of the mighty God;  
For he will carry all things in detail

**115** By reason, and all things will he subject,  
And he the temple of the mighty God  
And lovely altar will himself erect  
In his might, and will hurl the idols down;  
And gathering tribes together, both the race

**120** Of fathers and the helpless little ones,  
He shall encompass the inhabitants;  
His name shall have two hundred<sup>2</sup> for its number,  
And of the eighteenth letter show the sign.

But when for rolling decades two and five  
**125** He shall rule, going forwards towards the end  
Of his time, there shall be as many kings  
As there are tribes of men, as there are clans,  
As there are cities, and as isles and coasts,  
And fields and lands that bring forth goodly fruit.

**130** But one of these shall be a mighty king<sup>3</sup>,  
A leader among men; and many kings  
Of lofty spirit shall submit to him,  
And to his sons and grandsons opulent  
Give portions on account of royal power.

**135** Decades of decades<sup>4</sup>, eight ones upon these  
Of years shall they rule, and at last shall end.  
But when with cruel Ares there shall come

<sup>1</sup>107. *Mighty king*.--Reference to Solomon

<sup>2</sup>122. *Two hundred*.--Represented by *Sigma*, the 18th letter of the Greek alphabet, and initial of Solomon

<sup>3</sup>130. *Mighty king*.--Probable reference to Cyrus

<sup>4</sup>135. *Decades of decades*.--If we take this to mean twice ten decades, and add eight more, we have 208, a near approximation of the duration of the Persian monarchy

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A powerful wild beast<sup>1</sup>, even then for thee,  
O queenly land, shall wrath spring forth again.

**140** Alas, alas for thee, then Persian land;  
What an outpouring of the blood of men  
Shalt thou receive when that stronger-minded man

## Sibylline Oracles

Comes to thee; then I'll shout these things again.

But when Italian soil shall generate,

**145** Great wonder unto mortals, there shall be

Moans<sup>2</sup> of young children by a fountain pure,

In shady cavern off spring of wild beast

That feeds on sheep, who unto manhood grown

Shall upon seven strong hills with reckless soul

**150** Hurl many headlong down, in numbers both

Having a hundred<sup>3</sup>, and their names shall show

A great sign<sup>4</sup> to them that are yet to be;

And they shall build upon the seven hills

Strong walls and wage around them grievous war.

**155** And then again shall there be growing up

Revolt of men around thee, then great land

Of fine ears, high-souled Egypt; but again

I'll cry these things. And yet then shalt receive

A great stroke in thy houses; and again

**160** Shall there be a revolt of thine own men.

Now over thee, O wretched Phrygia,

I weep in pity; for to thee from Greece,

Tamer of horses, there shall conquest come

And war and plague by reason of hard fights.

**165** Ilium<sup>5</sup>, I pity thee; for there shall come

From Sparta an Erinys to thy halls

Mixed with a deadly sting; and most of all

Shall she bring thee toils, troubles, groans, and wails,

When well-skilled men the battle shall begin,

**170** By far the noblest heroes of the Greeks

Who are to Ares dear. And one of these

Shall be a strong brave king; of foulest deeds

He for his brother's sake will go in quest.

And they shall overthrow the famous walls

**175** Of Phrygian Troy; when of the rolling years

Twice five shall be filled with the bloody deeds

Of savage war, a wooden artifice

<sup>1</sup>138. *Wild beast*.--Reference to Alexander the Great

<sup>2</sup>146-148. Comp. book v, 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup>151. *A hundred*.--Represented by the Greek letter {Greek R}, initial of Romulus and Remus

<sup>4</sup>152. *Great signs*.--probably in the thought that the first letter of these names is also the initial of Rome, the eternal city, the symbol of power

<sup>5</sup>165. Comp. book iii, 516. The lines following rehearse the story of Troy

Shall sudden cover men, and on thy knees

Thou shalt receive this, not perceiving it

**180** To be an ambush pregnant with the Greeks,

O cause of grievous woe. Alas, alas,

## Sibylline Oracles

How much in one night Hades shall receive,  
And what spoils of the old man weeping much  
Shall he bear off! But with those yet to come  
**185** Shall be undying fame. And the great king<sup>6</sup>,  
A hero sprung from Zeus, shall have his name  
Of the first letter of the alphabet;  
Homewards shall he in order go. And then  
Shall he fall by a treacherous woman's hand.  
**190** And there shall rule a child<sup>7</sup> sprung from the  
race

And the blood of Assaracus, renowned  
Of heroes, both a strong and valiant man.  
And he shall come out of the mighty fire  
Of ravaged Troy, fleeing from fatherland  
**195** By reason of the fearful toil of war;  
Bearing his aged father on his shoulders  
And also holding his son by the hand  
He shall perform a pious work of law,  
Who, looking cautiously about him, cleft  
**200** The onset of the fire of burning Troy,  
And hurrying through the multitude in dread  
He shall pass over land and fearful sea.  
And he shall have a trisyllabic name,  
For the beginning of the alphabet  
**205** Points out this highest man as not unknown.  
And then a city for the powerful Latins  
He will raise up. And in his fifteenth year,  
Destroyed by waters<sup>8</sup> in the depths of sea,  
Shall he lay hold on the event of death.  
**210** But him though dead the nations of mankind  
Shall not forget; for his race over all  
Shall rule hereafter even to Euphrates  
And river Tigris, throughout the mid land  
Of the Assyrians, where the Parthians  
**215** Extended. For those who are yet to come  
It shall be, when all these things come to pass.  
And there shall be an old man<sup>9</sup>, minstrel wise,  
Whom all shall among mortals call most wise,  
By whose good understanding the whole world  
<sup>6</sup> 185. *Great king.*--Agamemnon, who on his return was  
slain by his wife, Clytemnestra  
<sup>7</sup> 190. *Child.*--Æneas. Comp. book v, 10-12  
<sup>8</sup> 208. *Destroyed by waters.*--According to one tradition,  
Æneas was drowned in the river Numicus  
<sup>9</sup> 217. *Old man.*--Homer. Comp. book iii, 523-541  
67  
**220** Shall be instructed; for his chapters he  
According to their power of thoughts will write.

## Sibylline Oracles

And wisely will he write most marvelous things,  
At times appropriating words of mine  
Measures and verses; for he shall the first  
**225** My books unfold and after these things bide them  
And unto men bring them to light no more  
Until the end of baneful death and life.  
But when forthwith these things have been fulfilled  
Which I spoke, yet again the Greeks shall fight  
**230** With one another; and Assyrians,  
Arabians and the quiver-bearing Medes,  
And Persians and Sicilians shall rise up,  
And Lydians, Thracians and Bithynians,  
And they who dwell in the land of fair corn  
**235** Beside the streams of Nile; and among all  
Will God the imperishable put at once  
Confusion. But exceeding terribly  
Shall an Assyrian<sup>1</sup> base-born fiery man  
Come suddenly, possessed of beastly soul,  
**240** And looking cautiously about him cut  
Through every isthmus, going against all,  
And sailing o'er the sea. Then, faithless Greece,  
To thee shall happen very many things.  
Alas, alas for thee, O wretched Greece,  
**245** How many things thou art obliged to wail!  
And during seven and eighty rolling years  
Thou shalt the miserable refuse be  
Of fearful battle among all the tribes.  
Then shall a Macedonian<sup>2</sup> man again  
**250** Bring forth for Hellas woe and shall destroy  
All Thrace, and toil of Ares on the isles  
And coasts and the war-loving Triballi.

.....

.....

He shall among the foremost fighters be,  
And he shall share that name which shows the sign  
**255** Of numbers ten times fifty. And short-lived  
Shall he be; but behind him he shall leave  
The greatest kingdom on the boundless earth.  
But by base spearman<sup>3</sup> he himself shall fall

<sup>1</sup> 238. *Assyrian*.--Probably referring to Xerxes. The epithet *Assyrian* seems to have a broad and loose significance with this writer, who in line 106 above calls Solomon an Assyrian. Comp. also line 35

<sup>2</sup> 249. *Macedonian*.--Philip of Macedon, whose initial, Phi (Greek *F*), stands in the Greek numerals for 500.

<sup>3</sup> 258. *Base spearman*.--Pausanias, one of the royal guards, who assassinated Philip on his way to the theater. While thought to live in quiet<sup>4</sup> as none else.



## Sibylline Oracles

**260** And afterwards shall a great-hearted child  
Of this one rule, beginning with his name  
The alphabet; but his race shall pass out.

Not<sup>5</sup> of Zeus, not of Amnion shall they call  
This one true son, yet still a bastard son

**265** Of Cronos as they all imagine him.

And cities he of many mortal men  
Shall plunder; and for Europe shall shoot up  
The greatest sore. And also terribly  
Will he abuse the city Babylon,

**270** And every land the sun looks down upon,  
And he alone shall sail both east and west.

Alas, alas for thee, O Babylon,

Thou shalt serve triumphs, who wast called a queen;  
Down upon Asia Ares comes, he comes

**275** Surely and shall thy many children slay.

And then shalt thou send forth thy royal man  
Named by the number four<sup>6</sup>, expert with spear  
Among the mighty warriors, terrible,

Shooting with bow and arrow. And then famine

**280** And war shall hold possession of the midst  
Of the Cilicians and Assyrians;

But kings of lofty spirit shall embrace  
The dreadful state of heart-consuming strife.

But do thou, fleeing, leave the former king,

**285** Be neither willing to remain nor fear

To be unhappy; for on thee shall come

A dreadful lion, a flesh-eating beast,

Wild, strange to justice, wearing on his shoulders

A mantle. Flee the thunder-smiting man.

**290** And Asia all shall bear an evil yoke,

And many a murder shall the wet earth drink.

But when a mighty city prosperous

Ares of Pella shall in Egypt found,

And it shall be named from him, fate and death,

**295** By his companions treacherously betrayed

.....

.....

For barbarous murder shall destroy this man

Around the tables when he shall have left

The Indians and shall come to Babylon.

Thereafter other kings, in a few years,

**300** Devourers of the people, arrogant

<sup>4</sup> 259. *To live in quiet.*--Conjectural reading.

<sup>5</sup> 263. Cp. book v, 8, 9. This entire picture of Alexander  
(lines 260-298) is peculiar to the writer of this book

<sup>6</sup> 277. *Four.*--Represented by *Delta* (Greek D), the initial of  
Darius (Codomannus), who was defeated by Alexander

## Sibylline Oracles

68

And faithless, shall rule each by his own tribe;  
But a great-hearted hero<sup>1</sup>, who shall glean  
All fenced Europe, from the time each land  
Shall drink the blood of all tribes, shall forthwith  
**305** Abandon life, unloosing his own fate.  
And other kings there shall be, twice four men<sup>2</sup>  
Of his race, and the same name to them all.  
And there shall be a bride of Egypt then  
Commanding and a noble city great  
**310** Of Macedonian lord, queen Alexandria,  
Famed nourisher of cities, shining fair  
She alone shall be the metropolis.  
Let Memphis then upbraid<sup>3</sup> them that command.  
And peace shall be deep throughout all the world;  
**315** Then shall the land of black soil have more fruits.  
And then there shall come evil to the Jews<sup>4</sup>,  
Nor shall they in that day make their escape  
From famine and intolerable plague;  
But the new world of black soil and fair corn,  
**320** Divine land, shall receive much-wandering men<sup>5</sup>.  
But marshy Egypt's eight<sup>6</sup> kings shall fill up  
The numbers of two hundred years and three  
And thirty. Yet shall offspring perish not  
Of all of them, but there shall issue forth  
**325** A female root<sup>7</sup>, a bane of mortal men,  
Betrayed of her kingdom. But they shall

<sup>1</sup> 302. *Hero*.--Referring most probably to Antigonus, the most famous of Alexander's immediate successors, who certainly gleaned all western Asia, if not Europe  
<sup>2</sup> 306. *Twice four men*.--The eight famous Ptolemies of Egypt, who were of Macedonian origin  
<sup>3</sup> 313. *Let Memphis then upbraid*.--Because overshadowed and superseded by the Ptolemies, who made Alexandria the sole metropolis. There is in the Greek text here a play on the word Memphis--*mephestho Memphis*  
<sup>4</sup> 316. *Evil to the Jews*.--Reference to the capture of Jerusalem by Ptolemy I, and the transportation of a great number of Jews to Egypt. See Josephus, *Ant.*, xii, 1  
<sup>5</sup> 320. *Wandering men*.--Scattered by famine and seeking a now and better country. Alexandre reads ruined men  
<sup>6</sup> 321. The period of the eight Ptolemies is commonly reckoned from Ptolemy I (Soter), B. C. 323, to Ptolemy VIII (Soter II), B. C. 81, or about 242 years.  
<sup>7</sup> 325. *Female root*.--The famous Cleopatra would seem most obviously intended, but the associated events (lines 346-354) appear to be those of the disorders and crimes of the times following the reign of the eighth Ptolemy. Hence, perhaps, this "betrayed of her kingdom" may best refer to the mother of the eighth Ptolemy (Soter II), who

## Sibylline Oracles

expelled him from Egypt and placed the crown on the head of her favorite son, Alexander.

According to their evil deeds perform  
Their wickedness thereafter, and one here  
Another there shall perish; son that wears

**330** The purple shall cut off his warlike sire,  
And he himself in turn by his own son,  
And ere he shall put forth another shoot  
He shall cease; but a root shall sprout again  
Thereafter of itself; and there shall be

**335** A race beside him growing. For a queen  
There shall be of the land by Nilus' streams  
Which comes down through seven mouths into the  
sea,

And her name very lovely shall be that  
Of the number twenty<sup>8</sup>; and she will demand

**340** Numberless things and gather up all goods  
Of gold and silver; but from her own men  
Shall treachery befall her. Then again

For thee, O dusky land, shall there be wars  
And battles and great slaughter of mankind.

**345** When many over fertile Rome shall rule,  
Examples not at all of happy men,  
But tyrants, and there be of thousands chiefs  
And of ten thousands, and the overseers  
Of popular assemblies under law,

**350** Then shall the mightiest Cæsars bear the rule  
Ill-fated all their days; and of these last<sup>9</sup>  
Shall for initial have the number ten,  
Last Cæsar stretching on the earth his limbs,

Struck by dire Ares by a hostile man,  
**355** Whom carrying in their hands the youth of Rome  
Shall bury piously, and over him

Pour out their token for his friendship's sake  
Rendering a tribute to his memory.

But when thou shalt come to an end of time  
**360** And hast completed twice three hundred years<sup>10</sup>  
And twice ten, from the time when he shall rule  
Who is thy founder, child of the wild beast,

There shall no longer a dictator be  
Ruling a measured period; but a lord  
**365** Shall become king, man equal to the gods.

<sup>8</sup> 339. *Twenty*.--The letter K, initial of the Greek form of the name Cleopatra. Here, without doubt, the last queen of Egypt, the famous daughter of Ptolemy Auletes, is intended

<sup>9</sup> 351. *Last*.--In the sense of loftiest, noblest. The Greek initial of Julius is the letter which stands for 10. Cp. bk v, 16-19

<sup>10</sup> 360. The date of the foundation of Rome is usually set B.

## Sibylline Oracles

C. 753. Both here and in bk xii, 16, the time intervening between this and the first Cæsar is said to be 620 years  
69

Then, Egypt<sup>1</sup>, know the king that comes to thee;  
And dreadful Ares of the glittering helm  
Shall surely come. For there shall be for thee,  
O widowed one, a capture afterwards;  
**370** For round the walls of thy land there shall be  
Terrible raging mischief-working wars.  
But having suffered misery in wars  
Thou, wretched, shalt thyself flee<sup>2</sup> from above  
Those lately wounded; and then to the couch  
**375** Shalt thou come to the dreadful man himself;  
The wedlock, sharing one bed, is the end.  
Alas, alas for thee, ill-wedded bride,  
Thy royal power unto the Roman king  
Shalt thou give, and thou shalt repay all things,  
**380** Which thou aforetime didst with masculine  
hands;  
Thou shalt give the whole land by way of dower  
As far as Libya and the dark-skinned men  
To the resistless man. And thou shalt be  
No more a widow, but thou shalt cohabit  
**385** With a man-eating lion terrible,  
A furious warrior. And then shalt thou be  
Unhappy and among all men unknown;  
For thou shalt leave possessed of shameless soul;  
And thee, the stately, shall the encircling tomb  
**390** Receive . . . is gone . . . living within<sup>3</sup> . . .  
Adapted at the summits, beautiful,  
Wrought curiously, and a great multitude  
Shall mourn thee and the dreadful king shall make  
A piteous lamentation over thee.  
**395** And then shall Egypt be the toiling slave  
Who many years against the Indians bears  
Her trophies; and she shall serve shamefully,  
And with the river, the fruit-bearing Nile,  
her tears, for haying gathered wealth  
**400** And store of all good things, a nourisher  
Of cities, she shall feed sheep-eating race  
Of fearful men. All, to how many beasts,  
O very wealthy Egypt, thou shalt be  
Booty and spoil, but giving peoples laws;

<sup>1</sup>366. Egypt and the queen, Cleopatra, are poetically addressed as one

<sup>2</sup>373. Here Cleopatra's flight to Julius Caesar seems to have been in the mind of the writer; and throughout this passage the Sibylline poet appears to confound events of

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different periods, part of which occurred with Antony, part with Julius Cæsar, to whom Cleopatra bore a son.  
<sup>3</sup> 390, 391. The text is so mutilated at this point as to leave the exact sentiment of the writer quite unintelligible

**405** And formerly delighting in great kings  
Thou shalt to peoples be a wretched slave  
On account of that people<sup>4</sup>, whom of old  
Piously living thou led'st to much woe  
Of toils and wailings, and didst put a plow  
**410** Upon their neck and irrigate the fields  
With mortal tears. Therefore the Lord himself,  
The imperishable God who dwells in heaven,  
Shall utterly destroy and send thee on  
To wailing; and thou shalt make recompense  
**415** For what thou didst unlawfully of old,  
And know at last that God's wrath came to thee.  
But I to Python and to Panopeus<sup>5</sup>  
Of goodly towers shall go; and then shall all  
Declare<sup>6</sup> that I am a true prophetess  
**420** Oracle-singing, yet a messenger  
With maddened soul. . . .

And when thou shalt come forward to the books  
Thou shalt not tremble, and all things to come  
And things that were ye shall know from our words;  
**425** Then none shall call the God-seized prophetess  
An oracle-singer of necessity.  
But now, Lord, end my very lovely strain,  
Driving off frenzy and real voice inspired  
And fearful madness, and give charming song.

### **BOOK XII**<sup>7</sup>.

#### **CONTENTS OF BOOK XII.**

Introduction, **1, 2**. The first Cæsars, **3-46**. The mighty warrior, **47-61**. The guileful king **62-87**. The king of wide sway, **88-100**. The dreadful and contemptible king, **101-125**. The three kings, **126-130**. The royal destroyer of pious men, **131-153**. The princes famed for filial devotion, **154-161**. The peaceful king, **162-183**. The venerable king, **184-189**. Another warrior king, **190-204**. The Celtic warrior, **205-210**. The king with the name of a sea, **211-227**. The three rulers, **228-242**. The wise and pious king, **243-270**. The king that sought to rival Hercules, **271-289**. Period of  
<sup>4</sup> 407. *That people*.--Referring to the Hebrews and their ancient Egyptian bondage

<sup>5</sup> 417. *Python . . . Panopeus*.--Shrines of Apollo in Phocis, Greece; Python is put for Delphi, and Panopeus was not far distant

<sup>6</sup> 419-429. Cp. bk iii, 1008-1016, and close of bks xii, xiii

## Sibylline Oracles

71. This book is in great part a reproduction of the material of the fifth book, and in portions, as, for example, the first fifteen lines, a direct appropriation of the language found at the beginning of that book  
70

Roman dominion, **290-303**. The twentieth king, **303-314**. The short-lived king, **315-320**. The ruler from the East, **321-328**. The wily ruler from the West, **329-344**. The youthful Cæsar, **345-354**. A time of woes, **356-368**. Only those who honor God attain happiness, **369-373**. The Sibyl's prayer, **374-382**.

**1** BUT come now, hear of me the mournful time  
Of sons of Latium; and first of all  
After the kings of Egypt were destroyed,  
And the like earth had downwards borne them all,  
**5** And after Pella's townsman, under whom  
The whole East and the rich West were cast down,  
Whom Babylon dishonored, and stretched out  
For Philip a dead body (not of Zeus,  
Of Ammon not true things were prophesied),  
**10** And after that one of the race and blood  
Of king Assaracus, who came from Troy,  
Even he who cleft the violence of fire,  
And after many lords, and after men  
To Ares dear, and after the young babes,  
**15** The children of the beast that feeds on sheep,  
And after the passing of six hundred years,  
And decades two of Rome's dictatorship,  
The very first<sup>2</sup> lord, from the western sea,  
Shall be of Rome the ruler, very strong  
**20** And warlike, the initial of whose name  
Begins the letters, and fast binding thee,  
O thou of goodly fruit, he shall be full  
Of man-destroying Ares; thou shalt pay  
The outrage which thou willing didst force on;  
For he, great soul, shall be the best in wars;  
**25** Before<sup>3</sup> him Thrace and Sicily shall crouch,  
With Memphis, Memphis cast headlong to earth  
By reason of the wickedness of rulers  
And of a woman unenslaved who falls  
Under the spear. And laws will he ordain  
**30** For peoples and put all things under him;  
Having great fame he shall wield scepter long;  
For no short time shall he last nor shall ever  
Be other greater scepter-bearing king  
**35** Than this one, o'er the Romans, not one hour,  
For God did lavish all things upon him,  
And also in the noble earth he showed

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<sup>1</sup>16. *Six hundred.*--Comp. book xi, 360

<sup>2</sup>18. *The very first.*--This differs from book v, 16-18, in making Augustus rather than Julius Cæsar the first imperial ruler

<sup>3</sup>25-30. Identical with book v, 22-27, excepting the word spear in line 29

Great marvelous seasons, and with them showed signs.

But when a radiant star<sup>4</sup> all like the sun

**40** Shall shine forth out of heaven in the mid days,

Then shall the secret Word<sup>5</sup> of the Most High

Come clothed in flesh like mortals; but with him

The might of Rome and of the illustrious Latins

Shall increase. But the mighty king himself

**45** Shall under his appointed lot expire,

Transmitting to another royal power.

But after him a man, a warrior strong,

Wearing the purple mantle on his shoulders,

Shall bear rule, and with his initial be

**50** Numbers three hundred<sup>6</sup>, and he shall destroy

The Medes and arrow-hurling Parthians;

And he himself by his power shall subvert

The high-gate city; and again shall come

Evil to Egypt and the Assyrians,

**55** And to the Colchian Heniochi<sup>7</sup>,

And to those by the waters of the Rhine,

The Germans dwelling o'er the sandy shores.

And he himself shall ravage afterwards

The high-gate city<sup>8</sup> near Eridanus

**60** Which is devising evils. And then he

Shall forthwith fall down, struck by gleaming iron.

And afterwards shall rule another man

Weaving guile, and the initial of his name

Will show the number three<sup>9</sup>; and he much gold

**65** Shall gather; and with him there shall not be

Satiety of wealth, but plundering more

Recklessly he'll put all things in the earth.

But peace shall come, and Ares shall desist

From wars; and he shall make known many things

**70** In divination of the greatest things,

Inquiring for the sake of means of life;

Yet there shall be on him the greatest sign:

From heaven down on the king while perishing

There shall flow many little drops of blood.

**75** And many lawless things will he perform,

<sup>4</sup>39. *Star.*--The star of Bethlehem. Matt. ii, 2, 9.

<sup>5</sup>41. *Word.*--The Logos, as in John i, 1

<sup>6</sup>50. *Three hundred.*--Designating Tiberius, as in book v, 30

<sup>7</sup>55. *Heniochi.*--A Sarmatian tribe, near Colchis

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8 59. *City*.--Cremona seems intended, but the writer has here apparently confused Tiberius with Vespasian, who destroyed this city by fire

9 64. *Three*.--The letter {Greek *G*}, denoting Gaius, or Caius Cæsar, commonly called Caligula, a monster of wickedness

71

And put around the neck of Romans pain  
Trusting in divination; and the heads  
Of the assembly he will also slay.  
And famine shall seize Cappadocians,  
**80** And Thracians, Macedonians, and Italians.  
And Egypt shall alone feed numerous tribes;  
And the king himself beguiling secretly  
Shall craftily destroy the virgin maid;  
But her the citizens in tearful grief  
**85** Shall bury; and against the king they all  
Holding wrath shall abuse him craftily.  
While strong Rome blossoms the strong man shall  
perish.  
And again there shall rule another lord  
Of the number of twice ten; and then shall come  
**90** Unto the Sauromatians and to Thrace  
And the Triballi, famed for hurling darts,  
Wars and sad cares; and Roman Ares shall  
Tear all in pieces. And a fearful sign  
Shall there be when this man shall rule the land  
**95** Of the Italians and Pannonians;  
And there shall be at the mid hour of day  
Dark night around them and then from the heaven  
A shower of stones; and thereupon the lord  
And vigorous judge of the Italians  
**100** Shall go in Hades' halls by his own fate.  
Again another fearful man<sup>2</sup> shall come  
And dreadful, numbering fifty; and from all  
The cities many noblest citizens  
Born to wealth he shall utterly destroy,  
**105** A dreadful serpent breathing grievous war,  
Who sometime stretching forth his hands shall make  
An end of his own race and stir all things,  
Acting the athlete, driving chariots,  
Putting to death and daring countless things;  
**110** And he shall cleave the mountain of two seas,  
And sprinkle it with gore. And out of sight  
Shall also vanish the destructive man;  
Then making himself equal unto God  
Shall he return, but God will prove him naught.  
**115** And while he rules there shall be peace profound



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And not the fears of men; and from the ocean  
Flowing, and cleaving by Ausonia,  
Shall come untrodden water; and around  
Looking with anxious care he will appoint

<sup>1</sup> 89. *Twice ten.*--Represented by *Kappa*, initial of  
Claudius (Klaudios) Comp. book v, 36

<sup>2</sup> 101-114. This description of Nero is nearly identical with that  
of book v, 39-49

**120** His very many contests for the people,  
And he himself an actor will contend  
With voice and cithara, and sing a song  
Along with harp-string; later he will flee

And leave the royal power, and perishing

**125** Illy will he repay the harm he wrought.

After<sup>3</sup> him three shall rule and two of them  
Shall have the number seventy by their names,

And in addition to these shall be one

Of the third letter; and one here, one there,

**130** Shall perish by strong Ares' sturdy hands.

Then shall a mighty ruler of men come,

Destroyer of the pious, strong-minded man,

Spear-wielding Ares, whom seven times the tenth

Shall point out clearly; he shall overthrow

**135** Phoenicia and destroy Assyria.

A sword shall come upon the sacred land

Of Solyma even to the utmost bend

Of the Tiberian sea. Alas, alas,

Phoenicia, O how much shalt thou endure,

**140** Grief-laden with thy trophies tightly bound,

And every nation shall upon thee tread.

Alas, alas, to the Assyrians

Shalt thou come and shalt see young children serve

Among unfriendly men and with the wives,

**145** And every means of life and wealth shall perish;

For on thee God's wrath causing grievous woe

Shall come, because they did not keep his law,

But served all idols with unseemly arts.

And many wars and fights and homicides,

**150** Famines, and pestilences, and confusion

Of cities shall be. But the reverend king

Of mighty soul shall at the end of life

Himself fall by a strong necessity.

Then shall two other<sup>4</sup> chief men, cherishing

**155** The memory of their father, great king, rule,

And in contending warriors glory much.

And (one) of these shall be a noble man

And lordly, whose name shall three hundred hold;

Yet he shall also fall by treachery,

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**160** Not in the warring companies stretched out,  
But struck in Rome's plain by the two-edged brass.  
And after him a powerful warlike man  
Of the letter four shall rule the mighty realm,  
Whom all men on the boundless earth shall love,

<sup>3</sup> 126-131. Comp. book v, 50-53.

<sup>4</sup> 154. *Two other.*--Titus and Domitian, who seem to be also the ones designated by three hundred and four in the lines immediately following

72

**165** And then shall there be over all the world  
A rest from war. Yet all, from west to east,  
Shall serve him willingly, not by constraint,  
And cities shall be under his control  
And of themselves be subject. For to him

**170** Shall heavenly Sabaoth much glory bring,  
The imperishable God who dwells on high.

And then shall famine waste Pannonia  
And all the Celtic land, and shall destroy  
One here, another there. And there shall be

**175** For the Assyrians, whom Orontes laves,  
Structures and ornament and what may seem  
Yet greater anywhere. And the great king  
Shall have a fondness for these and love them  
Above the others far (and there are many)<sup>1</sup>;

**180** But he himself shall in mid breast receive  
A great wound, and seized at the end of life  
Craftily, by a friend, in hallowed house  
Of the great royal hall shall he fall down  
Wounded; and after him shall be a ruler

**185** Numbering fifty<sup>2</sup>, venerable man,  
Who above measure shall destroy from Rome  
Many inhabitants and citizens;

But he shall rule few; for in Hades' halls  
For a former king's sake he shall wounded go.

**190** But then another<sup>3</sup> king, a warrior strong,  
Who has three hundred for initial sign,  
Shall bear rule and lay waste the Thracians' land  
Which is much varied, and he shall destroy  
The powerful Germans dwelling by the Rhine

**195** And the Iberians that shoot the arrow.  
Moreover, there shall be unto the Jews  
Another greatest evil, and with them  
Bedewed with murder shall Phoenicia drink;  
And the walls of the Assyrians shall fall

**200** By many warriors. And again a man  
Destroying life shall waste them utterly.  
And then shall threatenings of the mighty God,

## Sibylline Oracles

Earthquakes, and great plagues be on every land,  
Untimely snow-storms, and strong thunderbolts.

**205** And then the great king, mountain-roaming Celt,

Shall for the toil of Ares not escape

A fate unseemly, hastening eagerly

After the strife of battle, but worn out

Shall he be; foreign dust shall hide his corpse,

<sup>1</sup>179. The reading of the Greek text of this line is corrupt  
and doubtful

<sup>2</sup>185. *Fifty*.--Designating Nerva

<sup>3</sup>190. *Another*.--Trajan. Cp. lines 190-210 w bk v, 58-65

**210** But dust that of Nemea's flower has name.

And after him another<sup>4</sup> shall arise,

A silver-headed man, and of the sea

Shall be his name, and of four syllables,

Ares himself first of the alphabet

**215** Presenting. Temples he shall dedicate

In all the cities, watching o'er the world

By his own foot, and bringing gifts away,

Both gold and amber much will he supply

For many; and magicians' mysteries

**220** All will he from the sanctuaries keep;

And what is much more excellent for men

Will he place<sup>5</sup> . . . ruling . . . thunderbolt;

And great peace shall be when he shall be lord;

And he shall be a minstrel of rich voice

**225** And a participant in lawful things,

And a just minister of what is right;

But he shall fall, unloosing his own fate.

After him three<sup>6</sup> shall rule, and the third late

Shall rule, three decades keeping; yet again

**230** Of the first unit<sup>7</sup> shall another king

Bear the rule; and another after him

Shall be commander, of tens numbering sevens;

And their names shall be honored; and they shall

Themselves destroy men marked by many a spot,

**235** Britons and mighty Moors<sup>9</sup> and Dacians

And the Arabians. But<sup>10</sup> when the last

Of these shall perish, fearful Ares then,

He that before was wounded, shall again

Against the Parthians come, and utterly

**240** Shall he destroy them. And then shall the king

Himself fall by a treacherous wild beast

Training his hands--excuse itself of death.

And after him another man shall rule,

<sup>4</sup>211. *Another*.--Hadrian, Greek {Greek ?*Adriano's* }, a word  
of four syllables. Comp. book v, 65-71, and viii, 66-83

<sup>5</sup>222. *Will he place*.--Lacuna in the original text here

## Sibylline Oracles

leaves it impossible to complete the sentence, or even indicate the thought with any certainty

<sup>6</sup> 228. *Three*.--The Antonines. See book v, 72, and viii, 85

<sup>7</sup> 230. *First unit*.--A, here denoting Antoninus Pius

<sup>8</sup> 232. *Tens numbering seven*.--O, Greek initial of Verus (Greek *Ou?h~ros*)

<sup>9</sup> 235. *Moors*.--The Mauri, or Mauritians, on the NW coast of Africa

<sup>10</sup> 236-242. The statements of these lines are inexplicably obscure. Dire war was carried on with the Parthians under command of L. Verus, but the statements of lines 240-242 are not applicable to any of the Antonines, either literally or metaphorically

73

In many wise things skilled, and he shall have

**245** Himself the name of the first mighty king

Of the first unit; and he shall be good

And mighty; and for the illustrious Latins

Shall this strong one accomplish many things

In memory of his father; and forthwith

**250** Shall he adorn the walls of Rome with gold

And silver and ivory; and he shall go

Within the market places and the temples

With a strong man. And sometime direst wound

Shall shoot up like ears in the Roman wars;

**255** And he shall sack the whole land of the Germans,

When a great sign<sup>2</sup> of God shall be displayed

From heaven, and shall for the king's piety

Save men in brazen armor and distress;

For God who is in heaven and hears all things

**260** Shall wet him with unseasonable rain

When he prays. But when these things are fulfilled

Of which I spoke, then with the rolling years

Shall also the renowned dominion cease

Of the great pious king; and at the end

**265** Of his life, having then proclaimed his son<sup>3</sup>

Succeeding to the kingdom, he shall die

By his own lot and leave the royal power

Unto the ruler with the golden hair,

Who with two tens<sup>4</sup> in his name, born a king

**270** From the race of his father, shall receive

Dominion. This man with superior powers

Of mind shall grasp all things; and he shall rival

Great-hearted overweening Hercules,

And be the best in mighty arms and have

**275** The greatest fame in chase and horsemanship;

But he shall live in peril all alone.

And while this man is ruler there shall be

A fearful sign: there shall be a great mist

## Sibylline Oracles

Then in the plain of Rome, so that a man

**280** May not discern his neighbor. And then wars

<sup>1</sup>246. *First unit.*--Designating Aurelius--that is, Marcus Aurelius

<sup>2</sup>256. *Great sign.*--The marvelous thunder-storm, by aid of which the emperor and his army gained a great victory over the Quadi, and which the Romans ascribed to Jupiter Tonans, who heard Aurelius's prayer, but which the Christians of his army affirmed was in answer to their own prayers

<sup>3</sup>265. *Son.*--Commodus, who succeeded him

<sup>4</sup>269. *Two tens.*--Represented by {Greek K}, Greek initial of Commodus, specially famous for his skill with the bow and other arms, and boasting himself to be a rival of Hercules

Shall come to pass along with mournful cares,  
When the king himself, exceeding mad with love,  
And weakly, shall come in the marriage-bed  
Shaming his youthful offspring, infamous

**285** For inconsiderate wedding-songs impure.

And then, in helpless loneliness concealed,  
The mighty baneful man held under wrath  
Shall in a bath-room<sup>5</sup> suffer evil plight,  
Man-slaying Ares bound by treacherous fate.

**290** Know then the fatal lot of Rome is near  
Because of zeal for power; and by the hands  
Of Ares many in Palladian halls

Shall perish. And then Rome shall be bereft  
And shall repay all things, which she alone

**295** Before accomplished by her many wars.

My heart laments, my heart within me mourns;  
For from the time when thy first king, proud Rome,  
Gave good law to thee and to men on earth,  
And the Word of the great immortal God

**300** Came to the earth, until the nineteenth<sup>6</sup> reign  
Shall have been finished Cronos shall complete

Two<sup>7</sup> hundred years, twice twenty and twice two,  
With six months added; then the twentieth king,  
When smitten with sharp brass he with the sword

**305** Shall in thy houses pour out blood, shall make  
Thy race a widow, having in his name

The letter which the number eighty<sup>8</sup> shows,  
And burdened with old age; but he shall make  
A widow of thee in a little time,

**310** When many warriors, many overthrows,  
And murders, homicides, and deadly feuds  
And miseries of conquests there shall be,  
And in confusion many a horse and man  
Shall, cleft by force of hands, fall in the plain.

## Sibylline Oracles

**315** And then another man shall rule, and have  
The sign of his name in the number ten;  
And many sorrows shall he bring to pass,

<sup>5</sup> 288. *Bath-room*.--Commodus was assassinated by  
suffocation in a bath room

<sup>6</sup> 300. *Nineteenth*.--That is, the 19th reign reckoning from  
Augustus. Comp. line 303.

<sup>7</sup> 302. This computation is obviously erroneous, for Commodus  
was assassinated A. D. 192, to which if we add the 13 years of  
Augustus before the date of our era we have only 205 years

<sup>8</sup> 307. *Eighty*.--Represented by {Greek *P*}, initial of  
Pertinax, who was sixty-seven years old when made  
emperor and lived only eighty-seven days thereafter.

<sup>9</sup> 316. *Ten*.--{Greek *I*}, here referring to Julianus (Didius  
Julianus), who after the murder of Pertinax made the  
highest bid for the empire, but reigned only 66 days

74

And groans, and he shall plunder many men;  
But he himself shall be short-lived and fall  
**320** By mighty Ares, struck by gleaming iron.

Another, numbering fifty<sup>1</sup>, then shall come,  
A warrior roused up by the East for rule;  
A warlike Ares he shall come to Thrace;  
And he shall flee thereafter and shall come

**325** Into the land of the Bithynians  
And the Cilician plain; but brazen Ares  
The life-destroyer shall with speedy stroke  
Utterly spoil him in the Assyrian fields.

And then again there shall rule craftily  
**330** A man skilled in fraud, full of various wiles,  
Roused up by the West, and his name shall have  
The number of two hundred<sup>2</sup>. And again

Another sign: he shall contrive a war  
For royal power against Assyrian men,  
**335** Raise a whole army and subject all things.  
And he shall rule the Romans with his might;  
But there is much contrivance in his heart,  
Impulse of baleful Ares; serpent dire,  
And violent in war, who shall destroy

**340** All high-born men upon the earth, and slay  
The noble for their wealth, and, robber like,  
Stripping all earth while men are perishing,  
He shall go to the East; and all deceit  
Shall be to him . . .

.....

**345** Then shall a youthful Cæsar with him reign  
Having the name of a puissant lord  
Of Macedon, by the first letter<sup>3</sup> known;  
Bringing in broils around him he shall flee

## Sibylline Oracles

The hard deception of the coming king

**350** In the bosom of the army; but the one

Who rules by his barbaric usages,

A temple-guard<sup>4</sup>, shall perish suddenly

<sup>1</sup> 321. *Fifty*.--{Greek *N*}, designating Niger, who claimed the empire on the death of Pertinax and was supported by the East, but being repeatedly defeated by the troops of his rival, Severus, he fled for Parthia, but was overtaken and slain.

<sup>2</sup> 332. *Two hundred*.--Represented by {Greek *S*} and designating Septimius Severus

<sup>3</sup> 347. *First letter*.--Alexander Severus is denoted, his name reminding the writer of Alexander the Great of Macedon.

<sup>4</sup> 352. *Temple-guard*.--Heliogabalus (or Elagabalus) seems to be here referred to, who was in early youth trained as a priest in the Temple of the Sun at Emesa, and who, after he was made emperor, was wont to wear his  
Slain by strong Ares with the gleaming iron;  
Him even dead shall people tear in pieces.

**355** And then the kings of Persia<sup>5</sup> shall rise up;

And . . . Roman Ares Roman lord.

And Phrygia shall with earthquakes groan again

Wretched. Alas, alas, Laodicea;

Alas, alas, sad Hierapolis;

**360** For you first once the yawning earth received<sup>6</sup>.

Of Rome . . . immense Aus . . .

All things as many . . .

Shall wail . . . while men are perishing

In the hands of Ares; and the lot of men

**365** Shall be bad; but then by the eastern way

Hastening to look down upon Italy,

Stripped naked he shall fall by gleaming iron,

Acquiring hatred for his mother's sake.

For seasons are of all sorts; each holds back

**370** The other . . . gleaming and this not at once all  
know;

For all things shall not be (the lot) of all,

But only those shall be for happiness

Who honor God and shun idolatry.

And now, Lord of the world, of every realm<sup>7</sup>

**375** Unfeigned immortal King--for thou didst put

Into my heart the oracle divine--

Make thou the word cease; for I do not know

What things I say; for thou art in me he

That speaketh all these things. Now let me rest

**380** A little and put from my heart aside

The charming song; for weary is my heart

Foretelling with divine words royal power.

pontifical dress and tiara as high-priest of the sun. But he

## Sibylline Oracles

came before, not after, Alexander Severus  
5 355. *Kings of Persia*.--The dynasty of the Sassanidæ, or  
kings of the later Persian Empire, founded by Ardechir  
Babegan, commonly called Artaxerxes  
6 360. The verses which follow are so fragmentary that  
no certain meaning can be made out of them. Lines 365-  
368 appear to refer to the death of Alexander Severus  
7 374-382. Comp. conclusion of books xi and xiii  
75

### BOOK XIII<sub>1</sub>.

#### CONTENTS OF BOOK XIII.

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**1** GREAT word divine he bids me sing again--  
The immortal holy God imperishable,  
Who gives to kings their power and takes away,  
And who determined for them time both ways,  
**5** Both that of life and that of baneful death.  
And these the heavenly God enjoins on me  
Unwilling to bring tidings unto kings  
Concerning royal power. . . .

.....

.....

And spear impetuous Ares<sup>2</sup>; and by him  
**10** All perish, child and the old man who gives  
To the assemblies laws; and many wars  
And battles there shall be, and homicides,  
Famines and pestilences, earthquake-shocks  
And mighty thunderbolts, and many ways  
**15** Of the Assyrians over all the world,  
And pillaging and robbery of temples.  
And then an insurrection there shall be  
Of the industrious Persians<sup>3</sup>, and with them  
Indians, Armenians, and Arabians;



## Sibylline Oracles

<sup>1</sup>1. The 12th and 13th books are as closely connected as are the 1st and 2nd, and like them are probably the work of one author. After the words "royal power," in the eighth line, there is a noticeable defect in the text.

<sup>2</sup>9. *Impetuous Ares*.--Reference probably to Maximinus

<sup>3</sup>18. *Persians*.--The Sassanidæ, as in book xi, 356

**20** And unto these again a Roman king<sup>4</sup>

Insatiate in war and leading on

His spearmen against the Assyrians

Shall draw near, a young Ares, and as far

As the deep-flowing silvery Euphrates

**25** Shall warlike Ares stretch his deadly spear

Because of<sup>5</sup> . . .

For by his friend betrayed he shall fall down

In the ranks smitten by the gleaming iron.

And straightway coming out of Syria<sup>6</sup>

**30** There shall a purple-loving warrior rule,

Terror of Ares, and also his son<sup>7</sup>,

A Cæsar, shall even all the earth oppress;

And the one name is unto both of them:

On first and twentieth there are to be placed

**35** Five hundreds<sup>8</sup>. But when these in wars shall rule,

And laws shall be enacted, there shall be

A little rest from war, not for long time;

But<sup>9</sup> when a wolf shall to a flock of sheep

Pledge solemn oaths against the white-toothed dogs,

**40** Then, having misled, he will tear in pieces

The woolly sheep, and cast his oaths aside;

And then shall there be an unlawful strife

Of haughty kings in wars, and Syrians

Shall perish terribly, and Indians

**45** And the Armenians and Arabians,

The Persians and the Babylonians

Shall one another by hard fights destroy.

But when a Roman Ares<sup>10</sup> shall destroy

A German Ares ruinous of life

**50** Triumphant on the ocean, then is war

Of many years for haughty Persian men,

But for them there shall not be victory;

For as a fish swims not upon the point

<sup>4</sup>20. *Roman king*.--Gordian III, who defeated the Persian army under Sapor on the banks of the Chaboras, a branch of the Euphrates, and was soon afterward killed by Philippus (M. Julius Philippus), who succeeded to the empire

<sup>5</sup>26. Here the Greek text is somewhat corrupt and uncertain

<sup>6</sup>29. *Out of Syria*.--The reference is to M. Julius Philippus, who was called the Arabian because of his birth in Bostra, Syria, somewhere to the south of Damascus

<sup>7</sup>31. *his son*.--Philippus associated his son, of the same name, with him in the empire

## Sibylline Oracles

<sup>8</sup> 34, 35. The Greek letter for 500 is {Greek F}, initial of Philippus. The "one and twenty" is to be understood as denoting the initials (A=1 and K=20) of Augustus, the title assumed by the father, and Cæsar (Kaisar), the name of his son

<sup>9</sup> 38, 39. Comp. book xiv, 448, 449

<sup>10</sup> 48. *Roman Ares*.--Comp. book xii, 355, 356.

76

Of a high many-ridged and windy rock

**55** Precipitant, nor does a tortoise fly,

Nor does an eagle into water come,

So also are the Persians in that day

Far off from victory, while the fond nurse

Of the Italians<sup>1</sup>, in the plain of Nile

**60** Reposing by the sacred water's side,

Sends forth the appointed lot to seven-hilled Rome.

Now these things are; and while the name of Rome<sup>2</sup>

Shall hold in numbers of revolving time,

So many years shall the great noble city

**65** Of Macedon's lord, willing, deal out corn.

Another much-distressing pain I'll sing

For Alexandrians who are destroyed

By reason of the strife of shameful men.

Strong men who were aforesaid terrible

**70** Being then impotent shall pray for peace

By reason of the wickedness of chiefs.

And there shall come wrath of the mighty God

On the Assyrians and a mountain stream

Shall utterly destroy them, which shall come

**75** To Cæsar's city<sup>3</sup> and harm Canaanites.

The Pyramus<sup>4</sup> shall irrigate the city

Of Mopsus<sup>5</sup>; then shall the Ægæans fall

Because of strife of very mighty men.

Thee, wretched Antioch<sup>6</sup>, shall Ares strong

**80** Leave not while round thee an Assyrian war

Is pressing, for a chief of men shall dwell

Within thy houses who shall fight with all

The arrow-hurling Persians, he himself

Having obtained of Romans royal power.

**85** Now, cities of Arabians, deck yourselves

With temples and with places for the race,

And with broad markets and with splendid wealth,

With images, gold, silver, ivory;

And thou who art of all most fond of learning,

**90** Bostra<sup>7</sup> and Philippopolis, that thou may'st come

<sup>1</sup> 58, 59. *Nurse of the Italians*.--Alexandria, as

representing Egypt and source of the grain supply of Italy and the Roman world

<sup>2</sup> 62. *name of Rome*.--Comp. book viii, 195, and the note on the numerical value of the letters of the name <sup>2</sup>

## Sibylline Oracles

<sup>3</sup> 75. *Cæsar's city*.--Perhaps referring to Cæsarea Philippi

<sup>4</sup> 76. *Pyramus*.--River of Cilicia.

<sup>5</sup> 77. *Mopsus*.--More commonly called Mopsuestia, a town situated on the Pyramus. *Ægæans*.--Inhabitants of the city of Ægæ, near the mouth of this same river.

<sup>6</sup> 79. *Wretched Antioch*.--Comp. line 165, and book iv, 181

<sup>7</sup> 90. *Bostra*.--Situated some fifty miles to the south of Damascus.

Into great sorrow; and the laughing spheress

Of the zodiacal vault, Aries,

Taurus, and Gemini, and as many stars

Ruling hours as with them in heaven appear

**95** Shall benefit thee not; thou, wretched one,

Hast trusted many, when that very man

Shall afterwards bring near that which is thine.

And now for Alexandrians loving war

Will I sing wars most dreadful; and much people

**100** Shall perish while their cities are destroyed

By citizens against each other matched

And fighting for the sake of hateful strife,

And round them horrid Ares, rushing on,

Shall cease from war. And then one of great soul

**105** Along with his own mighty son<sup>9</sup> shall fall

By treachery on the older king's account.

And after him there shall rule powerfully<sup>10</sup>

O'er fertile Rome another great-souled lord

Versed in war, coming from the Dacians

**110** And numbering three hundred; he shall have

Also the letter of the number four,

And many shall be slay, and then the king

Shall all his brothers and his friends destroy

Even while the kings are cut off, and straightway

**115** Shall there be fights and pillagings and murders

Suddenly<sup>11</sup> on the older king's account.

Then, when a wily man<sup>12</sup> shall summoned come,

A robber and a Roman not well known

From Syria appearing, he by guile

**120** Into a race of Cappadocian men

Shall drive through and, besieging, shall press hard,

Insatiate of war. And then for thee,

Tyana and Mazaka<sup>13</sup>, there shall be

<sup>8</sup> 91-95. These allusions to the constellations may imply notable devotion to astrology on the part of the people of Arabia

<sup>9</sup> 105-106. The father and son here referred to are the same as those described in lines 29-33

<sup>10</sup> 107-112. This seems to describe Trajan of Pannonia, who is better known as Decius. Sent by the emperor Philip against Moesia, the troops proclaimed him emperor, and he exercised the imperial power for about two years. The names Trajan and Decius are represented

## Sibylline Oracles

by their initial letters, which are the Greek numerals respectively for *three hundred* and *four*

<sup>11</sup> 116. Comp. line 106 above. The *older king* is here apparently intended for Philip

<sup>12</sup> 117. *Wily man*.--Referring perhaps to Cyriades, one of the so-called "thirty tyrants" who arose in various parts of the empire about this time

<sup>13</sup> 123. *Tyana and Mazaka*.--Chief cities of Cappadocia  
77

A capture; thou shalt be enslaved and put  
**125** Upon thy neck again a fearful yoke.  
Arid Syria shall mourn for men destroyed  
And then Selenian goddess<sup>1</sup> shall not guard  
Her holy city. But when he by flight  
From Syria shall before the Romans come,  
**130** And shall pass over the Euphrates' streams,  
No longer like the Romans, but like fierce  
Dart-shooting Persians, then, fulfilling fate,  
Down shall the ruler of the Italians<sup>2</sup> fall  
In the ranks smitten by the gleaming iron;  
**135** And close upon him shall his children perish.  
But when another king<sup>3</sup> of Rome shall reign,  
Then also to the Romans there shall come  
Unstable nations, on the walls of Rome  
Destructive Ares with his bastard son<sup>4</sup>;  
**140** Then<sup>5</sup> also shall be famines, pestilence,  
And mighty thunderbolts, and dreadful wars,  
And anarchy in cities suddenly;  
And the Syrians shall perish fearfully;  
For there shall come upon them the great wrath  
**145** Of the Most High and straightway an uprising  
of the industrious Persians, and mixed up  
With Persians shall the Syrians destroy  
The Romans, but by the divine decree  
They shall not make a conquest of their laws.  
**150** Alas, how many with their goods shall flee  
Front the East unto men of other tongues  
Alas, the dark blood of how many men  
The land shall drink! For that shall be a time  
In which the living uttering o'er the dead  
**155** A blessing shall by word of mouth pronounce  
Death<sup>6</sup> beautiful and death shall flee from them.  
And now for thee, O wretched Syria,  
I<sup>7</sup> weep in sorrow; for to thee shall come  
A dreadful blow from arrow-shooting men,  
**160** Which thou didst never think would come to  
thee.

<sup>1</sup> 127. *Selenian goddess*.--Goddess of the moon. *Her holy city* maybe understood as Seleucia on the Tigris, once

## Sibylline Oracles

noted for the worship of the moon

<sup>2</sup> 133. *Ruler of the Italians*.--Decius Trajan, described in lines 107-112 above, who was smitten down under a shower of darts while fighting the Goths

<sup>3</sup> 136. *Another king*.--Gallus Trebonianus, who was proclaimed emperor by the legions on the death of Decius

<sup>4</sup> 139. *Bastard son*.--Reference to Volusianus, son of Gallus

<sup>5</sup> 140. Cp. lines 11-14 above, and bk xii, 149, 150, 202-204

<sup>6</sup> 156. Comp. books ii, 376, and viii, 468

<sup>7</sup> 158-160. Comp. book iii, 387-389

Also the fugitives<sup>8</sup> of Rome shall come

Bearing a great spear, Crossing on his way

Euphrates with his many myriads,

And he shall burn thee, and dispose all things

**165** In<sup>9</sup> a bad way. O wretched Antioch,

And thee a city they shall never call,

When by thy lack of prudence thou shalt fall

Under the spears; and stripping off all things

And making naked he shall leave thee thus

**170** Coverless, houseless; and when anyone

Sees he shall of a sudden weep for thee.

And thou shalt be, O Hierapolis<sup>10</sup>,

A triumph, also thou, Beroea; weep

At Chalcis over lately wounded sons.

**175** Alas, how many by the steep high mount

Of Casius<sup>11</sup> shall dwell and by Amanus

How many, and how many Lycus<sup>12</sup> laves,

And Marsyas<sup>13</sup> as many and Pyramus

The silver-eddy; for even to the bounds

**180** Of Asia they shall treasure up their spoils,

Make cities naked, and bear idols off

And cast down temples on much-nourishing earth.

And sometime to Gauls<sup>14</sup> and Pannonians,

To Mysians and Bithynians there shall be

**185** Great sorrow when a warrior shall have come.

O Lycians, Lycians, there shall come a wolf

To lick thy blood, when Sannians shall come

With city-wasting Ares and the Carpians

Shall draw near with Ausonians to fight.

**190** And then by his own shameless recklessness

The bastard son<sup>15</sup> shall put the king to death,

And he himself for his impiety

Shall straightway perish. And again shall rule

After him yet another whose name shows

**195** First letter<sup>16</sup>; but he too shall quickly fall

<sup>8</sup> 161. *The fugitive*.--Nero. Comp. book v, 118-180

<sup>9</sup> 165-168. Comp. book iv, 181-183

<sup>10</sup> 172-174. *Hierapolis . . . Beroea . . . Chalcis*.--Cities of Syria, eastward from Antioch

## Sibylline Oracles

<sup>11</sup> 176. *Casius*.--Rising to the south of Antioch. Amanus.--  
-A mountain range north of Antioch and overlooking the  
valley of Pyramus

<sup>12</sup> 177. *Lycus*.--River of Pontus

<sup>13</sup> 178. *Marsyas*.--A river of Syria, a branch of the  
Orontes

<sup>14</sup> 183-189. The mention of these widely separated provinces  
depicts the broad range of the desolating wars of this period

<sup>15</sup> 191. *Bastard son*.--The same as in line 139

<sup>16</sup> 195. *First letter*.--Evidently denoting Æmilianus, who was  
himself in turn cut off before he had reigned 4 months  
78

By mighty Ares, struck by gleaming iron.  
And yet again the world shall be confused,  
Men perishing by pestilence and war.  
And the Persians<sup>1</sup> maddened by the Ausonians  
**200** Shall in the toil of Ares yet again  
Force their way. And then there shall be a flight  
Of Romans; and thereafter there shall come  
The priest<sup>2</sup> heard of all round, sent by the sun,  
From Syria appearing and by guile  
**205** Shall he accomplish all things. And then too  
The city<sup>3</sup> of the sun shall offer prayer;  
And round about her shall the Persians dare  
The fearful threatenings of the Phoenicians.  
But when two chiefs, men swift in war, shall rule  
**210** The very mighty Romans, one of whom  
Shall have the number seventy<sup>4</sup>, and the other  
The number three, even then the stately bull<sup>5</sup>,  
That digs the earth with his hoofs and stirs up  
The dust with his two horns, shall many ills  
**215** Upon a dark-skinned reptile<sup>6</sup> perpetrate--  
Which draws a trail with his scales; and besides,  
Himself shall perish. And yet after him  
Again shall come another fair-horned stag<sup>7</sup>,  
Hungry upon the mountains, striving hard  
**220** To feed upon the venom-shedding beasts  
Then shall a dread and fearful lions<sup>8</sup> come,  
Sent from the sun, and breathing forth much flame.  
And then too by his shameless recklessness  
Shall he destroy the well-horned rapid stag,  
**225** And the most mighty<sup>9</sup> venom-shedding beast  
So dread, that sends forth many piping sounds,  
And the he-goat<sup>10</sup> that sideways moves along,

<sup>1</sup> 199. *Persians* . . . *again*.--Under Sapor, who captured  
Valerian, put the Romans to flight, and spread destruction over  
Syria and Cappadocia

<sup>2</sup> 203. *Priest*.--Odenatus

<sup>3</sup> 206. *City of the sun*.--Here referring to Palmyra

<sup>4</sup> 211. *Seventy* . . . *three*.--The first is represented by {Greek

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*O*}, initial of the Greek form of the name Valerian [{Greek *Ou?alh~rianos*}], and the second by {Greek *G*}, initial of Gallienus.

<sup>5</sup> 212. *Bull.*--Here representing Valerian, who dealt out many ills to the Persians, but was himself destroyed

<sup>6</sup> 215. *Dark-skinned reptile.*--Sapor, King of the Persians

<sup>7</sup> 218. *Stag.*--Macrianus, the Roman general

<sup>8</sup> 221. *Lion.*--Odenatus

<sup>9</sup> 225. *Most mighty . . . beast.*--The Persians

<sup>10</sup> 227. *He-goat.*--Reference doubtful. Alexandre suggests Balista, one of the so-called "thirty tyrants," who made pretension to the throne in the reign of Gallienus. Comp. Dan. viii, 5, for the same figure

And after him fame follows; he himself<sup>11</sup>

Sound, unhurt, unapproachable, shall rule

**230** The Romans, and the Persians shall be weak.

But<sup>12</sup>, Lord, King of the world, O God, restrain

The song of our words, and give charming song

**BOOK XIV**<sup>13</sup>.

### CONTENTS OF BOOK XIV.

Warning against the lust of power, **1-14**. The bulldestroyer,

**16-22**. The man known by the number

one, **23-27**. Two rulers of the number forty, **28-34**.

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**62-65**. Ruler known by the letter A, **66-73**. Three

kings of haughty soul, of the numbers one, thirty,

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**148-159**. King of the number three hundred, **160-**

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**223**. The man of potent signs and the peaceful king

of the number five, **224-245**. Many tyrants and the

holy king known by the letter A, **246-261**. Burning

and restoration of Rome, **262-271**. Woe for various

<sup>11</sup> 228. *He himself.*--Odenatus

<sup>12</sup> 231, 232. Comp. conclusion of books xi and xii

<sup>13</sup> 1. This book is the most obscure and inexplicable of the entire collection. Its date and authorship are quite uncertain.

After the opening lines against the lust of power (1-14) there appears to be an allusion to the closing part of the preceding book; but the writer goes on to designate a long succession of emperors and conquerors, giving the initial letter of most of the

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names, as in previous books, and otherwise describing them, yet so inconsistently with what we know of history as to leave it impossible to identify with any certainty the individuals and events intended. Ewald has attempted to identify most of these names with known characters of Roman and Byzantine history (*Abhandlung*, pp. 99-111), but the results of his study have commanded no following. In the following notes we insert for the benefit of the reader his more plausible conjectures, but with no conviction that they represent the persons intended by the author

79

Greeks, **272-278**. The fratricide, **279-283**. The fierce king of the number eighty and the terrors of his time, **284-508**. Many obtain royal power, **309-312**. Three kings and their destruction, **313-329**. Many spearmen, **330-335**. God's judgment on the shameless, **336-343**. Rome's wretched plight and the last race of Latin kings, **344-358**. Egypt and her prudent king, **359-375**. The Alexandrians, **376-381**. Fearful nameless woe, **382-398**. The Sicilians, **399-406**. The lion and lioness, **407-418**. The dragon and the ram, **419-425**. Second war in Egypt, **426-433**. Destructive slaughter, **434-447**. The Messianic era, **448-468**.

**1** O MEN, why do ye vainly think on things  
Too lofty, as if ye immortal were?  
And ye are ruling but a little time,  
And over mortals all desire to reign,  
**5** Not understanding that God himself hates  
The lust of rule, and most of all things hates  
Insatiate kings fearful in wickedness,  
And over them he stirs up what is dark;  
Wherefore, instead of good works and just thoughts,  
**10** Ye all choose for your garments purple robes,  
Desiring wretched fights and homicides  
Them God imperishable who dwells in heaven  
Shall make short-lived, destroy them utterly,  
And overthrow one here, another there.  
**15** But when there shall a bull-destroyer<sup>1</sup> come  
Trusting in his own might, thick-haired and grim,  
And shall destroy all, he shall also tear  
Shepherds<sup>2</sup> in pieces, and no victory  
Shall be theirs unless soon, with speed of feet  
**20** Pursuing eagerly through wooded glens,  
Young dogs shall meet in conflict; for a dog<sup>3</sup>  
Pursued the lion which destroys the shepherds.  
And then there shall be a lord confident  
In his might, and named with four syllables<sup>4</sup>,  
**25** And shown forth clearly from the number one;



## Sibylline Oracles

But him shall brazen Ares quickly slay  
Because of conflict with insatiate men.

Then shall two other princely men bear rule,

<sup>1</sup>15. *Bull-destroyer*.--That is, the lion mentioned in book  
xiii, 221, symbolizing Odenatus

<sup>2</sup>18. *Shepherds*.--Chiefs of the various tribes and nations  
whom Odenatus subdued

<sup>3</sup>21. *A dog*.--Mæonius, the assassin of Odenatus. Cp. bk viii,  
208.

<sup>4</sup>24. *Four syllables*.--Aureolus

Both<sup>5</sup> of the number forty; and with them

**30** Shall great peace be in the world and to all

The people law and right; but them in turn

Shall men with gleaming helmet, needing gold

And silver, impiously put to death

For these things, catching them by their deft plans.

**35** And then again a dreadful lord shall rule,

Young, fighting hand to hand, whose name shall  
show

The number seventy<sup>6</sup>, life-destroying, fierce,

Who to the army basely shall betray

The people of Rome, slain by wickedness

**40** Because of wrath of kings, and he shall hurl

Down every city and hut of the Latins.

And Rome is no more to be seen or heard,

Such as of late another traveler saw;

For all these things shall in the ashes lie,

**45** Nor shall there be a sparing of her works;

For hurtful he himself shall come from heaven,

God the immortal from the sky shall send

Lightnings and thunderbolts upon mankind;

And some he will destroy by lightnings burned,

**50** And others with his mighty thunderbolts.

And Rome's strong children and the famous Latins

Shall then the shameless dreadful ruler slay.

Around him dead the dust shall not lie light,

But he shall be a sport for dogs and birds

**55** And wolves, for he a martial people spoiled.

After him, numbering forty, there shall rule

Another, famous Parthian-destroyer<sup>7</sup>,

German-destroyer, putting down dread beasts

That kill men, which upon the ocean's streams

**60** And the Euphrates press continuous on.

And then shall Rome again be as before.

But when there comes a great wolf<sup>8</sup> in thy plains,

A ruler marching onward from the West,

Then shall he under powerful Ares die

**65** Being cleft asunder by the piercing brass.

## Sibylline Oracles

And o'er the very mighty Romans then  
Shall there rule yet again another man

<sup>5</sup> 29. *Both . . . forty*.--Macrianus, father and son of same name. But from this point onward the identification of the persons intended is purely conjectural and uncertain

<sup>6</sup> 37. *Sevnty*.--Represented by O, and possibly denoting the Achaian pretender, Valens

<sup>7</sup> 57. *Parthian-destroyer*.--Macrinus (M = 40)

<sup>8</sup> 62. *wolf*.--Reference, perhaps, to Quintilius, the brother of Claudius

<sup>9</sup> 66-73. Aurelian

80

Of great heart, from Assyria brought to light,  
Of the first letter, and he shall himself

**70** By means of wars put all things under him,  
And by his armies at once power display  
And lay down laws; but him shall brazen Ares  
Quickly destroy by treacherous armies falling.

After him three of haughty heart shall rule,

**75** One having the first number, one three tens,  
And the other with three hundred shall partake,  
Cruel, who gold and silver in much fire  
Shall melt in statues of gods made with hands,  
And to the armies they, equipped for war,

**80** Will, for the sake of victory, moneys give,  
Dividing many costly things and goods;  
And in like manner, striving eagerly

After power, they shall burn disastrously  
The arrow-shooting Parthians of the deep

**85** And swift Euphrates, and the hostile Medes,  
And the soft-haired warlike Massagetæ  
And Persians also, quiver-bearing men.

But when the king shall his own fate unloose  
Leaving unto his sons more fit for arms

**90** The royal scepter and entreating right,  
Then they, forgetful of their father's words  
And having their hands all prepared for war,  
Shall rush in conflict for the royal power.

And then another lord, of the third number,

**95** Shall rule alone, and smitten by a sword  
Shall quickly see his fate. Then after him  
Shall many perish at each other's hands,  
Being very valiant for the royal power.

Moreover a great-hearted one shall rule

**100** The very mighty Romans, an old lord,  
Of the number four<sup>2</sup>, and manage all things well.

And then upon Phoenicia shall come war  
And conflict, when there shall come nations near  
Of arrow-shooting Persians; ah, how many

## Sibylline Oracles

**105** Shall before men of barbarous speech fall down!

Sidon and Tripolis and Berytus

The loudly-boasting shall behold each other

Amid the blood and bodies of the dead.

Wretched Laodicea, round thyself

**110** Thou shalt a great and unsuccessful war

Stir up through the impiety of men,

<sup>1</sup>74. *Three*.--Their names beginning with A, L (A = 30), and T (= 800), the reference might be to Achilles, whom the people of Palmyra invested with the purple, and Lollian and Tetricus, who, however, belonged to the western provinces

<sup>2</sup>101. *Four*.--Possibly denoting Diocletian

Ah<sup>3</sup>, hapless Tyrians, ye shall gather in

An evil harvest; when in the day-time

The sun that lighteth mortals shall withdraw,

**115** And his disk not appear, and drops of blood

Thick and abundant shall flow down from heaven

Upon the earth. And then the king shall die,

Betrayed by his companions. After him

Shall many shameless leaders still promote

**120** The wicked strife and one another kill.

And then shall there a reverend ruler be,

Of much skill, with a name that numbers five<sup>4</sup>,

Confiding in great armies, whom mankind

Will fondly love because of royal power;

**125** And having the good name he shall thereto

Add by good deeds. But while he reigns there shall

'Twi<sup>5</sup>x Taurus and snow-clad Amanus be

A fearful sign. From the Cilician land

A city new and beautiful and strong

**130** Shall by the deep strong rivers be destroyed.

And in Propontis and in Phrygia

Shall there be many earthquakes. And the king

Of great renown shall under his own lot

By wasting deadly sickness lose his life.

**135** And after him shall rule two lordly kings,

One numbering three hundreds<sup>5</sup>, and one three;

And many shall he utterly destroy

In defense of the seven-hill city Rome,

And for the sake of powerful sovereignty.

**140** And then shall evil to the senate come,

Nor shall it from the angry king escape

While he holds wrath against it. And a sign

Shall then appear to all men upon earth;

And fuller shall the rains be, snow and hail

**145** Shall ruin field-fruits o'er the boundless earth.

But they shall fall in wars, slain by strong Ares

In behalf of the war for the Italians.

## Sibylline Oracles

And then again another king shall rule,  
Full of devices, gathering all the army,  
**150** And for the sake of war distributing  
Money to those with brazen breastplate clad;  
But thereupon shall Nilus, rich in corn,  
Beyond the Libyan mainland irrigate  
For two years the dark soil and fruitful land

**155** Of Egypt; but all things shall famine seize

<sup>3</sup> 113-117. Comp. book ii, 21; iii, 991-1002; xii, 72-74

<sup>4</sup> 122. *Five*.--The letter E, denoting Eugenius

<sup>5</sup> 136. *Three hundred*.--Represented by T, and, according  
to Ewald's conjecture, here designating Theodosius by  
his Latin initial. Three.--{Greek *G*}, initial of Gratian  
81

And war and robbers, murders, homicides.  
And many cities shall by warlike men  
Be thrown down headlong by the army's hands;  
And he, betrayed, shall fall by gleaming iron.  
**160** After him one whose number is three hundred  
Shall rule the Romans, very mighty men;  
He shall stretch forth a life-destroying spear  
Against the Armenians and the Parthians,  
The Assyrians and the Persians firm in war.

**165** And then anew shall a creation be  
Of splendidly built Rome with gold and amber  
And silver and ivory in order raised;  
And in her many people shall abide  
From all the East and from the prosperous West;

**170** And the king shall make other laws for her;  
But then shall death destructive and strong fate  
In turn receive him in a boundless isle.

And there shall rule another, of ten triads<sup>2</sup>,  
A man like a wild beast, fair-haired and grim,

**175** Who shall be a descendant of the Greeks.

And then a city of Molossian Phthia  
Feeding much, and Larissa shall be bent  
Down on Peneus's overhanging brows;  
And then too in horse-feeding Scythia

**180** Shall be an insurrection. And dire war  
Shall be hard by the waters of the lake  
Mæotis at streams by the utmost mouth  
Of the fount of watery Phasis on the mead  
Of asphodel; and there shall many fall

**185** By powerful warriors. Ah, how many men  
Shall Ares with strong brass receive! And then,  
Having destroyed a Scythian race, the king  
Shall die in his own lot unloosing life.

And yet another of the number four<sup>3</sup>

## Sibylline Oracles

**190** Shall rule thereafter, openly made known  
A dreadful man, whom all Armenians,  
Who drink the best ice of the flowing stream  
Araxes, and the Persians of great soul  
Shall fear in wars. And between Colchians

**195** And very strong Pelasgi there shall be  
Wars, fights, and homicides. And those who hold  
The cities of the land of Phrygia

<sup>1</sup>160. *Three Hundred*.--If the T of line 136 could represent Theodosius, this would most naturally refer to Theodosius the Younger, whom Gratian invested with the purple

<sup>2</sup>173. *Ten triads*.--A, initial of Leo, who was acknowledged emperor of the East in A. D. 457

<sup>3</sup>189. *Four*.--(Greek D), representing, as Ewald suggests, Dreskyllas, another form of the name Threskyllas  
And those of the Propontis, and make bare  
From out their scabbards the two-edged swords,

**200** Shall smite each other through sore  
impiousness.

And then shall God to mortal men display  
From heaven a great sign with the rolling years,  
A bat<sup>4</sup>, the portent of bad war to come.

And then the king shall not escape stern fate,

**205** But die by hand, slain by the gleaming iron.  
After him, numbering fifty<sup>5</sup>, there shall rule  
Again another coming out of Asia,

A dreadful terror, fighting hand to hand;  
And he shall set war on Rome's stately walls,

**210** And among Colchians, and Heniochi,  
And the milk-drinking Agathyrsians  
By Euxine sea, at Thracia's sandy bay.

And then the king shall not escape stern fate,  
And they will tear in pieces his dead corpse.

**215** And then, the king slain, man-ennobling Rome  
Shall be a desert, and much people perish.

And<sup>6</sup> then again one terrible and dread  
From mighty Egypt shall rule, and destroy  
Great hearted Parthians and Medes and Germans,

**220** And Agathyrsians of the Bosphorus,  
Iernians, Britons, and Iberians

That bear the quiver, bent Massagetæ,  
And Persians thinking themselves more than men.

