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WESTMINSTER COMMENTARIES
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II ESDRAS

II ESDRAS

(THE EZRA APOCALYPSE)

WITH INTRODUCTION
AND NOTES

BY

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WALTER LOCK

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PREFACE

THIS is the first book from the Apocrypha to be published in the *Westminster Commentaries*, as it is also the first Apocalyptic writing to be included. Doubtless, in due course, the one representative of each—the Old and New Testament, respectively, belonging to this Apocalyptic literature, will appear. But in some respects, the *Ezra Apocalypse*, though later than the book of *Daniel* and probably a very little later than the book of *Revelation*, appears more appropriately as the first of the three, for it is in some respects a more characteristic representative of the Apocalyptic literature than either of the other two.

The importance of this book lies, however, not so much in its Apocalyptic as in its Doctrinal standpoint; for it represents the belief of the best Jewish elements on such subjects as the doctrine of God, the origin and prevalence of sin, human free-will, the resurrection and the after-life, during the period in which the New Testament was in the making.

In view of the importance of the book as showing the Jewish doctrinal background of the New Testament and the place it occupied in the first Christian centuries, it is surprising that it has received so little attention in this country; in Germany its value has been more recognized. The only really good English commentary is that of my old friend Canon Box,¹ a tribute to whose work I should like to offer here; apart from its other excellences his book is especially valuable for its admirable English translation—far superior to that of the Revised Version—and for the numerous appropriate quotations from Rabbinical literature. It is only on the question of redactional interpolations that I find myself in disagreement with him, for if his conclusions are right on this point it means that we have here an Apocalyptist who does not believe in the resurrection, and who is not sufficiently interested in the 'signs of the end' to make any reference to them, although his gaze is constantly

¹ His recent death is deeply regretted by all friends.

fixed on the world to come. This seems to me an incomprehensible attitude on the part of an Apocalyptist of the first century A.D., but it is what is implied by Canon Box's contention. Probably our difference of opinion here arises mainly from the fact that he approaches the matter from the literary standpoint, I from the human; there is a lot to be said for either. We find it, however, quite refreshing to differ from one another on the point; there are very few subjects on which we disagree, after many years of work in collaboration. As the Commentary shows, I am greatly indebted to him in other respects, and it gives me particular pleasure to take this opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to him.

It remains but to say once more how I appreciate the kindness and help I have received from the General Editors; they are always ready to respond to requests for advice and guidance.

W. O. E. O.

April 1933.

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INTRODUCTION

I

TITLE OF THE BOOK

THE title of this book given in the Revised Version, 'II Esdras', follows, in the first instance, the Authorized Version; this latter took it over from the Genevan Bible; it is found in the Genevan Bible because the Latin MSS. used had this title. But the title varies in the different Latin MSS.; to give all these would only confuse matters; it will suffice to say that the most common arrangement is as follows:

Chaps. i, ii	of our book	= II Esdras
„ iii-xiv	„ „	= IV Esdras
„ xv, xvi	„ „	= V Esdras ¹

In some late Latin MSS. the three portions are joined together as one book, and, as just pointed out, it is ultimately on the basis of these that the Revised Version treats the three books as one.

In the Vulgate chaps. iii-xiv of our book appear as IV Esdras, hence the title usually found in modern books: II (IV) Esdras, or Ezra.

II

THE COMPONENT PARTS OF THE BOOK

That our book is a compilation, not the work of a single author, is evident from the fact that, as we have seen, in the Latin MSS. chaps. i, ii, and xv, xvi are, respectively, treated as separate books, each having a different title from that of chaps. iii-xiv; and, indeed, even a cursory comparison between these two literary pieces and the central portions shows such differences in subject-matter, style, and point of view, apart from other considerations, that the idea of unity of authorship cannot for a moment be entertained.

The question becomes more complicated when the central portion of the book is examined. Opinions differ among scholars on the subject as to whether chaps. iii-xiv represent the work of a single author, or whether they form a compilation of excerpts from different writings. Of one thing there cannot be any doubt, namely, that these chapters have been worked over by a redactor; but it is a difficult question to decide as to what extent his hand has been at

¹ I Esdras = the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and III Esdras = I Esdras in the Apocrypha.

work ; here, again, opinions differ ; though we cannot but feel that some commentators assign more to the redactor than is necessary ; subjectivity inevitably enters in to some extent here ; but there is sometimes a danger of looking at these ancient writings from too 'Western' a point of view ; incongruities, and even contradictions, were not such dreadful things to the Oriental mind of long ago as they are to the Occidental modern. The Apocalyptists, especially, were not exact thinkers, their attempts, when dealing with theological problems, were largely empirical, and one must not, therefore, look for logical thinking ; so that what is sometimes supposed to be a redactional element may possibly be merely an attempt at smoothing over some incongruity on the part of the author himself ; and what are contradictions may also be due to the author who did not worry himself over such matters. On the other hand, there are numerous cases in these chapters in which one is forced to recognize the hand of a redactor. This is such a common and well-recognized element in all the books of the Old Testament that its existence here may be regarded almost as axiomatic. Apart from this, however, the question must be considered as to whether we have in these chapters unity of authorship or not. It is one which suggests itself in the first instance owing to the clearly marked divisions in them ; and when these are examined and compared it is seen that there is a strong case in favour of diversity of authorship. There are what appear to be four independent literary pieces, which have been, not very skilfully, joined together by a redactor ; these are comprised in chaps. iii-x ; xi-xii ; xiii ; and xiv. The reasons for regarding these as belonging to different authors will be dealt with as we proceed ; they must be considered separately.

i. *The Apocalypse of Ezra (Salathiel, 'the same is Esdras') iii-x.*

Kabisch, followed by Box, believes that there existed an Apocalypse of Salathiel ; but neither gives adequate grounds for the assumption. Box says : ' At the outset of our book we are confronted with a *datum* that strongly suggests the use by an editor of an independent source. In the very first verse we read : *I, Salathiel, who am also Ezra.* This strange identification of Salathiel with Ezra cannot be justified historically, nor can it be explained as due to defective historical knowledge on the part of the original writer of this section of the book. The only adequate explanation is that an editor or compiler is using an independent writing in which the Seer, who is the recipient of the revelations that follow, spoke in the name of Salathiel, and that the compiler who utilized this written source

was anxious, for some reason, to connect it with the name of Ezra, accordingly he inserted the words *who am also Ezra*.¹ But, as we shall see, there is another quite adequate explanation.

That an Apocalypse with the pseudonym 'Salathiel' may have existed is not impossible, though it must strike one as strange since Salathiel plays no part whatsoever in the history of the Jews, and his name never occurs elsewhere in our book; cp., on the other hand, xiv. 1; in the case of every other Apocalypse the name in the title is that of one who for one reason or another is regarded as important in the history of the people. That cannot be said of Salathiel. The name (in its Hebrew form it is Shealtiel) occurs in the Old Testament and in post-Biblical Jewish literature only in connexion with Zerubbabel, whose father he was (or uncle, according to I Chron. iii. 17); otherwise the name is of no account at all; there is, moreover, no reference to or mention of such an Apocalypse in any ancient writing, such as is the case with various Apocalypses which are not extant.² The assumption, therefore, of the existence at one time of an Apocalypse of Salathiel has nothing to support it. Nor is it much help when Kabisch argues that the objection to a little-known name like Salathiel is not formidable because those of Daniel, Baruch, and Enoch only gained their notoriety through Rabbinical narratives about them and that the same can have been the case with Salathiel;³ but is there any real analogy here?

James has adduced what certainly seems to be a fatal argument against the assumption of an 'Apocalypse of Salathiel' based only on the opening words of our present Apocalypse; his words must be quoted in full in order to see the force of his contention; he says: 'In the opening words (iii. 1) the supposed author describes himself as "I Salathiel, who am also Esdras", and this has served critics as an argument in favour of the thesis that the book is composed of a plurality of documents welded together by a final editor, and that one of these—the principal one—was an *Apocalypse of Salathiel*. But I believe I have found evidence to show that there was a Jewish tradition which identified Esdras with Salathiel independently of this book. Epiphanius (*On the Twelve Gems*) speaks of an "Esdras the priest—not that Esdras who was called Salathiel, whose father was Zorobabel, which Zorobabel was son to Jechonias". Epiphanius—who is wrong, by the way, in his genealogy—nowhere shows any knowledge of *4 Esdras*. It is evident from what he says, and from

¹ *The Ezra-Apocalypse*, p. xxii (1912).

² There is a late Hebrew Apocalypse called *The Book of Zerubbabel*; see James, *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament*, p. 59 (1920).

³ *Das vierte Buch Esra auf seine Quellen untersucht*, p. 10 (1889).

other sources, that the name Esdras was supposed to have been that of several persons; one authority definitely states that Esdras the prophet, the author of *4 Esdras* and Esdras the scribe, the author of the canonical *Ezra*, lived about 100 years apart; also, *4 Esdras* is dated, in its opening words, in the thirtieth year of the ruin of the city, whereas *Ezra* the scribe belongs to the middle of the next century. The equation of Salathiel with Esdras is based, I believe, upon I Chron. iii. 17, where we read, "and the son of Jeconiah, Assir, Salathiel, his son"; and Assir, in despite of phonetic laws, was thought to be, or was forcibly assimilated to, the name *Ezra*; Assir and Salathiel being taken as two names for one man.¹

This identification of Salathiel with *Ezra* may have been utilized by the writer of our book for a purpose of his own; for, after all, *Ezra*, i.e. the *Ezra* who is represented as the Seer of the Visions, was too well known to require differentiation from any other *Ezra*; and, in any case, as I Chron. iii. 17 has 'Assir, Salathiel', we should have expected our text to have read 'Esdras, the same is Salathiel'. We suggest, therefore, that the reason our Seer wrote 'Salathiel, the same is Esdras' was for the same reason that the name of Daniel may have been given to the hero of the book that bears his name; Daniel means, 'God is my Judge' in the sense of 'Vindicator'; and the name is a kind of motto indicating the relationship between the hero of the book and God. Our Apocalypse has been much influenced by the book of *Daniel*, and possibly in this particular also that influence is to be discerned. The Hebrew form of the Greek Salathiel is Shealtiel, which means, 'I have asked of God'; and the writer may have wished at the outset to emphasize the fact that in his troubled and perplexed state of mind occasioned by the moral problems confronting him, his only hope of solving them was to bring them before God and to ask Him for enlightenment; the frequent questions addressed to the Almighty, or to the Archangel, who represents Him, is a feature of the book. If James is right in his contention that Salathiel (Shealtiel) was traditionally regarded as another name for *Ezra*, it was for the writer of our book a peculiarly happy circumstance since it served as such an appropriate motto for his book. We recognize that we are in the domain of conjecture; but some special purpose there must have been for bringing in the little-known name of Salathiel (Shealtiel) alongside of such an important one as *Ezra*.

In view of what has been said, then, it is difficult to believe that there ever was such a book as the 'Apocalypse of Salathiel'. Chaps.

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 79 ff.; see also the *Journal of Theological Studies* for 1917, pp. 167 ff., 1918, pp. 347 ff.

iii-x are an *Ezra Apocalypse*, and, as in the case of *Enoch* (cp. the later *Slavonic Enoch*) Apocalypses under his name were written subsequently.¹

But when James writes further: 'If my view is correct, it does away with the only formidable argument in favour of the dissection of 4 *Esdras* into a congeries of documents,'² we are unable to agree with him if by this he means that the whole of chaps. iii-xiv are by the same author; for there is a good deal to be said in favour of xi-xii. 51, xiii, and xiv being independent pieces which were subsequently added to our Apocalypse. But before we come to these there is one other matter in connexion with iii-x which requires notice. In different parts of these chapters there occur four passages of an eschatological character which are regarded by some scholars as not being part of the original text, but as having been inserted later by the redactor. These passages are: iv. 52-v. 13^a; vi. 11-29;³ vii. 26-44; viii. 63-ix. 12. An abbreviated account of their contents is as follows: In *iv. 52-v. 13^a* there is a description of the signs which will precede the end of the present age; trouble among men, the disappearance of faith and truth, increase of iniquity, the end of the Roman power ('the land that thou seest now to have rule shall be waste', v. 3), extraordinary perversions in the physical world, and general chaos, women will bear monsters, strife among friends, knowledge and understanding will disappear; instead, unrighteousness will have sway, hope for better things will be in vain.

In *vi. 11-29* the signs which will precede the end of the present world-order are again enumerated, though in form varying from the preceding passage, but here the passing away of the world is more definitely expressed, and a time of happiness is foretold for those who shall still be living when the end comes, for evil will be blotted out, and faith and truth shall flourish. Here, therefore, the Messianic Age is looked for, though no Messiah is mentioned.

In *vii. 26-44* the signs are only referred to, not enumerated; but a further development is seen in that the sudden appearance of the Messiah is foretold, and he will reign on this earth for four hundred years; then he will die, and all life will come to an end; the world will return to the primeval silence for seven days. Then will follow the resurrection ('the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell therein in silence, and the secret places shall deliver their souls that were committed unto them', vii. 32); the Judgement thereupon takes place with reward for the

¹ See James, *op. cit.*, pp. 80 ff.

² According to Kabisch, vi. 13-25, 28.

Op. cit., p. 80.

righteous and torment for the wicked. The nations, who will also have risen from the dead, are bidden to choose between delight and torment. Then follows, somewhat incongruously, the signs which will be seen on the day of Judgement; these are similar to those which are usually said to precede the end of the present world-order.

In *viii.* 63—*ix.* 12 there is once more a shortened description of the signs; but a new element is brought in, for it will be the Most High Himself Who will visit the earth when 'a certain part of the signs are past' (*ix.* 1); the righteous will escape the perils, but the wicked will be tormented.

It will thus be seen that while these eschatological passages partake of a certain general similarity, each has some specific element not shared by the rest; thus, the first strikes the note of Pessimism, the second looks forward to the Messianic Age, the third tells of the Resurrection of the dead, while the fourth looks forward to the Advent of the Most High on earth. While it is evident that these varying elements are all part of traditional material, it seems equally clear that they are intended to form a developing series. Floating eschatological material of this kind would obviously be very familiar to an Apocalyptist and would have been absorbed by him; so that there does not seem to be sufficient reason for supposing that these four passages are excerpts from some other Apocalypse; it is true that *iv.* 52—*v.* 13^a comes in a little awkwardly; but is one justified in looking for stylistic perfection in apocalyptic writings? Neither Kabisch nor Box appears to us to offer convincing reasons for their contention that all four passages are a 'compilation of diverse elements' which have been interpolated in their present position by the redactor. The thing is, on the face of it, improbable; one can understand additions being appended to a book; but for large portions to be 'spatchcocked' into the middle of an author's work by somebody else is not the kind of procedure one looks for without some very pressing reasons, which in this case are not forthcoming; it is certainly not the *métier* of a redactor. As an Apocalyptist the writer would necessarily want to place on record what was both the traditional and current belief regarding the signs of the end. These were an integral part of the eschatological scheme, and for our Apocalyptist to have omitted all reference to them would have been strange indeed. Of only one of these passages (*iv.* 52—*v.* 13^a) can it be maintained that there is any awkwardness in the way in which it is brought in; the other three read quite naturally in their contexts.

ii. *The Eagle Vision, xi-xii.*

This is a self-contained piece which, for the following reasons, must be regarded as of different authorship from the Ezra Apocalypse just considered:

As will be seen from the notes in the Commentary, the eagle is a symbol of the Roman Empire; this is a theme with which the Seer of the preceding Vision is never occupied; it is, moreover, one which is alien to the temperament and outlook of that Seer because the course of history which is depicted in cryptic and allegorical form is *political*; the religious note is quite subordinate, but the writer of the Ezra Apocalypse is markedly religious.

In this Vision there are none of the characteristic features which abound in the earlier Vision; no moral problems, no perplexity, no wrestling with the difficulty of understanding the ways of God, none of that deep concern at the awful prospect of the position of the vast majority of mankind. In a word, the character of the Seer in this Vision is utterly different from that of the 'Ezra' in the former Vision.

Another point of contrast is that the Seer of this Vision is almost entirely concerned with the present world; only once in the Vision itself, and at the end of the interpretation, is there a quite cursory reference to the age to come; this is a striking difference when one remembers the other-worldliness of the Seer in the Ezra Apocalypse, whose gaze is always concentrated on the future.

But further, in this Vision the misery and trouble under which men are groaning are due to the overbearing oppression and cruelty of the Roman Empire; how different is this from the Seer in the other Vision who is never tired of urging that all the sorrow and unhappiness in the world has been brought about by sin. And following upon this, the Seer of this Eagle Vision teaches that peace and happiness will come to the world with the destruction of the *Roman Empire*, whereas the other Seer repeats again and again that just as sin is the cause of all unhappiness, so only by the destruction of *sin* can the reign of bliss come about.

The Messianic conception, too, is different in the two Visions; in that which we are considering the Messiah is to destroy the Roman power, then the Almighty Himself will rule; the Messiah plays no further part; there is no Messianic Age. In the other Vision there is to be a Messiah who will rule for four hundred years, and then the end will come.

And, finally, in this Vision the Seer is a nationalist, he thinks in terms of the nation, whereas in the former Vision the Seer is an

individualist, he is always thinking of his fellow-creatures individually.

Doubtless there are other points of contrast which could be adduced, but what has been said is sufficient to show how impossible it is to believe that these two Visions can have come from the same writer.

iii. *The Vision of the Man from the Sea, xiii.*

In this Vision, again, there are some individual features which mark it as of independent origin. The most striking of these is the picture of the Messiah. He is represented as pre-existent, and he is a heavenly, not an earthly Messiah; he appears suddenly, and, unlike the popular conception of the Davidic Messiah, he is not born, but reveals himself. The action of the Messiah in destroying his enemies is also different from anything else found in the various parts of this book; 'And, lo, as he saw the assault of the multitude that came, he neither lifted up his hand, nor held spear, nor any instrument of war; but only I saw how that he sent out of his mouth as it had been a flood of fire, and out of his lips a flaming breath, and out of his tongue he cast forth sparks of the storm . . . and fell upon the assault of the multitude which was prepared to fight, and burned them up everyone, so that upon a sudden of an innumerable multitude nothing was to be perceived, but only dust of ashes and smell of smoke.' Clearly we have here ancient mythological *traits*; but the whole conception is so different from the Messianic picture occurring in the other portions of our book that this alone would be sufficient to mark this Vision as of different authorship. Other points will be dealt with in the Commentary.

iv. *Ezra and the Holy Scriptures, xiv.*

There are some features in this piece which are similar to some found in other parts of the book. Thus, the conception of the heavenly Messiah is paralleled by that given in the preceding Vision, though his title here as the 'Son' of God is a special feature. The division of time in reference to this age is also unlike anything in other parts of our book. On the other hand, the pessimistic outlook is reminiscent of the Seer of the Ezra Apocalypse, and so, too, the reverence for the Law. But quite different from what occurs elsewhere is the thought of the assumption of Ezra: 'for thou shalt be taken away from men, and from henceforth thou shalt remain with my Son, and with such as be like thee'. The way in which in the Ezra Apocalypse the Seer identifies himself with sinners is so very

different from this that it is inconceivable that both can have come from the same author. In the other two Visions Ezra does not appear at all. Upon the whole, then, though the grounds are perhaps not so convincing as in the case of the two preceding Visions dealt with, independent authorship for this literary piece may be postulated; and this is further fortified by the concluding part where the restoration of the Holy Scriptures is dealt with; this is a feature which witnesses to interests wholly alien to the spirit of the Seers of the other Visions.

III

THE TEACHING OF THE BOOK

The most important part of our book which comes into consideration here is the Apocalypse of Ezra; the more prominent elements in the teaching of the other parts have been briefly alluded to in the preceding section, and are also dealt with in the notes in the Commentary; we can, therefore, concentrate on the central part of the book, which is of prime importance;¹ incidental references occur in the notes, but the various doctrines which are met with in this Apocalypse are of such special interest and importance that they demand a somewhat more detailed examination.

i. The Seer's Doctrine of and Belief in God.

It is precisely what we should expect when we find that in this book belief in God and in His attributes corresponds with the teaching of the prophets. If the doctrine of the *unity of God* is nowhere insisted upon that is simply because this fundamental tenet of Judaism is so deep-seated as to be taken for granted, and therefore needs no emphasis. But other divine attributes are insisted upon because the deep piety and faith of the writer impels him to express them. Thus, the *eternity and glory of God* are spoken of in the Seer's prayer in viii. 20 ff.: 'O Lord, thou that inhabitest eternity, whose eyes are exalted, and whose chambers are in the air; whose throne is inestimable; whose glory may not be comprehended; before whom the hosts of angels stand with trembling . . .' As the *One and only Creator God* is addressed thus: 'O Lord that bearest rule, didst thou not speak at the beginning, when thou didst fashion the earth, and that thyself alone . . .' (iii. 4); so, too, in the long enumeration of God's creative acts in vi. 38-55; and again in the passage vi. 1-6 the sole creatorship of God is insisted upon, as though in protest of the idea that any

¹ So far as doctrine is concerned the two opening and the two closing chapters hardly come into consideration.

other agency, such as Wisdom or the Word, had taken any part, however subordinate: 'In the beginning when the earth was made . . . then did I consider these things, and they all were made through me alone, and through none other; as by me also they shall be ended, and by none other.' These last words would appear to be directed against the belief that the Messiah would take any part in the great occurrences at the end of the world.

Further, following the prophetic teaching of God as the *God of history*, the Seer, in his brief review of world-history from the beginning, and also that of his own people, sees the guiding hand of God in all (iii. 9 ff.).

Finally, there are other divine attributes, which again and again, both directly and indirectly, the Seer loves to dwell upon; thus, in one of the most beautiful passages in our book, the love of God, in manifold directions, is thus spoken of: 'I know, Lord, that the Most High is now called merciful, in that he hath mercy on them which are not yet come into the world; and compassionate, in that he hath compassion upon those that turn to his law; and longsuffering, for that he long suffereth those that have sinned, as his creatures; and bountiful, for that he is ready to give rather than to exact; and of great mercy, for that he multiplieth more and more mercies to them that are present, and that are past, and also to them that are to come . . . and one that forgiveth, for if he did not forgive of his goodness, that they which have committed iniquities might be eased of them, the ten thousandth part of men would not remain living' (vii. 132-8). Such words show how the writer was penetrated with a deep love of God, and realized the divine love for His creatures. Wholly in accordance with this is his trust in the righteousness of God however perplexing the difficulties which confront him (see, e.g., iii. 28 ff.). It is one of the most striking and appealing elements in the character of our Seer that his loyalty to God, tried to the uttermost by the insoluble problems occasioned by his limited outlook, stood firm, in spite of every temptation to question the righteousness of God. He had absorbed all that was best in the prophetic teaching here, though he had to grapple, unsuccessfully be it said, with problems to which the prophets were for the most part strangers.

The particular problem with which we are here concerned meets us at the beginning of the book: Why has God delivered His people into the hands of their enemies? Israel is the chosen people of God, and though they have sinned, they are, at any rate, no worse than those who oppress them: 'I said in mine heart, Are their deeds any better that inhabit Babylon? And hath she therefore dominion over Sion?'

(iii. 28). What puzzles the Seer is that God should see the sins of Israel's oppressors and yet permit them to be in prosperity, while His own people, who are at least no worse than these, He leaves to perish: 'For I have seen how thou sufferest them sinning, and hast spared the ungodly sinners, and hast destroyed thy people, and hast preserved thine enemies' (iii. 30). 'Are the deeds of Babylon better than those of Sion? Or is there any other nation that knoweth thee beside Israel?' (iii. 32).