And then a famous man shall look upon

**225** All Hellas, acting as an enemy  
To Scythia and windy Caucasus.

And<sup>7</sup> there shall be a dread sign while he rules:

Crowns altogether like the shining stars  
Shall from heaven in the south and north appear.

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**230** And then shall he bequeath the royal power  
To his son whose initial letter heads  
The alphabet, when in the halls of Hades  
The manly king in his own lot shall go.

But when the son of this man in the land  
**235** Of Rome shall rule, shown by the number one,

There shall be over all the earth great peaces  
<sup>4</sup> 203. *A bat.*--The Greek work is {Greek *fa'lkh*} Can it  
mean a falcon?

<sup>5</sup> 206. *Fifty.*--N, initial of Nepos, emperor in A. D. 474

<sup>6</sup> 217-223. The reference is unknown, and the allusions of  
the rest of the book defy even the ingenuity of Ewald to  
make even plausible

<sup>7</sup> 227. Comp. lines 126-128 above, and book xi, 30, 81;  
xii, 93, 94, 277, 278

<sup>8</sup> 236. *great peace.*--Comp. book iii, 940; xi, 105; xii, 223  
82

Much longed for, and the Latins will love him  
As king because of his own father's worth;

Him, eager to go both to East and West,

**240** The Roman people shall against his will  
Retain at home and in command of Rome,

For among all there is a friendly heart

Felt for their royal and illustrious lord.

But baneful death shall snatch him out of life,

**245** Short-lived, abandoned to his destiny.

But others afterwards again shall smite

Each other, powerful warriors, carrying on

An evil strife, not holding kingly power,

But being tyrants. And in all the world

**250** Shall they bring many evil things to pass,

But chiefly for the Romans till the time

Of the third Dionysus, until armed

With helmet Ares shall from Egypt come,

Whom they shall surname Dionysus lord.

**255** But when the famous royal purple cloak

A murderous lion and murderous lioness

Shall rend, together they shall grasp the lungs

Of the changed kingdom; then a holy king,

Whose name has the first letter, pressing hard

**260** For victory, shall cast down hostile chiefs

To be the food of dogs and birds of prey.

Alas for thee, O city burned with fire,

O powerful Rome! How many things must thou

Needs suffer when all these things come to pass!

**265** But the great far-famed king shall afterward

Raise thee all up again with gold and amber

And silver and ivory, and in the world

Thou shalt in thy possessions foremost be,

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Also in temples, market-places, wealth,  
**270** And race-grounds; and then shalt thou be again  
A light for all, even as thou wast before.  
Ah, wretched Cecropes<sup>2</sup> and Cadmeans  
And the Laconians, who are situate  
Around Peneus and Molossian stream  
**275** Thick grown with rushes, Tricca and Dodona,  
And high-built Ithome, Pierian ridge  
Around the summit of Olympian mount,  
Ossa, Larissa, and high-gate Calydon.  
But when God shall for mortals bring to pass  
**280** A great sign, day dark twilight round the world,  
Even then to thee, O king, the end shall come,  
<sup>1</sup> 266, 267. Cp. lines 166, 167 above, and bk xii, 218; xiii, 88  
<sup>2</sup> 272. *Cecropes . . . Cadmeans . . . Laconians.*--Named  
respectively for Athenians, Thebans, and Spartans  
Nor is it possible that thou escape  
A brother's piercing dart against thee hurled.  
And then again shall rule a life-destroyer,  
**285** A fiery eagle<sup>3</sup> from the royal race,  
Who shall of Egypt's offspring take fast hold,  
Younger, but than his brother much more strong,  
Who has for his first sign the number eighty.  
And then the whole world shall for honor's sake  
**290** Bear in its lap the soul-distressing wrath  
Of the immortal God; and there shall come  
On mortal men, the creatures of a day,  
Famines<sup>4</sup> and plagues and wars and homicides,  
And an incessant darkness o'er the earth,  
**295** Mother of peoples, and relentless wrath  
From heaven, and disorder of the times,  
And earthquake shocks, and flaming thunderbolts,  
And stones and storms of rain and squalid drops.  
And the high summits of the Phrygian land  
**300** Feel the shock, bases of the Scythian hills  
Feel the shock, cities tremble, and all earth  
Trembles at the cliffs of the land of Greece.  
And many cities, God being very wroth,  
Shall fall prone under burning thunderbolts  
**305** And with bewailings, and to shun the wrath  
And make escape is not even possible.  
And then the king shall by a strong hand fall,  
Struck as if he were no one by his men.  
After him of the Latins many men  
**310** Wearing the purple mantle on their shoulders  
Shall be again raised up, who shall by lot  
Desire to lay hold on the royal power.

## Sibylline Oracles

And then upon the stately walls of Rome  
Shall be three kings<sup>5</sup>, two having the first number,

**315** And one the eponym of victory  
Bearing as no one else. They shall love Rome  
And all the world, concerned for mortal men;  
But they shall not accomplish anything;

For God has not been gracious to the world  
**320** Neither will he be gentle with mankind,  
Because they have done many evil things.

Therefore to kings shall he a mean soul bring  
Still worse than that of leopards and of wolves;

<sup>3</sup> 285. *fiery eagle*.--Comp. book iii, 769

<sup>4</sup> 293. Comp. book xii, 149, 150; xiii, 140, 141

<sup>5</sup> 314. *Three kings*.--Could these be, as Ewald (p. 111)  
propounds, Anastasius (Byzantine emperor, A.D. 491-518)  
and the infamous and insolent Harmatius Achilles and  
Basiliscus, the usurpers who preceded him, the last name  
being supposed to be equivalent to the Latin Victorinus?

83

For harshly seizing them with their own hands,

**325** Like feeble women who are idly slain,  
Shall men in brazen breastplate utterly  
Destroy the kings together with their scepters.

Ah, wretched lofty men of glorious Rome,  
Trusting in false oaths ye shall be destroyed.

**330** And then shall many masters with the spear,  
Men rushing not in order furious on,  
Take away offspring of the first-born men

In their blood. . . . Therefore thrice<sup>1</sup>  
Shall the Most High then bring on dreadful doom,

**335** And all men with their works shall he destroy.  
But into judgment yet again shall God  
Cause them to come that have a shameless soul,  
As many as determined evil things;

And they themselves are fenced in, falling one

**340** Upon another, and given over there  
Into that condemnation of wickedness.

.....

All<sup>2</sup> one by one, yet a brilliant comet

.....

Of much to come, of war and battle strife,  
But at the time when one about the isles

**345** Shall gather many oracles that speak  
To strangers of fight and of battle strife,  
And grievous harm of temples, he shall bid  
One in great haste to gather in Rome's halls

For twelve months wheat and barley in abundance,  
**350** And this most quickly. And in wretched plight



## Sibylline Oracles

The city shall be those days, and straightway  
Shall it again be prosperous not a little;  
And rest shall be when that rule is destroyed.

And then the last race of the Latin kings

**355** Shall be, and after it again shall grow

Dominion<sup>3</sup>, children and the children's race

Shall be unshaken; for it shall be known,

Since of a surety God himself is king.

There is a land dear, nourisher of men<sup>4</sup>,

**360** Situate in a plain, and round it Nile

Marks off the boundary and separates

All Libya and Ethiopia.

And Syrians short-lived, one from one place,

Another from another, from that land

**365** Shall snatch away all movable effects;

A great and careful lord shall be their king,

<sup>1</sup> 333. *Thrice*.--Comp. line 386 below

<sup>2</sup> 342, 343. Comp. book viii, 252-254

<sup>3</sup> 356-362. The Greek text is here corrupt and the sense uncertain

<sup>4</sup> 359-361. Comp. book viii, 58-61

Training up youth and sending off for men,

And planning something fearful about those

Most fearful, above all he shall send forth

**370** A powerful helper of all Italy

The lofty-minded. And when he shall come

Unto the dark sea of Assyria

He shall despoil Phoenicians in their homes,

And fastening evil war and battle dire

**375** Shall be one lord of the two lords of earth.

And now will I for Alexandrians sing<sup>5</sup>

Their grievous end; alas, barbarians

Shall possess sacred Egypt, land unharmed,

Unshaken, when wrath from the gods shall come.

.....

**380** . . . making winter summers<sup>6</sup>,

Then shall the oracles be all fulfilled.

But when three youths in the Olympian games

Shall conquer, and thou shalt bid them that know

The oracles that call on God to cleanse

**385** First by the blood of sucking quadruped,

Thrice<sup>7</sup> therefore shall the Most High then bring on

A fearful lot, and be shall over all

Brandish the mournful long spear; then much blood

Barbarian shall be poured out in the dust

**390** When the city shall be plundered utterly

By inhospitable strangers. Happy he

Who is dead, also happy any one

Who is without a child; for he who once

## Sibylline Oracles

Was leader surnamed for them that are free,  
**395** Far-famed in song, no longer in his mind  
Revolving earlier plans, shall place their neck  
Under a servile yoke; such slavery,  
Cause of much weeping, shall a lord impose.  
And then straightway an army of Sicilians  
**400** Ill-fated shall come, carrying dismay,  
When a barbarian nation shall agains  
Come suddenly; and the fruit, when it grows,  
They from the field shall sever. Upon them  
Shall God the lofty Thunderer bestow  
**405** Evil instead of good; continually  
Shall stranger pluck from stranger hateful gold.  
But now when all shall look upon the blood  
Of the flesh-eating lion<sup>9</sup> and there comes  
Upon the body a murderous lioness,

<sup>5</sup> 376. Comp. book viii, 66-68, 98, 99

<sup>6</sup> 380, 381. Comp. book viii, 281, 282

<sup>7</sup> 386. *Thrice*.--Cp. line 333 above, and bk viii, 226, 226

<sup>8</sup> 401. Comp. book iii, 657

<sup>9</sup> 408. *lion*.--Comp. book xi, 287; xiii, 221

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**410** Down from his head will be the scepter cast  
Away from him. And as in friendly feast  
In Egypt when the people all partake,  
They perform valiant deeds, and one restrains  
Another, and among them there is much  
**415** Shouting aloud; so also shall there be  
Upon mankind the fear of furious strife,  
And many shall be utterly destroyed  
And others kill each other by hard fights.  
And then one, covered with dark scales<sup>1</sup> shall  
come;

**420** Two others shall come acting in concert  
With one another, and with them a third  
A great ram<sup>2</sup> from Cyrene, whom before

**1** spoke of as a fugitive in war

Beside the streams of Nile; but in no wise

**425** An unsuccessful way do all complete.

And then the lengths of the revolving years

Shall be exceeding quiet; yet again

Thereafter shall a second war for them

In Egypt be stirred up, and there shall be

**430** A battle on the sea, but victory

Shall not be theirs. Ah, wretched ones, there shall

A conquest of the famous city be,

And it shall be a spoil of war not long.

And then men having common boundaries

## Sibylline Oracles

**435** Of much land shall flee wretched, and shall lead  
Their wretched parents. And they shall again  
Having great victory light on a land,  
And shall destroy the Jews, men staunch in war,  
Wasting by wars far as the hoary deep,

**440** On both sides, fighting in the foremost ranks  
For father-land and parents. And a race  
Of trophy-bearing men shall for the dead  
Be reckoned. Ah<sup>3</sup>, how many men shall swim  
About the waves! For on the sandy beach

**445** Many shall lie; and heads of golden hair  
Shall fall beneath Egyptian winged fowls.  
And then for the Arabians mortal blood  
Shall go in quest. But<sup>4</sup> when wolves shall with dogs  
Pledge in a sea-girt island solemn oaths,

**450** Then shall there be the raising of a tower,  
And the city that suffered very many things  
Men shall inhabit. For deceitful gold  
Shall no more be nor silver, nor acquiring

<sup>1</sup> 419. *dark scales*.--Comp. book xiii, 215

<sup>2</sup> 422. *ram*.--Comp. he-goat of book xiii, 227.

<sup>3</sup> 443. The text is corrupt and doubtful here

<sup>4</sup> 448, 449. Comp. book xiii, 38, 39

Of the earth, nor much-laboring servitude;

**455** But one fast friendship and one mode of life  
With cheerful soul; and all things shall be common  
And equal light among the means of life.

And wickedness shall sink down from the earth  
Into the vast sea. And<sup>5</sup> then near at hand

**460** Is come the harvest-time of mortal men.

There<sup>6</sup> is imposed a strong necessity  
That these things be fulfilled. And at that time  
There shall not any other traveler say,

In this conjecturing, that the race of men

**465** Though perishable shall ever cease to be.

And<sup>7</sup> then a holy nation shall prevail

And hold the sovereignty of all the earth

Unto all ages with their mighty sons.

<sup>5</sup> 459, 460. Comp. book ii, 208

<sup>6</sup> 461, 462. Comp. book iii, 721-724

<sup>7</sup> 466-468. Comp. book iii, 58-60; viii, 223-226

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### APPENDIX.

#### FRAGMENTS OF THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES.

##### I.

1 YE<sup>2</sup> mortal men and fleshly, who are naught,  
How quickly are ye puffed up, seeing not  
The end of life! Do ye not tremble now

## Sibylline Oracles

And fear God, him who watches over you,  
**5** The one who is most high, the one who knows,  
The all-observant witness of all things,  
All<sup>3</sup>-nourishing Creator, who has put  
"All-nourishing Creator, who in all  
Sweet breath implanted, and made God the guide of all."  
In all things his sweet Spirit and has made  
Him leader of all mortals? God is one<sup>4</sup>,  
**10** Who rules alone, supremely great, unborn,  
Almighty and invisible, himself  
Alone beholding all things, but not seen  
Is he himself by any mortal flesh.  
For<sup>5</sup> what flesh is there able to behold  
**15** With eyes the heavenly and true God divine,  
Who has his habitation in the sky?  
Not even before the bright rays of the sun  
Can men stand still, men who are mortal born,  
Existing but as veins and flesh on bones.  
**20** Him<sup>6</sup> who alone is ruler of the world,  
Who alone is forever and has been  
From everlasting, reverence ye him,  
The self-existent unbegotten one  
Who rules all things through all time, dealing out

### <sup>1</sup>FIRST FRAGMENT.

This fragment is found in the writings of Theophilus, a bishop of Antioch, who lived in the latter half of the second century.

Near the close of his 2nd book, addressed to his friend Autolytus [chap. xxxvi; Migne, G., 6, 1109], Theophilus introduces these lines (35 in number in the Greek) with the following words: "Now the Sibyl, who among the Greeks and other nations was a prophetess, in the beginning of her prophecy upbraids the race of men, saying." From this statement it has been inferred that the lines stood originally at the beginning of our third book, which contains the oldest portions of our present collection; for Lactantius attributes the passages which he cites from this fragment to the Erythræan Sibyl, to whom he attributes elsewhere citations from the third book only. Citations from other books he refers to other Sibyls  
<sup>2</sup> 1. This first line is cited by Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, iii, 3 [Migne, G., 8, 1117], who also in the same connection quotes a similar passage from Empedocles. Comp. Homer, *Od.*, xviii, 130: "Earth nourishes nothing feebler than man."

<sup>3</sup> 7-9. These lines are quoted by Lactantius, iv, 6 [L., 6, 462], who, however, inserts the word *God*. He observes: "The Erythræan Sibyl in the beginning of her song, which she commenced by the help of the Most High God, proclaims the Son of God as leader and commander of all in these verses:

<sup>4</sup> 9-12. *God is one*.--Quoted by Justin Martyr, ad Gr., 16 [G., 6, 272]. Comp. Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.*, i, 3 [G. 82, 904]; Basil, *adv. Eunom.*, iii [G., 29, 6681; Greg. Naz., *Orat.*, xxvi, 19 [G., 35, 1252]; Lact., i, 6 [L., 6, 140]; Orphica, ed. Hermann, *Frag.* i, 10; ii, 11.

<sup>5</sup> 14-19. Cited by Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, v, 14 [G., 9, 165], and Eusebius, *Præp.*, xiii, 13 [G., 21, 1121]. Comp. Cyril, *Contr. Jul.*, i, 82 [G., 76, 549]; Philemon in Just. Mar., *de Monarch*, 2 [G., 6, 316]; Xenophon, *Memor.*, iv, 3, 13; Cicero, *de Nat. Decorum*, i, 12

<sup>6</sup> 20-22. Cited by Lact., *de fals. Relig.*, vi [L., 6, 141]

**25** Unto all mortals in a common light  
The judgment. And the merited reward  
Of evil counseling shall ye receive,  
For ceasing the true and eternal God  
To glorify, and holy hecatombs

## Sibylline Oracles

**30** To offer him, ye made your sacrifice  
Unto the demons that in Hades dwell.  
And ye in self-conceit and madness walk,  
And having left the true, straightforward path  
Ye went away and roamed about through thorns

**35** And thistles. O ye foolish mortals, cease  
Roving in darkness and black night obscure,  
And leave the darkness of night, and lay hold  
Upon the Light. Lo, he is clear to all  
And cannot err; come, do not always chase

**40** Darkness and gloom. Lo, the sweet-looking light  
Of the sun shines with a surpassing glow.

Now, treasuring wisdom in your hearts, know ye  
That God is one, who sends forth rains and winds,  
Earthquakes and lightnings, famines, pestilence,  
**45** And mournful cares, and storms of snow, and ice.  
But why do I thus speak them one by one?  
He guides heaven, rules earth, over Hades reigns.

### **II**<sub>3</sub>.

Now if gods beget offspring and remain  
Immortal there had been more gods than men,  
And there had never been sufficient room  
For mortals to stand.

### **III**<sub>4</sub>.

Now<sup>5</sup> if all that is born must also perish,  
It is not possible for God to be  
Formed from the thighs of man and from a womb;  
But<sup>6</sup> God alone is one and all-supreme,  
**5** Who made heaven and the sun and stars and moon,

<sup>1</sup>25. *Common light*.--An allusion to the universal moral sense of men. Comp. book i, 409; iii, 588; John i, 9

<sup>2</sup>38-47. Cited by Clem. Alex., *Cohort.*, viii [G., 8, 97]. Line 34 is also cited in *Strom.*, v, 14 [G., 9, 173

<sup>3</sup>SECOND FRAGMENT.

This passage, which appears nowhere in the twelve books of our collection, is found in Theophilus, *ad Antol.*, ii, 3 [G., 6, 1049]

<sup>4</sup>THIRD FRAGMENT

This excerpt, which numbers forty-nine lines in the Greek text, is preserved to us in Theophilus, and is placed by him immediately after the first fragment with the following introductory words: "Also in regard to those (gods) who are said to have been born, she thus speaks."

<sup>5</sup>1, 2. Cited by Lact., i, 8 [L., 6, 1541

<sup>6</sup>4-7. Cited by Lact., i, 6 [L., 6, 147].

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Fruit-bearing earth and billows of the sea,  
And lofty hills and mouth of lasting springs.  
He also bringeth forth great multitude  
Of creatures that amid the waters live  
**10** Innumerable, and the creeping things  
That move upon earth he sustains with life,  
And dappled, delicate, shrill-tweeting birds,

## Sibylline Oracles

That ply the air shrill-whirring with their wings.  
And in the glens of mountains wild be placed

**15** The race of beasts, and to us mortals made  
All cattle subject, and the God-formed one  
He constituted ruler of all things,  
And unto man all variegated things  
Made subject, things incomprehensible.

**20** For all these things what mortal flesh can know?  
For he himself alone, who made these things  
At the beginning, knows, the incorrupt  
Eternal Maker, dwelling in the heaven,  
Bringing unto the good good recompense

**25** Much more abundant, but awakening wrath  
And anger for the evil and unjust,  
And war and pestilence, and tearful woes<sup>2</sup>.  
O men, why, vainly puffed up, do ye root  
Yourselves out? Be ashamed to deify

**30** Polecats and monsters. Is it not a craze  
And frenzy, taking sense of mind away,  
If gods steal plates and carry off earthen pots?  
Instead of dwelling in the golden heaven  
In plenty, see them eaten by the moth

**35** And woven over with thick spider-webs!  
O fools, that bow to serpents, dogs and cats,  
And reverence birds and creeping beasts of earth,  
Stone images and statues made with bands,  
And stone-heaps by the roads--these ye revere,

**40** And also many other idle things  
Which it would even be a shame to tell;  
These are the baneful gods of senseless men,  
And from their mouth is deadly poison poured.  
But of Him is life and eternal light

**45** Imperishable, and he sheds a joy  
Sweeter than honey sweet on righteous men,  
And to him only do thou bow thy neck,  
And among pious lives incline thy way.  
Forsaking all these, in a spirit mad

**50** With folly ye did all drain off the cup

<sup>1</sup> 21-26. Cited by Lact., *de Ira Dei*, xxii [L., 1, 143]

<sup>2</sup> 27. *Tearful woes.*--Comp. Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, v, 14 [G., 9, 188]; Just. Martyr, *de Monarch*, ii [G., 6, 316]; *Cohort.*, xv [G., 6, 272]; Euseb. *Præp.*, xiii, 12 [G., 21, 1100].

Of judgment that was filled full, very pure,  
Closely pressed, weighed down, and withal unmixed.  
And ye will not wake from your drunken sleep  
And come to sober reason, and know God

**55** To be the king who oversees all things.  
Therefore on you the flash of gleaming fire

## Sibylline Oracles

Is coming, ye shall be with torches burned  
The livelong day through an eternal age,  
At your false useless idols feeling shame.  
**60** But they who fear the true eternal God  
Inherit life, and they forever dwell  
Alike in fertile field of Paradise,  
Feasting on sweet bread from the starry heaven.

### **IV**<sub>2</sub>.

Hear me, O men, the King eternal reigns.

### **V**<sub>3</sub>.

He only is God, Maker uncontrolled;  
He fixed the pattern of the human form,  
And did the nature of all mortals mix  
Himself, the generator of (all) life.

### **VI**<sub>4</sub>.

Whenever he shall come  
A smoky fire shall be in mid-night dark.

### **VII**<sub>5</sub>.

The Erythræan Sibyl, addressing God, says: Why dost thou, O Lord, enjoin on me the necessity of prophesying, and not rather take me aloft from the earth and preserve me unto the most blessed day of thy coming?

<sup>1</sup>60-64. Cited by Lact., ii, 13 [L., 6, 324]. In these last verses we may note allusions to such passages of Scripture as Matt. xix, 29; Luke xxiii, 43; 2 Cor. xii, 4; Rev. ii, 17; Psa. lxxviii, 24; cv, 40; John vi, 31

<sup>2</sup>FOURTH FRAGMENT.

This fragment, consisting of but a single line, is found in Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 24 [L., 6, 808].

<sup>3</sup>FIFTH FRAGMENT.

These lines are found in Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, ii, 12 [L., 6, 319], and also in the Anonymous Preface

<sup>4</sup>SIXTH FRAGMENT.

This fragment is also found in Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, vii, 19 [L., 6, 797].

<sup>5</sup>SEVENTH FRAGMENT.

This, which Rzach calls a "doubtful fragment," is cited as a saying of the Erythræan Sibyl in Constantine's *Oration to the Assembly of the Saints*, chap. xxi [G., 20, 1300].

## The Sibylline Acrostic

THE acrostic in book viii, 284-330 (Greek text, 217-250), is of a nature to attract special attention and interest. Not a few of the earliest published monographs touching the Greek Sibylline verses gave the text of this acrostic with explanatory observations upon it. Augustine in the eighteenth book of his *de Civitate Dei* (chap. xxiii) cites the first twenty-seven lines in a Latin translation which aims to retain the acrostic form of the Greek text. He further observes that "the verses are twenty-seven, which is the cube of three. For three times three are nine, and nine itself, if tripled, so as to rise from the superficial square to the cube, comes to twenty-seven. But if you join the initial letters of the five Greek words ({Greek *I?hsou~s Xristo's Qeou~ ui'o `s Swth'r* }) which mean, 'Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Saviour,' they will make the word {Greek *i?xqu's* }, that

## Sibylline Oracles

is, fish, in which word Christ is mystically understood, because he was able to live, that is, to exist, without sin in the abyss of this mortality as in the depth of waters."

The following version of the twenty-seven lines spoken of above is taken from Marcus Dods's translation of Augustine's *de Civitate Dei* in the "Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers." The reader will notice that the name of Christ is written in the lengthened Greek form {Greek *Xreisto's*}.

{Greek *I*} Judgment shall moisten the earth with the sweat of its standard,  
{Greek *H*} Ever enduring, behold the king shall come through the ages,  
{Greek *S*} Sent to be here in the flesh, and judge at the last of the world.  
{Greek *O*} O God, the believing and faithless alike shall behold thee  
{Greek *U*} Uplifted with saints, when at last the ages are ended,  
{Greek *S*} Stood before him are souls in the flesh for his judgment  
{Greek *X*} Hid in thick vapors, the while desolate lieth the earth,  
{Greek *R*} Rejected by men are the idols and long-hidden treasures;  
{Greek *E*} Earth is consumed by the fire, and it searcheth the ocean and heaven;  
{Greek *I*} Issuing forth, it destroyeth the terrible portals of hell.  
{Greek *S*} Saints in their body and soul freedom and light shall inherit  
{Greek *T*} Those who are guilty shall burn in fire and brimstone forever.  
{Greek *O*} Occult actions revealing, each one shall publish his secrets  
{Greek *S*} Secrets of every man's heart God shall reveal in the light.  
{Greek *Q*} Then shall be weeping and wailing, yea, and gnashing of teeth;  
{Greek *E*} Eclipsed is the sun, and silenced the stars in their chorus.  
{Greek *O*} Over and gone is the splendor of moonlight, melted the heaven.  
{Greek *U*} Uplifted by him are the valleys, and cast down the mountains.  
{Greek *U*} Utterly gone among men are distinctions of lofty and lowly.  
{Greek *I*} Into the plains rush the hills, the skies and oceans are mingled.  
{Greek *O*} O, what an end of all things! earth broken in pieces shall perish;  
{Greek *S*} Swelling together at once shall the waters and flames flow in rivers.  
{Greek *S*} Sounding, the archangel's trumpet shall peal down from heaven,  
{Greek *W*} Over the wicked who groan in their guilt and their manifold sorrows.  
{Greek *T*} Trembling, the earth shall be opened, revealing chaos and hell.  
{Greek *H*} Every king before God shall stand in that day to be judged.  
{Greek *R*} Rivers of fire and brimstone shall fall from the heavens.

The following version of the same twenty-seven lines are from the *Christian Review*, vol. xiii, 1848, p. 99.

{Greek *I*} Judgment impends. Lo! the earth reeks with sweat;  
{Greek *H*} He, the destined King of future ages, comes;  
{Greek *S*} Soon he descends--the Judge in human form.  
{Greek *O*} On speeds the God--his friends and foes behold him.  
{Greek *U*} Vengeance he wears, enthroned with his holy ones.  
{Greek *S*} See how the dead assume their ancient forms.  
{Greek *X*} Choked with thorny hedges lies the waste, dreary world  
{Greek *R*} Ruined are the idol gods; they scorn their heaps of gold.



## Sibylline Oracles

{Greek *E*} Even land and sea and sky shall raging fire consume.  
{Greek *I*} Its penetrating flames shall burst the gates of hell.  
{Greek *S*} Shining in light behold the saints immortal.  
{Greek *T*} Turn to the guilty, burning in endless flames.  
{Greek *O*} O'er hidden deeds of darkness no veil shall be spread.  
{Greek *S*} Sinners to their God will reveal their secret thoughts.  
{Greek *Q*} There will be a bitter wailing; there they gnash with their teeth.  
{Greek *E*} Ebon clouds veil the sun; the stars their chorus cease;  
{Greek *O*} O'er our heads the heavens roll not,--the lunar splendors fade.  
{Greek *U*} Underneath the mountains lie; the valleys touch the sky.  
{Greek *U*} Unknown the heights or depths of man,--since all shall prostrate lie.  
{Greek *I*} In the ocean's dark gulf sink the mountains and the plains.  
{Greek *O*} Order casts away her empire; creation ends in chaos.  
{Greek *S*} Swollen rivers and leaping fountains are consumed in the flames.  
{Greek *S*} Shrill sounds the trumpet; its blast rends the sky.  
{Greek *W*} O, fearful are the groanings, the sorrows of the doomed.  
{Greek *T*} Tartarean chaotic depths the gaping earth reveals.  
{Greek *H*} Earth's vaunted monarchs shall stand before the Lord.  
{Greek *R*} Rivers of sulphur roll along and flames descend the sky.

The following version from the *Christian Remembrancer*, vol. xlii, 1861, p. 287, accords with the order of initial English letters of the words,  
JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, THE SAVIOUR, THE CROSS:

Judgment at hand, the earth shall sweat with fear  
Eternal King, the Judge shall come on high;  
Shall doom all flesh; shall bid the world appear  
Unveiled before his throne. Him every eye  
Shall, just or unjust, see in majesty.  
Consummate time shall view the saints assemble,  
His own assessors; and the souls of men  
Round the great judgment seat shall wail and tremble  
In fear of sentence. And the green earth then  
Shall turn to desert; they that see that day  
To moles and bats their gods shall cast away.  
Sea, earth, and heaven, and hell's dread gates shall burn;  
Obedient to their call, the dead return;  
Nor shall the Judge unfitting doom discern;  
Of chains and darkness to each wicked soul;  
For them that have done good, the starry pole.  
Gnashing of teeth, and woe and fierce despair  
Of such as hear the righteous Judge declare  
Deeds long forgot, which that last day shall bare.  
Then, when each darkened breast he brings to sight,  
Heaven's stars shall fall; and day be turned to night;  
Effaced the sun-ray, and the moon's pale light.  
Surely the valleys he on high shall raise;

## Sibylline Oracles

All hills shall cease, all mountains turn to plain;  
Vessel shall no more pass the watery ways;  
In the dread lightning parching earth shall blaze,  
Ogygian rivers seek to flow in vain;  
Unutterable woe the trumpet blast,  
Re-echoing through the ether, shall forecast.  
Then Tartarus shall wrap the world in gloom,  
High chiefs and princes shall receive their doom,  
Eternal fire and brimstone for their tomb.  
Crown of the world, sweet Wood, salvation's horn,  
Rearing its beauty, shall for man be born;  
O Wood, that saints adore, and sinners scorn!  
So from twelve fountains shall its light be poured;  
Staff of the Shepherd, a victorious sword.

# Ascension of Isaiah

## The Ascension of Isaiah

I include this reference to the harrowing of hell found in the Ascension of Isaiah. This section of the book is a later Christian addition to the earlier Jewish writing. I begin with the highlighted texts if you choose not to read the entire work.

### Chapter 9: 6-18

6. And he raised me up into the seventh heaven, and I saw there a wonderful light and angels innumerable. 7. And there I saw all the righteous from the time of Adam. 8. And there I saw the holy Abel and all the righteous. 9. And there I saw Enoch and all who were with him, stript of the garments of the flesh, and I saw them in their garments of the upper world, and they were like angels, standing there in great glory.

10. But they sat not on their thrones, nor were their crowns of glory on them. 11. And I asked the angel who was with me: ' How is it that they have received the garments, but have not the thrones and the crowns?

'Crowns and thrones of glory they do not receive, till the Beloved will descend in the form in which you will see Him descend [will descend, I say] into the world in the last days the Lord, who will be called Christ".

Nevertheless, they see and know whose will be thrones, and whose the crowns **when He has descended, and been made in your form, and they will think that He is flesh and is a man. 14. And the god of that world will stretch forth his hand against the Son, and they will crucify Him on a tree, and will slay Him not knowing who He is. 15. And thus His descent, as you will see, will be hidden even from the heavens, so that it will not be known who He is. 16. And when He hath plundered the angel of death. He will ascend on the third day, [and he will remain in that world five hundred and forty-five days]. 17. And then many of the righteous will ascend with Him,** whose spirits do not receive their garments till the Lord Christ ascend and they ascend with Him.

18. Then indeed they will receive their [garments and] thrones and crowns, when He has ascended into the seventh heaven.

### Chapter 11: 19-20

19. **After this, the adversary grew jealous, and he brought the children of Israel upon him, when they did not know who he was. They led him to the king, they crucified him, and they brought him down to the angel in Sheol. 20. In Jerusalem, I saw them crucify him on a tree, 21. and after three days he was raised and remained for [some] days.**

## Ascension of Isaiah

### **The Ascension of Isaiah**

#### CHAPTER 1

AND it came to pass in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Hezediah king of Judah that he called Manasseh his son. Now he was his only one.

2. And he called him into the presence of Isaiah the son of Amoz the prophet, and into the presence of Josab the son of Isaiah, in order to deliver unto him the words of righteousness which the king himself had seen:

3. And of the eternal judgments and torments of Gehenna, and of the prince of this world, and of his angels, and his authorities and his powers.

4. And the words of the faith of the Beloved which he himself had seen in the fifteenth year of his reign during his illness.

5. And he delivered unto him the written words which Samnas the scribe had written, and also those which Isaiah, the son of Amoz, had given to him, and also to the prophets, that they might write and store up with him what he himself had seen in the king's house regarding the judgment of the angels, and the destruction of this world, and regarding the garments of the saints and their going forth, and regarding their transformation and the persecution and ascension of the Beloved.

6. In the twentieth year of the reign of Hezekiah, Isaiah had seen the words of this prophecy and had delivered them to Josab his son. And whilst he (Hezekiah) gave commands, Josab the son of Isaiah standing by.

7. Isaiah said to Hezekiah the king, but not in the presence of Manasseh only did he say unto him: `As the Lord liveth, and th3e Spirit which speaketh in me liveth, all these commands and these words will be made of none effect by Manasseh thy son, and through the agency of his hands I shall depart mid the torture of my body.

8. And Sammael Malchira will serve Manasseh, and execute all his desire, and he will become a follower of Beliar rather than of me:

9. And many in Jerusalem and in Judea he will cause to abandon the true faith, and Beliar will dwell in Manasseh, and by his hands I shall be sawn asunder.'

10. And when Hezekiah heard these words he wept very bitterly, and rent his garments, and placed earth upon his head, and fell on his face.

11. And Isaiah said unto him: `The counsel of Sammael against Manasseh is consummated: nought will avail thee."

12. And on that day Hezekiah resolved in his heart to slay Manasseh his son.

13. And Isaiah said to Hezekiah: `The Beloved hath made of none effect thy design, and the purpose of thy heart will not be accomplished, for with this calling have I been called and I shall inherit the heritage of the Beloved.'

#### CHAPTER 2

## Ascension of Isaiah

AND it came to pass after that Hezekiah died and Manasseh became king, that he did not remember the commands of Hezekiah his father, but forgot them, and Sammael abode in Manasseh and clung fast to him.

2. And Manasseh forsook the service of the God of his father, and he served Satan and his angels and his powers.

3. And he turned aside the house of his father, which had been before the face of Hezekiah (from) the words of wisdom and from the service of God.

4. And Manasseh turned aside his heart to serve Beliar; for the angel of lawlessness, who is the ruler of this world, is Beliar, whose name is Mantanbuchus. and he delighted in Jerusalem because of Manasseh, and he made him strong in apostatizing (Israel) and in the lawlessness which were spread abroad in Jerusalem.

5. And witchcraft and magic increased and divination and auguration, and fornication, a [and adultery], and the persecution of the righteous by Manasseh and [Belachira, and] Tobia the Canaanite, and John of Anathoth, and by (Zadok) the chief of the works.

6. And the rest of the acts, behold they are written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

7. And, when Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw the lawlessness which was being perpetrated in Jerusalem and the worship of Satan and his wantonness, he withdrew from Jerusalem and settled in Bethlehem of Judah.

8. And there also there was much lawlessness, and withdrawing from Bethlehem he settled on a mountain in a desert place.

9. And Micaiah the prophet, and the aged Ananias, and Joel and Habakkuk, and his son Josab, and many of the faithful who believed in the ascension into heaven, withdrew and settled on the mountain.

10. They were all clothed with garments of hair, and they were all prophets. And they had nothing with them but were naked, and they all lamented with a great lamentation because of the going astray of Israel.

11. And these eat nothing save wild herbs which they gathered on the mountains, and having cooked them, they lived thereon together with Isaiah the prophet. And they spent two years of days on the mountains and hills.

12. And after this, whilst they were in the desert, there was a certain man in Samaria named Belchira, of the family of Zedekiah, the son of Chanaan, a false prophet, whose dwelling was in Bethlehem. Now Hezekiah the son of Chanani, who was the brother of his father, and in the days of Ahab, king of Israel, had been the teacher of the 400. prophets of Baal, had himself smitten and reproved Micaiah the son of Amada the prophet.

13. And he, Micaiah, had been reproved by Ahab and cast into prison. (And he was) with Zedekiah the prophet: they were with Ahaziah the son of Ahab, king in Samaria.

## Ascension of Isaiah

14. And Elijah the prophet of Tebon of Gilead was reprovng Ahaziah and Samaria, and prophesied regarding Ahaziah that he should die on his bed of sickness, and that Samaria should be delivered into the hand of Leba Nasr because he had slain the prophets of God.

15. And when the false prophets, who were with Ahaziah the son of Ahab and their teacher Jalerjas of Mount Joel, had heard-

16. Now he was a brother of Zedekiah - when they persuaded Ahaziah the king of Aguaron and (slew) Micaiah.

### CHAPTER 3

AND Belchira recognized and saw the place of Isaiah and the prophets who were with him; for he dwelt in the region of Bethlehem, and was an adherent of Manasseh. And he prophesied falsely in Jerusalem, and many belonging to Jerusalem were confederate with him, and he was a Samaritan.

2. And it came to pass when Alagar Zagar, king of Assyria, had come and captive, and led them away to the mountains of the medes and the rivers of Tazon;

3. This (Belchira), whilst still a youth, had escaped and come to Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, but he walked not in the ways of his father of Samaria; for he feared Hezekiah.

4. And he was found in the days of Hezekiah speaking words of lawlessness in Jerusalem.

5. And the servants of Hezekiah accused him, and he made his escape to the region of Bethlehem. And they persuaded...

6. And Belchira accused Isaiah and the prophets who were with him, saying: `Isaiah and those who are with him prophesy against Jerusalem and against the cities of Judah that they shall be laid waste and (against the children of Judah and) Benjamin also that they shall go into captivity, and also against thee, O lord the king, that thou shalt go (bound) with hooks and iron chains':

7. But they prophesy falsely against Israel and Judah.

8. And Isaiah himself hath said: `I see more than Moses the prophet.'

9. But Moses said: `No man can see God and live'; and Isaiah hath said: `I have seen God and behold I live.'

10. Know, therefore, O king, that he is lying. And Jerusalem also he hath called Sodom, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem he hath declared to be the people of Gomorrah. And he brought many accusations against Isaiah and the prophets before Manasseh.

11. But Beliar dwelt in the heart of Manasseh and in the heart of the princes of Judah and Benjamin and of the eunuchs and of the councillors of the king.

12. And the words of Belchira pleased him [exceedingly], and he sent and seized Isaiah.

## Ascension of Isaiah

13. For Beliar was in great wrath against Isaiah by reason of the vision, and because of the exposure wherewith he had exposed Sammael, and because through him the going forth of the Beloved from the seventh heaven had been made known, and His transformation and His descent and the likeness into which He should be transformed (that is) the likeness of man, and the persecution wherewith he should be persecuted, and the torturers wherewith the children of Israel should torture Him, and the coming of His twelve disciples, and the teaching, and that He should before the sabbath be crucified upon the tree, and should be crucified together with wicked men, and that He should be buried in the sepulchre,

14. And the twelve who were with Him should be offended because of Him: and the watch of those who watched the sepulchre:

15. And the descent of the angel of the Christian Church, which is in the heavens, whom He will summon in the last days.

16. And that (Gabriel) the angel of the Holy Spirit, and Michael, the chief of the holy angels, on the third day will open the sepulchre:

17. And the Beloved sitting on their shoulders will come forth and send out His twelve disciples;

18. And they will teach all the nations and every tongue of the resurrection of the Beloved, and those who believe in His cross will be saved, and in His ascension into the seventh heaven whence He came:

19. And that many who believe in Him will speak through the Holy Spirit:

20. And many signs and wonders will be wrought in those days.

21. And afterwards, on the eve of His approach, His disciples will forsake the teachings of the Twelve Apostles, and their faith, and their love and their purity.

22. And there will be much contention on the eve of [His advent and] His approach.

23. And in those days many will love office, though devoid of wisdom.

24. And there will be many lawless elders, and shepherds dealing wrongly by their own sheep, and they will ravage (them) owing to their not having holy shepherds.

25. And many will change the honour of the garments of the saints for the garments of the covetous, and there will be much respect of persons in those days and lovers of the honour of this world.

26. And there will be much slander and vainglory at the approach of the Lord, and the Holy Spirit will withdraw from many.

27. And there will not be in those days many prophets, nor those who speak trustworthy words, save one here and there in divers places,

28. On account of the spirit of error and fornication and of vainglory, and of covetousness, which shall be in those, who will be called servants of that One and in those who will receive that One.

## Ascension of Isaiah

29. And there will be great hatred in the shepherds and elders towards each other.
30. For there will be great jealousy in the last days; for everyone will say what is pleasing in his own eyes.
31. And they will make of none effect the prophecy of the prophets which were before me, and these my visions also will they make of none effect, in order to speak after the impulse of their own hearts.

### CHAPTER 4

AND now Hezekiah and Josab my son, these are the days of the completion of the world.

2. After it is consummated, Beliar the great ruler, the king of this world, will descend, who hath ruled it since it came into being; yea, he will descent from his firmament in the likeness of a man, a lawless king, the slayer of his mother: who himself (even) this king.
3. Will persecute the plant which the Twelve Apostles of the Beloved have planted. Of the Twelve one will be delivered into his hands.
4. This ruler in the form of that king will come and there will come and there will come with him all the powers of this world, and they will hearken unto him in all that he desires.
5. And at his word the sun will rise at night and he will make the moon to appear at the sixth hour.
6. And all that he hath desired he will do in the world: he will do and speak like the Beloved and he will say: "I am God and before me there has been none."
7. And all the people in the world will believe in him. 8. And they will sacrifice to him and they will serve him saying: "This is God and beside him there is no other."
9. And they greater number of those who shall have been associated together in order to receive the Beloved, he will turn aside after him.
10. And there will be the power of his miracles in every city and region.
11. And he will set up his image before him in every city.
12. And he shall bear sway three years and seven months and twenty-seven days.
13. And many believers and saints having seen Him for whom they were hoping, who was crucified, Jesus the Lord Christ, [after that I, Isaiah, had seen Him who was crucified and ascended] and those also who were believers in Him - of these few in those days will be left as His servants, while they flee from desert to desert, awaiting the coming of the Beloved.
14. And after (one thousand) three hundred and thirty-two days the Lord will come with His angels and with the armies of the holy ones from the seventh heaven with the glory of the seventh heaven, and He will drag Beliar into Gehenna and also his armies.
15. And He will give rest of the godly whom He shall find in the body in this world, [and the sun will be ashamed]:



## Ascension of Isaiah

16. And to all who because of (their) faith in Him have execrated Beliar and his kings. But the saints will come with the Lord with their garments which are (now) stored up on high in the seventh heaven: with the Lord they will come, whose spirits are clothed, they will descend and be present in the world, and He will strengthen those, who have been found in the body, together with the saints, in the garments of the saints, and the Lord will minister to those who have kept watch in this world.

17. And afterwards they will turn themselves upward in their garments, and their body will be left in the world.

18. Then the voice of the Beloved will in wrath rebuke the things of heaven and the things of earth and the things of earth and the mountains and the hills and the cities and the desert and the forests and the angel of the sun and that of the moon, and all things wherein Beliar manifested himself and acted openly in this world, and there will be [a resurrection and] a judgment in their midst in those days, and the Beloved will cause fire to go forth from Him, and it will consume all the godless, and they will be as though they had not been created.

19. And the rest of the words of the vision is written in the vision of Babylon.

20. And the rest of the vision regarding the Lord, behold, it is written in three parables according to my words which are written in the book which I publicly prophesied.

21. **And the descent of the Beloved into Sheol**, behold, it is written in the section, where the Lord says: "Behold my Son will understand." And all these things, behold they are written [in the Psalms] in the parables of David, the son of Jesse, and in the Proverbs of Solomon his son, and in the words of Korah, and Ethan the Israelite, and in the words of Asaph, and in the rest of the Psalms also which the angel of the Spirit inspired.

22. (Namely) in those which have not the name written, and in the words of my father Amos, and of Hosea the prophet, and of Micah and Joel and Nahum and Jonah and Obadiah and Habakkuk and Haggai and Malachi, and in the words of Joseph the Just and in the words of Daniel.

### CHAPTER 5

ON account of these visions, therefore, Beliar was wroth with Isaiah, and he dwelt in the heart of Manasseh and he sawed him in sunder with a wooden saw.

2. And when Isaiah was being sawn in sunder, Belchira stood up, accusing him, and all the false prophets stood up, laughing and rejoicing because of Isaiah.

3. And Belchira, with the aid of Mechembechus, stood up before Isaiah, [laughing] deriding;

4. And Belchira said to Isaiah: 'Say, "I have lied in all that I have spoken, and likewise the ways of Manasseh are good and right.

5. And the ways also of Belchira and of his associates are good."

6. And this he said to him when he began to be sawn in sunder.

7. But Isaiah was (absorbed) in a vision of the Lord, and though his eyes were open, he saw them (not).

## Ascension of Isaiah

8. And Belchira spake thus to Isaiah: "Say what I say unto thee and I will turn their hearts, and I will compel Manasseh and the princes of Judah and the people and all Jerusalem to reverence thee.
9. And Isaiah answered and said: "So far as I have utterance (I say): Damned and accused be thou and all they powers and all thy house.
10. For thou canst not take (from me) aught save the skin of my body."
11. And they seized and sawed in sunder Isaiah, the son of Amoz, with a wooden saw.
12. And Manasseh and Belchira and the false prophets and the princes and the people [and] all stood looking on.
13. And to the prophets who were with him he said before he had been sawn in sunder: "Go ye to the region of Tyre and Sidon; for for me only hath God mingled the cup."
14. And when Isaiah was being sawn in sunder, he neither cried aloud nor wept, but his lips spake with the Holy Spirit until he was sawn in twain.
15. This, Beliar did to Isaiah through Belchira and Manasseh; for Sammael was very wrathful against Isaiah from the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, on account of the things which he had seen regarding the Beloved.
16. And on account of the destruction of Sammael, which he had seen through the Lord, while Hezekiah his father was still king. And he did according to the will of Satan.

### CHAPTER 6

#### The Vision Which Isaiah the Son of Amoz Saw:

In the twentieth year of the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, came Isaiah the son of Amoz, and Josab the son of Isaiah to Hezekiah to Jerusalem from Galgala.

2. And (having entered) he sat down on the couch of the king, and they brought him a seat, but he would not sit (thereon).
3. And when Isaiah began to speak the words of faith and truth with King Hezekiah, all the princes of Israel were seated and the eunuchs and the councillors of the king. And there were there forty prophets and sons of the prophets: they had come from the villages and from the mountains and the plains when they had heard that Isaiah was coming from Galgala to Hezekiah.
4. And they had come to salute him and to hear his words.
5. And that he might place his hands upon them, and that they might prophesy and that he might hear their prophecy: and they were all before Isaiah.
6. And when Isaiah was speaking to Hezekiah the words of truth and faith, they all heard a door which one had opened and the voice of the Holy Spirit.

## Ascension of Isaiah

7. And the king summoned all the prophets and all the people who were found there, and they came. and Macaiiah and the aged Ananias and Joel and Josab sat on his right hand (and on the left).

8. And it came to pass when they had all heard the voice of the Holy Spirit, they all worshipped on their knees, and glorified the God of truth, the Most High who is in the upper world and who sits on High the Holy One and who rest among His holy ones.

9. And they gave glory to Him who had thus bestowed a door in an alien world had bestowed (it) on a man.

10. And as he was speaking in the Holy Spirit in the hearing of all, he became silent and his mind was taken up from him and he saw not the men that stood before him.

11. Though his eyes indeed were open. Moreover his lips were silent and the mind in his body was taken up from him.

12. But his breath was in him; for he was seeing a vision.

13. And the angel who was sent to make him see was not of this firmament, nor was he of the angels of glory of this world, but he had come from the seventh heaven.

14. And the people who stood near did (not) think, but the circle of the prophets (did), that the holy Isaiah had been taken up.

15. And the vision which the holy Isaiah saw was not from this world but from the world which is hidden from the flesh.

16. And after Isaiah had seen this vision, he narrated it to Hezekiah, and to Josab his son and to the other prophets who had come.

17. But the leaders and the eunuchs and the people did not hear, but only Samna the scribe, and Ijoaqem, and Asaph the recorder; for these also were doers of righteousness, and the sweet smell of the Spirit was upon them. But the people had not heard; for Micaiah and Josab his son had caused them to go forth, when the wisdom of this world had been taken form him and he became as one dead.

### CHAPTER 7

AND the vision which Isaiah saw, he told to Hezekiah and Josab his son and Micaiah and the rest of the prophets, (and) said:

2. At this moment, when I prophesied according to the (words) heard which ye heard, I saw a glorious angel not like unto the glory of the angels which I used always to see, but possessing such glory ad position that I cannot describe the glory of that angel.

3. And having seized me by my hand he raised me on high, and I said unto him: "Who art thou, and what is thy name, and whither art thou raising me on high? for strength was given me to speak with him."

## Ascension of Isaiah

4. And he said unto me: "When I have raised thee on high [though the (various) degrees] and made thee see the vision, on account of which I have been sent, then thou wilt understand who I am: but my name thou dost not know.
5. Because thou wilt return into this thy body, but whither I am raising thee on high, thou wilt see; for for this purpose have I been sent."
6. And I rejoiced because he spake courteously to me.
7. And he said unto me: "Hast thou rejoiced because I have spoken courteously to thee?" And he said: "And thou wilt see how a grater also that I am will speak courteously and peaceably with thee."
8. And His Father also who is greater thou wilt see; for this purpose, have I been sent from the seventh heaven in order to explain all these things unto thee."
9. And we ascended to the firmament, I and he, and there I saw Sammael and his hosts, and there was great fighting therein and the angels of Satan were envying one another.
10. And as above so on the earth also; for the likeness of that which is in the firmament is here on the earth.
11. And I said unto the angel (who was with me): "(What is this war and) what is this envying?"
12. And he said unto me: "So has it been since this world was made until now, and this war (will continue) till He, whom thou shalt see will come and destroy him."
13. And afterwards he caused me to ascend (to that which is) above the firmament: which is the (first) heaven.
14. And there I saw a throne in the midst, and on his right and on his left were angels.
15. And (the angels on the left were) not like unto the angels who stood on the right, but those who stood on the right had the greater glory, and they all praised with one voice, and there was a throne in the midst, and those who were out he left gave praise after them; but their voice was not such as the voice of those on the right, nor their praise like the praise of those.
16. And I asked the angel who conducted me, and I said unto him: "To whom is this praise sent?"
17. And he said unto me: "(it is sent) to the praise of (Him who sitteth in) the seventh heaven: to Him who rests in the holy world, and to His Beloved, whence I have been sent to thee. [Thither is it sent.]"
18. And again, he made me to ascend to the second heaven. now the height of that heaven is the same as from the haven to the earth [and to the firmament].
19. And (I saw there, as) in the first heaven, angels on the right and on the left, and a throne in the midst, and the praise of the angels in the second heaven; and he who sat on the throne in the second heaven was more glorious than all (the rest).

## Ascension of Isaiah

20. And there was great glory in the second heaven, and the praise also was not like the praise of those who were in the first heaven.

21. And I fell on my face to worship him, but he angel who conducted me did not permit me, but said unto me: "Worship neither throne nor angel which belongs to the six heavens - for for this cause I was sent to conduct thee j- until I tell thee in the seventh heaven.

22. For above all the heavens and their angels has thy throne been placed, and thy garments and thy crown which thou shalt see."

23. And I rejoiced with great joy, that those who love the Most High and His Beloved will afterwards ascend thither by the angel of the Holy Spirit.

24. And he raise me to the third heaven, and in like manner I saw those upon the right and upon the left, and there was a throne there in the midst; but the memorial of this world is there unheard of.

25. And I said to the angel who was with me; for the glory of my appearance was undergoing transformation as I ascended to each heaven in turn: "Nothing of the vanity of that world is here named."

26. And he answered me, and said unto me: "Nothing is named on account of its weakness, and nothing is hidden there of what is done."

27. And I wished to learn how it is known, and he answered me saying: "When I have raised thee to the seventh heaven whence I was sent, to that which is above these, then thou shalt know that there is nothing hidden from the thrones and from those who dwell in the heavens and from the angels. And the praise wherewith they praised and glory of him who sat on the throne was great, and the glory of the angels on the right hand and on the left was beyond that of the heaven which was below them.

28. And again he raised me to the fourth heaven, and the height from the third to the height from the third to the forth heaven was greater than from the earth to the firmament.

29. And there again I saw those who were on the right hand and those who were on the left, and him who sat on the throne was in the midst, and there also they were praising.

30. And the praise and glory of the angels on the right was greater than that of those on the left.

31. And again the glory of him who sat on the throne was greater than that of the angels on the right, and their glory was beyond that of those who were below.

32. And he raised me to the fifth heaven.

33. And again I saw those upon the right hand and on the left, and him who sat on the throne possessing greater glory that those of the forth heaven.

34. And the glory of those on the right hand was greater than that of those on the left [from the third to the fourth].

## Ascension of Isaiah

35. And the glory of him who was on the throne was greater than that of the angels on the right hand.

36. And their praise was more glorious than that of the fourth heaven.

37. And I praised Him, who is not named and the Only-begotten who dwelleth in the heavens, whose name is not known to any flesh, who has bestowed such glory on the several heavens, and who makes great the glory of the angels, and more excellent the glory of Him who sitteth on the throne.

### CHAPTER 8

AND again he raised me into the air of the sixth heaven, and I saw such glory as I had not seen in the five heavens.

2. For I saw angels possessing great glory.

3. And the praise there was holy and wonderful.

4. And I said to the angel who conducted me: "What is this which I see, my Lord?"

5. And he said: "I am not thy lord, but thy fellow servant."

6. And again I asked him, and I said unto him: "Why are there not angelic fellow servants (on the left)?"

7. And he said: "From the sixth heaven there are no longer angels on the left, nor a throne set in the midst, but (they are directed) by the power of the seventh heaven, where dwelleth He that is not named and the Elect One, whose name has not been made known, and none of the heavens can learn His name.

8. For it is He alone to whose voice all the heavens and thrones give answer. I have therefore been empowered and sent to raise thee here that thou mayest see this glory.

9. And that thou mayest see the Lord of all those heavens and these thrones.

10. Undergoing (successive) transformation until He resembles your form and likeness.

11. I indeed say unto thee, Isaiah; No man about to return into a body of that world has ascended or seen what thou seest or perceived what thou hast perceived and what thou wilt see.

12. For it has been permitted to thee in the lot of the Lord to come hither. [And from thence comes the power of the sixth heaven and of the air]."

13. And I magnified my Lord with praise, in that through His lot I should come hither.

14. And he said: "Hear, furthermore, therefore, this also from thy fellow servant: when from the body by the will of God thou hast ascended hither, then thou wilt receive the garment which thou seest, and likewise other numbered garments laid up (there) thou wilt see.

15. And then thou wilt become equal to the angels of the seventh heaven.

## Ascension of Isaiah

16. And he raised me up into the sixth heaven, and there were no (angels) on the left, nor a throne in the midst, but all had one appearance and their (power of) praise was equal.

17. And (power) was given to me also, and I also praised along with them and that angel also, and our praise was like theirs. 18. And there they all named the primal Father and His Beloved, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, all with one voice.

19. And (their voice) was not like the voice of the angels in the five heavens.

20. [Nor like their discourse] but the voice was different there, and there was much light there.

21. And then, when I was in the sixth heaven I thought the light which I had seen in the five heavens to be but darkness.

22. And I rejoiced and praised Him who hath bestowed such lights on those who wait for His promise.

23. And I besought the angel who conducted me that I should not henceforth return to the carnal world.

24. I say indeed unto you, Hezekiah and Josab my son and Micaiah, that there is much darkness here.

25. And the angel who conducted me discovered what I thought and said: "If in this light thou dost rejoice, how much more wilt thou rejoice, when in the seventh heaven thou seest the light where is the Lord and His Beloved [whence I have been sent, who is to be called "Son" in this world.

26. Not (yet) hath been manifested he shall be in the corruptible world] and the garments, and the thrones, and the crowns which are laid up for the righteous, for those who trust in that Lord who will descend in your form. For the light which is there is great and wonderful.

27. And as concerning thy not returning into the body thy days are not yet fulfilled for coming here."

28. And when I heard (that) I was troubled, and he said: "Do not be troubled."

### CHAPTER 9

AND he took me into the air of the seventh heaven, and moreover I heard a voice saying: "How far will he ascend that dwelleth in the flesh?" And I feared and trembled.

2. And when I trembled, behold, I heard from hence another voice being sent forth, and saying: "It is permitted to the holy Isaiah to ascend hither; for here is his garment."

3. And I asked the angel who was with me and said: "Who is he who forbade me and who is he who permitted me to ascend?"

4. And he said unto me: "He who forbade thee, is he who is over the praise-giving of the sixth heaven.

## Ascension of Isaiah

5. And He who permitted thee, this is thy Lord God, the Lord Christ, who will be called "Jesus" in the world, but His name thou canst not hear till thou hast ascended out of thy body."

6. And he raised me up into the seventh heaven, and I saw there a wonderful light and angels innumerable.

7. And there I saw the holy Abel and all the righteous.

8. And there I saw Enoch and all who were with him, stript of the garments of the flesh, and I saw them in their garments of the upper world, and they were like angels, standing there in great glory.

9. And there I saw Enoch and all who were with him, stript of the garments of the flesh, and I saw them in their garments of the upper world, and they were like angels, standing there in great glory.

10. But they sat not on their thrones, nor were their crowns of glory on them.

11. And I asked the angel who was with me: "How is it that they have received the garments, but have not the thrones and the crowns?"

12. And he said unto me: "Crowns and thrones of glory they do not receive, till the Beloved will descent in the form in which you will see Him descent [will descent, I say] into the world in the last days the Lord, who will be called Christ.

13. Nevertheless they see and know whose will be thrones, and whose the crowns **when He has descended and been made in your form, and they will think that He is flesh and is a man.**

**14. And the god of that world will stretch forth his hand against the Son, and they will crucify Him on a tree, and will slay Him not knowing who He is.**

**15. And thus His descent, as you will see, will be hidden even from the heavens, so that it will not be known who He is.**

**16. And when He hath plundered the angel of death, He will ascend on the third day, [and he will remain in that world five hundred and forty-five days].**

**17. And then many of the righteous will ascend with Him, whose spirits do not receive their garments till the Lord Christ ascend and they ascend with Him.**

18. Then indeed they will receive their [garments and] thrones and crowns, when He has ascended into the seventh heaven."

19. And I said unto him that which I had asked him in the third heaven:

20. "Show me how everything which is done in that world is here made known."

21. And whilst I was still speaking with him, behold one of the angels who stood nigh, more glorious than the glory of that angel, who had raised me up from the world.



## Ascension of Isaiah

22. Showed me a book, [but not as a book of this world] and he opened it, and the book was written, but not as a book of this world. And he gave (it) to me and I read it, and lo! the deeds of the children of Israel were written therein, and the deeds of those whom I know (not), my son Josab.

23. And I said: "In truth, there is nothing hidden in the seventh heaven, which is done in this world."

24. And I saw there many garments laid up, and many thrones and many crowns.

25. And I said to the angel: "Whose are these garments and thrones and crowns?"

26. And he said unto me: "These garments many from that world will receive, believing in the words of That One, who shall be named as I told thee, and they will observe those things, and believe in them, and believe in His cross: for them are these laid up."

27. And I saw a certain One standing, whose glory surpassed that of all, and His glory was great and wonderful.

28. And after I had seen Him, all the righteous whom I had seen and also the angels whom I had seen came to Him. And Adam and Abel and Seth and all the righteous first drew near and worshipped Him, and they all praised Him with one voice, and I myself also gave praise with them, and my giving of praise was as theirs.

29. And then all the angels drew nigh and worshipped and gave praise.

30. And I was (again) transformed and became like an angel.

31. And thereupon the angel who conducted me said to me: "Worship this One," and I worshipped and praised.

32. And the angel said unto me: "This is the Lord of all the praise-givings which thou hast seen."

33. And whilst he was still speaking, I saw another Glorious One who was like Him, and the righteous drew nigh and worshipped and praised, and I praised together with them. But my glory was not transformed into accordance with their form.

34. And thereupon the angels drew near and worshipped Him.

35. And I saw the Lord and the second angel, and they were standing.

36. And the second whom I saw was on the left of my Lord. And I asked: "Who is this?" and he said unto me: "Worship Him, for He is the angel of the Holy Spirit, who speaketh in thee and the rest of the righteous."

37. And I saw the great glory, the eyes of my spirit being open, and I could not thereupon see, nor yet could the angel who was with me, nor all the angels whom I had seen worshipping my Lord.

38. But I saw the righteous beholding with great power the glory of that One.

## Ascension of Isaiah

39. And my Lord drew nigh to me and the angel of the Spirit and He said: "See how it is given to thee to see God, and on thy account power is given to the angel who is with thee."

40. And I saw how my Lord and the angel of the Spirit worshipped, and they both together praised God.

41. And thereupon all the righteous drew near and worshipped.

42. And the angels drew near and worshipped and all the angels praised.

### CHAPTER 10

AND thereupon I heard the voices and the giving of praise, which I had heard in each of the six heavens, ascending and being heard there:

2. And all were being sent up to that Glorious One whose glory I could not behold.

3. And I myself was hearing and beholding the praise (which was given) to Him.

4. And the Lord and the angel of the Spirit were beholding all and hearing all.

5. And all the praises which are sent up from the six heavens are not only heard, but seen.

6. And I heard the angel who conducted me and he said: "This is the Most High of the high ones, dwelling in the holy world, and resting in His holy ones, who will be called by the Holy Spirit through the lips of the righteous the Father of the Lord."

7. And I heard the voice of the Most High, the Father of my Lord, saying to my Lord Christ who will be called Jesus:

8. "Go forth and descent through all the heavens, and thou wilt descent to the firmament and that world: to the angel in Sheol thou wilt descend, but to Haguel thou wilt not go.

9. And thou wilt become like unto the likeness of all who are in the five heavens.

10. And thou wilt be careful to become like the form of the angels of the firmament [and the angels also who are in Sheol].

11. And none of the angels of that world shall know that Thou art with Me of the seven heavens and of their angels.

12. And they shall not know that Thou art with Me, till with a loud voice I have called (to) the heavens, and their angels and their lights, (even) unto the sixth heaven, in order that you mayest judge and destroy the princes and angels and gods of that world, and the world that is dominated by them:

13. For they have denied Me and said: "We alone are and there is none beside us."

14. And afterwards from the angels of death Thou wilt ascend to Thy place. And Thou wilt not be transformed in each heaven, but in glory wilt Thou ascend and sit on My right hand.

15. And thereupon the princes and powers of that world will worship Thee."

16. These commands I heard the Great Glory giving to my Lord.

## Ascension of Isaiah

17. And so I saw my Lord go forth from the seventh heaven into the sixth heaven.
18. And the angel who conducted me [from this world was with me and] said unto me: "Understand, Isaiah, and see the transformation and descent of the Lord will appear."
19. And I saw, and when the angels saw Him, thereupon those in the sixth heaven praised and lauded Him; for He had not been transformed after the shape of the angels there, and they praised Him and I also praised with them.
20. And I saw when He descended into the fifth heaven, that in the fifth heaven He made Himself like unto the form of the angels there, and they did not praise Him (nor worship Him); for His form was like unto theirs.
21. And then He descended into the fourth heaven, and made Himself like unto the form of the angels there.
22. And when they saw Him, they did not praise or laud Him; for His form was like unto their form.
23. And again I saw when He descended into the third heaven, and He made Himself like unto the form of the angels in the third heaven.
24. And those who kept the gate of the (third) heaven demanded the password, and the Lord gave (it) to them in order that He should not be recognized. And when they saw Him, they did not praise or laud Him; for His form was like unto their form.
25. And again I saw when He descended into the second heaven, and again He gave the password there; those who kept the gate proceeded to demand and the Lord to give.
26. And I saw when He made Himself like unto the form of the angels in the second heaven, and they saw Him and they did not praise Him; for His form was like unto their form.
27. And again I saw when He descended into the first heaven, and there also He gave the password to those who kept the gate, and He made Himself like unto the form of the angels who were on the left of that throne, and they neither praised nor lauded Him; for His form was like unto their form.
28. But as for me no one asked me on account of the angel who conducted me.
29. And again He descended into the firmament where dwelleth the ruler of this world, and He gave the password to those on the left, and His form was like theirs, and they did not praise Him there; but they were envying one another and fighting; for here there is a power of evil and envying about trifles.
30. And I saw when He descended and made Himself like unto the angels of the air, and He was like one of them.
31. And He gave no password; for one was plundering and doing violence to another.

### CHAPTER 11

## Ascension of Isaiah

AFTER this I saw, and the angel who spoke with me, who conducted me, said unto me: "Understand, Isaiah son of Amoz; for this purpose have I been sent from God."

2. And I indeed saw a woman of the family of David the prophet, named Mary, and Virgin, and she was espoused to a man named Joseph, a carpenter, and he also was of the seed and family of the righteous David of Bethlehem Judah.

3. And he came into his lot. And when she was espoused, she was found with child, and Joseph the carpenter was desirous to put her away.

4. But the angel of the Spirit appeared in this world, and after that Joseph did not put her away, but kept Mary and did not reveal this matter to anyone.

5. And he did not approach May, but kept her as a holy virgin, though with child.

6. And he did not live with her for two months.

7. And after two months of days while Joseph was in his house, and Mary his wife, but both alone.

8. It came to pass that when they were alone that Mary straight-way looked with her eyes and saw a small babe, and she was astonished.

9. And after she had been astonished, her womb was found as formerly before she had conceived.

10. And when her husband Joseph said unto her: "What has astonished thee?" his eyes were opened and he saw the infant and praised God, because into his portion God had come.

11. And a voice came to them: "Tell this vision to no one."

12. And the story regarding the infant was noised broad in Bethlehem.

13. Some said: "The Virgin Mary hath borne a child, before she was married two months."

14. And many said: "She has not borne a child, nor has a midwife gone up (to her), nor have we heard the cries of (labour) pains." And they were all blinded respecting Him and they all knew regarding Him, though they knew not whence He was.

15. And they took Him, and went to Nazareth in Galilee.

16. And I saw, O Hezekiah and Josab my son, and I declare to the other prophets also who are standing by, that (this) hath escaped all the heavens and all the princes and all the gods of this world.

17. And I saw: In Nazareth He sucked the breast as a babe and as is customary in order that He might not be recognized.

18. And when He had grown up he worked great signs and wonders in the land of Israel and of Jerusalem.

## Ascension of Isaiah

19. **And after this the adversary envied Him and roused the children of Israel against Him, not knowing who He was, and they delivered Him to the king, and crucified Him, and He descended to the angel (of Sheol).**
20. **In Jerusalem indeed I was Him being crucified on a tree:**
21. And likewise after the third day rise again and remain days.
22. And the angel who conducted me said: "Understand, Isaiah": and I saw when He sent out the Twelve Apostles and ascended.
23. And I saw Him, and He was in the firmament, but He had not changed Himself into their form, and all the angels of the firmament and the Satans saw Him and they worshipped.
24. And there was much sorrow there, while they said: "How did our Lord descend in our midst, and we perceived not the glory [which has been upon Him], which we see has been upon Him from the sixth heaven?"
25. And He ascended into the second heaven, and He did not transform Himself, but all the angels who were on the right and on the left and the throne in the midst.
26. Both worshipped Him and praised Him and said: "How did our Lord escape us whilst descending, and we perceived not?"
27. And in like manner He ascended into the third heaven, and they praised and said in like manner.
28. And in the fourth heaven and in the fifth also they said precisely after the same manner.
29. But there was one glory, and from it He did not change Himself.
30. And I saw when He ascended into the sixth heaven, and they worshipped and glorified Him.
31. But in all the heavens the praise increased (in volume).
32. And I saw how He ascended into the seventh heaven, and all the righteous and all the angels praised Him. And then I saw Him sit down on the right hand of that Great Glory whose glory I told you that I could not behold.
33. And also the angel of the Holy Spirit I saw sitting on the left hand.
34. And this angel said unto me: "Isaiah, son of Amoz, it is enough for thee;... for thou hast seen what no child of flesh has seen.
35. And thou wilt return into thy garment (of the flesh) until thy days are completed. Then thou wilt come hither."
36. These things Isaiah saw and told unto all that stood before him, and they praised. And he spake to Hezekiah the King and said: "I have spoken these things."
37. Both the end of this world;

## Ascension of Isaiah

38. And all this vision will be consummated in the last generations.

39. And Isaiah made him swear that he would not tell (it) to the people of Israel, nor give these words to any man to transcribe.

40. ...such things ye will read. and watch ye in the Holy Spirit in order they ye may receive your garments and thrones and crowns of glory which are laid up in the seventh heaven.

41. On account of these visions and prophecies Sammael Satan sawed in sunder Isaiah the son of Amoz, the prophet, by the hand of Manasseh.

42. And all these things Hezekiah delivered to Manasseh in the twenty-sixth year.

43. But Manasseh did not remember them nor place these things in his heart, but becoming the servant of Satan he was destroyed. Here endeth the vision of Isaiah the prophet with his ascension.

# Apocalypse of Zephania

## The Apocalypse of Zephania <sup>xii</sup>

After 100 B.C. & before A.D. 70

Clement, *Stromata* 5.11.77

### **The scene in the fifth heaven.**

**A** And a spirit took me and brought me up into the fifth heaven. And I saw angels who are called “lords.” And the diadem was set upon them in the Holy Spirit, and the throne of each of them was sevenfold more (brilliant) than the light of the rising sun. (And they were dwelling in the temples of salvation and singing hymns to the ineffable God.)

Sahidic fragment

### **The seer’s vision of a soul in torment.**

**B**<sub>1</sub>I saw a soul which five thousand angels punished and guarded. <sub>2</sub>They took it to the East and they brought it to the West. They beat its ... they gave it a hundred ... lashes for each one daily. <sub>3</sub>I was afraid and I cast myself upon my face so that my joints dissolved. <sub>4</sub>The angel helped me. He said unto me, “Be strong, O one who will triumph, and prevail so that thou wilt triumph over the accuser and thou wilt come up from Hades.” <sub>5</sub>And after I arose, I said, “Who is this whom they are punishing?” <sub>6</sub>He said unto me, “This is a soul which was found in its lawlessness.” And before it attained to repenting it was visited, and taken out of its body. <sub>7</sub>Truly, I, Zephaniah, saw these things in my vision.