It will materially help us to understand the Seer's perplexity, as well as his generally pessimistic estimate of his own people, if we take a brief glance at the state of affairs as these existed in Palestine at the time, *circa* A.D. 100, when our book was written; this, as will be seen, is connected with the Seer's doctrine of God. There are especially two points which should be borne in mind here, one is concerned with Rome, the other with the internal conditions among the Jews. At the first contact with Rome, in the middle of the second century B.C., the relations between the Jews and Rome were of a friendly character; this continued for long after Rome had become the suzerain power; but the causes which led up to the war, culminating in the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, and the end of the Jewish State, had the effect of changing entirely what had become a traditional friendship between Rome and the Jews. With the reasons we are not here concerned; but the Jews, as a nation, had rebelled against their suzerain, and as rebels, who had only been subdued after a long-sustained effort, they were naturally regarded as a potential source of danger to the Empire. The relationship between Rome and the Jews therefore underwent a great change; the Jews had to be held in subjection. One of the most cruel marks of this, in the eyes of the Jews, was the ordinance put forth by Vespasian, according to which the Temple-tax, hitherto sent by the Jews all over the world for the upkeep of the Temple services, was now to be used for the benefit of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome. So that what had always been used for the glory of God the Jews were now forced to give for the upkeep of a heathen temple. Besides this there was the *fiscus judaicus*, levied on every Jew, which Domitian laid not only on all who were Jews by race, but also on all proselytes to Judaism; Roman citizens who accepted the Jewish faith were, moreover, sought out and punished. Nothing could more vividly illustrate the harsh attitude adopted by Rome towards the Jews and their religion. These and other things our Seer had lived through, and one can understand his perplexity at seeing the ever-growing power of this enemy of God, on the one hand, and the cruel

humiliation of His people, on the other; how could the righteous and just God permit it? True, our Seer emphasizes the sinfulness of his own people, and there is much significance in that. This brings us to our second point.

Among the parties, in the Jewish State, dating from before the beginning of the Christian era, there were two which necessarily disappeared with the fall of the State: the High-priestly Sadduceean party, composed largely of the aristocracy, obviously had no part to play under the conditions which now obtained. The nationalist party also disappeared; they had been the real opponents of Rome, it was they alone who had withstood to the death the Roman power, and before they were subdued they had been almost exterminated, mainly by the Roman armies, but also partly through internecine strife; the adherents of this party, which included the bulk of the people, were joined by the worst elements among the Jews, thieves, highway robbers, and criminals of every description; they had nothing to lose, and fighting was their pastime. That this element joined the ranks of the nationalists was deplorable, but inevitable; the nationalists themselves, though blindly fanatical, were at first, at any rate, actuated by high ideals; and these ideals were inspired by the Apocalyptists; these latter looked for, and taught, the near approach of the end of the present world-order and the advent of the Messiah; they were not fighters themselves, but their teaching inspired others to fight since they were convinced of the almost immediate appearance of the Messiah. When at last the nationalists were driven to despair all their worst characteristics came to the fore; any religious motives which may originally have inspired them went by the board; and the Apocalyptists, who had once been their teachers, had to contemplate, instead of followers moved with a holy zeal for God, ruffianly gangs of marauders bereft of every noble sentiment, actuated solely by the desire of gain and the lust of blood.

One party among the Jews remained, their adherents enormously decreased by being attracted to the militant nationalist party, or by being forcibly made to join it; this was the party of the Pharisees who, with whatever faults they may have had, and however limited their outlook, constituted, nevertheless, the true kernel of the nation. Naturally the Pharisees had no sympathy with the Apocalyptists, whom they regarded, unjustly no doubt, as largely responsible, through their teaching, for the condition to which the nation had been reduced. As a party, the Apocalyptists, too, ceased to exist with the downfall of the State.

Bearing these facts in mind, then, it is not difficult to understand

the frame of mind of our Seer. Looking back upon what had happened he sees God's chosen people humiliated to the ground, the ideals once held by them shattered, his own party discredited; and to crown all, the Roman Empire in overwhelming strength. How was he to reconcile all this with his belief in the righteous God of Israel? It is in his attitude here that we are able to estimate the noble character of this sorely tried Seer. He has lost faith in his people, but cannot cease from interceding for them; he is despised by the Law-loving Pharisees, yet he glories in the Law, he is left an isolated remnant of his fellow Apocalyptists, yet he persists in their teaching; he is wholly mystified by the ways of God, yet his belief stands firm. It is this last fact which stamps him as a true hero; here is where his greatest difficulty lay; but his loyalty to God remains unshaken; nothing can take away from him his love of God. The attempts which the Seer makes to explain the problem with which he is faced offer no solution; but they mitigate, for him at any rate, its poignancy. The first consideration which he brings forward is that the ways of God are past finding out; 'thou canst not find out my judgement' (v. 40), he is told by the Almighty; implicitly this theme is repeated again and again. Closely connected with this is the Seer's recognition of his own limited understanding in face of the divine omniscience. The angelic messenger sent to him is made to ask the Seer to do three things: to weigh a weight of fire, to measure a measure of wind, and to call back again the day that is past; fire, wind, and time; all elements belonging to the present world, like mortal man; things, therefore, with which he ought to be familiar. All are, of course, impossible for the Seer; if, therefore, his lack of knowledge prevents him from dealing with earthly things, how can he expect to understand the higher things of God? And, lastly, he consoles himself with the thought that this world will soon pass away and the new age will dawn, then he will be able to understand all things.

It will be noticed how these three considerations are directly connected with the Seer's doctrine of and belief in God.

ii. *The Law.*

Though in some respects our Seer could hardly be regarded as an orthodox Jew in the strict sense, his attitude to the Law was one of unbounded love and honour. In one very significant respect, it is true, he differs fundamentally from the orthodox view; to this we shall refer presently; but, otherwise, the Law is to him the outstanding mark of God's love for His creatures.

The Law, though primarily for God's own people, was originally intended for all nations; this is implied in v. 27, where it is said: 'And among all the multitudes of peoples thou hast gotten thee one people; and unto this people, whom thou lovedst, thou gavest a law that is approved of all.' This is more definitely brought out in vii. 21, where the Seer says that 'God straitly commanded such as came (into the world), even as they came, what they should do to live, and what they should observe to avoid punishment'. That other nations rejected the Law was to their own detriment; they had had their chance. Of those who kept it the Seer says: 'Hear me, thou Israel; and mark my words, O seed of Jacob. For, behold, I sow my law in you, and it shall bring forth fruit in you, and ye shall be glorified in it for ever' (ix. 30, 31). Its enduring character is again emphasized in ix. 37: 'The Law perisheth not, but remaineth in its honour.' Rather than that it should be despised let men perish: 'Yea, let many that now be perish, than that the Law of God which is set before them be despised' (vii. 20). On the other hand, divine compassion is with those who keep His Law: 'He hath compassion upon those that turn to his law' (vii. 133). A somewhat strange thought is expressed in iii. 20, where it is said that the Almighty permitted evil to remain in men in order that the Law might enable them to overcome it: 'And yet tookest thou not away from them their wicked heart, that thy law might bring forth fruit in them'¹ (vii. 17). The Law was ordained that the righteous might obtain salvation.

But in spite of all that our Seer has to say in honour of the Law he makes the remarkable and unorthodox statement that it is inadequate to save: 'We that have received the Law shall perish by sin, and our heart also which received it' (ix. 36; cp. iii. 22). This recognition of the inefficacy of the Law comes near to St. Paul's words in Rom. iii. 20: 'Because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.' In another way our Seer approximates to the thought of St. Paul, for, recognizing the absence of good works in many, he says: 'For in this, O Lord, thy righteousness and thy goodness shall be declared, if thou be merciful unto them which have no store of good works'; cp. viii. 32. Not entirely parallel, but somewhat similar in thought, are St. Paul's words in Gal. ii. 16: '. . . a man is not justified by the works of the law', and Ephes. ii. 5: '. . . by grace you have been saved.' It is quite evident that our Seer, in spite of his reverence for the Law, felt terribly the need of something better. While he is,

¹ See further on this passage below, p. 25.

therefore, in the main, orthodox in his views about the Law, in this one respect he shows himself out of touch with the religious teachers of his time.

iii. *The Doctrine of Sin.*

The intense seriousness with which the writer of this book contemplates the fact of sin comes out on every page of his writing. At the base of all the moral problems which trouble him he sees the all-pervading existence of sin. Why has Israel been delivered over into the hands of her oppressors? Because Israel has sinned. The prosperity of the nations perplexes him not because of that prosperity *per se*, but because those who enjoyed it are sinners. God created Adam, yet Adam sinned; God rules the world, yet everywhere there is sin. God guides the history of the world, yet the whole history of men and of their acts from the beginning of the world is a record of sin: 'And every nation walked after their own will, and did ungodly things before thee, and despised thy commandments, and thou didst not forbid (better, "hinder") them' (iii. 8). With the Seer's attempted answers to these problems we have dealt elsewhere; here we mention them because in all of them the subject of sin is involved in one way or another.

To the Seer the terrible thing about sin is that it is not merely a series of individual wrong acts, but an evil principle in which the whole human race has been entangled from the beginning, the cause of the general corruption being the evil germ in the heart of man and the result of which must be the destruction of the world. Because of sin all suffering and sorrow, and death itself, became the lot of humanity. Whence came it then? The answer is given in several passages: 'For the first Adam, bearing a wicked heart, transgressed and was overcome; and not only he, but all they also that are born of him' (iii. 21). 'For a grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, and how much wickedness hath it brought forth unto this time! And how much shall it yet bring forth until the time of threshing come! Ponder now by thyself, how great fruit of wickedness a grain of evil seed hath brought forth. When the ears which are without number shall be sown, how great a floor shall they fill!' (iv. 30-2). 'O thou Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, the evil is not fallen on thee alone, but upon all of us that come of thee' (vii. 118).

That our Seer framed this theory of the origin of sin is highly improbable, it is more likely to have arisen gradually (there is, however, certainly no hint of it in the Old Testament); but he was

far too honest, and had too sensitive a conscience to shift the responsibility of sin on to somebody else's shoulders in this way. For if men sin because they are Adam's offspring, they cannot help themselves; and the fault is not their's, but Adam's, when they do wrong. Our Seer maintains, therefore, that men sin of their own free-will, possibly in imitation of Adam, but independently of him: '... then they that inhabited the city did evil, in all things even as Adam and all his generations had done' (iii. 26); and this is often implied elsewhere. The universality of sin, further, is one of its fatal features: 'For, in truth, there is no man among them that be born, but he hath dealt wickedly; and among them that have lived there is none which hath not done amiss' (viii. 35).

Our Seer's conception of sin is, therefore, simple and terrible enough, and to it is due his generally pessimistic frame of mind. But there is another point in connexion with it which demands a few words. We are confronted with two facts: on the one hand, the sin of Adam; on the other, the resultant effect of this, which is, that all men sin, without hope of escape from its baneful grasp. It is natural to ask, where, according to the Seer, is the point of connexion between these two facts? How does he explain to himself the process whereby the whole human race is sinful through the sin of the first man? Needless to say, he does not explain it; but his answer, such as it is, is really contained in the passages quoted above, as well as some others. In Adam there was created the *Yetzer ha-ra'*, the evil tendency, expressed in Latin by *cor malignum* or *cogitamentum malum*; and because all men are created in the likeness of Adam, therefore this 'evil tendency' is part of their nature. Nothing but the Seer's deep sense of reverence could have restrained him from drawing the logical inference from this, and imputing the creation of sin to the Almighty; but he contents himself by saying that it would have been better if Adam had been restrained from sinning (vii. 116). What must strike one as extraordinary is that nowhere does our Seer suggest that men are tempted to sin by any external agency, such as Satan; the impulse to sin, the root of evil, is inherent in man; it is the misfortune of his constitution. To have imputed sinful acts to a power outside of man would have greatly eased the situation for the Seer; but clearly he believes in nothing of the kind.

The doctrine of sin in our book, then, centres in the recognition of its existence; a very deep sense of sin is evinced all through; it occasions the Seer endless sorrow and sympathy with humanity, and more especially with his own people; this is, in fact, one of the outstanding elements in our book. But when the Seer attempts to

discern the origin of sin and its prevalence, and its transmissions from Adam to the whole human race, it is no matter of surprise to find that he fails.¹

iv. *The Doctrine of Human Free-will.*

This subject is closely connected with those of the Law and Sin. If our Seer was perplexed regarding the problem of the ways of God, if he was involved in further perplexity in considering the subject of the origin of evil, it lies also in the nature of things that he should find himself hopelessly at sea when he deals with the question of human free-will.

In some passages free-will is definitely asserted, though it is, as a rule, described as being used in an evil direction; thus, in iii. 8 it is said: 'And every nation walked after their own will, and did ungodly things before thee, and despised thy commandments, and thou didst not forbid them.' Similarly in viii. 56-8: 'For when they had received liberty, they despised the Most High, thought scorn of his law, and forsook his ways . . .;' cp. vii. 21 ff., and so often elsewhere. It is exceptional when, by implication free-will is used for the performance of what is good; an example of this occurs in vii. 77: 'For thou hast a treasure of works laid up with the Most High'; and in viii. 33 it is said: 'For the just which have many works laid up with thee, shall for their own deeds receive reward.'

In these and similar passages it is evident that the Seer believed that man was endowed with free-will, but that almost invariably he used it for doing what was wrong; only in very rare cases, righteous men forming such an infinitesimal minority, is the will exercised in accomplishing righteous acts. It is to be noted that in such cases there is no hint of divine grace inciting to righteousness. But that the Seer's mind was not clear on the subject of free-will emerges from the ambiguity observable in some other passages. Thus, it is said in iii. 20 in reference to Israel: 'And yet tookest thou not away from them their wicked heart, that thy law might bring forth fruit in them.' In other words, because of the presence of the wicked heart in men there was no possibility of the Law bringing forth fruit; if the evil heart had been taken away there would have been the possibility of the Law bringing forth fruit. That is to say that man is the slave of his *Yetzer*, the 'evil tendency', and in so far he has no free-will, and is forced by it to do evil; but to do evil is against the Law, so that man is really a helpless victim. Again, in vii. 17 it is said: 'O Lord that bearest rule, lo, thou hast ordained in thy law,

¹ See further below, pp. 89 f.

that the righteous should inherit these things, but that the ungodly should perish.' If this means that the ungodly are predestined to perdition, then, even if they had free-will it would avail them nothing (cp. iii. 22); but if it means that the ungodly, because they refuse to observe the Law, are doomed, then it implies that they have free-will, but that they only use it for doing what is wrong.

The fact is that, taking all the relevant passages into consideration, we are led to the conclusion that by laying such emphasis on the evil tendency in human nature our Seer practically does away with free-will; evil is so ingrained in the mass of humanity that although the Law has been given to man to guide him aright he is not capable of using it. In fact, our Seer is hopelessly pessimistic; according to his idea evil so dominates the world that there is no room for the action of divine grace whereby men might be drawn from evil to do what is right.

As a stage in the age-long history of the problems of grace and free-will, the attitude taken up in this book is profoundly interesting in spite of its one-sidedness. One's thoughts are naturally directed to the antithesis presented in later centuries by the teaching of Pelagius, who laid all the emphasis on man's free-will, by the sole action of which he could do what was right; in the case of neither does there seem to be any place for divine grace; according to our Seer, it cannot save man from perdition, while according to Pelagius, man does not need it to gain salvation. A St. Augustine was as much needed for the one as for the other!

v. *Universalism.*

There is a *trait* in our Seer's outlook which, in spite of his dismal pessimism, must command our sympathy. This is his solicitude not only for his own people, but for all men, in the tragic fate which, according to his belief, awaits them hereafter. For most Jews of his day, with the terrible experiences of recent years still fresh in their minds, the Gentiles, as the enemies of God and of His chosen people, would not unnaturally be thought of as destined to eternal torment hereafter; and the contemplation of such a thing would have caused no concern, possibly there may have been a measure of satisfaction at the idea of the wicked suffering according to their deserts.¹ Our Seer takes up a different attitude; true, he believes in the doom of almost the entire human race, but he includes his own people equally

¹ Cp. vii. 36: 'And the pit of torment shall appear, and over against it shall be the place of rest; and the furnace of hell shall be showed, and over against it the paradise of delight'; and *Enoch* xxvii. 3: 'In the last days there shall be upon them the spectacle of the righteous judgement in the presence of the righteous for ever.'

with the Gentiles; moreover, and this is the essential point, his sorrow at the lot of these is just as great as for his own people; he makes no distinction here. Thus, he utters the following pathetic lament regarding humanity as a whole: 'O thou earth, wherefore hast thou brought forth, if the mind is made out of dust, like as all other created things? For it were better that the dust itself had been unborn, so that the mind might not have been made therefrom. But now the mind groweth with us, and by reason of this we are tormented, because we perish and know it. Let the race of men lament, and the beasts of the field be glad; let all that are born lament, but let the four-footed beasts and the cattle rejoice. For it is far better with them than with us; for they look not for judgement, neither do they know of torments or of salvation promised unto them after death. For what doth it profit us, that we shall be preserved alive, but yet be afflicted with torment? For all that are born are defiled with iniquities, and are full of sins and laden with offences; and if after death we were not to come into judgement, peradventure it would have been better for us' (vii. 62-9). So that in contemplating the wickedness of all humanity, he thinks that the beasts of the field are happier than men; for they, at any rate, have no fear of hell, no looking forward to a terrible future hereafter. It is this comprehensive sorrow for all men, without distinction of race, which is so striking in a Jew of those times. However mistaken his pessimistic estimate of men, this world-embracing solicitude is greatly to his credit. And even when, on one occasion, in his natural predilection for his own people, he prays for them alone, he does not altogether forget the Gentiles, but commends them to the Most High: 'Now therefore I will speak; touching man in general, thou knowest best; but touching thy people will I speak, for whose sake I am sorry; and for thine inheritance, for whose cause I mourn; and for Israel, for whom I am heavy; and for the seed of Jacob, for whose sake I am troubled; therefore will I begin to pray before thee for myself and for them' (viii. 15-17). This is, however, exceptional; the Seer's far more usual attitude is to embrace all men within his purview; to give but one other illustration: 'For what is man, that thou shouldest take displeasure at him? Or what is a corruptible race, that thou shouldest be so bitter toward it? For, in truth, there is no man among them that be born, but he hath dealt wickedly; and among them that have lived there is none which hath not done amiss' (viii. 34, 35). All men have sinned, whether Jew or Gentile; but the fact of their being men makes them sinners, they cannot help themselves; will not the Most High take that into consideration?

It is in accordance with this world-view of our Seer that he regards the Law as having been intended not for the Chosen People alone, but for the Gentiles too; thus, in speaking of humanity in general—the transgression of Adam is referred to in vii. 11—it is said that ‘they were not obedient unto him (God), but spake against him . . . and said moreover of the Most High, that he is not; and knew not His ways; but they despised his law and denied his covenants; they have not been faithful to his statutes, and have not performed his works’ (vii. 22–4). That the Gentiles refused to observe the Law does not affect the Seer’s contention that it had been given to them; it had been the same, as he often says, with his own people.

Finally, following again his general attitude to the Gentiles, the Seer takes for granted that they will be included in the Resurrection: ‘And then shall the Most High say to the nations that are raised from the dead. . . .’¹ This view is by no means held by all the Apocalyptists, but we can fully understand that our Seer, with his sympathetic feelings toward the Gentiles, should have believed that, as part of the human race, they would necessarily be included in the Resurrection, whatever might subsequently happen.

It is thus clear that our Seer, in spite of many limitations, had a world-outlook very different from that of the ordinary Jew of his day; and while, owing to the painful circumstances of the times which had recently passed, we can fully appreciate the feelings of the latter, this only places in commendable contrast the attitude to the Gentiles of the writer of our Apocalypse.

vi. *Eschatology.*

We have seen that our Apocalyptic Seer despairs of the present world; consequently his gaze is constantly fixed on the age to come; and, as is to be expected in an Apocalyptic writing, the various elements of the eschatological scheme with which the Seer deals take up the major part of his book.

One fact needs emphasizing before we proceed to consider the details of the writer’s eschatology: there is a marked difference between this and other Apocalypses in that in the present work there is far less of the phantastic *traits* and *bizarre* pictures which are so characteristic of Apocalypses in general; also, the mythological element is less evident here, and this in spite of the use which the writer makes of traditional material.

In order to construct a clear picture of the somewhat involved

¹ We have shown above why we are unable to agree with Kabisch and Box in denying to the author of our book the passage in which this verse occurs.

eschatology of our book, it will be best to take the different elements separately, and see what the writer says about each.

The World to Come. The contrast between this world and the world to come is constantly emphasized, sometimes implicitly, but also in an explicit manner by the Apocalyptist:

To begin with, it is said in vii. 50 that 'the Most High hath not made one world, but two', the reference being, of course, to this world and the world to come. The contrast between the two, often referred to, is, for example, spoken of thus: 'This world is full of sadness and infirmities' (iv. 27), but in the Hereafter 'there is a city builded and set in a plain country, and full of all good things' (vii. 6). This evil world, therefore, must necessarily pass away before the new world can come: 'If, therefore, that which is sown be not reaped, and if the place where the evil is sown pass not away, there cannot come the field where the good seed is sown' (iv. 29; cp. vi. 20). Indeed, so corrupt is the present world that it must be destroyed before the new world can come: 'And the world shall be turned into the old silence seven days, like as in the first beginning; so that no man shall remain. And after seven days the world, that yet awaketh not, shall be raised up, and that shall die that is corruptible' (vii. 30, 31).

The near approach of the world to come will be heralded by wonderful and terrible signs, physical, moral, and political; as these have already been described,¹ the simple mention of them here will suffice. But the time of its approach has been pre-determined by God from the beginning; for when the Seer asks when the end will be, he is told that God 'hath weighed the world in the balance; and by measure hath he measured the times, and by number hath he numbered the seasons; and he shall not move nor stir them until the said measure be fulfilled' (iv. 37); similarly in vii. 70: 'When the Most High made the world, and Adam and all them that came of him, he first prepared the judgement and the things that pertain unto the judgement.' And the coming age will, therefore, be brought about by Him alone who has pre-determined all things: 'In the beginning, when the earth was made . . . then did I consider these things, and they were all made through me alone, and through none other; as by me also they shall be ended, and by none other' (vi. 1-6). It is, according to the somewhat cryptic words of vi. 9, 10, to follow immediately upon the passing away of the present world.

In a beautiful passage the Seer describes the felicities of the righteous in the coming age: 'For unto you is paradise opened, the tree of life is planted, the time to come is prepared, plenteousness is

¹ See above, pp. xv f.

made ready, a city is builded, and rest is established, goodness is perfected, wisdom being made perfect aforehand. The root of evil is sealed up from you, weakness is done away from you, and death is hidden; hell and corruption are fled into forgetfulness; sorrows are passed away, and in the end is showed the treasure of immortality' (viii. 52-4).

Alas, that, according to the Apocalyptist, but an infinitesimal remnant of humanity is destined to experience these joys: 'And now I see, that the world to come shall bring delight to few, but torments unto many' (vii. 47); 'the Most High hath made this world for many, but the world to come for few' (viii. 1); '. . . there be more of them that perish, than of them which shall be saved; like as a wave is greater than a drop' (ix. 16). Small wonder that the Seer implicitly protests against his own theory and asks repeatedly how a merciful God can suffer so many to perish (see e.g. vii. 132-9, viii. 8-14, 31-6).

The Messianic Age. This subject receives but scanty notice in our Apocalypse, the reason probably being that the Seer is so intent upon the world to come, and so despairs of the present world, that the traditional belief in a Messianic kingdom set up on earth does not appeal to him. Nevertheless, as a good Jew, he could hardly throw off this belief entirely; he says in vii. 28, 29: 'For my son the Messiah shall be revealed with those that be with him, and shall rejoice them that remain, four hundred years. After these years shall my son the Messiah die, and all that have the breath of life'; then comes the end of the world. Thus, the Messianic kingdom is to be set up on this earth, and it is, therefore, a temporal kingdom; this is the only passage in the Apocalypse where the Messiah himself is mentioned; elsewhere, however, the Messianic Age is referred to, but no Messiah appears as ruler; this is in vi. 25 ff.; here, after the terrors of the last times, the 'Messianic woes', have been described, it continues: 'And it shall be that whosoever remaineth after all these things that I have told thee of, he shall be saved, and shall see my salvation, and the end of my world . . .', then follows the description of the world to come. A passage parallel to this in essentials is ix. 1-11; here it is said that after a certain number of the 'Messianic woes' have come to pass, 'everyone that shall be saved, and shall be able to escape by his works, or by faith, whereby he hath believed, shall be preserved from the said perils, and shall see my salvation in my land, and within my borders, which I have sanctified for me from the beginning'; then comes the end; but in this passage, instead of a description of the world to come, there follows an enumeration of the evil works of the wicked, who will be in torment. Here again,

therefore, we have the 'Messianic woes', followed by the Messianic Age, no Messiah being mentioned, and then the end of the world. Only in this case the scene of the Messianic Age is the Holy Land; this passage is thus of a particularistic character, and differs in this particular from the former one cited.

The Messianic Age, therefore, plays a very small part in the eschatology of our Seer, for the reason already mentioned. It should be added that Box, following Kabisch, assigns all the passages in which the Messianic Age is dealt with to the redactor, and maintains that the theology of the Seer 'does not allow of any intermediate Messianic Age'. We are unable to agree with this; nor do the arguments put forth in support of the contention appear to us very cogent. That the Seer, with his other-worldly outlook, should leave the subject in the background is natural enough; but that he should have entirely discarded all belief in the Messiah is difficult to accept. How persistent and universal among the Jews was this belief long after this time is seen by the Bar-Kokhba revolt more than a century later.

The Intermediate State. The speculations of our Seer regarding this subject are very interesting; it is, of course, possible that he is placing traditional material under contribution here; but some of the thoughts expressed read like those of one who is himself framing ideas. How deeply his mind was attracted by the subject comes out clearly in these words: 'O Lord, show this also unto thy servant, whether after death, even now when every one of us giveth up his soul, we shall be kept in rest until those times come, in which thou shalt renew the creation, or whether we shall be tormented forthwith' (vii. 75). The answer to this is contained in a long and detailed description (vii. 78-99). The first act of all souls, whether of good men or bad, will be to give glory to God: 'For concerning death the teaching is: When the determinate sentence [decree] hath gone forth from the Most High that a man should die, as the spirit leaveth the body to return again to him who gave it, it adoreth the glory of the Most High first of all' (vii. 78). Thereupon the soul enters upon an existence of either misery or bliss according as to whether it belongs to a wicked or a righteous man. Their respective states are then described, each consisting of seven 'ways' of torment, or seven 'ways' of bliss, as the case may be (vii. 79-87 and 88-98). But at the end of these descriptions, in reply to another question asked by the Seer, he is told that for seven days immediately after death, and before the respective states are entered into, the souls will have freedom in order that 'they may see the things whereof thou hast been told, and afterwards they shall be gathered together in their

habitations' (vii. 100, 101). The mention of the 'habitations' suggests that these 'seven days' applies to the righteous only, since in verse 80 it is said that the souls of the wicked 'shall not enter into habitations, but shall wander and be in torments forthwith, ever grieving and sad'. These habitations or 'chambers' of the righteous during the intermediate state are referred to again in iv. 35: 'Did not the souls of the righteous ask question of these things in their chambers, saying, How long are we here? When cometh the fruit of the threshing-time of our reward?' Cp. iv. 41, 42. In the first of the passages quoted, it will be noted that retribution or reward follows immediately after death, and before the Judgement; one would expect, since the lot of the wicked and the righteous is already determined, that the Judgement would have taken place before they entered upon their respective final states, i.e. immediately after death; that is, however, not the case, for in the verses which follow, where the Judgement is spoken of, it is clearly implied that this follows after the intermediate state just described. Thus; according to our Seer, the intermediate state is itself a foretaste of what the wicked and the righteous will respectively experience in the world to come.

The Judgement. The most notable passage in our book in which this is described is vii. 33-5: 'And the Most High shall be revealed upon the seat of Judgement,¹ and compassion shall pass away, and long-suffering shall be withdrawn; but Judgement only shall remain, truth shall stand, and faith shall wax strong; and the work shall follow, and the reward shall be showed, and good deeds shall awake, and wicked deeds shall not sleep.' It is a day on which all that men have been accustomed to see in the physical world will have disappeared; no sun nor moon, no changes of season, no darkness and light, but only 'the splendour of the glory of the Most High'; and the Judgement is to last 'as it were a week of years'. When once the Day of Judgement has come there will be the final decision for all men, no interceding will avail for the wicked, and nothing shall be able to interfere with the bliss of the just: 'So never shall anyone pray for another in that day, neither shall one lay a burden on another, for then shall all bear every one his own righteousness or unrighteousness' (vii. 105); 'then shall no man be able to have mercy on him that is cast in judgement, nor to thrust down him that hath gotten the victory' (vii. 115). The Judgement has been pre-determined from the beginning: 'When the Most High made the world . . . he first prepared the judgement and the things that pertain unto the judgement' (vii. 70); by these last words are meant what is said in

¹ The Syriac Version, probably rightly, adds: 'and the End shall come'.

vii. 36: 'And the pit of torment shall appear, and over against it shall be the place of rest; and the furnace of hell shall be shewed, and over against it the paradise of delight.'

The Resurrection. In vii. 13 it is said: 'The ways¹ of the greater world (i.e. the world to come) are wide and sure, and bring forth fruit of immortality;' in themselves these words might mean nothing more than the immortality of the spirit without including the resurrection of the body; but they must be read in conjunction with some other passages. Thus, in vii. 32 the writer teaches that 'the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell therein in silence, and the chambers shall deliver those souls that were committed to them'. Similarly vii. 37: 'And then shall the Most High say to the nations that are raised from the dead . . .' These passages teach quite plainly the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. But these verses belong to one of the passages which some scholars (e.g. Kabisch and Box) regard as the work of the redactor, and not as part of the original work; we have already pointed out our disagreement with this view. Box maintains that our Seer did not believe in the resurrection of the body, 'what is anticipated is a pure immortality of the soul'. A somewhat critical passage in this connexion is v. 45 which both Kadisch and Box regard as authentic (we cite Box's rendering which gives the meaning better than that of the Revised Version): 'How, then, is it that thou hast (just now) said to thy servant that thou wilt verily quicken (*vivificans vivificabis*) all at once the creation created by thee? If then they (i.e. all the created) shall indeed be alive all at once, and creation (i.e. the world transformed) shall be able to sustain them, it might even now support them (all) present at once.' We find it difficult not to discern here a belief in the resurrection of the body, and apparently Box, too, feels that there is something to be said for this; he writes: 'By the expressions *quicken* and *be alive* in this passage the writer apparently means to describe the process by which the souls are assembled together alive to receive the final Judgement. The terms are borrowed from the current Palestinian phraseology, and bear different meanings in different contexts (cp. Volz, *op. cit.*, pp. 326 ff.). They might, of course, be applied to a bodily resurrection in the sense of the current orthodox belief; but if such a use were intended here some explicit mention of a bodily resurrection, describing the reunion of souls and bodies, would be desiderated. In the absence of such evidence it is best to assume that a judgement of souls alone is

¹ So the Ethiopic, no doubt correctly, against the Latin and Syriac Versions, which read 'entrances' (see further, the note on this verse).

referred to, or, preferably, of souls conceived as already endowed with a "spiritual" or soul-body.' Some evidence that our Seer held this latter conception is certainly to be desiderated. But it must be pointed out that while it is true to say that the terms *quicken* and *be alive* 'bear different meanings in different contexts', these contexts deal definitely either with life in this world or life in the next; one does not get contexts in which the terms 'quicken' and 'make alive' refer at one time to the immortality of the spirit, and at another to the resurrection of the body, at any rate not in the pages of Volz's work referred to. Volz himself understands the passage under consideration to refer to the resurrection of the body.¹

One other passage, the authenticity of which is not disputed, must be considered, viii. 52-4; here the lot of the blessed in the world to come is thus described: 'For unto you is paradise opened, the tree of life is planted, the time to come (i.e. the future age) is prepared, plenteousness is made ready, a city is builded, and rest is established . . . and in the end is showed the treasure of immortality.' How could our Seer have written words like these if he did not believe in the resurrection of the body? The tree of life, i.e. the enjoyment of its fruit; plenteousness; living in a city; partaking of rest; these are all things which postulate belief in a risen body, not merely the immortality of the spirit; and the words 'the treasure of immortality' in such a context show that in such a passage as vii. 13 the 'fruit of immortality' must also imply belief in a bodily resurrection.

But apart from the passages cited, one would naturally assume that the writer *would* believe in the resurrection of the body. This was one of the fundamental dogmas of Judaism; our Seer believed in those other fundamental dogmas, the Unity of God, and the Law, as we have seen; on two occasions only does he doubt the efficacy of the Law; but that is quite exceptional, his general attitude towards it no Pharisee, even, could have objected to; moreover, he believes in such doctrines as the election of Israel and the efficacy of works. If all these things do not receive more detailed treatment the reason is twofold; for one thing, he takes them for granted; in addition, he is an Apocalypticist, and his attention is riveted on things to come. It is true enough to say, as Box does, that 'Palestine was saturated with Hellenistic influence at this period' (though our book shows no trace of it), but it is certainly an exaggeration, as Wellhausen, Bousset, and others have pointed out, to say that 'Palestinian Juda-

¹ He adds: 'In solchen Aussagen ist die *ζωή* zunächst die physische Lebenskraft, die der Tote wiederbekommt, die in der Leiblichkeit liegt und die Bedingung für die Teilnahme am Heil bildet' (the italics are ours) (*Jüdische Eschatologie*, p. 326 [1903]).

ism was profoundly affected by it'; this may apply without any doubt to the Jews of the Dispersion, but not to those of Palestine; and even among those not so much to the fundamentals as to certain other non-essentials. Palestine *was* saturated with Hellenistic influence at this period, that is perfectly true; but upon whom was this influence brought to bear? On numbers of Hellenistic Jews, *but not on orthodox Jews*, and our Seer has shown that, in essentials, he was an orthodox Jew. Believing as he did, as we have seen, in the other fundamental doctrines of Judaism, why should he have discarded that one which professed belief in the resurrection of the body?

We are constrained, therefore, to maintain that in this, as in other respects, our Seer remained true to the Jewish faith.

The Eschatology of the other parts of the Book. In the 'Eagle Vision' the eschatology is of a purely political character; the writer is concerned with this world which is groaning under the tyranny of the great enemy, Rome. The Judgement is to come on Rome, carried out by the Messiah; then the Kingdom of God will be set up on earth; the Messiah in the Vision is depicted as a lion; this is 'the anointed one, whom the Most High hath kept unto the end of days, who shall spring up out of the seed of David, and he shall come and speak unto them and reprove them for their wickedness and their unrighteousness . . . he shall set them alive in his judgement, and when he hath reproved them, he shall destroy them. For the rest of my people shall he deliver with mercy . . .' (xii. 32-4); in an earlier part of the Vision it is said: 'The Most High also hath looked upon his times, and, behold, they are ended, and his ages are fulfilled . . . that all the earth may be refreshed, and be eased . . . and that she may hope for the judgement and mercy of him that made her' (xi. 44-6); the last words evidently imply the rule of God on earth, i.e. the theocratic kingdom.

It will, therefore, be seen that the eschatology of this part of the book is very different from that with which we have already dealt; in fact, this difference is one of the reasons for regarding this Vision as coming from another hand.

Different again is the eschatology of the Vision of the Man rising from the Sea; in this case it is the heavenly Messiah who comes and destroys the nations of the world, and then gathers together his own people, the ten tribes, and sets up his kingdom on earth (see further, on this, the notes in the Commentary). The other elements in the eschatological scheme which are dealt with in the 'Ezra Apocalypse' do not receive any notice in these parts of the book. In the final Vision eschatology is very briefly touched upon.

IV

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK FOR NEW
TESTAMENT STUDY

Our consideration of the doctrinal teaching of the book will have suggested that there are various points of attachment between this teaching and that of the New Testament; this subject, therefore, needs some attention. It is of special interest inasmuch as our book was written (see below, § V) not so very long after the definite severance of the early Christians from the Jewish Church.

i. *The Fall.*

There are several passages in which this subject is dealt with; these must first be examined. Through Adam's transgression death was appointed not only to him, but to his posterity: 'And unto him (i.e. Adam) thou gavest thy one commandment, which he transgressed, and immediately thou appointedst death for him and in his generations' (iii. 7; cp. vii. 11). The transmission of sin upon all flesh is again emphasized in vii. 118: 'O thou Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, the evil is not fallen on thee alone, but upon all of us that come of thee.'

But in various other passages the real cause of Adam having sinned is said to be due to the grain of evil seed, i.e. the *Yetzer ha-ra'*, the evil tendency, or impulse, which was implanted in him from the beginning; thus, in iv. 30 it is said: 'For a grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, and how much wickedness hath it brought forth unto this time, and how much shall it yet bring forth until the time of threshing come?' And this evil seed which corrupted his heart, and which was the cause of his sinning, was likewise transmitted to Adam's posterity: 'For the first Adam, bearing a wicked heart, transgressed, and was overcome; and not he only, but all they also that are born of him' (iii. 21).

Logically, therefore, since Adam was the victim of this evil tendency which was implanted in him from the beginning, he ought not to be held responsible for sinning, excepting in so far that he did not resist the evil impulse; but this would, of course, imply that evil was in existence before Adam. The Seer clearly does not recognize the incongruity of his position. But, at any rate, he does make Adam responsible; and lest it might be inferred that Adam's posterity could not help sinning because it was his offspring, the Seer plainly fixes responsibility on each individual, e.g. '. . . in all things doing

evil, as Adam and all his generations had done; for they also bear a wicked heart' (iii. 26); similarly, with greater emphasis, in vii. 48: 'For an evil heart hath grown up in us, which hath led us astray from these statutes, and hath brought us into corruption and into the ways of death, hath showed us the paths of perdition, and removed us far from life; and that, not a few only, but well nigh all that have been created' (cp. viii. 31, 59, 60).

Our Seer's doctrine of the Fall, then, centres in this: Adam first sinned, and whatever the cause of this, he was responsible for his sin; the result of it was death on himself and on all humanity, together with the transmission of sin on all his offspring, who, like him, were responsible for their sinful doings.

In turning now to the New Testament, it will be seen that, so far as the teaching on the Fall itself is concerned, there is entire agreement with what has been said in the passages just quoted. In Rom. v. 12 ff. we have the following: 'As through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men (cp. I Cor. xv. 22) for that all sinned. . . Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression.' Here we have in a nutshell teaching precisely parallel with that of our book, with the one exception that no reference is made to the evil tendency, but that is fully dealt with in Rom. vii. 14-25 (see below). In another respect, closely connected with this subject, there is also a point of contact between our Seer and St. Paul (though the latter develops it far more fully), and that is the inefficacy of the Law against sin. In our book it is said in iii. 22: '. . . and the law was in the heart of the people along with the wickedness of the root; so the good departed away, and that which was wicked abode still'; and again in ix. 36: 'We that have received the law shall perish by sin.' With this agrees what St. Paul says in Rom. iii. 20: 'Because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin'; and viii. 3: 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh . . .', and elsewhere in his epistles.

Regarding the evil impulse (what, as already remarked, in the Latin is called *cor malignum* or *cogitamentum malum*, both equal the *Yetzer ha-ra'*), while St. Paul never uses any technical terms for this, it was quite clearly in his mind when he wrote Rom. vii. 14-25; he agrees with our Seer as to its existence, but there is also a contrast between the two which is of extraordinary interest. Nothing in our book is more pathetic and touching than the insight which the writer gives of his inner, spiritual life: his deep sense of sin, the evil impulse

which masters him, convinces him that he must reckon himself among the great mass of sinful humanity; whatever good he may have done by observing the precepts of the Law will not avail to counterbalance his sins or to root out his evil nature; and therefore he is confronted with the awful prospect of the near approach of the last times, with the Judgement to follow, and torment in the world to come. Whatever gleams of hope may here and there lighten the darkness of his soul,¹ it is but momentary; his ineluctable fate holds him firmly in its grip; the conviction of sinfulness, the inefficacy of the works of the Law to justify, and therefore the certainty of eternal punishment! With that utterly hopeless outlook of this truly good man, we contrast what is revealed by a glimpse into the inner spiritual life of another, not less good; this one, too, felt that he was carnal, sold under sin, and was likewise convinced that the Law could not help, so that in momentary despair he cried, 'O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?' But while for the Jewish Seer there was nothing but a certain fearful expectation of judgement, and a fierceness of fire, this 'chief of sinners' was able in the depth of his gratitude to say, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord', because he had discovered, or had been vouchsafed to discover, the way of salvation (Rom. vii. 14-25).

ii. *The Election of Israel.*

In a poetical passage (v. 23-7) our Seer, gathering similes from the Old Testament, shows vividly his sympathy with the traditional belief in God's choice of Israel: 'Of all the woods of the earth, and of all the trees thereof, thou hast chosen thee one vine . . .'; elsewhere he contrasts all the nations of the world with Israel, 'we, thy people, whom thou hast called thy firstborn, thy only begotten, and thy fervent lover' (vi. 57, 58; cp. iii. 16); the nations are of no account, they are as spittle (vi. 55); and he goes so far as to say that the world was made for the sake of Israel (vi. 55, 59). This last claim illustrates the exaggerated idea of Israel's election which had grown up in course of time, and according to which the covenant made between God and His people was binding for ever, and could be dissolved by nothing. This is certainly not the teaching of the Old Testament, where the election of Israel on the part of God is always referred to as an act of divine love, or mercy, or grace (Deut. vii. 8, x. 15; Isa. xliv. 21, 22); and so far from the (for him, unusual) particularistic attitude taken up by our Seer, the Old Testament teaches that Israel was chosen to be the instrument of the conversion of the Gentiles (e.g. Isa. lxvi. 18; Zech. xiv. 16).

¹ See viii. 32, and 48, 49.

When we turn to the New Testament we find that this narrow view of the election of Israel is combated by St. Paul. 'It is important to note', write Sanday and Headlam, 'how the whole idea of the Old Testament conception is retained by him, but broadened and illuminated. Educated as a Pharisee, he had held the doctrine of election with the utmost tenacity. He had believed that his own nation had been chosen from among all the kingdoms of the earth. He still holds the doctrine, but the Christian revelation has given a meaning to what had been a narrow privilege, and might seem an arbitrary choice. His view is now widened. The world, not Israel, is the final end of God's action. This is the key to the explanation of the great difficulty of the rejection of Israel.'¹ So that while, on the one hand, St. Paul says that 'God did not cast off (*οὐκ ἀπώσατο*) his people which he foreknew' (Rom. xi. 2), and thus recognizes their election, he asserts, on the other hand, their rejection, in the words: 'For if the casting away (*ἡ ἀποβολή*) of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' (xi. 15). And one recalls in this connexion Matth. iii. 9 ff.: 'Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham . . .' Here, therefore, a great contrast is to be noted between the teaching of our book and the New Testament.

iii. *Eschatology.*

As will be seen from the notes in the Commentary, there are many parallels in eschatological details between our book and the New Testament, especially in the Synoptic Gospels; to go into the particulars of this here would be out of place, it must suffice to indicate the two following sets of passages in our book and in the Synoptic Gospels, respectively; a comparison of these will show how much identity of thought there is between the two sets: II Esdras iv. 52—v. 13^a; vi. 11—29; vii. 26—44, viii. 63—ix. 12; and Matth. xxiv. 6—31; Mark xiii. 3—27; Luke xxi. 5—28.

This is not the place to discuss the eschatological problem of the Gospels; but one remark may be hazarded: it is evident that both these sets of passages contain a large amount of floating eschatological material which had been handed down by tradition, and which was common popular property; the similar material found in other Apocalyptic books shows this to have been the case. This being so, one may well weigh the possibility as to whether the compilers of the Synoptic Gospels did not put into the mouth of our Lord a number of

¹ *The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 249 ff. (5 ed., 1914).

eschatological *traits*, when recording His words about the Second Coming, which He Himself did not utter, but which they believed to be appropriate additions to what He had said.

iv. *Other Parallels.*

It will be of interest to note some of the more striking incidental parallels between our book and the New Testament. To deal first with the Synoptic Gospels, apart from the signs of the last times:

In vii. 7 of our book the writer speaks of the narrow entrance which leads to the city builded in the plain country, symbolizing the abode of the righteous hereafter; in Matth. vii. 13, 14 it is said: 'Enter ye in by the narrow gate . . . for narrow is the gate, and straitened is the way that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it.' Our Seer, as has been pointed out, refers with sorrow more than once to the few only who will attain to a blessed hereafter.

In ix. 19 our Seer speaks of the 'table that faileth not' in the world that is prepared for the righteous, i.e. in the world to come; with this we compare the words in Matth. viii. 11 f.: '. . . many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down (i.e. recline at table) with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. . . .'

In II Esdras iv. 29, 30 the writer speaks of the evil seed sown in the heart of Adam which has taken root in all men, and he says: 'If therefore that which is sown be not reaped, and if the place where the evil is sown pass not away, there cannot come the field where the good is sown'; this is strongly reminiscent of the parable of the tares in Matth. xiii. 24-30, 37-40, especially verses 30, 'Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn'; and 39, 'the enemy that sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels'. Entirely different as the forms are in which the thoughts are expressed, the underlying idea in each is very similar.

We referred just now to our Seer's grief at the small number of those who will attain the world to come; the words of the Most High, in vii (60) are: 'I will rejoice over the few that shall be saved, inasmuch as these are they that have made my glory now to prevail, and of whom my name is now named'; and in viii. 3 again it is said: 'There be many created, but few shall be saved.' Similarly in Matth. xxii. 14 it is said: 'Many are called, but few are chosen'; cp. also Luke xiii. 23, 24: 'And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in by the narrow door; for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.'

In II Esdras iv. 33 the Seer asks, in reference to the time when the new age will come: 'How long? And when shall these things come to pass?' In like manner, the disciples asked our Lord: 'Master, when therefore shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?' (Luke xxi. 7).

In speaking of the world to come it is said in our book, vii [38]: 'Look on this side and on that; here is delight and rest, and there fire and torments'; and in viii. 59, in contrast to the lot of the righteous, it is that for the wicked 'thirst and pain' are prepared. With this compare Luke xvi. 23-4: 'And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

We have already noted some striking parallels between our book and the epistle to the Romans; one or two more from other epistles may be mentioned. In vii [89] of our book it is said of the righteous: 'In the time that they dwelt therein (i.e. in this world) they painfully served the Most High, and were in jeopardy every hour'; a similar thought occurs in I Cor. xv. 30: 'Why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour?'

In x. 7 of our book Zion (the heavenly Zion is meant) is personified as 'the mother of us all'; similarly in Gal. iv. 26 it is said that 'the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother'.

The 'rest appointed' for the blessed mentioned in viii. 52 of our book is dealt with at length in Hebr. iv. 1 ff., see especially verse 9: 'There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God.'

The thought of how transient the life of man is occurs in vii [61] of our book: 'These are they that are now like unto vapour and are become as flame and smoke'; the similar thought is expressed in Jas. iv. 14: 'What is your life? For ye are a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.'

One of the most striking parallels is the following; in II Esdras xii. 42 we have: 'For of all the prophets thou only art left us, as a cluster of the vintage, and as a lamp in a dark place, and as a haven for a ship saved from the tempest'; with this compare II Pet. i. 19: 'And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.'

These are very far from exhausting the many parallels which could be given—a large number occur in the Book of Revelation—but sufficient have been cited to show how many similarities in thought

and word between the two are to be found. It is not for a moment suggested that there has been any borrowing here; but the large amount of community of thought makes our book both interesting and important for the study of the New Testament.

V

THE DATES OF THE COMPONENT PARTS OF THE BOOK

As the dates of the different independent pieces, of which our book is made up, vary, we must take each component part separately. Regarding *chaps. i, ii*, there is so little in the subject-matter to guide us that it is impossible to do more than suggest a quite approximate date. Their fragmentary character increases the difficulty of arriving at any conclusion. The indication at the opening of the book is as illusory as that at the opening of the main part of the book, if taken literally (*iii. 1*). As is more than once pointed out in the Commentary, these chapters have come from the hand of a Jewish Christian, and as a somewhat anti-Jewish feeling is evinced, they cannot well belong to the earliest Christian times. The quite obvious references to passages in the Gospels would bring them at the earliest down to the end of the first century A.D. Again, if, as seems probable, *i. 40* (according to the Spanish text) was influenced by the Greek *Apocalypse of Baruch*, this would make the date of these chapters later than the early part of the second century A.D. And, once more, James believes with good reason that the writer of these chapters was well acquainted with the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*;¹ very little is known of the literary history of this work excepting that it is quoted by Clement of Alexandria; if the writer of *chaps. i, ii*, therefore, was acquainted with this Apocalypse he must, in all probability, have written after the middle of the second century A.D. This is, then, about as near as we can get to the date of *chaps. i, ii*.