### **The scene in a broad place.**

<sub>8</sub>And the angel of the Lord went with me. I saw a great broad place; thousands of thousands surrounded it on its left side and myriads of myriads on its right side. The form of each one was different. <sub>9</sub>Their hair was loose like that belonging to women. Their teeth were like the teeth of ...

Akhmimic Text

### **Fragment dealing with burial.**

**1**<sub>1</sub> ... dead. We will bury him like any man. <sub>2</sub>Whenever he dies, we will carry him out playing the cithera before him and chanting psalms and odes over his body.

## Apocalypse of Zephania

### Scenes from above the seer's city.

**2**<sub>1</sub>Now I went with the angel of the Lord, and he took me up (over) all my city. There was nothing before my eyes. **2**Then I saw two men walking together on one road. I watched them as they talked. **3**And, moreover, I also saw two women grinding together at a mill. And I watched them as they talked. **4**And I also saw two upon a bed, each one of them acting for their (mutual) ... upon a bed. **5**And I saw the whole inhabited world hanging like a drop of water which is suspended from a bucket when it comes up from a well. **6**I said unto the angel of the Lord. "Then does not darkness or night exist in this place?" **7**He said unto me, "No, because darkness existeth not in that place where the righteous and the saints are, but rather they always exist in the light."

**8**And I saw all the souls of men as they existed in punishment. **9**And I cried out to the Lord Almighty, "O God, if Thou remainest with the saints, Thou (certainly) hast compassion on behalf of the world and the souls which are in this punishment."

### Recording angels from Mount Seir.

**3**<sub>1</sub>The angel of the Lord said unto me, "Come, let me show thee the place of righteousness." **2**And he took me up upon Mount Seir and he showed me three men, as two angels walked with them rejoicing and exulting over them. **3**I said to the angel, "Of what sort are these?" **4**He said to me, "These are the three sons of Joatham, the priest, who neither kept the commandment of their father nor observed the ordinances of the Lord."

**5**Then I saw two other angels weeping over the three sons of Joatham, the priest. **6**I said, "O angel, who are these?" He said, "These are the angels of the Lord Almighty. They write down all the good deeds of the righteous upon their scrolls as they watch at the gate of heaven." **7**And I take them from their hands and bring them up before the Lord Almighty; He writeth their name in the Book of the Living. **8**Also the angels of the accuser who is upon the earth, they also write down all the sins of men upon their scrolls. **9**They also sit at the gate of heaven. They tell the accuser and he writeth them upon his scroll so that he might accuse them when they come out of the world (and go) down there."

### Ugly angels carry off the souls of ungodly men.

**4**<sub>1</sub>Then I walked with the angel of the Lord. I looked before me and I saw a place there. **2**Thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads of angels entered through it. **3**Their faces were like a leopard, their tusks being outside their mouth like wild boars. **4**Their eyes were mixed with blood. Their hair was loose like the hair of women, and fiery scourges were in their hands. **5**When I saw them, I was afraid. I said unto that angel who



## Apocalypse of Zephania

walked with me, “Of what sort are these?” <sup>6</sup>He said unto me, “These are the servants of all creation who come to the souls of ungodly men and bring them and leave them in this place. <sup>7</sup>They spend three days going around with them in the air before they bring them and cast them into their eternal punishment.”

<sup>8</sup>I said, “I beseech thee, O Lord, give them not authority to come to me.” <sup>9</sup>The angel said, “Fear not. I will not permit them to come to thee because thou art pure before the Lord. I will not permit them to come to thee because the Lord Almighty sent me unto thee because <thou> are pure before him.” <sup>10</sup>Then he beckoned to them, and they withdrew themselves and they ran from me.

### **The Heavenly city.**

<sup>1</sup>But I went with the angel of the Lord, and I looked in front of me and I saw gates. <sup>2</sup>Then when I approached them, I discovered that they were bronze gates. <sup>3</sup>The angel touched them and they opened before him. I entered with him and found its whole square like a beautiful city, and I walked in its midst. <sup>4</sup>Then the angel of the Lord transformed himself beside me in that place.

<sup>5</sup>Now I looked at them, and I discovered that they were bronze gates and bronze bolts and iron bars. <sup>6</sup>Now my mouth was shut therein. I beheld the bronze gates in front of me as fire was being cast forth for about fifty stadia.

### **The accuser and the angel Eremiel in Hades.**

<sup>1</sup>Again I turned back and walked, and I saw a great sea. <sup>2</sup>But I thought that it was a sea of water. I discovered that it was entirely a sea of flame like a slime which casteth forth much flame and whose waves burn sulfur and bitumen. <sup>3</sup>They began to approach me.

<sup>4</sup>Then I thought that the Lord Almighty had come to visit me. <sup>5</sup>Then when I saw, I fell upon my face before him in order that I might worship him. <sup>6</sup>I was very much afraid, and I entreated him that he might save me from this distress. <sup>7</sup>I cried out, saying, “Eloe, Lord, Adonai, Sabaoth. I beseech Thee to save me from this distress because it hath befallen me.”

<sup>8</sup>In that same instant I stood up, and I saw a great angel before me. His hair was spread out like that of lionesses'. His teeth were outside his mouth like a bear. His hair was spread out like women's. His body was like the serpent's when he wished to swallow me. <sup>9</sup>And when I saw him, I was afraid of him so that all the parts of my body were loosened and I fell upon my face. <sup>10</sup>I was unable to stand, and I prayed before the Lord Almighty, “Thou wilt save me from this distress. Thou art the one who saved Israel

## Apocalypse of Zephania

from the hand of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Thou saved Susanna from the hand of the elders of injustice. Thou saved the three holy men, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, from the furnace of burning fire. I beg you to save me from this distress.”

<sup>11</sup>Then I arose and stood, and I saw a great angel standing before me with his face shining like the rays of the sun in its glory since his face is like that which is perfected in its glory. <sup>12</sup>And he was girded as if a golden girdle were upon his breast. His feet were like bronze which is melted in a fire. <sup>13</sup>And when I saw him, I rejoiced, for I thought that the Lord Almighty had come to visit me. <sup>14</sup>I fell upon my face, and I worshiped him. <sup>15</sup>He said to me, “Take heed. Worship me not. I am not the Lord Almighty, but **am the great angel, Eremiel, who is over the abyss and Hades, the one in which all of the souls are imprisoned from the end of the Flood, which came upon the earth, until this day.**”

<sup>16</sup>Then I inquired of the angel, “What is the place to which I have come?” He said to me, “It is Hades.” <sup>17</sup>Then I asked him, “Who is the great angel who stands thus, whom I saw?” He said, “This is the one who accuses men in the presence of the Lord.”

### **The two scrolls.**

<sup>7</sup><sup>1</sup>Then I looked, and I saw him with a scroll in his hand. He began to unroll it. <sup>2</sup>Now after he had spread it out, I read it in my (own) language. I found that all my sins which I had done were written in it, those which I had done from my youth until this day. <sup>3</sup>They were all written upon that scroll of mine without there being a false word in them. <sup>4</sup>If I did not go to visit a sick man or a widow, I found it written down as a shortcoming upon my manuscript. <sup>5</sup>If I did not visit an orphan, it was found written down as a shortcoming on my scroll. <sup>6</sup>A day on which I did not fast (or) pray in the time of prayer I found written down as a failing upon my scroll. <sup>7</sup>And a day when I did not turn to the sons of Israel — since it is a shortcoming — I found written down upon my scroll <sup>8</sup>so that I threw myself upon my face and prayed before the Lord Almighty, “May thy mercy reach me and may thou wipe out my scroll because Thy mercy hath come to be in every place and hath filled every place.”

<sup>9</sup>Then I arose and stood, and I saw a great angel before me saying to me, “**Triumph, prevail because thou hast prevailed and hast triumphed over the accuser, and thou hast come up from Hades and the abyss. Thou wilt now cross over the crossing place.**”

<sup>10</sup>Again he brought another scroll which was written by hand. <sup>11</sup>He began to unroll it, and I read it, and found it written in my (own) language ...

### **Leaving Hades.**

## Apocalypse of Zephania

**two pages missing** (In the missing pages the author probably discussed the content of the second scroll, which should have recorded the good deeds of the seer. If the missing material is parallel to the preceding section, the reading of the scroll would be followed by a prayer — possibly a prayer of thanksgiving — and a pronouncement of triumph by a great angel. That would be followed by preparations for crossing over the river in a journey out of Hades. The section that follows begins after the arrival of a boat.)

**8** ... <sup>1</sup>They helped me and set me on that boat. <sup>2</sup>Thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads of angels gave praise before me. <sup>3</sup>I, myself, put on an angelic garment. I saw all of those angels praying. <sup>4</sup>I, myself, prayed together with them. <sup>5</sup>I knew their language, which they spoke with me. <sup>6</sup>Now, moreover, my sons, this is the trial because it is necessary that the good and the evil be weighed in a balance.

### **The 1st trumpet: triumph & visitation of the righteous.**

**9**<sup>1</sup>Then a great angel came forth having a golden trumpet in his hand, and he blew it three times over my head, saying, "Be courageous! O one who hath triumphed. Prevail! O one who hath prevailed. For thou hast triumphed over the accuser, and thou hast escaped from the abyss and Hades." <sup>2</sup>Thou wilt now cross over the crossing place. For thy name is written in the Book of the Living." <sup>3</sup>I wanted to embrace him, (but) I was unable to embrace the great angel because his glory is great.

<sup>4</sup>Then he ran to all the righteous ones, namely, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Enoch and Elijah and David. <sup>5</sup>He spoke with them as friend to friend speaking one with another.

### **A 2nd trumpet: opening of heaven & souls in torment.**

**10**<sup>1</sup>Then the great angel came to me with the golden trumpet in his hand, and he blew it up unto heaven. <sup>2</sup>Heaven opened from the place where the sun rises to where it sets, from the north to the south. <sup>3</sup>I saw the sea which I had seen at the bottom of Hades. Its waves came up to the clouds. <sup>4</sup>I saw all the souls sinking in it. I saw some whose hands were bound to their neck, with their hands and feet being fettered. <sup>5</sup>I said, "Who are these?" He said unto me, "These are the ones who were bribed and they were given gold and silver until the souls of men were led astray." <sup>6</sup>And I saw others covered with mats of fire. <sup>7</sup>I said, "Who are these?" He said unto me, "These are the ones who give money at interest, and they receive interest for interest." <sup>8</sup>And I also saw some blind ones crying out. And I was amazed when I saw all these works of God. <sup>9</sup>I said, "Who are these?" He said unto me, "These are catechumens who heard the word of God, but they were not perfected in the work which they heard." <sup>10</sup>And I said unto him, "Then have they not repentance here?" He said, "Yes," <sup>11</sup>I said, "How

## Apocalypse of Zephania

long?" He said unto me, "Until the day when the Lord will judge." <sup>12</sup>And I saw others with their hair on them. <sup>13</sup>I said, "Then there is hair and body in this place?" <sup>14</sup>He said, "Yes, the Lord gives body and hair to them as he desires."

### **The intercession of the saints for those in torment.**

<sup>11</sup>And I also saw multitudes. He brought them forth. <sup>2</sup>As they looked at all of the torments they called out, praying before the Lord Almighty, saying, "We pray unto Thee on account of those who are in all these torments so that Thou might have mercy on all of them." <sup>3</sup>And when I saw them, I said to the angel who spoke with me, "<Who are these?>" <sup>4</sup>He said, "These who beseech the Lord are Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. <sup>5</sup>Then at a certain hour daily they come forth with the great angel. He soundeth a trumpet up unto heaven and another soundeth upon the earth. <sup>6</sup>All the righteous hear the sound. They come running, praying to the Lord Almighty daily on behalf of these who are in all these torments."

### **Another trumpet: the coming wrath of God.**

<sup>12</sup>And again the great angel cometh forth with the golden trumpet in his hand blowing over the earth. <sup>2</sup>They hear (it) from the place of the sunrise to the place of the sunset and from the southern regions to the northern regions. <sup>3</sup>And again he blows (it) up unto heaven and its sound is heard. <sup>4</sup>I said, "O Lord, why left thou me not until I saw them all?" <sup>5</sup>He said unto me, "I have not authority to show them unto thee until the Lord Almighty riseth up in his wrath to destroy the earth and the heavens. <sup>6</sup>They will see and be disturbed, and they will all cry out, saying, 'All flesh which is ascribed to Thee we will give unto Thee on the day of the Lord.' <sup>7</sup>Who will stand in His presence when He riseth in His wrath <to destroy> the earth <and the heavens?> <sup>8</sup>Every tree which groweth upon the earth will be plucked up with its roots and fall down. And every high tower and the birds which fly will fall ... "

*four pages missing*

# Acts of Thomas

## The Acts of Thomas

**From "The Apocryphal New Testament"  
M.R. James-Translation and Notes  
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924**

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### **Introduction**

This is the only one of the five primary romances which we possess in its entirety. It is of great length and considerable interest. The Stichometry (see p. 24) gives it only 1,600 lines: this is far too little: it may probably apply only to a portion of the Acts, single episodes of which, in addition to the Martyrdom, may have been current separately. We do, in fact, find some separate miracles in some of the oriental versions.

There is a consensus of opinion among Syriac scholars that our Greek text of these Acts is a version from Syriac. The Syriac original was edited and translated by Wright in his Apocryphal Acts, and older fragments have since been published by Mrs. Lewis (*Horae Semiticae* IV, 1904. *Mythological Acts of the Apostles*).

My version is made from the Greek text, (Bonnet, 1903) with an eye on the Syriac as rendered by Wright and by Mrs. Lewis and Bevan.

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### ACTS OF THE HOLY APOSTLE THOMAS

**The First Act**, when he went into India with Abbanes the merchant.

At that season all we the apostles were at Jerusalem, Simon which is called Peter and Andrew his brother, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the publican, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Canaanite, and Judas the brother of James: and we divided the regions of the world, that every one of us should go unto the region that fell to him and unto the nation whereunto the Lord sent him.

According to the lot, therefore, India fell unto Judas Thomas, which is also the twin: but he would not go, saying that by reason of the weakness of the flesh he could not travel, and 'I am an Hebrew man; how can I go amongst the Indians and preach the truth?' And as he thus reasoned and spake, the

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Saviour appeared unto him by night and saith to him: Fear not, Thomas, go thou unto India and preach the word there, for my grace is with thee. But he would not obey, saying: Whither thou wouldest send me, send me, but elsewhere, for unto the Indians I will not go.

2 And while he thus spake and thought, it chanced that there was there a certain merchant come from India whose name was Abbanes, sent from the King Gundaphorus [Gundaphorus is a historical personage who reigned over a part of India in the first century after Christ. His coins bear his name in Greek, as Hyndopheres], and having commandment from him to buy a carpenter and bring him unto him.

Now the Lord seeing him walking in the market-place at noon said unto him: Wouldest thou buy a carpenter? And he said to him: Yea. And the Lord said to him: I have a slave that is a carpenter and I desire to sell him. And so saying he showed him Thomas afar off, and agreed with him for three litrae of silver unstamped, and wrote a deed of sale, saying: I, Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter, acknowledge that I have sold my slave, Judas by name, unto thee Abbanes, a merchant of Gundaphorus, king of the Indians. And when the deed was finished, the Saviour took Judas Thomas and led him away to Abbanes the merchant, and when Abbanes saw him he said unto him: Is this thy master? And the apostle said: Yea, he is my Lord. And he said: I have bought thee of him. And thy apostle held his peace.

3 And on the day following the apostle arose early, and having prayed and besought the Lord he said: I will go whither thou wilt, Lord Jesus: thy will be done. And he departed unto Abbanes the merchant, taking with him nothing at all save only his price. For the Lord had given it unto him, saying: Let thy price also be with thee, together with my grace, wheresoever thou goest.

And the apostle found Abbanes carrying his baggage on board the ship; so he also began to carry it aboard with him. And when they were embarked in the ship and were set down Abbanes questioned the apostle, saying: What craftsmanship knowest thou? And he said: In wood I can make ploughs and yokes and augers (ox-goads, Syr.), and boats and oars for boats and masts and pulleys; and in stone, pillars and temples and court-houses for kings. And Abbanes the merchant said to him: Yea, it is of such a workman that we have need. They began then to sail homeward; and they had a favourable wind, and sailed prosperously till they reached Andrapolis, a royal city.

4 And they left the ship and entered into the city, and lo, there were noises of flutes and water-organs, and trumpets sounded about them; and the apostle inquired, saying: What is this festival that is in this city? And they that were there said to him: Thee also have the gods brought to make

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merry in this city. For the king hath an only daughter, and now he giveth her in marriage unto an husband: this rejoicing, therefore, and assembly of the wedding to-day is the festival which thou hast seen. And the king hath sent heralds to proclaim everywhere that all should come to the marriage, rich and poor, bond and free, strangers and citizens: and if any refuse and come not to the marriage he shall answer for it unto the king. And Abbanes hearing that, said to the apostle: Let us also go, lest we offend the king, especially seeing we are strangers. And he said: Let us go.

And after they had put up in the inn and rested a little space they went to the marriage; and the apostle seeing them all set down (reclining), laid himself, he also, in the midst, and all looked upon him, as upon a stranger and one come from a foreign land: but Abbanes the merchant, being his master, laid himself in another place.

5 And as they dined and drank, the apostle tasted nothing; so they that were about him said unto him: Wherefore art thou come here, neither eating nor drinking? but he answered them, saying: I am come here for somewhat greater than the food or the drink, and that I may fulfil the king's will. For the heralds proclaim the king's message, and whoso hearkeneth not to the heralds shall be subject to the king's judgement.

So when they had dined and drunken, and garlands and unguents were brought to them, every man took of the unguent, and one anointed his face and another his beard and another other parts of his body; but the apostle anointed the top of his head and smeared a little upon his nostrils, and dropped it into his ears and touched his teeth with it, and carefully anointed the parts about his heart: and the wreath that was brought to him, woven of myrtle and other flowers, he took, and set it on his head, and took a branch of calamus and held it in his hand.

Now the flute-girl, holding her flute in her hand, went about to them all and played, but when she came to the place where the apostle was, she stood over him and played at his head for a long space: now this flute-girl was by race an Hebrew.

6 And as the apostle continued looking on the ground, one of the cup-bearers stretched forth his hand and gave him a buffet; and the apostle lifted up his eyes and looked upon him that smote him and said: My God will forgive thee in the life to come this iniquity, but in this world thou shalt show forth his wonders and even now shall I behold this hand that hath smitten me dragged by dogs. And having so said, he began to sing and to say this song:

The damsel is the daughter of light, in whom consisteth and dwelleth the proud brightness of kings, and the sight of her is delightful, she shineth with beauty and cheer. Her garments are like the flowers of spring, and

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from them a waft of fragrance is borne; and in the crown of her head the king is established which with his immortal food (ambrosia) nourisheth them that are founded upon him; and in her head is set truth, and with her feet she showeth forth joy. And her mouth is opened, and it becometh her well: thirty and two are they that sing praises to her. Her tongue is like the curtain of the door, which waveth to and fro for them that enter in: her neck is set in the fashion of steps which the first maker hath wrought, and her two hands signify and show, proclaiming the dance of the happy ages, and her fingers point out the gates of the city. Her chamber is bright with light and breatheth forth the odour of balsam and all spices, and giveth out a sweet smell of myrrh and Indian leaf, and within are myrtles strown on the floor, and of all manner of odorous flowers, and the door-posts(?) are adorned with freedst. 7 And surrounding her her groomsmen keep her, the number of whom is seven, whom she herself hath chosen. And her bridesmaids are seven, and they dance before her. And twelve in number are they that serve before her and are subject unto her, which have their aim and their look toward the bridegroom, that by the sight of him they may be enlightened; and for ever shall they be with her in that eternal joy, and shall be at that marriage whereto the princes are gathered together and shall attend at that banquet whereof the eternal ones are accounted worthy, and shall put on royal raiment and be clad in bright robes; and in joy and exultation shall they both be and shall glorify the Father of all, whose proud light they have received, and are enlightened by the sight of their lord; whose immortal food they have received, that hath no failing (excrementum, Syr.), and have drunk of the wine that giveth then neither thirst nor desire. And they have glorified and praised with the living spirit, the Father of truth and the mother of wisdom.

8 And when he had sung and ended this song, all that were there present gazed upon him; and he kept silence, and they saw that his likeness was changed, but that which was spoken by him they understood not, forasmuch as he was an Hebrew and that which he spake was said in the Hebrew tongue. But the flute-girl alone heard all of it, for she was by race an Hebrew and she went away from him and played to the rest, but for the most part she gazed and looked upon him, for she loved him well, as a man of her own nation; moreover he was comely to look upon beyond all that were there. And when the flute-girl had played to them all and ended, she sat down over against him, gazing and looking earnestly upon him. But he looked upon no man at all, neither took heed of any but only kept his eyes looking toward the ground, waiting the time when he might depart thence.

But the cup-bearer that had buffeted him went down to the well to draw water; and there chanced to be a lion there, and it slew him and left him lying in that place, having torn his limbs in pieces, and forthwith dogs seized his members, and among them one black dog holding his right hand in his mouth bare it into the place of the banquet.



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9 And all when they saw it were amazed and inquired which of them it was that was missing. And when it became manifest that it was the hand of the cup-bearer which had smitten the apostle, the flute-girl brake her flute and cast it away and went and sat down at the apostle's feet, saying: This is either a god or an apostle of God, for I heard him say in the Hebrew tongue: ' I shall now see the hand that hath smitten me dragged by dogs', which thing ye also have now beheld; for as he said, so hath it come about. And some believed her, and some not.

But when the king heard of it, he came and said to the apostle: Rise up and come with me, and pray for my daughter: for she is mine only-begotten, and to-day I give her in marriage. But the apostle was not willing to go with him, for the Lord was not yet revealed unto him in that place. But the king led him away against his will unto the bride-chamber that he might pray for them.

10 And the apostle stood, and began to pray and to speak thus: My Lord and my God, that travellest with thy servants, that guidest and correctest them that believe in thee, the refuge and rest of the oppressed, the hope of the poor and ransom of captives, the physician of the souls that lie sick and saviour of all creation, that givest life unto the world and strengthenest souls; thou knowest things to come, and by our means accomplishest them: thou Lord art he that revealeth hidden mysteries and maketh manifest words that are secret: thou Lord art the planter of the good tree, and of thine hands are all good works engendered: thou Lord art he that art in all things and passest through all, and art set in all thy works and manifested in the working of them all. Jesus Christ, Son of compassion and perfect saviour, Christ, Son of the living God, the undaunted power that hast overthrown the enemy, and the voice that was heard of the rulers, and made all their powers to quake, the ambassador that wast sent from the height and camest down even unto hell, who didst open the doors and bring up thence them that for many ages were shut up in the treasury of darkness, and showedst them the way that leadeth up unto the height: I beseech thee, Lord Jesu, and offer unto thee supplication for these young persons, that thou wouldest do for them the things that shall help them and be expedient and profitable for them. And he laid his hands on them and said: The Lord shall be with you, and left them in that place and departed.

11 And the king desired the groomsmen to depart out of the bride-chamber; and when all were gone out and the doors were shut, the bridegroom lifted up the curtain of the bride-chamber to fetch the bride unto him. And he saw the Lord Jesus bearing the likeness of Judas Thomas and speaking with the bride; even of him that but now had blessed them and gone out from them, the apostle; and he saith unto him: Wentest thou not out in the sight of all? how then art thou found here? But the Lord said to him: I am not Judas which is also called Thomas but I am his

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brother. And the Lord sat down upon the bed and bade them also sit upon chairs, and began to say unto them:

12 Remember, my children, what my brother spake unto you and what he delivered before you: and know this, that if ye abstain from this foul intercourse, ye become holy temples, pure, being quit of impulses and pains, seen and unseen, and ye will acquire no cares of life or of children, whose end is destruction: and if indeed ye get many children, for their sakes ye become grasping and covetous, stripping orphans and overreaching widows, and by so doing subject yourselves to grievous punishments. For the more part of children become useless oppressed of devils, some openly and some invisibly, for they become either lunatic or half withered or blind or deaf or dumb or paralytic or foolish; and if they be sound, again they will be vain, doing useless or abominable acts, for they will be caught either in adultery or murder or theft or fornication, and by all these will ye be afflicted.

But if ye be persuaded and keep your souls chaste before God, there will come unto you living children whom these blemishes touch not, and ye shall be without care, leading a tranquil life without grief or anxiety, looking to receive that incorruptible and true marriage, and ye shall be therein groomsmen entering into that bride-chamber which is full of immortality and light.

13 And when the young people heard these things, they believed the Lord and gave themselves up unto him, and abstained from foul desire and continued so, passing the night in that place. And the Lord departed from before them, saying thus: The grace of the Lord shall be with you.

And when the morning was come the king came to meet them and furnished a table and brought it in before the bridegroom and the bride. And he found them sitting over against each other and the face of the bride he found unveiled, and the bridegroom was right joyful.

And the mother came unto the bride and said: Why sittest thou so, child, and art not ashamed, but art as if thou hadst lived with thine husband a long season? And her father said: Because of thy great love toward thine husband dost thou not even veil thyself?

14 And the bride answered and said: Verily, father, I am in great love, and I pray my Lord that the love which I have perceived this night may abide with me, and I will ask for that husband of whom I have learned to-day: and therefore I will no more veil myself, because the mirror (veil) of shame is removed from me; and therefore am I no more ashamed or abashed, because the deed of shame and confusion is departed far from me; and that I am not confounded, it is because my astonishment hath not continued with me; and that I am in cheerfulness and joy, it is because the

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day of my joy hath not been troubled; and that I have set at nought this husband and this marriage that passeth away from before mine eyes, it is because I am joined in another marriage; and that I have had no intercourse with a husband that is temporal, whereof the end is with lasciviousness and bitterness of soul, it is because I am yoked unto a true husband.

15 And while the bride was saying yet more than this, the bridegroom answered and said: I give thee thanks, O Lord, that hast been proclaimed by the stranger, and found in us; who hast removed me far from corruption and sown life in me; who hast rid me of this disease that is hard to be healed and cured and abideth forever, and hast implanted sober health in me; who hast shown me thyself and revealed unto me all my state wherein I am; who hast redeemed me from falling and led me to that which is better, and set me free from temporal things and made me worthy of those that are immortal and everlasting; that hast made thyself lowly even down to me and my littleness, that thou mayest present me unto thy greatness and unite me unto thyself; who hast not withheld thine own bowels from me that was ready to perish, but hast shown me how to seek myself and know who I was, and who and in what manner I now am, that I may again become that which I was: whom I knew not, but thyself didst seek me out: of whom I was not aware, but thyself hast taken me to thee: whom I have perceived, and now am not able to be unmindful of him: whose love burneth within me, and I cannot speak it as is fit, but that which I am able to say of it is little and scanty, and not fitly proportioned unto his glory: yet he blameth me not that presume to say unto him even that which I know not: for it is because of his love that I say even this much.

16 Now when the king heard these things from the bridegroom and the bride, he rent his clothes and said unto them that stood by him: Go forth quickly and go about the whole city, and take and bring me that man that is a sorcerer who by ill fortune came unto this city; for with mine own hands I brought him into this house, and I told him to pray over this mine ill-starred daughter; and whoso findeth and bringeth him to me, I will give him whatsoever he asketh of me. They went, therefore and went about seeking him, and found him not; for he had set sail. They went also unto the inn where he had lodged and found there the flute-girl weeping and afflicted because he had not taken her with him. And when they told her the matter that had befallen with the young people she was exceeding glad at hearing it, and put away her grief and said: Now have I also found rest here. And she rose up and went unto them, and was with them a long time, until they had instructed the king also. And many of the brethren also gathered there until they heard the report of the apostle, that he was come unto the cities of India and was teaching there: and they departed and joined themselves unto him.

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**The Second Act:** concerning his coming unto the king Gundaphorus.

17 Now when the apostle was come into the cities of India with Abbanes the merchant, Abbanes went to salute the king Gundaphorus, and reported to him of the carpenter whom he had brought with him. And the king was glad, and commanded him to come in to him. So when he was come in the king said unto him: What craft understandest thou? The apostle said unto him: The craft of carpentering and of building. The king saith unto him: What craftsmanship, then, knowest thou in wood, and what in stone? The apostle saith: In wood: ploughs, yokes, goads, pulleys, and boats and oars and masts; and in stone: pillars, temples, and court-houses for kings. And the king said: Canst thou build me a palace? And he answered: Yea, I can both build and furnish it; for to this end am I come, to build and to do the work of a carpenter.

18 And the king took him and went out of the city gates and began to speak with him on the way concerning the building of the court-house, and of the foundations, how they should be laid, until they came to the place wherein he desired that the building should be; and he said: Here will I that the building should be. And the apostle said: Yea, for this place is suitable for the building. But the place was woody and there was much water there. So the king said: Begin to build. But he said: I cannot begin to build now at this season. And the king said: When canst thou begin? And he said: I will begin in the month Dios and finish in Xanthicus. But the king marvelled and said: Every building is builded in summer, and canst thou in this very winter build and make ready a palace? And the apostle said: Thus it must be, and no otherwise is it possible. And the king said: If, then, this seem good to thee, draw me a plan, how the work shall be, because I shall return hither after some long time. And the apostle took a reed and drew, measuring the place; and the doors he set toward the sunrising to look toward the light, and the windows toward the west to the breezes, and the bakehouse he appointed to be toward the south and the aqueduct for the service toward the north. And the king saw it and said to the apostle: Verily thou art a craftsman and it belitteth thee to be a servant of kings. And he left much money with him and departed from him.

19 And from time to time he sent money and provision, and victual for him and the rest of the workmen. But Thomas receiving it all dispensed it, going about the cities and the villages round about, distributing and giving alms to the poor and afflicted, and relieving them, saying: The king knoweth how to obtain recompense fit for kings, but at this time it is needful that the poor should have refreshment.

After these things the king sent an ambassador unto the apostle, and wrote thus: Signify unto me what thou hast done or what I shall send thee, or of what thou hast need. And the apostle sent unto him, saying: The palace (praetorium) is builded and only the roof remaineth. And the king hearing

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it sent him again gold and silver (lit. unstamped), and wrote unto him: Let the palace be roofed, if it is done. And the apostle said unto the Lord: I thank thee O Lord in all things, that thou didst die for a little space that I might live for ever in thee, and that thou hast sold me that by me thou mightest set free many. And he ceased not to teach and to refresh the afflicted, saying: This hath the Lord dispensed unto you, and he giveth unto every man his food: for he is the nourisher of orphans and steward of the widows, and unto all that are afflicted he is relief and rest.

20 Now when the king came to the city, he inquired of his friends concerning the palace which Judas that is called Thomas was building for him. And they told him: Neither hath he built a palace nor done aught else of that he promised to perform, but he goeth about the cities and countries, and whatsoever he hath he giveth unto the poor, and teacheth of a new God, and healeth the sick, and driveth out devils, and doeth many other wonderful things; and we think him to be a sorcerer. Yet his compassions and his cures which are done of him freely, and moreover the simplicity and kindness of him and his faith, do declare that he is a righteous man or an apostle of the new God whom he preacheth; for he fasteth continually and prayeth, and eateth bread only, with salt, and his drink is water, and he weareth but one garment alike in fair weather and in winter, and receiveth nought of any man, and that he hath he giveth unto others. And when the king heard that, he rubbed his face with his hands, and shook his head for a long space.

21 And he sent for the merchant which had brought him, and for the apostle, and said unto him: Hast thou built me the palace? And he said: Yea. And the king said: When, then, shall we go and see it? but he answered him and said: Thou canst not see it now, but when thou departest this life, then thou shalt see it. And the king was exceeding wroth, and commanded both the merchant and Judas which is called Thomas to be put in bonds and cast into prison until he should inquire and learn unto whom the king's money had been given, and so destroy both him and the merchant.

And the apostle went unto the prison rejoicing, and said to the merchant: Fear thou nothing, only believe in the God that is preached by me, and thou shalt indeed be set free from this world, but from the world to come thou shalt receive life. And the king took thought with what death he should destroy them. And when he had determined to flay them alive and burn them with fire, in the same night Gad the king's brother fell sick, and by reason of his vexation and the deceit which the king had suffered he was greatly oppressed; and sent for the king and said unto him: O king my brother, I commit unto thee mine house and my children; for I am vexed by reason of the provocation that hath befallen thee, and lo, I die; and if thou visit not with vengeance upon the head of that sorcerer, thou wilt give my soul no rest in hell. And the king said to his brother: All this night have

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I considered how I should put him to death and this hath seemed good to me, to flay him and burn him with fire, both him and the merchant which brought him (Syr. Then the brother of the king said to him: And if there be anything else that is worse than this, do it to him; and I give thee charge of my house and my children).

22 And as they talked together, the soul of his brother Gad departed. And the king mourned sore for Gad, for he loved him much, and commanded that he should be buried in royal and precious apparel (Syr. sepulchre). Now after this angels took the soul of Gad the king's brother and bore it up into heaven, showing unto him the places and dwellings that were there, and inquired of him: In which place wouldest thou dwell? And when they drew near unto the building of Thomas the apostle which he had built for the king, Gad saw it and said unto the angels: I beseech you, my lords, suffer me to dwell in one of the lowest rooms of these. And they said to him: Thou canst not dwell in this building. And he said: Wherefore? And they say unto him: This is that palace which that Christian builded for thy brother. And he said: I beseech you, my lords, suffer me to go to my brother, that I may buy this palace of him, for my brother knoweth not of what sort it is, and he will sell it unto me.

23 Then the angels let the soul of Gad go. And as they were putting his grave clothes upon him, his soul entered into him and he said to them that stood about him: Call my brother unto me, that I may ask one petition of him. Straightway therefore they told the king, saying: Thy brother is revived. And the king ran forth with a great company and came unto his brother and entered in and stood by his bed as one amazed, not being able to speak to him. And his brother said: I know and am persuaded, my brother, that if any man had asked of thee the half of thy kingdom, thou wouldest have given it him for my sake; therefore I beg of thee to grant me one favour which I ask of thee, that thou wouldest sell me that which I ask of thee. And the king answered and said: And what is it which thou askest me to sell thee? And he said: Convince me by an oath that thou wilt grant it me. And the king sware unto him: One of my possessions, whatsoever thou shalt ask, I will give thee. And he saith to him: Sell me that palace which thou hast in the heavens? And the king said: Whence should I have a palace in the heavens? And he said: Even that which that Christian built for thee which is now in the prison, whom the merchant brought unto thee, having purchased him of one Jesus: I mean that Hebrew slave whom thou desiredst to punish as having suffered deceit at his hand: whereat I was grieved and died, and am now revived.

24 Then the king considering the matter, understood it of those eternal benefits which should come to him and which concerned him, and said: That palace I cannot sell thee, but I pray to enter into it and dwell therein and to be accounted worthy of the inhabitants of it, but if thou indeed desirest to buy such a palace, lo, the man liveth and shall build thee one

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better than it. And forthwith he sent and brought out of prison the apostle and the merchant that was shut up with him, saying: I entreat thee, as a man that entreateth the minister of God, that thou wouldest pray for me and beseech him whose minister thou art to forgive me and overlook that which I have done unto thee or thought to do, and that I may become a worthy inhabiter of that dwelling for the which I took no pains, but thou hast builded it for me, labouring alone, the grace of thy God working with thee, and that I also may become a servant and serve this God whom thou preachest. And his brother also fell down before the apostle and said: I entreat and supplicate thee before thy God that I may become worthy of his ministry and service, and that it may fall to me to be worthy of the things that were shown unto me by his angels.

25 And the apostle, filled with joy, said: I praise thee, O Lord Jesu, that thou hast revealed thy truth in these men; for thou only art the God of truth, and none other, and thou art he that knoweth all things that are unknown to the most; thou, Lord, art he that in all things showest compassion and sparest men. For men by reason of the error that is in them have overlooked thee but thou hast not overlooked them. And now at my supplication and request do thou receive the king and his brother and join them unto thy fold, cleansing them with thy washing and anointing them with thine oil from the error that encompasseth them: and keep them also from the wolves, bearing them into thy meadows. And give them drink out of thine immortal fountain which is neither fouled nor drieth up; for they entreat and supplicate thee and desire to become thy servants and ministers, and for this they are content even to be persecuted of thine enemies, and for thy sake to be hated of them and to be mocked and to die, like as thou for our sake didst suffer all these things, that thou mightest preserve us, thou that art Lord and verily the good shepherd. And do thou grant them to have confidence in thee alone, and the succour that cometh of thee and the hope of their salvation which they look for from thee alone; and that they may be grounded in thy mysteries and receive the perfect good of thy graces and gifts, and flourish in thy ministry and come to perfection in thy Father.

26 Being therefore wholly set upon the apostle, both the king Gundaphorus and Gad his brother followed him and departed not from him at all, and they also relieved them that had need giving unto all and refreshing all. And they besought him that they also might henceforth receive the seal of the word, saying unto him: Seeing that our souls are at leisure and eager toward God, give thou us the seal; for we have heard thee say that the God whom thou preachest knoweth his own sheep by his seal. And the apostle said unto them: I also rejoice and entreat you to receive this seal, and to partake with me in this eucharist and blessing of the Lord, and to be made perfect therein. For this is the Lord and God of all, even Jesus Christ whom I preach, and he is the father of truth, in whom I have taught you to believe. And he commanded them to bring oil, that they

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might receive the seal by the oil. They brought the oil therefore, and lighted many lamps; for it was night (Syr. whom I preach: and the king gave orders that the bath should be closed for seven days, and that no man should bathe in it: and when the seven days were done, on the eighth day they three entered into the bath by night that Judas might baptize them. And many lamps were lighted in the bath).

27 And the apostle arose and sealed them. And the Lord was revealed unto them by a voice, saying: Peace be unto you brethren. And they heard his voice only, but his likeness they saw not, for they had not yet received the added sealing of the seal (Syr. had not been baptized). And the apostle took the oil and poured it upon their heads and anointed and chrismed them, and began to say (Syr. And Judas went up and stood upon the edge of the cistern and poured oil upon their heads and said):

Come, thou holy name of the Christ that is above every name.

Come, thou power of the Most High, and the compassion that is perfect.

Come, gift (charism) of the Most High.

Come, compassionate mother.

Come, communion of the male.

Come, she that revealeth the hidden mysteries.

Come, mother of the seven houses, that thy rest may be in the eighth house.

Come, elder of the five members, mind, thought, reflection, consideration, reason; communicate with these young men.

Come, holy spirit, and cleanse their reins and their heart, and give them the added seal, in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost.

And when they were sealed, there appeared unto them a youth holding a lighted torch, so that their lamps became dim at the approach of the light thereof. And he went forth and was no more seen of them. And the apostle said unto the Lord: Thy light, O Lord, is not to be contained by us, and we are not able to bear it, for it is too great for our sight.

And when the dawn came and it was morning, he brake bread and made them partakers of the eucharist of the Christ. And they were glad and rejoiced.



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And many others also, believing, were added to them, and came into the refuge of the Saviour.

28 And the apostle ceased not to preach and to say unto them: Ye men and women, boys and girls, young men and maidens, strong men and aged, whether bond or free, abstain from fornication and covetousness and the service of the belly: for under these three heads all iniquity cometh about. For fornication blindeth the mind and darkeneth the eyes of the soul, and is an impediment to the life (conversation) of the body, turning the whole man unto weakness and casting the whole body into sickness. And greed putteth the soul into fear and shame; being within the body it seizeth upon the goods of others, and is under fear lest if it restore other men's goods to their owner it be put to shame. And the service of the belly casteth the soul into thoughts and cares and vexations, taking thought lest it come to be in want, and have need of those things that are far from it. If, then, ye be rid of these ye become free of care and grief and fear, and that abideth with you which was said by the Saviour: Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Remember also that word of him of whom I spake: Look at the ravens and see the fowls of the heaven, that they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and God dispenseth unto them; how much more unto you, O ye of little faith? But look ye for his coming and have your hope in him and believe on his name. For he is the judge of quick and dead, and he giveth to every one according to their deeds, and at his coming and his latter appearing no man hath any word of excuse when he is to be judged by him, as though he had not heard. For his heralds do proclaim in the four quarters (climates) of the world. Repent ye, therefore, and believe the promise and receive the yoke of meekness and the light burden, that ye may live and not die. These things get, these keep. Come forth of the darkness that the light may receive you! Come unto him that is indeed good, that ye may receive grace of him and implant his sign in your souls.

29 And when he had thus spoken, some of them that stood by said: It is time for the creditor to receive the debt. And he said unto them: He that is lord of the debt desireth alway to receive more; but let us give him that which is due. And he blessed them, and took bread and oil and herbs and salt and blessed and gave unto them; but he himself continued his fast, for the Lord's Day was coming on (Syr. And he himself ate, because the Sunday was dawning).

And when night fell and he slept, the Lord came and stood at his head, saying: Thomas, rise early, and having blessed them all, after the prayer and the ministry go by the eastern road two miles and there will I show thee my glory: for by thy going shall many take refuge with me, and thou shalt bring to light the nature and power of the enemy. And he rose up from sleep and said unto the brethren that were with him: Children, the Lord would accomplish somewhat by me to-day, but let us pray, and

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entreat of him that we may have no impediment toward him, but that as at all times, so now also it may be done according to his desire and will by us. And having so said, he laid his hands on them and blessed them, and brake the bread of the eucharist and gave it them, saying: This encharist shall be unto you for compassion and mercy, and not unto judgement and retribution. And they said Amen.

### **Act the Third:** concerning the servant

30 And the apostle went forth to go where the Lord had bidden him; and when he was near to the second mile (stone) and had turned a little out of the way, he saw the body of a comely youth Iying, and said: Lord, is it for this that thou hast brought me forth, to come hither that I might see this (trial) temptation? thy will therefore be done as thou desirest. And he began to pray and to say: O Lord, the judge of quick and dead, of the quick that stand by and the dead that lie here, and master and father of all things; and father not only of the souls that are in bodies but of them that have gone forth of them, for of the souls also that are in pollutions (al. bodies) thou art lord and judge; come thou at this hour wherein I call upon thee and show forth thy glory upon him that lieth here. And he turned himself unto them that followed him and said: This thing is not come to pass without cause, but the enemy hath effected it and brought it about that he may assault (?) us thereby; and see ye that he hath not made use of another sort, nor wrought through any other creature save that which is his subject.

31 And when he had so said, a great (Syr. black) serpent (dragon) came out of a hole, beating with his head and shaking his tail upon the ground, and with (using) a loud voice said unto the apostle: I will tell before thee the cause wherefor I slew this man, since thou art come hither for that end, to reprove my works. And the apostle said: Yea, say on. And the serpent: There is a certain beautiful woman in this village over against us; and as she passed by me (or my place) I saw her and was enamoured of her, and I followed her and kept watch upon her; and I found this youth kissing her, and he had intercourse with her and did other shameful acts with her: and for me it was easy to declare them before thee, for I know that thou art the twin brother of the Christ and alway abolishest our nature (Syr. easy for me to say, but to thee I do not dare to utter them because I know that the ocean-flood of the Messiah will destroy our nature): but because I would not affright her, I slew him not at that time, but waited for him till he passed by in the evening and smote and slew him, and especially because he adventured to do this upon the Lord's day.

And the apostle inquired of him, saying: Tell me of what seed and of what race thou art. 32 And he said unto him: I am a reptile of the reptile nature and noxious son of the noxious father: of him that hurt and smote the four brethren which stood upright (om. Syr.: the elerments or four cardinal

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points may be meant) I am son to him that sitteth on a throne over all the earth that receiveth back his own from them that borrow: I am son to him that girdeth about the sphere: and I am kin to him that is outside the ocean, whose tail is set in his own mouth: I am he that entered through the barrier (fence) into paradise and spake with Eve the things which my father bade me speak unto her: I am he that kindled and inflamed Cain to kill his own brother, and on mine account did thorns and thistles grow up in the earth: I am he that cast down the angels from above and bound them in lusts after women, that children born of earth might come of them and I might work my will in them: I am he that hardened Pharaoh's heart that he should slay the children of Israel and enslave them with the yoke of cruelty: I am he that caused the multitude to err in the wilderness when they made the calf: I am he that inflamed Herod and enkindled Caiaphas unto false accusation of a lie before Pilate; for this was fitting to me: I am he that stirred up Judas and bribed him to deliver up the Christ: I am he that inhabiteth and holdeth the deep of hell (Tartarus), but the Son of God hath wronged me, against my will, and taken (chosen) them that were his own from me: I am kin to him that is to come from the east, unto whom also power is given to do what he will upon the earth.

33 And when that serpent had spoken these things in the hearing of all the people, the apostle lifted up his voice on high and said: Cease thou henceforth, O most shameless one, and be put to confusion and die wholly, for the end of thy destruction is come, and dare not to tell of what thou hast done by them that have become subject unto thee. And I charge thee in the name of that Jesus who until now contendeth with you for the men that are his own, that thou suck out thy venom which thou hast put into this man, and draw it forth and take it from him. But the serpent said: Not yet is the end of our time come as thou hast said. Wherefore compellest thou me to take back that which I have put into this man, and to die before my time? for mine own father, when he shall draw forth and suck out that which he hath cast into the creation, then shall his end come. And the apostle said unto him: Show, then, now the nature of thy father. And the serpent came near and set his mouth upon the wound of the young man and sucked forth the gall out of it. And by little and little the colour of the young man which was as purple, became white, but the serpent swelled up. And when the serpent had drawn up all the gall into himself, the young man leapt up and stood, and ran and fell at the apostle's feet: but the serpent being swelled up, burst and died, and his venom and gall were shed forth; and in the place where his venom was shed there came a great gulf, and that serpent was swallowed up therein. And the apostle said unto the king and his brother: Take workmen and fill up that place, and lay foundations and build houses upon them, that it may be a dwelling-place for strangers.

34 But the youth said unto the apostle with many tears: Wherein have I sinned against thee? for thou art a man that hast two forms, and

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wheresoever thou wilt, there thou art found, and art restrained of no man, as I behold. For I saw that man that stood by thee and said unto thee: I have many wonders to show forth by thy means and I have great works to accomplish by thee, for which thou shalt receive a reward; and thou shalt make many to live, and they shall be in rest in light eternal as children of God. Do thou then, saith he, speaking unto thee of me, quicken this youth that hath been stricken of the enemy and be at all times his overseer. Well, therefore, art thou come hither, and well shalt thou depart again unto him, and yet he never shall leave thee at any time. But I am become without care or reproach: and he hath enlightened me from the care of the night and I am at rest from the toil of the day: and I am set free from him that provoked me to do thus, sinning against him that taught me to do contrary thereto: and I have lost him that is the kinsman of the night that compelled me to sin by his own deeds, and have found him that is of the light, and is my kinsman. I have lost him that darkeneth and blindeth his own subjects that they may not know what they do and, being ashamed at their own works, may depart from him, and their works come to an end; and have found him whose works are light and his deeds truth, which if a man doeth he repenteth not of them. And I have left him with whom Iying abideth, and before whom darkness goeth as a veil, and behind him followeth shame, shameless in indolence; and I have found him that showeth me fair things that I may take hold on them, even the son of the truth that is akin unto concord, who scattereth away the mist and enlighteneth his own creation, and healeth the wounds thereof and overthroweth the enemies thereof. But I beseech thee, O man of God, cause me to behold him again, and to see him that is now become hidden from me, that I may also hear his voice whereof I am not able to express the wonder, for it belongeth not to the nature of this bodily organ.

*[Before this speech Syr. (Wright) inserts one of equal length, chiefly about man's free will and fall. But the fifth-century palimpsest edited by Mrs. Lewis agrees with the Greek.]*

35 And the apostle answered him, saying: If thou depart from these things whereof thou hast received knowledge, as thou hast said, and if thou know who it is that hath wrought this in thee, and learn and become a hearer of him whom now in thy fervent love thou seekest; thou shalt both see him and be with him for ever, and in his rest shalt thou rest, and shalt be in his joy. But if thou be slackly disposed toward him and turn again unto thy former deeds, and leave that beauty and that bright countenance which now was showed thee, and forget the shining of his light which now thou desirest, not only wilt thou be bereaved of this life but also of that which is to come and thou wilt depart unto him whom thou saidst thou hadst lost, and will no more behold him whom thou saidst thou hadst found.

36 And when the apostle had said this, he went into the city holding the hand of that youth, and saying unto him: These things which thou hast

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seen, my child, are but a few of the many which God hath, for he doth not give us good tidings concerning these things that are seen, but greater things than these doth he promise us; but so long as we are in the body we are not able to speak and show forth those which he shall give unto our souls. If we say that he giveth us light, it is this which is seen, and we have it: and if we say it of wealth, which is and appeareth in the world, we name it (we speak of something which is in the world, Syr.), and we need it not, for it hath been said: Hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven: and if we speak of apparel of raiment wherewith they that are luxurious in this life are clad, it is named (we mention something that nobles wear, Syr.), and it hath been said: They that wear soft raiment are in the houses of kings. And if of costiy banquets, concerning these we have received a commandment to beware of them, not to be weighed down With revelling and drunkenness and cares of this life -speaking of things that are- and it hath been said: Take no thought for your life (soul), what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, neither for your body, what ye shall put on, for the soul is more than the meat and the body than the raiment. And of rest, if we speak of this temporal rest, a judgement is appointed for this also. But we speak of the world which is above, of God and angels, of watchers and holy ones of the immortal (ambrosial) food and the drink of the true vine, of raiment that endureth and groweth not old, of things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of sinful men, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Of these things do we converse and of these do we bring good tidings. Do thou therefore also believe on him that thou mayest live, and put thy trust in him, and thou shalt not die. For he is not persuaded with gifts, that thou shouldest offer them to him, neither is he in need of sacrifices, that thou shouldest sacrifice unto him. But look thou unto him, and he will not overlook thee; and turn unto him, and he will not forsake thee. For his comeliness and his beauty will make thee wholly desirous to love him: and indeed he permitteth thee not to turn thyself away.

37 And when the apostle had said these things unto that youth, a great multitude joined themselves unto them. And the apostle looked and saw them raising themselves on high that they might see him, and they were going up into high places; and the apostle said unto them: Ye men that are come unto the assembly of Christ, and would believe on Jesus, take example hereby, and see that if ye be not lifted up, ye cannot see me who am little, and are not able to spy me out who am like unto you. If, then, ye cannot see me who am like you unless ye lift yourselves up a little from the earth, how can ye see him that dwelleth in the height and now is found in the depth, unless ye first lift yourselves up out of your former conversation, and your unprofitable deeds, and your desires that abide not, and the wealth that is left here, and the possession of earth that groweth old, and the raiment that corrupteth, and the beauty that waxeth old and vanisheth away, and yet more out of the whole body wherein all these things are stored up, and which groweth old and becometh dust,

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returning unto its own nature? For it is the body which maintaineth all these things. But rather believe on our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we preach, that your hope may be in him and in him ye may have life world without end, that he may become your fellow traveler in this land of error, and may be to you an harbour in this troublous sea. And he shall be to you a fountain springing up in this thirsty land and a chamber full of food in this place of them that hunger, and a rest unto your souls, yea, and a physician for your bodies.

38 Then the multitude of them that were gathered together hearing these things wept, and said unto the apostle: O man of God, the God whom thou preachest, we dare not say that we are his, for the works which we have done are alien unto him and not pleasing to him; but if he will have compassion on us and pity us and save us, overlooking our former deeds, and will set us free from the evils which we committed being in error, and not impute them unto us nor make remembrance of our former sins, we will become his servants and will accomplish his will unto the end. And the apostle answered them and said: He reckoneth not against you, neither taketh account of the sins which ye committed being in error, but overlooketh your transgressions which ye have done in ignorance.

### **The Fourth Act:** concerning the colt

39 And while the apostle yet stood in the highway and spake with the multitude, A she ass's colt came and stood before him (Syr. adds, And Judas said: It is not without the direction of God that this colt has come hither. But to thee I say, O colt that by the grace of our Lord there shall be given to thee speech before these multitudes who are standing here; and do thou say whatsoever thou wilt, that they may believe in the God of truth whom we preach. And the mouth of the colt was opened, and it spake by the power of our Lord and said to him) and opened its mouth and said: Thou twin of Christ, apostle of the Most High and initiate in the hidden word of Christ who receivest his secret oracles, fellow worker with the Son of God, who being free hast become a bondman, and being sold hast brought many into liberty. Thou kinsman of the great race that hath condemned the enemy and redeemed his own, that hast become an occasion of life unto man in the land of the Indians; for thou hast come (against thy will, Syr.) unto men that were in error, and by thy appearing and thy divine words they are now turning unto the God of truth which sent thee: mount and sit upon me and repose thyself until thou enter into the city. And the apostle answered and said: O Jesu Christ (Son) that understandest the perfect mercy! O tranquillity and quiet that now art spoken of (speakest, Syr.) by (among) brute beasts! O hidden rest, that art manifested by thy working, Saviour of us and nourisher, keeping us and resting in alien bodies! O Saviour of our souls! spring that is sweet and unfailing; fountain secure and clear and never polluted; defender and helper in the fight of thine own servants, turning away and scaring the

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enemy from us, that fightest in many battles for us and makest us conquerors in all; our true and undefeated champion (athlete); our holy and victorious captain: glorious and giving unto thine own a joy that never passeth away, and a relief wherein is none affliction; good shepherd that givest thyself for thine own sheep, and hast vanquished the wolf and redeemed thine own lambs and led them into a good pasture: we glorify and praise thee and thine invisible Father and thine holy spirit [and] the mother of all creation.

40 And when the apostle had said these things, all the multitude that were there looked upon him, expecting to hear what he would answer to the colt. And the apostle stood a long time as it were astonished, and looked up into heaven and said to the colt: Of whom art thou and to whom belongest thou? for marvellous are the things that are shown forth by thy mouth, and amazing and such as are hidden from the many. And the colt answered and said: I am of that stock that served Balaam, and thy lord also and teacher sat upon one that appertained unto me by race. And I also have now been sent to give thee rest by thy sitting upon me: and (that) I may receive (Syr. these may be confirmed in) faith, and unto me may be added that portion which now I shall receive by thy service wherewith I serve thee; and when I have ministered unto thee, it shall be taken from me. And the apostle said unto him: He is able who granted thee this gift, to cause it to be fulfilled unto the end in thee and in them that belong unto thee by race: for as to this mystery I am weak and powerless. And he would not sit upon him. But the colt besought and entreated him that he might be blessed of him by ministering unto him. Then the apostle mounted him and sat upon him; and they followed him, some going before and some following after, and all of them ran, desiring to see the end, and how he would dismiss the colt.

41 But when he came near to the city gates he dismounted from him, saying: Depart, and be thou kept safe where thou wert. And straightway the colt fell to the ground at the apostle's feet and died. And all they that were present were sorry and said to the apostle: Bring him to life and raise him up. But he answered and said unto them: I indeed am able to raise him by the name of Jesus Christ: but this is by all means expedient (or, this is by any means expedient). For he that gave him speech that he might talk was able to cause that he should not die; and I raise him not, not as being unable, but because this is that which is expedient and profitable for him. And he bade them that were present to dig a trench and bury his body and they did as they were commanded.

**The Fifth Act:** concerning the devil that took up his abode in the woman

42 And the apostle entered into the city and all the multitude followed him. And he thought to go unto the parents of the young man whom he had made alive when he was slain by the serpent: for they earnestly

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besought him to come unto them and enter into their house. But a very beautiful woman on a sudden uttered an exceeding loud cry, saying: O Apostle of the new God that art come into India, and servant of that holy and only good God; for by thee is he preached, the Saviour of the souls that come unto him, and by thee are healed the bodies of them that are tormented by the enemy, and thou art he that is become an occasion of life unto all that turn unto him: command me to be brought before thee that I may tell thee what hath befallen me, and peradventure of thee I may have hope, and these that stand by thee may be more confident in the God whom thou preachest. For I am not a little tormented by the adversary now this five years' space [one Greek MS. And the apostle bade her come unto him, and the woman stood before him and said: I, O servant of him that is indeed God am a woman: the rest have, As a woman] I was sitting at the first in quiet, and peace encompassed me on every side and I had no care for anything, for I took no thought for any other. 43 And it fell out one day that as I came out from the bath there met me a man troubled and disturbed, and his voice and speech seemed to me exceeding faint and dim; and he stood before me and said: I and thou will be in one love and we will have intercourse together as a man with his wife; And I answered and said to him: I never had to do with my betrothed, for I refused to marry, and how shall I yield myself to thee that wouldest have intercourse with me in adulterous wise? And having so said, I passed on, and I said to my handmaid that was with me: Sawest thou that youth and his shamelessness, how boldly he spake with me, and had no shame? but she said to me: I saw an old man speaking to thee. And when I was in mine house and had dined my soul suggested unto me some suspicion and especially because he was seen of me in two forms; and having this in my mind I fell asleep. He came, therefore, in that night and was joined unto me in his foul intercourse. And when it was day I saw him and fled from him, and on the night following that he came and abused me; and now as thou seest me I have spent five years being troubled by him, and he hath not departed from me. But I know and am persuaded that both devils and spirits and destroyers are subject unto thee and are filled with trembling at thy prayers: pray thou therefore for me and drive away from me the devil that ever troubleth me, that I also may be set free and be gathered unto the nature that is mine from the beginning, and receive the grace that hath been given unto my kindred.

44 And the apostle said: O evil that cannot be restrained! O shamelessness of the enemy! O envious one that art never at rest! O hideous one that subdueth the comely! O thou of many forms! As he will he appeareth, but his essence cannot be changed. O the crafty and faithless one! O the bitter tree whose fruits are like unto him! O the devil that overcometh them that are alien to him! O the deceit that useth impudence! O the wickedness that creepeth like a serpent, and that is of his kindred! (Syr. wrongly adds a clause bidding the devil show himself.) And when the apostle said this, the malicious one came and stood before him, no man seeing him save the



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woman and the apostle, and with an exceeding loud voice said in the hearing of all: 45 What have we to do with thee, thou apostle of the Most High! What have we to do with thee, thou servant of Jesus Christ? What have we to do with thee, thou counsellor of the holy Son of God? Wherefore wilt thou destroy us, whereas our time is not yet come? Wherefore wilt thou take away our power? for unto this hour we had hope and time remaining to us. What have we to do with thee? Thou hast power over thine own, and we over ours. Wherefore wilt thou act tyrannously against us, when thou thyself teachest others not to act tyrannously? Wherefore dost thou crave other men's goods and not suffice thyself with thine own? Wherefore art thou made like unto the Son of God which hath done us wrong? for thou resemblest him altogether as if thou wert born of him. For we thought to have brought him under the yoke like as we have the rest, but he turned and made us subject unto him: for we knew him not; but he deceived us with his form of all uncomeliness and his poverty and his neediness: for seeing him to be such, we thought that he was a man wearing flesh, and knew not that it is he that giveth life unto men. And he gave us power over our own, and that we should not in this present time leave them but have our walk in them: but thou wouldest get more than thy due and that which was given thee, and afflict us altogether.

46 And having said this the devil wept, saying: I leave thee, my fairest consort, whom long since I found and rested in thee; I forsake thee, my sure sister, my beloved in whom I was well pleased. What I shall do I know not, or on whom I shall call that he may hear me and help me. I know what I will do: I will depart unto some place where the report of this man hath not been heard, and peradventure I shall call thee, my beloved by another name (Syr. for thee my beloved I shall find a substitute). And he lifted up his voice and said: Abide in peace for thou hast taken refuge with one greater than I, but I will depart and seek for one like thee, and if I find her not, I will return unto thee again: for I know that whilst thou art near unto this man thou hast a refuge in him, but when he departeth thou wilt be such as thou wast before he appeared, and him thou wilt forget, and I shall have opportunity and confidence: but now I fear the name of him that hath saved thee. And having so said the devil vanished out of sight: only when he departed fire and smoke were seen there: and all that stood there were astonished.

47 And the apostle seeing it, said unto them: This devil hath shown nought that is alien or strange to him, but his own nature, wherein also he shall be consumed, for verily the fire shall destroy him utterly and the smoke of it shall be scattered abroad. And he began to say:

Jesu, the hidden mystery that hath been revealed unto us, thou art he that hast shown unto us many mysteries; thou that didst call me apart from all my fellows and spakest unto me three (one, Syr.) words wherewith I am inflamed, and am not able to speak them unto others. Jesu, man that wast

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slain, dead buried! Jesu, God of God, Saviour that quickenest the dead, and healest the sick! Jesu, that wert in need like and savest as one that hath no need, that didst catch the fish for the breakfast and the dinner and madest all satisfied with a little bread. Jesu, that didst rest from the weariness of wayfaring like a man, and walkedst on the waves like a God. 48 Jesu most high, voice arising from perfect mercy, Saviour of all, the right hand of the light, overthrowing the evil one in his own nature, and gathering all his nature into one place; thou of many forms, that art only begotten, first-born of many brethren God of the Most High God, man despised until now (Syr. and humble). Jesu Christ that neglectest us not when we call upon thee, that art become an occasion of life unto all mankind, that for us wast judged and shut up in prison, and loosest all that are in bonds, that wast called a deceiver and redeemest thine own from error: I beseech thee for these that stand here and believe on thee, for they entreat to obtain thy gifts, having good hope in thy help, and having their refuge in thy greatness; they hold their hearing ready to listen unto the words that are spoken by us. Let thy peace come and tabernacle in them and renew them from their former deeds, and let them put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new that now is proclaimed unto them by me.

49 And he laid his hands on them and blessed them, saying: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be upon you for ever. And they said, Amen. And the woman besought him, saying: O apostle of the Most High, give me the seal, that that enemy return not again unto me. Then he caused her to come near unto him (Syr. went to a river which was close by there), and laid his hands upon her and sealed her in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; and many others also were sealed with her. And the apostle bade his minister (deacon) to set forth a table; and he set forth a stool which they found there, and spread a linen cloth upon it and set on the bread of blessing; and the apostle stood by it and said: Jesu, that hast accounted us worthy to partake of the eucharist of thine holy body and blood, lo, we are bold to draw near unto thine eucharist and to call upon thine holy name: come thou and communicate unto us (Syr. adds more).

50 And he began to say: Come, O perfect compassion, Come O communion of the male, Come, she that knoweth the mysteries of him that is chosen, Come, she that hath part in all the combats of the noble champion (athlete), Come, the silence that revealeth the great things of the whole greatness, Come, she that manifesteth the hidden things and maketh the unspeakable things plain, the holy dove that beareth the twin young, Come, the hidden mother, Come, she that is manifest in her deeds and giveth joy and rest unto them that are joined unto her: Come and communicate with us in this eucharist which we celebrate in thy name and in the love-feast wherein we are gathered together at thy calling. (Syr. has other clauses and not few variants.) And having so said he marked out the cross upon the bread, and brake it, and began to distribute it. And first he

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gave unto the woman, saying: This shall be unto thee for remission of sins and eternal transgressions (Syr. and for the everlasting resurrection). And after her he gave unto all the others also which had received the seal (Syr. and said to them: Let this eucharist be unto you for life and rest, and not for judgement and vengeance. And they said, Amen. Cf. 29 fin.).

**The Sixth Act:** of the youth that murdered the Woman.

51 Now there was a certain youth who had wrought an abominable deed, and he came near and received of the eucharist with his mouth: but his two hands withered up, so that he could no more put them unto his own mouth. And they that were there saw him and told the apostle what had befallen; and the apostle called him and said unto him: Tell me, my child, and be not ashamed, what was it that thou didst and camest hither? for the eucharist of the Lord hath convicted thee. For this gift which passeth among many doth rather heal them that with faith and love draw near thereto, but thee it hath withered away; and that which is come to pass hath not befallen without some effectual cause. And the Youth, being convicted by the eucharist of the Lord, came and tell at the apostle's feet and besought him, saying: I have done an evil deed, yet I thought to do somewhat good. I was enamoured of a woman that dwelleth at an inn without the city, and she also loved me; and when I heard of thee and believed, that thou proclaimest a living God, I came and received of thee the seal with the rest; for thou saidst: Whosoever shall partake in the polluted union, and especially in adultery, he shall not have life with the God whom I preach. Whereas therefore I loved her much, I entreated her and would have persuaded her to become my consort in chastity and pure conversation, which thou also teachest: but she would not. When, therefore, she consented not, I took a sword and slew her: for I could not endure to see her commit adultery with another man.

52 When the apostle heard this he said: O insane union how ruinest thou unto shamelessness! O unrestrained lust, how hast thou stirred up this man to do this! O work of the serpent, how art thou enraged against thine own! And the apostle bade water to be brought to him in a bason; and when the water was brought, he said: Come, ye waters from the living waters, that were sent unto us, the true from the true, the rest that was sent unto us from the rest, the power of salvation that cometh from that power which conquereth all things and subdueth them unto its own will: come and dwell in these waters, that the gift of the Holy Ghost may be perfectly consummated in them. And he said unto the youth: Go, wash thy hands in these waters. And when he had washed they were restored; and the apostle said unto him: Believest thou in our Lord Jesus Christ that he is able to do all things? And he said: Though I be the least, yet I believe. But I committed this deed thinking that I was doing somewhat good: for I besought her as I told thee, but she would not obey me, to keep herself chaste.

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53 And the apostle said to him: Come, let us go unto the inn where thou didst commit this deed. And the youth went before the apostle in the way, and when they came to the inn, they found her lying dead. And the apostle when he saw her was sorry, for she was a comely girl. And he commanded her to be brought into the midst of the inn: and they laid her on a bed and brought her forth and set her down in the midst of the court of the inn. And the apostle laid his hand upon her and began to say: Jesu, who always showest thyself unto us; for this is thy will, that we should at all times seek thee, and thyself hast given us this power, to ask and to receive, and hast not only permitted this, but hast taught us to pray: who art not seen of our bodily eyes, but art never hidden from the eyes of our soul, and in thine aspect art concealed, but in thy works art manifested unto us: and in thy many acts we have known thee so far as we are able, and thyself hast given us thy gifts without measure, saying: Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you: we beseech thee, therefore, having the fear (suspicion) of our sins; and we ask of thee, not riches, not gold, not silver, not possessions, not aught else of the things which come of the earth and return again unto the earth; but this we ask of thee and entreat, that in thine holy name thou wouldest raise up the woman that lieth here, by thy power, to the glory and faith of them that stand by.

54 And he said unto the youth (Syr. ' Stretch thy mind towards our Lord,' and he signed him with the cross), having signed (sealed) him: Go and take hold on her hand and say unto her: I with my hands slew thee with iron, and with my hands in the faith of Jesus I raise thee up. So the youth went to her and stood by her, saying: I have believed in thee, Christ Jesu. And he looked unto Judas Thomas the apostle and said to him: Pray for me that my Lord may come to my help, whom I also call upon. And he laid his hand upon her hand and said: Come, Lord Jesu Christ: unto her grant thou life and unto me the earnest of faith in thee. And straightway as he drew her hand she sprang up and sat up, looking upon the great company that stood by. And she saw the apostle also standing over against her, and leaving the bed she leapt forth and fell at his feet and caught hold on his raiment, saying: I beseech thee, my lord where is that other that was with thee, who left me not to remain in that fearful and cruel place, but delivered me unto thee, saying: Take thou this woman, that she may be made perfect, and hereafter be gathered into her place?

### Vision of the Sufferings of Hell

55 And the apostle said unto her: Relate unto us where thou hast been. And she answered: Dost thou who wast with me and unto whom I was delivered desire to hear? And she began to say: *[This description of hell-*

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*tourments is largely derived from the Apocalypse of Peter* / A man took me who was hateful to look upon altogether black, and his raiment exceedingly foul, and took me away to a place wherein were many pits (chasms), and a great stench and hateful odour issued thence. And he caused me to look into every pit, and I saw in the (first) pit flaming fire, and wheels of fire ran round there, and souls were hanged upon those wheels, and were dashed (broken) against each other; and very great crying and howling was there, and there was none to deliver. And that man said to me: These souls are of thy tribe, and when the number of their days is accomplished (lit. in the days of the number) they are (were) delivered unto torment and affliction, and then are others brought in in their stead, and likewise these into another place. These are they that have reversed the intercourse of male and female. And I looked and saw infants heaped one upon another and struggling with each other as they lay on them. And he answered and said to me: These are the children of those others, and therefore are they set here for a testimony against them. (Syr. omits this clause of the children, and lengthens and dilutes the preceding speech.)

56 And he took me unto another pit, and I stooped and looked and saw mire and worms welling up, and souls wallowing there, and a great gnashing of teeth was heard thence from them. And that man said unto me: These are the souls of women which forsook their husbands and committed adultery with others, and are brought into this torment. Another pit he showed me whereinto I stooped and looked and saw souls hanging, some by the tongue, some by the hair, some by the hands, and some head downward by the feet, and tormented (smoked) with smoke and brimstone; concerning whom that man that was with me answered me: The souls which are hanged by the tongue are slanderers, that uttered lying and shameful words, and were not ashamed, and they that are hanged by the hair are unblushing ones which had no modesty and went about in the world bareheaded; and they that are hanged by the hands, these are they that took away and stole other men's goods, and never gave aught to the needy nor helped the afflicted, but did so, desiring to take all, and had no thought at all of justice or of the law; and they that hang upside down by the feet, these are they that lightly and readily ran in evil ways and disorderly paths, not visiting the sick nor escorting them that depart this life, and therefore each and every soul receiveth that which was done by it. (Syr. omits almost the whole section.)

57 Again he took me and showed me a cave exceeding dark, breathing out a great stench, and many souls were looking out desiring to get somewhat of the air, but their keepers suffered them not to look forth. And he that was with me said: This is the prison of those souls which thou sawest: for when they have fulfilled their torments for that which each did, thereafter do others succeed them: and there be some that are wholly consumed and (some, Syr.) that are delivered over unto other torments. And they that kept the souls which were in the dark cave said unto the man that had

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taken me: Give her unto us that we may bring her in unto the rest until the time cometh for her to be delivered unto torment. But he answered them: I give her not unto you, for I fear him that delivered her to me: for I was not charged to leave her here, but I take her back with me until I shall receive order concerning her. And he took me and brought me unto another place wherein were men being sharply tormented (Syr. where men were). And he that was like unto thee took me and delivered me to thee, saying thus to thee: Take her, for she is one of the sheep that have gone astray. And I was taken by thee, and now am I before thee. I beseech thee, therefore, and supplicate that I may not depart unto those places of punishment which I have seen.