More important, however, is the date of the main portion of our book, *chaps. iii-x*. And this is indicated quite clearly. In *iii. 1* it is said: 'In the thirtieth year after the ruin of the city . . .'; this purports to be in the thirtieth year after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar, i.e. 586 B.C.; similarly in *iii. 29* the Seer says, 'and my soul saw many evil-doers these thirty years' (see the note in the Commentary), i.e. during the thirty years since the fall of Jerusalem. That this date is intended to be a cryptic one becomes obvious as

¹ The fragments of a Coptic Version have been published by Steindorff, in *Texte und Untersuchungen* (Gebhardt and Harnack, 1899).

soon as one begins to study the book; the references to the fall of Jerusalem (e.g. iii. 2, vi. 19, x. 48, and elsewhere) are sufficient to make it clear that the A.D. 70 catastrophe is disguised under the date of the earlier fall of the city; such a device is characteristic of the Apocalypticists; the *Apocalypse of Esdras*, a Christian writing, of later date, opens with a date similar to that of our Apocalypse (Gunkel). Most authorities are, therefore, agreed that the central portion of our book belongs to the last decade of the first century A.D.

The date of the Eagle Vision, *chaps. xi, xii*, is likewise not difficult to determine; as, according to xii. 28 (see Additional Note on p. 144), the writer wrote before the death of Domitian, this portion of the book cannot have been written after A.D. 96; we may, therefore, conclude, with most authorities, that it belongs to some year between A.D. 80-96.

The date of the Vision of the Man from the Sea, *chap. xiii*, is slightly earlier; verses 38-40 describe the annihilation of the Gentiles and the bringing back of the ten tribes, the Dispersion, to their own land; the two tribes are therefore in Palestine; this, as Box, following Kabisch, points out, 'implies a historical situation for the interpretation of the Vision before A.D. 70, when the nation (= the two tribes) is in peaceful possession of Palestine. After A.D. 70 the situation of the two tribes is always represented as that of exile (a Babylonian exile).' How long before this year the Seer wrote his Vision nothing in the text indicates; the Jewish war, apart from the previous unrest, broke out towards the end of A.D. 66; that or the next year, when some initial Jewish successes took place, would have been an appropriate time for a writing such as this.

The fragment contained in *chap. xiv*, which deals with the inspiration not only of the canonical Scriptures, but also of the seventy secret books (the Apocalypses), suggests the period during which the question of the Canon was being finally discussed; if this is so, we can date it approximately A.D. 120; there is nothing else in the piece indicative of its date.

Regarding the last portion of our book, *chaps. xv, xvi*, the indications of date are clear, but as these are dealt with in the notes of the Commentary (see especially pp. 179 ff., 184, 188), it will be sufficient to say that they belong to the second half of the third century A.D.

VI

THE VERSIONS

That our Apocalypse—we are referring to the central part of the book, chaps. iii–xiv—was originally written in *Hebrew* does not admit of doubt. Wellhausen was the first to show this;¹ and Box has given a lot of illustrative material, proving conclusively a Semitic original;² ‘the textual phenomena certainly point to this (i.e. Hebrew) rather than Aramaic’. A Hebrew original is what one would naturally expect, since, long before the time that this Apocalypse was written Aramaic had been the current language of the Palestinian Jews, Hebrew being the literary language. Not a vestige of this Hebrew original has survived.

The first Version to be made was the *Greek*; of this only a few fragments have come down to us. James has collected a number of quotations from early writings which appear to imply a knowledge of our book; but the only direct quotations are: v. 35 quoted by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* iii. 16); viii. 23 quoted in the *Apostolical Constitutions* viii. 7; and in ii. 14 of this work there is a remarkable similarity of idea with vii. 103 ff. of our book.³ A Greek fragment, but not from the Apocalypse, viz. xv. 57–9, was discovered by Hunt in 1909 among the Oxyrhynchus Papyri.⁴

It is from this Greek Version that all the other Versions were made. First and foremost among these is the *Latin*; this is the most important, and it is to Bensly and James that the world is indebted for the *editio princeps* of the Version, including the long-lost passage in the seventh chapter, discovered by the former.⁵ Of less value, but important for the study of our book, are the Oriental Versions: the Syriac, Ethiopic, Armenian, and two Arabic Versions; in addition, fragments of a Sahidic and a Georgian Version are extant. Of these the Syriac is the most important. With the exception of the fragments, Violet has published all these six Versions in parallel columns, with *apparatus criticus*; there is the Latin text of this Version, and German translations of the Syriac, Ethiopic, and the two Arabic Versions, together with a Latin translation of the Armenian; an immense piece of work for which all students of IV Ezra must be

¹ *Vorarbeiten und Skizzen*, vi, pp. 234–9 (1899).

² *The Ezra-Apocalypse*, pp. xiv–xviii (1912).

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. xxvii–xxx.

⁴ Violet, *Die Ezra-Apokalypse* (IV Ezra), Erster Teil, p. xiv (1910).

⁵ *The Missing Fragment of the Fourth Book of Ezra* (1875).

grateful. In the second volume of his work he gives a German translation with notes.

The additional chapters (i, ii, xv, xvi) never existed in Hebrew; they go back to a Greek original; they are not contained in any of the Oriental Versions, and exist only in Latin.

VII

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II (IV) ESDRAS

PART I

ESDRAS' CHARGE

(*Chapters i, ii*)

Ezra receives a charge, according to which he is to declare their sinfulness to the Jewish people in captivity. The divine mercies in the past are recalled, yet in spite of these the people have forsaken their God; therefore punishment will overtake them. They are to be scattered abroad, and their inheritance is to be given to others. Upon these light shall shine for evermore. In a vision Ezra sees the great multitude of the redeemed, in the midst of whom stands the Son of God.

1. 1-3. *The Genealogy of Ezra.*

I. 1 THE second book of the prophet Esdras, the son of Saraias, the son of Azaraias, the son of Helkias, the son of Salemas, the son of Sadoc, the son of Ahitob, 2 the son of Achias, the son of Phinees, the son of Heli, the son of Amarias, the son of Aziei, the son of Marimoth, the son of Arna, the son of Ozias, the son of Borith, the son of Abissei, the son of Phinees, the son of Eleazar, 3 the son of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi; which was captive in the land of the Medes, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of the Persians.

1. *The second book of the prophet Esdras.* On the title 'II (IV) Esdras' see Intr., p. xi. The designation 'second' in the text, as distinct from the title, is unique in both the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, though it occurs, of course, in the New Testament. Esdras is only called a prophet elsewhere in xii. 42. In a MS. of the Spanish text (Lat. Version) he is called 'priest' (*sacerdos*), which James believes to be a correction of 'prophet'; cp. Ezra x. 10, 16; Neh. viii. 9. The form 'Esdras' occurs in the Spanish text, and is now found in the Clementine Vulgate; but the French text (Lat. Version) has the correct form, Ezra, which is that used in the best MSS. of the Vulgate of the canonical book of *Ezra*. We shall use the form Ezra here as being nearer the original.

the son of Saraias . . . With this genealogy cp. those given (1) in the canonical *Ezra* (vii. 1-5); (2) in I Esdras viii. 1, 2 (= Esdras A in the Sept.); and (3) in I Chron. vi. 1-14 (Hebr. v. 27-vi. 13); they all differ from one another in some particulars; but it will suffice to

point out that while Esdras is spoken of here as the son of Saraiah (Seraiah), in I Chron. vi. 14 it is Jehozadak who is the son of Seraiah; but further, Seraiah was put to death at the siege of Jerusalem (586 B.C.), according to II Kings xxv. 18-21; he lived, therefore, at the least, about a hundred and fifty years before the time of Ezra. The genealogy is omitted in the Spanish text, where it is simply said: 'Esdras the son of Cushi'; this curious fact James believes to have arisen through some scribe having taken the words from Zeph. i. 1, which has some points of similarity with the genealogy in the verses before us; but why he should only have borrowed 'Cushi' from Zeph. i. 1, and have left out Gedaliah, Amariah, and Hezekiah, is difficult to say. At any rate, the primary object of the genealogy before us is to make it clear that Ezra was of priestly descent.

3. *which was captive . . . Medes.* Cyrus was king of Anshan, a vassal state of Media; in 550 B.C. he revolted against his suzerain, Astyages, and conquered the land of the Medes. Then, in 538 B.C., he conquered Babylonia, and with it all the old territories of the Babylonian kings; these territories, joined to what he had already conquered, formed the Medo-Persian Empire.

Artaxerxes king of the Persians. Recent research has shown that the Artaxerxes here mentioned is the second of the name (Mnemon), who reigned 404-359 B.C., not Artaxerxes I (Longimanus), who reigned 464-424 B.C.

1. 4-12. Ezra is commanded to denounce the sinfulness of his people. In spite of divine mercies to the nation in the past the people have been unfaithful to their God, and have worshipped strange deities.

4 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 5 Go thy way, and shew my people their sinful deeds, and their children their wickedness which they have done against me; that they may tell their children's children: 6 because the sins of their fathers are increased in them: for they have forgotten me, and have done sacrifice unto strange gods. 7 Did not I bring them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage? but they have provoked me unto wrath, and despised my counsels. 8 Shake thou then the hair of thy head, and cast all evils upon them, for they have not been obedient unto my law, but it is a rebellious people. 9 How long shall I forbear them, unto whom I have done so much good? 10 Many kings have I overthrown for their sakes; Pharaoh with his servants and all his host have I smitten down. 11 All the nations have I destroyed before them, and in the east I have scattered the people of two

provinces, even of Tyre and Sidon, and have slain all their adversaries. 12 Speak thou therefore unto them, saying,

4. *And the word of the Lord came . . .* This phrase, so characteristic of the prophetic literature, never occurs in the canonical book of *Ezra*; its presence here is, no doubt, due to *Ezra* being spoken of as a prophet in the opening words of the book.

5, 6. The sequence of thought is difficult to follow in these verses; stereotyped phrases seem to have been written down without taking into account that they are illogical as they stand.

sacrifice unto strange gods. These words purport to have been uttered by *Ezra* to those of the Captivity who had chosen to remain in Babylonia rather than to return to their own land; there is nothing to show from the Biblical narrative that the Jews as a whole had forsaken the religion of their fathers (exceptions there certainly were), indeed, much on the contrary, for Babylonian Jewry became the centre of orthodox Judaism; the primary object of the return, first of Nehemiah and then of *Ezra*, with their respective following, was to establish in Palestine the orthodoxy that obtained in Babylonia.

8. *Shake thou then the hair of . . .* The point of these words seems to centre in what follows: 'and cast all evils upon them'; that we have here a reference to some old-world superstition is evident, though what precisely this was is not easy to say. The conjecture may be hazarded that inasmuch as cutting off the hair was a sign of mourning (see, e.g. Jer. vii. 29), the man who cut off his hair as a witness against any one thereby brought calamity upon him by a species of imitative magic. In this case the rendering of the Authorized Version, 'Pull thou off then the hair of thy head, and cast all evil upon them', would express the meaning of the act better than that of the Revised Version.

11. *and in the east I have scattered . . .* The Spanish reading *ad meridianum* for *in oriente* may well be due, as James suggests, to Zeph. ii. 4 (the influence of this book has already been referred to, see the note on verse 1), where the Septuagint reads: *Διότι Γάζα διηρπασμένη ἔσται, καὶ Ἀσκάλων εἰς ἀφανισμόν, καὶ Ἀζωτος μεσημβρίας ἐκριφήσεται*, ' . . . Ashdod shall be taken at noon-day.' The ambiguous *μεσημβρία*, says James, 'was taken to mean the quarter of the compass, not the time of day; and this was further corrected in the French text to "East", a quarter of the compass which would suggest itself as being more accurate'.

While, so far, the Spanish recension may well represent a more original form of the text, there is one expression in these verses which suggests the apocalyptic standpoint, and which may, therefore, owe its presence to the desire to approximate to apocalyptic when these chapters were attached to the *Ezra Apocalypse*; viz. the words *igni cremabi*; this may well be a deduction from the words of Matth. xi. 22, where 'the day of judgement' is referred to; the conception

regarding this may be gathered from such a passage as Matth. xiii. 42: ' . . . and shall be cast into the furnace of fire . . . ', cp. xiii. 50, Rev. ix. 2. In this case the Spanish recension will represent a later stage in the history of the text, though this is probably exceptional.

i. 12-27. An historical retrospect recounting God's mercies to the people in the past. In spite of these the people refused to be faithful to their God; therefore God will withdraw His mercy from them. With the whole section cp. Pss. lxxviii, cvi.

Thus saith the Lord, 13 Of a truth I brought you through the sea, and where there was no path I made for you highways; I gave you Moses for a leader, and Aaron for a priest. 14 I gave you light in a pillar of fire, and great wonders have I done among you; yet have ye forgotten me, saith the Lord.

15 Thus saith the Lord Almighty, The quails were for a token to you; I gave you a camp for your safeguard, nevertheless ye murmured there: 16 and ye triumphed not in my name for the destruction of your enemies, but ever to this day do ye yet murmur. 17 Where are the benefits that I have done for you? when ye were hungry and thirsty in the wilderness, did ye not cry unto me, 18 saying, Why hast thou brought us into this wilderness to kill us? it had been better for us to have served the Egyptians, than to die in this wilderness. 19 I had pity upon your mournings, and gave you manna for food; ye did eat angels' bread. 20 When ye were thirsty, did I not cleave the rock, and waters flowed out to your fill? for the heat I covered you with the leaves of the trees. 21 I divided among you fruitful lands; I cast out the Canaanites, the Pherezites, and the Philistines, before you: what shall I yet do more for you? saith the Lord.

22 Thus saith the Lord Almighty, When ye were in the wilderness, at the bitter river, being athirst, and blaspheming my name, 23 I gave you not fire for your blasphemies, but cast a tree in the water, and made the river sweet. 24 What shall I do unto thee, O Jacob? thou, Judah, wouldest not obey me: I will turn me to other nations, and unto them will I give my name, that they may keep my statutes. 25 Seeing ye have forsaken me, I also will forsake you; when ye ask me to be merciful unto you, I will have no mercy upon you. 26 Whensoever ye shall call upon me, I will not hear you: for ye have defiled your hands with blood,

and your feet are swift to commit manslaughter. 27 Ye have not as it were forsaken me, but your own selves, saith the Lord.

16. *ye triumphed not in my name . . .* i.e. they did not give thanks and praise to God for the overthrow of their enemies.

17. *Where are the benefits . . .* i.e. where is the remembrance of, or gratitude for, the benefits accorded?

20. *for the heat I covered you . . .* No reference to this occurs in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament as we now have it.

24-7. *I will turn me to other nations . . .* These words can hardly have been written by a Jew, see Deut. iv. 34. This is one of several passages in i, ii which point to a Jewish Christian as the author.

i. 28-32. The casting-off of Israel. The passage has clear indications of having been written by a Jewish Christian.

28 Thus saith the Lord Almighty, Have I not prayed you as a father his sons, as a mother her daughters, and a nurse her young babes, 29 that ye would be my people, and I should be your God; that ye would be my children, and I should be your father? 30 I gathered you together, as a hen *gathereth* her chickens under her wings: but now, what shall I do unto you? I will cast you out from my presence. 31 When ye offer oblations unto me, I will turn my face from you: for your solemn feast days, your new moons, and your circumcisions of the flesh, have I rejected. 32 I sent unto you my servants the prophets, whom ye have taken and slain, and torn their bodies in pieces, whose blood I will require *of your hands*, saith the Lord.

28. *Lord Almighty.* This title of God stamps the passage as Christian; in the Old Testament we have 'God Almighty' and 'the Almighty', but never 'Lord Almighty'; it occurs in II Cor. vi. 18, and in Rev. 'Lord God Almighty' occurs several times.

Have I not prayed you. . . Although the phraseology of this and the next verse is, in part, Biblical, the general thought is not; God chose Israel, and could be spoken of as their Father; but to say that He besought them to accept Him is to put things the wrong way round. It is evident that we have here an anti-Jewish polemic in which it is sought to exaggerate what was held to be the ingratitude of the Jews.

30. *I gathered you together . . .* This quotation from Matth. xxiii. 37 or Luke xiii. 34 only emphasizes what has already been said about the author being a Jewish Christian.

31. *When ye offer oblations . . .* This reads as though the writer were writing before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70; but probably it is only a reminiscence of such passages as Isa. i. 13, 14;

Am. v. 22. The reference to sacrifices and feasts suggests a converted Jew rather than a Gentile Christian as the writer.

32. *I sent unto you . . .* These words are a curtailed paraphrase of Matth. xxiii. 34, 35; cp. Luke xi. 49-51.

and torn their bodies in pieces. For *illorum* the Spanish text has *apostolorum*, which, in view of Luke xi. 49, is undoubtedly to be preferred; see note on verse 37.

i. 33-40. In place of Israel rejected God will choose 'a people that shall come' from the east; leaders of this people will be the patriarchs together with the prophets of old.

33 Thus saith the Lord Almighty, Your house is desolate, I will cast you out as the wind doth stubble. 34 And your children shall not be fruitful; for they have neglected my commandment¹ unto you, and done that which is evil before me. 35 Your houses will I give to a people that shall come; which not having heard of me yet believe me; they to whom I have shewed no signs shall do that which I have commanded. 36 They have seen no prophets, yet they shall call their former estate to remembrance. 37 I take to witness the grace of the people that shall come, whose little ones rejoice with gladness: and though they see me not with bodily eyes, yet in spirit they shall believe the thing that I say.

38 And now, O father, behold with glory; and see the people that come from the east: 39 unto whom I will give for leaders, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Oseas, Amos, and Micheas, Joel, Abdias, and Jonas, 40 Nahum, and Abacuc, Sophonias, Aggæus, Zachary, and Malachy, which is called also the angel of the Lord.

¹ Or, *together with you*

34. *unto you.* See marginal note of Revised Version.

35. *a people that shall come.* This can only refer to the Christian community.

which not having heard of me . . . Gentile Christians are meant, cp. Rom. x. 14 ff.

36. *They have seen no prophets . . .* Vulg. *Prophetas non viderunt, et memorabuntur iniquitatum eorum*; this is obviously wrong; the Revised Version follows the Spanish text: . . . *et memores sunt antiquitatum (-is) eorum*. The meaning seems to be that although the 'people that shall come' had never seen the prophets, they called to mind those who had been of old, i.e. their teaching, and acted upon it. In Ezek. xvi. 55 *antiquitatem* represents the Hebrew אִתְּךָ, 'former state', but in Isa. xxiii. 7, where both words also occur in the Hebrew and Vulgate, respectively, the meaning is 'antiquity';

so that in the verse before us what is meant is simply 'those of old time'.

37. *I take to witness . . . with gladness.* Here again the Spanish text is manifestly superior to the Vulgate; it reads: *Testantur apostoli populum venientem cum laetitia*; the mention of the apostles with the prophets (cp. verse 32) is what one would expect, see Luke xi. 49. James holds that the omission of *cujus parvuli exultant* in the Spanish text is accidental; in view of Matth. xxi. 15 he is doubtless right.

38. *And now, O father.* The Vulg. *Et nunc frater* is an obvious error; *pater* is read by one of the French MSS., but the text is in both cases corrupt, seeing that God is represented as the speaker; the probability is that something has fallen out. There is a clear community of thought between this verse and *Baruch* iv. 36, 37: 'O Jerusalem, look about thee toward the east, and behold the joy that cometh to thee from God. Lo, thy sons come, whom thou sentest away, they come gathered together from the east to the west at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God.'

the people that come from the east. The conjecture is worth hazarding as to whether there were not two thoughts at the back of the mind of the writer in speaking of the people from the east; if, as seems probable, the *Baruch* passage, just quoted, influenced him, he was adapting words which referred to the return of the exiles from Babylon (cp. Isa. xlix. 18, 'Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold; all these gather themselves together and come to thee . . .'; see also lx. 2, 4), and making them apply to the words of Matth. ii. 1, 2: ' . . . behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem . . . we saw his star in the east', and verse 10: 'And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.' It is true that from verse 11 the writer would seem to have lived in the Western Dispersion and might therefore be thinking of a people coming from Jerusalem, i.e. Jewish Christians coming from there to spread the faith in the west; but the list of the names of the 'leaders' which follows suggests Palestine rather than a country to the west.

39, 40. *unto whom I will give for leaders . . .* The text of the Spanish MSS. differs from this considerably; after the names of the three patriarchs occur those of Elijah and Enoch, followed by the Minor Prophets (with the omission of Haggai) in a haphazard order; the list concludes with the words: *et angelos duodecim cum floribus*. James believes this form of the text to be 'a more original one than the tame and obvious series of the French text'; but the inclusion of Elijah and Enoch is an apocalyptic trait of the Jewish type; the apocalyptic elements in the latter part of chap. ii are of the Christian type. It is worth considering, therefore, whether the list which includes Elijah and Enoch was not intended to be an approximation to apocalyptic, added in the prototype of the Spanish text when

chaps. i, ii were joined on to the *Ezra Apocalypse*. If so, the French text, not the Spanish, would be the more original, for the prefixing of these chapters to II (IV) Esdras is a later stage in their literary history.

Regarding the twelve angels with flowers in the Spanish text, James points to the Greek *Apocalypse of Baruch* xii. 1 ff., where it is said: 'Behold, angels came bearing baskets full of flowers. . . . These flowers are the merits of the righteous'; this is a Christian addition to the originally Jewish-apocalyptic work, belonging to the beginning of the second century A.D. This would also point to the Spanish text of the two verses under consideration being later than the French, assuming, that is, that the redactor was indebted to the Greek *Apoc. of Baruch* here.

As to the list itself James quotes an interesting parallel from *Sib. Orac.* ii. 245; among the names in this list occur those of Elijah and Daniel, but not that of Enoch. One other point is of interest: the list of the twelve Minor Prophets in the verses before us follows the order of the Septuagint, which differs from the Hebrew form so far as the first six are concerned. This points again to the writer being a Jewish Christian, since, as is well known, it was the Greek Old Testament which was the Bible of the early Church. The non-mention of Moses is a certain sign that the writer was not a Jew.

ii. 1-9. Israel has forsaken the Lord, they will therefore be scattered among the nations. A woe is also pronounced against 'Assur', which shall be brought to ruin like Sodom and Gomorrah.

II. 1 Thus saith the Lord, I brought this people out of bondage, and I gave them my commandments by my servants the prophets; whom they would not hear, but set my counsels at nought. 2 The mother that bare them saith unto them, Go your way, O my children; for I am a widow and forsaken. 3 I brought you up with gladness, and with sorrow and heaviness have I lost you: for ye have sinned before the Lord God, and done that which is evil before me. 4 But what shall I now do unto you? for I am a widow and forsaken: go your way, O my children, and ask mercy of the Lord. 5 As for me, O father, I call upon thee for a witness over the mother of *these* children, because they would not keep my covenant, 6 that thou bring them to confusion, and their mother to a spoil, that there may be no offspring of them. 7 Let them be scattered abroad among the heathen, let their names be blotted out of the earth: for they have despised my ¹covenant. 8 Woe unto thee, Assur, thou that

hidest the unrighteous with thee! O thou wicked nation, remember what I did unto Sodom and Gomorrah; 9 whose land lieth in clods of pitch and heaps of ashes: even so also will I do unto them that have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord Almighty.

¹ Another reading is *sacrament*, or *oath*.

1. *I gave them my commandments . . .* Cp. i. 32; that the writer speaks of the commandments having been given through the medium of the prophets, and not Moses, shows that the writer was not a Jew by religion.

2. *The mother that bare them . . .* Jerusalem personified; for Jerusalem pictured as the mother of the people see Isa. liv. 1 and Gal. iv. 26, 27. Cp. also *Baruch* iv. 9, 10, and x. 7 of our book.

Go your way, O my children; for . . . Cp. *Bar.* iv. 19.

3. *I brought you up with gladness . . .* Cp. *Bar.* iv. 11.

before me. 'Before him' is what the context demands.

5. *As for me, O father, I call . . .* It is the writer who speaks in his own name here.

my covenant. Read 'thy covenant'.

6. *and their mother to a spoil.* The writer is thinking of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

7. *Let them be scattered abroad . . .* Jewish communities were to be found in every part of the Roman Empire.

let their names be blotted out . . . These cruel words testify to the bitter enmity between the Jewish and Christian communities.

my covenant. Read 'thy covenant'; the Vulg. has *sacramentum*; see R.V. marg.

8. *Woe unto thee, Assur.* i.e. Rome; in Rev. xiv. 8, xvi. 19, xvii. 5, xviii. 2, 10, 21, Rome is designated 'Babylon'; so, too, in *Apoc. Bar.* lxvii. 7, *Sib. Orac.* v. 143, 159. Assyria is used elsewhere, too, as a synonym for a world-power antagonistic to the Jews; thus, in Zech. x. 10 it is used of Syria (the Seleucid Empire), similarly in Isa. xxvii. 13; and it is used as a synonym for Babylon in *Sib. Orac.* iii. 268, cp. also iii. 160, 'Assyrian Babylon'. See also xv. 30 below. James pointedly refers to Zeph. ii. 9, 13: 'Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah. . . . And he will stretch forth his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like the wilderness.' Other parallels between *Zephaniah* and the writer of these chapters have been noted (i. 1, 11).

9. *whose land lieth in . . . ashes.* In place of this the Spanish text reads: *quorum terra descendit usque ad infernum*, which recalls Matth. xi. 23: 'And thou, Capernaum . . . thou shalt go down to Hades' (*usque in [ad] infernum descendes*); the context refers to Sodom. It is difficult to say which of these two renderings is likely

to approximate more nearly to the original; the simplicity of the Spanish text makes it perhaps more acceptable.

ii. 10-14. Ezra is commanded to tell Israel that the 'kingdom of Jerusalem' which should have been theirs is to be given to another people; to this latter will also be given the everlasting tabernacles which had been prepared for Israel. The section ends with some fragmentary quotations from the New Testament.

10 Thus saith the Lord unto Esdras, Tell my people that I will give them the kingdom of Jerusalem, which I would have given unto Israel. 11 Their glory also will I take unto me, and give these the everlasting tabernacles, which I had prepared for them. 12 They shall have the tree of life for an ointment of sweet savour; they shall neither labour, nor be weary. 13 ¹Ask, and ye shall receive: pray for few days unto you, that they may be shortened: the kingdom is already prepared for you: watch. 14 Take heaven and earth to witness, take them to witness; for I have given up the evil, and created the good: for I live, saith the Lord.

¹ Another reading is *Go*.

10. *my people*. i.e. the Christians; the writer uses an expression which had always been applied specifically to Israel; but conceivably Hos. ii. 23 may have been in the writer's mind: '. . . and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people.'

the kingdom of Jerusalem. This expression does not occur in the Bible; doubtless Matth. xxi. 5 was in the mind of the writer: 'Behold, thy King cometh unto thee . . .'

11. *and give these the everlasting tabernacles*. Cp. Luke xvi. 9; this offers an interesting explanation of the difficult words in the Gospel parable, 'that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles'; as the passage before us shows, the word 'they' must be understood as referring to God, and rightly, for in post-Biblical Jewish writings 'they' is used for God for reverential reasons. *which I had prepared for them*. i.e. for Israel.

13. *Ask, and ye shall receive*. This, and not *Ite* of the Vulg., is the right reading. Cp. Matth. vii. 7, 8, Luke xi. 9, 10; the quotation is inexact here.

14. *for I have given up the evil*. The Vulg. reading, *contrivi enim malum* 'for I have broken (or crushed) evil', has something in favour of it; the Revised Version follows the reading *omisi*, of some MSS. But possibly this is an inaccurate reminiscence of Isa. xlv. 7: 'I make peace, and create evil. I am the Lord, that doeth all these things.' All the writer's quotations here seem to be mental rather than verbal.

ii. 15-32. God exhorts the Church, personified, like Jerusalem, as the mother of children, to be of good cheer. God's promises to the Church. An exhortation to good works, together with further promises of happiness.

15 Mother, embrace thy children ; I will bring them out with gladness like a dove ; stablish their feet ; for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord. 16 And those that be dead will I raise up again from their places, and bring them out of the tombs: for I¹ have known my name in them. 17 Fear not, thou mother of the children: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord. 18 For thy help will I send my servants Esaias and Jeremy, after whose counsel I have sanctified and prepared for thee twelve trees laden with divers fruits, 19 and as many fountains flowing with milk and honey, and seven mighty mountains, whereupon there grow roses and lilies, whereby I will fill thy children with joy. 20 Do right to the widow, judge the fatherless, give to the poor, defend the orphan, clothe the naked, 21 heal the broken and the weak, laugh not a lame man to scorn, defend the maimed, and let the blind man come unto the sight of my glory. 22 Keep the old and young within thy walls. 23 Where-soever thou findest the dead, set a sign upon them and commit them to the grave, and I will give thee the first place in my resurrection. 24 Abide still, O my people, and take thy rest, for thy quietness shall come. 25 Nourish thy children, O thou good nurse, and stablish their feet. 26 As for the servants whom I have given thee, there shall not one of them perish ; for I will require them from among thy number. 27 Be not careful overmuch: for when the day of tribulation and anguish cometh, others shall weep and be sorrowful, but thou shalt be merry and have abundance. 28 The nations shall envy thee, but they shall be able to do nothing against thee, saith the Lord. 29 My hands shall cover thee, so that thy children see not² hell. 30 Be joyful, O thou mother, with thy children ; for I will deliver thee, saith the Lord. 31 Remember thy children that sleep, for I shall bring them out of the secret places of the earth, and shew mercy unto them: for I am merciful, saith the Lord Almighty. 32 Embrace thy children until I come, and proclaim mercy unto them: for my wells run over, and my grace shall not fail.

¹ Or, *recognise*

² Lat. *Gehenna*.

15. *Mother*. James takes it for granted that the city of Jerusalem is meant, as in ii. 2-4; from various indications in the context it seems more probable that the Church is meant; there is, possibly, an implied contrast between Jerusalem, the mother of the historical Israel, and the Church, the mother of the spiritual Israel, cp. Rom. ii. 28, 29; Gal. iv. 24-7. The conception of the Church as the Mother is very ancient, cp. e.g. the *Ecclesia Mater* mosaic (4th cent.) of Thabraca in Tunis (Cabrol, *Dict. d'Archéol. Chrétienne*, pp. 2231 ff., where other examples will be found).

I will bring them out with gladness. The Spanish text has *da illis letitiam*, but after *columba* adds the words *que ducit filios suos*, which James regards as an explanatory gloss; he also points to the Septuagint of Zeph. iii. 1, where a city is compared with a dove (*ὡς ἡ ἐπιφανὴς καὶ ἀπολελυτρωμένη πόλις ἢ περιστερὰ*). This must evidently have been in the writer's mind; but that does not necessarily militate against his having adapted the representation of Jerusalem as the mother of Israel to the Church as the mother of the faithful.

stablish their feet. The Authorized Version has: 'Make their feet as fast as a pillar'; on this Lupton says: 'This reading, found in Coverdale, is due to a conjectural alteration of *sicut columba* to *sicut columnam*; and this again was due to a needless connexion of *sicut columba* with the words following, instead of those preceding.'

16. *and bring them out of the tombs*. Cp. Matth. xxvii. 53.

for I have known my name in them. The Vulg. has *quoniam cognovi nomen meum in Israel*, an erroneous alteration of the text by a scribe who misunderstood the purpose of the passage. Cp. Rev. xiv. 1: 'And I saw, and behold the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of His Father, written on their foreheads.'

17. *thou mother of the children*. See the illustration of the Mother Church with her children in Cabrol, *op. cit.*, p. 2235; this is of late date (1191), but it was copied from an earlier document; the idea, as we have seen, goes back to an early century.

18. *Esaias and Jeremy*. The Spanish text adds 'and Daniel', again an approximation to apocalyptic, see note on i. 40.

and prepared for thee. One of the Spanish MSS. (*M*) reads *parabo* and 'makes the last clause into a promise to send the twelve Apostles, who are thus once more found in connexion with the prophets' (James).

twelve trees laden . . . Cp. *Enoch* xxiv. 3 ff.: '. . . and fragrant trees encircled the throne. And among them was a tree such as I have never yet smelt . . . it had a fragrance beyond all fragrance, and its leaves and blooms and wood wither not for ever; and its fruit is beautiful . . .'; xxv. 5, 'Its fruit shall be for food for the elect'; and Rev. xxii. 2; while it is this last passage that the writer had primarily in mind, he was evidently (see below) familiar with the book of *Enoch*.

19. *fountains flowing with milk and honey.* This expression is taken from Deut. xxxi. 20 and applied to the writer's apocalyptic picture, cp. 'the bright spring of water', reserved for the righteous, spoken of in *Enoch* xxii. 9.

seven mighty mountains. Cp. *Enoch* xxiv. 2: 'And I . . . saw seven magnificent mountains all differing from each other', pointing clearly to the writer's use of *Enoch*.

23. *Wheresoever thou findest the dead . . .* Cp. Tobit i. 17-19.

set a sign . . . This refers presumably to the sign of the cross; on early Christian inscriptions in catacombs in Rome the cross often appears.

I will give thee the first place . . . It is difficult to say what precisely was in the mind of the writer here; possibly he was thinking of Matth. xx. 23: '. . . to sit on my right hand, and on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared of my Father.'

25. *Nourish thy children, O thou good nurse.* The writer, who is so inexact in his quotations, and who evidently quotes from memory, may have been thinking of Eph. vi. 29-32 without remembering the real import of the passage. Or else, applying to the Church what the prophet wrote regarding Jerusalem, Isa. lx. 4 may have been in his mind: '. . . and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms' (lit. 'nursed upon the side'; Sept. ἐπ' ὤμων ἀρθήσονται).

26. *there shall not one of them perish.* Cp. John xvii. 12. As the writer cannot have been referring to our Lord here, and as, in view of verses 10, 11, he cannot have meant Jerusalem, the obvious conclusion is that he was referring to the Church.

27. *for when the day . . .* For the thought cp. *Enoch* xcvi. 8: 'Woe to you, ye mighty, who with might oppress the righteous; for the day of your destruction is coming. In those days many and good days shall come to the righteous—in the day of your judgement.'

29. *My hands shall cover thee . . .* For this verse the Spanish text reads: *Me tremunt omnia: oculi mei genam vident*; this James believes to be genuine; 'the French text', he says, 'has altered it because its connexion with the context was not superficially obvious. But that connexion is a real one. The elect are not to fear the nations, because God, who is omnipotent, is on their side.'

30. *O thou mother.* See note on verse 15.

31. *for I shall bring them out . . . earth . . .* Reading *de latilibus terrae* for *de lateribus terrae*. The Spanish text reads: *quoniam ego illos exquiram de latitudine terrae, et confirma mare in amplitudine glorie tue, et misericordiam faciam*. On this James's suggestive conjecture must be quoted: 'Can *latilibus* of S (one of the French MSS.) be a corruption of *volatilibus*? and does *confirma mare* conceal the true reading? *mare* would correspond well with *terra*. 'I will require them of the fowls of the earth and of the fish of the sea' would be the

obvious sense; and it is rather curious that ἰσχυσον, the equivalent of *confirma* is not a difficult corruption of ἰχθύων. The Greek sentence would run ἐκζητήσω αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ πετεινῶν τῆς γῆς καὶ ἰχθύων θαλάσσης. The words in *amplitudine glorie tue* then fall into place as meaning “when thy glory is fulfilled”. He compares *Sib. Orac.* ii. 233:

ῥσσας δ' ἐν πελάγεσσιν ἀπόλεσε κῦμα θαλάσσης
ἦδ' ὀπόσας θῆρες τε καὶ ἐρπετὰ καὶ πετεηνὰ
βουήσαντ', ἀλέας ταύτας ἐπὶ βῆμα καλέσσει.

And see also *Enoch* lxi. 5: ‘And these measures shall reveal everything that is hidden in the depths of the earth, and those who have been destroyed by the desert, and those who have been devoured by the fish of the sea and by the beasts, that they may return and stay themselves on the day of the Elect One.’ Cp. also vii. 32 of our book; *Enoch* li. 1 and *Rev.* xx. 13 may also be mentioned.

ii. 33-41. Ezra tells of how he received a charge to go to Israel; his words to them are rejected, therefore he turns to the Gentiles. To them, if they will hearken, he proclaims everlasting life. The end of the world is near, therefore he exhorts them to withdraw from the shadow of the world. The Church, pictured as Sion, is told that the number of her children is fulfilled.

33 I Esdras received a charge from the Lord upon the mount Horeb, that I should go unto Israel; but when I came unto them, they would none of me, and rejected the commandment of the Lord. 34 And therefore I say unto you, O ye nations, that hear and understand, look for your shepherd, he shall give you everlasting rest; for he is nigh at hand, that shall come in the end of the world. 35 Be ready to the rewards of the kingdom, for the everlasting light shall shine upon you for evermore. 36 Flee the shadow of this world, receive the joyfulness of your glory: I call to witness my saviour openly. 37 O receive that which is given you of the Lord, and be joyful, giving thanks unto him that hath called you to heavenly kingdoms. 38 Arise up and stand, and behold the number of those that be sealed in the feast of the Lord; 39 they that withdrew them from the shadow of the world have received glorious garments of the Lord. 40 ¹Look upon thy number, O Sion, and make up the reckoning of those of thine that are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the law of the Lord. 41 The number of thy children, whom thou longedst for, is fulfilled: beseech the power of the

¹ Another reading is *Take*.

Lord, that thy people, which have been called from the beginning, may be hallowed.

33. *upon the mount Horeb.* As the 'ready scribe in the law of Moses' (Ezra vii. 6) Mount Horeb would be thought an appropriate spot on which to receive his commission.

35. *the everlasting light . . .* Cp. Isa. lx. 20; *Enoch* lviii. 3: 'And the righteous shall be in the light of the sun, and the elect in the light of eternal life'; Rev. xxi. 23, xxii. 5.

36. *the shadow of this world.* Cp. *Wisdom* ii. 5: 'For our life is the passing of a shadow, and there is no putting back of our latter end.' *receive the joyfulness of your glory.* *Accipite jocunditatem gloriae vestrae*; while this gives good sense, the reading of the Spanish text (*Fugite umbram seculi hujus*) *captivitatem gloriae vestrae*, is more pointed; to flee from the world which has, as it were, been a prison preventing them from attaining to eternal bliss, is a more inspiring thought than that expressed in the words, 'receive the joyfulness of your glory', which is self-evident, since if they enter into glory the joyfulness follows necessarily.

I call to witness my saviour openly. *Ego testor palam salvatorem meum*; for this the Spanish text reads: *Testor salvatorem meum mandatum esse a domino*, 'I testify that my saviour hath been commanded of the Lord', i.e. that the Saviour is coming, to accomplish the number of the elect and to fulfil their joy (James). This reading is certainly to be preferred.

39. *have received glorious garments.* In *Enoch* lxii. 16 it is said: 'And they shall have been clothed with garments of glory, and these shall be the garments of life from the Lord of Spirits; and your garments shall not grow old, nor your glory pass away before the Lord of Spirits.'

40. *O Sion.* Cp. Hebr. xii. 22, 23, equivalent to 'the Church of the first-born'.

that are clothed in white. Cp. *Enoch* lxxi. 1: 'Their garments were white, and their faces shone like snow'; Rev. iii. 4, vi. 11, vii. 14.

have fulfilled the law of the Lord. This Jewish element in the midst of so many Christian thoughts points again to the author as a Jewish Christian.

41. *which have been called from the beginning.* Cp. Rom. viii. 29, 30.

This doctrine of predestination was characteristic of the Apocalypticists, as we shall see (note on iv. 36), see also Rev. vi. 11, ' . . . until their fellow servants also . . . should be fulfilled.'

II. 42-8. Ezra's Vision of the risen saints.

42 I Esdras saw upon the mount Sion a great multitude, whom I could not number, and they all praised the Lord with songs. 43 And in the midst of them there was a young man of

a high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns, and was more exalted; whereat I marvelled greatly. 44 So I asked the angel, and said, What are these, my Lord? 45 He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God: now are they crowned, and receive palms. 46 Then said I unto the angel, What young man is he that setteth crowns upon them, and giveth them palms in their hands? 47 So he answered and said unto me, It is the Son of God, whom they have confessed in the world. Then began I greatly to commend them that stood so stiffly for the name of the Lord. 48 Then the angel said unto me, Go thy way, and tell my people what manner of things, and how great wonders of the Lord God thou hast seen.

42. *the mount Sion.* i.e. the heavenly Jerusalem. In Rev. iv. 1 (the vision of the Apocalyptist there is described in chaps. iv ff.) it is said: 'I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven.'

43. *in the midst of them there was a young man.* Cp. *Enoch* lxvi. 1: '. . . And with Him was another being whose countenance had the appearance of a man, and his face was full of graciousness, like one of the holy angels.' Lupton quotes some passages from the 'Pastor' of Hermas (*Sim.* ix. 6, and viii. 2, 3): 'And lo! after a little while I saw an array of many men coming, and in the midst a man lofty in his stature, so as to overtop the tower. . . . And the angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought. And there were brought crowns as it were of palms and he crowned the men. . . . "Who then, Lord", say I, "are they that are crowned, and that enter into the tower?" "These be they that suffered for the Law".'

45. *and have confessed the name of God.* The Spanish text has . . . *nomen filii dei.* Cp. *Enoch* xlv. 3. 'And their souls shall grow strong within them when they see mine elect ones, and those who have called upon my glorious name.'

47. *Then began I . . . name of the Lord.* The Spanish text reads, *Ego vero laudare et magnificare cepi dominum.* James remarks that 'the idea contained in the French text [followed by the Revised Version] is not a very usual, nor, I think, a very early one; it might even be taken as characteristic of an age when reverence for saints and martyrs had developed very considerably'. He believes that, on the whole, the French text of these chapters represents a later form of the original text than the Spanish; so that the words of this verse must not be allowed to suggest a later date for these first two chapters than is probably actually the case; see *Intr.* § V.

PART II

THE EZRA APOCALYPSE

(*Chapters iii-x*)

THE FIRST VISION: iii. 1—v. 19

The Seer, Salathiel (= Ezra), in grieving over the fate of his people, is faced with the problem as to how a righteous and just God can permit His chosen people to be subject to the tyranny of a godless nation that knows Him not. The Seer is not blind to the fact that Israel has sinned; but there are extenuating circumstances; all men are sinners because of Adam's sin, they are the victims of an uncontrollable fate. True, Israel has received the Law which ought to have been effective in preserving them from sin; but experience had shown that even the Law was not sufficiently powerful to keep them in the straight path as long as the 'evil germ' was part of their nature. Nevertheless, even if Israel had fallen short, there were nations far worse than they were, and who neither acknowledged God nor knew of His Law; and these nations were in prosperity, while Israel was suffering grievous oppression.

In this perplexity the Seer is confronted by the archangel Uriel. The Seer had raised a doubt as to the justice of the divine providence, and had implied, firstly, that as man was created by God, He must ultimately be responsible for the evil that is in man's nature; therefore to punish him was unjust; and, secondly, that to suffer His chosen people to be oppressed by a far more wicked nation, which itself enjoyed prosperity, was not what might be expected of a righteous God. The archangel, in reply, shows him that he is unable to understand the simplest things of everyday life, how then can he expect to apprehend the ways of the Almighty? In reply to the second point, the archangel tells the Seer that the end of the present world-order is approaching, and with the advent of the new age all the incongruities of these times will be rectified. The Seer then asks how long the present age is to last; to this the archangel replies that the new age cannot come until the predestined number of the righteous has been reached. It is then shown to the Seer that the greater part of the present world-order is already past; a description of the signs heralding the approach of the end is then given.

iii. 1-3. Introduction to the Vision.

III. 1 In the thirtieth year after the ruin of the city, I Salathiel (the same is Esdras) was in Babylon, and lay troubled upon my bed, and my thoughts came up over my heart: 2 for I saw the desolation of Sion, and the wealth of them that dwelt at

Babylon. 3 And my spirit was sore moved, so that I began to speak words full of fear to the Most High, and said,

1. *In the thirtieth year . . .* This purports to be the thirtieth year after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. when the city was taken by Nebuchadrezzar (II Kings xxv. 1 ff.); the year would therefore be 556 B.C.

I Salathiel (the same is Esdras). Salathiel is the Septuagint form of Shealtiel (Shaltiel in Hag. i. 12, 14, ii. 2), the father of Zerubbabel (Ezra iii. 2, v. 2; Neh. xii. 1), though in I Chron. iii. 17-19 Zerubbabel is given as the son of Pedaiiah the brother of Shealtiel, thus the nephew of the latter. In the New Testament the Septuagint form is followed (Matth. i. 12; Luke iii. 27). In the history of the Jews Salathiel plays no part at all. The curious addition in brackets (the Latin has *qui et Ezras*) is at first sight meaningless, for Ezra lived quite a century and a half later than Salathiel; for a suggested explanation of the reason why these words occur here see Intr. § II i.

and lay troubled . . . The Seer indicates by these words his perplexity of mind aroused by the problems with which he is about to deal so fully; prominent among these was that introduced by the words which follow.

2. *The desolation of Sion, and . . .* Here we get, at the outset, one of the main themes of the book; the incongruity, in view of the fact of the existence of a righteous God, that the godly are in adversity while the Gentiles who do not acknowledge Him enjoy full prosperity. He contrasts the desolation of Sion, i.e. the chosen people, with the wealth of the Babylonians; this is a cryptic, allegorical way of contrasting the servile condition of the Jews of the time of the writer with the evergrowing power of Rome.

3. *And my spirit was sore moved.* In the introduction to the second Vision (v. 20), as well as to that of the third (vi. 35), the Seer says that he fasted seven days, this being a preparation for receiving the Vision; it is possible that a similar note occurred in the text here originally; on the other hand, there is no mention of fasting preparatory to the fourth Vision (ix. 26), where the preparation consists of eating herbs of the field.

words full of fear. i.e. words of reverential awe.

iii. 4-36. Address to the Most High; the question as to how His way may be comprehended seeing that Israel who knows God is in the hands of his impious enemy.

The argument consists in an historical retrospect in which the Almighty is reminded of His creation of Adam, of the sin of Adam and of how, on account of this sin, death became the heritage of the human race; then, because of the almost universal sinfulness of men the flood came and all flesh, with the exception of Noah and his righteous household, was destroyed. In course of time the earth was re-peopled, but

the result of Adam's sin still worked, and the prevalence of ungodliness became worse than at first. Therefore God chose one from among sinful humanity whom he loved, namely, Abraham; from him came Isaac, who bore Esau and Jacob, and the offspring of the latter became in due course a great multitude. Mention is then made of what are conceived to be the three outstanding events in the history of the chosen people: the exodus from Egypt, the giving of the Law, and the raising-up of David, the founder of the Holy City. Finally, the Seer points out that the result of Adam's sin again asserted itself; the inhabitants of the city became evil, and therefore God delivered the city over to their enemies (verses 4-27). After this retrospect, the main object of which is to recall the origin of sin and its universal and inevitable prevalence on all flesh, the Seer comes to his real point: Are the chosen people any worse than the Babylonians? Why then are the former destroyed, and the latter preserved? Here the Seer apparently realized the flaw in his argument; for if, as he has been at pains to point out, his own people had sinned equally with all flesh, why should he expect them to receive preferential treatment? If they were no worse than the Babylonians, they were certainly no better (cp. verses 28, 31); therefore he adds a further question, which, in view of his own people's sinfulness, sounds somewhat illogical: 'Is there any other nation that knoweth thee beside Israel? or what tribes have so believed thy covenants as these tribes of Jacob?' The obvious retort would be that this only increased their sinfulness since they sinned knowingly while the Babylonians sinned in ignorance. Possibly some such thought may have been in the Seer's mind; it would, at any rate, account for the very naïve words which follow: 'Weigh thou therefore our iniquities now in the balance, and theirs also that dwell in the world; and so shall it be found which way the scale inclineth.'