58 And the apostle said: Ye have heard what this woman hath related: and there are not these torments only, but others also, worse than these; and ye, if ye turn not unto this God whom I preach, and abstain from your former works and the deeds which ye committed without knowledge, shall have your end in those torments. Believe therefore on Christ Jesus, and he will forgive you the sins ye have committed hitherto, and will cleanse you from all your bodily lusts that abide on the earth, and will heal you of all your trespasses which follow you and depart with you and are found upon (before) you. Put off therefore every one of you the old man, and put on the new, and forsake your former walk and conversation; and let them that stole steal no more, but live by labouring and working; and let the adulterous no more fornicate, lest they deliver themselves unto eternal torment; for adultery is before God exceeding evil beyond other sins. And put away from you covetousness and lying and drunkenness and slandering, and render not evil for evil: for all these things are strange and alien unto the God who is preached by me: but rather walk ye in faith and meekness and holiness and hope, wherein God delighteth, that ye may become his own, expecting of him the gifts which some few only do receive.

59 All the people therefore believed and gave their souls obediently unto the living God and Christ Jesus, rejoicing in the blessed works of the Most High and in his holy service. And they brought much money for the service of the widows: for the apostle had them gathered together in the cities, and unto all of them he sent provision by his own ministers (deacons), both clothes and nourishment. And he himself ceased not preaching and speaking to them and showing that this is Jesus Christ whom the scriptures proclaimed, who is come and was crucified, and raised the third day from the dead. And next he showed them plainly, beginning from the prophets, the things concerning the Christ, that it was necessary that he should come, and that in him should be accomplished all things that were foretold of him. And the fame of him went forth into all the cities and countries, and all that had sick or them that were oppressed by unclean spirits brought them, and some they laid in the way whereby he should pass, and he healed them all by the power of the Lord. Then all that were

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healed by him said with one accord: Glory be to thee, Jesu, who hast granted us all alike healing through thy servant and apostle Thomas. And now being whole and rejoicing, we beseech thee that we may be of thy flock, and be numbered among thy sheep; receive us therefore, Lord, and impute not unto us our transgressions and our former faults which we committed being in ignorance.

60 And the apostle said: Glory be to the only-begotten of the Father! Glory be to the first-born of many brethren! Glory be to thee, the defender and helper of them that come unto thy refuge! that sleepest not, and awakest them that are asleep that livest and givest life to them that lie in death! O God Jesu Christ, Son of the living God, redeemer and helper, refuge and rest of all that are weary (labour) in thy work, giver of healing to them that for thy name's sake bear the burden and heat of the day: we give thanks for (to) the gifts that are given us of thee and granted us by thy help and thy dispensation that cometh unto us from thee.

61 Perfect thou therefore these things in us unto the end that we may have the boldness that is in thee: look upon us for for thy sake have we forsaken our homes and our parents, and for thy sake have we gladly and willingly become strangers: look upon us, Lord, for we have forsaken our own possessions for thy sake, that we might gain thee the possession that cannot be taken away: look upon us, Lord, for we have forsaken them that belong unto us by race, that we might be joined unto thy kinship: look upon us, Lord, that have forsaken our fathers and mothers and fosters, that we might behold thy Father, and be satisfied with his divine food: look upon us, Lord, for for thy sake have we forsaken our bodily consorts and our earthly fruits, that we might be partakers in that enduring and true fellowship, and bring forth true fruits, whose nature is from above, which no man can take from us, with whom we shall abide and who shall abide with us.

**The Seventh Act:** of the Captain.

62 Now while the apostle Thomas was proclaiming throughout all India the word of God, a certain captain of the king Misdaeus (Mazdai, Syr.) came to him and said unto him: I have heard of thee that thou takest no reward of any man, but even that thou hast thou givest to them that need. For if thou didst receive rewards, I would have sent thee a great sum, and would not have come myself, for the king doeth nought without me: for I have much substance and am rich, even one of the rich men of India. And I have never done wrong to any; but the contrary hath befallen me. I have a wife, and of her I had a daughter and I am well affectioned toward her, as also nature requireth and have never made trial of another wife. Now it chanced that there was a wedding in our city, and they that made the marriage feast were well beloved of me: they came in therefore and bade me to it, bidding also my mife and her daughter. Forasmuch then as they

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were my good friends I could not refuse: I sent her therefore, though she desired not to go, and with them I sent also many servants: so they departed, both she and her daughter, decked with many ornaments.

63 And when it was evening and the time was come to depart from the wedding I sent lamps and torches to meet them: and I stood in the street to espy when she should come and I should see her with my daughter. And as I stood I heard a sound of lamentation. Woe for her! was heard out of every mouth. And my servants with their clothes rent came to me and told me what was done. We saw, said they, a man and a boy with him. And the man laid his hand upon thy wife, and the boy upon thy daughter: and they fled from them: and we smote (wounded) them with our swords, but our swords fell to the ground. And the same hour the women fell down, gnashing their teeth and beating their heads upon the earth and seeing this we came to tell it thee. And when I heard this of my servants I rent my clothes and smote my face with my hands, and becoming like one mad I ran along the street, and came and found them cast in the market-place; and I took them and brought them to my house, and after a long space they awaked and stood up, and sat down.

64 I began therefore to inquire of my wife: What is it that hath befallen thee? And she said to me: Knowest thou not what thou hast done unto me? for I prayed thee that I might not go to the wedding, because I was not of even health in my body; and as I went on the way and came near to the aqueduct wherein the water floweth, I saw a black man standing over against me nodding at me with his head, and a boy like unto him standing by him; and I said to my daughter: Look at those two hideous men, whose teeth are like milk and their lips like soot. And we left them and went towards the aqueduct; and when it was sunset and we departed from the wedding, as we passed by with the young men and drew near the aqueduct, my daughter saw them first, and was affrighted and fled towards me; and after her I also beheld them coming against us: and the servants that were with us fled from them (Syr.) and they struck us, and cast down both me and my daughter. And when she had told me these things, the devils came upon them again and threw them down: and from that hour they are not able to come forth, but are shut up in one room or a second (Syr. in a room within another): and on their account I suffer much, and am distressed: for the devils throw them down wheresoever they find them, and strip them naked. I beseech and supplicate thee before God, help me and have pity on me, for it is now three years that a table hath not been set in my house, and my wife and my daughter have not sat at a table: and especially for mine unhappy daughter, which hath not seen any good at all in this world.

65 And the apostle, hearing these things from the captain, was greatly grieved for him, and said unto him: Believest thou that Jesus will heal them? And the captain said: Yea. And the apostle said: Commit thyself



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then unto Jesus, and he will heal them and procure them succour. And the captain said: Show me him, that I may entreat him and believe in him. And the apostle said: He appeareth not unto these bodily eyes, but is found by the eyes of the mind. The captain therefore lifted up his voice and said: I believe thee, Jesu, and entreat and supplicate thee, help my little faith which I have in thee. And the apostle commanded Xenophon (Syr. Xanthippus) the deacon to assemble all the brethren; and when the whole multitude was gathered, the apostle stood in the midst and said:

66 Children and brethren that have believed on the Lord, abide in this faith, preaching Jesus who was proclaimed unto you by me, to bring you hope in him; and forsake not (be not forsaken of) him, and he will not forsake you. While ye sleep in this slumber that weigheth down the sleepers, he, sleeping not, keepeth watch over you; and when ye sail and are in peril and none can help, he walking upon the waters supporteth and aideth. For I am now departing from you, and it appeareth not if I shall again see you according to the flesh. Be ye not therefore like unto the people of Israel, who losing sight of their pastors for an hour, stumbled. But I leave unto you Xenophon the deacon in my stead; for he also like myself proclaimeth Jesus: for neither am I aught, nor he, but Jesus only; for I also am a man clothed with a body, a son of man like one of you; for neither have I riches as it is found with some, which also convict them that possess them, being wholly useless, and left behind upon the earth, whence also they came, and they bear away with them the transgressions and blemishes of sins which befall men by their means. And scantily are rich men found in almsgiving: but the merciful and lowly in heart, these shall inherit the kingdom of God: for it is not beauty that endureth with men, for they that trust in it, when age cometh upon them, shall suddenly be put to shame: all things therefore have their time; in their season are they loved and hated. Let your hope then be in Jesus Christ the Son of God, which is always loved, and always desired: and be mindful of us, as we of you: for we too, if we fulfil not the burden of the commandments are not worthy to be preachers of this name, and hereafter shall we pay the price (punishment) of our own head.

67 And he prayed with them and continued with them a long time in prayer and supplication, and committing them unto the Lord, he said: O Lord that rulest over every soul that is in the body; Lord, Father of the souls that have their hope in thee and expect thy mercies: that redeemest from error the men that are thine own and settest free from bondage and corruption thy subjects that come unto thy refuge: be thou in the flock of Xenophon and anoint it with holy oil, and heal it of sores, and preserve it from the ravening wolves. And he laid his hand on them and said: The peace of the Lord shall be upon you and shall journey with us.

**The Eighth Act:** of the wild asses.

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68 The apostle therefore went forth to depart on the way: and they all escorted him, weeping and adjuring him to make remembrance of them in his prayers and not to forget them. He went up then and sat upon the chariot, leaving all the brethren, and the captain came and awaked the driver, saying: I entreat and pray that I may become worthy to sit beneath his feet, and I will be his driver upon this way, that he also may become my guide in that way whereby few go.

69 And when they had journeyed about two miles, the apostle begged of the captain and made him arise and caused him to sit by him, suffering the driver to sit in his own place. And as they went along the road, it came to pass that the beasts were wearied with the great heat and could not be stirred at all. And the captain was greatly vexed and wholly cast down, and thought to run on his own feet and bring other beasts for the use of the chariot; but the apostle said: Let not thine heart be troubled nor affrighted, but believe on Jesus Christ whom I have proclaimed unto thee, and thou shalt see great wonders. And he looked and saw a herd of wild asses feeding by the wayside, and said to the captain: If thou hast believed on Christ Jesus, go unto that herd of wild asses and say: Judas Thomas the apostle of Christ the new God saith unto you: Let four of you come, of whom we have need (or, of whom we may have use).

70 And the captain went in fear, for they were many; and as he went, they came to meet him; and when they were near, he said unto them: Judas Thomas the apostle of the new God commandeth you: Let four of you come, of whom I have need. And when the wild asses heard it, they ran with one accord and came to him, and when they came, they did him reverence. [Syr. has a long prayer: And Judas Thomas the apostle of our Lord lifted up his voice in praise and said: Glorious art thou, God of truth and Lord of all natures, for thou didst will with thy will, and make all thy works and finish all thy creatures, and bring them to the rule of their nature, and lay upon them all thy fear that they might be subject to thy command. And thy will trod the path from thy secrecy to manifestation, and was caring for every soul that thou didst make, and was spoken of by the mouth of all the prophets, in all visions and sounds and voices; but Israel did not obey because of their evil inclination. And thou, because thou art Lord of all, hast a care for the creatures, so that thou spreadest over us thy mercy in him who came by thy will and put on the body, thy creature, which thou didst will and form according to thy glorious wisdom. He whom thou didst appoint in thy secrecy and establish in thy manifestation, to him thou hast given the name of Son, he who was thy will, the power of thy thought; so that ye are by various names, the Father and the Son and the Spirit, for the sake of the government of thy creatures, for the nourishing of all natures, and ye are one in glory and power and will; and ye are divided without being separated, and are one though divided, and all subsists in thee and is subject to thee, because all is thine. And I rely upon thee, Lord, and by thy command have subjected these

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dumb beasts, that thou mightest show thy ministering power upon us and upon them because it is needful, and that thy name might be glorified in us and in the beasts that cannot speak.] And the apostle said unto them: Peace be unto you. Yoke ye four of you in the stead of these beasts that have come to a stand. And every one of them came and pressed to be yoked: there were then four stronger than the rest, which also were yoked. And the rest, some went before and some followed. And when they had journeyed a little way he dismissed the colts, saying: I say unto you the inhabitants of the desert, depart unto your pastures, for if I had had need of all, ye would all have gone with me; but now go unto your place wherein ye dwell. And they departed quietly until they were no more seen.

71 Now as the apostle and the captain and the driver went on, the wild asses drew the chariot quietly and evenly, lest they should disturb the apostle of God. And when they came near to the city gate they turned aside and stood still before the doors of the captain's house. And the captain said: It is not possible for me to relate what hath happened, but when I see the end, I will tell it. The whole city therefore came to see the wild asses under the yoke; and they had heard also the report of the apostle that he was to come and visit them. And the apostle asked the captain: Where is thy dwelling, and whither dost thou bring us? And he said to him: Thou thyself knowest that we stand before the doors, and these which by thy commandment are come with thee know it better than I.

72 And having so said he came down from the chariot. The apostle therefore began to say: Jesu Christ, that art blasphemed by the ignorance of thee in this country; Jesu, the report of whom is strange in this city; Jesu, that receivest all (Syr. sendest on before the apostles in every country and in every city, and all thine that are worthy are glorified in thee; Jesu, that didst take a form and become as a man, and wert seen of all us that thou mightest not separate us from thine own love: thou, Lord, art he that gavest thyself for us, and with thy blood hast purchased us and gained us as a possession of great price: and what have we to give thee, Lord, in exchange for thy life which thou gavest for us? for that which we would give, thou gavest us: and this is, that we should entreat of thee and live.

73 And when he had so said, many assembled from every quarter to see the apostle of the new God. And again the apostle said: Why stand we idle? Jesu, Lord, the hour is come: what wilt thou have done? command therefore that that be fulfilled which needeth to be done. Now the captain's wife and her daughter were sore borne down by the devils, so that they of the house thought they would rise up no more: for they suffered them not to partake of aught, but cast them down upon their beds recognizing no man until that day when the apostle came thither. And the apostle said unto one of the wild asses that were yoked on the right hand: Enter thou within the gate, and stand there and call the devils and say to them: Judas Thomas the apostle and disciple of Jesus Christ saith unto you: Come forth

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hither: for on your account am I sent and unto them that pertain to you by race, to destroy you and chase you unto your place, until the time of the end come and ye go down into your own deep of darkness.

74 And that wild ass went in, a great multitude being with him, and said: Unto you I speak, the enemies of Jesus that is called Christ: unto you I speak that shut your eyes lest ye see the light: unto you I speak, children of Gehenna and of destruction, of him that ceaseth not from evil until now, that alway reneweth his workings and the things that befit his being: unto you I speak, most shameless, that shall perish by your own hands. And what I shall say of your destruction and end, and what I shall tell, I know not. For there are many things and innumerable to the hearing: and greater are your doings than the torment that is reserved for you (Syr. however great your bodies, they are too small for your retributions). But unto thee I speak, devil, and to thy son that followeth with thee: for now am I sent against you. And wherefore should I make many words concerning your nature and root, which yourselves know and are not ashamed? but Judas Thomas the apostle of Christ Jesus saith unto you, he that by much love and affection is sent hither: Before all this multitude that standeth here, come forth and tell me of what race ye are.

75 And straightway the woman came forth with her daughter, both like dead persons and dishonoured in aspect: and the apostle beholding them was grieved. especially for the girl, and saith unto the devils: God forbid that for you there should be sparing or propitiation, for ye know not to spare nor to have pity: but in the name of Jesus, depart from them and stand by their side. And when the apostle had so said, the women fell down and became as dead; for they neither had breath nor uttered speech: but the devil answered with a loud voice and said: Art thou come hither again, thou that deridest our nature and race? art thou come again, that blottest out our devices? and as I take it, thou wouldest not suffer us to be upon the earth at all: but this at this time thou canst not accomplish. And the apostle guessed that this devil was he that had been driven out from that other woman.

76 And the devil said: I beseech thee, give me leave to depart even whither thou wilt, and dwell there and take commandment from thee, and I will not fear the ruler that hath authority over me. For like as thou art come to preach good tidings, so I also am come to destroy; and like as, if thou fulfil not the will of him that sent thee, he will bring punishment upon thy head, so I also if I do not the will of him that sent me, before the season and time appointed, shall be sent unto mine own nature; and like as thy Christ helpeth thee in that thou doest, so also my father helpeth me in that I do; and like as for thee he prepareth vessels worthy of thine inhabiting, so also for me he seeketh out vessels whereby I may accomplish his deeds; and like as he nourisheth and provideth for his subjects, so also for me he prepareth chastisements and torments, with them that become my

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dwelling places (Syr. those in whom I dwell); and like as for a recompense of thy working he giveth thee eternal life, so also unto me he giveth for a reward of my works eternal destruction; and like as thou art refreshed by thy prayer and thy good works and spiritual thanksgivings, so I also am refreshed by murders and adulteries and sacrifices made with wine upon altars (Syr. sacrifices and libations of wine), and like as thou convertest men unto eternal life, so I also pervert them that obey me unto eternal destruction and torment: and thou receivest thine own and I mine.

77 And when the devil had said these things and yet more the apostle said: Jesus commandeth thee and thy son by me to enter no more into the habitation of man: but go ye forth and depart and dwell wholly apart from the habitation of men. And the devils said unto him: Thou hast laid on us a harsh commandment: but what wilt thou do unto them that now are concealed from thee? for they that have wrought all the images rejoice in them more than thee: and many of them do the more part worship, and perform their will, sacrificing to them and bringing them food, by libations and by wine and water and offering with oblations. And the apostle said: They also shall now be abolished, with their works. And suddenly the devils vanished away: but the women lay cast upon the earth as if were dead, and without speech.

78 And the wild asses stood together and parted not one from another; but he to whom speech was given by the power of the Lord -while all men kept silence, and looked to see what they would do- the wild ass said unto the apostle: Why standest thou idle, O apostle of Christ the Most High, who looketh that thou shouldest ask of him the best of learning? Wherefore then tarriest thou? (Syr. that thou shouldest ask him, and he would give thee? Why delayest thou, good disciple?) for lo, thy teacher desireth to show by thy hands his mighty works. Why standest thou still, O herald of the hidden one? for thy (Lord) willeth to manifest through thee his unspeakable things, which he reserveth for them that are worthy of him, to hear them. Why restest thou, O doer of mighty works in the name of the Lord? for thy Lord encourageth thee and engendereth boldness in thee. Fear not, therefore; for he will not forsake the soul that belongeth unto thee by birth. Begin therefore to call upon him and he will readily hearken to thee. Why standest thou marvelling at all his acts and his workings? for these are small things which he hath shown by thy means. And what wilt thou tell concerning his great gifts? for thou wilt not be sufficient to declare them. And why marvellest thou at his cures of the body which he worketh? (Syr. which come to an end) especially when thou knowest that healing of his which is secure and lasting, which he bringeth forth by his own nature? And why lookest thou unto this temporal life, and hast no thought of that which is eternal (Syr. when thou canst every day think on that which is eternal)?

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79 But unto you the multitudes that stand by and look to see these that are cast down raised up, I say, believe in the apostle of Jesus Christ: believe the teacher of truth, believe him that showeth you the truth, believe Jesus, believe on the Christ that was born, that the born may live by his life: who also was raised up through infancy, that perfection might appear by his manhood (man). He did teach his own disciples: for he is the teacher of the truth and maketh wise men wise (Syr. who went to school that through him perfect wisdom might be known: he taught his teacher because he was the teacher of verity and the master of the wise). Who also offered the gift in the temple that he might show that all the (every) offering was sanctified. This is his apostle, the shewer-forth of truth: this is he that performeth the will of him that sent him. But there shall come false apostles and prophets of lawlessness, whose end shall be according to their deeds; preaching indeed and ordaining to flee from ungodliness, but themselves at all times detected in sins, clad indeed with sheep's clothing, but within, ravening wolves. Who suffice not themselves with one wife but corrupt many women; who, saying that they despise children, destroy many children (boys), for whom they vwill pay the penalty; that content not themselves with their own possessions, but desire that all useless things should minister unto them only; professing to be his disciples; and with their mouth they utter one thing, but in their heart they think another; charging other men to beware of evil, but they themselves perform nought that is good; who are accounted temperate, and charge other men to abstain from fornication theft, and covetousness, but in all these things do they themselves walk secretly, teaching other men not to do them.

80 And when the wild ass had declared all these things, all men gazed upon him. And when he ceased the apostle said: What I shall think concerning thy beauty, O Jesu, and what I shall tell of thee, I know not, or rather I am not able, for I have no power to declare it, O Christ that art in rest, and only wise that only knowest the inward of the heart and understandest the thought. Glory be to thee, merciful and tranquil. Glory to thee, wise word. Glory to thy compassion that was born unto us. Glory to thy mercy that was spread out over us. Glory to thy greatness that was made small for us. Glory to thy most high kingship that was humbled for us. Glory to thy might which was enfeebled for us. Glory to thy Godhead that for us was seen in likeness of men. Glory to thy manhood that died for us that it might make us live. Glory to thy resurrection from the dead; for thereby rising and rest cometh unto our souls. Glory and praise (good report) to thine ascending into the heavens; for thereby thou hast shewed us the path of the height, and promised that we shall sit with thee on thy right hand and with thee judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Thou art the heavenly word of the Father: thou art the hidden light of the understanding, shewer of the way of truth, driver away of darkness, and blotter-out of error.

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81 Having thus spoken, the apostle stood over the women, saying: My Lord and my God, I am not divided from thee (or doubt not concerning thee), nor as one unbelieving do I call upon thee, who art always our helper and succourer and raiser-up; who breathest thine own power into us and encourageth us and givest confidence in love unto thine own servants. I beseech thee, let these souls be healed and rise up and become such as they were before they were smitten of the devils. And when he thus spake the women turned and sat up. And the apostle bade the captain that his servants should take them and bring them within (Syr. and give them food, for they had not eaten for many days). And when they were gone in, the apostle said unto the wild asses, Follow me. And they went after him until he had brought them without the gate. And when they had gone out, he said to them: Depart in peace unto your pastures. The wild asses therefore went away willingly; and the apostle stood and took heed to them lest they should be hurt of any, until they had gone afar off and were no more seen. And the apostle returned with the multitude into the house of the captain.

### **The Ninth Act:** of the Wife of Charisius.

82 Now it chanced that a certain woman, the wife of Charisius, that was next unto the king, whose name was Mygdonia, came to see and behold the new name and the new God who was being proclaimed, and the new apostle who had come to visit their country: and she was carried by her own servants; and because of the great crowd and the narrow way they were not able to bring her near unto him. And she sent unto her husband to send her more to minister to her; and they came and approached her, pressing upon the people and beating them. And the apostle saw it and said to them: Wherefore overthrow ye them that come to hear the word, and are eager for it? and ye desire to be near me but are far off, as it was said of the multitude that came unto the Lord: Having eyes ye see not, and having ears ye hear not; and he said to the multitudes: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; and: Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

83 And looking upon them that carried her, he said unto them: This blessing and this admonition [Here and elsewhere there is a marked divergence between the texts of U and P, the Roman and Paris MSS.: Bonnet prints them separately. P is on the whole much shorter. Syr. differs from both. I follow U, but it is very corrupt.] which was promised unto them is for you that are heavily burdened now. Ye are they that carry burdens grievous to be borne, and are borne about by her command. And though ye are men, they lay on you loads as on brute beasts, for they that have authority over you think that ye are not men such as themselves, whether bond or free. For neither shall possessions profit the rich, nor poverty save the poor from judgement; nor have we received a commandment which we are not able to perform, nor hath he laid on us

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burdens grievous to be borne which we are not able to carry; nor building which men build; nor to hew stones and prepare houses, as your craftsmen do by their own knowledge. But this commandment have we received of the Lord, that that which pleaseth not us when it is done by another this we should not do to any other man.

84 Abstain therefore first from adultery, for this is the beginning of all evils, and next from theft, which enticed Judas Iscariot, and brought him unto hanging; (and from covetousness,) for as many as yield unto covetousness see not that which they do; and from vainglory and from all foul deeds, especially them of the body, whereby cometh eternal condemnation. For this is the chief city of all evils; and likewise it bringeth them that hold their heads (necks) high unto tyranny, and draweth them down unto the deep, and subdueth them under its hands that they see not what they do; wherefore the things done of them are hidden from them.

85 But do ye become well-pleasing unto God in all good things, in meekness and quietness: for these doth God spare, and granteth eternal life and setteth death at nought. And in gentleness which followeth on all good things, and overcometh all enemies and alone receiveth the crown of victory: with gentleness (Syr.), and stretching out of the hand to the poor, and supplying the want of the needy, and distributing to them that are in necessity, especially them that walk in holiness. For this is chosen before God and leadeth unto eternal life: for this is before God the chief city of all good: for they that strive not in the course (stadium) of Christ shall not obtain holiness. And holiness did appear from God, doing away fornication, overthrowing the enemy, well-pleasing unto God: for she is an invincible champion (athlete), having honour from God, glorified of many: she is an ambassador of peace, announcing peace: if any gain her he abideth without care, pleasing the Lord, expecting the time of redemption: for she doeth nothing amiss, but giveth life and rest and joy unto all that gain her. [P has nothing of this, and Syr. makes better sense, but is not very interesting.]

86 But meekness hath overcome death and brought him under authority, meekness hath enslaved the enemy (U and P and Syr. now present the same text), meekness is the good yoke: meekness feareth not and opposeth not the many: meekness is peace and joy and exaltation of rest. Abide ye therefore in holiness and receive freedom from me, and be near unto meekness for in these three heads is portrayed the Christ whom I proclaim unto you. Holiness is the temple of Christ, and he that dwelleth in her getteth her for an habitation, because for forty days and forty nights he fasted, tasting nothing: and he that keepeth her shall dwell in her as on a mountain. And meekness is his boast: for he said unto Peter our fellow apostle: Turn back thy sword and put it again into the sheath thereof: for if I had willed so to do, could I not have brought more than twelve legions of angels from my Father?



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87 And when the apostle had said these things in the hearing of all the multitude, they trode and pressed upon one another: and the wife of Charisius the king's kinsman leapt out of her chair and cast herself on the earth before the apostle, and caught his feet and besought and said: O disciple of the living God, thou art come into a desert country, for we live in the desert; being like to brute beasts in our conversation, but now shall we be saved by thy hands; I beseech thee, therefore, take thought of me, and pray for me, that the compassion of the God whom thou preachest may come upon me, and I may become his dwelling place and be joined in prayer and hope and faith in him, and I also may receive the seal and become an holy temple and he may dwell in me.

88 And the apostle said: I do pray and entreat for you all, brethren, that believe on the Lord, and for you, sisters, that hope in Christ, that in all of you the word of God may tabernacle and have his tabernacle therein: for we have no power over them (Syr. because ye are given power over your own souls). And he began to say unto the woman Mygdonia: Rise up from the earth and compose thyself (take off thine ornaments, P; be mindful of thyself, Syr.). For this attire that is put on shall not profit thee nor the beauty of thy body, nor thine apparel, neither yet the fame of thy rank, nor the authority of this world, nor the polluted intercourse with thine husband shall avail thee if thou be bereaved of the true fellowship: for the appearance (fantasy) of ornamenting cometh to nought, and the body waxeth old and changeth, and raiment weareth out, and authority and lordship pass away (U corrupt; P abridges; Syr. has: passeth away accompanied with punishment, according as each person hath conducted himself in it), and the fellowship of procreation also passeth away, and is as it were condemnation. Jesus only abideth ever, and they that hope in him. Thus he spake, and said unto the woman: Depart in peace, and the Lord shall make thee worthy of his own mysteries. But she said: I fear to go away, lest thou forsake me and depart unto another nation. But the apostle said to her: Even if I go, I shall not leave thee alone, but Jesus of his compassion will be with thee. And she fell down and did him reverence and departed unto her house.

89 Now Charisius, the kinsman of Misdaeus the king, bathed himself and returned and laid him down to dine. And he inquired concerning his wife, where she was; for she had not come out of her own chamber to meet him as she was wont. And her handmaids said to him: She is not well. And he entered quickly into the chamber and found her lying on the bed and veiled: and he unveiled her and kissed her, saying: Wherefore art thou sorrowful to-day? And she said: I am not well. And he said unto her: Wherefore then didst thou not keep the guise of thy freedom (Syr. pay proper respect to thy position as a free woman) and remain in thy house, but didst go and listen unto vain speeches and look upon works of sorcery? but rise up and dine with me, for I cannot dine without thee. But she said to him: To-day I decline it, for I am greatly afeared.

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90 And when Charisius heard this of Mygdonia, he would not go forth to dinner, but bade his servants bring her to dine with him (Syr. bring food to him that he might sup in her presence): when then they brought it in, he desired her to dine with him, but she excused herself; since then she would not, he dined alone, saying unto her: On thine account I refused to dine with Misdaeus the king, and thou, wast thou not willing to dine with me? but she said: It is because I am not well. Charisius therefore rose up as he was wont and would sleep with her, but she said: Did I not tell thee that for today I refused it?

91 When he heard that he went to another bed and slept; and awaking out of sleep he said: My lady Mygdonia, hearken to the dream which I have seen. I saw myself lie at meat near to Misdaeus the king, and a dish of all sorts was set before us: and I saw an eagle come down from heaven and carry off from before me and the king two partridges, which he set against his heart; and again he came over us and flew about above us, and the king bade a bow to be brought to him; and the eagle again caught away from before us a pigeon and a dove, and the king shot an arrow at him, and it passed through him from one side to the other and hurt him not; and he being unscathed rose up into his own nest. And I awoke, and I am full of fear and sore vexed, because I had tasted of the partridge, and he suffered me not to put it to my mouth again. And Mygdonia said unto him: Thy dream is good: for thou every day eatest partridges, but this eagle had not tasted of a partridge until now.

92 And when it was morning Charisius went and dressed himself and shod his right foot with his left shoe; and he stopped, and said to Mygdonia: What then is this matter? for look, the dream and this action of mine! But Mygdonia said to him: And this also is not evil, but seemeth to me very good; for from an unlucky act there will be a change unto the better. And he washed his hands and went to salute Misdaeus the king.

93 And likewise Mygdonia rose up early and went to salute Judas Thomas the apostle, and she found him discoursing with the captain and all the multitude, and he was advising them and speaking of the woman which had received the Lord in her soul, whose wife she was; and the captain said: She is the wife of Charisius the kinsman of Misdaeus the king. And: Her husband is a hard man, and in everything that he saith to the king he obeyeth him: and he will not suffer her to continue in this mind which she hath promised; for often-times hath he praised her before the king, saying that there is none other like her in love: all things therefore that thou speakest unto her are strange unto her. And the apostle said: If verily and surely the Lord hath risen upon her soul and she hath received the seed that was cast on her, she will have no care of this temporal life, nor fear death, neither will Charisius be able to harm her at all: for greater is he whom she hath received into her soul, if she have received him indeed.

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94 And Mygdonia hearing this said unto the apostle: In truth, my lord, I have received the seed of thy words, and I will bear fruit like unto such seed. The apostle saith: Our souls give praise and thanks unto thee, O Lord, for they are thine: our bodies give thanks unto thee, which thou hast accounted worthy to become the dwelling-place of thy heavenly gift. And he said also to them that stood by: Blessed are the holy, whose souls have never condemned them, for they have gained them and are not divided against themselves: blessed are the spirits of the pure, and they that have received the heavenly crown whole from the world (age) which hath been appointed them: blessed are the bodies of the holy, for they have been made worthy to become temples of God, that Christ may dwell in them: blessed are ye, for ye have power to forgive sins: blessed are ye if ye lose not that which is committed unto you, but rejoicing and departing bear it away with you: blessed are ye the holy, for unto you it is given to ask and receive: blessed are ye meek for you hath God counted worthy to become heirs of the heavenly kingdom. Blessed are ye meek, for ye are they that have overcome the enemy: blessed are ye meek, for ye shall see the face of the Lord. Blessed are ye that hunger for the Lord's sake for for you is rest laid up, and your souls rejoice from henceforth. Blessed are ye that are quiet, (for ye have been counted worthy) to be set free from sin [and from the exchange of clean and unclean beasts]. And when the apostle had said these things in the hearing of all the multitude, Mygdonia was the more confirmed in the faith and glory and greatness of Christ.

95 But Charisius the kinsman and friend of Misdaeus the king came to his breakfast and found not his wife in the house; and he inquired of all that were in his house: Whither is your mistress gone? And one of them answered and said: She is gone unto that stranger. And when he heard this of his servant, he was wroth with the other servants because they had not straightway told him what was done: and he sat down and waited for her. And when it was evening and she was come into the house he said to her: Where wast thou? And she answered and said: With the physician. And he said: Is that stranger a physician? And she said: Yea, he is a physician of souls: for most physicians do heal bodies that are dissolved, but the souls that are not destroyed. Charisius, hearing this, was very angry in his mind with Mygdonia because of the apostle, but he answered her nothing, for he was afraid; for she was above him both in wealth and birth: but he departed to dinner, and she went into her chamber. And he said to the servants: Call her to dinner. But she would not come.

96 And when he heard that she would not come out of her chamber, he went in and said unto her: Wherefore wilt thou not dine with me and perchance not sleep with me as the wont is? yea, concerning this I have the greater suspicion, for I have heard that that sorcerer and deceiver teacheth that a man should not live with his wife, and that which nature requireth and the godhead hath ordained he overthroweth. When Charisius said these things, Mygdonia kept silence. He saith to her again: My lady and

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consort Mygdonia, be not led astray by deceitful and vain words, nor by the works of sorcery which I have heard that this man performeth in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; for it was never yet heard in the world that any raised the dead, and, as I hear, it is reported of this man that he raiseth dead men. And for that he neither eateth nor drinketh, think not that for righteousness' sake he neither eateth nor drinketh but this he doth because he possesseth nought, for what should he do which hath not even his daily bread? And he hath one garment because he is poor, and as for his not receiving aught of any (he doth so, to be sure, because he knoweth in himself that he doth not verily heal any man, Syr.).

97 And when Charisius so said, Mygdonia was silent as any stone, but she prayed, asking when it should be day, that she might go to the apostle of Christ. And he withdrew from her and went to dinner heavy in mind, for he thought to sleep with her according to the wont. And when he was gone out, she bowed her knees and prayed, saying: Lord God and Master, merciful Father, Saviour Christ, do thou give me strength to overcome the shamelessness of Charisius, and grant me to keep the holiness wherein thou delightest, that I also may by it find eternal life. And when she had so prayed she laid herself on her bed and veiled herself.

98 But Charisius having dined came upon her, and she cried out, saying: Thou hast no more any room by me: for my Lord Jesus is greater than thou, who is with me and resteth in me. And he laughed and said: Well dost thou mock, saying this of that sorcerer, and well dost thou deride him, who saith: Ye have no life with God unless ye purify yourselves. And when he had so said he essayed to sleep with her, but she endured it not and cried out bitterly and said: I call upon thee, Lord Jesu, forsake me not! for with thee have I made my refuge; for when I learned that thou art he that seekest out them that are veiled in ignorance and savest them that are held in error And now I entreat thee whose report I have heard and believed, come thou to my help and save me from the shamelessness of Charisius, that his foulness may not get the upper hand of me. And she smote her hands together (tied his hands, Syr.) and fled from him naked, and as she went forth she pulled down the curtain of the bed-chamber and wrapped it about her; and went to her nurse, and slept there with her.

99 But Charisius was in heaviness all night, and smote his face with his hands, and he was minded to go that very hour and tell the king concerning the violence that was done him, but he considered with himself, saying: If the great heaviness which is upon me compelleth me to go now unto the king, who will bring me in to him? for I know that my abuse hath overthrown me from my high looks and my vainglory and majesty, and hath cast me down into this vileness and separated my sister Mygonia from me. Yea, if the king himself stood before the dools at this hour, I could not have gone out and answered him. But I will wait until dawn, and I know that whatsoever I ask of the king, he granteth it me: and

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I will tell him of the madness of this stranger, how that it tyrannously casteth down the great and illustrious into the depth. For it is not this that grieveth me, that I am deprived of her companying, but for her am I grieved, because her greatness of soul is humbled: being an honourable lady in whom none of her house ever found fault (condemned), she hath fled away naked, running out of her own bedchamber, and I know not whither she is gone; and it may be that she is gone mad by the means of that sorcerer, and in her madness hath gone forth into the market-place to seek him; for there is nothing that appealeth unto her lovable except him and the things that are spoken by him.

100 And so saving he began to lament and say: Woe to me, O my consort, and to thee besides! for I am too quickly bereaved of thee. Woe is me, my most dear one, for thou excellest all my race: neither son nor daughter have I had of thee that I might find rest in them; neither hast thou yet dwelt with me a full year, and an evil eye hath caught thee from me. Would that the violence of death had taken thee, and I should yet have reckoned myself among kings and nobles: but that I should suffer this at the hands of a stranger, and belike he is a slave that hath run away, to mine ill fortune and the sorrow of mine unhappy soul! Let there be no impediment for me until I destroy him and avenge this night, and may I not be well-pleasing before Misdæus the king if he avenge me not with the head of this stranger; (and I will also tell him) of Siphor the captain who hath been the occasion of this. For by his means did the stranger appear here, and lodgeth at his house: and many there be that go in and come out whom he teacheth a new doctrine; saying that none can live if he quit not all his substance and become a renouncer like himself: and he striveth to make many partakers with him.

101 And as Charisius thought on these things, the day dawned: and after the night (?) he put on a mean habit, and shod himself, and went downcast and in heaviness to salute the king. And when the king saw him he said: Wherefore art thou sorrowful, and comest in such garb? and I see that thy countenance is changed. And Charisius said unto the king: I have a new thing to tell thee and a new desolation which Siphor hath brought into India, even a certain Hebrew, a sorcerer, whom he hath sitting in his house and who departeth not from him: and many are there that go in to him: whom also he teacheth of a new God, and layeth on them new laws such as never yet were heard, saving: It is impossible for you to enter into that eternal life which I proclaim unto you, unless ye rid you of your wives, and likewise the wives of their husbands. And it chanced that mine unlucky wife also went to him and became a hearer of his words, and she believed them, and in the night she forsook me and ran unto the stranger. But send thou for both Siphor and that sorcerer that is hid with (in) him, and visit it (?) on their head, lest all that are of our nation perish.

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102 And when Misdaeus his friend heard this he saith to him: Be not grieved nor heavy, for I will send for him and avenge thee, and thou shalt have thy wife again, and the others that cannot I will avenge. And the king went forth and sat on the judgement seat, and when he was set he commanded Siphor the captain to be called. They went therefore unto his house and found him sitting on the right hand of the apostle and Mygdonia at his feet, hearkening to him with all the multitude. And they that were sent from the king said unto Siphor: Sittest thou here listening to vain words, and Misdaeus the king in his wrath thinketh to destroy thee because of this sorcerer and deceiver whom thou hast brought into thine house? And Siphor hearing it was cast down, not because of the king's threat against him, but for the apostle, because the king was disposed contrary to him. And he said to the apostle: I am grieved concerning thee: for I told thee at the first that that woman is the wife of Charisius the king's friend and kinsman, and he will not suffer her to perform that she hath promised, and all that he asketh of the king he granteth him. But the apostle said unto Siphor: Fear nothing, but believe in Jesus that pleadeth for us all, for unto his refuge are we gathered together. And Siphor, hearing that, put his garment about him and went unto Misdaeus the king,

103 And the apostle inquired of Mygdonia: What was the cause that thy husband was wroth with thee and devised this against us? And she said: Because I gave not myself up unto his corruption (destruction): for he desired last night to subdue me and subject me unto that passion which he serveth: and he to whom I have committed my soul delivered me out of his hands; and I fled away from him naked, and slept with my nurse: but that which befell him I know not, wherefore he hath contrived this. The apostle saith: These things will not hurt us; but believe thou on Jesus, and he shall overthrow the wrath of Charisius and his madness and his impulse; and he shall be a companion unto thee in the fearful way, and he shall guide thee into his kingdom, and shall bring thee unto eternal life giving thee that confidence which passeth not away nor changeth.

104 Now Siphor stood before the king, and he inquired of him: Who is that sorcerer and whence, and what teacheth he whom thou hast lurking in thine house? And Siphor answered the king: Thou art not ignorant, O king, what trouble and grief I, with my friends had concerning my wife, whom thou knowest and many others remember, and concerning my daughter, whom I value more than all my possessions, what a time and trial I suffered; for I became a laughing-stock and a curse in all our country. And I heard the report of this man and went to him and entreated him, and took him and brought him hither. And as I came by the way I saw wonderful and amazing things: and here also many did hear the wild ass and concerning that devil whom he drove out, and healed my wife and daughter, and now are they whole; and he asked no reward but requireth faith and holiness, that men should become partakers with him in that which he doeth: and this he teacheth to worship and fear one God, the

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ruler of all things, and Jesus Christ his Son, that they may have eternal life. And that which he eateth is bread and salt, and his drink is water from evening unto evening, and he maketh many prayers; and whatsoever he asketh of his God, he giveth him. And he teacheth that this God is holy and mighty, and that Christ is living and maketh alive, wherefore also he chargeth them that are there present to come unto him in holiness and purity and love and faith.

105 And when Misdaeus the king heard these things of Siphor he sent many soldiers unto the house of Siphor the captain, to bring Thomas the apostle and all that were found there. And they that were sent entered in and found him teaching much people; and Mygdonia sat at his feet. And when they beheld the great multitude that were about him, they feared, and departed to their king and said: We durst not say aught unto him, for there was a great multitude about him, and Mygdonia sitting at his feet was listening to the things that were spoken by him. And when Misdaeus the king and Charisius heard these things, Charisius leaped out from before the king and drew much people with him and said: I will bring him, O king, and Mygdonia whose understanding he hath taken away. And he came to the house of Siphor the captain, greatly disturbed, and found him (Thomas) teaching: but Mygdonia he found not, for she had withdrawn herself unto her house, having learnt that it had been told her husband that she was there.

106 And Charisius said unto the apostle: Up, thou wicked one and destroyer and enemy of mine house: for me thy sorcery harmeth not, for I will visit thy sorcery on thine head. And when he so said, the apostle looked upon him and said unto him: Thy threatenings shall return upon thee, for me thou wilt not harm any whit: for greater than thee and thy king and all your army is the Lord Jesus Christ in whom I have my trust. And Chalisius took a kerchief (turban, Syr.) of one of his slaves and cast it about the neck of the apostle, saying: Hale him and bring him away; let me see if his God is able to deliver him out of my hands. And they haled him and led him away to Misdaeus the king. And the apostle stood before the king, and the king said to him: Tell me who thou art and by what power thou doest these things. But the apostle kept silence. And the king commanded his officers (subjects) that he should be scourged with an hundred and twenty-eight (hundred and fifty, Syr.) blows, and bound, and be cast into the prison; and they bound him and led him away. And the king and Charisius considered how they should put him to death, for the multitude worshipped him as God. And they had it in mind to say: The stranger hath reviled the king and is a deceiver.

107 But the apostle went unto the prison rejoicing and exulting, and said: I praise thee, Jesu, for that thou hast not only made me worthy of faith in thee, but also to endure much for thy sake. I give thee thanks therefore, Lord, that thou hast taken thought for me and given me patience: I thank

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thee Lord, that for thy sake I am called a sorcerer and a wizard. Receive thou me therefore with the blessing (Syr. Iet me receive of the blessing) of the poor, and of the rest of the weary, and of the blessings of them whom men hate and persecute and revile, and speak evil words of them. For lo, for thy sake I am hated: lo for thy sake I am cut off from the many, and for thy sake they call me such an one as I am not.

108 And as he prayed, all the prisoners looked on him, and besought him to pray for them: and when he had prayed and was set down, he began to utter a psalm in this wise:

### The Hymn of the Soul

*[Here follows the Hymn of the Soul: a most remarkable composition, originally Syriac, and certainly older than the Acts, with which it has no real connection. We have it in Greek in one manuscript, the Vallicellian, and in a paraphrase by Nicetas of Thessalonica, found and edited by Bonnet.]*

1 When I was an infant child in the palace of my Father

2 and resting in the wealth and luxury of my nurturers,

3 out of the East, our native country, my parents provisioned me and sent me.

4 And of the wealth of those their treasures they put together a load

5 both great and light, that I might carry it alone.

6 Gold is the load, of them that are above (or of the land of the Ellaeans or Gilaeans), and silver of the great treasures (or of Gazzak the great)

7 and stones, chalcedonies from the Indians and pearls from the Kosani (Kushan).

8 And they armed me with adamant

9 and they took off from me (Gr. put on me) the garment set with gems, spangled with gold, which they had made for me because they loved me

10 and the robe that was yellow in hue, made for my stature.



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11 And they made a covenant with me, and inscribed it on mine understanding, that I should forget it, and said:

12 If thou go down into Egypt, and bring back thence the one pearl

13 which is there girt about by the devouring serpent

14 thou shalt put on the garment set with gems, and that robe whereupon it resteth (or which is thereon)

15 and become with thy brother that is next unto us (Gr. of the well-remembered) an heir (Gr. herald) in our kingdom.

16 And I came out of the East by a road difficult and fearful, with two guides

17 and I was untried in travelling by it.

18 And I passed by the borders of the Mosani (Maishan) where is the resort of the merchants of the East,

19 and reached the land of the Babylonians .

20 But when I entered into Egypt, the guides left me which had journeyed with me.

21 And I set forth by the quickest way to the serpent, and by his hole I abode

22 watching for him to slumber and sleep, that I might take my pearl from him.

23 And forasmuch as I was alone I made mine aspect strange, and appeared as an alien to my people.

24 And there I saw my kinsman from the East, the free-born

25 a lad of grace and beauty, a son of princes (or an anointed one).

26 He came unto me and dwelt with me,

27 and I had him for a companion, and made him my friend and partaker in my journey (or merchandise).

28 And I charged him to beware of the Egyptians, and of partaking of those unclean things (or consorting with those unclean men).

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29 And I put on their raiment, lest I should seem strange, as one that had come from without

30 to recover the pearl; and lest the Egyptians should awake the serpent against me.

31 But, I know not by what occasion, they learned that I was not of their country.

32 And with guile they mingled for me a deceit, and I tasted of their food.

33 And I knew no more that I was a king's son, and I became a servant unto their king.

34 And I forgot also the pearl for which my fathers had sent me,

35 and by means of the heaviness of their food I fell into a deep sleep.

36 But when this befell me, my fathers also were ware of it, and grieved for me

37 and a proclamation was published in our kingdom, that all should meet at our doors.

38 And then the kings of Parthia and they that bare office and the great ones of the East

39 made a resolve concerning me, that I should not be left in Egypt,

40 and the princes wrote unto me signifying thus (and every noble signed his name to it, Syr.):

41 From the (thy) Father the King of kings, and thy mother that ruleth the East,

42 and thy brother that is second unto us; unto our son that is in Egypt, peace.

43 Rise up and awake out of sleep, and hearken unto the words of the letter

44 and remember that thou art a son of kings; lo, thou hast come under the yoke of bondage.

45 Remember the pearl for the which thou wast sent into Egypt (Gr. puts this after 46).

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46 Remember thy garment spangled with gold,

47 Thy name is named in the book of life,

48 and with thy brother whom thou hast received in our kingdom.

49 and the King [as ambassador] sealed it

50 because of the evil ones, even the children of the Babylonians and the tyrannous demons of Labyrinthus (Sarbug, Syr.).

51

52 It flew and lighted down by me, and became all speech.>

53 And I at the voice of it and the feeling of it started up out of sleep

54 and I took it up and kissed it and read it.

55 And it was written concerning that which was recorded in mine heart.

56 And I remembered forthwith that I was a son of kings, and my freedom yearned (sought) after its kind.

57 I remembered also the pearl for the which I was sent down into Egypt

58 and I began (or came) with charms against the terrible serpent,

59 and I overcame him (or put him to sleep) by naming the name of my Father upon him,

60 .

61 And I caught away the pearl and turned back to bear it unto my fathers.

62 And I stripped off the filthy garment and left it in their land,

63 and directed my way forthwith to the light of my fatherland in the East.

64 And on the way I found my letter that had awakened me,

65 and it, like as it had taken a voice and raised me when I slept, so also guided me with the light that came from it.

66 For at times the royal garment of silk before mine eyes,

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67

68 and with love leading me and drawing me onward,

69 I passed by Labyrinthus (Sarbug), and I left Babylon upon my left hand

70 and I came unto Meson (Mesene; Maishan) the great,

71 that lieth on the shore of the sea,

72

73 from the heights of Warkan (Hyrcania?) had my parents sent thither

74 by the hand of their treasurers, unto whom they committed it because of their faithfulness>.

112. 75 But I remembered not the brightness of it; for I was yet a child and very young when I had left it in the palace of my Father,

76 but suddenly, [when] I saw the garment made like unto me as it had been in a mirror.

77 And I beheld upon it all myself (or saw it wholly in myself) and I knew and saw myself through it,

78 that we were divided asunder, being of one; and again were one in one shape.

79 Yea, the treasurers also which brought me the garment

80 I beheld, that they were two, yet one shape was upon both, one royal sign was set upon both of them.

81 The money and the wealth had they in their hands, and paid me the due price,

82 and the lovely garment, which was variegated with bright colours

83 with gold and precious stones and pearls of comely hue

84 they were fastened above (or in the height)

85 .

86 And the likeness of the King of kings was all in all of it.

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87 Sapphire stones were fitly set in it above (or, like the sapphire stone also were its manifold hues).

113. 88 And again I saw that throughout it motions of knowledge were being sent forth,

89 and it was ready to utter speech.

90 And I heard it speak :

91 I am of him that is more valiant than all men, for whose sake I was reared up with the Father himself.

92 And I also perceived his stature (so Gr.- Syr. I perceived in myself that my stature grew in accordance with his working).

93 And all its royal motions rested upon me as it grew toward the impulse of it (And with its kingly motions it was spreading itself toward me).

94 And it hastened, reaching out from the hand of unto him that would receive it

95 and me also did yearning arouse to start forth and meet it and receive it.

96 And I stretched forth and received it, and adorned myself with the beauty of the colours thereof (mostly Syr.; Gr. corrupt)

97 and in my royal robe excelling in beauty I arrayed myself wholly.

98 And when I had put it on, I was lifted up unto the place of peace (sahl-tation) and homage

99 and I bowed my head and worshipped the brightness of the Father which had sent it unto me.

100 for I had performed his commandments, and he likewise that which he had promised,

101 and at the doors of his palace which was from the beginning I mingled among ,

102 and he rejoiced over me and received me with him into his palace,

103 and all his servants do praise him vwith sweet voices.

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104 And he promised me that with him I shall be sent unto the gates of the king,

105 that with my gifts and my pearl we may appear together before the king.

*[Immediately on this, in the Syriac, follows a Song of Praise of Thomas the apostle consisting of forty-two ascriptions of praise and four final clauses (Wright, pp. 245-51). It has no bearing on the Acts, and is not in itself so remarkable as to need to be inserted here.]*

114 And Charisius went home glad, thinking that his wife would be with him, and that she had become such as she was before, even before she heard the divine word and believed on Jesus. And he went, and found her with her hair dishevelled and her clothes rent, and when he saw it he said unto her: My lady Mygdonia, why doth this cruel disease keep hold on thee? and wherefore hast thou done this? I am thine husband from thy virginity, and both the gods and the law grant me to have rule over thee, what is this great madness of thine, that thou art become a derision in all our nation? but put thou away the care that cometh of that sorcerer; and I will remove his face from among us, that thou mayest see him no more.

115 But Mygdonia when she heard that gave herself up unto grief, groaning and lamenting and Charisius said again; Have I then so much wronged the gods that they have afflicted me with such a disease? what is my great offence that they have cast me into such humiliation? I beseech thee. Mygdonia trangle my soul no more with the pitiful sight of thee and thy mean appearance and afflict not mine heart with care for thee I am Charisius thine husband, whom all the nation honoureth and feareth. What must I do? I know not whither to turn. What am I to think? shall I keep silence and endure? yet who can be patient when men take his treasure? and who can endure to lose thy sweet ways? and what is there for me? (Syr. thy beauties which are ever before me) the fragrance of thee is in my nostrils, and thy bright face is fixed in mine eyes. They are taking away my soul, and the fair body which I rejoiced to see they are destroying, and that sharpest of eyes they are blinding and cutting off my right hand: my joy is turning to grief and my life to death, and the light of it is being dyed (?) with darkness. Let no man of you my kindred henceforth look on me; from you no help hath come to me, nor will I hereafter worship the gods of the east that have enwrapped me in such calamities, nor pray to them anymore nor sacrifice to them, for I am bereaved of my spouse. And what else should I ask of them? for all my glory is taken away, yet am I a prince and next unto the king in power; but Mygdonia hath set me at nought, and taken away all these things. (Would that someone would blind one of my eyes, and that thine eyes would look upon me as they were wont, Syr. which has more clauses, to the same effect.)

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116 And while Charisius spake thus with tears, Mygdonia sat silent and looking upon the ground; and again he came unto her and said: My lady Mygdonia, most desired of me, remember that out of all the women that are in India I chose and took thee as the most beautiful, though I might have joined to myself in marriage many more beautiful: but yet I lie, Mygdonia, for by the gods it would not have been possible to find another like thee in the land of India; but woe is me alway, for thou wilt not even answer me a word: but if thou wilt, revile me, so that I may only be vouchsafed a word from thee. Look at me, for I am more comely than that sorcerer: but thou art my wealth and honour: and all men know that there is none like me: and thou art my race and kindred; and lo, he taketh thee away from me.

117 And when Charisius had so said, Mygdonia saith unto him: He whom I love is better than thee and thy substance: for thy substance is of earth and returneth unto the earth; but he whom I love is of heaven and will take me with him unto heaven. Thy wealth shall pass away, and thy beauty shall vanish, and thy robes, and thy many works: and thou shalt be alone, naked, with thy transgressions. Call not to my remembrance thy deeds (unto me), for I pray the Lord that I may forget thee, so as to remember no more those former pleasures and the custom of the body; which shall pass away as a shadow, but Jesus only endureth for ever, and the souls which hope in him. Jesus himself shall quit me of the shameful deeds which I did with thee. And when Charisius heard this, he turned him to sleep, vexed (dissolved) in soul, saying to her: Consider it by thyself all this night: and if thou wilt be with me such as thou wast before, and not see that sorcerer, I will do all according to thy mind, and if thou wilt remove thine affection from him I will take him out of the prison and let him go and remove into another country, and I will not vex thee, for I know that thou makest much of the stranger. And not with thee first did this matter come about, for many other women also hath he deceived with thee; and they have awaked sober and returned to themselves: do not thou then make nought of my words and cause me to be a reproach among the Indians.

118 And Charisius having thus spoken went to sleep: but she took ten denarii (20 zuze, Syr.), and went secretly to give them to the gaolers that she might enter in to the apostle. But on the way Judus Thomas came and met her, and she saw him and was afraid, for she thought that he was one of the rulers: for a great light went before him. And she said to herself as she fled: have lost thee, O my unhappy soul! for thou wilt not again see Judas the apostle of the living, and not yet hast thou received the holy seal. And she fled and ran into a narrow place and there hid herself, saying: I would rather choose to be killed (taken) by the poorer, whom it is possible to persuade, than to fall into the hand of this mighty ruler, who will despise gifts.

**The Tenth Act:** wherein Mygdonia receiveth baptism.

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119 And while Mygdonia thought thus with herself, Judas came and stood over her, and she saw him and was afraid, and fell down and became lifeless with terror. But he stood by her and took her by the hand and said unto her: Fear not, Mygdonia: Jesus will not leave thee, neither will the Lord unto whom thou hast committed thy soul overlook thee. His compassionate rest will not forsake thee: he that is kind will not forsake thee, for his kindness' sake, nor he that is good for his goodness' sake. Rise up then from the earth, thou that art become wholly above it: look on the light, for the Lord leaveth not them that love him to walk in darkness: behold him that travelleth with his servants, that he is unto them a defender in perils. And Mygdonia arose and looked on him and said: Whither wentest thou, my lord? and who is he that brought thee out of prison to behold the sun? Judas Thomas saith unto her: My Lord Jesus is mightier than all powers and all kings and rulers.

120 And Mygdonia said: Give me the seal of Jesus Christ and I shall (Iet me) receive the gift at thy hands before thou departest out of life. And she took him with her and entered into the court and awaked her nurse, saying unto her: Narcia (Gr. Marcia), my mother and nurse, all thy service and refreshment thou hast done for me from my childhood until my present age are vain, and for them I owe thee thanks which are temporal; do for me now also a favour, that thou mayest forever receive a recompense from him that giveth great gifts. And Narcia in answer saith: What wilt thou, my daughter Mygdonia, and what is to be done for thy pleasure? for the honours which thou didst promise me before, the stranger hath not suffered thee to accomplish, and thou hast made me a reproach among all the nation. And now what is this new thing that thou commandest me? And Mygdonia saith: Become thou partaker with me in eternal life, that I may receive of thee perfect nurture: take bread and bring it me, and wine mingled with water, and spare my freedom (take pity on me a free-born woman, Syr.). And the nurse said: I will bring thee many loaves, and for water flagons of wine, and fulfil thy desire. But she saith to the nurse: Flagons I desire not, nor the many loaves: but this only, bring wine mingled with water and one loaf, and oil .

121 And when Narcia had brought these things, Mygdonia stood before the apostle with her head bare; and he took the oil and poured it on her head, saying: Thou holy oil given unto us for sanctification, secret mystery whereby the cross was shown unto us, thou art the straightener of the crooked limbs, thou art the humbler (softener) of hard things (works), thou art it that showeth the hidden treasures, thou art the sprout of goodness; let thy power come, let it be established upon thy servant Mygdonia, and heal thou her by this freedom. And when the oil was poured upon her he had her nurse unclthe her and gird a linen cloth about her; and there was there a fountain of water upon which the apostle went up, and baptized Mygdonia in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. And when she was baptized and clad, he brake bread



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and took a cup of water and made her a partaker in the body of Christ and the cup of the Son of God, and said: Thou hast received thy seal, get for thyself eternal life. And immediately there was heard from above a voice saying: Yea, amen. And when Narcia heard that voice, she was amazed, and besought the apostle that she also might receive the seal; and the apostle gave it her and said: Let the care of the Lord be about thee as about the rest.

122 And having done these things the apostle returned unto the prison, and found the doors open and the guards still sleeping. And Thomas said: Who is like thee, O God? who withholdest not thy loving affection and care from any who is like thee, the merciful, who hast delivered thy creatures out of evil. Life that hath subdued death, rest that hath ended toil. Glory be to the only-begotten of the Father. Glory to the compassionate that was sent forth of his heart. And when he had said thus, the guards waked and beheld all the doors open, and the prisoners <+ asleep, Syr.>, and said in themselves: Did not we fasten the doors? and how are they now open, and the prisoners within?

123 But at the dawn Charisius went unto Mygdonia , and found them praying and saying: O new God that by the stranger hast come hither unto us, hidden God of the dwellers in India (Syr. who art hidden from); God that hast shown thy glory by thine apostle Thomas, God whose report we have heard and believed on thee; God, unto whom we are come to be saved; God, who for love of man and for pity didst come down unto our littleness; God who didst seek us out when we knew him (thee) not; God that dwellest in the heights and from whom the depths are not hid: turn thou away from us the madness of Charisius. And Charisius hearing that said to Mygdonia: Rightly callest thou me evil and mad and foul I for if I had not borne with thy disobedience, and given thee liberty, thou wouldest not have called on God against me and made mention of my name before God. But believe me, Mygdonia that in that sorcerer there is no profit, and what he promiseth to perform he cannot: but I will perform before thy sight all that I promise, that thou mayest believe, and bear with my words and be to me as thou wast beforetime.

124 And he came near and besought her again, saying: If thou wilt be persuaded of me, I shall henceforth have no grief; remember that day when thou didst meet me first; tell the truth: was I more beautiful unto thee at that time, or Jesus at this? And Mygdonia said: That time required its own, and this time also; that was the time of the beginning, but this of the end; that was the time of temporal life, this of eternal; that of pleasure that passeth away, but this of pleasure that abideth for ever; that, of day and night, this of day without night. Thou sawest that marriage that was passing, and here, and single but this marriage continueth for ever; that was a partnership of corruption, but this of eternal life; those groomsmen (and maids) were men and women of time, but these abide unto the end.

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That marriage upon earth setteth up dropping dew of the love of men (Syr. That union was founded upon the earth where there is an unceasing press: this is founded upon the bridge of fire upon which is sprinkled grace: both corrupt); that bride-chamber is taken down again, but this remaineth always; that bed was strown with coverlets (that grow old), but this with love and faith. Thou art a bridegroom that passest away and art dissolved (changed), but Jesus is a true bridegroom, enduring forever immortal, that dowry was of money and robes that grow old, but this is of living words which never pass away.

125 And when Charisius heard these things he went unto the king and told him all: and the king commanded Judas to be brought, that he might judge him and destroy him. But Charisius said: Have patience a little, O king, and first persuade the man making him afraid, that he may persuade Mygdonia to be unto me as formerly. And Misdaeus sent and fetched the apostle of Christ, and all the prisoners were grieved because the apostle departed from them, for they yearned after him, saying: Even the comfort which we had have they taken away from us.

126 And Misdaeus said unto Judas: Wherefore teachest thou this new doctrine, which both gods and men hate, and which hath nought of profit? And Judas said: What evil do I teach? And Misdaeus said: Thou teachest, saying that men with the God whom thou preachest. Judas saith: Thou sayest true, O king: thus do I teach. For tell me, art thou not wroth with thy soldiers if they wait on thee in filthy garments? if then thou, being a king of earth and returning unto earth, request thy subjects to be reverend in their doings, are ye wroth and said ye that I teach ill when I say that they who serve my king must be reverend and pure and free from all grief and care of children and unprofitable riches and vain trouble? For indeed thou wouldest have thy subjects follow thy conversation and thy manners, and thou punishest them if they despise thy commandments: how much more must they that believe on him serve my God with much reverence and cleanness and security, and be quit of all pleasures of the body, adultery and prodigality and theft and drunkenness and belly-service and foul deeds?

127 And Misdaeus hearing these things said: Lo, I let thee go: go then and persuade Mygdonia, the wife of Charisius, not to desire to depart from him. Judas saith unto him: Delay not if thou hast aught to do: for her, if she hath rightly received what she hath learned, neither iron nor fire nor aught else stronger than these will avail to hurt or to root out him that is held in her soul. Misdaeus saith unto Judas: Some poisons do dissolve other poisons, and a theriac cureth the bites of the viper; and thou if thou wilt canst give a solvent of those diseases, and make peace and concord betwixt this couple: for by so doing thou wilt spare thyself, for not yet art thou sated with life; and know thou that if thou do not persuade her, I will catch thee away out of this life which is desirable unto all men. And Judas

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said: This life hath been given as a loan, and this time is one that changeth, but that life whereof I teach is incorruptible; and beauty and youth that are seen shall in a little cease to be. The king saith to him: I have counselled thee for the best, but thou knowest thine own affairs.

128 And as the apostle went forth from before the king, Charisius came to him and entreated him and said: I beseech thee, O man: I have not sinned against thee or any other at any time, nor against the gods; wherefore hast thou stirred up this great calamity against me? and for what cause hast thou brought such disturbance upon mine house? and what profit hast thou of it? but if thou thinkest to gain somewhat, tell me the gain, what it is, and I will procure it for thee without labour. To what end dost thou make me mad, and cast thyself into destruction? for if thou persuade her not, I will both dispatch thee and finally take myself out of life. But if, as thou sayest, after our departing hence there is there life and death, and also condemnation and victory and a place of judgement, then will I also go in thither to be judged with thee: and if that God whom thou preachest is just and awardeth punishment justly, I know that I shall gain my cause against thee; for thou hast injured me, having suffered no wrong at my hands: for indeed even here I am able to avenge myself on thee and bring upon thee all that thou hast done unto me. Therefore be thou persuaded, and come home with me and persuade Mygdonia to be with me as she was at first, before she beheld thee. And Judas saith to him: Believe me, my child that if men loved God as much as they love one another, they would ask of him all things and receive them, and none would do them violence (there would be nothing which would not obey them, Syr.).

129 And as Thomas said this, they came unto the house of Charisius and found Mygdonia sitting and Narcia standing by her, and her hand supporting her cheek; and she was saying: Let the remainder of the days of my life, O mother, be cut off from me, and all the hours become as one hour, and let me depart out of life that I may go the sooner and behold that beautiful one, whose report I have heard, even that living one and giver of life unto them that believe on him, where is not day and night, nor light and darkness, nor good and evil, nor poor and rich, nor male and female, nor free and bond, nor proud that subjecteth the humble. And as she spake the apostle stood by her, and forthwith she rose up and did him reverence. Then Charisius said unto him: Seest thou how she feareth and honoureth thee and all that thou shalt bid her she will do willingly?

130 And as he so spake, Judas saith unto Mygdonia: My daughter Mygdonia, obey that which thy brother Charisius saith. And Mygdonia saith: If thou wast not able the deed in word wilt thou compel me to endure the act? for I have heard of thee that this life is of no profit, and this relief is for a time, and these possessions are transitory. And again thou saidst that whoso renounceth this life shall receive the life eternal, and whoso hateth the light of day and night shall behold a light that is not

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overtaken, that whoso despiseth this money shall find other and eternal money. But now because thou art in fear. Who that hath done somewhat and is praised for the work changeth it? straightway overthroweth it from the foundation? who diggeth a spring water in a thirsty land and straightway filleth it in? who findeth a treasure and useth it not? And Charisius heard it and said: I will not imitate you, neither will I hasten to destroy you; nor though I may so do, will I put bonds about thee (but thee I will bind, Syr.); and I will not suffer thee to speak with this sorcerer; and if thou obey me, well, but if not, I know what I must do.

131 And Judas went out of Charisius' house and departed unto the house of Siphor and lodged there with him. And Siphor said: I will prepare for Judas a hall (triclinium) wherein he may teach (Syr. Siphor said to Judas: Prepare thyself an apartment, &c.). And he did so; and Siphor said : I and my wife and daughter will dwell henceforth in holiness, and in chastity, and in one affection. I beseech thee that we may receive of thee the seal, and become worshippers of the true God and numbered among his sheep and lambs. And Judas said: I am afraid to speak that which I think: yet I know somewhat, and what I know it is not possible for me to utter.

132 And he began to say concerning baptism: This baptism is remission of sins (the Greek MSS. U and P have divergent texts, both obscure): this bringeth forth again light that is shed about us: this bringeth to new birth the new man (this is the restorer of understandings Syr.): this mingleth the spirit (with the body), raiseth up in threefoldwise a new man and partaker of the remission of sins. Glory be to thee, hidden one, that art communicated in baptism. Glory to thee the unseen power that is in baptism. Glory to thee, renewal, whereby are renewed they that are baptized and with affection take hold upon thee.

And having thus said, he poured oil over their heads and said: Glory be to thee the love of compassion (bowels). Glory to thee name of Christ. Glory to thee, power established in Christ. And he commanded a vessel to be brought, and baptized them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

133 And when they were baptized and clad, he set bread on the table and blessed it, and said: Bread of life, the which who eat abide incorruptible: Bread that filleth the hungry souls with the blessing thereof: thou art he that vouchsafest to receive a gift, that thou mayest become unto us remission of sins, and that they who eat thee may become immortal: we invoke upon thee the name of the mother, of the unspeakable mystery of the hidden powers and authorities (? we name the name of the unspeakable mystery, that is hidden from all &c.): we invoke upon thee the name of [thy?] Jesus. And he said: Let the powers of blessing come, and be established in this bread, that all the souls which partake of it may be

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washed from their sins. And he brake and gave unto Siphor and his wife and daughter.

**The Eleventh Act:** concerning the wife of Misdaeus.

134 Now Misdaeus the king, when he had let Judas go, dined and went home, and told his wife what had befallen Charisius their kinsman, saying: See what hath come to pass to that unhappy man, and thou thyself knowest, my sister Tertia, that a man hath nought better than his own wife on whom he resteth; but it chanced that his wife went unto that sorcerer of whom thou hast heard that he is come to the land of the Indians, and fell into his charms and is parted from her own husband; and he knoweth not what he should do. And when I would have destroyed the malefactor, he would not have it. But do thou go and counsel her to incline unto her husband, and forsake the vain words of the sorcerer.

135 And as soon as she arose Tertia went to the house of Charisius her husband's, and found Mygdonia lying upon the earth in humiliation, and ashes and sackcloth were spread under her, and she was praying that the Lord would forgive her her former sins and she might soon depart out of life. And Tertia said unto her: Mygdonia, my dear sister and companion what is this hand (Syr. this folly)? what is the disease that hath overtaken thee? and why doest thou the deeds of madmen? Know thyself and come back unto thine own way, come near unto thy many kinsfolk, and spare thy true husband Charisius, and do not things unbefitting a free-woman. Mygdonia saith unto her: O Tertia, thou hast not yet heard the preacher of life: not yet hath he touched thine ears, not yet hast thou tasted the medicine of life nor art freed from corruptible mourning. Thou standest in the life of time, and the everlasting life and salvation thou knowest not, and perceivest not the incorruptible fellowship. Thou standest clad in robes that grow old and desirest not those that are eternal, and art proud of this beauty which vanisheth and hast no thought of the holiness of thy soul; and art rich in a multitude of servants, (and hast not freed thine own soul from servitude, Syr.) and pridest thyself in the glory that cometh of many, but redeemest not thyself from the condemnation of death.

136 And when Tertia heard this of Mygdonia she said: I pray thee, sister, bring me unto that stranger that teacheth these great things, that I also may go and hear him, and be taught to worship the God whom he preacheth, and become partaker of his prayers, and a sharer in all that thou hast told me of. And Mygdonia saith to her: He is in the house of Siphor the captain; for he is become the occasion of life unto all them that are being saved in India. And hearing that, Tertia went quickly to Siphor's house, that she might see the new apostle that was come thither. And when she entered in, Judas said unto her: What art thou come to see? a man that is a stranger and poor and contemptible and needy, having neither riches nor substance; yet one thing I possess which neither kings

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nor rulers can take away, that neither perisheth nor ceaseth, which is Jesus the Saviour of all mankind, the Son of the living God, who hath given life unto all that believe on him and take refuge with him and are known to be of the number of his servants (sheep, Syr.). Unto whom saith Tertia: May I become a partaker of this life which thou promisest that all they shall receive who come together unto the assembly of God. And the apostle said: The treasury of the holy king is opened wide, and they which worthily partake of the good things that are therein do rest, and resting do reign: but first, no man cometh unto him that is unclean and vile: for he knoweth our inmost hearts and the depths of our thought, and it is not possible for any to escape him. Thou, then, if verily thou believest in him, shalt be made worthy of his mysteries; and he will magnify thee and enrich thee, and make thee to be an heir of his kingdom.

137 And Tertia having heard this returned home rejoicing, and found her husband awaiting her, not having dined, and when Misdaeus saw her he said: Whence is it that thine entering in to-day is more beautiful? and wherefore art thou come walking, which beseemeth not free-born women like thee? And Tertia saith unto him: I owe thee the greatest of thanks for that thou didst send me unto Mygdonia, for I went and heard of a new life, and I saw the new apostle of the God that giveth life unto them that believe on him and fulfil his commandments; I ought therefore myself to recompense thee for this favour and admonition with good advice; for thou shalt be a great king in heaven if thou obey me and fear the God that is preached by the stranger, and keep thyself holy unto the living God. For this kingdom passeth away, and thy comfort will be turned into affliction: but go thou to that man, and believe him, and thou shalt live unto the end. And when Misdaeus heard these things of his wife, he smote his face with his hands and rent his clothes and said: May the soul of Charisius find no rest, for he hath hurt me to the soul; and may he have no hope, for he hath taken away my hope. And he went out greatly vexed.

138 And he found Charisius his friend in the market-place, and said unto him: Why hast thou cast me into hell to be another companion to thyself? why hast thou emptied and defrauded me to gain nought? why hast thou hurt me and profited thyself not at all? why hast thou slain me and thyself not lived? Why hast thou wronged me and thyself not got justice? why didst thou not suffer me to destroy that sorcerer before he corrupted my house with his wickedness? And he kept hold upon (was upbraiding, Syr.) Charisius. And Charisius saith: Why, what hath befallen thee? Misdaeus said: He hath bewitched Tertia. And they went both of them unto the house of Siphor the captain, and found Judas sitting and teaching. And all they that were there rose up before the king, but he arose not. And Misdaeus perceived that it was he, and took hold of the seat and overset it, and took up the seat with both his hands and smote his head so that he wounded it, and delivered him to his soldiers, saying: Take him away, and hale him with violence and not gently, that his shame may be manifest

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unto all men. And they haled him and took him to the place where Misdaeus judged, and he stood there, held of the soldiers of Misdaeus.

**The Twelfth Act:** concerning Ouazanes (Iuzanes) the son of Misdaeus.

139 And Ouazanes (Iuzanes, P; Vizan, Syr.) the son of Misdaeus came unto the soldiers and said: Give me him that I may speak with him until the king cometh. And they gave him up, and he brought him in where the king gave judgement. And Iuzanes saith: Knowest thou not that I am the son of Misdaeus the king, and I have power to say unto the king what I will, and he will suffer thee to live? tell me then, who is thy God, and what power dost thou claim and glory in it? for if it be some power or art of magic, tell it me and teach me, and I will let thee go. Judas saith unto him: Thou art the son of Misdacus the king who is king for a time, but I am the servant of Jesus Christ the eternal king, and thou hast power to say to thy father to save whom thou wilt in the temporal life wherein men continue not, which thou and thy father grant, but I beseech my Lord and intercede for men, and he giveth them a new life which is altogether enduring. And thou boastest thyself of possessions and servants and robes and luxury and unclean chamberings, but I boast myself of poverty and philosophy and humility and lasting and prayer and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost and of my brethren that are worthy of God: and I boast myself of eternal life. And thou reliest on (hast taken refuge with) a man like unto thyself and not able to save his own soul from judgement and death, but I rely upon the living God, upon the saviour of kings and princes, who is the judge of all men. And ye indeed to-day perchance are, and to-morrow are no more, but I have taken refuge with him that abideth forever and knoweth all our seasons and times. And if thou wilt become the servant of this God thou shalt soon do so; but show that thou wilt be a servant worthy of him hereby: first by holiness (purity), which is the head of all good things, and then by fellowship with this God whom I preach, and philosophy and simplicity and love and faith and in him, and unity of pure food (simplicity of pure i e, Syr.).

140 And the young man was persuaded by the Lord and sought occasion how he might let Judas escape: but while he thought thereon, the king came, and the soldiers took Judas and led him forth. And Iuzanes went forth with him and stood beside him. And when the king was set he bade Judas be brought in, with his hands bound behind him; and he was brought into the midst and stood there. And the king saith: Tell me who thou art and by what power thou doest these things. And Judas saith to him: I am a man like thee, and by the power of Jesus Christ I do these things. And Misdaeus saith: Tell me the truth before I destroy thee. And Judas saith: Thou hast no power against me, as thou supposest, and thou wilt not hurt me at all. And the king was wroth at his words, and commanded to heat iron plates and set him upon them barefoot; and as the soldiers took off his shoes he said: The wisdom of God is better than

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the wisdom of men. Thou Lord and King (do thou take counsel against them, Syr.) and let thy goodness resist his wrath. And they brought the plates which were like fire, and set the apostle upon them, and straightway water sprang up abundantly from the earth, so that the plates were swallowed up in it, and they that held him let him go and withdrew themselves.

141 And the king seeing the abundance of water said to Judas: Ask thy God that he deliver me from this death, that I perish not in the flood. And the apostle prayed and said: Thou that didst bind this element (nature) and gather it into one place and send it forth into divers lands; that didst bring disorder into order, that grantest mighty works and great wonders by the hands of Judas thy servant; that hast mercy on my soul, that I may always receive thy brightness; that givest wages unto them that have laboured; thou saviour of my soul, restoring it unto its own nature that it may have no fellowship with hurtful things; that hast always been the occasion of life: do thou restrain this element that it lift not up itself to destroy; for there are some of them that stand here who shall believe on thee and live. And when he had prayed, the water was swallowed up by little and little, and the place became dry. And when Misdaeus saw it he commanded him to be taken to the prison: Until I shall consider how he must be used.

142 And as Judas was led away to the prison they all followed him, and Iuzanes the king's son walked at his right hand, and Siphor at the left. And he entered into the prison and sat down, and Iuzanes and Siphor, and he persuaded his wife and his daughter to sit down, for they also were come in to hear the word of life. For they knew that Misdaeus would slay him because of the excess of his anger. And Judas began to say: O liberator of my soul from the bondage of the many, because I gave myself to be sold; behold, I rejoice and exult, knowing that the times are fulfilled for me to enter in and receive. Lo, I am to be set free from the cares that are on the earth; lo, I fulfil mine hope and receive truth; lo, I am set free from sorrow and put on joy alone; lo, I become careless and griefless and dwell in rest; lo, I am set free from bondage and am called unto liberty; lo, I have served times and seasons, and I am lifted up above times and seasons; lo, I receive my wages from my recompenser, who giveth without reckoning (number) because his wealth sufficeth for the gift; and I shall not put it on again; lo, I sleep and awake, and I shall no more go to sleep; lo, I die and live again, and I shall no more taste of death; lo, they rejoice and expect me, that I may come and be with their kindred and be set as a flower in their crown; lo, I reign in the kingdom whereon I set my hope, even from hence; lo, the rebellious fall before me, for I have escaped them; lo, (unto me) the peace hath come, whereunto all are gathered.

143 And as the apostle spake thus, all that were there hearkened, supposing that in that hour he would depart out of life. And again he said: Believe on the physician of all, both seen and unseen, and on the saviour



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of the souls that need help from him. This is the free-born of kings, this the physician of his creatures; this is he that was reproached of his own slaves; this is the Father of the height and the Lord of nature and the Judge (? Father of nature and Lord of the height and supreme Judge, Syr.): he came of the greatest, the only-begotten son of the deep; and he was called the son of (became visible through, Syr.) Mary the virgin, and was termed the son of Joseph the carpenter: he whose littleness (we beheld) with the eyes of our body, but his greatness we received by faith, and saw it in his works whose human body we felt also with our hands, and his aspect we saw transfigured (changed) with our eyes, but his heavenly semblance on the mount we were not able to see: he that made the rulers stumble and did violence unto death: he, the truth that lieth not, that at the last paid the tribute for himself and his disciples: whom the prince beholding feared and the powers that were with him were troubled; and the prince bare witness (asked him, Syr.) who he was and from whence, and knew not the truth, because he is alien from truth: he that having authority over the world, and the pleasures therein, and the possessions and the comfort, all these things and turneth away his subjects, that they should not use them.

144 And having fulfilled these sayings, he arose and prayed thus: our Father, which art in heaven: hallowed be thy name: Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done, as in heaven so upon earth: and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

My Lord and God, hope and confidence and teacher, thou hast taught me to pray thus, behold, I pray this prayer and fulfil thy commandment: be thou with me unto the end; thou art he that from childhood hast sown life in me and kept me from corruption; thou art he that hast brought me unto the poverty of this world, and exhorted me unto the true riches; thou art he that hast made me known unto myself and showed me that I am thine; and I have kept myself pure from woman, that that which thou requirest be not found in defilement.

*[At the words 'My Lord and God' begins the double text, represented on the one hand by the MS. U and on the other by the Paris MS. P, and three (partly four) others. These insert the prayer after ch. 167. Their text, I believe, may be the original Greek. I follow it here, repeating the first paragraph.]*

(144) My Lord and God, my hope and my confidence and my teacher, that hast implanted courage in me, thou didst teach me to pray thus; behold, I pray thy prayer and bring thy will to fulfilment: be thou with me unto the end. Thou art he that from my youth up didst give me patience in temptation and me life and preserve me from corruption; thou art he that didst bring me into the poverty of this world and fill me with the true riches; thou art he that didst show me that I was thine: wherefore I was

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never joined unto a wife, that the temple worthy of thee might not be found in pollution.

145 My mouth sufficeth not to praise thee, neither am I able to conceive the care and providence (carefulness) which hath been about me from thee which thou hast had for me). For I desired to gain riches, but thou by a vision didst show me that they are full of loss and injury to them that gain them and I believed thy showing, and continued in the poverty of the world until thou, the true riches wert revealed unto me, who didst fill both me and the rest that were worthy of thee with thine own riches and set free thine own from care and anxiety. I have therefore fulfilled thy commandments, O Lord, and accomplished thy will, and become poor and needy and a stranger and a bondman and set at nought and a prisoner and hungry and thirsty and nailed and unshod, and I have toiled for thy sake, that my confidence might not perish and my hope that is in thee might not be confounded and my much labour might not be in vain and my weariness not be counted for nought: let not my prayers and my continual fastings perish, and my great zeal toward thee; let not my seed of wheat be changed for tares out of thy land, let not the enemy carry it away and mingle his own tares therewith; for thy land verily receiveth not his tares, neither indeed can they be laid up in thine houses.

146 I have planted thy vine in the earth, it hath sent down its roots into the depth and its growth is spread out in the height, and the fruits of it are stretched forth upon the earth, and they that are worthy of thee are made glad by them, whom also thou hast gained. The money which thou hast from me I laid down upon the table (bank); this, when thou requirest it, restore unto me with usury, as thou hast promised. With thy one mind have I traded and have made ten, thou hast added more to me beside that I had, as thou didst covenant. I have forgiven my debtor the mine, require thou it not at my hands. I was bidden to the supper and I came: and I refused the land and the yoke of oxen and the wife, that I might not for their sake be rejected; I was bidden to the wedding, and I put on white raiment, that I might be worthy of it and not be bound hand and foot and cast into the outer darkness. My lamp with its bright light expecteth the master coming from the marriage, that it may receive him, and I may not (? he may not) see it dimmed because the oil is spent. Mine eyes, O Christ, look upon thee, and mine heart exulteth with joy because I have fulfilled thy will and perfected thy commandments; that I may be likened unto that watchful and careful servant who in his eagerness neglecteth not to keep vigil (other MSS.: I have not slumbered idly in keeping thy commandments: in the first sleep and at midnight and at cockcrow, that mine eyes may behold thee, &c.). All the night have I laboured to keep mine house from robbers, lest it be broken through.

147 My loins have I girt close with truth and bound my shoes on my feet, that I may never see them gaping: mine hands have I put unto the yoked

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plough and have not turned away backward, lest my furrows go crooked. The plough-land is become white and the harvest is come, that I may receive my wages. My garment that groweth old I have worn out, and the labour that hath brought me unto rest have I accomplished. I have kept the first watch and the second and the third, that I may behold thy face and adore thine holy brightness. I have rooted out the worst (pulled down my barns, Syr.) and left them desolate upon earth, that I may be filled full from thy treasures (Gr. MSS. add: all my substance have I sold, that I may gain thee the pearl). The moist spring that was in me have I dried up, that I may live and rest beside thine inexhaustible spring (al. and Syr.: rest beside thy living spring). The captive whom thou didst commit to me I have slain, that he which is set free in me may not fall from his confidence. Him that was inward have I made outward and the outward, and all thy fullness hath been fulfilled in me. I have not returned unto the things that are behind, but have gone forward unto the things that are before, that I become not a reproach. The dead man have I quickened, and the living one have I overcome, and that which was lacking have I filled up (Syr. Wright, not the older one, inserts negatives, 'not quickened', &c.), that I may receive the crown of victory, and the power of Christ may be accomplished in me. I have received reproach upon earth, but give thou me the return and the recompense in the heavens. (U omits practically all this chapter.)

148 Let not the powers and the officers perceive me, and let them not have any thought concerning me; let not the publicans and exactors ply their calling upon me; let not the weak and the evil cry out against me that am valiant and humble, and when I am borne upward let them not rise up to stand before me, by thy power, O Jesu, which surroundeth me as a crown: for they do flee and hide themselves, they cannot look on thee: but (for) suddenly do they fall upon them that are subject to them, and the portion of the sons of the evil one doth itself cry out and convict them; and it is not hid from them, nor their nature is made known: the children of the evil one are separated off. Do thou then grant me, Lord, that I may pass by in quietness and joy and peace, and pass over and stand before the judge, and let not the devil (or slanderer) look upon me; let his eyes be blinded by thy light which thou hast made to dwell in me, close thou up (muzzle) his mouth: for he hath found nought against me.

[We revert to U.]

149 And he said again unto them that were about him: believe in the Saviour of them that have laboured in his service: for my soul already flourisheth because my time is near to receive him; for he being beautiful draweth me on always to speak concerning his beauty, what it is though I be not able and suffice not to speak it worthily: thou that art the light (feeder, Syr.) of my poverty and the supplier of my defects and nurturer of my need: be thou with me until I come and receive thee for evermore.

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**The Thirteenth Act:** wherein Iuzanes receiveth baptism with the rest.

150 And Iuzanes the youth besought the apostle, saying: I pray thee, O man, apostle of God, suffer me to go, and I will persuade the gaoler to permit thee to come home with me, that by thee I may receive the seal, and become thy minister and a keeper of the commandments of the God whom thou preachest. For indeed, formerly I walked in those things which thou teachest, until my father compelled me and joined me unto a wife by name Mnesara; for I am in my one-and-twentieth year, and have now been seven years married, and before I was joined in marriage I knew no other woman, wherefore also I was accounted useless of my father, nor have I ever had son or daughter of this wife and also my wife herself hath lived with me in chastity all this time, and to-day, if she had been in health, and had listened to thee, I know well that both I should have been at rest and she would have received eternal life; but she is in peril and afflicted with much illness; I will therefore persuade the keeper that he promise to come with me, for I live by myself: and thou shalt also heal that unhappy one. And Judas the apostle of the Most High, hearing this, said to Iuzanes: If thou believest, thou shalt see the marvels of God, and how he saveth his servants.

151 And as they spake thus together, Tertia and Mygdonia and Narcia stood at the door of the prison, and they gave the gaoler 363 staters of silver and entered in to Judas; and found Iuzanes and Siphor and his wife and daughter, and all the prisoners sitting and hearing the word. And when they stood by him he said to them: Who hath suffered you to come unto us? and who opened unto you the sealed door that ye came forth? Tertia saith unto him: Didst not thou open the door for us and tell us to come into the prison that we might take our brethren that were there, and then should the Lord show forth his glory in us? And when we came near the door, I know not how, thou wast parted from us and hid thyself and camest hither before us where also we heard the noise of the door, when thou didst shut us out. We gave money therefore to the keepers and came in and lo, we are here praying thee that we may persuade thee and let thee escape until the king's wrath against thee shall cease. Unto whom Judas said: Tell us first of all how ye were shut up.

152 And she saith to him: Thou wast with us, and didst never leave us for one hour, and askest thou how we were shut up? but if thou desirest to hear, hear. The king Misdaeus sent for me and said unto me: Not yet hath that sorcerer prevailed over thee, for, as I hear, he bewitcheth men with oil and water and bread, and hath not yet bewitched thee; but obey thou me, for if not, I will imprison thee and wear thee out, and him I will destroy; for I know that if he hath not yet given thee oil and water and bread, he hath not prevailed to get power over thee. And I said unto him: Over my body thou hast authority, and do thou all that thou wilt; but my soul I will not let perish with thee. And hearing that he shut me up in a chamber

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(beneath his dining-hall, Syr.): and Charisius brought Mygdonia and shut her up with me: and thou broughtest us out and didst bring us even hither; but give thou us the seal quickly, that the hope of Misdacus who counselleth thus may be cut off.

153 And when the apostle heard this, he said: Glory be to thee, O Jesu of many forms, glory to thee that appearest in the guise of our poor manhood: glory to thee that encouragest us and makest us strong and givest grace and consolest and standest by us in all perils, and strengthenest our weakness. And as he thus spake, the gaoler came and said: Put out the lamps, lest any accuse you unto the king. And then they extinguished the lamps, and turned to sleep; but the apostle spake unto the Lord: It is the time now, O Jesu, for thee to make haste; for, lo the children of darkness sit (make us to sit, Syr.) in their own darkness, do thou therefore enlighten us with the light of thy nature. And on a sudden the whole prison was light as the day: and while all they that were in the prison slept a deep sleep, they only that had believed in the Lord continued waking.

154 Judas therefore saith to Iuzanes: Go thou before and make ready the things for our need. Iuzanes thererore saith: And who will open me the doors of the prison? for the gaolers shut them and are gone to sleep. And Judas saith: Believe in Jesus, and thou shalt find the doors open. And when he went forth and departed from them, all the rest followed after him. And as Iuzanes was gone on before, Mnesara his wife met him coming unto the prison. And she knew him and said: My brother Iuzanes, is it thou? and he saith, Yea, and art thou Mnesara? and she saith Yea. Iuzanes said unto her; Whither walkest thou, especialiy at so untimely an hour? and how wast thou able to rise up? And she said: This youth laid his hand on me and raised me up, and in a dream I say that I should go where the stranger sitteth, and become perfectly whole. Iuzanes saith to her: What youth is with thee? And she said: Seest thou not him that is on my right hand, leading me by the hand?

155 And while they spake together thus, Judas, with Siphor and his wife and daughter and Tertia and Mygdonia and Narcia came unto Iuzanes' house. And Mnesara the wife of Iuzanes seeing him did reverence and said: Art thou come that savedst us from the sore disease? thou art he whom I saw in the night delivering unto me this youth to bring me to the prison. But thy goodness suffered me not to grow weary, but thou thyself art come unto me. And so saying she turned about and saw the youth no more; and finding him not, she saith to the apostle: I am not able to walk alone: for the youth whom thou gavest me is not here. And Judas said: Jesus will henceforth lead thee. And thereafter she came running unto him. And when they entered into the house of Iuzanes the son of Misdaeus the king though it was yet night, a great light shined and was shed about them.

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### Judas' Prayer Concerning Jesus' Work in Hell

156 And then Judas began to pray and to speak thus: O companion and defender (ally) and hope of the weak and confidence of the poor: refuge and lodging of the weary: voice that came forth of the height (sleep, Gr.): comforter dwelling in the midst: port and harbour of them that pass through the regions of the rulers: physician that healest without payment: who among men wast crucified for many: who didst go down into hell with great might: the sight of whom the princes of death endured not; and thou camest up with great glory, and gathering all them that fled unto thee didst prepare a way, and in thy footsteps all they journeyed whom thou didst redeem; and thou broughtest them into thine own fold and didst join them with thy sheep: son of mercy, the son that for love of man wast sent unto us from the perfect country (fatherland) that is above, the Lord of all possessions (undefiled possessions, Syr.): that servest thy servants that they may live: that fillest creation with thine own riches: the poor, that wast in need and didst hunger forty days: that satisfiest thirsty souls with thine own good things; be thou with Iuzanes the son of Misdaeus and with Tertia and Mnesara, and gather them into thy fold and mingle them with thy number; Be unto them a guide in the land of error: be unto them a physician in the land of sickness: be unto them a rest in the land of the weary: sanctify them in a polluted land: be their physician both of bodies and souls: make them holy temples of thee, and let thine holy spirit dwell in them.

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157 Having thus prayed over them, the apostle said unto Mygdonia: Unclothe thy sisters. And she took off their clothes and girded them with girdles and brought them: but Iuzanes had first gone before, and they came after him; and the apostle took oil in a cup of silver and spake thus over it: Fruit more beautiful than all other fruits, unto which none other whatsoever may be compared: altogether merciful: fervent with the force of the word: power of the tree which men putting upon them overcome their adversaries: crowner of the conquerors: help (symbol) and joy of the sick: that didst announce unto men their salvation that showest light to them that are in darkness; whose leaf is bitter, but in thy most sweet fruit thou art fair, that art rough to the sight but soft to the taste; seeming to be weak, but in the greatness of thy strength able to bear the power that beholdeth all things. Having thus said [a corrupt word follows]: Jesu: let his victorious might come and be established in this oil, like as it was established in the tree (wood) that was its kin, even his might at that time, whereof they that crucified thee could not endure the word: let the gift also come whereby breathing upon his (thine) enemies thou didst cause them to go backward and fall headlong and let it rest on this oil, whereupon we invoke thine holy name. And having thus said, he poured it first upon the head of Iuzanes and then upon the women's heads, saying: In thy name, O Jesu Christ, let it be unto these souls for remission of sins and for turning back of the adversary and for salvation of their souls. And he commanded Mygdonia to anoint them but he himself anointed Iuzanes. And having anointed them he led them down into the water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

158 And when they were come up, he took bread and a cup, and blessed it and said: Thine holy body which was crucified for us do we eat, and thy blood that was shed for us unto salvation do we drink; let therefore thy body be unto us salvation and thy blood for remission of sins. And for the gall which thou didst drink for our sakes let the gall of the devil be removed from us: and for the vinegar which thou hast drunk for us, let our weakness be made strong: and for the spitting which thou didst receive for us, let us receive the dew of thy goodness: and by (or for) the reed wherewith they smote thee for us, let us receive the perfect house: and whereas thou receivedst a crown of thorns for our sake, let us that have loved thee put on a crown that fadeth not away; and for the linen cloth wherein thou wast Wrapped, let us also be girt about with thy power that is not vanquished and for the new tomb and the burial let us receive renewing of soul and body: and for that thou didst rise up and revive, let us revive and live and stand before thee in righteous judgement. And he brake and gave the eucharist unto Iuzanes and Tertia and Mnesara and the wife and daughter of Siphor and said: Let this eucharist be unto you for salvation and joy and health of your souls. And they said: Amen. And a voice was heard, saying: Amen: fear ye not, but only believe.

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### The Martyrdom

*Here we revert to the text of P and its companions.*

159 And after these things Judas departed to be imprisoned.

And Tertia with Mygdonia and Narcia also went to be imprisoned. And the apostle Thomas said unto them -the multitude of them that had believed being present: Daughters and sisters and fellow-servants which have believed in my Lord and God, ministers of my Jesus, hearken to me this day: for I do deliver my word unto you, and I shall no more speak with you in this flesh nor in this world; for I go up unto my Lord and God Jesus Christ, unto him that sold me, unto that Lord that humbled himself even unto me the little, and brought me up unto eternal greatness, that vouchsafed to me to become his servant in truth and steadfastness: unto him do I depart, knowing that the time is fulfilled, and the day appointed hath drawn near for me to go and receive my recompense from my Lord and God: for my recompenser is righteous, who knoweth me, how I ought to receive my reward; for he is not grudging nor envious, but is rich in his gifts, he is not a lover of craft (OT sparing) in that he giveth, for he hath confidence in his possessions which cannot fail.

160 I am not Jesus, but I am his servant: I am not Christ, but I am his minister; I am not the Son of God, but I pray to become worthy of God. Continue ye in the faith of Christ: continue in the hope of the Son of God: faint not at affliction, neither be divided in mind if ye see me mocked or that I am shut up in prison; for I do accomplish his will. For if I had willed not to die, I know in Christ that I am able thereto: but this which is called death, is not death, but a setting free from the body; wherefore I receive gladly this setting free from the body, that I may depart and see him that is beautiful and full of mercy, him that is to be loved: for I have endured much toil in his service, and have laboured for his grace that is come upon me, which departeth not from me. Let not Satan, then, enter you by stealth and catch away your thoughts: let there be in you no place for him: for he is mighty whom ye have received. Look for the coming of Christ, for he shall come and receive you, and this is he whom ye shall see when he cometh.

161 When the apostle had ended these sayings, they went into the house, and the apostle Thomas said: Saviour that didst suffer many things for us, let these doors be as they were and let seals be set on them. And he left them and went to be imprisoned: and they wept and were in heaviness, for they knew that Misdaeus would slay him (not knowing that, M. would release him, P.).

162 And the apostle found the keepers wrangling and saying: Wherein have we sinned against this wizard? for by his art magic he hath opened



## Acts of Thomas

the doors and would have had all the prisoners escape: but let us go and report it unto the king, and tell him concerning his wife and his son. And as they disputed thus, Thomas held his peace. They rose up early, therefore, and went unto the king and said unto him: Our lord and king, do thou take away that sorcerer and cause him to be shut up elsewhere, for we are not able to keep him; for except thy good fortune had kept the prison, all the condemned persons would have escaped for now this second time have we found the doors open: and also thy wife, O king, and thy son and the rest depart not from him. And the king, hearing that, went, and found the seals that were set on the doors whole; and he took note of the doors also, and said to the keepers: Wherefore lie ye? for the seals are whole. How said ye that Tertia and Mygdonia come unto him into the prison? And the keepers said: We have told thee the truth.

163 And Misdaeus went to the prison and took his seat, and sent for the apostle Thomas and stripped him (and girded him with a girdle) and set him before him and saith unto him: Art thou bond or free? Thomas said: I am the bondsman of one only, over whom thou hast no authority. And Misdaeus saith to him: How didst thou run away and come into this country? And Thomas said: I was sold hither by my master, that I might save many, and by thy hands depart out of this world. And Misdaeus said: Who is thy lord? and what is his name? and of what country is he? And Thomas said: My Lord is thy master and he is Lord of heaven and earth. And Misdaeus saith: What is his name? Thomas saith: Thou canst not hear his true name at this time: but the name that was given unto him is Jesus Christ. And Misdaeus saith unto him: I have not made haste to destroy thee, but have had long patience with thee: but thou hast added unto thine evil deeds, and thy sorceries are dispersed abroad and heard of throughout all the country: but this I do that thy sorceries may depart with thee, and our land be cleansed from them. Thomas saith unto him; These sorceries depart with me when I set forth hence, and know thou this that I shall never forsake them that are here.

164 When the apostle had said these things, Misdaeus considered how he should put him to death; for he was afraid because of the much people that were subject unto him, for many also of the nobles and of them that were in authority believed on him. He took him therefore and went forth out of the city; and armed soldiers also went with him. And the people supposed that the king desired to learn somewhat of him, and they stood still and gave heed. And when they had walked one mile, he delivered him unto four soldiers and an officer, and commanded them to take him into the mountain and there pierce him with spears and put an end to him, and return again to the city. And saying thus unto the soldiers, he himself also returned unto the city.

165 But the men ran after Thomas, desiring to deliver him from death. And two soldiers went at the right hand of the apostle and two on his left,

## Acts of Thomas

holding spears, and the officer held his hand and supported him. And the apostle Thomas said: O the hidden mysteries which even until our departure are accomplished in us! O riches of his glory, who will not suffer us to be swallowed up in this passion of the body! Four are they that cast me down, for of four am I made; and one is he that draweth me, for of one I am, and unto him I go. And this I now understand, that my Lord and God Jesus Christ being of one was pierced by one, but I, which am of four, am pierced by four.

166 And being come up into the mountain unto the place where he was to be slain, he said unto them that held him, and to the rest: Brethren, hearken unto me now at the last; for I am come to my departure out of the body. Let not then the eyes of your heart be blinded, nor your ears be made deaf. Believe on the God whom I preach, and be not guides unto yourselves in the hardness of your heart, but walk in all your liberty, and in the glory that is toward men, and the life that is toward God.

167 And he said unto Iuzanes: Thou son (to the son, P) of the (earthly) king Misdaeus and minister (to the minister) of our Lord Jesus Christ: give unto the servants of Misdaeus their price that they may suffer me to go and pray. And Iuzanes persuaded the soldiers to let him pray. And the blessed Thomas went to pray, and kneeled down, and rose up and stretched forth his hands unto heaven, and spake thus:

[Here P and the rest give -rightly- the prayer of cc. 144-8. U and its companions give the following:

He turned to his prayer; and it was this: My Lord and my God, and hope and redeemer and leader and guide in all countries, be thou with all them that serve thee, and guide me this day as I come unto thee. Let not any take my soul which I have committed unto thee: let not the publicans see me, and let not the exactors accuse me falsely (play the sycophant with me). Let not the serpent see me, and let not the children of the dragon hiss at me. Behold, Lord, I have accomplished thy work and perfected thy commandment. I have become a bondman; therefore to-day do I receive freedom. Do thou therefore give me this and perfect me: and this I say, not for that I doubt, but that they may hear for whom it is needful to hear.]

168 And when he had thus prayed, he said unto the soldiers: Come hither and accomplish the commandments of him that sent you. And the four came and pierced him with their spears, and he fell down and died.

And all the brethren wept; and they brought beautiful robes and much and fair linen, and buried him in a royal sepulchre wherein the former (first) kings were laid.

## Acts of Thomas

169 But Siphor and Iuzanes would not go down to the city, but continued sitting by him all the day. And the apostle Thomas appeared unto them and said: Why sit ye here and keep watch over me? I am not here, but I have gone up and received all that I was promised. But rise up and go down hence; for after a little time ye also shall be gathered unto me.

But Misdaeus and Charisius took away Mygdonia and Tertia and afflicted them sorely: howbeit they consented not unto their will. And the apostle appeared unto them and said: Be not deceived: Jesus the holy, the living one, shall quickly send help unto you. And Misdaeus and Charisius, when they perceived that Mygdonia and Tertia obeyed them not, suffered them to live according to their own desire.

And the brethren gathered together and rejoiced in the grace of the Holy Ghost: now the apostle Thomas when he departed out of the world made Siphor a presbyter and Iuzanes a deacon, when he went up into the mountain to die. And the Lord wrought with them, and many were added unto the faith.

170 Now it came to pass after a long time that one of the children of Misdaeus the king was smitten by a devil, and no man could cure him, for the devil was exceeding fierce. And Misdaeus the king took thought and sad: I will go and open the sepulchre, and take a bone of the apostle of God and hang it upon my son and he shall be healed. But while Misdaeus thought upon this, the apostle Thomas appeared to him and said unto him: Thou believedst not on a living man, and wilt thou believe on the dead? yet fear not, for my Lord Jesus Christ hath compassion on thee and pitieth thee of his goodness.

And he went and opened the scpulchre, but found not the apostle there, for one of the brethren had stolen him away and taken him unto Mesopotamia; but from that place where the bones of the apostle had lain Misdaeus took dust and put it about his son's neck, saying: I believe on thee, Jesu Christ, now that he hath left me which troubleth men and opposeth them lest they should see thee. And when he had hung it upon his son, the lad became whole.

Misdaeus the king therefore was also gathered among the brethren, and bowed his head under the hands of Siphor the priest; and Siphor said unto the brethren: Pray ye for Misdaeus the king, that he may obtain mercy of Jesus Christ, and that he may no more remember evil against him. They all therefore, with one accord rejoicing, made prayer for him; and the Lord that loveth men, the King of Kings and Lord of lords, granted Misdaeus also to have hope in him; and he was gathered with the multitude of them that had believed in Christ, glorifying the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, whose is power and adoration, now and forever and world without end. Amen.

## Acts of Thomas

[U (and Syr.) ends: The acts of Judas Thomas the apostle are completed, which he did in India, fulfilling the commandment of him that sent him. Unto whom be glory, world without end. Amen.]

# Odes of Solomon

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## The Odes of Solomon

### Translation by James Charlesworth

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#### Ode 1

1. The Lord is on my head like a crown, and I shall never be without Him.
2. Plaited for me is the crown of truth, and it caused Your branches to blossom in me.
3. For it is not like a parched crown that blossoms not;
4. For You live upon my head, and have blossomed upon me.
5. Your fruits are full and complete; they are full of Your salvation....

#### Ode 2

[Has not yet been found.]

#### Ode 3

1. ... I am putting on the love of the Lord.
2. And His members are with Him, and I am dependent on them; and He loves me.
3. For I should not have known how to love the Lord, if He had not continuously loved me.
4. Who is able to distinguish love, except him who is loved?
5. I love the Beloved and I myself love Him, and where His rest is, there also am I.
6. And I shall be no stranger, because there is no jealousy with the Lord Most High and Merciful.
7. I have been united to Him, because the lover has found the Beloved, because I love Him that is the Son, I shall become a son.
8. Indeed, he who is joined to Him who is immortal, truly shall be immortal.
9. And he who delights in the Life will become living.
10. This is the Spirit of the Lord, which is not false, which teaches the sons of men to know His ways.
11. Be wise and understanding and awakened.  
Hallelujah.

#### Ode 4

1. No man can pervert Your holy place, O my God; nor can he change it, and put it in another place.

## Odes of Solomon

2. Because he has no power over it; for Your sanctuary You designed before You made special places.
3. The ancient one shall not be perverted by those which are inferior to it. You have given Your heart, O Lord, to Your believers.
4. Never will You be idle, nor will You be without fruits;
5. For one hour of Your faith is more excellent than all days and years.
6. For who shall put on Your grace and be rejected?
7. Because Your seal is known; and Your creatures are known to it.
8. And Your hosts possess it, and the elect archangels are clothed with it.
9. You have given to us Your fellowship, not that You were in need of us, but that we are always in need of You.
10. Shower upon us Your gentle rain, and open Your bountiful springs which abundantly supply us with milk and honey.
11. For there is no regret with You; that You should regret anything which You have promised;
12. Since the result was manifest to You.
13. For that which You gave, You gave freely, so that no longer will You draw back and take them again.
14. For all was manifest to You as God, and was set in order from the beginning before You.
15. And You, O Lord, have made all.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 5

1. I praise You, O Lord, because I love You.
2. O Most High, forsake me not, for You are my hope.
3. Freely did I receive Your grace, may I live by it.
4. My persecutors will come but let them not see me.
5. Let a cloud of darkness fall upon their eyes; and let an air of thick darkness obscure them.
6. And let them have no light to see, so that they cannot seize me.
7. Let their designs become hardened, so that whatever they have conspired shall return upon their own heads.
8. For they have devised a plan, but it was not for them.
9. They prepared themselves maliciously, but they were found to be impotent.
10. Indeed, my confidence is upon the Lord, and I will not fear.
11. And because the Lord is my salvation, I will not fear.
12. And He is as a woven crown upon my head, and I shall not be shaken.
13. Even if everything should be shaken, I shall stand firm.
14. And though all things visible should perish, I shall not die;
15. Because the Lord is with me, and I with Him.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 6

## Odes of Solomon

1. As the wind glides through the harp and the strings speak,
2. So the Spirit of the Lord speaks through my members, and I speak through His love.
3. For He destroys whatever is alien, and everything is of the Lord.
4. For thus it was from the beginning, and will be until the end.
5. So that nothing shall be contrary, and nothing shall rise up against Him.
6. The Lord has multiplied his knowledge, and He was zealous that those things should be known which through His grace have been given to us.
7. And His praise He gave us on account of His name, our spirits praise His Holy Spirit.
8. For there went forth a stream, and it became a river great and broad; indeed, it carried away everything, and it shattered and brought it to the Temple.
9. And the barriers which were built by men were not able to restrain it, nor even the arts of them who habitually restrain water.
10. For it spread over the surface of all the earth, and it filled everything.
11. Then all the thirsty upon the earth drank, and thirst was relieved and quenched;
12. For from the Most High the drink was given.
13. Blessed, therefore, are the ministers of that drink, who have been entrusted with His water.
14. They have refreshed the parched lips, and have aroused the paralyzed will.
15. Even living persons who were about to expire, they have held back from death.
16. And limbs which have collapsed, they have restored and set up.
17. They gave strength for their coming, and light for their eyes.
18. Because everyone recognized them as the Lord's, and lived by the living water of eternity.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 7**

1. As is the course of anger over wickedness, so is the course of joy over the Beloved; and brings in of its fruits unhindered.
2. My joy is the Lord and my course is towards Him, this path of mine is beautiful.
3. For there is a Helper for me, the Lord. He has generously shown Himself to me in His simplicity, because His kindness has diminished His dreadfulness.
4. He became like me, that I might receive Him. In form He was considered like me, that I might put Him on.
5. And I trembled not when I saw Him, because He was gracious to me.
6. Like my nature He became, that I might understand Him. And like my form, that I might not turn away from Him.
7. The Father of knowledge is the Word of knowledge.
8. He who created wisdom is wiser than His works.

## Odes of Solomon

9. And He who created me when yet I was not knew what I would do when I came into being.
10. On account of this He was gracious to me in His abundant grace, and allowed me to ask from Him and to benefit from His sacrifice.
11. For He it is who is incorrupt, the perfection of the worlds and their Father.
12. He has allowed Him to appear to them that are His own; in order that they may recognize Him that made them, and not suppose that they came of themselves.
13. For towards knowledge He has set His way, he has widened it and lengthened it and brought it to complete perfection.
14. And has set over it the traces of His light, and it proceeded from the beginning until the end.
15. For by Him He was served, and He was pleased by the Son.
16. And because of his salvation He will possess everything. And the Most High will be known by His holy ones:
17. To announce to those who have songs of the coming of the Lord, that they may go forth to meet Him and may sing to Him, with joy and with the harp of many tones.
18. The Seers shall go before Him, and they shall be seen before Him.
19. And they shall praise the Lord in His love, because He is near and does see.
20. And hatred shall be removed from the earth, and with jealousy it shall be drowned.
21. For ignorance was destroyed upon it, because the knowledge of the Lord arrived upon it.
22. Let the singers sing the grace of the Lord Most High, and let them bring their songs.
23. And let their heart be like the day, and their gentle voices like the majestic beauty of the Lord.
24. And let there not be anyone who breathes that is without knowledge or voice.
25. For He gave a mouth to His creation: to open the voice of the mouth towards Him, and to praise Him.
26. Confess His power and declare His grace.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 8**

1. Open, open your hearts to the exultation of the Lord, and let your love abound from the heart to the lips.
2. In order to bring forth fruits to the Lord, a holy life; and to talk with watchfulness in His light.
3. Rise up and stand erect, you who sometimes were brought low.
4. You who were in silence, speak, for your mouth has been opened.
5. You who were despised, from henceforth be lifted up, for your Righteousness has been lifted up;
6. For the right hand of the Lord is with you, and He will be your Helper.



## Odes of Solomon

7. And peace was prepared for you, before what may be your war.
8. Hear the word of truth, and receive the knowledge of the Most High.
9. Your flesh may not understand that which I am about to say to you; nor your garment that which I am about to show you.
10. Keep my mystery, you who are kept by it; keep my faith, you who are kept by it.
11. And understand my knowledge, you who know me in truth; love me with affection, you who love;
12. For I turn not my face from my own, because I know them.
13. And before they had existed, I recognized them; and imprinted a seal on their faces.
14. I fashioned their members, and my own breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink my holy milk and live by it.
15. I am pleased by them, and am not ashamed by them.
16. For my workmanship are they, and the strength of my thoughts.
17. Therefore who can stand against my work? Or who is not subject to them?
18. I willed and fashioned mind and heart, and they are my own. And upon my right hand I have set my elect ones.
19. And my righteousness goes before them, and they shall not be deprived of my name; for it is with them.
20. Pray and increase, and abide in the love of the Lord;
21. And you who were loved in the Beloved, and you who are kept in Him who lives, and you who are saved in Him who was saved.
22. And you shall be found incorrupt in all ages, on account of the name of your Father.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 9**

1. Open your ears, and I shall speak to you.
2. Give me yourself, so that I may also give you myself.
3. The word of the Lord and His desires, the holy thought which He has thought concerning His Messiah.
4. For in the will of the Lord is your life, and His purpose is eternal life, and your perfection is incorruptible.
5. Be enriched in God the Father; and receive the purpose of the Most High. Be strong and redeemed by His grace.
6. For I announce peace to you, His holy ones, so that none of those who hear shall fall in the war.
7. And also that those who have known Him may not perish, and so that those who received Him may not be ashamed.
8. An everlasting crown is Truth; blessed are they who set it on their head.
9. It is a precious stone, for the wars were on account of the crown.
10. But Righteousness has taken it, and has given it to you.
11. Put on the crown in the true covenant of the Lord, and all those who have conquered will be inscribed in His book.

## Odes of Solomon

12. For their book is the reward of victory which is for you, and she sees you before her and wills that you shall be saved.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 10**

1. The Lord has directed my mouth by His Word, and has opened my heart by His Light.
2. And He has caused to dwell in me His immortal life, and permitted me to proclaim the fruit of His peace.
3. To convert the lives of those who desire to come to Him, and to lead those who are captive into freedom.
4. I took courage and became strong and captured the world, and the captivity became mine for the glory of the Most High, and of God my Father.
5. And the Gentiles who had been dispersed were gathered together, but I was not defiled by my love for them, because they had praised me in high places.
6. And the traces of light were set upon their heart, and they walked according to my life and were saved, and they became my people for ever and ever.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 11**

1. My heart was pruned and its flower appeared, then grace sprang up in it, and my heart produced fruits for the Lord.
2. For the Most High circumcised me by His Holy Spirit, then He uncovered my inward being towards Him, and filled me with His love.
3. And His circumcising became my salvation, and I ran in the Way, in His peace, in the way of truth.
4. From the beginning until the end I received His knowledge.
5. And I was established upon the rock of truth, where He had set me.
6. And speaking waters touched my lips from the fountain of the Lord generously.
7. And so I drank and became intoxicated, from the living water that does not die.
8. And my intoxication did not cause ignorance, but I abandoned vanity,
9. And turned toward the Most High, my God, and was enriched by His favors.
10. And I rejected the folly cast upon the earth, and stripped it off and cast it from me.
11. And the Lord renewed me with His garment, and possessed me by His light.
12. And from above He gave me immortal rest, and I became like the land that blossoms and rejoices in its fruits.
13. And the Lord is like the sun upon the face of the land.

## Odes of Solomon

14. My eyes were enlightened, and my face received the dew;
15. And my breath was refreshed by the pleasant fragrance of the Lord.
16. And He took me to His Paradise, wherein is the wealth of the Lord's pleasure.  
I beheld blooming and fruit-bearing trees,  
And self-grown was their crown.  
Their branches were sprouting and their fruits were shining.  
From an immortal land were their roots.  
And a river of gladness was irrigating them,  
And round about them in the land of eternal life.
17. Then I worshipped the Lord because of His magnificence.
18. And I said, Blessed, O Lord, are they who are planted in Your land, and who have a place in Your Paradise;
19. And who grow in the growth of Your trees, and have passed from darkness into light.
20. Behold, all Your laborers are fair, they who work good works, and turn from wickedness to your pleasantness.
21. For the pungent odor of the trees is changed in Your land,
22. And everything becomes a remnant of Yourself. Blessed are the workers of Your waters, and eternal memorials of Your faithful servants.
23. Indeed, there is much room in Your Paradise. And there is nothing in it which is barren, but everything is filled with fruit.
24. Glory be to You, O God, the delight of Paradise forever.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 12**

1. He has filled me with words of truth, that I may proclaim Him.
2. And like the flowing of waters, truth flows from my mouth, and my lips declare His fruits.
3. And He has caused His knowledge to abound in me, because the mouth of the Lord is the true Word, and the entrance of His light.
4. And the Most High has given Him to His generations, which are the interpreters of His beauty,  
And the narrators of His glory,  
And the confessors of His purpose,  
And the preachers of His mind,  
And the teachers of His works.
5. For the subtlety of the Word is inexpressible, and like His utterance so also is His swiftness and His acuteness, for limitless is His progression.
6. He never falls but remains standing, and one cannot comprehend His descent or His way.
7. For as His work is, so is His expectation, for He is the light and dawning of thought.
8. And by Him the generations spoke to one another, and those that were silent acquired speech.

## Odes of Solomon

9. And from Him came love and equality, and they spoke one to another that which was theirs.
10. And they were stimulated by the Word, and knew Him who made them, because they were in harmony.
11. For the mouth of the Most High spoke to them, and His exposition prospered through Him.
12. For the dwelling place of the Word is man, and His truth is love.
13. Blessed are they who by means of Him have perceived everything, and have known the Lord in His truth.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 13**

1. Behold, the Lord is our mirror. Open your eyes and see them in Him.
2. And learn the manner of your face, then declare praises to His Spirit.
3. And wipe the paint from your face, and love His holiness and put it on.
4. Then you will be unblemished at all times with Him.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 14**

1. As the eyes of a son upon his father, so are my eyes, O Lord, at all times towards You.
2. Because my breasts and my pleasure are with You.
3. Turn not aside Your mercies from me, O Lord; and take not Your kindness from me.
4. Stretch out to me, my Lord, at all times, Your right hand, and be to me a guide till the end according to Your will.
5. Let me be pleasing before You, because of Your glory, and because of Your name let me be saved from the Evil One.
6. And let Your gentleness, O Lord, abide with me, and the fruits of Your love.
7. Teach me the odes of Your truth, that I may produce fruits in You.
8. And open to me the harp of Your Holy Spirit, so that with every note I may praise You, O Lord.
9. And according to the multitude of Your mercies, so grant unto me, and hasten to grant our petitions.
10. For You are sufficient for all our needs.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 15 Death Destroyed**

1. As the sun is the joy of them who seek its daybreak, so is my joy the Lord;
2. Because He is my Sun, and His rays have lifted me up; and His light has dismissed all darkness from my face.
3. Eyes I have obtained in Him, and have seen His holy day.

## Odes of Solomon

4. Ears I have acquired, and have heard His truth.
5. The thought of knowledge I have acquired, and have enjoyed delight fully through Him.
6. I repudiated the way of error, and went towards Him and received salvation from Him abundantly.
7. And according to His generosity He gave to me, and according to His excellent beauty He made me.
8. I put on immortality through His name, and took off corruption by His grace.
9. Death has been destroyed before my face, and Sheol has been vanquished by my word.
10. And eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land, and it has been declared to His faithful ones, and has been given without limit to all that trust in Him. Hallelujah.

### Ode 16

1. As the occupation of the ploughman is the ploughshare, and the occupation of the helmsman is the steering of the ship, so also my occupation is the psalm of the Lord by His hymns.
2. My art and my service are in His hymns, because His love has nourished my heart, and His fruits He poured unto my lips.
3. For my love is the Lord; hence I will sing unto Him.
4. For I am strengthened by His praises, and I have faith in Him.
5. I will open my mouth, and His Spirit will speak through me the glory of the Lord and His beauty,
6. The work of His hands, and the labor of His fingers;
7. For the multitude of His mercies, and the strength of His Word.
8. For the Word of the Lord investigates that which is invisible, and reveals His thought.
9. For the eye sees His works, and the ear hears His thought.
10. It is He who made the earth broad, and placed the waters in the sea.
11. He expanded the heaven, and fixed the stars.
12. And He fixed the creation and set it up, then He rested from His works.
13. And created things run according to their courses, and work their works, for they can never cease nor fail.
14. And the hosts are subject to His Word.
15. The reservoir of light is the sun, and the reservoir of darkness is the night.
16. For He made the sun for the day so that it will be light; but night brings darkness over the face of the earth.
17. And by their portion one from another they complete the beauty of God.
18. And there is nothing outside of the Lord, because He was before anything came to be.
19. And the worlds are by His Word, and by the thought of His heart.
20. Praise and honor to His name. Hallelujah.

## Odes of Solomon

### Ode 17 Jesus' Harrowing of Hell

1. Then I was crowned by my God, and my crown was living.
2. And I was justified by my Lord, for my salvation is incorruptible.
3. I have been freed from vanities, and am not condemned.
4. My chains were cut off by His hands, I received the face and likeness of a new person, and I walked in Him and was saved.
5. And the thought of truth led me, and I went after it and wandered not.
6. And all who saw me were amazed, and I seemed to them like a stranger.
7. And He who knew and exalted me, is the Most High in all His perfection.
8. And He glorified me by His kindness, and raised my understanding to the height of truth.
9. And from there He gave me the way of His steps, and I opened the doors which were closed.
10. And I shattered the bars of iron, for my own shackles had grown hot and melted before me.
11. And nothing appeared closed to me, because I was the opening of everything.
12. And I went towards all my bound ones in order to loose them; that I might not leave anyone bound or binding.
13. And I gave my knowledge generously, and my resurrection through my love.
14. And I sowed my fruits in hearts, and transformed them through myself.
15. Then they received my blessing and lived, and they were gathered to me and were saved;
16. Because they became my members, and I was their Head.
17. Glory to You, our Head, O Lord Messiah.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 18

1. My heart was lifted up and enriched in the love of the Most High, so that I might praise Him with my name.
2. My members were strengthened, that they may not fall from His power.
3. Infirmities fled from my body, and it stood firm for the Lord by His will; because His kingdom is firm.
4. O Lord, for the sake of those who are in need, do not dismiss Your Word from me.
5. Nor, for the sake of their works, withhold Your perfection from me.
6. Let not light be conquered by darkness, nor let truth flee from falsehood.
7. Let Your right hand set our salvation to victory, and let it receive from every region, and preserve it on the side of everyone who is besieged by misfortunes.
8. You are my God, falsehood and death are not in Your mouth; only perfection is Your will.

## Odes of Solomon

9. And vanity You know not, because neither does it know You.
10. And You know not error; because neither does it know You.
11. And ignorance appeared like dust, and like the foam of the sea.
12. And vain people thought that it was great, and they became like its type and were impoverished.
13. But those who knew understood and contemplated, and were not polluted by their thoughts;
14. Because they were in the mind of the Most High, and mocked those who were walking in error.
15. Then they spoke the truth, from the breath which the Most High breathed into them.
16. Praise and great honor to His name.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 19

1. A cup of milk was offered to me, and I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness.
2. The Son is the cup, and the Father is He who was milked; and the Holy Spirit is She who milked Him;
3. Because His breasts were full, and it was undesirable that His milk should be ineffectually released.
4. The Holy Spirit opened Her bosom, and mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father.
5. Then She gave the mixture to the generation without their knowing, and those who have received it are in the perfection of the right hand.
6. The womb of the Virgin took it, and she received conception and gave birth.
7. So the Virgin became a mother with great mercies.
8. And she labored and bore the Son but without pain, because it did not occur without purpose.
9. And she did not require a midwife, because He caused her to give life.
10. She brought forth like a strong man with desire, and she bore according to the manifestation, and she acquired according to the Great Power.
11. And she loved with redemption, and guarded with kindness, and declared with grandeur.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 20

1. I am a priest of the Lord, and Him I serve as a priest;
2. And to Him I offer the offering of His thought.
3. For His thought is not like the world, nor like the flesh, nor like them who worship according to the flesh.
4. The offering of the Lord is righteousness, and purity of heart and lips.
5. Offer your inward being faultlessly; and let not your compassion oppress compassion; and let not yourself oppress a self.

## Odes of Solomon

6. You should not purchase a stranger because he is like yourself, nor seek to deceive your neighbor, nor deprive him of the covering for his nakedness.
7. But put on the grace of the Lord generously, and come to His Paradise, and make for yourself a garland from His tree.
8. Then put it on your head and be joyful, and recline upon His rest.
9. For His glory will go before you; and you shall receive of His kindness and of His grace; and you shall be anointed in truth with the praise of His holiness.
10. Praise and honor to His name.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 21

1. I lifted up my arms on high on account of the compassion of the Lord.
2. Because He cast off my bonds from me, and my Helper lifted me up according to His compassion and His salvation.
3. And I put off darkness, and put on light.
4. And even I myself acquired members. In them there was no sickness or affliction or suffering.
5. And abundantly helpful to me was the thought of the Lord, and His everlasting fellowship.
6. And I was lifted up in the light, and I passed before Him.
7. And I was constantly near Him, while praising and confessing Him.
8. He caused my heart to overflow, and it was found in my mouth; and it sprang forth unto my lips.
9. Then upon my face increased the exultation of the Lord and His praise.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 22

1. He who caused me to descend from on high, and to ascend from the regions below;
2. And He who gathers what is in the Middle, and throws them to me;
3. He who scattered my enemies, and my adversaries;
4. He who gave me authority over bonds, so that I might unbind them;
5. He who overthrew by my hands the dragon with seven heads, and set me at his roots that I might destroy his seed;
6. You were there and helped me, and in every place Your name surrounded me.
7. Your right hand destroyed his evil venom, and Your hand leveled the Way for those who believe in You.
8. And It chose them from the graves, and separated them from the dead ones.
9. It took dead bones and covered them with flesh.
10. But they were motionless, so It gave them energy for life.



## Odes of Solomon

11. Incorruptible was Your way and Your face; You have brought Your world to corruption, that everything might be resolved and renewed.
12. And the foundation of everything is Your rock. And upon it You have built Your kingdom, and it became the dwelling-place of the holy ones.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 23

1. Joy is for the holy ones. And who shall put it on but they alone?
2. Grace is for the elect ones. And who shall receive it but they who trusted in it from the beginning?
3. Love is for the elect ones. And who shall put it on but they who possessed it from the beginning?
4. Walk in the knowledge of the Lord, and you will know the grace of the Lord generously; both for His exultation and for the perfection of His knowledge.
5. And His thought was like a letter, and His will descended from on high.
6. And it was sent like an arrow which from a bow has been forcibly shot.
7. And many hands rushed to the letter, in order to catch it, then take and read it.
8. But it escaped from their fingers; and they were afraid of it and of the seal which was upon it.
9. Because they were not allowed to loosen its seal; for the power which was over the seal was greater than they.
10. But those who saw the letter went after it; that they might learn where it would land, and who should read it, and who should hear it.
11. But a wheel received it, and it came over it.
12. And a sign was with it, of the kingdom and of providence.
13. And everything which was disturbing the wheel, it mowed and cut down.
14. And it restrained a multitude of adversaries; and bridged rivers.
15. And it crossed over and uprooted many forests, and made an open way.
16. The head went down to the feet, because unto the feet ran the wheel, and whatever had come upon it.
17. The letter was one of command, and hence all regions were gathered together.
18. And there was seen at its head, the head which was revealed, even the Son of Truth from the Most High Father.
19. And He inherited and possessed everything, and then the scheming of the many ceased.
20. Then all the seducers became headstrong and fled, and the persecutors became extinct and were blotted out.
21. And the letter became a large volume, which was entirely written by the finger of God.
22. And the name of the Father was upon it; and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, to rule for ever and ever.  
Hallelujah.

## Odes of Solomon

### Ode 24

1. The dove fluttered over the head of our Lord Messiah, because He was her head.
2. And she sang over Him, and her voice was heard.
3. Then the inhabitants were afraid, and the foreigners were disturbed.
4. The bird began to fly, and every creeping thing died in its hole.
5. And the chasms were opened and closed; and they were seeking the Lord as those who are about to give birth.
6. But He was not given to them for nourishment, because He did not belong to them.
7. But the chasms were submerged in the seal of the Lord, and they perished in the thought with which they had remained from the beginning.
8. For they were in labor from the beginning, and the end of their travail was life.
9. And all of them who were lacking perished, because they were not able to express the word so that they might remain.
10. And the Lord destroyed the devices, of all those who had not the truth with them.
11. For they were lacking in wisdom, they who exalted themselves in their mind.
12. So they were rejected, because the truth was not with them.
13. For the Lord revealed His way, and spread widely His grace.
14. And those who understood it knew His holiness.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 25

1. I was rescued from my chains, and I fled unto You, O my God.
2. Because You are the right hand of salvation, and my Helper.
3. You have restrained those who rise up against me, and no more were they seen.
4. Because Your face was with me, which saved me by Your grace.
5. But I was despised and rejected in the eyes of many, and I was in their eyes like lead.
6. And I acquired strength from You, and help.
7. A lamp You set for me both on my right and on my left, so that there might not be in me anything that is not light.
8. And I was covered with the covering of Your Spirit, and I removed from me my garments of skin.
9. Because Your right hand exalted me, and caused sickness to pass from me.
10. And I became mighty in Your truth, and holy in Your righteousness.
11. And all my adversaries were afraid of me, and I became the Lord's by the name of the Lord.
12. And I was justified by His kindness, and His rest is for ever and ever.  
Hallelujah.

## Odes of Solomon

### Ode 26

1. I poured out praise to the Lord, because I am His own.
2. And I will recite His holy ode, because my heart is with Him.
3. For His harp is in my hand, and the odes of His rest shall not be silent.
4. I will call unto Him with all my heart, I will praise and exalt Him with all my members.
5. For from the East and unto the West is His praise;
6. Also from the South and unto the North is His thanksgiving.
7. Even from the crest of the summits and unto their extremity is His perfection.
8. Who can write the odes of the Lord, or who can read them?
9. Or who can train himself for life, so that he himself may be saved?
10. Or who can press upon the Most High, so that He would recite from His mouth?
11. Who can interpret the wonders of the Lord? Though he who interprets will be destroyed, yet that which was interpreted will remain.
12. For it suffices to perceive and be satisfied, for the odists stand in serenity;
13. Like a river which has an increasingly gushing spring, and flows to the relief of them that seek it.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 27

1. I extended my hands and hallowed my Lord,
2. For the expansion of my hands is His sign.
3. And my extension is the upright cross.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 28

1. As the wings of doves over their nestlings, and the mouths of their nestlings towards their mouths, so also are the wings of the Spirit over my heart.
2. My heart continually refreshes itself and leaps for joy, like the babe who leaps for joy in his mother's womb.
3. I trusted, consequently I was at rest; because trustful is He in whom I trusted.
4. He has greatly blessed me, and my head is with Him.
5. And the dagger shall not divide me from Him, nor the sword;
6. Because I am ready before destruction comes, and have been set on His immortal side.
7. And immortal life embraced me, and kissed me.

## Odes of Solomon

8. And from that life is the Spirit which is within me. And it cannot die because it is life.
9. Those who saw me were amazed, because I was persecuted.
10. And they thought that I had been swallowed up, because I seemed to them as one of the lost.
11. But my injustice became my salvation.
12. And I became their abomination, because there was no jealousy in me.
13. Because I continually did good to every man I was hated.
14. And they surrounded me like mad dogs, those who in stupidity attack their masters.
15. Because their thought is depraved, and their mind is perverted.
16. But I was carrying water in my right hand, and their bitterness I endured by my sweetness.
17. And I did not perish, because I was not their brother, nor was my birth like theirs.
18. And they sought my death but did not find it possible, because I was older than their memory; and in vain did they cast lots against me.
19. And those who were after me sought in vain to destroy the memorial of Him who was before them.
20. Because the thought of the Most High cannot be prepossessed; and His heart is superior to all wisdom.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 29

1. The Lord is my hope, I shall not be ashamed of Him.
2. For according to His praise He made me, and according to His grace even so He gave to me.
3. And according to His mercies He exalted me, and according to His great honor He lifted me up.
4. And he caused me to ascend from the depths of Sheol, and from the mouth of death He drew me.
5. And I humbled my enemies, and He justified me by His grace.
6. For I believed in the Lord's Messiah, and considered that He is the Lord.
7. And He revealed to me His sign, and He led me by His light.
8. And He gave me the scepter of His power, that I might subdue the devices of the people, and humble the power of the mighty.
9. To make war by His Word, and to take victory by His power.
10. And the Lord overthrew my enemy by His Word, and he became like the dust which a breeze carries off.
11. And I gave praise to the Most High, because He has magnified His servant and the son of His maidservant.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 30

## Odes of Solomon

1. Fill for yourselves water from the living fountain of the Lord, because it has been opened for you.
2. And come all you thirsty and take a drink, and rest beside the fountain of the Lord.
3. Because it is pleasing and sparkling, and perpetually refreshes the self.
4. For much sweeter is its water than honey, and the honeycomb of bees is not to be compared with it;
5. Because it flowed from the lips of the Lord, and it named from the heart of the Lord.
6. And it came boundless and invisible, and until it was set in the middle they knew it not.
7. Blessed are they who have drunk from it, and have refreshed themselves by it.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 31

1. Chasms vanished before the Lord, and darkness dissipated before His appearance.
2. Error erred and perished on account of Him; and contempt received no path, for it was submerged by the truth of the Lord.
3. He opened His mouth and spoke grace and joy; and recited a new chant to His name.
4. Then He lifted his voice towards the Most High, and offered to Him those that had become sons through Him.
5. And His face was justified, because thus His Holy Father had given to Him.
6. Come forth, you who have been afflicted, and receive joy.
7. And possess yourselves through grace, and take unto you immortal life.
8. And they condemned me when I stood up, me who had not been condemned.
9. Then they divided my spoil, though nothing was owed them.
10. But I endured and held my peace and was silent, that I might not be disturbed by them.
11. But I stood undisturbed like a solid rock, which is continuously pounded by columns of waves and endures.
12. And I bore their bitterness because of humility; that I might redeem my nation and instruct it.
13. And that I might not nullify the promises to the patriarchs, to whom I was promised for the salvation of their offspring.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 32

1. To the blessed ones the joy is from their heart, and light from Him who dwells in them;

## Odes of Solomon

2. And the Word of truth who is self-originate,
3. Because He has been strengthened by the Holy Power of the Most High; and He is unshaken for ever and ever.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 33

1. But again Grace was swift and dismissed the Corruptor, and descended upon him to renounce him.
2. And he caused utter destruction before him, and corrupted all his work.
3. And he stood on the peak of a summit and cried aloud from one end of the earth to the other.
4. Then he drew to him all those who obeyed him, for he did not appear as the Evil One.
5. However, the perfect Virgin stood, who was preaching and summoning and saying:
6. O you sons of men, return, and you their daughters, come.
7. And leave the ways of that Corruptor, and approach me.
8. And I will enter into you, and bring you forth from destruction, and make you wise in the ways of truth.
9. Be not corrupted nor perish.
10. Obey me and be saved, for I am proclaiming unto you the grace of God.
11. And through me you will be saved and become blessed. I am your judge;
12. And they who have put me on shall not be falsely accused, but they shall possess incorruption in the new world.
13. My elect ones have walked with me, and my ways I will make known to them who seek me; and I will promise them my name.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 34

1. There is no hard way where there is a simple heart, nor barrier for upright thoughts,
2. Nor whirlwind in the depth of the enlightened thought.
3. Where one is surrounded on every side by pleasing country, there is nothing divided in him.
4. The likeness of that which is below is that which is above.
5. For everything is from above, and from below there is nothing, but it is believed to be by those in whom there is no understanding.
6. Grace has been revealed for your salvation. Believe and live and be saved.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 35

## Odes of Solomon

1. The gentle showers of the Lord overshadowed me with serenity, and they caused a cloud of peace to rise over my head;
2. That it might guard me at all times. And it became salvation to me.
3. Everyone was disturbed and afraid, and there came from them smoke and judgment.
4. But I was tranquil in the Lord's legion; more than shade was He to me, and more than foundation.
5. And I was carried like a child by its mother; and He gave me milk, the dew of the Lord.
6. And I was enriched by His favor, and rested in His perfection.
7. And I spread out my hands in the ascent of myself, and I directed myself towards the Most High, and I was redeemed towards Him.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 36

1. I rested on the Spirit of the Lord, and She lifted me up to heaven;
2. And caused me to stand on my feet in the Lord's high place, before His perfection and His glory, where I continued glorifying Him by the composition of His Odes.
3. The Spirit brought me forth before the Lord's face, and because I was the Son of Man, I was named the Light, the Son of God;
4. Because I was the most glorified among the glorious ones, and the greatest among the great ones.
5. For according to the greatness of the Most High, so She made me; and according to His newness He renewed me.
6. And He anointed me with His perfection; and I became one of those who are near Him.
7. And my mouth was opened like a cloud of dew, and my heart gushed forth like a gusher of righteousness.
8. And my approach was in peace, and I was established in the Spirit of Providence.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 37

1. I stretched out my hands towards the Lord, and towards the Most High I raised my voice.
2. And I spoke with the lips of my heart, and He heard me when my voice reached Him.
3. His Word came towards me, in order to give me the fruits of my labors;
4. And gave me rest by the grace of the Lord.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 38

## Odes of Solomon

1. I went up into the light of Truth as into a chariot, and the Truth led me and caused me to come.
2. And caused me to pass over chasms and gulfs, and saved me from cliffs and valleys.
3. And became for me a haven of salvation, and set me on the place of immortal life.
4. And He went with me and caused me to rest and did not allow me to err; because He was and is the Truth.
5. And there was no danger for me because I constantly walked with Him; and I did not err in anything because I obeyed Him.
6. For Error fled from Him, and never met Him.
7. But Truth was proceeding on the upright way, and whatever I did not understand He exhibited to me:
8. All the poisons of error, and pains of death which are considered sweetness.
9. And the corrupting of the Corruptor, I saw when the bride who was corrupting was adorned, and the bridegroom who corrupts and is corrupted.
10. And I asked the Truth, Who are these? And He said to me: This is the Deceiver and the Error.
11. And they imitate the Beloved and His Bride, and they cause the world to err and corrupt it.
12. And they invite many to the wedding feast, and allow them to drink the wine of their intoxication;
13. So they cause them to vomit up their wisdom and their knowledge, and prepare for them mindlessness.
14. Then they abandon them; and so they stumble about like mad and corrupted men.
15. Since there is no understanding in them, neither do they seek it.
16. But I have been made wise so as not to fall into the hands of the Deceivers, and I myself rejoiced because the Truth had gone with me.
17. For I was established and lived and was redeemed, and my foundations were laid on account of the Lord's hand; because He has planted me.
18. For He set the root, and watered it and endowed it and blessed it, and its fruits will be forever.
19. It penetrated deeply and sprang up and spread out, and it was full and was enlarged.
20. And the Lord alone was glorified, in His planting and in His cultivation;
21. In His care and in the blessing of His lips, in the beautiful planting of His right hand;
22. And in the attainment of His planting, and in the understanding of His mind.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 39**



## Odes of Solomon

1. Raging rivers are the power of the Lord; they send headlong those who despise Him.
2. And entangle their paths, and destroy their crossings.
3. And snatch their bodies, and corrupt their natures.
4. For they are more swift than lightnings, even more rapid.
5. But those who cross them in faith shall not be disturbed.
6. And those who walk on them faultlessly shall not be shaken.
7. Because the sign on them is the Lord, and the sign is the Way for those who cross in the name of the Lord.
8. Therefore, put on the name of the Most High and know Him, and you shall cross without danger; because rivers shall be obedient to you.
9. The Lord has bridged them by His Word, and He walked and crossed them on foot.
10. And His footsteps stand firm upon the waters, and were not destroyed; but they are like a beam of wood that is constructed on truth.
11. On this side and on that the waves were lifted up, but the footsteps of our Lord Messiah stand firm.
12. And they are neither blotted out, nor destroyed.
13. And the Way has been appointed for those who cross over after Him, and for those who adhere to the path of His faith; and who adore His name.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 40**

1. As honey drips from the honeycomb of bees, and milk flows from the woman who loves her children, so also is my hope upon You, O my God.
2. As a fountain gushes forth its water, so my heart gushes forth the praise of the Lord, and my lips bring forth praise to Him.
3. And my tongue becomes sweet by His anthems, and my members are anointed by His odes.
4. My face rejoices in His exultation, and my spirit exults in His love, and my nature shines in Him.
5. And he who is afraid shall trust in Him, and redemption shall be assured in Him.
6. And His possessions are immortal life, and those who receive it are incorruptible.  
Hallelujah.

### **Ode 41**

1. Let all the Lord's babes praise Him, and let us receive the truth of His faith.
2. And His children shall be acknowledged by Him, therefore let us sing by His love.
3. We live in the Lord by His grace, and life we receive by His Messiah.
4. For a great day has shined upon us, and wonderful is He who has given to us of His glory.

## Odes of Solomon

5. Let us, therefore, all of us agree in the name of the Lord, and let us honor Him in His goodness.
6. And let our faces shine in His light, and let our hearts meditate in His love, by night and by day.
7. Let us exult with the exultation of the Lord.
8. All those who see me will be amazed, because I am from another race.
9. For the Father of Truth remembered me; he who possessed me from the beginning.
10. For His riches begat me, and the thought of His heart.
11. And His Word is with us in all our way, the Savior who gives life and does not reject ourselves.
12. The Man who humbled Himself, but was exalted because of His own righteousness.
13. The Son of the Most High appeared in the perfection of His Father.
14. And light dawned from the Word that was before time in Him.
15. The Messiah in truth is one. And He was known before the foundations of the world, that He might give life to persons for ever by the truth of His name.
16. A new chant is for the Lord from them that love Him.  
Hallelujah.

### Ode 42

1. I extended my hands and approached my Lord, for the expansion of my hands is His sign.
2. And my extension is the upright cross, that was lifted up on the way of the Righteous One.
3. And I became useless to those who knew me not, because I shall hide myself from those who possessed me not.
4. And I will be with those who love me.
5. All my persecutors have died, and they sought me, they who declared against me, because I am living.
6. Then I arose and am with them, and will speak by their mouths.
7. For they have rejected those who persecute them; and I threw over them the yoke of my love.
8. Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride, so is my yoke over those who know me.
9. And as the bridal chamber is spread out by the bridal pair's home, so is my love by those who believe in me.
10. I was not rejected although I was considered to be so, and I did not perish although they thought it of me.
11. Sheol saw me and was shattered, and Death ejected me and many with me.
12. I have been vinegar and bitterness to it, and I went down with it as far as its depth.
13. Then the feet and the head it released, because it was not able to endure my face.

## Odes of Solomon

14. And I made a congregation of living among his dead; and I spoke with them by living lips; in order that my word may not be unprofitable.
15. And those who had died ran towards me; and they cried out and said, Son of God, have pity on us.
16. And deal with us according to Your kindness, and bring us out from the bonds of darkness.
17. And open for us the door by which we may come out to You; for we perceive that our death does not touch You.
18. May we also be saved with You, because You are our Savior.
19. Then I heard their voice, and placed their faith in my heart.
20. And I placed my name upon their head, because they are free and they are mine.  
Hallelujah.

# Teachings of Silvanus

## The Teachings of Silvanus

**Translated by Malcolm L. Peel and Jan Zandee**

Abolish every childish time of life, acquire for yourself strength of mind and soul, and intensify the struggle against every folly of the passions of love and base wickedness, and love of praise, and fondness of contention, and tiresome jealousy and wrath, and anger and the desire of avarice. Guard your (pl.) camp and weapons and spears. Arm yourself and all the soldiers, which are the words, and the commanders, which are the counsels, and your mind as a guiding principle.