III. 4, 5. The creation of Adam.

4 O Lord that bearest rule, didst thou not speak at the beginning, when thou didst fashion the earth, and that thyself alone, and commandedst the ¹dust, 5 and it ²gave thee Adam, a body without a soul? yet it was the workmanship of thine hands, and thou didst breathe into him the breath of life, and he was made living before thee.

¹ So the Syriac and Æthiopic.

² So the Syriac.

4. *and that thyself alone.* This emphasis on the sole creatorship of God reads almost like a protest against the conception contained e.g. in such a passage as Prov. viii. 29, 30, where Wisdom is made to say: 'When he marked out the foundations of the earth, then was I by him as a master workman'; so, too, in the book of *Wisdom* vii. 21: 'For she (i.e. Wisdom) is the artificer (*Τεχνίτις*) of all.'

and commandedst the dust . . . Cp. Gen. ii. 7; with this very materialistic idea cp. the Midrash *Bereshith Rabba*, where it said that God

created the first man a lump of earth into which he breathed the breath of life.

5. *and thou didst breathe into him . . .* A curious saying of Rabbi Jehudah (end of the 2nd cent. A.D.) is preserved in *Ber. Rab.* § xiv, according to which God created Adam with a tail, but afterwards took it away lest he should have the appearance of an animal.

iii. 6-8. Adam's sin, and death on all humanity in consequence.

6 And thou ledest him into paradise, which thy right hand did plant, before ever the earth came forward. 7 And unto him thou gavest thy one commandment: which he transgressed, and immediately thou appointedst death for him and in his generations; and there were born of him nations and tribes, peoples and kindreds, out of number. 8 And every nation walked after their own will, and did ungodly things before thee, and despised *thy commandments*, and thou didst not forbid them.

6. *paradise*. In Gen. ii. 8 'a garden in Eden'. In the apocalyptic literature the word is used both in reference to the paradise in which Adam was placed, and in the eschatological sense of the abode of the blessed hereafter; see, further, note on vii. 34.

before ever the earth came forward. According to one form of the Babylonian Creation story the earth came forth from the ocean (Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, p. 419 [1895]), cp. II Pet. iii. 5. Paradise is here conceived of as having been in existence before the creation of the world; but in vi. 2 it is said that the *earth* was made 'before the foundations of paradise were laid'. This inconsistency is found elsewhere in the apocalyptic literature and arose from the question as to whether paradise belonged to the heavenly regions or to the earth. In the *Secrets of Enoch*, viii. 5, 6, the writer solves the difficulty by saying that it lies 'between corruptibility and incorruptibility', i.e. neither in heaven nor on earth, but between the two.

7. *and immediately thou appointedst death . . .* The implication is that had the commandment not been disobeyed death would not have been the lot of man. This is in accordance with Babylonian belief, as well as with the original form of the Old Testament garden of Eden story (see further the present writer's *Immortality and the Unseen World*, pp. 193 ff. [1921]).

A similar implication that Adam was not originally intended to be mortal occurs in *Apoc. Bar.* iii. 17, cp. xix. 8, xxiii. 4; according to *Enoch* lxix. 11 men were not intended to be mortal since they were created like the angels; in *Slav. Enoch* xxx. 11 it is said that Adam was created as a great and glorious angel; it was only because men succumbed to the temptation of the fallen angels that death came upon them. In *Wisd.* i. 13, 14 it is said that God did not create death;

it came into the world through the envy of the devil (*Wisd.* ii. 23, 24). On the other hand, it is taught that Adam was created a mortal being, so *Ecclus.* xiv. 17, xvii. 1, 2, xl. 11; and Ben-Sira probably represents the more common view. This difference of teaching is easily accounted for when it is remembered that in *Gen.* i. 27 it is said that Adam was created 'in the image of God', and therefore immortal, while in *Gen.* ii. 7 it is said that he was formed 'of the dust of the ground' (cp. iii. 19, 'dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return'), and therefore mortal. On the question of Adam's sin being inherited by all flesh, see below, under verses 20, 21.

8. . . . *after their own will . . . and thou didst not forbid them.* Here arises the interesting question of the Seer's conception of human free-will. According to him, presumably, man's free-will can only be exercised so long as God does not hinder it, but that, in effect, is pure Determinism, which in other respects is characteristic of the Apocalyptists. On the other hand, that man can exercise his own will in despite of the divine will is taught, e.g. in the Lord's Prayer; 'Thy will be done on earth . . .', i.e. *may* Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. And this is, implicitly, the teaching of St. Paul (*Rom.* viii. 18-23). In resisting the flow of divine grace man exercises his own will and successfully resists the divine will. This seems to deny the divine omnipotence; but it is not really so, for can greater omnipotence be conceived of than that which is able to restrict its own power? And if it be God's will that man's will should be free there can be no questioning of God's omnipotence if man has his own way in spite of God's will.

When, further, the Seer says: 'thou didst not forbid (or hinder) them', he (no doubt quite unconsciously himself) raises another problem: What was God's attitude to those who did not acknowledge Him because they had never been brought to the knowledge of Him?

To the strictly orthodox Jew of those days the answer was simple: they were outside the pale of God's mercy; and this was in the main, though not exclusively, the attitude of the Seer of this Vision, as is clear from vi. 56-9, vii. 60, 61; but it is important to note that this particularistic outlook is by no means always adopted by the Apocalyptists; it is the universalistic attitude which predominates (see e.g. *Enoch* x. 21, xi. 1, 2, xlix. 1, l. 2-5, xc. 30, xci. 14; *Sib. Orac.* iii. 702-26; *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 19; *Test. xii Patr.* Levi ii. 11; and many other passages); in these the broader outlook inspired by Hellenistic influence asserts itself. But though the strictly orthodox Jews took the narrower view it must not be forgotten that even among them an ardent propagandism, which was often successful in gaining proselytes, witnessed to the presence of higher ideals; this was especially the merit of the best type of Pharisee (see, e.g. Bertholet, *Die Stellung der Israeliten und Juden zu den Fremden* [1890]).

iii. 9-11. The Flood; Noah and his family are saved.

9 Nevertheless again in process of time thou broughtest the flood upon those that dwelt in the world, and destroyedst them. 10 And it came to pass that the same hap befell them; like as death was to Adam, so was the flood to these. 11 Nevertheless one of them thou leftest, Noah with his household, *even* all the righteous men *that came* of him.

10. *And it came to pass . . . befell them.* Just as Adam sinned, and therefore had to die, so this generation, having sinned, had also to die. The flood is often taken as the type of the final destruction of the world, see, e.g. *Enoch* x. 2, liv. 7 ff., xci. 5; *Slav. Enoch* iii. 43; *Matth.* xxiv. 37; *Luke* xvii. 26.

like as death was to Adam . . . The origin of sin, bringing death upon all mankind, is here traced to Adam (cp. iv. 30-2, vii. 118); similarly in the *Apoc. Bar.* xlvi. 42, 43, and in, the later, *Bereshith Rabba* § xix, on Gen. iii. 7. But elsewhere the origin of sin is traced to the fallen angels, cp. *Enoch* vi-viii, and in x. 7 it is said: 'And heal the earth which the angels have corrupted . . .', the chief of these fallen angels is spoken of in the following verse, where it is said: 'And the whole earth has been corrupted through the works that were taught by Azazel; to him ascribe all sin.' Another theory is found in *Ecclus.* xxv. 24, where sin is said to have originated with Eve; and yet another occurs, e.g., in *Enoch* xcvi. 4, where man himself is declared to be the originator of his sin: 'Sin has not been sent upon earth, but man himself has created it.' This is also taught in *Apoc. Bar.* liv. 19 (in spite of xlvi. 42), where it is said: 'Adam is, therefore, not the cause, save only of his own soul, but each one of us has been the Adam of his own soul.' Similarly in verse 15 of the same chapter: 'For though Adam first sinned and brought untimely death upon all, yet of those who were born from him each one of them has prepared for his own soul torment to come, and again each one of them has chosen for himself glories to come.' Ben-Sira teaches, in effect, the same thing when he says: 'When the ungodly curseth his adversary (*lit.* his satan) he curseth his own soul. The whisperer defileth his own soul, and is hated wheresoever he sojourneth.' (*Ecclus.* xxi. 27, 28, in the Greek; the Hebrew is not extant). These various theories of the origin of sin occur in other places, too, in post-Biblical Jewish literature, and their variety shows how the subject occupied the minds of thinkers. This is to some extent found also in early Christian literature; thus, in *Rom.* v. 12-15 the origin of sin is traced to Adam, while in *II Pet.* ii. 4, 5 it is said: 'For if God spared not angels when they sinned . . . and spared not the ancient world'; cp. *Gen.* vi. 1, 2. It is, however, to be noticed that the doctrine of inherited sin, of man being born in sin, was not taught

in either the Old Testament nor yet in Jewish post-Biblical literature, nor has it ever subsequently been held in the Jewish Church. See also Intr. § IV i.

11. *Noah*. Since Noah was regarded, in a certain sense, as the refounder of the human race, and, with Enoch, as the only truly righteous man in the earliest history of mankind (cp. Gen. v. 24, vi. 9), he came to occupy an important place in later Jewish thought and legend; a considerable Noachic literature must have existed at one time, for fragments of books of Noah are found in the book of *Jubilees*, vii. 20-39, x. 1-15, and *Enoch* vi-xi, liv. 7-lv. 2, lx, lxx, lxxxiii-lxxxix. 9, cvi, cvii.

iii. 12-16. The choice of Abraham.

12 And it came to pass, that when they that dwelt upon the earth began to multiply, they multiplied also children, and peoples, and many nations, and began again to be more ungodly than the first. 13 And it came to pass, when they did wickedly before thee, thou didst choose thee one from among them, whose name was Abraham; 14 and him thou lovedst, and unto him only thou shewedst the end of the times secretly by night: 15 and madest an everlasting covenant with him, promising him that thou wouldest never forsake his seed. 16 And unto him thou gavest Isaac, and unto Isaac thou gavest Jacob and Esau. And thou didst set apart Jacob for thyself, but didst put by Esau: and Jacob became a great multitude.

14. *the end of the times*. i.e. as interpreted by the Apocalyptist who read eschatological thought into the text of Gen. xv. 4-8.

secretly by night. Cp. Gen. xv. 1. This is referred to in *Apoc. Bar.* iv. 4, where it is said that God showed to Abraham the Heavenly Jerusalem 'between the pieces', cp. Gen. xv. 17.

iii. 17-22. The Exodus; Sinai and the Law.

17 And it came to pass, that when thou leddest his seed out of Egypt, thou broughtest them up to the mount Sinai. 18 Thou bowedst the heavens also, and didst ¹shake the earth, and movedst the whole world, and madest the depths to tremble, and troubledst the *course of that* age. 19 And thy glory went through four gates, of fire, and of earthquake, and of wind, and of cold; that thou mightest give the law unto the seed of Jacob, and the commandment unto the generation of Israel.

¹ So some versions. Lat. *set fast*.

20 And yet tookest thou not away from them *their* ¹wicked heart, that thy law might bring forth fruit in them. 21 For the first Adam bearing a ¹wicked heart transgressed, and was overcome; *and not he only*, but all they also that are born of him. 22 Thus disease was made permanent; and the law was in the heart of the people along with the ²wickedness of the root; so the good departed away, and that which was ¹wicked abode still.

¹ Or, *corrupt*

² Or, *corruptness*

18. *the depths*. i.e. the underworld.

and troubledst the course of that age. Lat. *et conturbasti saeculum*, Syr. and Arab. read the plural; what precisely is meant is uncertain; it cannot refer to the heavens as these have already been mentioned; it would seem, therefore, to mean 'age' in the sense of generation, as used so frequently in the Gospels, e.g. in the eschatological twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew: 'This generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished' (Matth. xxiv. 34). The reference would then be to those living in that age.

19. *thy glory*. Synonymous with God, as, e.g., in Exod. xxxiii. 18, 22.

four gates. These refer to the entrances to the four lowest of the seven heavens, which, in accordance with the developed belief in the divine transcendence, were believed to exist. Gunkel holds that this was a Jewish adaptation of what was originally an astronomical hypothesis of Babylonian sages, who wished to explain thereby the different movements of the seven planets (in Kautzsch, ii. 354). This is, of course, possible, but the Hebrews believed, naturally enough, that such things as rain, thunder, hail, fire, and lightning, came from heaven (cp. Gen. viii. 2, 'the windows of heaven were stopped and the rain from heaven was restrained', Exod. ix. 23, 24; II Kings i. 10, 22; Job xxxviii. 37), and therefore they must be kept somewhere in the higher spheres. The mention of earthquake in this verse is to be explained by the fact that it is frequently coupled with fire and thunder.

the commandment. Lat. *diligentiam*, see note on verse 7. The mention of the law (*Torah*) and the commandment (*Mitzvah*) in close connexion here is interesting; a similar juxtaposition occurs in *Ecclus.* xlv. 5; it has always had a special significance for the Jews, even in pre-Christian times; this is clearly shown by Maimonides in the Preface to his work called *Yad ha-chazakah* ('the Strong Hand'); he says: 'All the commandments which were given to Moses on Sinai were given with their interpretation; for it is said (Exod. xxiv. 12), "And I will give thee tables of stone, and the *Torah* (Law) and the *Mitzvah* (commandment); *Torah*: that is, the Written Law;

Mitzvah; that is, its interpretation. He commanded us to observe the *Torah* in accordance with the *Mitzvah*. And this *Mitzvah* is called the "Oral Law". Moses our teacher wrote down the whole Law with his own hand before he died . . . the *Mitzvah*, that is, the interpretation of the Law, he did not write down, but he commanded it to the Elders and to Joshua, and to the rest of Israel; for it is written, "All the words which I have commanded you, these shall ye observe and do" (Deut. xii. 28). And therefore this is called the "Oral Law".

20. *wicked heart*. Lat. *cor malignum*, corresponding to the Hebrew *Yetzer ha-ra'*, i.e. the evil bias, the conception indicated by the word is important for the study of the doctrine of sin both in Judaism and in early Christian thought. According to the teaching of the Rabbis there is implanted in every man the good and the evil *Yetzer*; but 'the more conspicuous figure of the two yetzers', says Schechter, 'is that of the evil *Yetzer*. Indeed, it is not impossible that the expression the good *Yetzer*, as the antithesis of the evil *Yetzer*, is a creation of a later date'.¹ As a matter of fact, the earliest post-Biblical usage of the word *Yetzer* makes it practically certain that it connoted originally the evil *Yetzer* only (see *Ecclus.* xv. 14, xxxvii. 3), though the idea of the good *Yetzer*, in addition to the evil one, must have arisen, in all probability, before the beginning of the Christian era, for it occurs not only in early Rabbinical literature—where no doubt earlier thought is reflected—but also in such a passage as Rom. vii. 18-23, which clearly implies it. The apostle's words in this passage show that his mind must have been saturated with Jewish ideas which had been instilled during his earlier years, and which was traditional Rabbinical teaching. The question of the origin of sin arises here again; we have seen above (see under verse 10), that the Seer traced the origin of sin to Adam; but when he speaks, in the passage cited above (iv. 30) of 'the grain of evil seed sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning', he does not, or perhaps will not, see the inevitable outcome of this; for if this evil seed was sown in Adam's heart, the question naturally forces itself: By whom was it sown? And as the Seer never hints at a doctrine of dualism he would have had to say that this was sown by God; in other words, that evil originated with God; he never mentions Satan. He avoids the difficulty by ignoring it. Not so, however, other early Jewish thinkers; however repugnant the thought may have been, some of them did not shirk the logical outcome of a very inadequate doctrine of sin; long before this Ben-Sira had written: 'Good is set over against evil, and life over against death; so is the sinner over against the godly; two thus look upon all the works of the Most High; two and two, one against another' (*Ecclus.* xxxiii. 7-15); this is, in effect, as much as to assign the origin of evil to the Almighty. It

¹ *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. 243, see also p. 262 (1909).

is true that elsewhere he directly repudiates such a thought, saying: 'Say not thou, It is through the Lord that I fell away, for thou shalt not do the things that he hateth. Say not thou, It is he that caused me to err, for he hath no need of a sinful man' (*Ecclus.* xv. 11, 12); but these directly opposed views only show in what difficulties thinkers were involved in their efforts to account for the existence of sin; with this last passage cp., too, *Jas.* i. 13, 14: 'Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed.' Clearly this writer believed no more in sin originating from God than from Adam, as the last sentence shows.

that thy law might bring forth fruit. The fruit is death, as the next verse shows; cp. *Rom.* v. 20: 'And the Law came in beside, that the trespass might abound', only St. Paul adds: 'but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly.' The immense contrast between the two in their conception of God is very striking.

21. *transgressed, and was overcome.* Here again the Seer fails to realize the illogical course of his argument; Adam transgresses and is consequently conquered by sin; but since it was owing to his wicked heart that he transgressed, evil was in him prior to his being overcome by sin.

22. *disease.* i.e. the infirmity of sin.

and the law was . . . This thought of the two elements in man, the good, represented by the law, and 'the wickedness of the root', is most graphically illustrated by *Rom.* vii. 7-25. The good departed because of the conquest of sin; this pessimistic estimate of humanity is characteristic of the Apocalyptists.

the wickedness of the root. Referring to the transgression of Adam of which all who are 'born of him' partake. This is not the same as the 'evil bias' (*Yetzer ha ra'*), which is part of man's nature and has nothing to do with the sin of Adam. In Jewish theology the really fatal thing about Adam's sin was that it brought death upon the human race; the sin itself might have been obliterated by repentance, but Adam did not repent. This, of course, is not the attitude taken up by the Seer.

iii. 23-36.

23 So the times passed away, and the years were brought to an end: then didst thou raise thee up a servant, called David, 24 whom thou commandedst to build a city unto thy name, and to offer oblations unto thee therein of thine own. 25 When this was done many years, then they that inhabited the city did evil, 26 in all things doing even as Adam and all his generations had done: for they also bare a

¹wicked heart; 27 and so thou gavest thy city over into the hands of thine enemies. 28 And I said then in mine heart, Are their deeds any better that inhabit Babylon? and hath she therefore dominion over Sion? 29 For it came to pass when I came hither, that I saw also impieties without number, and my soul saw many evil-doers in this thirtieth year, so that my heart failed me. 30 For I have seen how thou sufferest them sinning, and hast spared the ungodly doers, and hast destroyed thy people, and hast preserved thine enemies; and thou hast not signified 31 unto any ²how thy way may be comprehended. Are the deeds of Babylon better than those of Sion? 32 Or is there any other nation that knoweth thee beside Israel? or what tribes have so believed thy covenants as these *tribes of Jacob*? 33 And yet their reward appeareth not, and their labour hath no fruit: for I have gone hither and thither through the nations, and I see that they abound *in wealth*, and think not upon thy commandments. 34 Weigh thou therefore our iniquities now in the balance, and theirs also that dwell in the world; and so shall it be found which way the scale inclineth. 35 Or when was it that they which dwell upon the earth have not sinned in thy sight? or what nation hath so kept thy commandments? 36 Thou shalt find that men *who may be reckoned* by name have kept thy precepts; but nations thou shalt not find.

¹ Or, *corrupt*

² So the Syriac. The Latin has *how this way may be left*.

23. *So the times passed away . . .* The periods of time from the death of Moses to David were of relatively small importance to the Jews.

24. *to build a city.* David did not, of course, build Jerusalem, though, no doubt, he strengthened its defences (II Sam. v. 9, but see I Kings ix. 15, 24). Since it was known as 'the city of David' the building of it was ascribed to him.

to offer oblations . . . The Seer holds that the purpose of building Jerusalem was in order that sacrifices might be offered there. This was written after the destruction of the Temple, but that many Jews looked forward to the time when the whole sacrificial system would be reinstated cannot be doubted in view of the words of the synagogal 'Amidah prayer (the seventeenth Benediction): 'Accept, O Lord our God, Thy people Israel and their prayer. And restore the service to the oracle (*debir*) of Thy House. And the fire-offerings of Israel (עֲלֵי-אֵשׁ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל cp. I Sam. ii. 28 אֵשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) and their prayer and

their service do thou speedily accept in love with favour; and may the service of Thy people Israel be ever acceptable . . .'

25. *then they . . . did evil.* It seems to be implied that for many years, owing to the offering of oblations, the people refrained from evil; but this, of course, is not what is meant. The context shows that the writer means that in spite of the offerings the people continued in sin; this was the result of Adam's transgression.

27. *and so thou gavest . . .* The reference is to the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 B.C., see the *Pss. of Sol.* ii. 1 ff.

28. *Babylon.* i.e. Rome, cp. *Sib. Orac.* v. 143, 159; *Apoc. Bar.* xi. 1; *Rev.* xiv. 8.

hath she therefore dominion . . . The Lat. *dominavit* is, according to Gunkel, a corruption of *abominavit*, following Syr., Arab., Arm.: 'Hath he (God) on this account had Zion in abomination?' Violet, on the basis of Ethiop., suggests: 'Hath he on this account done with Zion?' The Lat. is, in any case, wrong in making Babylon the subject. What puzzles the Seer is that God should cast off Zion when the oppressor, 'Babylon', is no better than the inhabitants of Zion.

29. *when I came hither.* i.e. to Babylon.

and my soul saw. In Hebrew 'soul' is often a paraphrase for a personal pronoun, 'I myself'.

in this thirtieth year. As Box points out, this should be 'these thirty years' (so Ethiop., Ar., Arm.), lit. 'this thirty year', a Hebraism, cp. *Gen.* xxxi. 38. The first thirty years of the Babylonian exile are meant (see on this, *Intr.* § V).

30. This verse expresses the essence of the problem with which the Seer was faced: God bears with sinners and spares the ungodly; His own people are destroyed, but His enemies are preserved! The Seer can understand the justice of his own people being punished on account of their wickedness, that fact occasioned no difficulty; but that the, at least, equally wicked enemies should not only escape punishment, but be actually in the enjoyment of prosperity, this is what causes him searchings of heart.

31. *how thy way may be comprehended.* So Syr. which seems nearest the original; it is the divine course of action which puzzles the Seer, and no explanation has been vouchsafed. The Lat. has 'how this thy way may be altered' (lit. 'abandoned').

32. *Or is there . . . that knoweth thee . . .* The Seer passes over the fact of Israel's wickedness to which he refers in verse 26. One recalls the attitude of such a one as Amos ('You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities', iii. 2), and realizes how the standpoint has changed. The reference to the 'covenants' shows that the writer believed that the fact that his people had accepted the Law, which no other nation had accepted, placed them in a special category in the sight of God.

33. *their labour hath no fruit.* i.e. there was no recompense for their laborious observance of the Law. We have here two points in regard to the Law which are characteristic of later Judaism: (1) it is implied that the works of the Law merit recompense, i.e. the meritoriousness of work; and (2) the observance of the Law is spoken of as 'labour'. Regarding the first cp., e.g. Rom. xi. 6; Gal. ii. 16, iii. 10 ff.; Eph. ii. 9; as to the second, there is a great contrast between this and the earlier utterances of the Law being a delight, as found often, e.g. in the Psalms (see, e.g., Matth. xxiii. 4; Luke xi. 46; Gal. iii [whole chapter], and often elsewhere; contrast with these Ps. xl. 8, the whole of Ps. cxix, and elsewhere).

34. *which way the scale inclineth.* Cp. *Enoch* xli. 1, lii. 15, lxi. 8; *Pss. of Sol.* v. 4; the idea of God's scales occurs also in Rabbinical literature; God weighs the good and the evil deeds of a man in His scales, and thereby sees whether he is a righteous or a sinful man in His sight (see for references, Weber, *Jüdische Theologie*, p. 282 [1897]); it is not improbable that this quaint idea came to the Jews from Persia (see Böklen, *Die Verwandtschaft der Jüdisch-Christlichen mit der Parsischen Eschatologie*, p. 54 f. [1902]).

35. *they which dwell upon the earth.* i.e. the heathen, 'the children of this world' (Luke xvi. 8).