My son, throw every robber out of your gates. Guard all your gates with torches, which are the words, and you will acquire through all these things a quiet life. But he who will not guard these things will become like a city which is desolate, since it has been captured. All kinds of wild beasts have trampled upon it, for thoughts which are not good are evil wild beasts. And your city will be filled with robbers, and you will not be able to acquire peace, but only all kinds of savage wild beasts. The Wicked One, who is a tyrant, is lord over these. While directing this, he (the Wicked One) is beneath the great mire. The whole city, which is your soul, will perish.

Remove yourself from these things, O wretched soul! Bring your guide and your teacher. The mind is the guide, but reason is the teacher. They will bring you out of destruction and dangers.

Listen, my son, to my advice! Do not show your back to enemies and flee, but rather, pursue them as a strong one. Be not an animal, with men pursuing you; but rather, be a man, with you pursuing the evil wild beasts, lest somehow, they become victorious over you and trample upon you as on a dead man, and you perish due to their wickedness.

Oh wretched man, what will you do if you fall into their hands? Protect yourself, lest you be delivered into the hands of your enemies. Entrust yourself to this pair of friends, reason and mind, and no one will be victorious over you. May God dwell in your camp, may his Spirit protect your gates, and may the mind of Divinity protect the walls. Let holy reason become a torch in your mind, burning the wood which is the whole of sin.

And if you do these things, O my son, you will be victorious over all your enemies, and they will not be able to wage war against you, neither will they be able to resist, nor will they be able to get in your way. For if you find these, you will despise them as deniers of truth. They will speak to you, cajoling you and enticing (you), not because they are afraid of you,

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but because they are afraid of those who dwell within you, namely, the guardians of the divinity and the teaching.

My son, accept the education and the teaching. Do not flee from the education and the teaching, but when you are taught, accept (it) with joy. And if you are educated in any matter, do what is good. You will plait a crown of education by your guiding principle. Put on the holy teaching like a robe. Make yourself noble-minded through good conduct. Obtain the austerity of good discipline. Judge yourself like a wise judge. Do not go astray from my teaching, and do not acquire ignorance, lest you lead your people astray. Do not flee from the divine and the teaching which are within you, for he who is teaching you loves you very much. For he shall bequeath to you a worthy austerity. Cast out the animal nature which is within you, and do not allow base thought to enter you. For ... you know the way which I teach.

If it is good to rule over the few, as you see it, how much better it is that you rule over everyone, since you are exalted above every congregation and every people, (are) prominent in every respect, and (are) a divine reason, having become master over every power which kills the soul.

My son, does anyone want to be a slave? Why, then, do you trouble yourself wrongly?

My son, do not fear anyone except God alone, the Exalted One. Cast the deceitfulness of the Devil from you. Accept the light for your eyes, and cast the darkness from you. Live in Christ, and you will acquire a treasure in heaven. Do not become a sausage (made) of many things which are useless, and do not become a guide in your blind ignorance.

My son, listen to my teaching, which is good and useful, and end the sleep which weighs heavily upon you. Depart from the forgetfulness which fills you with darkness, since if you were unable to do anything, I would not have said these things to you. But Christ has come in order to give you this gift. Why do you pursue the darkness when the light is at your disposal? Why do you drink stale water, though sweet wine is available for you? Wisdom summons you, yet you desire folly. Not by your own desire do you do these things, but it is the animal nature within you that does them.

Wisdom summons you in her goodness, saying, "Come to Me, all of you, O foolish ones, that you may receive a gift, the understanding which is good and excellent. I am giving to you a high-priestly garment which is woven from every (kind of) wisdom." What else is evil death except ignorance? What else is evil darkness except familiarity with forgetfulness? Cast your anxiety upon God alone. Do not become desirous of gold and silver, which are profitless, but clothe yourself with wisdom like a robe; put knowledge

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on yourself like a crown, and be seated upon a throne of perception. For these are yours, and you will receive them again on high another time.

For a foolish man usually puts on folly like a robe, and like a garment of sorrow, he puts on shame. And he crowns himself with ignorance, and takes his seat upon a throne of nescience. For while he is without reason, he leads only himself astray, for he is guided by ignorance. And he goes the ways of the desire of every passion. He swims in the desires of life and has sunk. To be sure, he thinks that he finds profit when he does all the things which are without profit. The wretched man who goes through all these things will die, because he does not have the mind, the helmsman. But he is like a ship which the wind tosses to and fro, and like a loose horse which has no rider. For this (man) needed the rider, which is reason. For the wretched one went astray because he did not want advice. He was thrown to and fro by these three misfortunes: he acquired death as a father, ignorance as a mother, and evil counsels - he acquired them as friends and brothers. Therefore, foolish one, you should mourn for yourself.

From now on, then, my son, return to your divine nature. Cast from you these evil, deceiving friends! Accept Christ, this true friend, as a good teacher. Cast from you death, which has become a father to you. For death did not exist, nor will it exist at the end.

But since you cast from yourself God, the holy Father, the true Life, the Spring of Life, therefore you have obtained death as a father and have acquired ignorance as a mother. They have robbed you of the true knowledge.

But return, my son, to your first father, God, and Wisdom, your Mother, from whom you came into being from the very first in order that you might fight against all of your enemies, the Powers of the Adversary.

Listen, my son, to my advice. Do not be arrogant in opposition to every good opinion, but take for yourself the side of the divinity of reason. Keep the holy commandments of Jesus Christ, and you will reign over every place on earth, and will be honored by the angels and archangels. Then you will acquire them as friends and fellow servants, and you will acquire places in heaven above.

Do not bring grief and trouble to the divine which is within you. But when you will care for it, will request of it that you remain pure, and will become self-controlled in your soul and body, you will become a throne of wisdom, and one belonging to God's household. He will give you a great light through it (wisdom).

But before everything (else), know your birth. Know yourself, that is, from what substance you are, or from what race, or from what species.

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Understand that you have come into being from three races: from the earth, from the formed, and from the created. The body has come into being from the earth with an earthly substance, but the formed, for the sake of the soul, has come into being from the thought of the Divine. The created, however, is the mind, which has come into being in conformity with the image of God. The divine mind has substance from the Divine, but the soul is that which he (God) formed for their own hearts. For I think that it (the soul) exists as wife of that which has come into being in conformity with the image, but matter is the substance of the body, which has come into being from the earth.

If you mix yourself, you will acquire the three parts as you fall from virtue into inferiority. Live according to the Mind. Do not think about things pertaining to the flesh. Acquire strength, for the mind is strong. If you fall from this other, you have become male-female. And if you cast out of yourself the substance of the mind, which is thought, you have cut off the male part, and turned yourself to the female part alone. You have become psychic, since you have received the substance of the formed. If you cast out the smallest part of this, so that you do not acquire again a human part - but you have accepted for yourself the animal thought and likeness - you have become fleshly, since you have taken on animal nature. For (if) it is difficult to find a psychical man, how much more so to find the Lord?

But I say that God is the spiritual one. Man has taken shape from the substance of God. The divine soul shares partly in this one; furthermore, it shares partly in the flesh. The base soul is wont to turn from side to side, [...] which it images the truth.

It is good for you, O man, to turn yourself toward the human, rather than toward the animal nature - I mean toward the fleshly. You will take on the likeness of the part toward which you will turn yourself.

I shall say something further to you. Again, for what will you (masc. sg.) be zealous? Did you (fem. sg.) wish to become animal when you had come into this kind of nature? But rather, share in a true nature of life. To be sure, animality will guide you into the race of the earth, but the rational nature will guide you in rational ways. Turn toward the rational nature, and cast from yourself the earth-begotten nature.

O soul, persistent one, be sober and shake off your drunkenness, which is the work of ignorance. If you persist and live in the body, you dwell in rusticity. When you entered into a bodily birth, you were begotten. Come into being inside the bridal chamber! Be illuminated in mind!

My son, do not swim in any water, and do not allow yourself to be defiled by strange kinds of knowledge. Certainly, you know that the schemes of the Adversary are not few, and (that) the tricks which he has are varied?

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Especially has the noetic man been robbed of the intelligence of the snake. For it is fitting for you to be in agreement with the intelligence of (these) two: with the intelligence of the snake and with the innocence of the dove - lest he (the Adversary) come into you in the guise of a flatterer, as a true friend, saying, "I advise good things for you."

But you did not recognize the deceitfulness of this one when you received him as a true friend. For he casts into your heart evil thoughts as good ones, and hypocrisy in the guise of true wisdom, avidity in the guise of conservative frugality, love of glory in the guise of that which is beautiful, boastfulness and pride in the guise of great austerity, and godlessness as great godliness. For he who says, "I have many gods," is godless. And he casts spurious knowledge into your heart in the guise of mysterious words. Who will be able to comprehend his thoughts and devices, which are varied, since he is a Great Mind for those who wish to accept him as king?

My son, how will you be able to comprehend the schemes of this one, or his soul-killing counsel? For his devices, and the schemes of his wickedness, are many. And think about his entrances, that is, how he will enter your soul, and in what garment he will enter you.

Accept Christ, who is able to set you free, and who has taken on the devices of that one, so that through these he might destroy him by deceit. For this is the king whom you have who is forever invincible, against whom no one will be able to fight nor say a word. This is your king and your father, for there is no one like him. The divine teacher is with you always. He is a helper, and he meets you because of the good which is in you.

Do not put maliciousness in your judgment, for every malicious man harms his heart. For only a foolish man is wont to his destruction, but a wise man knows his way.

And a foolish man does not guard against speaking (a) mystery: A wise man (however) does not blurt out every word, but he will be discriminating toward those who hear. Do not mention everything in the presence of those whom you do not know.

Have a great number of friends, but not counselors. First, examine your counselor, for do not honor anyone who flatters. Their word, to be sure, is sweet as honey, but their heart is full of hellebore. For whenever they think that they have become a reliable friend, then they will deceitfully turn against you, and they will cast you down into the mire.

Do not trust anyone as a friend, for this whole world has come into being deceitfully, and every man is troubled in vain. All things of the world are not profitable, but they happen in vain. There is no one, not even a brother (who is trustworthy), since each one is seeking his own advantage.



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My son, do not have anyone as a friend, but if you do acquire one, do not entrust yourself to him. Entrust yourself to God alone as father and as friend. For everyone proceeds deceitfully, while the whole earth is full of suffering and pain - things in which there is no profit. If you wish to pass your life in quiet, do not keep company with anyone. And if you do keep company with them, be as if you do not. Be pleasing to God, and you will not need anyone.

Live with Christ and he will save you. For he is the true light and the sun of life. For just as the sun which is visible and makes light for the eyes of the flesh, so Christ illuminates every mind and the heart. For (if) a wicked man (who is) in the body (has) an evil death, how much more so (does) he who has his mind blind. For every blind man goes along in such a way that he is seen just as one who does not have his mind sane. He does not delight in acquiring the light of Christ, which is reason.

For everything which is visible is a copy of that which is hidden. For as a fire which burns in a place without being confined to it, so it is with the sun which is in the sky, all of whose rays extend to places on the earth. Similarly, Christ has a single being, and he gives light to every place. This is also the way in which he speaks of our mind, as if it were a lamp which burns and lights up the place. (Being) in a part of the soul, it gives light to all the parts.

Furthermore, I shall speak of what is more exalted than this: the mind, with respect to actual being, is in a place, which means it is in the body; but with respect to thought, the mind is not in a place. For how can it be in a place, when it contemplates every place?

But we are able to mention what is more exalted than this: for do not think in your heart that God exists in a place. If you localize the Lord of all in a place, then it is fitting for you to say that the place is more exalted than he who dwells in it. For that which contains is more exalted than that which is contained. For there is no place which is called incorporeal. For it is not right for us to say that God is corporeal. For the consequence (would be) that we (must) attribute both increase and decrease to the corporeal, but also that he (God) who is subject to these will not remain imperishable.

Now, it is not difficult to know the Creator of all creatures, but it is impossible to comprehend the likeness of this One. For it is difficult not only for men to comprehend God, but it is (also) difficult for every divine being, (both) the angels and the archangels. It is necessary to know God as he is. You cannot know God through anyone except Christ, who has the image of the Father, for this image reveals the true likeness in correspondence to that which is revealed. A king is not usually known apart from an image.

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Consider these things about God: he is in every place; on the other hand, he is in no place. With respect to power, to be sure, he is in every place; but with respect to divinity, he is in no place. So then, it is possible to know God a little. With respect to his power, he fills every place, but in the exaltation of his divinity, nothing contains him. Everything is in God, but God is not in anything.

Now what is it to know God? God is all which is in the truth. But it is as impossible to look at Christ as at the sun. God sees everyone; no one looks at him. But Christ, without being jealous, receives and gives. He is the Light of the Father, as he gives light without being jealous. In this manner he gives light to every place.

And all is Christ, he who has inherited all from the Existent One. For Christ is the idea of incorruptibility, and he is the Light which is shining undefiled. For the sun (shines) on every impure place, and yet it is not defiled. So it is with Christ: even if he is in the deficiency, yet he is without deficiency. And even if he has been begotten, he is (still) unbegotten. So it is with Christ: if, on the one hand, he is comprehensible, on the other, he is incomprehensible with respect to his actual being. Christ is all. He who does not possess all is unable to know Christ.

My son, do not dare to say a word about this One, and do not confine the God of all to mental images. For he who condemns may not be condemned by the one who condemns. Indeed, it is good to ask and to know who God is. Reason and mind are male names. Indeed, let him who wishes to know about this One, quietly and reverently ask. For there is no small danger in speaking about these things, since you know that you will be judged on the basis of everything that you say.

And understand by this that he who is in darkness will not be able to see anything unless he receives the light and recovers (his) sight by means of it. Examine yourself (to see) whether you wholly have the light, so that, if you ask about these things, you may understand how you will escape. For many are seeking in darkness, and they grope about, wishing to understand, since there is no light for them.

My son, do not allow your mind to stare downward, but rather, let it look by means of the light at things above. For the light will always come from above. Even if it (the mind) is upon the earth, let it seek to pursue the things above. Enlighten your mind with the light of heaven, so that you may turn to the light of heaven.

Do not tire of knocking on the door of reason, and do not cease walking in the way of Christ. Walk in it so that you may receive rest from your labors. If you walk in another way, there will be no profit in it. For also those who walk in the broad way will go down at their end to the perdition of the

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mire. For the Underworld is open wide for the soul, and the place of perdition is broad. Accept Christ, the narrow way. For he is oppressed and bears affliction for your sin.

### Christ in the Underworld

O soul, persistent one, in what ignorance you exist! For who is your guide into the darkness? How many likenesses did Christ take on because of you! Although he was God, he was found among men as a man. He descended to the Underworld. He released the children of death. They were in travail, as the scripture of God has said. And he sealed up the (very) heart of it (the Underworld). And he broke its (the Underworld's) strong bows completely. And when all the powers had seen him, they fled, so that he might bring you, wretched one, up from the Abyss, and might die for you as a ransom for your sin. He saved you from the strong hand of the Underworld.

But you, yourself, difficult (though it be) give to him your fundamental assent with (even so much as) a hint that he may take you up with joy! Now the fundamental choice, which is humility of heart, is the gift of Christ. A contrite heart is the acceptable sacrifice. If you humble yourself, you will be greatly exalted; and if you exalt yourself, you will be exceedingly humbled.

My son, guard yourself against wickedness, and do not let the Spirit of Wickedness cast you down into the Abyss. For he is mad and bitter. He is terrifying, and he casts everyone down into a pit of mire.

It is a great and good thing not to love fornication, and not even to think of the wretched matter at all, for to think of it is death. It is not good for any man to fall into death. For a soul which has been found in death will be without reason. For it is better not to live than to acquire an animal's life. Protect yourself, lest you are burned by the fires of fornication. For many who are submerged in fire are its servants, whom you do not know as your enemies.

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O my son, strip off the old garment of fornication, and put on the garment which is clean and shining, that you may be beautiful in it. But when you have this garment, protect it well. Release yourself from every bond, so that you may acquire freedom. If you cast out of yourself the desire whose devices are many, you will release yourself from the sins of lust.

Listen, O soul, to my advice. Do not become a den of foxes and snakes, nor a hole of serpents and asps, nor a dwelling place of lions, or a place of refuge of basilisk-snakes. When these things happen to you, O soul, what will you do? For these are the powers of the Adversary. Everything which is dead will come into you through them (the powers). For their food is everything which is dead, and every unclean thing. For when these are within you, what living thing will come into you? The living angels will detest you. You were a temple, (but) you have made yourself a tomb. Cease being a tomb, and become (again) a temple, so that uprightness and divinity may remain in you.

Light the light within you. Do not extinguish it! Certainly, no one lights a lamp for wild beasts or their young. Raise your dead who have died, for they lived and have died for you. Give them life. They shall live again!

For the Tree of Life is Christ. He is Wisdom. For he is Wisdom; he is also the Word. he is the Life, the Power, and the Door. He is the Light, the Angel, and the Good Shepherd. Entrust yourself to this one who became all for your sake.

Knock on yourself as upon a door, and walk upon yourself as on a straight road. For if you walk on the road, it is impossible for you to go astray. And if you knock with this one (Wisdom), you knock on hidden treasures.

For since he (Christ) is Wisdom, he makes the foolish man wise. He (Wisdom) is a holy kingdom and a shining robe. For it (Wisdom) is much gold, which gives you great honor. The Wisdom of God became a type of fool for you, so that it might take you up, O foolish one, and make you a wise man. And the Life died for you when he was powerless, so that through his death, he might give life to you who have died.

Entrust yourself to reason and remove yourself from animalism. For the animal which has no reason is made manifest. For many think that they have reason, but if you look at them attentively, their speech is animalistic.

Give yourself gladness from the true vine of Christ. Satisfy yourself with the true wine, in which there is no drunkenness nor error. For it (the true wine) marks the end of drinking, since there is usually in it what gives joy to the soul and the mind, through the Spirit of God. But first, nurture your reasoning powers before you drink of it (the true wine).

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Do not pierce yourself with the sword of sin. Do not burn yourself, O wretched one, with the fire of lust. Do not surrender yourself to barbarians like a prisoner, nor to savage beasts which want to trample upon you. For they are as lions which roar very loudly. Be not dead lest they trample upon you. You shall be man! It is possible for you through reasoning to conquer them.

But the man who does nothing is unworthy of (being called) rational man. The rational man is he who fears God. He who fears God does nothing insolent. And he who guards himself against doing anything insolent is one who keeps his guiding principle. Although he is a man who exists on earth, he makes himself like God.

But he who makes himself like God is one who does nothing unworthy of God, according to the statement of Paul, who has become like Christ.

For who shows reverence for God while not wanting to do things which are pleasing to him? For piety is that which is from the heart, and piety from the heart (characterizes) every soul which is near to God.

The soul which is a member of God's household is one which is kept pure, and the soul which has put on Christ is one which is pure. It is impossible for it to sin. Now where Christ is, there sin is idle.

Let Christ alone enter your world, and let him bring to naught all powers which have come upon you. Let him enter the temple which is within you, so that he may cast out all the merchants. Let him dwell in the temple which is within you, and may you become for him a priest and a Levite, entering in purity.

Blessed are you, O soul, if you find this one in your temple.

Blessed are you still more if you perform his service.

But he who will defile the temple of God, that one God will destroy. For you lay yourself open, O man, if you cast this one out of your temple. For whenever the enemies do not see Christ in you, then they will come into you armed in order to crush you.

O my son, I have given you orders concerning these things many times so that you would always guard your soul. It is not you who will cast him (Christ) out, but he will cast you out. For if you flee from him, you will fall into great sin. Again, if you flee from him, you will become food for your enemies. For all base persons flee from their lord, and the (man) base in virtue and wisdom flees from Christ. For every man who is separated (from him) falls into the claws of wild beasts.

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## Harrowing of Hell

Know who Christ is, and acquire him as a friend, for this is the friend who is faithful. He is also God and Teacher. This one, being God, became man for your sake. It is this one who broke the iron bars of the Underworld, and the bronze bolts. It is this one who attacked and cast down every haughty tyrant. It is he who loosened from himself the chains of which he had taken hold. He brought up the poor from the Abyss and the mourners from the Underworld. It is he who humbled the haughty powers; he who put to shame haughtiness through humility; he who has cast down the strong and the boaster through weakness; he who, in his contempt, scorned that which is considered an honor, so that humility for God's sake might be highly exalted; (and) he who has put on humanity.

And yet, the divine Word is God, he who bears patiently with man always. He wished to produce humility in the exalted. He (Christ), who has exalted man became like God, not in order that he might bring God down to man, but that man might become like God.

O this great goodness of God! O Christ, King, who has revealed to men the Great Divinity, King of every virtue and King of life, King of ages and Great One of the heavens, hear my words and forgive me!

Furthermore, he manifested a great zeal for Divinity.

Where is a man (who is) wise or powerful in intelligence, or a man whose devices are many because he knows wisdom? Let him speak wisdom; let him utter great boasting! For every man has become a fool and has spoken out of his (own) knowledge. For he (Christ) confounded the counsels of guileful people, and he prevailed over those wise in their own understanding.

Who will be able to discover the counsel of the Almighty, or to speak of the Divinity, or to proclaim it correctly? If we have not even been able to understand the counsels of our companions, who will be able to comprehend the Divinity, or the divinities of the heavens? If we scarcely

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find things on earth, who will search for the things of heaven? A great power and great glory has made the world known.

And the Life of Heaven wishes to renew all, that he may cast out that which is weak, and every black form, that everyone may shine forth in heavenly garments in order to make manifest the command of the Father (who) is exceedingly brilliant, and that he (Christ) may crown those wishing to contend well. Christ, being judge of the contest, is he who crowned every one, teaching everyone to contend. This one who contended first received the crown, gained dominion, and appeared, giving light to everyone. And all were made new through the Holy Spirit and the Mind.

O Lord Almighty, how much glory shall I give Thee? No one has been able to glorify God adequately. It is Thou who hast given glory to Thy Word in order to save everyone, O Merciful God. (It is) he who has come from Thy mouth and has risen from Thy heart, the First-born, the Wisdom, the Prototype, the First Light.

For he is light from the power of God, and he is an emanation of the pure glory of the Almighty. He is the spotless mirror of the working of God, and he is the image of his goodness. For he is also the light of the Eternal Light. He is the eye which looks at the invisible Father, always serving and forming by the Father's will. He alone was begotten by the Father's good pleasure. For he is an incomprehensible Word, and he is Wisdom and Life. He gives life to, and nourishes, all living things and powers. Just as the soul gives life to all the members, he rules all with power and gives life to them. For he is the beginning and the end of everyone, watching over all and encompassing them. He is troubled on behalf of everyone, and he rejoices and also mourns. On the one hand, he mourns for those who have gotten as their lot the place of punishment; on the other, he is troubled about every one whom he arduously brings to instruction. But he rejoices over everyone who is in purity.

Then beware, lest somehow you fall into the hands of robbers. Do not allow sleep to your eyes nor drowsiness to your eyelids, that you may be saved like a gazelle from nets, and like a bird from a trap.

Fight the great fight as long as the fight lasts, while all the powers are staring after you - not only the holy ones, but also all the powers of the Adversary. Woe to you if you are vanquished in the midst of every one who is watching you! If you fight the fight and are victorious over the powers which fight against you, you will bring great joy to every holy one, and yet great grief to your enemies. Your judge helps (you) completely, since he wants you to be victorious.

Listen, my son, and do not be slow with your ears. Raise yourself up when you have left your old man behind like an eagle. Fear God in all your acts,

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and glorify him through good work. You know that every man who is not pleasing to God is the son of perdition. He will go down to the Abyss of the Underworld.

### God's Will is Salvation

**O this patience of God, which bears with every one, which desires that everyone who has become subject to sin be saved!**

**But no one prevents him (God) from doing what he wants. For who is stronger than him, that he may prevent him?** To be sure, it is he who touches the earth, causing it to tremble and also causing the mountains to smoke. (It is) he who has gathered together such a great sea as in a leather bag, and has weighed all the water on his scales. Only the hand of the Lord has created all these things. For this hand of the Father is Christ, and it forms all. Through it, all has come into being, since it became the mother of all. For he is always Son of the Father.

Consider these things about God Almighty, who always exists: this One was not always King, for fear that he might be without a divine Son. For all dwell in God, (that is), the things which have come into being through the Word, who is the Son as the image of the Father.

For God is nearby; he is not far off. All divine limits are those which belong to God's household. Therefore, if the divine agrees with you partially in anything, know that all of the Divine agrees with you. But this divine is not pleased with anything evil. For it is this which teaches all men what is good. This is what God has given to the human race, so that for this reason every man might be chosen before all the angels and the archangels.

For God does not need to put any man to the test. He knows all things before they happen, and he knows the hidden things of the heart. They are all revealed and found wanting in his presence. Let no one ever say that God is ignorant. For it is not right to place the Creator of every creature in ignorance. For even things which are in darkness are before him like (things in) the light.

So, there is no other one hidden except God alone. But he is revealed to everyone, and yet he is very hidden. He is revealed because God knows all. And if they do not wish to affirm it, they will be corrected by their heart. Now he is hidden because no one perceives the things of God. For it is incomprehensible and unfathomable to know the counsel of God. Furthermore, it is difficult to comprehend him, and it is difficult to find Christ. For he is the one who dwells in every place, and also he is in no place. For no one who wants to will be able to know God as he actually is, nor Christ, nor the Spirit, nor the chorus of angels, nor even the



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archangels, as well as the thrones of the spirits, and the exalted lordships, and the Great Mind. If you do not know yourself, you will not be able to know all of these.

Open the door for yourself, that you may know the One who is. Knock on yourself, that the Word may open for you. For he is the Ruler of Faith and the Sharp Sword, having become all for everyone because he wishes to have mercy on everyone.

My son, prepare yourself to escape from the world-rulers of darkness and of this kind of air, which is full of powers. But if you have Christ, you will conquer this entire world. That which you open for yourself, you will open. That which you knock upon for yourself, you will knock upon, benefiting yourself.

Help yourself, my son, (by) not proceeding with things in which there is no profit.

My son, first purify yourself toward the outward life, in order that you may be able to purify the inward.

And be not as the merchants of the Word of God.

Put all words to the test before you utter them.

Do not wish to acquire honors which are insecure, nor the boastfulness which brings you to ruin.

Accept the wisdom of Christ, (who is) patient and mild, and guard this, O my son, knowing that God's way is always profitable.

This translation was made by Malcolm L. Peel and Jan Zandee, excerpted from *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* edited by James M. Robinson, and transcribed for online publication originally at the Gnostic Society Library (gnosis.org).

## Appendix

### APPENDIX: Writings of Early Church Fathers

#### Appendix 1 Irenaeus of Lyons: Against Heresies

##### Book III

##### Chapter XXIII.-Arguments in Opposition to Tatian, Showing that It Was Consonant to Divine Justice and Mercy that the First Adam Should First Partake in that Salvation Offered to All by Christ.

1. It was necessary, therefore, that the Lord, coming to the lost sheep, and making recapitulation of so comprehensive a dispensation, and seeking after His own handiwork, should save that very man who had been created after His image and likeness, that is, Adam, filling up the times of His condemnation, which had been incurred through disobedience, - [times] "which the Father had placed in His own power." [This was necessary, ] too, inasmuch as the whole economy of salvation regarding man came to pass according to the good pleasure of the Father, in order that God might not be conquered, nor His wisdom lessened, [in the estimation of His creatures.] For if man, who had been created by God that he might live, after losing life, through being injured by the serpent that had corrupted him, should not any more return to life, but should be utterly [and for ever] abandoned to death, God would [in that case] have been conquered, and the wickedness of the serpent would have prevailed over the will of God. But inasmuch as God is invincible and long-suffering, He did indeed show Himself to be long-suffering in the matter of the correction of man and the probation of all, as I have already observed; and by means of the second man did He bind the strong man, and spoiled his goods, and abolished death, vivifying that man who had been in a state of death. For at the first Adam became a vessel in his (Satan's) possession, whom he did also hold under his power, that is, by bringing sin on him iniquitously, and under colour of immortality entailing death upon him. For, while promising that they should be as gods, which was in no way possible for him to be, he wrought death in them: wherefore he who had led man captive, was justly captured in his turn by God; but man, who had been led captive, was loosed from the bonds of condemnation.

2. But this is Adam, if the truth should be told, the first formed man, of whom the Scripture says that the Lord spake, "Let Us make man after Our own image and likeness;" and we are all from him: and as we are from him, therefore have we all inherited his title. But inasmuch as man is saved, it is fitting that he who was created the original man should be saved. For it is too absurd to maintain, that he who was so deeply injured by the enemy, and was the first to suffer captivity, was not rescued by Him who conquered the enemy, but that his children were, - those whom he had begotten in the same captivity. Neither would the enemy appear to be as yet conquered, if the old spoils remained with him. To give an illustration: If a hostile force had overcome certain

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[enemies], had bound them, and led them away captive, and held them for a long time in servitude, so that they begat children among them; and somebody, compassionating those who had been made slaves, should overcome this same hostile force; he certainly would not act equitably, were he to liberate the children of those who had been led captive, from the sway of those who had enslaved their fathers, but should leave these latter, who had suffered the act of capture, subject to their enemies, -those, too, on whose very account he had proceeded to this retaliation, -the children succeeding to liberty through the avenging of their fathers' cause, but not so that their fathers, who suffered the act of capture itself, should be left [in bondage]. For God is neither devoid of power nor of justice, who has afforded help to man, and restored him to His own liberty.

3. It was for this reason, too, that immediately after Adam had transgressed, as the Scripture relates, He pronounced no curse against Adam personally, but against the ground, in reference to his works, as a certain person among the ancients has observed: "God did indeed transfer the curse to the earth, that it might not remain in man." But man received, as the punishment of his transgression, the toilsome task of tilling the earth, and to eat bread in the sweat of his face, and to return to the dust from whence he was taken. Similarly, also did the woman [receive] toil, and labour, and groans, and the pangs of parturition, and a state of subjection, that is, that she should serve her husband; so that they should neither perish altogether when cursed by God, nor, by remaining unrebuked, should be led to despise God. But the curse in all its fulness fell upon the serpent, which had beguiled them. "And God," it is declared, "said to the serpent: Because thou hast done this, cubed art thou above all cattle, and above all the beasts of the earth." And this same thing does the Lord also say in the Gospel, to those who are found upon the left hand: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into ever: lasting fire, which my Father hath prepared for the devil and his angels;" indicating that eternal fire was not originally prepared for man, but for him who beguiled man, and caused him to offend-for him, I say, who is chief of the apostasy, and for those angels who became apostates along with him; which [fire], indeed, they too shall justly feel, who, like him, persevere in works of wickedness, without repentance, and without retracing their steps.

4. [These act] as Cain [did, who], when he was counselled by God to keep quiet, because he had not made an equitable division of that share to which his brother was entitled, but with envy and malice thought that he could domineer over him, not only did not acquiesce, but even added sin to sin, indicating his state of mind by his action. For what he had planned, that did he also put in practice: he tyrannized over and slew him; God subjecting the just to the unjust, that the former might be proved as the just one by the things which he suffered, and the latter detected as the unjust by those which he perpetrated. And he was not softened even by this, nor did he stop short with that evil deed; but being asked where his brother was, he said, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" extending and aggravating [his] wickedness by his answer. For if it is wicked to slay a brother, much worse is it thus insolently and irreverently to reply to the omniscient God as if he could battle Him. And for this he did himself bear a curse about with him, because he gratuitously brought an offering of sin, having had no reverence for God, nor being put to confusion by the act of fratricide.

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5. The case of Adam, however, had no analogy with this, but was altogether different. For, having been beguiled by another under the pretext of immortality, he is immediately seized with terror, and hides himself; not as if he were able to escape from God; but, in a state of confusion at having transgressed His command, he feels unworthy to appear before and to hold converse with God. Now, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" the sense of sin leads to repentance, and God bestows His compassion upon those who are penitent. For [Adam] showed his repentance by his conduct, through means of the girdle [which he used], covering himself with fig-leaves, while there were many other leaves, which would have irritated his body in a less degree. He, however, adopted a dress conformable to his disobedience, being awed by the fear of God; and resisting the erring, the lustful propensity of his flesh (since he had lost his natural disposition and child-like mind, and had come to the knowledge of evil things), he girded a bridle of continence upon himself and his wife, fearing God, and waiting for His coming, and indicating, as it were, some such thing [as follows]: Inasmuch as, he says, I have by disobedience lost that robe of sanctity which I had from the Spirit, I do now also acknowledge that I am deserving of a covering of this nature, which affords no gratification, but which gnaws have retained this clothing for ever, thus humbling himself, if God, who is merciful, had not clothed them with tunics of skins instead of fig-leaves. For this purpose, too, He interrogates them, that the blame might light upon the woman; and again, He interrogates her, that she might convey the blame to the serpent. For she related what had occurred. "The serpent," says she, "beguiled me, and I did eat." But He put no question to the serpent; for He knew that he had been the prime mover in the guilty deed; but He pronounced the curse upon him in the first instance, that it might fall upon man with a mitigated rebuke. For God detested him who had led man astray, but by degrees, and little by little, He showed compassion to him who had been beguiled.

6. Wherefore also He drove him out of Paradise, and removed him far from the tree of life, not because He envied him the tree of life, as some venture to assert, but because He pitied him, [and did not desire] that he should continue a sinner for ever, nor that the sin which surrounded him should be immortal, and evil interminable and irremediable. But He set a bound to his [state of] sin, by interposing death, and thus causing sin to cease, putting an end to it by the dissolution of the flesh, which should take place in the earth, so that man, ceasing at length to live to sin, and dying to it, might begin to live to God.

7. For this end did He put enmity between the serpent and the woman and her seed, they keeping it up mutually: He, the sole of whose foot should be bitten, having power also to tread upon the enemy's head; but the other biting, killing, and impeding the steps of man, until the seed did come appointed to tread down his head, -which was born of Mary, of whom the prophet speaks: "Thou shalt tread upon the asp and the basilisk; thou shalt trample down the lion and the dragon;" -indicating that sin, which was set up and spread out against man, and which rendered him subject to death, should be deprived of its power, along with death, which rules [over men]; and that the lion, that is, antichrist, rampant against mankind in the latter days, should be trampled down by Him; and that He should bind "the dragon, that old serpent" and subject him to the power of man, who had been conquered so that all his might should be trodden down.

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Now Adam had been conquered, all life having been taken away from him: wherefore, when the foe was conquered in his turn, Adam received new life; and the last enemy, death, is destroyed, which at the first had taken possession of man. Therefore, when man has been liberated, "what is written shall come to pass, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death sting?" This could not be said with justice, if that man, over whom death did first obtain dominion, were not set free. For his salvation is death's destruction. When therefore the Lord vivifies man, that is, Adam, death is at the same time destroyed.

8. All therefore speak falsely who disallow his (Adam's) salvation, shutting themselves out from life for ever, in that they do not believe that the sheep which had perished has been found. For if it has not been found, the whole human race is still held in a state of perdition. False, therefore, is that, man who first started this idea, or rather, this ignorance and blindness-Tatian. As I have already indicated, this man entangled himself with all the heretics. This dogma, however, has been invented by himself, in order that, by introducing something new, independently of the rest, and by speaking vanity, he might acquire for himself hearers void of faith, affecting to be esteemed a teacher, and endeavouring from time to time to employ sayings of this kind often [made use of] by Paul: "In Adam we all die;" ignorant, however, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Since this, then, has been clearly shown, let all his disciples be put to shame, and let them wrangle about Adam, as if some great gain were to accrue to them if he be not saved; when they profit nothing more [by that], even as the serpent also did not profit when persuading man [to sin], except to this effect, that he proved him a transgressor, obtaining man as the first-fruits of his own apostasy. But he did not know God's power. Thus also do those who disallow Adam's salvation gain nothing, except this, that they render themselves heretics and apostates from the truth, and show themselves patrons of the serpent and of death.

**Chapter XXV.**-This World is Ruled Providence of One God, Who is Both Endowed with Infinite Justice to Punish the Wicked, and with Infinite Goodness to Bless the Pious, and Impart to Them Salvation.

1. God does, however, exercise a providence over all things, and therefore He also gives counsel; and when giving counsel, He is present with those who attend to moral discipline. It follows then of course, that the things which are watched over and governed should be acquainted with their ruler; which things are not irrational or vain, but they have understanding derived from the providence of God. And, for this reason certain of the Gentiles, who were less addicted to [sensual] allurements and voluptuousness, and were not led away to such a degree of superstition with regard to idols, being moved, though but slightly, by His providence, were nevertheless convinced that they should call the Maker of this universe the Father, who exercises a providence over all things, and arranges the affairs of our world.

2. Again, that they might remove the rebuking and judicial power from the Father, reckoning that as unworthy of God, and thinking that they had found out a God both without anger and [merely] good, they have alleged that one [God] judges, but that another saves, unconsciously taking away the intelligence and justice of both deities. For

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if the judicial one is not also good, to bestow favours upon the deserving, and to direct reproofs against those requiring them, he will appear neither a just nor a wise judge. On the other hand, the good God, if he is merely good, and not one who tests those upon whom he shall send his goodness, will be out of the range of justice and goodness; and his goodness will seem imperfect, as not saving all; [for it should do so, ] if it be not accompanied with judgment.

3. Marcion, therefore, himself, by dividing God into two, maintaining one to be good and the other judicial, does in fact, on both sides, put an end to deity. For he that is the judicial one, if he be not good, is not God, because he from whom goodness is absent is no God at all; and again, he who is good, if he has no judicial power, suffers the same [loss] as the former, by being deprived of his character of deity. And how can they call the Father of all wise, if they do not assign to Him a judicial faculty? For if He is wise, He is also one who tests [others]; but the judicial power belongs to him who tests, and justice follows the judicial faculty, that it may reach a just conclusion; justice calls forth judgment, and judgment, when it is executed with justice, will pass on to wisdom. Therefore the Father will excel in wisdom all human and angelic wisdom, because He is Lord, and Judge, and the Just One, and Ruler over all. For He is good, and merciful, and patient, and saves whom He ought: nor does goodness desert Him in the exercise of justice, nor is His wisdom lessened; for He saves those whom He should save, and judges those worthy of judgment. Neither does He show Himself unmercifully just; for His goodness, no doubt, goes on before, and takes precedence.

4. The God, therefore, who does benevolently cause His sun to rise upon all, and sends rain upon the just and unjust, shall judge those who, enjoying His equally distributed kindness, have led lives not corresponding to the dignity of His bounty; but who have spent their days in wantonness and luxury, in opposition to His benevolence, and have, moreover, even blasphemed Him who has conferred so great benefits upon them.

5. Plato is proved to be more religious than these men, for he allowed that the same God was both just and good, having power over all things, and Himself executing judgment, expressing himself thus, "And God indeed, as He is also the ancient Word, possessing the beginning, the end, and the mean of all existing things, does everything rightly, moving round about them according to their nature; but retributive justice always follows Him against those who depart from the divine law." Then, again, he points out that the Maker and Framer of the universe is good. "And to the good," he says, "no envy ever springs up with regard to anything;" thus establishing the goodness of God, as the beginning and the cause of the creation of the world, but not ignorance, nor an erring Aeon, nor the consequence of a defect, nor the Mother weeping and lamenting, nor another God or Father.

6. Well may their Mother bewail them, as capable of conceiving and inventing such things for they have worthily uttered this falsehood against themselves, that their Mother is beyond the Pleroma, that is beyond the knowledge of God, and that their entire multitude became a shapeless and crude abortion: for it apprehends nothing of the truth; it falls into void and darkness: for their wisdom (*Sophia*) was void, and wrapped up in darkness; and Horos did not permit her to enter the Pleroma: for the

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Spirit (*Achamoth*) did not receive them into the place of refreshment. For their father, by begetting ignorance, wrought in them the sufferings of death. We do not misrepresent [their opinions on] these points; but they do themselves confirm, they do themselves teach, they do glory in them, they imagine a lofty [mystery] about their Mother, whom they represent as having been begotten without a father, that is, without God, a female from a female, that is, corruption from error.

7. We do indeed pray that these men may not remain in the pit which they themselves have dug, but separate themselves from a Mother of this nature, and depart from Bythus, and stand away from the void, and relinquish the shadow; and that they, being converted to the Church of God, may be lawfully begotten, and that Christ may be formed in them, and that they may know the Framer and Maker of this universe, the only true God and Lord of all. We pray for these things on their behalf, loving them better than they seem to love themselves. For our love, inasmuch as it is true, is salutary to them, if they will but receive it. It may be compared to a severe remedy, extirpating the proud and sloughing flesh of a wound; for it puts an end to their pride and haughtiness. Wherefore it shall not weary us, to endeavour with all our might to stretch out the hand unto them. Over and above what has been already stated, I have deferred to the following book, to adduce the words of the Lord; if, by convincing some among them, through means of the very instruction of Christ, I may succeed in persuading them to abandon such error, and to cease from blaspheming their Creator, who is both God alone, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### Book IV

#### **Chapter VIII.**-Vain Attempts of Marcion and His Followers, Who Exclude Abraham from the Salvation Bestowed by Christ, Who Liberated Not Only Abraham, But the Seed of Abraham, by Fulfilling and Not Destroying the Law When He Healed on the Sabbath-Day.

1. Vain, too, is [the effort of] Marcion and his followers when they [seek to] exclude Abraham from the inheritance, to whom the Spirit through many men, and now by Paul, bears witness, that "he believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." And the Lord [also bears witness to him, ] in the first place, indeed, by raising up children to him from the stones, and making his seed as the stars of heaven, saying, "They shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and shall recline with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; " and then again by saying to the Jews, "When ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of heaven, but you yourselves cast out." This, then, is a clear point, that those who disallow his salvation, and frame the idea of another God besides Him who made the promise to Abraham, are outside the kingdom of God, and are disinherited from [the gift of] incorruption, setting at naught and blaspheming God, who introduces, through Jesus Christ, Abraham to the kingdom of heaven, and his seed, that is, the Church, upon which also is conferred the adoption and the inheritance promised to Abraham.

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2. For the Lord vindicated Abraham's posterity by loosing them from bondage and calling them to salvation, as He did in the case of the woman whom He healed, saying openly to those who had not faith like Abraham, "Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath-days loose his ox or his ass, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-days? " It is clear therefore, that He loosed and vivified those who believe in Him as Abraham did, doing nothing contrary to the law when He healed upon the Sabbath-day. For the law did not prohibit men from being healed upon the Sabbaths; [on the contrary, ] it even circumcised them upon that day, and gave command that the offices should be performed by the priests for the people; yea, it did not disallow the healing even of dumb animals. Both at Siloam and on frequent subsequent occasions, did He perform cures upon the Sabbath; and for this reason many used to resort to Him on the Sabbath-days. For the law commanded them to abstain from every servile work, that is, from all grasping after wealth which is procured by trading and by other worldly business; but it exhorted them to attend to the exercises of the soul, which consist in reflection, and to addresses of a beneficial kind for their neighbours' benefit. And therefore the Lord reproved those who unjustly blamed Him for having healed upon the Sabbath-days. For He did not make void, but fulfilled the law, by performing the offices of the high priest, propitiating God for men, and cleansing the lepers, healing the sick, and Himself suffering death, that exiled man might go forth from condemnation, and might return without fear to his own inheritance.

3. And again, the law did not forbid those who were hungry on the Sabbath-days to take food lying ready at hand: it did, however, forbid them to reap and to gather into the barn. And therefore did the Lord say to those who were blaming His disciples because they plucked and ate the ears of corn, rubbing them in their hands, "Have ye not read this, what David did, when himself was an hungered; how he went into the house of God, and ate the shew-bread, and gave to those who were with him; which it is not lawful to eat, but for the priests alone? " justifying His disciples by the words of the law, and pointing out that it was lawful for the priests to act freely. For David had been appointed a priest by God, although Saul persecuted him. For all the righteous possess the sacerdotal rank. And all the apostles of the Lord are priests, who do inherit here neither lands nor houses, but serve God and the altar continually. Of whom Moses also says in Deuteronomy, when blessing Levi, "Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not known thee; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, and he disinherited his own sons: he kept Thy commandments, and observed Thy covenant." But who are they that have left father and mother, and have said adieu to all their neighbours, on account of the word of God and His covenant, unless the disciples of the Lord? Of whom again Moses says, "They shall have no inheritance, for the Lord Himself is their inheritance." And again, "The priests the Levites shall have no part in the whole tribe of Levi, nor substance with Israel; their substance is the offerings (*fructifications*) of the Lord: these shall they eat." Wherefore also Paul says, "I do not seek after a gift, but I seek after fruit." To His disciples He said, who had a priesthood of the Lord, to whom it was lawful when hungry to eat the ears of corn, "For the workman is worthy of his meat." And the priests in the temple profaned the Sabbath, and were blameless. Wherefore, then, were they blameless? Because when in the temple they were not engaged in secular affairs,



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but in the service of the Lord, fulfilling the law, but not going beyond it, as that man did, who of his own accord carded dry wood into the camp of God, and was justly stoned to death. "For every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire;" and "whosoever shall defile the temple of God, him shall God defile."

**Chapter XI.**-The Old Prophets and Righteous Men Knew Beforehand of the Advent of Christ, and Earnestly Desired to See and Hear Him, He Revealing Himself in the Scriptures by the Holy Ghost, and Without Any Change in Himself, Enriching Men Day by Day with Benefits, But Conferring Them in Greater Abundance on Later Than on Former Generations.

1. But that it was not only the prophets and many righteous men, who, foreseeing through the Holy Spirit His advent, prayed that they might attain to that period in which they should see their Lord face to face, and hear His words, the Lord has made manifest, when He says to His disciples, "Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." In what way, then, did they desire both to hear and to see, unless they had foreknowledge of His future advent? But how could they have foreknown it, unless they had previously received foreknowledge from Himself? And how do the Scriptures testify of Him, unless all things had ever been revealed and shown to believers by one and the same God through the Word; He at one time conferring with His creature, and at another pro-pounding His law; at one time, again, reproof, at another exhorting, and then setting free His servant, and adopting him as a son (*in filium*); and, at the proper time, bestowing an incorruptible inheritance, for the purpose of bringing man to perfection? For He formed him for growth and increase, as the Scripture says: "Increase and multiply."

2. And in this respect God differs from man, that God indeed makes, but man is made; and truly, He who makes is always the same; but that which is made must receive both beginning, and middle, and addition, and increase. And God does indeed create after a skillful manner, while, [as regards] man, he *is* created skillfully. God also is truly perfect in all things, Himself equal and similar to Himself, as He is all light, and all mind, and all substance, and the fount of all good; but man receives advancement and increase towards God. For as God is always the same, so also man, when found in God, shall always go on towards God. For neither does God at any time cease to confer benefits upon, or to enrich man; nor does man ever cease from receiving the benefits, and being enriched by God. For the receptacle of His goodness, and the instrument of His glorification, is the man who is grateful to Him that made him; and again, the receptacle of His just judgment is the ungrateful man, who both despises his Maker and is not subject to His Word; who has promised that He will give very much to those always bringing forth fruit, and more [and more] to those who have the Lord's money. "Well done," He says, "good and faithful servant: because thou hast been faithful in little, I will appoint thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The Lord Himself thus promises very much.

3. As, therefore, He has promised to give very much to those who do now bring forth fruit, according to the gift of His grace, but not according to the changeableness of

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"knowledge; "for the Lord remains the same, and the same Father is revealed; thus, therefore, has the one and the same Lord granted, by means of His advent, a greater gift of grace to those of a later period, than what He had granted to those under the Old Testament dispensation. For they indeed used to hear, by means of [His] servants, that the King would come, and they rejoiced to a certain extent, inasmuch as they hoped for His coming; but those who have beheld Him actually present, and have obtained liberty, and been made partakers of His gifts, do possess a greater amount of grace, and a higher degree of exultation, rejoicing because of the King's arrival: as also David says, "My soul shall rejoice in the Lord; it shall be glad in His salvation." And for this cause, upon His entrance into Jerusalem, all those who were in the way recognised David their king in His sorrow of soul, and spread their garments for Him, and ornamented the way with green boughs, crying out with great joy and gladness, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: hosanna in the highest." But to the envious wicked stewards, who circumvented those under them, and ruled over those that had no great intelligence, and for this reason were unwilling that the king should come, and who said to Him, "Hearest thou what these say? "did the Lord reply, "Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected praise?" -thus pointing out that what had been declared by David concerning the Son of God, was accomplished in His own person; and indicating that they were indeed ignorant of the meaning of the Scripture and the dispensation of God; but declaring that it was Himself who was announced by the prophets as Christ, whose name is praised in all the earth, and who perfects praise to His Father from the mouth of babes and sucklings; wherefore also His glory has been raised above the heavens.

4. If, therefore, the self-same person is present who was announced by the prophets, our Lord Jesus Christ, and if His advent has brought in a fuller [measure of] grace and greater gifts to those who have received Him, it is plain that the Father also is Himself the same who was proclaimed by the prophets, and that the Son, on His coming, did not spread the knowledge of another Father, but of the same who was preached from the beginning; from whom also He has brought down liberty to those who, in a lawful manner, and with a willing mind, and with all the heart, do Him service; whereas to scoffers, and to those not subject to God, but who follow outward purifications for the praise of men (which observances had been given as a type of future things, -the law typifying, as it were, certain things in a shadow, and delineating eternal things by temporal, celestial by terrestrial), and to those who pretend that they do themselves observe more than what has been prescribed, as if preferring their own zeal to God Himself, while within they are full of hypocrisy, and covetousness, and all wickedness, - [to such] has He assigned everlasting perdition by cutting them off from life.

### Chapters 37 - 41

**Chapter XXXVII.**-Men are Possessed of Free Will, and Endowed with the Faculty of Making a Choice. It is Not True, Therefore, that Some are by Nature Good, and Others Bad.

1. This expression [of our Lord], "How often would I have gathered thy children together, and thou wouldest not," set forth the ancient law of human liberty, because

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God made man a free [agent] from the beginning, possessing his own power, even as he does his own soul, to obey the behests (*ad utendum sententia*) of God voluntarily, and not by compulsion of God. For there is no coercion with God, but a good will [towards us] is present with Him continually. And therefore, does He give good counsel to all. And in man, as well as in angels, He has placed the power of choice (for angels are rational beings), so that those who had yielded obedience might justly possess what is good, given indeed by God, but preserved by themselves. On the other hand, they who have not obeyed shall, with justice, be not found in possession of the good, and shall receive condign punishment: for God did kindly bestow on them what was good; but they themselves did not diligently keep it, nor deem it something precious, but poured contempt upon His super-eminent goodness. Rejecting therefore the good, and as it were spuing it out, they shall all deservedly incur the just judgment of God, which also the Apostle Paul testifies in his Epistle to the Romans, where he says, "But dost thou despise the riches of His goodness, and patience, and long-suffering, being ignorant that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God." "But glory and honour," he says, "to every one that doeth good." God therefore has given that which is good, as the apostle tells us in this Epistle, and they who work it shall receive glory and honour, because they have done that which is good when they had it in their power not to do it; but those who do it not shall receive the just judgment of God, because they did not work good when they had it in their power so to do.

2. But if some had been made by nature bad, and others good, these latter would not be deserving of praise for being good, for such were they created; nor would the former be reprehensible, for thus they were made [originally]. But since all men are of the same nature, able both to hold fast and to do what is good; and, on the other hand, having also the power to cast it from them and not to do it, -some do justly receive praise even among men who are under the control of good laws (and much more from God), and obtain deserved testimony of their choice of good in general, and of persevering therein; but the others are blamed, and receive a just condemnation, because of their rejection of what is fair and good. And therefore, the prophets used to exhort men to what was good, to act justly and to work righteousness, as I have so largely demonstrated, because it is in our power so to do, and because by excessive negligence we might become forgetful, and thus stand in need of that good counsel which the good God has given us to know by means of the prophets.

3. For this reason the Lord also said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good deeds, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." And, "Take heed to yourselves, lest perchance your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and worldly cares." And, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning, and ye like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He returns from the wedding, that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open to Him. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing." And again, "The servant who knows his Lord's will, and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." And, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" And again, "But if the servant say in his heart, The Lord delayeth, and begin to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat, and drink, and to be

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drunken, his Lord will come in a day on which he does not expect Him, and shall cut him in sunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites." All such passages demonstrate the independent will of man, and at the same time the counsel which God conveys to him, by which He exhorts us to submit ourselves to Him, and seeks to turn us away from [the sin of] unbelief against Him, without, however, in any way coercing us.

4. No doubt, if anyone is unwilling to follow the Gospel itself, it is in his power [to reject it], but it is not expedient. For it is in man's power to disobey God, and to forfeit what is good; but [such conduct] brings no small amount of injury and mischief. And on this account Paul says, "All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient;" referring both to the liberty of man, in which respect "all things are lawful," God exercising no compulsion in regard to him; and [by the expression] "not expedient" pointing out that we "should not use our liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, for this is not expedient. And again he says, "Speak ye every man truth with his neighbour." And, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor scurrility, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks." And, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk honestly as children of the light, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in anger and jealousy. And such were some of you; but ye have been washed, but ye have been sanctified in the name of our Lord." If then it were not in our power to do or not to do these things, what reason had the apostle, and much more the Lord Himself, to give us counsel to do some things, and to abstain from others? But because man is possessed of free will from the beginning, and God is possessed of free will, in whose likeness man was created, advice is always given to him to keep fast the good, which thing is done by means of obedience to God.

5. And not merely in works, but also in faith, has God preserved the will of man free and under his own control, saying, "According to thy faith be it unto thee;" thus showing that there is a faith specially belonging to man, since he has an opinion specially his own. And again, "All things are possible to him that believeth;" and, "Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." Now all such expressions demonstrate that man is in his own power with respect to faith. And for this reason, "he that believeth in Him has eternal life while he who believeth not the Son hath not eternal life, but the wrath of God shall remain upon him." In the same manner therefore the Lord, both showing His own goodness, and indicating that man is in his own free will and his own power, said to Jerusalem, "How often have I wished to gather thy children together, as a hen [gathereth] her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Wherefore your house shall be left unto you desolate."

6. Those, again, who maintain the opposite to these [conclusions], do themselves present the Lord as destitute of power, as if, forsooth, He were unable to accomplish what He willed; or, on the other hand, as being ignorant that they were by nature "material," as these men express it, and such as cannot receive His immortality. "But He should not," say they, "have created angels of such a nature that they were capable of transgression, nor men who immediately proved ungrateful towards Him; for they were made rational beings, endowed with the power of examining and judging, and were not [formed] as things irrational or of a [merely] animal nature, which can do nothing of

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their own will, but are drawn by necessity and compulsion to what is good, in which things there is one mind and one usage, working mechanically in one groove (*inflexibiles et sine iudicio*), who are incapable of being anything else except just what they had been created." But upon this supposition, neither would what is good be grateful to them, nor communion with God be precious, nor would the good be very much to be sought after, which would present itself without their own proper endeavour, care, or study, but would be implanted of its own accord and without their concern. Thus it would come to pass, that their being good would be of no consequence, because they were so by nature rather than by will, and are possessors of good spontaneously, not by choice; and for this reason they would not understand this fact, that good is a comely thing, nor would they take pleasure in it. For how can those who are ignorant of good enjoy it? Or what credit is it to those who have not aimed at it? And what crown is it to those who have not followed in pursuit of it, like those victorious in the contest?

7. On this account, too, did the Lord assert that the kingdom of heaven was the portion of "the violent;" and He says, "The violent take it by force;" that is, those who by strength and earnest striving axe on the watch to snatch it away on the moment. On this account also Paul the Apostle says to the Corinthians, "Know ye not, that they who run in a racecourse, do all indeed run, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. Every one also who engages in the contest is temperate in all things: now these men [do it] that they may obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. But I so run, not as uncertainty; I fight, not as One beating the air; but I make my body livid, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means, when preaching to others, I may myself be rendered a castaway." This able wrestler, therefore, exhorts us to the struggle for immortality, that we may be crowned, and may deem the crown precious, namely, that which is acquired by our struggle, but which does not encircle us of its own accord (*sed non ultro coalitam*). And the harder we strive, so much is it the more valuable; while so much the more valuable it is, so much the more should we esteem it. And indeed those things axe not esteemed so highly which come spontaneously, as those which are reached by much anxious care. Since, then, this power has been conferred upon us, both the Lord has taught and the apostle has enjoined us the more to love God, that we may reach this [prize] for ourselves by striving after it. For otherwise, no doubt, this our good would be [virtually] irrational, because not the result of trial. Moreover, the faculty of seeing would not appear to be so desirable, unless we had known what a loss it were to be devoid of sight; and health, too, is rendered all the more estimable by an acquaintance with disease; light, also, by contrasting it with darkness; and life with death. Just in the same way is the heavenly kingdom honourable to those who have known the earthly one. But in proportion as it is more honourable, so much the more do we prize it; and if we have prized it more, we shall be the more glorious in the presence of God. The Lord has therefore endured all these things on our behalf, in order that we, having been instructed by means of them all, may be in all respects circumspect for the time to come, and that, having been rationally taught to love God, we may continue in His perfect love: for God has displayed long-suffering in the case of man's apostasy; while man has been instructed by means of it, as also the prophet says, "Thine own apostasy shall heal thee;" God thus determining all things beforehand for the bringing of man to perfection, for his edification, and for the revelation of His dispensations, that

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goodness may both be made apparent, and righteousness perfected, and that the Church may be fashioned after the image of His Son, and that man may finally be brought to maturity at some future time, becoming ripe through such privileges to see and comprehend God.

### Chapter XXXVIII.-Why Man Was Not Made Perfect from the Beginning.

1. If, however, any one say, "What then? Could not God have exhibited man as perfect from beginning?" let him know that, inasmuch as God is indeed always the same and unbegotten as respects Himself, all things are possible to Him. But created things must be inferior to Him who created them, from the very fact of their later origin; for it was not possible for things recently created to have been uncreated. But inasmuch as they are not uncreated, for this very reason do they come short of the perfect. Because, as these things are of later date, so are they infantile; so are they unaccustomed to, and unexercised in, perfect discipline. For as it certainly is in the power of a mother to give strong food to her infant, [but she does not do so], as the child is not yet able to receive more substantial nourishment; so also it was possible for God Himself to have made man perfect from the first, but man could not receive this [perfection], being as yet an infant. And for this cause our Lord in these last times, when He had summed up all things into Himself, came to us, not as He might have come, but as we were capable of beholding Him. He might easily have come to us in His immortal glory, but in that case we could never have endured the greatness of the glory; and therefore it was that He, who was the perfect bread of the Father, offered Himself to us as milk, [because we were] as infants. He did this when He appeared as a man, that we, being nourished, as it were, from the breast of His flesh, and having, by such a course of milk nourishment, become accustomed to eat and drink the Word of God, may be able also to contain in ourselves the Bread of immortality, which is the Spirit of the Father.

2. And on this account does Paul declare to the Corinthians, "I have fed you with milk, not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it." That is, ye have indeed learned the advent of our Lord as a man; nevertheless, because of your infirmity, the Spirit of the Father has not as yet rested upon you. "For when envying and strife," he says, "and dissensions are among you, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" That is, that the Spirit of the Father was not yet with them, on account of their imperfection and shortcomings of their walk in life. As, therefore, the apostle had the power to give them strong meat- for those upon whom the apostles laid hands received the Holy Spirit, who is the food of life [eternal]-but they were not capable of receiving it, because they had the sentient faculties of the soul still feeble and undisciplined in the practice of things pertaining to God; so, in like manner, God had power at the beginning to grant perfection to man; but as the latter was only recently created, he could not possibly have received it, or even if he had received it, could he have contained it, or containing it, could he have retained it. It was for this reason that the Son of God, although He was perfect, passed through the state of infancy in common with the rest of mankind, partaking of it thus not for His own benefit, but for that of the infantile stage of man's existence, in order that man might be able to receive Him. There was nothing, therefore, impossible to and deficient in God, [implied in the fact] that man was not an uncreated being; but this merely applied to him who was lately created, [namely] man.

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3. With God there are simultaneously exhibited power, wisdom, and goodness. His power and goodness [appear] in this, that of His own will He called into being and fashioned things having no previous existence; His wisdom [is shown] in His having made created things parts of one harmonious and consistent whole; and those things which, through His super-eminent kindness, receive growth and a long period of existence, do reflect the glory of the uncreated One, of that God who bestows what is good ungrudgingly. For from the very fact of these things having been created, [it follows] that they are not uncreated; but by their continuing in being throughout a long course of ages, they shall receive a faculty of the Uncreated, through the gratuitous bestowal of eternal existence upon them by God. And thus in all things God has the pre-eminence, who alone is uncreated, the first of all things, and the primary cause of the existence of all, while all other things remain under God's subjection. But being in subjection to God is continuance in immortality, and immortality is the glory of the uncreated One. By this arrangement, therefore, and these harmonies, and a sequence of this nature, man, a created and organized being, is rendered after the image and likeness of the uncreated God, -the Father planning everything well and giving His commands, the Son carrying these into execution and performing the work of creating, and the Spirit nourishing and increasing [what is made], but man making progress day by day, and ascending towards the perfect, that is, approximating to the uncreated One. For the Uncreated is perfect, that is, God. Now it was necessary that man should in the first instance be created; and having been created, should receive growth; and having received growth, should be strengthened; and having been strengthened, should abound; and having abounded, should recover [from the disease of sin]; and having recovered, should be glorified; and being glorified, should see his Lord. For God is He who is yet to be seen, and the beholding of God is productive of immortality, but immortality renders one nigh unto God.

4. Irrational, therefore, in every respect, are they who await not the time of increase, but ascribe to God the infirmity of their nature. Such persons know neither God nor themselves, being insatiable and ungrateful, unwilling to be at the outset what they have also been created-men subject to passions; but go beyond the law of the human race, and before that they become men, they wish to be even now like God their Creator, and they who are more destitute of reason than dumb animals [insist] that there is no distinction between the uncreated God and man, a creature of to-day. For these, [the dumb animals], bring no charge against God for not having made them men; but each one, just as he has been created, gives thanks that he has been created. For we cast blame upon Him, because we have not been made gods from the beginning, but at first merely men, then at length gods; although God has adopted this course out of His pure benevolence, that no one may impute to Him invidiousness or grudgingness. He declares, "I have said, Ye are gods; and ye are all sons of the Highest." But since we could not sustain the power of divinity, He adds, "But ye shall die like men," setting forth both truths-the kindness of His free gift, and our weakness, and also that we were possessed of power over ourselves. For after His great kindness He graciously conferred good [upon us], and made men like to Himself, [that is] in their own power; while at the same time by His prescience He knew the infirmity of human beings, and the consequences which would flow from it; but through [His] love and [His] power, He shall overcome the substance of created nature. For it was necessary, at first, that nature

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should be exhibited; then, after that, that what was mortal should be conquered and swallowed up by immortality, and the corruptible by incorruptibility, and that man should be made after the image and likeness of God, having received the knowledge of good and evil.

Chapter XXXIX.-Man is Endowed with the Faculty of Distinguishing Good and Evil; So That, Without Compulsion, He Has the Power, by His Own Will and Choice, to Perform God's Commandments, by Doing Which He Avoids the Evils Prepared for the Rebellious.

1. Man has received the knowledge of good and evil. It is good to obey God, and to believe in Him, and to keep His commandment, and this is the life of man; as not to obey God is evil, and this is his death. Since God, therefore, gave [to man] such mental power (*magnanimitatem*) man knew both the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience, that the eye of the mind, receiving experience of both, may with judgment make choice of the better things; and that he may never become indolent or neglectful of God's command; and learning by experience that it is an evil thing which deprives him of life, that is, disobedience to God, may never attempt it at all, but that, knowing that what preserves his life, namely, obedience to God, is good, he may diligently keep it with all earnestness. Wherefore he has also had a twofold experience, possessing knowledge of both kinds, that with discipline he may make choice of the better things. But how, if he had no knowledge of the contrary, could he have had instruction in that which is good? For there is thus a surer and an undoubted comprehension of matters submitted to us than the mere surmise arising from an opinion regarding them. For just as the tongue receives experience of sweet and bitter by means of tasting, and the eye discriminates between black and white by means of vision, and the ear recognises the distinctions of sounds by hearing; so also does the mind, receiving through the experience of both the knowledge of what is good, become more tenacious of its preservation, by acting in obedience to God: in the first place, casting away, by means of repentance, disobedience, as being something disagreeable and nauseous; and afterwards coming to understand what it really is, that it is contrary to goodness and sweetness, so that the mind may never even attempt to taste disobedience to God. But if any one do shun the knowledge of both these kinds of things, and the twofold perception of knowledge, he unawares divests himself of the character of a human being.

2. How, then, shall he be a God, who has not as yet been made a man? Or how can he be perfect who was but lately created? How, again, can he be immortal, who in his mortal nature did not obey his Maker? For it must be that thou, at the outset, shouldest hold the rank of a man, and then afterwards partake of the glory of God. For thou dost not make God, but God thee. If, then, thou art God's workmanship, await the hand of thy Maker which creates everything in due time; in due time as far as thou art concerned, whose creation is being carried out. Offer to Him thy heart in a soft and tractable state, and preserve the form in which the Creator has fashioned thee, having moisture in thyself, lest, by becoming hardened, thou lose the impressions of His fingers. But by preserving the framework thou shalt ascend to that which is perfect, for the moist clay which is in thee is hidden [there] by the workmanship of God. His hand fashioned thy substance; He will cover thee over [too] within and without with pure gold and silver,



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and He will adorn thee to such a degree, that even "the King Himself shall have pleasure in thy beauty." But if thou, being obstinately hardened, dost reject the operation of His skill, and show thyself ungrateful towards Him, because thou wast created a [mere] man, by becoming thus ungrateful to God, thou hast at once lost both His workmanship and life. For creation is an attribute of the goodness of God but to be created is that of human nature. If then, thou shalt deliver up to Him what is thine that is, faith towards Him and subjection, thou shalt receive His handiwork, and shall be a perfect work of God.

3. If, however, thou wilt not believe in Him, and wilt flee from His hands, the cause of imperfection shall be in thee who didst not obey, but not in Him who called [thee]. For He commissioned [messengers] to call people to the marriage, but they who did not obey Him deprived themselves of the royal supper. The skill of God, therefore, is not defective, for He has power of the stones to raise up children to Abraham; but the man who does not obtain it is the cause to himself of his own imperfection. Nor, [in like manner], does the light fail because of those who have blinded themselves; but while it remains the same as ever, those who are [thus] blinded are involved in darkness through their own fault. The light does never enslave any one by necessity; nor, again, does God exercise compulsion upon any one unwilling to accept the exercise of His skill. Those persons, therefore, who have apostatized from the light given by the Father, and transgressed the law of liberty, have done so through their own fault, since they have been created free agents, and possessed of power over themselves.

4. But God, foreknowing all things, prepared fit habitations for both, kindly conferring that light which they desire on those who seek after the light of incorruption, and resort to it; but for the despisers and mockers who avoid and turn themselves away from this light, and who do, as it were, blind themselves, He has prepared darkness suitable to persons who oppose the light, and He has inflicted an appropriate punishment upon those who try to avoid being subject to Him. Submission to God is eternal rest, so that they who shun the light have a place worthy of their flight; and those who fly from eternal rest, have a habitation in accordance with their fleeing. Now, since all good things are with God, they who by their own determination fly from God, do defraud themselves of all good things; and having been [thus] defrauded of all good things with respect to God, they shall consequently fall under the just judgment of God. For those persons who shun rest shall justly incur punishment, and those who avoid the light shall justly dwell in darkness. For as in the case of this temporal light, those who shun it do deliver themselves over to darkness, so that they do themselves become the cause to themselves that they are destitute of light, and do inhabit darkness; and, as I have already observed, the light is not the cause of such an [unhappy.] condition of existence to them; so those who fly from the eternal light of God, which contains in itself all good things, are themselves the cause to themselves of their inhabiting eternal darkness, destitute of all good things, having become to themselves the cause of [their consignment to] an abode of that

Chapter XL.-One and the Same God the Father Inflicts Punishment on the Reprobate, and Bestows Rewards on the Elect.

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1. It is therefore one and the same God the Father who has prepared good things with Himself for those who desire His fellowship, and who remain in subjection to Him; and who has the eternal fire for the ringleader of the apostasy, the devil, and those who revolted with him, into which [fire] the Lord has declared those men shall be sent who have been set apart by themselves on His left hand. And this is what has been spoken by the prophet, "I am a jealous God, making peace, and creating evil things;" thus making peace and friendship with those who repent and turn to Him, and bringing [them to] unity, but preparing for the impenitent, those who shun the light, eternal fire and outer darkness, which are evils indeed to those persons who fall into them.

2. If, however, it were truly one Father who confers rest, and another God who has prepared the fire, their sons would have been equally different [one from the other]; one, indeed, sending [men] into the Father's kingdom, but the other into eternal fire. But inasmuch as one and the same Lord has pointed out that the whole human race shall be divided at the judgment, "as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats," and that to some He will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you," but to others, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which My Father has prepared for the devil and his angels," one and the same Father is manifestly declared [in this passage], "making peace and creating evil things," preparing fit things for both; as also there is one Judge sending both into a fit place, as the Lord sets forth in the parable of the tares and the wheat, where He says, "As therefore the tares are gathered together, and burned in the fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of man shall send His angels, and they shall gather from His kingdom everything that offendeth, and those who work iniquity, and shall send them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the just shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." The Father, therefore, who has prepared the kingdom for the righteous, into which the Son has received those worthy of it, is He who has also prepared the furnace of fire, into which these angels commissioned by the Son of man shall send those persons who deserve it, according to God's command.

3. The Lord, indeed, sowed good seed in His own field; and He says, "The field is the world." But while men slept, the enemy came, and "sowed tares in the midst of the wheat, and went his way." Hence we learn that this was the apostate angel and the enemy, because he was envious of God's workmanship, and took in hand to render this [workmanship] an enmity with God. For this cause also God has banished from His presence him who did of his own accord stealthily sow the tares, that is, him who brought about the transgression; but He took compassion upon man, who, through want of care no doubt, but still wickedly [on the part of another], became involved in disobedience; and He turned the enmity by which [the devil] had designed to make [man] the enemy of God, against the author of it, by removing His own anger from man, turning it in another direction, and sending it instead upon the serpent. As also the Scripture tells us that God said to the serpent, "And I will place enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. He shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel." And the Lord summed up in Himself this enmity, when He was made man from a woman, and trod upon his [the serpent's] head, as I have pointed out in the preceding book.

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### Chapter XLI.-Those Persons Who Do Not Believe in God, But Who are Disobedient, are Angels and Sons of the Devil, Not Indeed by Nature, But by Imitation. Close of This Book, and Scope of the Succeeding One.