36. *men . . . by name.* i.e. exceptional individuals, who could be named, among the Gentiles; others explain it as 'men of name', illustrious men (cp. I Chron. v. 24).

*The answer to Ezra's perplexity: God's ways
are inscrutable.*

iv. 1-11. The Archangel Uriel is sent to Ezra; he asks the Seer to do three things, not one of which is possible for him to do. The Archangel then asks how, if he cannot do things of which he has knowledge can he expect to understand the ways of the Almighty.

IV. 1 And the angel that was sent unto me, whose name was Uriel, gave me an answer, 2 and said to me, Thy heart hath utterly failed thee in *regarding* this world, and thinkest thou to comprehend the way of the Most High?

3 Then said I, Yea, my Lord.

And he answered me, and said, I am sent to shew thee three ways, and to set forth three similitudes before thee: 4 whereof if thou canst declare me one, I also will shew thee the way that thou desirest to see, and I will teach thee wherefore the heart is ¹wicked.

¹ Or, *corrupt*

5 And I said, Say on, my Lord.

Then said he unto me, Go to, weigh me a weight of fire, or measure me a ¹measure of wind, or call me again the day that is past.

6 Then answered I and said, Who of the sons of *men* is able to do this, that thou shouldest ask me of such things ?

7 And he said unto me, If I had asked thee, saying, How many dwellings are there in the heart of the sea ? or how many springs are there at the fountain head of the deep ? or how many ¹ways are above the firmament ? or which are the outgoings ²of hell ? or which are the paths of paradise ? 8 peradventure thou wouldest say unto me, I never went down into the deep, nor as yet into hell, neither did I ever climb up into heaven. 9 Nevertheless now have I asked thee but only of the fire and wind, and of the day, things wherethrough thou hast passed, and ³without which thou canst not be, and yet hast thou given me no answer of them.

10 He said moreover unto me, Thine own things, that are grown up with thee, canst thou not know ; 11 how then can thy vessel comprehend the way of the Most High ? and how can he that is already worn out with the corrupted world understand ⁴incorruption ?

¹ After the Oriental versions.

² So the Syriac. The Latin omits *of hell? or which are the paths.*

³ Another reading is, *from which thou canst not be separated.*

⁴ Syriac and Æthiopic, *the way of the incorruptible.*

1. *the angel.* The abrupt way in which the angel (properly arch-angel, see note on verse 36) is mentioned is striking ; it is the same in Zech. i. 9. The fact is that long before this time, angelic beings had assumed an important rôle in Jewish theology, and their activity as divine messengers was generally believed in. What is to be specially noted in regard to this subject is that while in pre-exilic and exilic times belief in angels exists, it is subordinate and unimportant ; but with Zechariah a considerable development is noticeable ; nevertheless, with the exception of a few references in the later Psalms, that prophet stands somewhat isolated in this respect, since otherwise the post-exilic literature is almost entirely silent on the subject of angels ; the Priestly Code never mentions them. It is in the later hellenistic period that the real development takes place, and an angelology in the strict sense arises ; now for the first time the angels receive names, they are divided into various classes, and they undertake definite duties among men, thereby making the divine action

among men indirect. It is as though it were thought that direct divine intervention in the affairs of men were derogatory to the majesty of God. The course of this development cannot be traced; but it is exceedingly likely that Ezekiel's doctrine of divine transcendence played a considerable part in it; in how far he may have been influenced by Iranian belief in his representation of intermediate beings between God and men is a subject too large to be dealt with here; it should, however, be pointed out that the influence of Iranian religion was widespread long before Persia rose to become a world-power.

Uriel. The name means 'the fire of God'. According to *Enoch* xl. 2, Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, and Uriel were the four archangels, though elsewhere Phanuel takes the place of Uriel. A different enumeration of the highest class of angelic beings occurs in various parts of the apocalyptic literature, where also seven archangels are mentioned: Uriel, Raguel, Michael, Raphael, Sarakiel, Gabriel, and Jeremiel (see *Enoch* xx. 1-8, lxxi. 3, lxxxii. 5, lxxxvii. 2, xc. 21; *Test. xii Patr.*, Levi viii. 2-10; cp. Tob. xii. 15; see also Rev. i. 4, 20, iii. 1, iv. 5, v. 6, viii. 2, 6). Of Uriel it is said that he is appointed 'over the world and over Tartarus' (*Enoch* xx. 2). It will be noticed that the names of all the angels are compounded with -el—'Who is like God' (Michael), 'God healeth' (Raphael), 'the man of God' (Gabriel), &c.—in order to emphasize, on the one hand, their intimate connexion with God, and, on the other, their subordination to Him.

2. *Thy heart . . .* The meaning seems to be, 'Thou hast entirely failed to understand' (heart being equivalent to the understanding in Hebrew); but this is not the case; the Lat., *excedens excessit*, implies an original in which the emotion of excitement or fear was expressed; what is probably meant is, 'Thy heart is terrified concerning the course of this world', implying that he is shocked by what appears to go on with God's acquiescence; he is in fear as well as in ignorance; this being so, how will he be able to understand the ways of God which are concerned with things far higher than merely those of this world?

this world. *Hoc saeculum* or *saeculum istud* and *saeculum prius*, in, e.g., vi. 55; or, as in vii. 112, viii. 2, it is *praesens saeculum*; opposed to this is *sequens saeculum*, vi. 9, *saeculum venturum*, vii. 47, *futurum tempus*, vii. 113, viii. 52, *futurum saeculum*, viii. 1, *majus saeculum*, vii. 13.

3. *three ways . . . three similitudes.* The reference must be to the three impossible tasks he is set (verse 5); possibly in the original the Hebrew had *derek* for 'way', this could be made to have the meaning of the manner of doing something, and thus a task; the word 'similitude' = 'parable'.

4. *wherefore the heart is wicked.* Though the best Lat. MSS. have 'wherefore', *quare*, the reading *unde sit*, 'whence is the . . .', no doubt

expresses the original; the point is not why the heart is wicked, but, whence comes the wicked heart, i.e. what is the origin of evil? This was one of the great problems which were beyond the ken of many besides this Seer.

7, 8. This kind of speculation does not occur elsewhere in our book. As Gunkel says, such cosmological material, which occupies so much space in the book of *Enoch*, recedes quite into the background in II (IV) Esdras; this is characteristic of the writer, whose concern is history, not cosmology.

7. *ways are above the firmament.* i.e. the courses of the stars.
or which are . . . hell. i.e. Hades. These words, inadvertently omitted in Lat. are contained in the Syr., Arab., Arm. Versions.

the paths of paradise. i.e. the paths to Paradise.

8. *heaven.* Arab. adds, 'nor have I seen paradise', Arm. and Ethiop. have 'nor have I attained paradise'; the omission in Lat. and Syr. is accidental. It will be noticed that while Heaven ('above the firmament') Hades (*She'ol*), and Paradise, are mentioned, there is no reference to Gehenna. The reason of this is that already in the second century B.C. *She'ol* had become a purgatory to which all men, good and bad, had to go before the final judgement. It had various divisions, from one of which there was no rising; so that, so far as this division was concerned, *She'ol* was equivalent to Hell (*Gehenna*).

9. *and of the day.* i.e. of yesterday.

without which thou canst not be. Syr. has perhaps the better reading, 'from which thou canst not be separated'.

10. *that are grown up with thee.* i.e. things with which he is inextricably connected; a reference, of oriental origin, to the teaching that the human microcosm is formed of the four elements of fire, wind, earth, and water (cp. *Wisdom* vii. 17, xiii. 1, xix. 18).

In the *Bundehesh* xxx. 6 (the Persian Scriptures) the body of man is said to be formed thus: 'Bones from the spirit of the earth, blood from water, hairs from the plants, life's vigour from fire.'

11. *and how can he . . . incorruption.* These words are so variously rendered in the Versions that it is impossible to know what the original text read. Violet offers tentatively the rendering: 'How then shouldst thou, a passing traveller in a transient world be able to apprehend the way of the Unchangeable'; his beautiful words in German are difficult to render adequately in English:

Wie vermagst also du Vergänglichlicher in vergänglichlicher Welt den Weg des Unvergänglichlichen zu erkennen?

iv. 12-21. The Archangel enforces what he has already said by the parable of the conflict between the forest and the sea, the moral of which is that it is folly for him who dwells upon the earth to think that he can understand heavenly things.

12¹And when I heard these things I fell upon my face, and

¹ So the Syriac and Æthiopic. The Latin is corrupt.

said unto him, It were better that we were not here at all, than that we should come hither and live in the midst of ungodliness, and suffer, and not know wherefore.

13 He answered me, and said, ¹The woods of the trees of the field went forth, and took counsel together, 14 and said, Come, let us go and make war against the sea, that it may depart away before us, and that we may make us more woods. 15 The waves of the sea also in like manner took counsel together, and said, Come, let us go up and subdue the wood of the plain, that there also we may make us another country. 16 The counsel of the wood was in vain, for the fire came and consumed it: 17 likewise also the counsel of the waves of the sea, for the sand stood up and stopped them. 18 If thou wert judge now betwixt these two, whom wouldest thou justify, or whom condemn?

19 I answered and said, It is a foolish counsel that they both have taken, for the ground is given unto the wood, and the place of the sea *is given* to bear his waves.

20 Then answered he me, and said, Thou hast given a right judgement, and why judgest thou not in thine own case? 21 For like as the ground is given unto the wood, and the sea to his waves, even so they that dwell upon the earth may understand nothing but that which is upon the earth: and he *only that dwelleth* above the heavens *may understand* the things that are above the height of the heavens.

¹ So the Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt.

12. *that we were not here at all.* There can be little doubt that the Ethiop. text is the better reading: 'that we had never been created'. As Box points out, 'the terms *be created* or *born* and *enter into the world* are parallel expressions in Hebrew'; but 'entering into the world' presupposes the pre-existence of the soul, and there is no reason to doubt that the original writer of the book believed this doctrine, in common with other Apocalyptists and thinkers (see *Apoc. Bar.* iii. 1; *Wisdom* viii. 19, 20; *Assumpt. of Moses* i. 14).

13 *The woods of the trees of the field.* This pleonastic mode of expression is one instance, of many, which point to a Hebrew original. This is the rendering of Syr.; the Lat. text, 'I, in truth, went forth unto a wood of the trees of the field', is corrupt. The *motif* of a conflict for supremacy between the dry land and the sea is very ancient; an example of this may be seen in the second Babylonian recension of the Creation-myth given by Gunkel in *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit*, pp. 419 ff. (1895). See also *Apoc. Bar.* xxxvi.

iv. 22-32. The Seer protests that he has no wish to peer into things which are no concern of his, he desires only to know why it is that Israel, the beloved of God, is the scorn of the Gentiles. It is a question of God's honour: 'What will he then do for his name whereby we are called?' In reply the Archangel tells him that the present age is quickly passing away, and in the age that is to come the righteous will understand. But first the evil which is sown must be reaped.

22 Then answered I and said, I beseech thee, O Lord,¹ wherefore is the power of understanding given unto me? 23 For it was not my mind to be curious of the ways above, but of such things as pass by us daily; because Israel is given up as a reproach to the heathen, and the people whom thou hast loved is given over unto ungodly nations, and the law of our forefathers is made of none effect, and the written covenants are nowhere regarded, 24 and we pass away out of the world as grasshoppers, and our life is as a²vapour, neither are we worthy to obtain mercy. 25 What will he then do for his name whereby we are called? Of these things have I asked.

26 Then answered he me, and said, If thou be *alive*, thou shalt see, and if thou livest³ long, thou shalt marvel; for the world hasteth fast to pass away. 27 For it is not able to bear the things that are promised to the righteous in the times to come: for this world is full of sadness and infirmities. 28 For the evil⁴whereof thou askest me is sown, but the gathering thereof is not yet come. 29 If therefore that which is sown be not reaped, and if the place where the evil is sown pass not away, there cannot come the field where the good is sown. 30 For a grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, and how much wickedness hath it brought forth unto this time! and how much shall it yet bring forth until the⁵time of threshing come! 31 Ponder now by thyself, how great fruit of wickedness a grain of evil seed hath brought forth. 32 When the ears which are without number shall be sown, how great a floor shall they fill!

¹ After the Oriental versions.

² So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt.

³ So the Syriac.

⁴ So the Syriac and the Æthiopic.

⁵ Or, *threshing-floor*

22. *O Lord. Domine*, either this mode of address, or *meus dominus*, is always used to the divine messenger; both are equivalent to the Hebrew *Adonai*, cp. Dan. x. 17, 19.

24. *neither are we . . .* The meaning is clearer if a full-stop is put after 'vapour', after which a new sentence should begin: 'We, indeed, are not worthy to obtain mercy, but what will he then do', &c.

25. *whereby we are called. Quod invocatum est super nos*, 'which is called upon us'; cp. Jas. ii. 7, 'the honourable name by which ye are called', lit. which was called upon, or over, you. It is a Hebrew expression; the people upon whom, or over whom, God's name is pronounced are his peculiar possession; cp. Isa. xliii. 7: 'everyone that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory.'

26. In this verse it is said, in effect, that if Ezra lives long enough he will see the solution of the problem, and that this age is swiftly passing away; that is to say, the new age will dawn on *this* earth; this is in accordance with what is taught in the Old Testament; in the glorious time to come the present world will be renovated. But in the verses which follow, the present world is looked upon as hopeless, it is entirely despaired of; it will not be the scene of the new age (see verses 35, 39). There are thus two irreconcilable points of view represented here; it is difficult to believe that in the original form of our book this can have been the case; possibly more than one hand has been at work here; but the Apocalypstists are not always consistent.

the world hasteth fast . . . Festinans festinat, again a Hebraism. With the thought cp. *Apoc. Bar. xxi.*

31, 32. On the basis of Syr., Ethiop., and Arab. the following text is constructed by Violet and Gunkel, followed by Box, in which a contrast is presented, thus: 'If a grain of evil seed hath brought forth so great fruit of wickedness, how great a harvest will ears of good seed without number, which shall be sown, bring forth?' This gives the meaning that the harvest from the good seed in the glorious age to come will be vastly greater than the harvest from the evil seed in this age; according to the rendering represented in the Revised Version the meaning is that the present evil is as nothing compared with the evil that will be. There is something to be said for either rendering; the expectation of the golden age to come, when all evil will be done away with and when there shall be only good, is thoroughly in accordance with the teaching of the Apocalypstists. On the other hand, the pessimistic note as regards this world presented in the other rendering is also characteristic of them. However, what is said in the verses which follow certainly inclines one to accept the Oriental Versions as expressing the sense of the original.

iv. 33-43. The Seer asks how long it will be before 'these things' will happen. The reply is that others, too, have asked that question, and it was answered by the Archangel Jeremiel, who told them that first the number of the righteous must be completed; for all things are

predetermined, and until the measure of each has been fulfilled, the end will not come.

33 Then I answered and said, ¹How long? and when shall these things come to pass? wherefore are our years few and evil?

34 And he answered me, and said, Thou dost not hasten more than the Most High: for thy haste is ²for thine own self, but he that is above *hasteneth* on behalf of many. 35 Did not the souls of the righteous ask question of these things in their chambers, saying, How long ³are we here? when cometh the fruit of the ⁴threshing time of our reward? 36 And unto them Jeremiel the archangel gave answer, and said, Even when the number is fulfilled of them that are like unto you. For he hath weighed the world in the balance; 37 and by measure hath he measured the times, and by number hath he numbered the seasons; and he shall not ⁵move nor stir them, until the said measure be fulfilled.

38 Then answered I and said, O Lord that bearest rule, yet even we all are full of impiety: 39 and for our sakes peradventure it is that the ⁴threshing time of the righteous is kept back, because of the sins of them that dwell upon the earth.

40 So he answered me, and said, Go thy way to a woman with child, and ask of her when she hath fulfilled her nine months, if her womb may keep the birth any longer within her.

41 Then said I, No, Lord, that can it not.

And he said unto me, In the grave the chambers of souls are like the womb: 42 for like as a woman that travaileth maketh haste to escape the anguish of the travail: even so do these places haste to deliver those things that are committed unto them from the beginning. 43 Then shall it be shewed thee concerning those things which thou desirest to see.

¹ So the chief Oriental versions.

² So the Syriac. The Latin is corrupt.

³ So the Syriac. The Latin has *shall I hope on this fashion?*

⁴ Or, *threshing-floor*

⁵ Syr. rest.

33. *wherefore are our years . . . ?* Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xvi. 1. Rather, 'are not our years . . .?'; he means that there are, in any case, so few years in human life that he despairs of seeing 'these things'. By 'these things' is meant, of course, the age to come, which is therefore represented as happening in this world; so that we have here again,

especially in view of the verses which follow, the two standpoints regarding the scene of the future age, to which reference has already been made (see under verse 26); verse 35 clearly contemplates it as being in the regions above, while in the verse before us it is to be in this world.

35. in their chambers. This is more fully explained in Rabbinical writings, echoing, doubtless, earlier ideas. The souls of the righteous, it is taught, go to the treasure-houses (*'ôtzārôth*), under the throne of God; their chambers (*mëchîzôth*) are separated from the dwelling-place of the Almighty by a curtain (*pargôâ*); they may hear the voice of God, but they may not behold Him (see further, Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 163, 205, 338).

36. Jeremiel the archangel. See verse 1. He is the same as Remiel, mentioned in *Enoch* xx. 8, as 'one of the holy angels, whom God hath set over those who (will) rise (at the resurrection)'. Gunkel refers to the *Apoc. of Elijah* (ed. Steindorff 10), where Eremiel is the name of the angel who watches over the souls in the underworld. In *Apoc. Bar.* lv. 3 Ramiel is the angel 'who presideth over true visions'; and in *Sib. Orac.* ii. 215-17 Ramiel is one of the five angels who lead the souls of men to judgement (Box). This diversity need not occasion surprise when one remembers the multifarious speculations of the Apocalyptists.

when the number is fulfilled . . . In this and the next verse we have a good illustration of the determinism taught by the Apocalyptists; this has been well summed up by Charles: 'In Apocryphal literature historical events are not depicted according to the manifold variety of life, but are methodically arranged under artificial categories of measure, number, weight, *Wisdom* xi. 20; 4 *Ezra* iv. 36, 37. The conception is not a hard and fixed one; in *Enoch* and *Test. xii. Patr.* it wavers between an absolute determinism and prediction pure and simple; whereas in *Jubilees* in addition to these significations, it implies at times little more than a contemporary heavenly record of events. In *Enoch* the idea is mainly predestinarian, the 'heavenly tables' record all the deeds of men to the remotest generations, lxxxi. 1, 2; and the entire history of the earth, xciii. 1-3. In *Test. xii Patr.*, *Levi* v. 4; *Asher* vii. 5, the idea is predictive . . . In *Jubilees* the use of the phrase is very loose, the "heavenly tables" are the statute book of the theocracy, or a mere contemporary record, or else are predictive or determinative . . .' (*The Book of Enoch*, pp. 91 f. [1912]).

39. for our sakes . . . the sins of them . . . Hitherto the Seer has been the righteous mentor; now he reckons himself among the sinners that dwell on the earth.

42. that are committed unto them from the beginning. From the general context one would expect the reference here to be to the souls of the righteous in their chambers, as in verse 35, and this is

presumably what the original writer intended; indeed, this is clear from the words of verse 41, 'In the grave the chambers of souls are like . . .' (or 'Sheol and the chambers of the souls are like . . .', so Syr. and Ethiop.); but there are two points in verse 42 which are quite inappropriate in this connexion: (1) the parallel of a woman's travail cannot apply to the souls of the righteous, for they cannot be said to be in anguish; and (2) 'that are committed unto them from the beginning' raises a difficulty; for how can the departed souls in their chambers be said to have been there from the beginning? In Hebrew phraseology 'from the beginning' means from the beginning of all things. What seems to have been the case here is that the writer has been inexact in expressing himself; his intention is to refer to the chambers where the souls of the righteous are reposing, but he uses language which applies to the place where unborn souls are kept from the beginning awaiting their entry into a body. On the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul in Judaism see Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 225 ff.; it is referred to in *Apoc. Bar.* xxiii. 4, and in xlvi. 14-16 it is said: 'For lo! by thy gift do we come into the world, and we depart not of our own will. For we said not to our parents, "Beget us" nor did we send to Sheol and say, "Receive us".'

iv. 44-50. The Seer now asks, in regard to the length of time that the present world order is to continue, as to how much is past and how much is to come. The Archangel replies by presenting two pictures, the purport of which is to show the Seer that the end is not far off.

44 Then answered I and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, and if it be possible, and if I be meet therefore, 45 shew me this also, whether there be more to come than is past, or whether the more part is gone over us. 46 For what is gone I know, but what is for to come I know not.

47 And he said unto me, Stand up upon the right side, and I shall expound the similitude unto thee.

48 So I stood, and saw, and, behold, a hot burning oven passed by before me: and it happened, that when the flame was gone by I looked, and, behold, the smoke remained still. 49 After this there passed by before me a watery cloud, and sent down much rain with a storm; and when the stormy rain was past, the drops remained therein still.

50 Then said he unto me, Consider with thyself; as the rain is more than the drops, and as the fire is greater than the smoke, so the quantity which is past did more exceed; but the drops and the smoke remained still.

iv. 51—v. 13. The Seer asks whether he will still be living when the end comes; the Archangel tells him he does not know, and then proceeds to describe the signs which will precede the coming of the end.

51 Then I prayed, and said, May I live, thinkest thou, until that time? or who shall be in those days?

52 He answered me, and said, As for the tokens whereof thou askest me, I may tell thee of them in part: but as touching thy life, I am not sent to shew thee; for I do not know it. V. 1 Nevertheless as concerning the tokens, behold, the days shall come, that they which dwell upon earth shall be taken ¹with great amazement, and the way of truth shall be hidden, and the land shall be barren of faith. 2 But iniquity shall be increased above that which now thou seest, or that thou hast heard long ago. 3 And the land, that thou seest now to have rule, shall be waste and ¹untrodden, and men shall see it desolate. 4 But if the Most High grant thee to live, thou shalt see that which is after the third *kingdom* to be troubled; and the sun shall suddenly shine forth in the night, and the moon in the day: 5 and blood shall drop out of wood, and the stone shall give his voice, and the peoples shall be troubled; and ²their goings shall be changed: 6 and he shall rule, whom they that dwell upon the earth look not for, and the fowls shall take their flight away together: 7 and the Sodomitish sea shall cast out fish, and make a noise in the night, which many have not known: but all shall hear the voice thereof. 8 There shall be chaos also in many places, and the fire shall be oft sent out, and the wild beasts shall change their places, and women shall bring forth monsters: 9 and salt waters shall be found in the sweet, and all friends shall destroy one another; then shall wit hide itself, and understanding withdraw itself into its chamber; 10 and it shall be sought of many, and shall not be found: and unrighteousness and incontinency shall be multiplied upon earth. 11 One land also shall ask another, and say, Is righteousness, is a man that doeth righteousness, gone through thee? And it shall say, No. 12 And it shall come to pass at that time that men shall hope, but shall not obtain: they shall labour, but their ways shall not prosper. 13 To shew thee such tokens I have leave; and if thou

¹ So the Syriac.

² According to some Oriental versions, *the air*.

wilt pray again, and weep as now, and fast seven days, thou shalt hear yet greater things than these.

51. *who shall be in those days?* So Lat., Syr.; the Ethiop. and Arab. texts have 'what', i.e. what shall happen in those days.

52. *the tokens whereof thou askest me.* Nothing has been asked about these; in all probability, as Violet holds, something has fallen out of the text here.

V. 1. *with great amazement.* So Syr., which Box renders better, 'with great panic', cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxv. 3, *Enoch* i. 5.

the way of truth shall be hidden. Or possibly we should follow Ethiop., and read 'the place or region of truth'; *Apoc. Bar.* xxxix. 6: 'And by it [the "fourth kingdom", i.e. Rome] the truth shall be hidden.'

the land shall be barren of faith. Here we must read, with Syr., Ethiop., 'the land of faith shall be barren'; the two lines form a parallelism; 'the region of truth', corresponds with 'the land of faith', and 'barren' with 'hidden'. *Apoc. Bar.* lix. 10 has the phrase 'the place of faith'.