1. Inasmuch as the Lord has said that there are certain angels, [viz. those] of the devil, for whom eternal fire is prepared; and as, again, He declares with regard to the tares, "The tares are the children of the wicked one," it must be affirmed that He has ascribed all who are of the apostasy to him who is the ringleader of this transgression. But He made neither angels nor men so by nature. For we do not find that the devil created anything whatsoever, since indeed he is himself a creature of God, like the other angels. For God made all things, as also David says with regard to all things of the kind: "For He spake the word, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created."

2. Since, therefore, all things were made by God, and since the devil has become the cause of apostasy to himself and others, justly does the Scripture always term those who remain in a state of apostasy "sons of the devil" and "angels of the wicked one" (*maligni*). For [the word] "son," as one before me has observed, has a twofold meaning: one [is a son] in the order of nature, because he was born a son; the other, in that he was made so, is reputed a son, although there be a difference between being born so and being made so. For the first is indeed born from the person referred to; but the second is made so by him, whether as respects his creation or by the teaching of his doctrine. For when any person has been taught from the mouth of another, he is termed the son of him who instructs him, and the latter [is called] his father. According to nature, then - that is, according to creation, so to speak - we are all sons of God, because we have all been created by God. But with respect to obedience and doctrine we are not all the sons of God: those only are so who believe in Him and do His will. And those who do not believe, and do not obey His will, are sons and angels of the devil, because they do the works of the devil. And that such is the case He has declared in Isaiah: "I have begotten and brought up children, but they have rebelled against Me." And again, where He says that these children are aliens: "Strange children have lied unto Me." According to nature, then, they are [His] children, because they have been so created; but with regard to their works, they are not His children.

3. For as, among men, those sons who disobey their fathers, being disinherited, are still their sons in the course of nature, but by law are disinherited, for they do not become the heirs of their natural parents; so in the same way is it with God, - those who do not obey Him being disinherited by Him, have ceased to be His sons. Wherefore they cannot receive His inheritance: as David says, "Sinners are alienated from the womb; their anger is after the likeness of a serpent." And therefore did the Lord term those whom He knew to be the offspring of men "a generation of vipers;" because after the manner of these animals they go about in subtilty, and injure others. For He said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Speaking of Herod, too, He says, "Go ye and tell that fox," aiming at his wicked cunning and deceit. Wherefore the prophet David says, "Man, being placed in honour, is made like unto cattle." And again Jeremiah says, "They are become like horses, furious about females; each one neighed after his neighbour's wife." And Isaiah, when preaching in Judea, and reasoning with Israel, termed them "rulers of Sodom" and "people of Gomorrah;" intimating that they were

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like the Sodomites in wickedness, and that the same description of sins was rife among them, calling them by the same name, because of the similarity of their conduct. And inasmuch as they were not by nature so created by God, but had power also to act rightly, the same person said to them, giving them good counsel, "Wash ye, make you clean; take away iniquity from your souls before mine eyes; cease from your iniquities." Thus, no doubt, since they had transgressed and sinned in the same manner, so did they receive the same reproof as did the Sodomites. But when they should be converted and come to repentance, and cease from evil, they should have power to become the sons of God, and to receive the inheritance of immortality which is given by Him. For this reason, therefore, He has termed those "angels of the devil," and "children of the wicked one," who give heed to the devil, and do his works. But these are, at the same time, all created by the one and the same God. When, however, they believe and are subject to God, and go on and keep His doctrine, they are the sons of God; but when they have apostatized and fallen into transgression, they are ascribed to their chief, the devil-to him who first became the cause of apostasy to himself, and afterwards to others.

4. Inasmuch as the words of the Lord are numerous, while they all proclaim one and the same Father, the Creator of this world, it was incumbent also upon me, for their own sake, to refute by many [arguments] those who are involved in many errors, if by any means, when they are confuted by many [proofs], they may be converted to the truth and saved. But it is necessary to subjoin to this composition, in what follows, also the doctrine of Paul after the words of the Lord, to examine the opinion of this man, and expound the apostle, and to explain whatsoever [passages] have received other interpretations from the heretics, who have altogether misunderstood what Paul has spoken, and to point out the folly of their mad opinions; and to demonstrate from that same Paul, from whose [writings] they press questions upon us, that they are indeed utterers of falsehood, but that the apostle was a preacher of the truth, and that he taught all things agreeable to the preaching of the truth; [to the effect that] it was one God the Father who spake with Abraham, who gave the law, who sent the prophets beforehand, who in the last times sent His Son, and conferred salvation upon His own handiwork-that is, the substance of flesh. Arranging, then, in another book, the rest of the words of the Lord, which He taught concerning the Father not by parables, but by expressions taken in their obvious meaning (*sed simpliciter ipsis dictionibus*), and the exposition of the Epistles of the blessed apostle, I shall, with God's aid, furnish thee with the complete work of the exposure and refutation of knowledge, falsely so called; thus practising myself and thee in [these] five books for presenting opposition to all heretics.

### Book V

**Chapter XIII.**-In the Dead Who Were Raised by Christ We Possess the Highest Proof of the Resurrection; And Our Hearts are Shown to Be Capable of Life Eternal, Because They Can Now Receive the Spirit of God.

1. Let our opponents-that is, they who speak against their own salvation-inform us [as to this point]: The deceased daughter of the high priest; the widow's dead son, who was being carded out [to burial] near the gate [of the city]; and Lazarus, who had lain four days in the tomb, -in what bodies did they rise again? In those same, no doubt, in which

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they had also died. For if it were not in the very same, then certainly those same individuals who had died did not rise again. For [the Scripture] says, "The Lord took the hand of the dead man, and said to him, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And the dead man sat up, and He commanded that something should be given him to eat; and He delivered him to his mother." Again, He called Lazarus "with a loud voice, saying, Lazarus, come forth; and he that was dead came forth bound with bandages, feet and hands." This was symbolical of that man who had been bound in sins. And therefore, the Lord said, "Loose him, and let him depart." As, therefore, those who were healed were made whole in those members which had in times past been afflicted; and the dead rose in the identical bodies, their limbs and bodies receiving health, and that life which was granted by the Lord, who prefigures eternal things by temporal, and shows that it is He who is Himself able to extend both healing and life to His handiwork, that His words concerning its [future] resurrection may also be believed; so also at the end, when the Lord utters His voice "by the last trumpet," the dead shall be raised, as He Himself declares: "The hour shall come, in which all the dead which are in the tombs shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth; those that have done good to the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil to the resurrection of judgment."

2. Vain, therefore, and truly miserable, are those who do not choose to see what is so manifest and clear, but shun the light of truth, blinding themselves like the tragic Oedipus. And as those who are not practised in wrestling, when they contend with others, laying hold with a determined grasp of some part of [their opponent's] body, really fall by means of that which they grasp, yet when they fall, imagine that they are gaining the victory, because they have obstinately kept their hold upon that part which they seized at the outset, and besides falling, become subjects of ridicule; so is it with respect to that [favourite] expression of the heretics: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; "while taking two expressions of Paul's, without having perceived the apostle's meaning, or examined critically the force of the terms, but keeping fast hold of the mere expressions by themselves, they die in consequence of their influence (*perit au0ta/&Eaxute*), overturning as far as in them lies the entire dispensation of God.

3. For thus they will allege that this passage refers to the flesh strictly so called, and not to fleshly works, as I have pointed out, so representing the apostle as contradicting himself. For immediately following, in the same Epistle, he says conclusively, speaking thus in reference to the flesh: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O death, where is thy victory? " Now these words shall be appropriately said at the time when this mortal and corruptible flesh, which is subject to death, which also is pressed down by a certain dominion of death, rising up into life, shall put on incorruption and immortality. For then, indeed, shall death be truly vanquished, when that flesh which is held down by it shall go forth from under its dominion. And again, to the Philippians he says: "But our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus, who shall transfigure the body of our humiliation conformable to the body of His glory, even as He is able (*ita ut possit*) according to the working of His own power." What, then, is this "body of humiliation" which the Lord shall transfigure, [so as to be] conformed to "the body of His glory?"

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"Plainly it is this body composed of flesh, which is indeed humbled when it falls into the earth. Now its transformation [takes place thus], that while it is mortal and corruptible, it becomes immortal and incorruptible, not after its own proper substance, but after the mighty working of the Lord, who is able to invest the mortal with immortality, and the corruptible with incorruption. And therefore he says, "that mortality may be swallowed up of life. He who has perfected us for this very thing is God, who also has given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." He uses these words most manifestly in reference to the flesh; for the soul is not mortal, neither is the spirit. Now, what is mortal shall be swallowed up of life, when the flesh is dead no longer, but remains living and incorruptible, hymning the praises of God, who has perfected us for this very thing. In order, therefore, that we may be perfected for this, aptly does he say to the Corinthians, "Glorify God in your body." Now God is He who gives rise to immortality.

4. That he uses these words with respect to the body of flesh, and to none other, he declares to the Corinthians manifestly, indubitably, and free from all ambiguity: "Always bearing about in our body the dying of Jesus, that also the life of Jesus Christ might be manifested in our body. For if we who live are delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, it is that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our mortal flesh." And that the Spirit lays hold on the flesh, he says in the same Epistle, "That ye axe the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, inscribed not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart." If, therefore, in the present time, fleshly hearts are made partakers of the Spirit, what is there astonishing if, in the resurrection, they receive that life which is granted by the Spirit? Of which resurrection the apostle speaks in the Epistle to the Philippians: "Having been made conformable to His death, if by any means I might attain to the resurrection which is from the dead." In what other mortal flesh, therefore, can life be understood as being manifested, unless in that substance which is also put to death on account of that confession which is made of God?-as he has himself declared, "If, as a man, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? For if the dead rise not, neither has Christ risen. Now, if Christ has not risen, our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain. In that case, too, we are found false witnesses for God, since we have testified that He raised up Christ, whom [upon that supposition] He did not raise up. For if the dead rise not, neither has Christ risen. But if Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, since ye are yet in your sins. Therefore those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are more miserable than all men. But now Christ has risen from the dead, the first-fruits of those that sleep; for as by man [came] death, by man also [came] the resurrection of the dead."

5. In all these passages, therefore, as I have already said, these men must either allege that the apostle expresses opinions contradicting himself, with respect to that statement, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; "or, on the other hand, they will be forced to make perverse and crooked interpretations of all the passages, so as to overturn and alter the sense of the words. For what sensible thing can they say, if they endeavour to interpret otherwise this which he writes: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality; " and, "That the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh; " and all the other passages in which the apostle does manifestly and clearly declare the resurrection and incorruption of the

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flesh? And thus shall they be compelled to put a false interpretation upon passages such as these, they who do not choose to understand one correctly.

**Chapter XXIII.**-The Devil is Well Practised in Falsehood, by Which Adam Having Been Led Astray, Sinned on the Sixth Day of the Creation, in Which Day Also He Has Been Renewed by Christ.

1. He had indeed been already accustomed to lie against God, for the purpose of leading men astray. For at the beginning, when God had given to man a variety of things for food, while He commanded him not to eat of one tree only, as the Scripture tells us that God said to Adam: "From every tree which is in the garden thou shalt eat food; but from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, from this ye shall not eat: for in the day that ye shall eat of it, ye shall die by death;" he then, lying against the Lord, tempted man, as the Scripture says that the serpent said to the woman: "Has God indeed said this, Ye shall not eat from every tree of the garden?" And when she had exposed the falsehood, and simply related the command, as He had said, "From every tree of the garden we shall eat; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die: " when he had [thus] learned from the woman the command of God, having brought his cunning into play, he finally deceived her by a falsehood, saying, "Ye shall not die by death; for God knew that in the day ye shall eat of it your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." In the first place, then, in the garden of God he disputed about God, as if God was not there, for he was ignorant of the greatness of God; and then, in the next place, after he had learned from the woman that God had said that they should die if they tasted the aforesaid tree, opening his mouth, he uttered the third falsehood, "Ye shall not die by death." But that God was true, and the serpent a liar, was proved by the result, death having passed upon them who had eaten. For along with the fruit they did also fall under the power of death, because they did eat in disobedience; and disobedience to God entails death. Wherefore, as they became forfeit to death, from that [moment] they were handed over to it.

2. Thus, then, in the day that they did eat, in the same did they die, and became death's debtors, since it was one day of the creation. For it is said, "There was made in the evening, and there was made in the morning, one day." Now in this same day that they did eat, in that also did they die. But according to the cycle and progress of the days, after which one is termed first, another second, and another third, if anybody seeks diligently to learn upon what day out of the seven it was that Adam died, he will find it by examining the dispensation of the Lord. For by summing up in Himself the whole human race from the beginning to the end, He has also summed up its death. From this it is clear that the Lord suffered death, in obedience to His Father, upon that day on which Adam died while he disobeyed God. Now he died on the same day in which he did eat. For God said, "In that day on which ye shall eat of it, ye shall die by death." The Lord, therefore, recapitulating in Himself this day, underwent His sufferings upon the day preceding the Sabbath, that is, the sixth day of the creation, on which day man was created; thus granting him a second creation by means of His passion, which is that [creation] out of death. And there are some, again, who relegate the death of Adam to the thousandth year; for since "a day of the Lord is as a thousand years," he did not

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overstep the thousand years, but died within them, thus bearing out the sentence of his sin. Whether, therefore, with respect to disobedience, which is death; whether [we consider] that, on account of that, they were delivered over to death, and made debtors to it; whether with respect to [the fact that on] one and the same day on which they ate they also died (for it is one day of the creation); whether [we regard this point], that, with respect to this cycle of days, they died on the day in which they did also eat, that is, the day] of the preparation, which is termed "the pure supper," that is, the sixth day of the feast, which the Lord also exhibited when He suffered on that day; or whether [we reflect] that he (Adam) did not overstep the thousand years, but died within their limit,- it follows that, in regard to all these significations, God is indeed true. For they died who tasted of the tree; and the serpent is proved a liar and a murderer, as the Lord said of him: "For he is a murderer from the beginning, and the truth is not in him."

**Chapter XXXVI.**-Men Shall Be Actually Raised: the World Shall Not Be Annihilated; But There Shall Be Various Mansions for the Saints, According to the Rank Allotted to Each Individual. All Things Shall Be Subject to God the Father, and So Shall He Be All in All.

1. For since there are real men, so must there also be a real establishment (*plantationem*), that they vanish not away among non-existent things, but progress among those which have an actual existence. For neither is the substance nor the essence of the creation annihilated (for faithful and true is He who has established it), but "the *fashion* of the world passeth away; " that is, those things among which transgression has occurred, since man has grown old in them. And therefore this [present] fashion has been formed temporary, God foreknowing all things; as I have pointed out in the preceding book, and have also shown, as far as was possible, the cause of the creation of this world of temporal things. But when this [present] fashion [of things] passes away, and man has been renewed, and flourishes in an incorruptible state, so as to preclude the possibility of becoming old, [then] there shall be the new heaven and the new earth, in which the new man shall remain [continually ], always holding fresh converse with God. And since (*or*, that) these things shall ever continue without end, Isaiah declares, "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I do make, continue in my sight, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain." And as the presbyters say, Then those who are deemed worthy of an abode in heaven shall go there, others shall enjoy the delights of paradise, and others shall possess the splendour of the city; for everywhere the Saviour shall be seen according as they who see Him shall be worthy.

2. [They say, moreover], that there is this distinction between the habitation of those who produce an hundred-fold, and that of those who produce sixty-fold, and that of those who produce thirty-fold: for the first will be taken up into the heavens, the second will dwell in paradise, the last will inhabit the city; and that was on this account the Lord declared, "In My Father's house are many mansions." For all things belong to God, who supplies all with a suitable dwelling-place; even as His Word says, that a share is allotted to all by the Father, according as each person is or shall be worthy. And this is the couch on which the guests shall recline, having been invited to the wedding. The presbyters, the disciples of the apostles, affirm that this is the gradation and arrangement of those



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who are saved, and that they advance through steps of this nature; also that they ascend through the Spirit to the Son, and through the Son to the Father, and that in due time the Son will yield up His work to the Father, even as it is said by the apostle, "For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." For in the times of the kingdom, the righteous man who is upon the earth shall then forget to die. "But when He saith, All things shall be subdued unto Him, it is manifest that He is excepted who did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

3. John, therefore, did distinctly foresee the first "resurrection of the just," and the inheritance in the kingdom of the earth; and what the prophets have prophesied concerning it harmonize [with his vision]. For the Lord also taught these things, when He promised that He would have the mixed cup new with His disciples in the kingdom. The apostle, too, has confessed that the creation shall be free from the bondage of corruption, [so as to pass] into the liberty of the sons of God. And in all these things, and by them all, the same God the Father is manifested, who fashioned man, and gave promise of the inheritance of the earth to the fathers, who brought it (the creature) forth [from bondage] at the resurrection of the just, and fulfils the promises for the kingdom of His Son; subsequently bestowing in a paternal manner those things which neither the eye has seen, nor the ear has heard, nor has [thought concerning them] arisen within the heart of man, For there is the one Son, who accomplished His Father's will; and one human race also in which the mysteries of God are wrought, "which the angels desire to look into; " and they are not able to search out the wisdom of God, by means of Which His handiwork, confirmed and incorporated with His Son, is brought to perfection; that His offspring, the First-begotten Word, should descend to the creature (*facturam*), that is, to what had been moulded (*plasma*), and that it should be contained by Him; and, on the other hand, the creature should contain the Word, and ascend to Him, passing beyond the angels, and be made after the image and likeness of God.

### Appendix 2 St Augustine on Eternal Punishment

St Augustine wrote a defense of the idea that punishment in Hell is eternal and provided a list of a list of scriptures to prove his point.

#### St Augustine: The City of God (Book XXI)

Of the end reserved for the city of the devil, namely, the eternal punishment of the damned; and of the arguments which unbelief brings against it.

Chapter 1. Of the Order of the Discussion, Which Requires that We First Speak of the Eternal Punishment of the Lost in Company with the Devil, and Then of the Eternal Happiness of the Saints.

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I Propose, with such ability as God may grant me, to discuss in this book more thoroughly the nature of the punishment which shall be assigned to the devil and all his retainers, when the two cities, the one of God, the other of the devil, shall have reached their proper ends through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Judge of quick and dead. And I have adopted this order, and preferred to speak, first of the punishment of the devils, and afterwards of the blessedness of the saints, because the body partakes of either destiny; and it seems to be more incredible that bodies endure in everlasting torments than that they continue to exist without any pain in everlasting felicity. Consequently, when I shall have demonstrated that that punishment ought not to be incredible, this will materially aid me in proving that which is much more credible, viz., the immortality of the bodies of the saints which are delivered from all pain. Neither is this order out of harmony with the divine writings, in which sometimes, indeed, the blessedness of the good is placed first, as in the words, "They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment;" John 5:29 but sometimes also last, as, "The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things which offend, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of His Father;" Matthew 13:41-43 and that, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Matthew 25:46 And though we have not room to cite instances, anyone who examines the prophets will find that they adopt now the one arrangement and now the other. My own reason for following the latter order I have given.

### Chapter 2.— Whether It is Possible for Bodies to Last for Ever in Burning Fire.

What, then, can I adduce to convince those who refuse to believe that human bodies, animated and living, can not only survive death, but also last in the torments of everlasting fires? They will not allow us to refer this simply to the power of the Almighty, but demand that we persuade them by some example. If, then, we reply to them, that there are animals which certainly are corruptible, because they are mortal, and which yet live in the midst of flames; and likewise, that in springs of water so hot that no one can put his hand in it with impunity a species of worm is found, which not only lives there, but cannot live elsewhere; they either refuse to believe these facts unless we can show them, or, if we are in circumstances to prove them by ocular demonstration or by adequate testimony, they contend, with the same skepticism, that these facts are not examples of what we seek to prove, inasmuch as these animals do not live forever, and besides, they live in that blaze of heat without pain, the element of fire being congenial to their nature, and causing it to thrive and not to suffer — just as if it were not more incredible that it should thrive than that it should suffer in such circumstances. It is strange that anything should suffer in fire and yet live, but stranger that it should live in fire and not suffer. If, then, the latter be believed, why not also the former?

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### Chapter 3.— Whether Bodily Suffering Necessarily Terminates in the Destruction of the Flesh.

But, say they, there is no body which can suffer and cannot also die. How do we know this? For who can say with certainty that the devils do not suffer in their bodies, when they own that they are grievously tormented? And if it is replied that there is no earthly body — that is to say, no solid and perceptible body, or, in one word, no flesh — which can suffer and cannot die, is not this to tell us only what men have gathered from experience and their bodily senses? For they indeed have no acquaintance with any flesh but that which is mortal; and this is their whole argument, that what they have had no experience of they judge quite impossible. For we cannot call it reasoning to make pain a presumption of death, while, in fact, it is rather a sign of life. For though it be a question whether that which suffers can continue to live forever, yet it is certain that everything which suffers pain does live, and that pain can exist only in a living subject. It is necessary, therefore, that he who is pained be living, not necessary that pain kill him; for every pain does not kill even those mortal bodies of ours which are destined to die. And that any pain kills them is caused by the circumstance that the soul is so connected with the body that it succumbs to great pain and withdraws; for the structure of our members and vital parts is so infirm that it cannot bear up against that violence which causes great or extreme agony. But in the life to come this connection of soul and body is of such a kind, that as it is dissolved by no lapse of time, so neither is it burst asunder by any pain. And so, although it be true that in this world there is no flesh which can suffer pain and yet cannot die, yet in the world to come there shall be flesh such as now there is not, as there will also be death such as now there is not. For death will not be abolished, but will be eternal, since the soul will neither be able to enjoy God and live, nor to die and escape the pains of the body. The first death drives the soul from the body against her will: the second death holds the soul in the body against her will. The two have this in common, that the soul suffers against her will what her own body inflicts.

Our opponents, too, make much of this, that in this world there is no flesh which can suffer pain and cannot die; while they make nothing of the fact that there is something which is greater than the body. For the spirit, whose presence animates and rules the body, can both suffer pain and cannot die. Here then is something which, though it can feel pain, is immortal. And this capacity, which we now see in the spirit of all, shall be hereafter in the bodies of the damned. Moreover, if we attend to the matter a little more closely, we see that what is called bodily pain is rather to be referred to the soul. For it is the soul not the body, which is pained, even when the pain originates with the body — the soul feeling pain at the point where the body is hurt. As then we speak of bodies feeling and living, though the feeling and life of the body are from the soul, so also we speak of bodies being pained, though no pain can be suffered by the body apart from the soul. The soul, then, is pained with the body in that part where something occurs to hurt

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it; and it is pained alone, though it be in the body, when some invisible cause distresses it, while the body is safe and sound. Even when not associated with the body it is pained; for certainly that rich man was suffering in hell when he cried, "I am tormented in this flame." Luke 16:24 But as for the body, it suffers no pain when it is soulless; and even when animate it can suffer only by the soul's suffering. If, therefore, we might draw a just presumption from the existence of pain to that of death, and conclude that where pain can be felt death can occur, death would rather be the property of the soul, for to it pain more peculiarly belongs. But, seeing that that which suffers most cannot die, what ground is there for supposing that those bodies, because destined to suffer, are therefore, destined to die? The Platonists indeed maintained that these earthly bodies and dying members gave rise to the fears, desires, griefs, and joys of the soul. "Hence," says Virgil (i.e., from these earthly bodies and dying members),

Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,

And human laughter, human tears.

But in the fourteenth book of this work we have proved that, according to the Platonists' own theory, souls, even when purged from all pollution of the body, are yet possessed by a monstrous desire to return again into their bodies. But where desire can exist, certainly pain also can exist; for desire frustrated, either by missing what it aims at or losing what it had attained, is turned into pain. And therefore, if the soul, which is either the only or the chief sufferer, has yet a kind of immortality of its own, it is inconsequent to say that because the bodies of the damned shall suffer pain, therefore they shall die. In fine, if the body causes the soul to suffer, why can the body not cause death as well as suffering, unless because it does not follow that what causes pain causes death as well? And why then is it incredible that these fires can cause pain but not death to those bodies we speak of, just as the bodies themselves cause pain, but not therefore death, to the souls? Pain is therefore no necessary presumption of death.

Chapter 4.— Examples from Nature Proving that Bodies May Remain Unconsumed and Alive in Fire.

If, therefore, the salamander lives in fire, as naturalists have recorded, and if certain famous mountains of Sicily have been continually on fire from the remotest antiquity until now, and yet remain entire, these are sufficiently convincing examples that everything which burns is not consumed. As the soul too, is a proof that not everything which can suffer pain can also die, why then do they yet demand that we produce real examples to prove that it is not incredible that the bodies of men condemned to everlasting punishment may retain their soul in the fire, may burn without being consumed, and may suffer without perishing? For suitable properties will be

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communicated to the substance of the flesh by Him who has endowed the things we see with so marvelous and diverse properties, that their very multitude prevents our wonder. For who but God the Creator of all things has given to the flesh of the peacock its antiseptic property? This property, when I first heard of it, seemed to me incredible; but it happened at Carthage that a bird of this kind was cooked and served up to me, and, taking a suitable slice of flesh from its breast, I ordered it to be kept, and when it had been kept as many days as make any other flesh stinking, it was produced and set before me, and emitted no offensive smell. And after it had been laid by for thirty days and more, it was still in the same state; and a year after, the same still, except that it was a little more shrivelled, and drier. Who gave to chaff such power to freeze that it preserves snow buried under it, and such power to warm that it ripens green fruit?

But who can explain the strange properties of fire itself, which blackens everything it burns, though itself bright; and which, though of the most beautiful colors, discolors almost all it touches and feeds upon, and turns blazing fuel into grimy cinders? Still this is not laid down as an absolutely uniform law; for, on the contrary, stones baked in glowing fire themselves also glow, and though the fire be rather of a red hue, and they white, yet white is congruous with light, and black with darkness. Thus, though the fire burns the wood in calcining the stones, these contrary effects do not result from the contrariety of the materials. For though wood and stone differ, they are not contraries, like black and white, the one of which colors is produced in the stones, while the other is produced in the wood by the same action of fire, which imparts its own brightness to the former, while it begrimes the latter, and which could have no effect on the one were it not fed by the other. Then what wonderful properties do we find in charcoal, which is so brittle that a light tap breaks it and a slight pressure pulverizes it, and yet is so strong that no moisture rots it, nor any time causes it to decay. So enduring is it, that it is customary in laying down landmarks to put charcoal underneath them, so that if, after the longest interval, any one raises an action, and pleads that there is no boundary stone, he may be convicted by the charcoal below. What then has enabled it to last so long without rotting, though buried in the damp earth in which [its original] wood rots, except this same fire which consumes all things?

Again, let us consider the wonders of lime; for besides growing white in fire, which makes other things black, and of which I have already said enough, it has also a mysterious property of conceiving fire within it. Itself cold to the touch, it yet has a hidden store of fire, which is not at once apparent to our senses, but which experience teaches us, lies as it were slumbering within it even while unseen. And it is for this reason called "quick lime," as if the fire were the invisible soul quickening the visible substance or body. But the marvelous thing is, that this fire is kindled when it is extinguished. For to disengage the hidden fire the lime is moistened or drenched with water, and then, though it be cold before, it becomes hot by that very application which

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cools what is hot. As if the fire were departing from the lime and breathing its last, it no longer lies hid, but appears; and then the lime lying in the coldness of death cannot be requickened, and what we before called "quick," we now call "slaked." What can be stranger than this? Yet there is a greater marvel still. For if you treat the lime, not with water, but with oil, which is as fuel to fire, no amount of oil will heat it. Now if this marvel had been told us of some Indian mineral which we had no opportunity of experimenting upon, we should either have immediately pronounced it a falsehood, or certainly should have been greatly astonished. But things that daily present themselves to our own observation we despise, not because they are really less marvelous, but because they are common; so that even some products of India itself, remote as it is from ourselves, cease to excite our admiration as soon as we can admire them at our leisure.

The diamond is a stone possessed by many among ourselves, especially by jewellers and lapidaries, and the stone is so hard that it can be wrought neither by iron nor fire, nor, they say, by anything at all except goat's blood. But do you suppose it is as much admired by those who own it and are familiar with its properties as by those to whom it is shown for the first time? Persons who have not seen it perhaps do not believe what is said of it, or if they do, they wonder as at a thing beyond their experience; and if they happen to see it, still they marvel because they are unused to it, but gradually familiar experience [of it] dulls their admiration. We know that the loadstone has a wonderful power of attracting iron. When I first saw it I was thunderstruck, for I saw an iron ring attracted and suspended by the stone; and then, as if it had communicated its own property to the iron it attracted, and had made it a substance like itself, this ring was put near another, and lifted it up; and as the first ring clung to the magnet, so did the second ring to the first. A third and a fourth were similarly added, so that there hung from the stone a kind of chain of rings, with their hoops connected, not interlinking, but attached together by their outer surface. Who would not be amazed at this virtue of the stone, subsisting as it does not only in itself, but transmitted through so many suspended rings, and binding them together by invisible links? Yet far more astonishing is what I heard about this stone from my brother in the episcopate, Severus bishop of Milevis. He told me that Bathanarius, once count of Africa, when the bishop was dining with him, produced a magnet, and held it under a silver plate on which he placed a bit of iron; then as he moved his hand with the magnet underneath the plate, the iron upon the plate moved about accordingly. The intervening silver was not affected at all, but precisely as the magnet was moved backwards and forwards below it, no matter how quickly, so was the iron attracted above. I have related what I myself have witnessed; I have related what I was told by one whom I trust as I trust my own eyes. Let me further say what I have read about this magnet. When a diamond is laid near it, it does not lift iron; or if it has already lifted it, as soon as the diamond approaches, it drops it. These stones come from India. But if we cease to admire them because they are now familiar, how much less must they admire them who procure them very easily and send them to us? Perhaps they are held as cheap as we hold lime, which, because it is common, we

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think nothing of, though it has the strange property of burning when water, which is wont to quench fire, is poured on it, and of remaining cool when mixed with oil, which ordinarily feeds fire.

Chapter 5.— That There are Many Things Which Reason Cannot Account For, and Which are Nevertheless True.

Nevertheless, when we declare the miracles which God has wrought, or will yet work, and which we cannot bring under the very eyes of men, sceptics keep demanding that we shall explain these marvels to reason. And because we cannot do so, inasmuch as they are above human comprehension, they suppose we are speaking falsely. These persons themselves, therefore, ought to account for all these marvels which we either can or do see. And if they perceive that this is impossible for man to do, they should acknowledge that it cannot be concluded that a thing has not been or shall not be because it cannot be reconciled to reason, since there are things now in existence of which the same is true. I will not, then, detail the multitude of marvels which are related in books, and which refer not to things that happened once and passed away, but that are permanent in certain places, where, if anyone has the desire and opportunity, he may ascertain their truth; but a few only I recount. The following are some of the marvels men tell us:— The salt of Agrigento in Sicily, when thrown into the fire, becomes fluid as if it were in water, but in the water it crackles as if it were in the fire. The Garamantæ have a fountain so cold by day that no one can drink it, so hot by night no one can touch it. In Epirus, too, there is a fountain which, like all others, quenches lighted torches, but, unlike all others, lights quenched torches. There is a stone found in Arcadia, and called asbestos, because once lit it cannot be put out. The wood of a certain kind of Egyptian fig-tree sinks in water, and does not float like other wood; and, stranger still, when it has been sunk to the bottom for some time, it rises again to the surface, though nature requires that when soaked in water it should be heavier than ever. Then there are the apples of Sodom which grow indeed to an appearance of ripeness, but, when you touch them with hand or tooth, the peel cracks, and they crumble into dust and ashes. The Persian stone pyrites burns the hand when it is tightly held in it and so gets its name from fire. In Persia too, there is found another stone called selenite, because its interior brilliancy waxes and wanes with the moon. Then in Cappadocia the mares are impregnated by the wind, and their foals live only three years. Tilon, an Indian island, has this advantage over all other lands, that no tree which grows in it ever loses its foliage.

These and numberless other marvels recorded in the history, not of past events, but of permanent localities, I have no time to enlarge upon and diverge from my main object; but let those sceptics who refuse to credit the divine writings give me, if they can, a rational account of them. For their only ground of unbelief in the Scriptures is, that they contain incredible things, just such as I have been recounting. For, say they, reason cannot admit that flesh burn and remain unconsumed, suffer without dying. Mighty

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reasoners, indeed, who are competent to give the reason of all the marvels that exist! Let them then give us the reason of the few things we have cited, and which, if they did not know they existed, and were only assured by us they would at some future time occur, they would believe still less than that which they now refuse to credit on our word. For which of them would believe us if, instead of saying that the living bodies of men hereafter will be such as to endure everlasting pain and fire without ever dying, we were to say that in the world to come there will be salt which becomes liquid in fire as if it were in water, and crackles in water as if it were in fire; or that there will be a fountain whose water in the chill air of night is so hot that it cannot be touched, while in the heat of day it is so cold that it cannot be drunk; or that there will be a stone which by its own heat burns the hand when tightly held, or a stone which cannot be extinguished if it has been lit in any part; or any of those wonders I have cited, while omitting numberless others? If we were to say that these things would be found in the world to come, and our sceptics were to reply, "If you wish us to believe these things, satisfy our reason about each of them," we should confess that we could not, because the frail comprehension of man cannot master these and such-like wonders of God's working; and that yet our reason was thoroughly convinced that the Almighty does nothing without reason, though the frail mind of man cannot explain the reason; and that while we are in many instances uncertain what He intends, yet that it is always most certain that nothing which He intends is impossible to Him; and that when He declares His mind, we believe Him whom we cannot believe to be either powerless or false. Nevertheless, these cavillers at faith and exactors of reason, how do they dispose of those things of which a reason cannot be given, and which yet exist, though in apparent contrariety to the nature of things? If we had announced that these things were to be, these sceptics would have demanded from us the reason of them, as they do in the case of those things which we are announcing as destined to be. And consequently, as these present marvels are not non-existent, though human reason and discourse are lost in such works of God, so those things we speak of are not impossible because inexplicable; for in this particular they are in the same predicament as the marvels of earth.

Chapter 6.— That All Marvels are Not of Nature's Production, But that Some are Due to Human Ingenuity and Others to Diabolic Contrivance.

At this point they will perhaps reply, "These things have no existence; we don't believe one of them; they are travellers' tales and fictitious romances;" and they may add what has the appearance of argument, and say, "If you believe such things as these, believe what is recorded in the same books, that there was or is a temple of Venus in which a candelabrum set in the open air holds a lamp, which burns so strongly that no storm or rain extinguishes it, and which is therefore called, like the stone mentioned above, the asbestos or inextinguishable lamp." They may say this with the intention of putting us into a dilemma: for if we say this is incredible, then we shall impugn the truth of the other recorded marvels; if, on the other hand, we admit that this is credible, we shall avouch the pagan deities. But, as I have already said in the eighteenth book of this work,



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we do not hold it necessary to believe all that profane history contains, since, as Varro says, even historians themselves disagree on so many points, that one would think they intended and were at pains to do so; but we believe, if we are disposed, those things which are not contradicted by these books, which we do not hesitate to say we are bound to believe. But as to those permanent miracles of nature, whereby we wish to persuade the skeptical of the miracles of the world to come, those are quite sufficient for our purpose which we ourselves can observe or of which it is not difficult to find trustworthy witnesses. Moreover, that temple of Venus, with its inextinguishable lamp, so far from hemming us into a corner, opens an advantageous field to our argument. For to this inextinguishable lamp we add a host of marvels wrought by men, or by magic — that is, by men under the influence of devils, or by the devils directly — for such marvels we cannot deny without impugning the truth of the sacred Scriptures we believe. That lamp, therefore, was either by some mechanical and human device fitted with asbestos, or it was arranged by magical art in order that the worshippers might be astonished, or some devil under the name of Venus so signally manifested himself that this prodigy both began and became permanent. Now devils are attracted to dwell in certain temples by means of the creatures (God's creatures, not theirs), who present to them what suits their various tastes. They are attracted not by food like animals, but, like spirits, by such symbols as suit their taste, various kinds of stones, woods, plants, animals, songs, rites. And that men may provide these attractions, the devils first of all cunningly seduce them, either by imbuing their hearts with a secret poison, or by revealing themselves under a friendly guise, and thus make a few of them their disciples, who become the instructors of the multitude. For unless they first instructed men, it were impossible to know what each of them desires, what they shrink from, by what name they should be invoked or constrained to be present. Hence the origin of magic and magicians. But, above all, they possess the hearts of men, and are chiefly proud of this possession when they transform themselves into angels of light. Very many things that occur, therefore, are their doing; and these deeds of theirs we ought all the more carefully to shun as we acknowledge them to be very surprising. And yet these very deeds forward my present arguments. For if such marvels are wrought by unclean devils, how much mightier are the holy angels! And what cannot that God do who made the angels themselves capable of working miracles!

If, then, very many effects can be contrived by human art, of so surprising a kind that the uninitiated think them divine, as when, e.g., in a certain temple two magnets have been adjusted, one in the roof, another in the floor, so that an iron image is suspended in mid-air between them, one would suppose by the power of the divinity, were he ignorant of the magnets above and beneath; or, as in the case of that lamp of Venus which we already mentioned as being a skillful adaptation of asbestos; if, again, by the help of magicians, whom Scripture calls sorcerers and enchanters, the devils could gain such power that the noble poet Virgil should consider himself justified in describing a very powerful magician in these lines:

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Her charms can cure what souls she please,  
Rob other hearts of healthful ease,  
Turn rivers backward to their source,  
And make the stars forget their course,  
And call up ghosts from night:  
The ground shall bellow 'neath your feet:  
The mountain-ash shall quit its seat,  
And travel down the height; —

if this be so, how much more able is God to do those things which to sceptics are incredible, but to His power easy, since it is He who has given to stones and all other things their virtue, and to men their skill to use them in wonderful ways; He who has given to the angels a nature more mighty than that of all that lives on earth; He whose power surpasses all marvels, and whose wisdom in working, ordaining, and permitting is no less marvelous in its governance of all things than in its creation of all!

Chapter 7.— That the Ultimate Reason for Believing Miracles is the Omnipotence of the Creator.

Why, then, cannot God effect both that the bodies of the dead shall rise, and that the bodies of the damned shall be tormented in everlasting fire — God, who made the world full of countless miracles in sky, earth, air, and waters, while itself is a miracle unquestionably greater and more admirable than all the marvels it is filled with? But those with whom or against whom we are arguing, who believe both that there is a God who made the world, and that there are gods created by Him who administer the world's laws as His viceregents — our adversaries, I say, who, so far from denying emphatically, assert that there are powers in the world which effect marvelous results (whether of their own accord, or because they are invoked by some rite or prayer, or in some magical way), when we lay before them the wonderful properties of other things which are neither rational animals nor rational spirits, but such material objects as those we have just cited, are in the habit of replying, This is their natural property, their nature; these are the powers naturally belonging to them. Thus the whole reason why Agrigentine salt dissolves in fire and crackles in water is that this is its nature. Yet this seems rather contrary to nature, which has given not to fire but to water the power of melting salt, and the power of scorching it not to water but to fire. But this they say, is the natural property of this salt, to show effects contrary to these. The same reason, therefore, is assigned to account for that Garamantian fountain, of which one and the same runlet is

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chill by day and boiling by night, so that in either extreme it cannot be touched. So also of that other fountain which, though it is cold to the touch, and though it, like other fountains, extinguishes a lighted torch, yet, unlike other fountains, and in a surprising manner, kindles an extinguished torch. So of the asbestos stone, which, though it has no heat of its own, yet when kindled by fire applied to it, cannot be extinguished. And so of the rest, which I am weary of reciting, and in which, though there seems to be an extraordinary property contrary to nature, yet no other reason is given for them than this, that this is their nature, — a brief reason truly, and, I own, a satisfactory reply. But since God is the author of all natures, how is it that our adversaries, when they refuse to believe what we affirm, on the ground that it is impossible, are unwilling to accept from us a better explanation than their own, viz., that this is the will of Almighty God — for certainly He is called Almighty only because He is mighty to do all He will — He who was able to create so many marvels, not only unknown, but very well ascertained, as I have been showing, and which, were they not under our own observation, or reported by recent and credible witnesses, would certainly be pronounced impossible? For as for those marvels which have no other testimony than the writers in whose books we read them, and who wrote without being divinely instructed, and are therefore liable to human error, we cannot justly blame anyone who declines to believe them.

For my own part, I do not wish all the marvels I have cited to be rashly accepted, for I do not myself believe them implicitly, save those which have either come under my own observation, or which any one can readily verify, such as the lime which is heated by water and cooled by oil; the magnet which by its mysterious and insensible suction attracts the iron, but has no effect on a straw; the peacock's flesh which triumphs over the corruption from which not the flesh of Plato is exempt; the chaff so chilling that it prevents snow from melting, so heating that it forces apples to ripen; the glowing fire, which, in accordance with its glowing appearance, whitens the stones it bakes, while, contrary to its glowing appearance, it begrimes most things it burns (just as dirty stains are made by oil, however pure it be, and as the lines drawn by white silver are black); the charcoal, too, which by the action of fire is so completely changed from its original, that a finely marked piece of wood becomes hideous, the tough becomes brittle, the decaying incorruptible. Some of these things I know in common with many other persons, some of them in common with all men; and there are many others which I have not room to insert in this book. But of those which I have cited, though I have not myself seen, but only read about them, I have been unable to find trustworthy witnesses from whom I could ascertain whether they are facts, except in the case of that fountain in which burning torches are extinguished and extinguished torches lit, and of the apples of Sodom, which are ripe to appearance, but are filled with dust. And indeed I have not met with any who said they had seen that fountain in Epirus, but with some who knew there was a similar fountain in Gaul not far from Grenoble. The fruit of the trees of Sodom, however, is not only spoken of in books worthy of credit, but so many persons say that they have seen it that I cannot doubt the fact. But the rest of the prodigies I receive without definitely affirming or denying them; and I have cited them because I

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read them in the authors of our adversaries, and that I might prove how many things many among themselves believe, because they are written in the works of their own literary men, though no rational explanation of them is given, and yet they scorn to believe us when we assert that Almighty God will do what is beyond their experience and observation; and this they do even though we assign a reason for His work. For what better and stronger reason for such things can be given than to say that the Almighty is able to bring them to pass, and will bring them to pass, having predicted them in those books in which many other marvels which have already come to pass were predicted? Those things which are regarded as impossible will be accomplished according to the word, and by the power of that God who predicted and effected that the incredulous nations should believe incredible wonders.

Chapter 8.— That It is Not Contrary to Nature That, in an Object Whose Nature is Known, There Should Be Discovered an Alteration of the Properties Which Have Been Known as Its Natural Properties.

But if they reply that their reason for not believing us when we say that human bodies will always burn and yet never die, is that the nature of human bodies is known to be quite otherwise constituted; if they say that for this miracle we cannot give the reason which was valid in the case of those natural miracles, viz., that this is the natural property, the nature of the thing — for we know that this is not the nature of human flesh — we find our answer in the sacred writings, that even this human flesh was constituted in one fashion before there was sin — was constituted, in fact, so that it could not die — and in another fashion after sin, being made such as we see it in this miserable state of mortality, unable to retain enduring life. And so in the resurrection of the dead shall it be constituted differently from its present well-known condition. But as they do not believe these writings of ours, in which we read what nature man had in paradise, and how remote he was from the necessity of death — and indeed, if they did believe them, we should of course have little trouble in debating with them the future punishment of the damned, — we must produce from the writings of their own most learned authorities some instances to show that it is possible for a thing to become different from what it was formerly known characteristically to be.

From the book of Marcus Varro, entitled, *Of the Race of the Roman People*, I cite word for word the following instance: "There occurred a remarkable celestial portent; for Castor records that, in the brilliant star Venus, called *Vesperugo* by Plautus, and the lovely *Hesperus* by Homer, there occurred so strange a prodigy, that it changed its color, size, form, course, which never happened before nor since. *Adrastus* of *Cyzicus*, and *Dion* of *Naples*, famous mathematicians, said that this occurred in the reign of *Ogyges*." So great an author as Varro would certainly not have called this a portent had it not seemed to be contrary to nature. For we say that all portents are contrary to nature; but they are not so. For how is that contrary to nature which happens by the will of God,

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since the will of so mighty a Creator is certainly the nature of each created thing? A portent, therefore, happens not contrary to nature, but contrary to what we know as nature. But who can number the multitude of portents recorded in profane histories? Let us then at present fix our attention on this one only which concerns the matter in hand. What is there so arranged by the Author of the nature of heaven and earth as the exactly ordered course of the stars? What is there established by laws so sure and inflexible? And yet, when it pleased Him who with sovereignty and supreme power regulates all He has created, a star conspicuous among the rest by its size and splendor changed its color, size, form, and, most wonderful of all, the order and law of its course! Certainly that phenomenon disturbed the canons of the astronomers, if there were any then, by which they tabulate, as by unerring computation, the past and future movements of the stars, so as to take upon them to affirm that this which happened to the morning star (Venus) never happened before nor since. But we read in the divine books that even the sun itself stood still when a holy man, Joshua the Son of Nun, had begged this from God until victory should finish the battle he had begun; and that it even went back, that the promise of fifteen years added to the life of king Hezekiah might be sealed by this additional prodigy. But these miracles, which were vouchsafed to the merits of holy men, even when our adversaries believe them, they attribute to magical arts; so Virgil, in the lines I quoted above, ascribes to magic the power to

Turn rivers backward to their source,  
And make the stars forget their course.

For in our sacred books we read that this also happened, that a river "turned backward," was stayed above while the lower part flowed on, when the people passed over under the above-mentioned leader, Joshua the Son of Nun; and also when Elias the prophet crossed; and afterwards, when his disciple Elisha passed through it: and we have just mentioned how, in the case of king Hezekiah the greatest of the "stars forgot its course." But what happened to Venus, according to Varro, was not said by him to have happened in answer to any man's prayer.

Let not the sceptics then benight themselves in this knowledge of the nature of things, as if divine power cannot bring to pass in an object anything else than what their own experience has shown them to be in its nature. Even the very things which are most commonly known as natural would not be less wonderful nor less effectual to excite surprise in all who beheld them, if men were not accustomed to admire nothing but what is rare. For who that thoughtfully observes the countless multitude of men, and their similarity of nature, can fail to remark with surprise and admiration the individuality of each man's appearance, suggesting to us, as it does, that unless men were like one another, they would not be distinguished from the rest of the animals;

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while unless, on the other hand, they were unlike, they could not be distinguished from one another, so that those whom we declare to be like, we also find to be unlike? And the unlikeness is the more wonderful consideration of the two; for a common nature seems rather to require similarity. And yet, because the very rarity of things is that which makes them wonderful, we are filled with much greater wonder when we are introduced to two men so like, that we either always or frequently mistake in endeavoring to distinguish between them.

But possibly, though Varro is a heathen historian, and a very learned one, they may disbelieve that what I have cited from him truly occurred; or they may say the example is invalid, because the star did not for any length of time continue to follow its new course, but returned to its ordinary orbit. There is, then, another phenomenon at present open to their observation, and which, in my opinion, ought to be sufficient to convince them that, though they have observed and ascertained some natural law, they ought not on that account to prescribe to God, as if He could not change and turn it into something very different from what they have observed. The land of Sodom was not always as it now is; but once it had the appearance of other lands, and enjoyed equal if not richer fertility; for, in the divine narrative, it was compared to the paradise of God. But after it was touched [by fire] from heaven, as even pagan history testifies, and as is now witnessed by those who visit the spot, it became unnaturally and horribly sooty in appearance; and its apples, under a deceitful appearance of ripeness, contain ashes within. Here is a thing which was of one kind, and is of another. You see how its nature was converted by the wonderful transmutation wrought by the Creator of all natures into so very disgusting a diversity — an alteration which after so long a time took place, and after so long a time still continues. As therefore it was not impossible to God to create such natures as He pleased, so it is not impossible to Him to change these natures of His own creation into whatever He pleases, and thus spread abroad a multitude of those marvels which are called monsters, portents, prodigies, phenomena, and which if I were minded to cite and record, what end would there be to this work? They say that they are called "monsters," because they demonstrate or signify something; "portents," because they portend something; and so forth. But let their diviners see how they are either deceived, or even when they do predict true things, it is because they are inspired by spirits, who are intent upon entangling the minds of men (worthy, indeed, of such a fate) in the meshes of a hurtful curiosity, or how they light now and then upon some truth, because they make so many predictions. Yet, for our part, these things which happen contrary to nature, and are said to be contrary to nature (as the apostle, speaking after the manner of men, says, that to graft the wild olive into the good olive, and to partake of its fatness, is contrary to nature), and are called monsters, phenomena, portents, prodigies, ought to demonstrate, portend, predict that God will bring to pass what He has foretold regarding the bodies of men, no difficulty preventing Him, no law of nature prescribing to Him His limit. How He has foretold what He is to do, I think I have sufficiently shown in the preceding book, culling from the sacred

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Scriptures, both of the New and Old Testaments, not, indeed, all the passages that relate to this, but as many as I judged to suffice for this work.

### Chapter 9.— Of Hell, and the Nature of Eternal Punishments.

So then what God by His prophet has said of the everlasting punishment of the damned shall come to pass — shall without fail come to pass — "their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." Isaiah 66:24 In order to impress this upon us most forcibly, the Lord Jesus Himself, when ordering us to cut off our members, meaning thereby those persons whom a man loves as the most useful members of his body, says, "It is better for you to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched." Similarly of the foot: "It is better for you to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched." So, too, of the eye: "It is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark 9:43-48 He did not shrink from using the same words three times over in one passage. And who is not terrified by this repetition, and by the threat of that punishment uttered so vehemently by the lips of the Lord Himself?

Now they who would refer both the fire and the worm to the spirit, and not to the body, affirm that the wicked, who are separated from the kingdom of God, shall be burned, as it were, by the anguish of a spirit repenting too late and fruitlessly; and they contend that fire is therefore not inappropriately used to express this burning torment, as when the apostle exclaims "Who is offended, and I burn not?" 2 Corinthians 11:29 The worm, too, they think, is to be similarly understood. For it is written they say, "As the moth consumes the garment, and the worm the wood, so does grief consume the heart of a man." Isaiah 51:8 But they who make no doubt that in that future punishment both body and soul shall suffer, affirm that the body shall be burned with fire, while the soul shall be, as it were, gnawed by a worm of anguish. Though this view is more reasonable — for it is absurd to suppose that either body or soul will escape pain in the future punishment — yet, for my own part, I find it easier to understand both as referring to the body than to suppose that neither does; and I think that Scripture is silent regarding the spiritual pain of the damned, because, though not expressed, it is necessarily understood that in a body thus tormented the soul also is tortured with a fruitless repentance. For we read in the ancient Scriptures, "The vengeance of the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms." Sirach 7:17 It might have been more briefly said, "The vengeance of the ungodly." Why, then, was it said, "The flesh of the ungodly," unless because both the fire and the worm are to be the punishment of the flesh? Or if the object of the writer in saying, "The vengeance of the flesh," was to indicate that this shall be the punishment of those who live after the flesh (for this leads to the second death, as the apostle intimated when he

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said, "For if you live after the flesh, you shall die" Romans 8:13, let each one make his own choice, either assigning the fire to the body and the worm to the soul — the one figuratively, the other really — or assigning both really to the body. For I have already sufficiently made out that animals can live in the fire, in burning without being consumed, in pain without dying, by a miracle of the most omnipotent Creator, to whom no one can deny that this is possible, if he be not ignorant by whom has been made all that is wonderful in all nature. For it is God Himself who has wrought all these miracles, great and small, in this world which I have mentioned, and incomparably more which I have omitted, and who has enclosed these marvels in this world, itself the greatest miracle of all. Let each man, then, choose which he will, whether he thinks that the worm is real and pertains to the body, or that spiritual things are meant by bodily representations, and that it belongs to the soul. But which of these is true will be more readily discovered by the facts themselves, when there shall be in the saints such knowledge as shall not require that their own experience teach them the nature of these punishments, but as shall, by its own fullness and perfection, suffice to instruct them in this matter. For "now we know in part, until that which is perfect has come;" 1 Corinthians 13:9-10 only, this we believe about those future bodies, that they shall be such as shall certainly be pained by the fire.

Chapter 10.— Whether the Fire of Hell, If It Be Material Fire, Can Burn the Wicked Spirits, that is to Say, Devils, Who are Immaterial.

Here arises the question: If the fire is not to be immaterial, analogous to the pain of the soul, but material, burning by contact, so that bodies may be tormented in it, how can evil spirits be punished in it? For it is undoubtedly the same fire which is to serve for the punishment of men and of devils, according to the words of Christ: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" Matthew 25:41 unless, perhaps, as learned men have thought, the devils have a kind of body made of that dense and humid air which we feel strikes us when the wind is blowing. And if this kind of substance could not be affected by fire, it could not burn when heated in the baths. For in order to burn, it is first burned, and affects other things as itself is affected. But if any one maintains that the devils have no bodies, this is not a matter either to be laboriously investigated, or to be debated with keenness. For why may we not assert that even immaterial spirits may, in some extraordinary way, yet really be pained by the punishment of material fire, if the spirits of men, which also are certainly immaterial, are both now contained in material members of the body, and in the world to come shall be indissolubly united to their own bodies? Therefore, though the devils have no bodies, yet their spirits, that is, the devils themselves, shall be brought into thorough contact with the material fires, to be tormented by them; not that the fires themselves with which they are brought into contact shall be animated by their connection with these spirits, and become animals composed of body and spirit, but, as I said, this junction will be effected in a wonderful and ineffable way, so that they shall receive pain from the fires, but give no life to them. And, in truth, this other mode of union, by which bodies



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and spirits are bound together and become animals, is thoroughly marvelous, and beyond the comprehension of man, though this it is which is man.

I would indeed say that these spirits will burn without any body of their own, as that rich man was burning in hell when he exclaimed, "I am tormented in this flame," Luke 16:24 were I not aware that it is aptly said in reply, that that flame was of the same nature as the eyes he raised and fixed on Lazarus, as the tongue on which he entreated that a little cooling water might be dropped, or as the finger of Lazarus, with which he asked that this might be done — all of which took place where souls exist without bodies. Thus, therefore, both that flame in which he burned and that drop he begged were immaterial, and resembled the visions of sleepers or persons in an ecstasy, to whom immaterial objects appear in a bodily form. For the man himself who is in such a state, though it be in spirit only, not in body, yet sees himself so like to his own body that he cannot discern any difference whatever. But that hell, which also is called a lake of fire and brimstone, Revelation 20:10 will be material fire, and will torment the bodies of the damned, whether men or devils — the solid bodies of the one, aerial bodies of the others; or if only men have bodies as well as souls, yet the evil spirits, though without bodies, shall be so connected with the bodily fires as to receive pain without imparting life. One fire certainly shall be the lot of both, for thus the truth has declared.

Chapter 11.— Whether It is Just that the Punishments of Sins Last Longer Than the Sins Themselves Lasted.

Some, however, of those against whom we are defending the city of God, think it unjust that any man be doomed to an eternal punishment for sins which, no matter how great they were, were perpetrated in a brief space of time; as if any law ever regulated the duration of the punishment by the duration of the offense punished! Cicero tells us that the laws recognize eight kinds of penalty — damages, imprisonment, scourging, reparation, disgrace, exile, death, slavery. Is there any one of these which may be compressed into a brevity proportioned to the rapid commission of the offense, so that no longer time may be spent in its punishment than in its perpetration, unless, perhaps, reparation? For this requires that the offender suffer what he did, as that clause of the law says, "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth." Exodus 21:24 For certainly it is possible for an offender to lose his eye by the severity of legal retaliation in as brief a time as he deprived another of his eye by the cruelty of his own lawlessness. But if scourging be a reasonable penalty for kissing another man's wife, is not the fault of an instant visited with long hours of atonement, and the momentary delight punished with lasting pain? What shall we say of imprisonment? Must the criminal be confined only for so long a time as he spent on the offense for which he is committed? Or is not a penalty of many years' confinement imposed on the slave who has provoked his master with a word, or has struck him a blow that is quickly over? And as to damages, disgrace, exile, slavery, which are commonly inflicted so as to admit of no relaxation or pardon, do not these

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resemble eternal punishments in so far as this short life allows a resemblance? For they are not eternal only because the life in which they are endured is not eternal; and yet the crimes which are punished with these most protracted sufferings are perpetrated in a very brief space of time. Nor is there anyone who would suppose that the pains of punishment should occupy as short a time as the offense; or that murder, adultery, sacrilege, or any other crime, should be measured, not by the enormity of the injury or wickedness, but by the length of time spent in its perpetration. Then as to the award of death for any great crime, do the laws reckon the punishment to consist in the brief moment in which death is inflicted, or in this, that the offender is eternally banished from the society of the living? And just as the punishment of the first death cuts men off from this present mortal city, so does the punishment of the second death cut men off from that future immortal city. For as the laws of this present city do not provide for the executed criminal's return to it, so neither is he who is condemned to the second death recalled again to life everlasting. But if temporal sin is visited with eternal punishment, how then, they say, is that true which your Christ says, "With the same measure that you mete withal it shall be measured to you again?" Luke 6:38 and they do not observe that "the same measure" refers, not to an equal space of time, but to the retribution of evil or, in other words, to the law by which he who has done evil suffers evil. Besides, these words could be appropriately understood as referring to the matter of which our Lord was speaking when He used them, viz., judgments and condemnation. Thus, if he who unjustly judges and condemns is himself justly judged and condemned, he receives "with the same measure" though not the same thing as he gave. For judgment he gave, and judgment he receives, though the judgment he gave was unjust, the judgment he receives just.

Chapter 12.— Of the Greatness of the First Transgression, on Account of Which Eternal Punishment is Due to All Who are Not Within the Pale of the Saviour's Grace.

But eternal punishment seems hard and unjust to human perceptions, because in the weakness of our mortal condition there is wanting that highest and purest wisdom by which it can be perceived how great a wickedness was committed in that first transgression. The more enjoyment man found in God, the greater was his wickedness in abandoning Him; and he who destroyed in himself a good which might have been eternal, became worthy of eternal evil. Hence the whole mass of the human race is condemned; for he who at first gave entrance to sin has been punished with all his posterity who were in him as in a root, so that no one is exempt from this just and due punishment, unless delivered by mercy and undeserved grace; and the human race is so apportioned that in some is displayed the efficacy of merciful grace, in the rest the efficacy of just retribution. For both could not be displayed in all; for if all had remained under the punishment of just condemnation, there would have been seen in no one the mercy of redeeming grace. And, on the other hand, if all had been transferred from darkness to light, the severity of retribution would have been manifested in none. But many more are left under punishment than are delivered from it, in order that it may

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thus be shown what was due to all. And had it been inflicted on all, no one could justly have found fault with the justice of Him who takes vengeance; whereas, in the deliverance of so many from that just award, there is cause to render the most cordial thanks to the gratuitous bounty of Him who delivers.

Chapter 13.— Against the Opinion of Those Who Think that the Punishments of the Wicked After Death are Purgatorial.

The Platonists, indeed, while they maintain that no sins are unpunished, suppose that all punishment is administered for remedial purposes, be it inflicted by human or divine law, in this life or after death; for a man may be scathless here, or, though punished, may yet not amend. Hence that passage of Virgil, where, when he had said of our earthly bodies and mortal members, that our souls derive —

Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,  
And human laughter, human tears;  
Immured in dungeon-seeming night,  
They look abroad, yet see no light,  
goes on to say:

Nay, when at last the life has fled,  
And left the body cold and dead,  
Ee'n then there passes not away  
The painful heritage of clay;  
Full many a long-contracted stain  
Perforce must linger deep in grain.  
So penal sufferings they endure  
For ancient crime, to make them pure;  
Some hang aloft in open view,  
For winds to pierce them through and through,  
While others purge their guilt deep-dyed  
In burning fire or whelming tide.

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They who are of this opinion would have all punishments after death to be purgatorial; and as the elements of air, fire, and water are superior to earth, one or other of these may be the instrument of expiating and purging away the stain contracted by the contagion of earth. So Virgil hints at the air in the words, "Some hang aloft for winds to pierce;" at the water in "whelming tide;" and at fire in the expression "in burning fire." For our part, we recognize that even in this life some punishments are purgatorial — not, indeed, to those whose life is none the better, but rather the worse for them, but to those who are constrained by them to amend their life. All other punishments, whether temporal or eternal, inflicted as they are on every one by divine providence, are sent either on account of past sins, or of sins presently allowed in the life, or to exercise and reveal a man's graces. They may be inflicted by the instrumentality of bad men and angels as well as of the good. For even if anyone suffers some hurt through another's wickedness or mistake, the man indeed sins whose ignorance or injustice does the harm; but God, who by His just though hidden judgment permits it to be done, sins not. But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment. But of those who suffer temporary punishments after death, all are not doomed to those everlasting pains which are to follow that judgment; for to some, as we have already said, what is not remitted in this world is remitted in the next, that is, they are not punished with the eternal punishment of the world to come.

Chapter 14.— Of the Temporary Punishments of This Life to Which the Human Condition is Subject.

Quite exceptional are those who are not punished in this life, but only afterwards. Yet that there have been some who have reached the decrepitude of age without experiencing even the slightest sickness, and who have had uninterrupted enjoyment of life, I know both from report and from my own observation. However, the very life we mortals lead is itself all punishment, for it is all temptation, as the Scriptures declare, where it is written, "Is not the life of man upon earth a temptation?" Job 7:1 For ignorance is itself no slight punishment, or want of culture, which it is with justice thought so necessary to escape, that boys are compelled, under pain of severe punishment, to learn trades or letters; and the learning to which they are driven by punishment is itself so much of a punishment to them, that they sometimes prefer the pain that drives them to the pain to which they are driven by it. And who would not shrink from the alternative, and elect to die, if it were proposed to him either to suffer death or to be again an infant? Our infancy, indeed, introducing us to this life not with laughter but with tears, seems unconsciously to predict the ills we are to encounter. Zoroaster alone is said to have laughed when he was born, and that unnatural omen portended no good to him. For he is said to have been the inventor of magical arts, though indeed they were unable to secure to him even the poor felicity of this present

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life against the assaults of his enemies. For, himself king of the Bactrians, he was conquered by Ninus king of the Assyrians. In short, the words of Scripture, "An heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother's womb till the day that they return to the mother of all things," Sirach 40:1 — these words so infallibly find fulfillment, that even the little ones, who by the layer of regeneration have been freed from the bond of original sin in which alone they were held, yet suffer many ills, and in some instances are even exposed to the assaults of evil spirits. But let us not for a moment suppose that this suffering is prejudicial to their future happiness, even though it has so increased as to sever soul from body, and to terminate their life in that early age.

Chapter 15.— That Everything Which the Grace of God Does in the Way of Rescuing Us from the Inveterate Evils in Which We are Sunk, Pertains to the Future World, in Which All Things are Made New.

Nevertheless, in the "heavy yoke that is laid upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother's womb to the day that they return to the mother of all things," there is found an admirable though painful monitor teaching us to be sober-minded, and convincing us that this life has become penal in consequence of that outrageous wickedness which was perpetrated in Paradise, and that all to which the New Testament invites belongs to that future inheritance which awaits us in the world to come, and is offered for our acceptance, as the earnest that we may, in its own due time, obtain that of which it is the pledge. Now, therefore, let us walk in hope, and let us by the spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, and so make progress from day to day. For "the Lord knows them that are His;" 2 Timothy 2:19 and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God," Romans 8:14 but by grace, not by nature. For there is but one Son of God by nature, who in His compassion became Son of man for our sakes, that we, by nature sons of men, might by grace become through Him sons of God. For He, abiding unchangeable, took upon Him our nature, that thereby He might take us to Himself; and, holding fast His own divinity, He became partaker of our infirmity, that we, being changed into some better thing, might, by participating in His righteousness and immortality, lose our own properties of sin and mortality, and preserve whatever good quality He had implanted in our nature perfected now by sharing in the goodness of His nature. For as by the sin of one man we have fallen into a misery so deplorable, so by the righteousness of one Man, who also is God, shall we come to a blessedness inconceivably exalted. Nor ought any one to trust that he has passed from the one man to the other until he shall have reached that place where there is no temptation, and have entered into the peace which he seeks in the many and various conflicts of this war, in which "the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." Galatians 5:17 Now, such a war as this would have had no existence if human nature had, in the exercise of free will, continued steadfast in the uprightness in which it was created. But now in its misery it makes war upon itself, because in its blessedness it would not continue at peace with God; and this, though it be a miserable calamity, is better than

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the earlier stages of this life, which do not recognize that a war is to be maintained. For better is it to contend with vices than without conflict to be subdued by them. Better, I say, is war with the hope of peace everlasting than captivity without any thought of deliverance. We long, indeed, for the cessation of this war, and, kindled by the flame of divine love, we burn for entrance on that well-ordered peace in which whatever is inferior is forever subordinated to what is above it. But if (which God forbid) there had been no hope of so blessed a consummation, we should still have preferred to endure the hardness of this conflict, rather than, by our non-resistance, to yield ourselves to the dominion of vice.

Chapter 16.— The Laws of Grace, Which Extend to All the Epochs of the Life of the Regenerate.

But such is God's mercy towards the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory, that even the first age of man, that is, infancy, which submits without any resistance to the flesh, and the second age, which is called boyhood, and which has not yet understanding enough to undertake this warfare, and therefore yields to almost every vicious pleasure (because though this age has the power of speech, and may therefore seem to have passed infancy, the mind is still too weak to comprehend the commandment), yet if either of these ages has received the sacraments of the Mediator, then, although the present life be immediately brought to an end, the child, having been translated from the power of darkness to the kingdom of Christ, shall not only be saved from eternal punishments, but shall not even suffer purgatorial torments after death. For spiritual regeneration of itself suffices to prevent any evil consequences resulting after death from the connection with death which carnal generation forms. But when we reach that age which can now comprehend the commandment, and submit to the dominion of law, we must declare war upon vices, and wage this war keenly, lest we be landed in damnable sins. And if vices have not gathered strength, by habitual victory they are more easily overcome and subdued; but if they have been used to conquer and rule, it is only with difficulty and labor they are mastered. And indeed this victory cannot be sincerely and truly gained but by delighting in true righteousness, and it is faith in Christ that gives this. For if the law be present with its command, and the Spirit be absent with His help, the presence of the prohibition serves only to increase the desire to sin, and adds the guilt of transgression. Sometimes, indeed, patent vices are overcome by other and hidden vices, which are reckoned virtues, though pride and a kind of ruinous self-sufficiency are their informing principles. Accordingly vices are then only to be considered overcome when they are conquered by the love of God, which God Himself alone gives, and which He gives only through the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who became a partaker of our mortality that He might make us partakers of His divinity. But few indeed are they who are so happy as to have passed their youth without committing any damnable sins, either by dissolute or violent conduct, or by following some godless and unlawful opinions, but have subdued by their greatness of soul everything in them which could make them the slaves of carnal

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pleasures. The greater number having first become transgressors of the law that they have received, and having allowed vice to have the ascendancy in them, then flee to grace for help, and so, by a penitence more bitter, and a struggle more violent than it would otherwise have been, they subdue the soul to God, and thus give it its lawful authority over the flesh, and become victors. Whoever, therefore, desires to escape eternal punishment, let him not only be baptized, but also justified in Christ, and so let him in truth pass from the devil to Christ. And let him not fancy that there are any purgatorial pains except before that final and dreadful judgment. We must not, however deny that even the eternal fire will be proportioned to the deserts of the wicked, so that to some it will be more, and to others less painful, whether this result be accomplished by a variation in the temperature of the fire itself, graduated according to every one's merit, or whether it be that the heat remains the same, but that all do not feel it with equal intensity of torment.

### Chapter 17.— Of Those Who Fancy that No Men Shall Be Punished Eternally.

I must now, I see, enter the lists of amicable controversy with those tender-hearted Christians who decline to believe that any, or that all of those whom the infallibly just Judge may pronounce worthy of the punishment of hell, shall suffer eternally, and who suppose that they shall be delivered after a fixed term of punishment, longer or shorter according to the amount of each man's sin. In respect of this matter, Origen was even more indulgent; for he believed that even the devil himself and his angels, after suffering those more severe and prolonged pains which their sins deserved, should be delivered from their torments, and associated with the holy angels. But the Church, not without reason, condemned him for this and other errors, especially for his theory of the ceaseless alternation of happiness and misery, and the interminable transitions from the one state to the other at fixed periods of ages; for in this theory he lost even the credit of being merciful, by allotting to the saints real miseries for the expiation of their sins, and false happiness, which brought them no true and secure joy, that is, no fearless assurance of eternal blessedness. Very different, however, is the error we speak of, which is dictated by the tenderness of these Christians who suppose that the sufferings of those who are condemned in the judgment will be temporary, while the blessedness of all who are sooner or later set free will be eternal. Which opinion, if it is good and true because it is merciful, will be so much the better and truer in proportion as it becomes more merciful. Let, then, this fountain of mercy be extended, and flow forth even to the lost angels, and let them also be set free, at least after as many and long ages as seem fit! Why does this stream of mercy flow to all the human race, and dry up as soon as it reaches the angelic? And yet they dare not extend their pity further, and propose the deliverance of the devil himself. Or if anyone is bold enough to do so, he does indeed put to shame their charity, but is himself convicted of error that is more unsightly, and a wresting of God's truth that is more perverse, in proportion as his clemency of sentiment seems to be greater.

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### Chapter 18.— Of Those Who Fancy That, on Account of the Saints' Intercession, Man Shall Be Damned in the Last Judgment.

There are others, again, with whose opinions I have become acquainted in conversation, who, though they seem to reverence the holy Scriptures, are yet of reprehensible life, and who accordingly, in their own interest, attribute to God a still greater compassion towards men. For they acknowledge that it is truly predicted in the divine word that the wicked and unbelieving are worthy of punishment, but they assert that, when the judgment comes, mercy will prevail. For, say they, God, having compassion on them, will give them up to the prayers and intercessions of His saints. For if the saints used to pray for them when they suffered from their cruel hatred, how much more will they do so when they see them prostrate and humble suppliants? For we cannot, they say, believe that the saints shall lose their bowels of compassion when they have attained the most perfect and complete holiness; so that they who, when still sinners, prayed for their enemies, should now, when they are freed from sin, withhold from interceding for their suppliants. Or shall God refuse to listen to so many of His beloved children, when their holiness has purged their prayers of all hindrance to His answering them? And the passage of the psalm which is cited by those who admit that wicked men and infidels shall be punished for a long time, though in the end delivered from all sufferings, is claimed also by the persons we are now speaking of as making much more for them. The verse runs: "Shall God forget to be gracious? Shall He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" His anger, they say, would condemn all that are unworthy of everlasting happiness to endless punishment. But if He suffer them to be punished for a long time, or even at all, must He not shut up His tender mercies, which the Psalmist implies He will not do? For he does not say, Shall He in anger shut up His tender mercies for a long period? But he implies that He will not shut them up at all.

And they deny that thus God's threat of judgment is proved to be false even though He condemn no man, any more than we can say that His threat to overthrow Nineveh was false, though the destruction which was absolutely predicted was not accomplished. For He did not say, "Nineveh shall be overthrown if they do not repent and amend their ways," but without any such condition He foretold that the city should be overthrown. And this prediction, they maintain, was true because God predicted the punishment which they deserved, although He was not to inflict it. For though He spared them on their repentance yet He was certainly aware that they would repent, and, notwithstanding, absolutely and definitely predicted that the city should be overthrown. This was true, they say, in the truth of severity, because they were worthy of it; but in respect of the compassion which checked His anger, so that He spared the suppliants from the punishment with which He had threatened the rebellious, it was not true. If, then, He spared those whom His own holy prophet was provoked at His sparing, how much more shall He spare those more wretched suppliants for whom all His saints shall



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intercede? And they suppose that this conjecture of theirs is not hinted at in Scripture, for the sake of stimulating many to reformation of life through fear of very protracted or eternal sufferings, and of stimulating others to pray for those who have not reformed. However, they think that the divine oracles are not altogether silent on this point; for they ask to what purpose is it said, "How great is Your goodness which You have hidden for them that fear You," if it be not to teach us that the great and hidden sweetness of God's mercy is concealed in order that men may fear? To the same purpose they think the apostle said, "For God has concluded all men in unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all," Romans 11:32 signifying that no one should be condemned by God. And yet they who hold this opinion do not extend it to the acquittal or liberation of the devil and his angels. Their human tenderness is moved only towards men, and they plead chiefly their own cause, holding out false hopes of impunity to their own depraved lives by means of this quasi compassion of God to the whole race. Consequently, they who promise this impunity even to the prince of the devils and his satellites make a still fuller exhibition of the mercy of God.

**Chapter 19.— Of Those Who Promise Impunity from All Sins Even to Heretics, Through Virtue of Their Participation of the Body of Christ.**

So, too, there are others who promise this deliverance from eternal punishment, not, indeed, to all men, but only to those who have been washed in Christian baptism, and who become partakers of the body of Christ, no matter how they have lived, or what heresy or impiety they have fallen into. They ground this opinion on the saying of Jesus, "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that if any man eat thereof, he shall not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If a man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." John 6:50-51 Therefore, say they, it follows that these persons must be delivered from death eternal, and at one time or other be introduced to everlasting life.

**Chapter 20.— Of Those Who Promise This Indulgence Not to All, But Only to Those Who Have Been Baptized as Catholics, Though Afterwards They Have Broken Out into Many Crimes and Heresies.**

There are others still who make this promise not even to all who have received the sacraments of the baptism of Christ and of His body, but only to the Catholics, however badly they have lived. For these have eaten the body of Christ, not only sacramentally but really, being incorporated in His body, as the apostle says, "We, being many, are one bread, one body;" 1 Corinthians 10:17 so that, though they have afterwards lapsed into some heresy, or even into heathenism and idolatry, yet by virtue of this one thing, that they have received the baptism of Christ, and eaten the body of Christ, in the body of Christ, that is to say, in the Catholic Church, they shall not die eternally, but at one time

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or other obtain eternal life; and all that wickedness of theirs shall not avail to make their punishment eternal, but only proportionately long and severe.

**Chapter 21.— Of Those Who Assert that All Catholics Who Continue in the Faith Even Though by the Depravity of Their Lives They Have Merited Hell Fire, Shall Be Saved on Account of the "Foundation" Of Their Faith.**

There are some, too, who found upon the expression of Scripture, "He that endures to the end shall be saved," Matthew 24:13 and who promise salvation only to those who continue in the Catholic Church; and though such persons have lived badly, yet, say they, they shall be saved as by fire through virtue of the foundation of which the apostle says, "For other foundation has no man laid than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day of the Lord shall declare it, for it shall be revealed by fire; and each man's work shall be proved of what sort it is. If any man's work shall endure which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. But if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire." 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 They say, accordingly, that the Catholic Christian, no matter what his life be, has Christ as his foundation, while this foundation is not possessed by any heresy which is separated from the unity of His body. And therefore, through virtue of this foundation, even though the Catholic Christian by the inconsistency of his life has been as one building up wood, hay, stubble, upon it, they believe that he shall be saved by fire, in other words, that he shall be delivered after tasting the pain of that fire to which the wicked shall be condemned at the last judgment.

**Chapter 22.— Of Those Who Fancy that the Sins Which are Intermingled with Alms-Deeds Shall Not Be Charged at the Day of Judgment.**

I have also met with some who are of opinion that such only as neglect to cover their sins with almsdeeds shall be punished in everlasting fire; and they cite the words of the Apostle James, "He shall have judgment without mercy who has shown no mercy." James 2:13 Therefore, say they, he who has not amended his ways, but yet has intermingled his profligate and wicked actions with works of mercy, shall receive mercy in the judgment, so that he shall either quite escape condemnation, or shall be liberated from his doom after some time shorter or longer. They suppose that this was the reason why the Judge Himself of quick and dead declined to mention anything else than works of mercy done or omitted, when awarding to those on His right hand life eternal, and to those on His left everlasting punishment. Matthew 25:33 To the same purpose, they say, is the daily petition we make in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matthew 6:12 For, no doubt, whoever pardons the person who has wronged him does a charitable action. And this has been so highly commended by the

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Lord Himself, that He says, "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:14-15 And so it is to this kind of almsdeeds that the saying of the Apostle James refers, "He shall have judgment without mercy that has shown no mercy." And our Lord, they say, made no distinction of great and small sins, but "Your Father will forgive your sins, if you forgive men theirs." Consequently they conclude that, though a man has led an abandoned life up to the last day of it, yet whatsoever his sins have been, they are all remitted by virtue of this daily prayer, if only he has been mindful to attend to this one thing, that when they who have done him any injury ask his pardon, he forgive them from his heart.

When, by God's help, I have replied to all these errors, I shall conclude this (twenty-first) book.

### Chapter 23.— **Against Those Who are of Opinion that the Punishment Neither of the Devil Nor of Wicked Men Shall Be Eternal.**

First of all, it behooves us to inquire and to recognize why the Church has not been able to tolerate the idea that promises cleansing or indulgence to the devil even after the most severe and protracted punishment. For so many holy men, imbued with the spirit of the Old and New Testament, did not grudge to angels of any rank or character that they should enjoy the blessedness of the heavenly kingdom after being cleansed by suffering, but rather they perceived that they could not invalidate nor evacuate the divine sentence which the Lord predicted that He would pronounce in the judgment, saying, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41 For here it is evident that the devil and his angels shall burn in everlasting fire. And there is also that declaration in the Apocalypse, "The devil their deceiver was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where also are the beast and the false prophet. And they shall be tormented day and night forever." Revelation 20:10 In the former passage "everlasting" is used, in the latter "for ever;" and by these words Scripture is wont to mean nothing else than endless duration. And therefore no other reason, no reason more obvious and just, can be found for holding it as the fixed and immovable belief of the truest piety, that the devil and his angels shall never return to the justice and life of the saints, than that Scripture, which deceives no man, says that God spared them not, and that they were condemned beforehand by Him, and cast into prisons of darkness in hell, 2 Peter 2:4 being reserved to the judgment of the last day, when eternal fire shall receive them, in which they shall be tormented world without end. And if this be so, how can it be believed that all men, or even some, shall be withdrawn from the endurance of punishment after some time has been spent in it? How can this be believed without enervating our faith in the eternal punishment of the devils? For if all or some of those to whom it shall be said, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matthew 25:41 are not to be

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always in that fire, then what reason is there for believing that the devil and his angels shall always be there? Or is perhaps the sentence of God, which is to be pronounced on wicked men and angels alike, to be true in the case of the angels, false in that of men? Plainly it will be so if the conjectures of men are to weigh more than the word of God. But because this is absurd, they who desire to be rid of eternal punishment ought to abstain from arguing against God, and rather, while yet there is opportunity, obey the divine commands. Then what a fond fancy is it to suppose that eternal punishment means long continued punishment, while eternal life means life without end, since Christ in the very same passage spoke of both in similar terms in one and the same sentence, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal!" Matthew 25:46 If both destinies are "eternal," then we must either understand both as long-continued but at last terminating, or both as endless. For they are correlative — on the one hand, punishment eternal, on the other hand, life eternal. And to say in one and the same sense, life eternal shall be endless, punishment eternal shall come to an end, is the height of absurdity. Wherefore, as the eternal life of the saints shall be endless, so too the eternal punishment of those who are doomed to it shall have no end.

### Chapter 24.— Against Those Who Fancy that in the Judgment of God All the Accused Will Be Spared in Virtue of the Prayers of the Saints.

And this reasoning is equally conclusive against those who, in their own interest, but under the guise of a greater tenderness of spirit, attempt to invalidate the words of God, and who assert that these words are true, not because men shall suffer those things which are threatened by God, but because they deserve to suffer them. For God, they say, will yield them to the prayers of His saints, who will then the more earnestly pray for their enemies, as they shall be more perfect in holiness, and whose prayers will be the more efficacious and the more worthy of God's ear, because now purged from all sin whatsoever. Why, then, if in that perfected holiness their prayers be so pure and all-availing, will they not use them in behalf of the angels for whom eternal fire is prepared, that God may mitigate His sentence and alter it, and extricate them from that fire? Or will there, perhaps, be some one hardy enough to affirm that even the holy angels will make common cause with holy men (then become the equals of God's angels), and will intercede for the guilty, both men and angels, that mercy may spare them the punishment which truth has pronounced them to deserve? But this has been asserted by no one sound in the faith; nor will be. Otherwise there is no reason why the Church should not even now pray for the devil and his angels, since God her Master has ordered her to pray for her enemies. The reason, then, which prevents the Church from now praying for the wicked angels, whom she knows to be her enemies, is the identical reason which shall prevent her, however perfected in holiness, from praying at the last judgment for those men who are to be punished in eternal fire. At present she prays for her enemies among men, because they have yet opportunity for fruitful repentance. For what does she especially beg for them but that "God would grant them repentance," as

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the apostle says, "that they may return to soberness out of the snare of the devil, by whom they are held captive according to his will?" 2 Timothy 2:25-26 But if the Church were certified who those are, who, though they are still abiding in this life, are yet predestinated to go with the devil into eternal fire, then for them she could no more pray than for him. But since she has this certainty regarding no man, she prays for all her enemies who yet live in this world; and yet she is not heard in behalf of all. But she is heard in the case of those only who, though they oppose the Church, are yet predestinated to become her sons through her intercession. But if any retain an impenitent heart until death, and are not converted from enemies into sons, does the Church continue to pray for them, for the spirits, i.e., of such persons deceased? And why does she cease to pray for them, unless because the man who was not translated into Christ's kingdom while he was in the body, is now judged to be of Satan's following?

It is then, I say, the same reason which prevents the Church at any time from praying for the wicked angels, which prevents her from praying hereafter for those men who are to be punished in eternal fire; and this also is the reason why, though she prays even for the wicked so long as they live, she yet does not even in this world pray for the unbelieving and godless who are dead. For some of the dead, indeed, the prayer of the Church or of pious individuals is heard; but it is for those who, having been regenerated in Christ, did not spend their life so wickedly that they can be judged unworthy of such compassion, nor so well that they can be considered to have no need of it. As also, after the resurrection, there will be some of the dead to whom, after they have endured the pains proper to the spirits of the dead, mercy shall be accorded, and acquittal from the punishment of the eternal fire. For were there not some whose sins, though not remitted in this life, shall be remitted in that which is to come, it could not be truly said, "They shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in that which is to come." Matthew 12:32 But when the Judge of quick and dead has said, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and to those on the other side, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels," and "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life," it were excessively presumptuous to say that the punishment of any of those whom God has said shall go away into eternal punishment shall not be eternal, and so bring either despair or doubt upon the corresponding promise of life eternal.

Let no man then so understand the words of the Psalmist, "Shall God forget to be gracious? Shall He shut up in His anger His tender mercies" as if the sentence of God were true of good men, false of bad men, or true of good men and wicked angels, but false of bad men. For the Psalmist's words refer to the vessels of mercy and the children of the promise, of whom the prophet himself was one; for when he had said, "Shall God forget to be gracious? Shall He shut up in His anger His tender mercies?" and then

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immediately subjoins, "And I said, Now I begin: this is the change wrought by the right hand of the Most High," he manifestly explained what he meant by the words, "Shall he shut up in His anger His tender mercies?" For God's anger is this mortal life, in which man is made like to vanity, and his days pass as a shadow. Yet in this anger God does not forget to be gracious, causing His sun to shine and His rain to descend on the just and the unjust; Matthew 5:45 and thus He does not in His anger cut short His tender mercies, and especially in what the Psalmist speaks of in the words, "Now I begin: this change is from the right hand of the Most High;" for He changes for the better the vessels of mercy, even while they are still in this most wretched life, which is God's anger, and even while His anger is manifesting itself in this miserable corruption; for "in His anger He does not shut up His tender mercies." And since the truth of this divine canticle is quite satisfied by this application of it, there is no need to give it a reference to that place in which those who do not belong to the city of God are punished in eternal fire. But if any persist in extending its application to the torments of the wicked, let them at least understand it so that the anger of God, which has threatened the wicked with eternal punishment, shall abide, but shall be mixed with mercy to the extent of alleviating the torments which might justly be inflicted; so that the wicked shall neither wholly escape, nor only for a time endure these threatened pains, but that they shall be less severe and more endurable than they deserve. Thus the anger of God shall continue, and at the same time He will not in this anger shut up His tender mercies. But even this hypothesis I am not to be supposed to affirm because I do not positively oppose it.

As for those who find an empty threat rather than a truth in such passages as these: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire;" and "These shall go away into eternal punishment;" Matthew 25:41, 46 and "They shall be tormented for ever and ever;" Revelation 20:10 and "Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched," Isaiah 66:24 — such persons, I say, are most emphatically and abundantly refuted, not by me so much as by the divine Scripture itself. For the men of Nineveh repented in this life, and therefore their repentance was fruitful, inasmuch as they sowed in that field which the Lord meant to be sown in tears that it might afterwards be reaped in joy. And yet who will deny that God's prediction was fulfilled in their case, if at least he observes that God destroys sinners not only in anger but also in compassion? For sinners are destroyed in two ways — either, like the Sodomites, the men themselves are punished for their sins, or, like the Ninevites, the men's sins are destroyed by repentance. God's prediction, therefore, was fulfilled — the wicked Nineveh was overthrown, and a good Nineveh built up. For its walls and houses remained standing; the city was overthrown in its depraved manners. And thus, though the prophet was provoked that the destruction which the inhabitants dreaded, because of his prediction, did not take place, yet that which God's foreknowledge had predicted did take place, for He who foretold the destruction knew how it should be fulfilled in a less calamitous sense.

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But that these perversely compassionate persons may see what is the purport of these words, "How great is the abundance of Your sweetness, Lord, which You have hidden for them that fear You," let them read what follows: "And You have perfected it for them that hope in You." For what means, "You have hidden it for them that fear You," "You have perfected it for them that hope in You," unless this, that to those who through fear of punishment seek to establish their own righteousness by the law, the righteousness of God is not sweet, because they are ignorant of it? They have not tasted it. For they hope in themselves, not in Him; and therefore God's abundant sweetness is hidden from them. They fear God, indeed, but it is with that servile fear "which is not in love; for perfect love casts out fear." 1 John 4:18 Therefore to them that hope in Him He perfects His sweetness, inspiring them with His own love, so that with a holy fear, which love does not cast out, but which endures forever, they may, when they glory, glory in the Lord. For the righteousness of God is Christ, "who is of God made unto us," as the apostle says, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 This righteousness of God, which is the gift of grace without merits, is not known by those who go about to establish their own righteousness, and are therefore not subject to the righteousness of God, which is Christ. Romans 10:3 But it is in this righteousness that we find the great abundance of God's sweetness, of which the psalm says, "Taste and see how sweet the Lord is." And this we rather taste than partake of to satiety in this our pilgrimage. We hunger and thirst for it now, that hereafter we may be satisfied with it when we see Him as He is, and that is fulfilled which is written, "I shall be satisfied when Your glory shall be manifested." It is thus that Christ perfects the great abundance of His sweetness to them that hope in Him. But if God conceals His sweetness from them that fear Him in the sense that these our objectors fancy, so that men's ignorance of His purpose of mercy towards the wicked may lead them to fear Him and live better, and so that there may be prayer made for those who are not living as they ought, how then does He perfect His sweetness to them that hope in Him, since, if their dreams be true, it is this very sweetness which will prevent Him from punishing those who do not hope in Him? Let us then seek that sweetness of His, which He perfects to them that hope in Him, not that which He is supposed to perfect to those who despise and blaspheme Him; for in vain, after this life, does a man seek for what he has neglected to provide while in this life.

Then, as to that saying of the apostle, "For God has concluded all in unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all," Romans 11:32 it does not mean that He will condemn no one; but the foregoing context shows what is meant. The apostle composed the epistle for the Gentiles who were already believers; and when he was speaking to them of the Jews who were yet to believe, he says, "For as you in times past believed not God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." Then he added the words in question with which these persons beguile themselves: "For God concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." All whom, if not all those of whom he was speaking, just

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as if he had said, "Both you and them?" God then concluded all those in unbelief, both Jews and Gentiles, whom He foreknew and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that they might be confounded by the bitterness of unbelief, and might repent and believingly turn to the sweetness of God's mercy, and might take up that exclamation of the psalm, "How great is the abundance of Your sweetness, O Lord, which You have hidden for them that fear You, but have perfected to them that hope," not in themselves, but "in You." He has mercy, then, on all the vessels of mercy. And what means "all?" Both those of the Gentiles and those of the Jews whom He predestinated, called, justified, glorified: none of these will be condemned by Him; but we cannot say none of all men whatever.

**Chapter 25.— Whether Those Who Received Heretical Baptism, and Have Afterwards Fallen Away to Wickedness of Life; Or Those Who Have Received Catholic Baptism, But Have Afterwards Passed Over to Heresy and Schism; Or Those Who Have Remained in the Catholic Church in Which They Were Baptized, But Have Continued to Live Immorally — May Hope Through the Virtue of the Sacraments for the Remission of Eternal Punishment.**

But let us now reply to those who promise deliverance from eternal fire, not to the devil and his angels (as neither do they of whom we have been speaking), nor even to all men whatever, but only to those who have been washed by the baptism of Christ, and have become partakers of His body and blood, no matter how they have lived, no matter what heresy or impiety they have fallen into. But they are contradicted by the apostle, where he says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variances, emulations, wrath, strife, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and the like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, for they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21 Certainly this sentence of the apostle is false, if such persons shall be delivered after any lapse of time, and shall then inherit the kingdom of God. But as it is not false, they shall certainly never inherit the kingdom of God. And if they shall never enter that kingdom, then they shall always be retained in eternal punishment; for there is no middle place where he may live unpunished who has not been admitted into that kingdom.

And therefore, we may reasonably inquire how we are to understand these words of the Lord Jesus: "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." John 6:50-51 And those, indeed, whom we are now answering, are refuted in their interpretation of this passage by those whom we are shortly to answer, and who do not promise this deliverance to all who have received the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's body, but only to the Catholics, however wickedly they live; for these, say they, have eaten the Lord's body not only sacramentally, but



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really, being constituted members of His body, of which the apostle says, "We being many are one bread, one body." 1 Corinthians 10:17 He then who is in the unity of Christ's body (that is to say, in the Christian membership), of which body the faithful have been wont to receive the sacrament at the altar, that man is truly said to eat the body and drink the blood of Christ. And consequently, heretics and schismatics being separate from the unity of this body, are able to receive the same sacrament, but with no profit to themselves — nay, rather to their own hurt, so that they are rather more severely judged than liberated after some time. For they are not in that bond of peace which is symbolized by that sacrament.

But again, even those who sufficiently understand that he who is not in the body of Christ cannot be said to eat the body of Christ, are in error when they promise liberation from the fire of eternal punishment to persons who fall away from the unity of that body into heresy, or even into heathenish superstition. For, in the first place, they ought to consider how intolerable it is, and how discordant with sound doctrine, to suppose that many, indeed, or almost all, who have forsaken the Catholic Church, and have originated impious heresies and become heresiarchs, should enjoy a destiny superior to those who never were Catholics, but have fallen into the snares of these others; that is to say, if the fact of their Catholic baptism and original reception of the sacrament of the body of Christ in the true body of Christ is sufficient to deliver these heresiarchs from eternal punishment. For certainly he who deserts the faith, and from a deserter becomes an assailant, is worse than he who has not deserted the faith he never held. And, in the second place, they are contradicted by the apostle, who, after enumerating the works of the flesh, says with reference to heresies, "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

And therefore, neither ought such persons as lead an abandoned and damnable life to be confident of salvation, though they persevere to the end in the communion of the Church catholic, and comfort themselves with the words, "He that endures to the end shall be saved." By the iniquity of their life they abandon that very righteousness of life which Christ is to them, whether it be by fornication, or by perpetrating in their body the other uncleannesses which the apostle would not so much as mention, or by a dissolute luxury, or by doing any one of those things of which he says, "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Consequently, they who do such things shall not exist anywhere but in eternal punishment, since they cannot be in the kingdom of God. For, while they continue in such things to the very end of life, they cannot be said to abide in Christ to the end; for to abide in Him is to abide in the faith of Christ. And this faith, according to the apostle's definition of it, "works by love." Galatians 5:6 And "love," as he elsewhere says, "works no evil." Romans 13:10 Neither can these persons be said to eat the body of Christ, for they cannot even be reckoned among His members. For, not to mention other reasons, they cannot be at once the members of Christ and the

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members of a harlot. In fine, He Himself, when He says, "He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him," John 6:56 shows what it is in reality, and not sacramentally, to eat His body and drink His blood; for this is to dwell in Christ, that He also may dwell in us. So that it is as if He said, He that dwells not in me, and in whom I do not dwell, let him not say or think that he eats my body or drinks my blood. Accordingly, they who are not Christ's members do not dwell in Him. And they who make themselves members of a harlot, are not members of Christ unless they have penitently abandoned that evil, and have returned to this good to be reconciled to it.

Chapter 26.— **What It is to Have Christ for a Foundation, and Who They are to Whom Salvation as by Fire is Promised.**

But, say they, the Catholic Christians have Christ for a foundation, and they have not fallen away from union with Him, no matter how depraved a life they have built on this foundation, as wood, hay, stubble; and accordingly the well-directed faith by which Christ is their foundation will suffice to deliver them some time from the continuance of that fire, though it be with loss, since those things they have built on it shall be burned. Let the Apostle James summarily reply to them: "If any man say he has faith, and have not works, can faith save him?" James 2:14 And who then is it, they ask, of whom the Apostle Paul says, "But he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire?" Let us join them in their inquiry; and one thing is very certain, that it is not he of whom James speaks, else we should make the two apostles contradict one another, if the one says, "Though a man's works be evil, his faith will save him as by fire," while the other says, "If he have not good works, can his faith save him?"

We shall then ascertain who it is who can be saved by fire, if we first discover what it is to have Christ for a foundation. And this we may very readily learn from the image itself. In a building the foundation is first. Whoever, then, has Christ in his heart, so that no earthly or temporal things — not even those that are legitimate and allowed — are preferred to Him, has Christ as a foundation. But if these things be preferred, then even though a man seem to have faith in Christ, yet Christ is not the foundation to that man; and much more if he, in contempt of wholesome precepts, seek forbidden gratifications, is he clearly convicted of putting Christ not first but last, since he has despised Him as his ruler, and has preferred to fulfill his own wicked lusts, in contempt of Christ's commands and allowances. Accordingly, if any Christian man loves a harlot, and, attaching himself to her, becomes one body, he has not now Christ for a foundation. But if any one loves his own wife, and loves her as Christ would have him love her, who can doubt that he has Christ for a foundation? But if he loves her in the world's fashion, carnally, as the disease of lust prompts him, and as the Gentiles love who know not God, even this the apostle, or rather Christ by the apostle, allows as a venial fault. And therefore, even such a man may have Christ for a foundation. For so long as he does not prefer such an affection or pleasure to Christ, Christ is his foundation, though on it he

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builds wood, hay, stubble; and therefore, he shall be saved as by fire. For the fire of affliction shall burn such luxurious pleasures and earthly loves, though they be not damnable, because enjoyed in lawful wedlock. And of this fire the fuel is bereavement, and all those calamities which consume these joys. Consequently, the superstructure will be loss to him who has built it, for he shall not retain it, but shall be agonized by the loss of those things in the enjoyment of which he found pleasure. But by this fire he shall be saved through virtue of the foundation, because even if a persecutor demanded whether he would retain Christ or these things, he would prefer Christ. Would you hear, in the apostle's own words, who he is who builds on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones? "He that is unmarried," he says, "cares for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord." 1 Corinthians 7:32 Would you hear who he is that builds wood, hay, stubble? But he that is married cares for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. 1 Corinthians 7:33 "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it," — the day, no doubt, of tribulation — "because," says he, "it shall be revealed by fire." 1 Corinthians 3:13 He calls tribulation fire, just as it is elsewhere said, "The furnace proves the vessels of the potter, and the trial of affliction righteous men." Sirach 27:5 And "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide" — for a man's care for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord, abides — "which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward," — that is, he shall reap the fruit of his care. "But if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss," — for what he loved he shall not retain: — "but he himself shall be saved," — for no tribulation shall have moved him from that stable foundation — "yet so as by fire;" 1 Corinthians 3:14-15 for that which he possessed with the sweetness of love he does not lose without the sharp sting of pain. Here, then, as seems to me, we have a fire which destroys neither, but enriches the one, brings loss to the other, proves both.

But if this passage [of Corinthians] is to interpret that fire of which the Lord shall say to those on His left hand, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire," Matthew 25:41 so that among these we are to believe there are those who build on the foundation wood, hay, stubble, and that they, through virtue of the good foundation, shall after a time be liberated from the fire that is the award of their evil deserts, what then shall we think of those on the right hand, to whom it shall be said, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you," Matthew 25:34 unless that they are those who have built on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones? But if the fire of which our Lord speaks is the same as that of which the apostle says, "Yet so as by fire," then both — that is to say, both those on the right as well as those on the left — are to be cast into it. For that fire is to try both, since it is said, "For the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." 1 Corinthians 3:13 If, therefore, the fire shall try both, in order that if any man's work abide — i.e., if the superstructure be not consumed by the fire — he may receive a reward, and that if his work is burned he may suffer loss, certainly that fire is not the eternal fire itself. For into this latter fire only those on the left hand shall be cast, and that with final and everlasting doom; but that former fire proves those on the right

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hand. But some of them it so proves that it does not burn and consume the structure which is found to have been built by them on Christ as the foundation; while others of them it proves in another fashion, so as to burn what they have built up, and thus cause them to suffer loss, while they themselves are saved because they have retained Christ, who was laid as their sure foundation, and have loved Him above all. But if they are saved, then certainly they shall stand at the right hand, and shall with the rest hear the sentence, "Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you;" and not at the left hand, where those shall be who shall not be saved, and shall therefore hear the doom, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire." For from that fire no man shall be saved, because they all shall go away into eternal punishment, where their worms shall not die, nor their fire be quenched, in which they shall be tormented day and night forever.

But if it be said that in the interval of time between the death of this body and that last day of judgment and retribution which shall follow the resurrection, the bodies of the dead shall be exposed to a fire of such a nature that it shall not affect those who have not in this life indulged in such pleasures and pursuits as shall be consumed like wood, hay, stubble, but shall affect those others who have carried with them structures of that kind; if it be said that such worldliness, being venial, shall be consumed in the fire of tribulation either here only, or here and hereafter both, or here that it may not be hereafter — this I do not contradict, because possibly it is true. For perhaps even the death of the body is itself a part of this tribulation, for it results from the first transgression, so that the time which follows death takes its color in each case from the nature of the man's building. The persecutions, too, which have crowned the martyrs, and which Christians of all kinds suffer, try both buildings like a fire, consuming some, along with the builders themselves, if Christ is not found in them as their foundation, while others they consume without the builders, because Christ is found in them, and they are saved, though with loss; and other buildings still they do not consume, because such materials as abide forever are found in them. In the end of the world there shall be in the time of Antichrist tribulation such as has never before been. How many edifices there shall then be, of gold or of hay, built on the best foundation, Christ Jesus, which that fire shall prove, bringing joy to some, loss to others, but without destroying either sort, because of this stable foundation! But whosoever prefers, I do not say his wife, with whom he lives for carnal pleasure, but any of those relatives who afford no delight of such a kind, and whom it is right to love — whosoever prefers these to Christ, and loves them after a human and carnal fashion, has not Christ as a foundation, and will therefore not be saved by fire, nor indeed at all; for he shall not possibly dwell with the Saviour, who says very explicitly concerning this very matter, "He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Matthew 10:37 But he who loves his relations carnally, and yet so that he does not prefer them to Christ, but would rather want them than Christ if he were put to the proof, shall be saved by fire, because it is necessary that by the loss of these relations he suffer pain in proportion to his love. And he who loves father, mother,

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sons, daughters, according to Christ, so that he aids them in obtaining His kingdom and cleaving to Him, or loves them because they are members of Christ, God forbid that this love should be consumed as wood, hay, stubble, and not rather be reckoned a structure of gold, silver, precious stones. For how can a man love those more than Christ whom he loves only for Christ's sake?

**Chapter 27.— Against the Belief of Those Who Think that the Sins Which Have Been Accompanied with Almsgiving Will Do Them No Harm.**

It remains to reply to those who maintain that those only shall burn in eternal fire who neglect almsdeeds proportioned to their sins, resting this opinion on the words of the Apostle James, "He shall have judgment without mercy that has showed no mercy." James 2:13 Therefore, they say, he that has showed mercy, though he has not reformed his dissolute conduct, but has lived wickedly and iniquitously even while abounding in alms, shall have a merciful judgment, so that he shall either be not condemned at all, or shall be delivered from final judgment after a time. And for the same reason they suppose that Christ will discriminate between those on the right hand and those on the left, and will send the one party into His kingdom, the other into eternal punishment, on the sole ground of their attention to or neglect of works of charity. Moreover, they endeavor to use the prayer which the Lord Himself taught as a proof and bulwark of their opinion, that daily sins which are never abandoned can be expiated through almsdeeds, no matter how offensive or of what sort they be. For, say they, as there is no day on which Christians ought not to use this prayer, so there is no sin of any kind which, though committed every day, is not remitted when we say, "Forgive us our debts," if we take care to fulfill what follows, "as we forgive our debtors." Matthew 6:12 For, they go on to say, the Lord does not say, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you your little daily sins," but "will forgive you your sins." Therefore, be they of any kind or magnitude whatever, be they perpetrated daily and never abandoned or subdued in this life, they can be pardoned, they presume, through almsdeeds.

But they are right to inculcate the giving of alms proportioned to past sins; for if they said that any kind of alms could obtain the divine pardon of great sins committed daily and with habitual enormity, if they said that such sins could thus be daily remitted, they would see that their doctrine was absurd and ridiculous. For they would thus be driven to acknowledge that it were possible for a very wealthy man to buy absolution from murders, adulteries, and all manner of wickedness, by paying a daily alms of ten paltry coins. And if it be most absurd and insane to make such an acknowledgment, and if we still ask what are those fitting alms of which even the forerunner of Christ said, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," Matthew 3:8 undoubtedly it will be found that they are not such as are done by men who undermine their life by daily enormities even to the very end. For they suppose that by giving to the poor a small fraction of the

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wealth they acquire by extortion and spoliation they can propitiate Christ, so that they may with impunity commit the most damnable sins, in the persuasion that they have bought from Him a license to transgress, or rather do buy a daily indulgence. And if they for one crime have distributed all their goods to Christ's needy members, that could profit them nothing unless they desisted from all similar actions, and attained charity which works no evil He therefore who does almsdeeds proportioned to his sins must first begin with himself. For it is not reasonable that a man who exercises charity towards his neighbor should not do so towards himself, since he hears the Lord saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," Matthew 22:39 and again, "Have compassion on your soul, and please God." Sirach 30:24 He then who has not compassion on his own soul that he may please God, how can he be said to do almsdeeds proportioned to his sins? To the same purpose is that written, "He who is bad to himself, to whom can he be good?" Sirach 21:1 We ought therefore to do alms that we may be heard when we pray that our past sins may be forgiven, not that while we continue in them we may think to provide ourselves with a license for wickedness by almsdeeds.

The reason, therefore, of our predicting that He will impute to those on His right hand the almsdeeds they have done, and charge those on His left with omitting the same, is that He may thus show the efficacy of charity for the deletion of past sins, not for impunity in their perpetual commission. And such persons, indeed, as decline to abandon their evil habits of life for a better course cannot be said to do charitable deeds. For this is the purport of the saying, "Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me." Matthew 25:45 He shows them that they do not perform charitable actions even when they think they are doing so. For if they gave bread to a hungry Christian because he is a Christian, assuredly they would not deny to themselves the bread of righteousness, that is, Christ Himself; for God considers not the person to whom the gift is made, but the spirit in which it is made. He therefore who loves Christ in a Christian extends alms to him in the same spirit in which he draws near to Christ, not in that spirit which would abandon Christ if it could do so with impunity. For in proportion as a man loves what Christ disapproves does he himself abandon Christ. For what does it profit a man that he is baptized, if he is not justified? Did not He who said, "Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God," John 3:5 say also, "Unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven?" Matthew 5:20 Why do many through fear of the first saying run to baptism, while few through fear of the second seek to be justified? As therefore it is not to his brother a man says, "You fool," if when he says it he is indignant not at the brotherhood, but at the sin of the offender — for otherwise he were guilty of hell fire — so he who extends charity to a Christian does not extend it to a Christian if he does not love Christ in him. Now he does not love Christ who refuses to be justified in Him. Or, again, if a man has been guilty of this sin of calling his brother Fool, unjustly reviling him without any desire to remove his sin, his almsdeeds go a small way towards expiating this fault, unless he adds to this the remedy of reconciliation which the same passage enjoins. For

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it is there said, "Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has anything against you; leave there your gift before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." Matthew 5:23-24 Just so it is a small matter to do almsdeeds, no matter how great they be, for any sin, so long as the offender continues in the practice of sin.

Then as to the daily prayer which the Lord Himself taught, and which is therefore called the Lord's prayer, it obliterates indeed the sins of the day, when day by day we say, "Forgive us our debts," and when we not only say but act out that which follows, "as we forgive our debtors;" Matthew 6:12 but we utter this petition because sins have been committed, and not that they may be. For by it our Saviour designed to teach us that, however righteously we live in this life of infirmity and darkness, we still commit sins for the remission of which we ought to pray, while we must pardon those who sin against us that we ourselves also may be pardoned. The Lord then did not utter the words, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your Father will also forgive you your trespasses," Matthew 6:14 in order that we might contract from this petition such confidence as should enable us to sin securely from day to day, either putting ourselves above the fear of human laws, or craftily deceiving men concerning our conduct, but in order that we might thus learn not to suppose that we are without sins, even though we should be free from crimes; as also God admonished the priests of the old law to this same effect regarding their sacrifices, which He commanded them to offer first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people. For even the very words of so great a Master and Lord are to be intently considered. For He does not say, If you forgive men their sins, your Father will also forgive you your sins, no matter of what sort they be, but He says, your sins; for it was a daily prayer He was teaching, and it was certainly to disciples already justified He was speaking. What, then, does He mean by "your sins," but those sins from which not even you who are justified and sanctified can be free? While, then, those who seek occasion from this petition to indulge in habitual sin maintain that the Lord meant to include great sins, because He did not say, He will forgive you your small sins, but "your sins," we, on the other hand, taking into account the character of the persons He was addressing, cannot see our way to interpret the expression "your sins" of anything but small sins, because such persons are no longer guilty of great sins. Nevertheless not even great sins themselves — sins from which we must flee with a total reformation of life — are forgiven to those who pray, unless they observe the appended precept, "as you also forgive your debtors." For if the very small sins which attach even to the life of the righteous be not remitted without that condition, how much further from obtaining indulgence shall those be who are involved in many great crimes, if, while they cease from perpetrating such enormities, they still inexorably refuse to remit any debt incurred to themselves, since the Lord says, "But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses?" Matthew 6:15 For this is the purport of the saying of the Apostle James also, "He shall have judgment without mercy that has showed no mercy." James 2:13 For we should remember that servant whose debt of ten thousand talents his lord cancelled, but afterwards ordered him to pay up, because the

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servant himself had no pity for his fellow-servant, who owed him an hundred pence. Matthew 18:23 The words which the Apostle James subjoins, "And mercy rejoices against judgment," James 2:13 find their application among those who are the children of the promise and vessels of mercy. For even those righteous men, who have lived with such holiness that they receive into the eternal habitations others also who have won their friendship with the mammon of unrighteousness, Luke 16:9 became such only through the merciful deliverance of Him who justifies the ungodly, imputing to him a reward according to grace, not according to debt. For among this number is the apostle, who says, "I obtained mercy to be faithful." 1 Corinthians 7:25

But it must be admitted, that those who are thus received into the eternal habitations are not of such a character that their own life would suffice to rescue them without the aid of the saints, and consequently in their case especially does mercy rejoice against judgment. And yet we are not on this account to suppose that every abandoned profligate, who has made no amendment of his life, is to be received into the eternal habitations if only he has assisted the saints with the mammon of unrighteousness — that is to say, with money or wealth which has been unjustly acquired, or, if rightfully acquired, is yet not the true riches, but only what iniquity counts riches, because it knows not the true riches in which those persons abound, who even receive others also into eternal habitations. There is then a certain kind of life, which is neither, on the one hand, so bad that those who adopt it are not helped towards the kingdom of heaven by any bountiful almsgiving by which they may relieve the wants of the saints, and make friends who could receive them into eternal habitations, nor, on the other hand, so good that it of itself suffices to win for them that great blessedness, if they do not obtain mercy through the merits of those whom they have made their friends. And I frequently wonder that even Virgil should give expression to this sentence of the Lord, in which He says, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into everlasting habitations;" Luke 16:9 and this very similar saying, "He that receives a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receives a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." Matthew 10:41 For when that poet described the Elysian fields, in which they suppose that the souls of the blessed dwell, he placed there not only those who had been able by their own merit to reach that abode, but added —

And they who grateful memory won

By services to others done;

that is, they who had served others, and thereby merited to be remembered by them. Just as if they used the expression so common in Christian lips, where some humble person commends himself to one of the saints, and says, Remember me, and secures



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that he do so by deserving well at his hand. But what that kind of life we have been speaking of is, and what those sins are which prevent a man from winning the kingdom of God by himself, but yet permit him to avail himself of the merits of the saints, it is very difficult to ascertain, very perilous to define. For my own part, in spite of all investigation, I have been up to the present hour unable to discover this. And possibly it is hidden from us, lest we should become careless in avoiding such sins, and so cease to make progress. For if it were known what these sins are which, though they continue, and be not abandoned for a higher life, do yet not prevent us from seeking and hoping for the intercession of the saints, human sloth would presumptuously wrap itself in these sins, and would take no steps to be disentangled from such wrappings by the deft energy of any virtue, but would only desire to be rescued by the merits of other people, whose friendship had been won by a bountiful use of the mammon of unrighteousness. But now that we are left in ignorance of the precise nature of that iniquity which is venial, even though it be persevered in, certainly we are both more vigilant in our prayers and efforts for progress, and more careful to secure with the mammon of unrighteousness friends for ourselves among the saints.

But this deliverance, which is effected by one's own prayers, or the intercession of holy men, secures that a man be not cast into eternal fire, but not that, when once he has been cast into it, he should after a time be rescued from it. For even those who fancy that what is said of the good ground bringing forth abundant fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold, is to be referred to the saints, so that in proportion to their merits some of them shall deliver thirty men, some sixty, some an hundred — even those who maintain this are yet commonly inclined to suppose that this deliverance will take place at, and not after the day of judgment. Under this impression, someone who observed the unseemly folly with which men promise themselves impunity on the ground that all will be included in this method of deliverance, is reported to have very happily remarked, that we should rather endeavor to live so well that we shall be all found among the number of those who are to intercede for the liberation of others, lest these should be so few in number, that, after they have delivered one thirty, another sixty, another a hundred, there should still remain many who could not be delivered from punishment by their intercessions, and among them every one who has vainly and rashly promised himself the fruit of another's labor. But enough has been said in reply to those who acknowledge the authority of the same sacred Scriptures as ourselves, but who, by a mistaken interpretation of them, conceive of the future rather as they themselves wish, than as the Scriptures teach. And having given this reply, I now, according to promise, close this book.

### Appendix 3 St Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologica

#### Question 52. Christ's descent into hell

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Was it fitting for Christ to descend into hell?

Into which hell did He descend?

Was He entirely in hell?

Did He make any stay there?

Did He deliver the Holy Fathers from hell?

Did He deliver the lost from hell?

Did He deliver the children who died in original sin?

Did He deliver men from Purgatory?

Article 1. Whether it was fitting for Christ to descend into hell?

Objection 1. It would seem that it was not fitting for Christ to descend into hell, because Augustine says (Ep. ad Evod. cliv.): "Nor could I find anywhere in the Scriptures hell mentioned as something good." But Christ's soul did not descend into any evil place, for neither do the souls of the just. Therefore it does not seem fitting for Christ's soul to descend into hell.

Objection 2. Further, it cannot belong to Christ to descend into hell according to His Divine Nature, which is altogether immovable; but only according to His assumed nature. But that which Christ did or suffered in His assumed nature is ordained for man's salvation: and to secure this it does not seem necessary for Christ to descend into hell, since He delivered us from both guilt and penalty by His Passion which He endured in this world, as stated above (III:49:3). Consequently, it was not fitting that Christ should descend into hell.

Objection 3. Further, by Christ's death His soul was separated from His body, and this was laid in the sepulchre, as stated above (Article 51). But it seems that He descended into hell, not according to His soul only, because seemingly the soul, being incorporeal, cannot be a subject of local motion; for this belongs to bodies, as is proved in Phys. vi, text. 32; while descent implies corporeal motion. Therefore it was not fitting for Christ to descend into hell.

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On the contrary, It is said in the Creed: "He descended into hell": and the Apostle says (Ephesians 4:9): "Now that He ascended, what is it, but because He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" And a gloss adds: "that is—into hell."

I answer that It was fitting for Christ to descend into hell. First of all, because He came to bear our penalty in order to free us from penalty, according to Isaiah 53:4: "Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows." But through sin man had incurred not only the death of the body, but also descent into hell. Consequently since it was fitting for Christ to die in order to deliver us from death, so it was fitting for Him to descend into hell in order to deliver us also from going down into hell. Hence it is written (Hosea 13:14): "O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy bite." Secondly, because it was fitting when the devil was overthrown by the Passion that Christ should deliver the captives detained in hell, according to Zechariah 9:11: "Thou also by the blood of Thy Testament hast sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit." And it is written (Colossians 2:15): "Despoiling the principalities and powers, He hath exposed them confidently." Thirdly, that as He showed forth His power on earth by living and dying, so also He might manifest it in hell, by visiting it and enlightening it. Accordingly it is written (Psalm 23:7): "Lift up your gates, O ye princes," which the gloss thus interprets: "that is—Ye princes of hell, take away your power, whereby hitherto you held men fast in hell"; and so "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," not only "of them that are in heaven," but likewise "of them that are in hell," as is said in Philippians 2:10.

Reply to Objection 1. The name of hell stands for an evil of penalty, and not for an evil of guilt. Hence it was becoming that Christ should descend into hell, not as liable to punishment Himself, but to deliver them who were.

Reply to Objection 2. Christ's Passion was a kind of universal cause of men's salvation, both of the living and of the dead. But a general cause is applied to particular effects by means of something special. Hence, as the power of the Passion is applied to the living through the sacraments which make us like unto Christ's Passion, so likewise it is applied to the dead through His descent into hell. On which account it is written (Zechariah 9:11) that "He sent forth prisoners out of the pit, in the blood of His testament," that is, by the power of His Passion.

Reply to Objection 3. Christ's soul descended into hell not by the same kind of motion as that whereby bodies are moved, but by that kind whereby the angels are moved, as was said in I:53:1.

Article 2. Whether Christ went down into the hell of the lost?

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Objection 1. It would seem that Christ went down into the hell of the lost, because it is said by the mouth of Divine Wisdom (Sirach 24:45): "I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth." But the hell of the lost is computed among the lower parts of the earth according to Psalm 62:10: "They shall go into the lower parts of the earth." Therefore Christ who is the Wisdom of God, went down even into the hell of the lost.

Objection 2. Further, Peter says (Acts 2:24) that "God hath raised up Christ, having loosed the sorrows of hell, as it was impossible that He should be holden by it." But there are no sorrows in the hell of the Fathers, nor in the hell of the children, since they are not punished with sensible pain on account of any actual sin, but only with the pain of loss on account of original sin. Therefore Christ went down into the hell of the lost, or else into Purgatory, where men are tormented with sensible pain on account of actual sins.

Objection 3. Further, it is written (1 Peter 3:19) that "Christ coming in spirit preached to those spirits that were in prison, which had some time been incredulous": and this is understood of Christ's descent into hell, as Athanasius says (Ep. ad Epict.). For he says that "Christ's body was laid in the sepulchre when He went to preach to those spirits who were in bondage, as Peter said." But it is clear the unbelievers were in the hell of the lost. Therefore Christ went down into the hell of the lost.

Objection 4. Further, Augustine says (Ep. ad Evod. clxiv): "If the sacred Scriptures had said that Christ came into Abraham's bosom, without naming hell or its woes, I wonder whether any person would dare to assert that He descended into hell. But since evident testimonies mention hell and its sorrows, there is no reason for believing that Christ went there except to deliver men from the same woes." But the place of woes is the hell of the lost. Therefore Christ descended into the hell of the lost.

Objection 5. Further, as Augustine says in a sermon upon the Resurrection: Christ descending into hell "set free all the just who were held in the bonds of original sin." But among them was Job, who says of himself (Job 17:16): "All that I have shall go down into the deepest pit." Therefore Christ descended into the deepest pit.

On the contrary, Regarding the hell of the lost it is written (Job 10:21): "Before I go, and return no more, to a land that is dark and covered with the mist of death." Now there is no "fellowship of light with darkness," according to 2 Corinthians 6:14. Therefore Christ, who is "the light," did not descend into the hell of the lost.

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I answer that, A thing is said to be in a place in two ways. First of all, through its effect, and in this way Christ descended into each of the hells, but in different manner. For going down into the hell of the lost He wrought this effect, that by descending thither He put them to shame for their unbelief and wickedness: but to them who were detained in Purgatory He gave hope of attaining to glory: while upon the holy Fathers detained in hell solely on account of original sin, He shed the light of glory everlasting.

In another way a thing is said to be in a place through its essence: and in this way Christ's soul descended only into that part of hell wherein the just were detained. so that He visited them "in place," according to His soul, whom He visited "interiorly by grace," according to His Godhead. Accordingly, while remaining in one part of hell, He wrought this effect in a measure in every part of hell, just as while suffering in one part of the earth He delivered the whole world by His Passion.

Reply to Objection 1. Christ, who is the Wisdom of God, penetrated to all the lower parts of the earth, not passing through them locally with His soul, but by spreading the effects of His power in a measure to them all: yet so that He enlightened only the just: because the text quoted continues: "And I will enlighten all that hope in the Lord."

Reply to Objection 2. Sorrow is twofold: one is the suffering of pain which men endure for actual sin, according to Psalm 17:6: "The sorrows of hell encompassed me." Another sorrow comes of hoped-for glory being deferred, according to Proverbs 13:12: "Hope that is deferred afflicteth the soul": and such was the sorrow which the holy Fathers suffered in hell, and Augustine refers to it in a sermon on the Passion, saying that "they besought Christ with tearful entreaty." Now by descending into hell Christ took away both sorrows, yet in different ways: for He did away with the sorrows of pains by preserving souls from them, just as a physician is said to free a man from sickness by warding it off by means of physic. Likewise He removed the sorrows caused by glory deferred, by bestowing glory.

Reply to Objection 3. These words of Peter are referred by some to Christ's descent into hell: and they explain it in this sense: "Christ preached to them who formerly were unbelievers, and who were shut up in prison"—that is, in hell—"in spirit"—that is, by His soul. Hence Damascene says (*De Fide Orth.* iii): "As He evangelized them who are upon the earth, so did He those who were in hell"; not in order to convert unbelievers unto belief, but to put them to shame for their unbelief, since preaching cannot be understood otherwise than as the open manifesting of His Godhead. which was laid bare before them in the lower regions by His descending in power into hell.

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Augustine, however, furnishes a better exposition of the text in his Epistle to Evodius quoted above, namely, that the preaching is not to be referred to Christ's descent into hell, but to the operation of His Godhead, to which He gave effect from the beginning of the world. Consequently, the sense is, that "to those (spirits) that were in prison"—that is, living in the mortal body, which is, as it were, the soul's prison-house—"by the spirit" of His Godhead "He came and preached" by internal inspirations, and from without by the admonitions spoken by the righteous: to those, I say, He preached "which had been some time incredulous," i.e. not believing in the preaching of Noah, "when they waited for the patience of God," whereby the chastisement of the Deluge was put off: accordingly (Peter) adds: "In the days of Noah, when the Ark was being built."

Reply to Objection 4. The expression "Abraham's bosom" may be taken in two senses. First of all, as implying that restfulness, existing there, from sensible pain; so that in this sense it cannot be called hell, nor are there any sorrows there. In another way it can be taken as implying the privation of longed-for glory: in this sense it has the character of hell and sorrow. Consequently, that rest of the blessed is now called Abraham's bosom, yet it is not styled hell, nor are sorrows said to be now in Abraham's bosom.

Reply to Objection 5. As Gregory says (Moral. xiii): "Even the higher regions of hell he calls the deepest hell . . . For if relatively to the height of heaven this darksome air is infernal, then relatively to the height of this same air the earth lying beneath can be considered as infernal and deep. And again in comparison with the height of the same earth, those parts of hell which are higher than the other infernal mansions, may in this way be designated as the deepest hell."

Article 3. Whether the whole Christ was in hell?

Objection 1. It would seem that the whole Christ was not in hell. For Christ's body is one of His parts. But His body was not in hell. Therefore, the whole Christ was not in hell.

Objection 2. Further, nothing can be termed whole when its parts are severed. But the soul and body, which are the parts of human nature, were separated at His death, as stated above (III:50:4), and it was after death that He descended into hell. Therefore the whole (Christ) could not be in hell.

Objection 3. Further, the whole of a thing is said to be in a place when no part of it is outside such place. But there were parts of Christ outside hell; for instance, His body

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was in the grave, and His Godhead everywhere. Therefore the whole Christ was not in hell.

On the contrary, Augustine says (De Symbolo iii): "The whole Son is with the Father, the whole Son in heaven, on earth, in the Virgin's womb, on the Cross, in hell, in paradise, into which He brought the robber."

I answer that, It is evident from what was said in I:31:2 ad 4, the masculine gender is referred to the hypostasis or person, while the neuter belongs to the nature. Now in the death of Christ, although the soul was separated from the body, yet neither was separated from the Person of the Son of God, as stated above (III:50:2). Consequently, it must be affirmed that during the three days of Christ's death the whole Christ was in the tomb, because the whole Person was there through the body united with Him, and likewise He was entirely in hell, because the whole Person of Christ was there by reason of the soul united with Him, and the whole Christ was then everywhere by reason of the Divine Nature.

Reply to Objection 1. The body which was then in the grave is not a part of the uncreated Person, but of the assumed nature. Consequently, the fact of Christ's body not being in hell does not prevent the whole Christ from being there: but proves that not everything appertaining to human nature was there.

Reply to Objection 2. The whole human nature is made up of the united soul and body; not so the Divine Person. Consequently when death severed the union of the soul with the body, the whole Christ remained, but His whole human nature did not remain.

Reply to Objection 3. Christ's Person is whole in each single place, but not wholly, because it is not circumscribed by any place: indeed, all places put together could not comprise His immensity; rather is it His immensity that embraces all things. But it happens in those things which are in a place corporeally and circumscriptively, that if a whole be in some place, then no part of it is outside that place. But this is not the case with God. Hence Augustine says (De Symbolo iii): "It is not according to times or places that we say that the whole Christ is everywhere, as if He were at one time whole in one place, at another time whole in another: but as being whole always and everywhere."

Article 4. Whether Christ made any stay in hell?

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Objection 1. It would seem that Christ did not make any stay in hell. For Christ went down into hell to deliver men from thence. But He accomplished this deliverance at once by His descent, for, according to Sirach 11:23: "It is easy in the eyes of God on a sudden to make the poor man rich." Consequently He does not seem to have tarried in hell.

Objection 2. Further, Augustine says in a sermon on the Passion (clx) that "of a sudden at our Lord and Saviour's bidding all 'the bars of iron were burst'" (Cf. Isaiah 45:2). Hence on behalf of the angels accompanying Christ it is written (Psalm 23:7-9): "Lift up your gates, O ye princes." Now Christ descended thither in order to break the bolts of hell. Therefore He did not make any stay in hell.

Objection 3. Further, it is related (Luke 23:43) that our Lord while hanging on the cross said to the thief: "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise": from which it is evident that Christ was in paradise on that very day. But He was not there with His body, for that was in the grave. Therefore He was there with the soul which had gone down into hell: and consequently it appears that He made no stay in hell.

On the contrary, Peter says (Acts 2:24): "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the sorrows of hell, as it was impossible that He should be held by it." Therefore it seems that He remained in hell until the hour of the Resurrection.

I answer that, As Christ, in order to take our penalties upon Himself, willed His body to be laid in the tomb, so likewise He willed His soul to descend into hell. But the body lay in the tomb for a day and two nights, so as to demonstrate the truth of His death. Consequently, it is to be believed that His soul was in hell, in order that it might be brought back out of hell simultaneously with His body from the tomb.

Reply to Objection 1. When Christ descended into hell He delivered the saints who were there, not by leading them out at once from the confines of hell, but by enlightening them with the light of glory in hell itself. Nevertheless it was fitting that His soul should abide in hell as long as His body remained in the tomb.

Reply to Objection 2. By the expression "bars of hell" are understood the obstacles which kept the holy Fathers from quitting hell, through the guilt of our first parent's sin; and these bars Christ burst asunder by the power of His Passion on descending into hell: nevertheless He chose to remain in hell for some time, for the reason stated above.



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Reply to Objection 3. Our Lord's expression is not to be understood of the earthly corporeal paradise, but of a spiritual one, in which all are said to be who enjoy the Divine glory. Accordingly, the thief descended locally into hell with Christ, because it was said to him: "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise"; still as to reward he was in paradise, because he enjoyed Christ's Godhead just as the other saints did.

Article 5. Whether Christ descending into hell delivered the holy Fathers from thence?

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ descending into hell did not deliver the holy Fathers from thence. For Augustine (Epist. ad Evod. clxiv) says: "I have not yet discovered what Christ descending into hell bestowed upon those righteous ones who were in Abraham's bosom, from whom I fail to see that He ever departed according to the beatific presence of His Godhead." But had He delivered them, He would have bestowed much upon them. Therefore it does not appear that Christ delivered the holy Fathers from hell.

Objection 2. Further, no one is detained in hell except on account of sin. But during life the holy Fathers were justified from sin through faith in Christ. Consequently they did not need to be delivered from hell on Christ's descent thither.

Objection 3. Further, if you remove the cause, you remove the effect. But that Christ went down into hell was due to sin which was taken away by the Passion, as stated above (III:49:1). Consequently, the holy Fathers were not delivered on Christ's descent into hell.

On the contrary, Augustine says in the sermon on the Passion already quoted that when Christ descended into hell "He broke down the gate and 'iron bars' of hell, setting at liberty all the righteous who were held fast through original sin."

I answer that, As stated above (Article 4, Reply to Objection 2), when Christ descended into hell He worked through the power of His Passion. But through Christ's Passion the human race was delivered not only from sin, but also from the debt of its penalty, as stated above (III:49:3). Now men were held fast by the debt of punishment in two ways: first of all for actual sin which each had committed personally: secondly, for the sin of the whole human race, which each one in his origin contracts from our first parent, as stated in Romans 5 of which sin the penalty is the death of the body as well as exclusion from glory, as is evident from Genesis 2 and 3: because God cast out man from paradise

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after sin, having beforehand threatened him with death should he sin. Consequently, when Christ descended into hell, by the power of His Passion He delivered the saints from the penalty whereby they were excluded from the life of glory, so as to be unable to see God in His Essence, wherein man's beatitude lies, as stated in the I-II:3:8. But the holy Fathers were detained in hell for the reason, that, owing to our first parent's sin, the approach to the life of glory was not opened. And so when Christ descended into hell He delivered the holy Fathers from thence. And this is what is written Zechariah 9:11: "Thou also by the blood of Thy testament hast sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water." And (Colossians 2:15) it is written that "despoiling the principalities and powers," i.e. "of hell, by taking out Isaac and Jacob, and the other just souls," "He led them," i.e. "He brought them far from this kingdom of darkness into heaven," as the gloss explains.

Reply to Objection 1. Augustine is speaking there against such as maintained that the righteous of old were subject to penal sufferings before Christ's descent into hell. Hence shortly before the passage quoted he says: "Some add that this benefit was also bestowed upon the saints of old, that on the Lord's coming into hell they were freed from their sufferings. But I fail to see how Abraham, into whose bosom the poor man was received, was ever in such sufferings." Consequently, when he afterwards adds that "he had not yet discovered what Christ's descent into hell had brought to the righteous of old," this must be understood as to their being freed from penal sufferings. Yet Christ bestowed something upon them as to their attaining glory: and in consequence He dispelled the suffering which they endured through their glory being delayed: still they had great joy from the very hope thereof, according to John 8:56: "Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day." And therefore he adds: "I fail to see that He ever departed, according to the beatific presence of His Godhead," that is, inasmuch as even before Christ's coming they were happy in hope, although not yet fully happy in fact.

Reply to Objection 2. The holy Fathers while yet living were delivered from original as well as actual sin through faith in Christ; also from the penalty of actual sins, but not from the penalty of original sin, whereby they were excluded from glory, since the price of man's redemption was not yet paid: just as the faithful are now delivered by baptism from the penalty of actual sins, and from the penalty of original sin as to exclusion from glory, yet still remain bound by the penalty of original sin as to the necessity of dying in the body because they are renewed in the spirit, but not yet in the flesh, according to Romans 8:10: "The body indeed is dead, because of sin; but the spirit liveth, because of justification."

Reply to Objection 3. Directly Christ died His soul went down into hell, and bestowed the fruits of His Passion on the saints detained there; although they did not go out as

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long as Christ remained in hell, because His presence was part of the fulness of their glory.

Article 6. Whether Christ delivered any of the lost from hell?

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ did deliver some of the lost from hell, because it is written (Isaiah 24:22): "And they shall be gathered together as in the gathering of one bundle into the pit, and they shall be shut up there in prison: and after many days they shall be visited." But there he is speaking of the lost, who "had adored the host of heaven," according to Jerome's commentary. Consequently it seems that even the lost were visited at Christ's descent into hell; and this seems to imply their deliverance.

Objection 2. Further, on Zechariah 9:11: "Thou also by the blood of Thy testament hast sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water," the gloss observes: "Thou hast delivered them who were held bound in prisons, where no mercy refreshed them, which that rich man prayed for." But only the lost are shut up in merciless prisons. Therefore Christ did deliver some from the hell of the lost.

Objection 3. Further, Christ's power was not less in hell than in this world, because He worked in every place by the power of His Godhead. But in this world He delivered some persons of every state. Therefore, in hell also, He delivered some from the state of the lost.

On the contrary, It is written (Hosea 13:14): "O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy bite": upon which the gloss says: "By leading forth the elect, and leaving there the reprobate." But only the reprobate are in the hell of the lost. Therefore, by Christ's descent into hell none were delivered from the hell of the lost.

I answer that, As stated above (Article 5), when Christ descended into hell He worked by the power of His Passion. Consequently, His descent into hell brought the fruits of deliverance to them only who were united to His Passion through faith quickened by charity, whereby sins are taken away. Now those detained in the hell of the lost either had no faith in Christ's Passion, as infidels; or if they had faith, they had no conformity with the charity of the suffering Christ: hence they could not be cleansed from their sins. And on this account Christ's descent into hell brought them no deliverance from the debt of punishment in hell.

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Reply to Objection 1. When Christ descended into hell, all who were in any part of hell were visited in some respect: some to their consolation and deliverance, others, namely, the lost, to their shame and confusion. Accordingly the passage continues: "And the moon shall blush, and the sun be put to shame," etc.

This can also be referred to the visitation which will come upon them in the Day of Judgment, not for their deliverance, but for their yet greater confusion, according to Zephaniah 1:12: "I will visit upon the men that are settled on their lees."

Reply to Objection 2. When the gloss says "where no mercy refreshed them," this is to be understood of the refreshing of full deliverance, because the holy Fathers could not be delivered from this prison of hell before Christ's coming.

Reply to Objection 3. It was not due to any lack of power on Christ's part that some were not delivered from every state in hell, as out of every state among men in this world; but it was owing to the very different condition of each state. For, so long as men live here below, they can be converted to faith and charity, because in this life men are not confirmed either in good or in evil, as they are after quitting this life.

Article 7. Whether the children who died in original sin were delivered by Christ?

Objection 1. It would seem that the children who died in original sin were delivered from hell by Christ's descending thither. For, like the holy Fathers, the children were kept in hell simply because of original sin. But the holy Fathers were delivered from hell, as stated above (Article 5). Therefore the children were similarly delivered from hell by Christ.

Objection 2. Further, the Apostle says (Romans 5:15): "If by the offense of one, many died; much more the grace of God and the gift, by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." But the children who die with none but original sin are detained in hell owing to their first parent's sin. Therefore, much more were they delivered from hell through the grace of Christ.

Objection 3. Further, as Baptism works in virtue of Christ's Passion, so also does Christ's descent into hell, as is clear from what has been said (4, ad 2, 5,6). But through Baptism children are delivered from original sin and hell. Therefore, they were similarly delivered by Christ's descent into hell.

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On the contrary, The Apostle says (Romans 3:25): "God hath proposed Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood." But the children who had died with only original sin were in no wise sharers of faith in Christ. Therefore, they did not receive the fruits of Christ's propitiation, so as to be delivered by Him from hell.

I answer that, As stated above (Article 6), Christ's descent into hell had its effect of deliverance on them only who through faith and charity were united to Christ's Passion, in virtue whereof Christ's descent into hell was one of deliverance. But the children who had died in original sin were in no way united to Christ's Passion by faith and love: for, not having the use of free will, they could have no faith of their own; nor were they cleansed from original sin either by their parents' faith or by any sacrament of faith. Consequently, Christ's descent into hell did not deliver the children from thence. And furthermore, the holy Fathers were delivered from hell by being admitted to the glory of the vision of God, to which no one can come except through grace; according to Romans 6:23: "The grace of God is life everlasting." Therefore, since children dying in original sin had no grace, they were not delivered from hell.

Reply to Objection 1. The holy Fathers, although still held bound by the debt of original sin, in so far as it touches human nature, were nevertheless delivered from all stain of sin by faith in Christ: consequently, they were capable of that deliverance which Christ brought by descending into hell. But the same cannot be said of the children, as is evident from what was said above.

Reply to Objection 2. When the Apostle says that the grace of God "hath abounded unto many," the word "many" [The Vulgate reads 'plures,' i.e. 'many more'] is to be taken, not comparatively, as if more were saved by Christ's grace than lost by Adam's sin: but absolutely, as if he said that the grace of the one Christ abounded unto many, just as Adam's sin was contracted by many. But as Adam's sin was contracted by those only who descended seminally from him according to the flesh, so Christ's grace reached those only who became His members by spiritual regeneration: which does not apply to children dying in original sin.

Reply to Objection 3. Baptism is applied to men in this life, in which man's state can be changed from sin into grace: but Christ's descent into hell was vouchsafed to the souls after this life when they are no longer capable of the said change. And consequently by baptism children are delivered from original sin and from hell, but not by Christ's descent into hell.

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### Article 8. Whether Christ by His descent into hell delivered souls from purgatory?

Objection 1. It would seem that Christ by His descent into hell delivered souls from Purgatory—for Augustine says (Ep. ad Evod. clxiv): "Because evident testimonies speak of hell and its pains, there is no reason for believing that the Saviour came thither except to rescue men from those same pains: but I still wish to know whether it was all whom He found there, or some whom He deemed worthy of such a benefit. Yet I do not doubt that Christ went into hell, and granted this favor to them who were suffering from its pains." But, as stated above (Article 6), He did not confer the benefit of deliverance upon the lost: and there are no others in a state of penal suffering except those in Purgatory. Consequently Christ delivered souls from Purgatory.

Objection 2. Further, the very presence of Christ's soul had no less effect than His sacraments have. But souls are delivered from Purgatory by the sacraments, especially by the sacrament of the Eucharist, as shall be shown later (Supplement:71:9). Therefore much more were souls delivered from Purgatory by the presence of Christ descending into hell.

Objection 3. Further, as Augustine says (De Poenit. ix), those whom Christ healed in this life He healed completely. Also, our Lord says (John 7:23): "I have healed the whole man on the sabbath-day." But Christ delivered them who were in Purgatory from the punishment of the pain of loss, whereby they were excluded from glory. Therefore, He also delivered them from the punishment of Purgatory.

On the contrary, Gregory says (Moral. xiii): "Since our Creator and Redeemer, penetrating the bars of hell, brought out from thence the souls of the elect, He does not permit us to go thither, from whence He has already by descending set others free." But He permits us to go to Purgatory. Therefore, by descending into hell, He did not deliver souls from Purgatory.

I answer that, As we have stated more than once (4, ad 2, 5,6,7), Christ's descent into hell was one of deliverance in virtue of His Passion. Now Christ's Passion had a virtue which was neither temporal nor transitory, but everlasting, according to Hebrews 10:14: "For by one oblation He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." And so it is evident that Christ's Passion had no greater efficacy then than it has now. Consequently, they who were such as those who are now in Purgatory, were not set free from Purgatory by Christ's descent into hell. But if any were found such as are now set free from

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Purgatory by virtue of Christ's Passion, then there was nothing to hinder them from being delivered from Purgatory by Christ's descent into hell.

Reply to Objection 1. From this passage of Augustine it cannot be concluded that all who were in Purgatory were delivered from it, but that such a benefit was bestowed upon some persons, that is to say, upon such as were already cleansed sufficiently, or who in life, by their faith and devotion towards Christ's death, so merited, that when He descended, they were delivered from the temporal punishment of Purgatory.

Reply to Objection 2. Christ's power operates in the sacraments by way of healing and expiation. Consequently, the sacrament of the Eucharist delivers men from Purgatory inasmuch as it is a satisfactory sacrifice for sin. But Christ's descent into hell was not satisfactory; yet it operated in virtue of the Passion, which was satisfactory, as stated above (III:48:2), but satisfactory in general, since its virtue had to be applied to each individual by something specially personal (49, 1, ad 4,5). Consequently, it does not follow of necessity that all were delivered from Purgatory by Christ's descent into hell.

Reply to Objection 3. Those defects from which Christ altogether delivered men in this world were purely personal, and concerned the individual; whereas exclusion from God's glory was a general defect and common to all human nature. Consequently, there was nothing to prevent those detained in Purgatory being delivered by Christ from their privation of glory, but not from the debt of punishment in Purgatory which pertains to personal defect. Just as on the other hand, the holy Fathers before Christ's coming were delivered from their personal defects, but not from the common defect, as was stated above (Article 7, Reply to Objection 1; III:49:5 ad 1).

### Appendix 4 Orthodox Icons of Jesus' Harrowing of Hell

In the Western (Roman Catholic) Church the Gospel was presented in different ways, through preaching, through architecture (in Cathedrals) and through paintings and statues of Saints. In the Eastern (Orthodox) Church these means were also employed but there was a special emphasis upon Icons.

Icons or Ikon (from the Greek eikon - picture) are paintings, mosaics or enameled objects, usually depicting Jesus, Mary or another Saint. They are revered as sacred in the Eastern Church. They are an important part of the way the Church taught and kept alive the traditions concerning Jesus' victory over Hell and death.

The images depicting Jesus' descent to Hell and His victory over death portray it in various ways. Some images simply depict Christ in Hell. In other images this is associated with Jesus' baptism in the Jordan, with the prophet Jonah in the belly of the Great Fish, with the Skull of Adam and the Temptation in the Wilderness.

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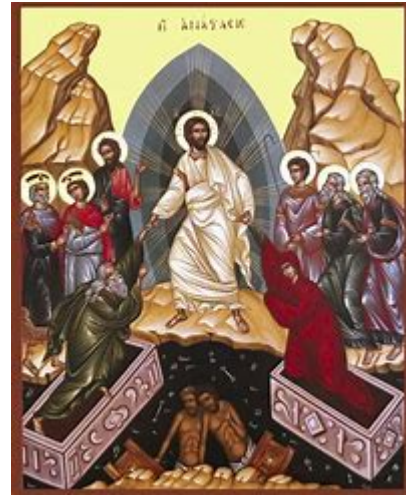
In this way the prophecies, types and foreshadowing of this event that are clearly apparent in the scriptures (see the Hellrazer's Bibles for a highlighting of these scriptures) are held up together with the descent into Hell. It is meditating on these images that a rich understanding of what Jesus accomplished in Hell can be attained.

I will present to you some of these images to further your own meditation and study.





## Appendix



### Appendix 5 Liturgies and Poetry

I refer you to the book by Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev: *Christ the Conqueror of Hell: the descent into Hades from an Orthodox Perspective*. This book offers a comprehensive assessment of references to Jesus' descent into Hell in Orthodox liturgy and poetry. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood New York 2009.

# Appendix

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## END NOTES

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<sup>i</sup> The Tanakh is made up of the Masoretic texts of the Hebrew scriptures. Many Protestant Bibles use translations of the Tanakh as the entirety of the Old Testament.

<sup>ii</sup> Matthew 13: 44

<sup>iii</sup> Translated by Robert Sinker. From Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 8. Edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight.  
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<sup>iv</sup> From "The Apocryphal New Testament" M.R. James-Translation and Notes Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924

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- vi The Apocryphal New Testament: M.R. James-Translation and Notes Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924
- vii **ibid**
- viii Scanned and edited by Joshua Williams, Northwest Nazarene College, 1995. Corrected by Lance S. Owens, 2011
- ix The Apocryphal New Testament: J.K. Elliot, 1993, Oxford Scholarship Online. P15-16
- x **ibid** page 17-18
- xi **ibid** page 29-30
- xii from James H. Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1983)