2. *iniquity shall be increased.* This is often mentioned as heralding the end, as though the climax of iniquity were reached which necessitated the great catastrophe; e.g. *Matth.* xxiv. 12; in the Mishnah tractate, *Sota* ix. 15 we have the following: 'As signs of the approach of Messiah are to be regarded that arrogance increases, ambition shoots up . . . the government turns to heresy; there is no instruction. The places of assembly [i.e. the synagogues] are devoted to lewdness . . .' In the verses which follow the further 'signs' of the coming end are enumerated. A similar account occurs in various other apocalyptic books; in Rabbinical literature these signs are called 'the travail-pains, or birth-pangs, of the Messiah' (*cheble ha-Mashiach*, and *cheble shel Mashiach*). Other descriptions will be found, e.g., in *Enoch* lxxx. 2-8, xcix. 1-5; *Book of Jubilees*, xxiii. 16-25; *Sib. Orac.* ii. 154 f., iii. 796 f.; *Assumpt. of Moses*, x. 1-8; *Text. xii. Patr.*, *Levi* iv. 1, *Judah* xxi. 6-9; *Apoc. Bar.* xxv—xxvii, xlvi. 31-43, lxx. 2-7; *Apoc. of Abraham*, xxix, xxx.

3. *the land, that thou seest . . .* The reference is to the Roman Empire.

4. *the third kingdom to be troubled.* Lat. *post tertiam turbatam*; all the Versions have something similar; and no doubt all go back to the same text, though apparently they did not understand what was meant. This has been a problem which has occupied scholars for long, but which has now been finally solved by Gunkel; for the various steps in the complicated argument one must read his *Schöpfung und Chaos*, pp. 268-390; we can only give his conclusions here. It is a question of the Jewish adaptation of the ancient Babylonian Tiamat-myth, with various accretions, in which the number 'three',

strictly three-and-a-half, comes to play an important part. The number, in its origin, has nothing to do with kingdoms, but refers to the period of the conflict between winter and spring for supremacy, i.e. the three months and half a month from the day of the winter solstice to the full moon nearest the spring equinox, roughly, January–April 15. Put thus baldly this sounds, no doubt, unconvincing; but any one who will take the trouble to read Gunkel's brilliant and fascinating work will soon become convinced of the truth of his contention.

the sun . . . and the moon . . . Just as in the ancient myth winter and spring, or rather the powers represented by these, fought for supremacy, so a highly strung imagination conceived of the sun and moon being in conflict; probably here, too, some ancient mythical element is echoed.

5. *blood . . . wood.* Better ' . . . shall drop out of the tree'; an echo of the animistic conception of trees being like men.

the stone shall give . . . Cp. Hab. ii. 11; Luke xix. 40; another echo of animism.

and their goings shall be changed. This has nothing to do with the peoples. The Lat. seems to be a literal translation of a word rendered *aeres* by Syr., and *stellae* by Ethiop.; instead of *gressus* we should read *egressus*, the 'outgoings'; according to Ps. lxxv. 9 (8 in E.V.), the portals of heaven through which the stars and the winds come; that their normal course should be changed is regarded as a terrible sign (Gunkel). In *Enoch xxxiv.* 2 ff., it is said, 'And here I saw three portals of heaven open in the heaven; through each of them proceed north winds . . . And from thence I went to the east to the ends of the heaven, and I saw here the three eastern portals of heaven open and small portals above them. Through each of these small portals pass the stars of heaven and run their course to the west on the path which is shown to them.'

6. *and he shall rule, whom . . .* i.e. Antichrist, or Belial, the great enemy of the last times; cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xl. 1, 2; *Sib. Orac.* iii. 63 f.; *Test. xii. Patr.*; Dan. v. 10, 11; *Asc. of Isaiah* iv. 2; *Assumpt. of Moses* viii. 1.

and the fowls shall . . . Birds were credited with foresight in ancient times, and therefore they fly from the scene of coming disaster.

7. *the Sodomitish sea . . .* i.e. the Dead Sea; it is called 'the lake of Sodom' by Josephus, *Antiq.* v. 81. In Ezek. xlvii. 8 ff. it is told of how the bitter waters of the Dead Sea are healed by the waters that come forth from the Temple, so that there shall be 'a very great multitude of fish', thus implying that hitherto there had been none. The point of the 'Sodomitish sea' casting out fish is to show further how nature will be turned topsy-turvy in that dreadful time.

and make a noise . . . Cp. Luke xxi. 25: ' . . . in perplexity for the

roaring of the sea and the billows'; Violet quotes *Test. Dom.* § 6 *Et sonus et vox et maris bullitio et terrae rugitus*. In the material made use of in describing these signs of the end the roaring of the sea was undoubtedly one of the elements. Some scholars, however, emend this text, reading: 'And one whom the many do not know will make his voice heard by night; and all shall hear his voice', so Box, following Wellhausen and Charles, renders it, and explains it by saying that 'a mysterious personage is indicated by a voice which all can hear'. There is something to be said for this; but the difficulty is that such a mysterious personage does not figure in the accounts we have of these signs of the end; the Messiah is never so described.

9. *wit . . . understanding . . .* Better 'understanding (or intelligence) and wisdom'; such hypostases are common in later Judaism; cp. *Prov.* viii; *Wisdom* vii. 22^b—viii. 1; in *Apoc. Bar.* xlvi. 36 it is said: 'And many shall say to many at that time, "Where hath the multitude of intelligence hidden itself; and whither hath the multitude of wisdom removed itself?"' For other quasi-personifications see Oesterley and Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, pp. 195 ff. (1911).

v. 14—19. The Seer awakes from his sleep in a condition of fear and weariness. His solitude is disturbed by the arrival of 'the captain of the people', who urges him to look after his compatriots in captivity. Ezra bids him go and not to return until after seven days; thereupon he departs.

14 Then I awaked, and an extreme trembling went through my body, and my mind was troubled, so that it fainted. 15 So the angel that was come to talk with me held me, comforted me, and set me up upon my feet. 16 And in the second night it came to pass, that ¹Phaltiel the captain of the people came unto me, saying, Where hast thou been? and why is thy countenance sad? 17 or knowest thou not that Israel is committed unto thee in the land of their captivity? 18 Up then, and eat some bread, and forsake us not, as the shepherd *that leaveth* his flock in the hands of cruel wolves. 19 Then said I unto him, Go thy ways from me, and come not nigh me for seven days, and then shalt thou come unto me. And he heard what I said, and went from me.

¹ The Syriac has *Psaltiel*.

14. *Then I awaked*. The experience through which the Seer has gone thus took place during sleep.

an extreme trembling . . . These signs of mental and physical exhaustion after what was believed to have been a vision are natural

enough, and point to some real experience through which the writer had passed. The literary form in which the account of this experience has come down to us is, of course, an elaboration; but there is no sufficient reason for doubting that it describes an actual experience. The Apocalyptists were constantly thinking of what they believed was going to happen in the near future, their minds were saturated with the traditional material which they adapted to their purposes, and they were convinced that they were recipients of divine messages. What more natural that with minds so predisposed, and a rigid preparatory fast, what they believed to be visions should be experienced during sleep? They had a message to give to their people, and this message seemed to them to be re-enforced in their dream-visions.

THE SECOND VISION: v. 20—vi. 34

In this Vision there is some repetition of what has gone before. There is another fast of seven days; and there is again the question as to why the chosen people of God should be suffering at the hands of the oppressor, together with the reply that man, who cannot understand the things of his own environment can still less expect to understand the ways of the Almighty. A new element then enters in: the Seer asks how it shall be with those who shall have died before the present world-order has passed; the reply is that their lot will be similar to those who are still living. Then the Seer asks again as to the time of the end, and is told that God knows this and that He alone will bring it about, together with the advent of the new age. Another description of the signs heralding the approach of the end is then given. With the promise of further revelations the vision comes to an end.

v. 20-2. Introduction to the Vision.

20 And so I fasted seven days, mourning and weeping, like as Uriel the angel commanded me. 21 And after seven days so it was, that the thoughts of my heart were very grievous unto me again, 22 and my soul recovered the spirit of understanding, and I began to speak words before the Most High again,

v. 23-30. The Seer's prayer to God.

23 and said, O Lord that bearest rule, of all the woods of the earth, and of all the trees thereof, thou hast chosen thee one vine: 24 and of all the lands of the world thou hast chosen thee one ¹country: and of all the flowers of the world thou hast chosen thee one lily: 25 and of all the depths of the sea thou

¹ After the Oriental versions. The Latin has *pit*.

hast filled thee one river: and of all builded cities thou hast hallowed Sion unto thyself: 26 and of all the fowls that are created thou hast named thee one dove: and of all the cattle that are made thou hast provided thee one sheep: 27 and among all the multitudes of peoples thou hast gotten thee one people: and unto this people, whom thou lovedst, thou gavest a law that is approved of all. 28 And now, O Lord, why hast thou given this one people over unto many, and ¹hast dishonoured the one root above others, and hast scattered thine only one among many? 29 And they which did gainsay thy promises have trodden them down that believed thy covenants. 30 If thou dost so much hate thy people, they should be punished with thine own hands.

¹ After the Oriental versions. The Latin reads *hast prepared*.

23. *thou hast chosen thee . . .* 'Thee', which all the Oriental Versions have, is omitted, doubtless accidentally, as it is added in the succeeding sentences, by Lat.; its inclusion is important since Israel, as the vine of God, is peculiarly His; this is especially brought out in Ps. lxxx. 9-16 (8-15), a Psalm which may well have been in the writer's mind. Cp. also Isa. v. 1-7, though there Israel is figuratively spoken of not as a vine but as a vineyard.

28. *and hast scattered . . . among many*. A reference to the Dispersion, cp. *Sib. Orac.* iii. 271: 'Every land and sea is full of thee', and, more than two centuries later, Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vii. 43, 'the Jewish nation is widely dispersed over all the habitable earth among its inhabitants', and ii. 398, 'there is no part of the habitable earth which does not contain some part of us'.

v. 31-40. The Archangel Uriel comes to instruct the Seer again. The divine messenger, by showing him how little he knows about the things of his immediate surroundings, once more impresses upon the Seer the impossibility of his understanding God's ways.

31 Now when I had spoken these words, the angel that came to me the night afore was sent unto me, 32 and said unto me, Hear me, and I will instruct thee; hearken unto me, and I shall tell thee more.

33 And I said, Speak on, my Lord. Then said he unto me, Thou art sore troubled in mind for Israel's sake: lovest thou that people better than he that made them?

34 And I said, No, Lord: but of very grief have I spoken: for my reins torment me every hour, while I labour to comprehend

the way of the Most High, and to seek out part of his judgement.

35 And he said unto me, Thou canst not. And I said, Wherefore, Lord, or whereunto was I born? or why was not my mother's womb then my grave, that I might not have seen the travail of Jacob, and the wearisome toil of the stock of Israel?

36 And he said unto me, Number me them that are not yet come, gather me together the drops that are scattered abroad, make me the flowers green again that are withered, 37 open me the chambers that are closed, and bring me forth the winds that in them are shut up, or shew me the image of a voice: and then I will declare to thee the travail that thou askest to see.

38 And I said, O Lord that bearest rule, who may know these things, but he that hath not his dwelling with men? 39 As for me, I am unwise: how may I then speak of these things whereof thou askest me?

40 Then said he unto me, Like as thou canst do none of these things that I have spoken of, even so canst thou not find out my judgement, or the end of the love that I have promised unto my people.

31. *the night afore.* Not the night immediately before; on a preceding night.

32. *and I shall tell thee more.* Lat. . . . *et adiciam coram te*, 'and I will add (to speak) before thee', a Hebrew form of expression.

33. *lovest thou . . .* How can he possibly love his people more than God loves them, who made them! Cp. viii. 47.

34. *my reins.* i.e. the kidneys (Lat. *renes mei*), the seat of the emotions, according to Hebrew ideas; cp. Ps. lxxiii. 21: 'I was pricked (lit. "pierced") in my kidneys', as though the mental anguish produced physical pain.

35. *why was not my mother's womb . . .* Cp. Job iii. 11, x. 18, 19; Gunkel gives Clement of Alexander's quotation of this: *διὰ τι γὰρ οὐκ ἐγένετο ἡ μήτρα τῆς μητρός μου τάφος, ἵνα μὴ ἴδω τὸν μόχθον τοῦ Ἰακώβ καὶ τὸν κόπον τοῦ γένους Ἰσραὴλ; Ἐσδρας ὁ προφῆτης λέγει* (Strom. iii. 16).

37. *the chambers that are closed.* See note on verse 5 of this chapter. If 'winds' is synonymous with spirits, then the reference would be to the chambers under the throne of God where the departed spirits await the final judgement (see Wellhausen); cp. iv. 35. The, to us incongruous, mixing up of the things of this world and of the world above is natural enough to the Apocalypticist with his constant other-worldly thoughts.

shut up. Lat. omits, inadvertently, after this a line which occurs in the Oriental Versions: 'Shew me the image of faces thou hast never seen.'

shew me the image of a voice. The quaint idea that behind a sound there is an image, though invisible to mortal eyes, was widespread in antiquity.

the travail. Gunkel pointedly refers to Ps. lxxiii. 16: 'Then sought I to understand this, but it is a travail (in the sense of "difficulty" or "problem") in mine eyes'; Violet disagrees with this, but it fully explains the rather difficult sentence: i.e. 'then will I explain to thee the problem thou desirest to understand'.

39. *these things whereof . . .* i.e. the things enumerated in verses 36, 37.

v. 41-55. The Seer, continuing the dialogue, raises a new problem: the promise of blessedness has been made in reference to those who will be living 'in the end', i.e. when the Messianic Age begins; but how about those who are dead, and those who are living now, and those yet to be born, but during whose lifetime the end will not yet have come? The reply, put in parabolic form, is, in effect, that with God there is neither past nor future; His judgement is for all. Then the Seer asks why God did not create all generations simultaneously. The reply, summed up, is that this is not possible, because God, having created the world according to a certain plan, will see to it that this plan is carried out. Once more, the Seer asks whether the mother of all flesh, the earth, is still young? He is told that the earth is 'past the strength of youth'.

41 And I said, But, lo, O Lord, thou hast made the promise unto them that be in the end: and what shall they do that have been before us, or we *that be now*, or they that shall come after us?

42 And he said unto me, I will liken my judgement unto a ring: like as there is no slackness of them that be last, even so there is no swiftness of them that be first.

43 So I answered and said, Coudest thou not make them *to be* at once that have been made, and that be now, and that are for to come; that thou mightest shew thy judgement the sooner?

44 Then answered he me, and said, The creature may not haste above the creator; neither may the world hold them at once that shall be created therein.

45 And I said, How hast thou said unto thy servant, that ¹thou wilt surely make alive at once the creature that thou hast created? ²If therefore they shall be alive at once, and the

¹ So the Syriac.

² The Latin omits *If . . . alive at once.*

creature shall sustain them: even so it might now also support them to be present at once.

46 And he said unto me, Ask the womb of a woman, and say unto her, If thou bringest forth ten children, why *doest thou it* at several times? pray her therefore to bring forth ten children at once.

47 And I said, She cannot: but must do it by distance of time.

48 Then said he unto me, Even so have I given the womb of the earth to those that be sown therein in their several times. 49 For like as a young child may not bring forth, neither she that is grown old *bring forth* any more, even so have I disposed the world which I created.

50 And I asked, and said, Seeing thou hast now shewed me the way, I will speak before thee: Is our mother, of whom thou hast told me, still young? or doth she now draw nigh unto age?

51 He answered me, and said, Ask a woman that beareth children, and she shall tell thee. 52 Say unto her, Wherefore are not they whom thou hast now brought forth like those that were before, but less of stature? 53 And she also shall answer thee, They that be born in the strength of youth are of one fashion, and they that are born in the time of age, when the womb faileth, are otherwise. 54 Consider therefore thou also, how that ye are less of stature than those that were before you. 55 And so are they that come after you less than ye, as *born* of the creature which now beginneth to be old, and is past the strength of youth.

41. *that be in the end.* i.e. the last generation of the present world-order, those who will be living when the New Age begins. The speaker is made to represent in these words the old belief of the solidarity of the nation, according to which if the last generation of the nation is saved this will apply to all earlier generations. The Seer then goes on to ask about all the generations that have passed, the present generations, and all future ones between now and the time when the last generation of the present world-order shall have arisen. The point of this question is to call forth the reply which is to show that the old view about the solidarity of the nation was wrong. The teaching on Individualism, first put forth by Jeremiah, and more especially by Ezekiel, had in course of time come home, and the truth had become recognized that each individual was responsible for his own acts. This is illustrated by the next verse.

42. *I will liken my judgement unto a ring.* i.e. God's judgement

will be upon all generations simultaneously, just as there is no beginning and no end in the ring. In *Apoc. Bar.* li. 13 it is said: 'For the first shall receive the last, those whom they were expecting, and the last those of whom they used to hear that they had passed away.'

like as there is no slackness . . . i.e. all are exactly on the same level.

45. *How hast thou said . . .* i.e. how are the two statements just made to be reconciled with each other, viz. in verse 42 it was said that God's judgement would be upon all generations simultaneously, while in verse 44 it was said that the world could not contain at one and the same time all those who have been created! If, however, the world can contain them all at the same time why should that not be the case now?

that thou wilt surely make alive. So Bensly's emended Lat. text, *vivificans vivificabis*, following Syr.; a Hebraism.

If therefore . . . at once. So Syr., inadvertently omitted by Lat.

the creature shall . . . i.e. the world which has been created; Ethiop. reads 'world'. The verse presupposes the resurrection of the body.

46-9. That there is no real analogy here does not trouble the writer; for his purposes a superficial parallel suffices.

50. *Is our mother . . .* The same question, though in a different form, is asked in iv. 33 and 45.

54. *how that ye are less of stature . . .* Cp. Gen. vi. 4, 'The *Nephilim*' ('giants') were in the earth in those days'; Num. xiii. 33, 'And there we saw the *Nephilim*, the sons of Anak, which come of the *Nephilim*; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so were we in their sight'; Am. ii. 9, 'Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of cedars, and he was strong as the oaks.'

55. *which now beginneth to be old . . .* Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* lxxxv. 10: 'For the youth of the world is past, and the strength of the creation is already exhausted; and the advent of the times is very short, yea, they have passed by; and the pitcher is near to the cistern, and the ship to the port, and the course of the journey to the city, and life to its consummation.'

v. 56—vi. 6. The Seer continues to address God directly, and God answers his question as to through whose agency the end will come, by telling him that just as through Him all things were made, so the end will be brought about by Himself alone, and by none other.

56 Then said I, Lord, I beseech thee, if I have found favour in thy sight, shew thy servant by whom thou visitest thy creature.

VI. 1 And he said unto me, In the beginning, when the earth was made, before the outgoings of the world were fixed, or ever the gatherings of the winds blew, 2 before the voices of the thunder sounded and before the flashes of the lightning shone,

or ever the foundations of paradise were laid, 3 before the fair flowers were seen, or ever the powers of the earthquake were established, before the innumerable hosts of angels were gathered together, 4 or ever the heights of the air were lifted up, before the measures of the firmament were named, or ever the footstool of Sion ¹was established, 5 and ere the present years were sought out, and or ever the imaginations of them that now sin were estranged, before they were sealed that have gathered faith for a treasure: 6 then did I consider these things, and they all were made through me alone, and through none other: as by me also they shall be ended, and by none other.

¹ So the Syriac.

56. *thou visitest*. Read, with Syr., 'Thou wilt visit', in reference to the end of this world-order.

VI. 1. *In the beginning* . . . The remarkably fine description of the various elements belonging to the Creation which follows here will originally have been in poetical form like other similar descriptions. Even if the writer put it together himself it is undoubtedly based, in content as well as in form, on ancient traditional material; to see that this is the case one has but to read the early Babylonian Creation-myths (translations can be found in English, e.g. in Ball's *Light from the East*, pp. 2-19 [1899], or in German in Gunkel's *Schöpfung und Chaos*, pp. 401-20, already referred to). The description before us is, however, much more compressed, and certainly far more beautiful, than the Babylonian accounts. In the Old Testament we have something similar in Prov. viii. 22-9, and cp. Ps. xc. 2; see also the fragment from the book of *Noah*, in *Enoch* lx. 11-12, and cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xlviii. 7-10, lix. 5-12.

the outgoings of the world. This is difficult to understand; Gunkel, referring to iii. 18, viii. 20, takes the Lat. *exitus saeculi* in the sense of the outgoings, or portals, of heaven, no doubt rightly; cp. *Enoch* xxxv. 2 ff. (quoted in note on v. 5).

the gatherings of the winds. Lat. *conventiones ventorum*, which Gunkel emends, reading *convectiones ventorum*, 'the blowings (or "blasts") of the winds'; this is evidently right as Syr. reads, 'the weights of the winds', cp. *Apoc. Bar.* lix. 5, 'He showed to Him . . . the weight of the winds and the number of the drops of rain'; the force of the wind is conceived of as its weight.

2. *the foundations of paradise*. Paradise = *Gan Eden*, 'the garden of Eden'; but in some of the Midrashic literature it is spoken of as having chambers (different, of course, from the 'chambers of souls' in iv. 41), and is therefore thought of as a building (cp. John xiv. 2); the idea is clearly traditional.

3. *the fair flowers.* Syr., Ethiop. have 'the beauty of its flowers'. According to Gunkel, the flowers of the heavenly paradise were originally the stars. The Jews believed in an earthly as well as a heavenly paradise.

the powers of the earthquake. Lat. *motus virtutes* (=Syr., Ethiop.), lit. 'the powers of movement', which Gunkel understands as 'the powers of the heavens', which 'shall be shaken' (Matth. xxiv. 29), meaning the powers of the angels who move the heavens and the stars; cp. *Enoch* lxxv. 1: 'And the leaders of the heads of the thousands, who are placed over the whole creation and over all the stars'; cp. lxxx. 7. So, too, in Slav. *Enoch* iv. 1, 2: 'And they brought before my face the elders, and the rulers of the orders of the stars; and they showed me the two hundred angels who rule the stars, and their heavenly service; and they fly with their wings and go round all the stars as they float' (see also *Enoch* lxxxii. 9-18, 20).

the innumerable hosts of angels. In Rabbinical literature the angels are said to have been created on the second day of the Creation, according to some; on the fifth day, according to others.

4. *the heights of the air.* In Slav. *Enoch* iii. 1, 2 it is said: '... these men (i.e. the angels) summoned me and took me on their wings and placed me on the clouds. And lo! the clouds moved. And again going higher, I saw the air and going still higher, I saw the ether; and they placed me in the first heaven.'

the measures of the firmament were named. i.e. the divisions of the heavens. The opening words of the Babylonian Creation-myth are: 'Once, when the heaven above was not (yet) named.' In Slav. *Enoch* xxi. 6, xxii. 1 some of the names of the heavens, in their Hebrew form, are mentioned: the eighth heaven is called *Mazalôth* (the twelve signs of the Zodiac), the ninth, *Kokhabim* ('stars'), the tenth, '*Arabôth* ('dry places'?). In *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* xviii (G. Friedlander's translation), the words occur: 'The Holy One, blessed be He, created seven firmaments, and He selected from them all '*Arabôth* only for the place of the throne of glory of His kingdom.' According to the Talmud (*Chagiga* 12 b) '*Arabôth* was really the seventh heaven (Charles).

the footstool of Sion was established. So Syr.; Lat. has 'was valued'. Sion was conceived of as the centre of the world; in Isa. lxvi. 1 it is said, 'the earth is my footstool'; it is quite in accordance with the apocalyptic view of things that Sion should have been destined for God's footstool before the Creation.

5. *ere the present years were sought out.* i.e. before time was reckoned.

or ever the imaginations of them . . . The meaning of these difficult words seems to be, 'before the impulse to sin had been restrained'; it was believed that God, in His mercy, had set a limit to sin from the first; even before this God had considered 'these things'

(verse 6), i.e. that He alone would bring the present world-order to an end.

before they were sealed . . . i.e. the righteous have been sealed, even before the Creation, for bliss in the Messianic times, cp. Rev. vii. 2 ff.: ' . . . till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads . . .'; see also Rev. ix. 4.

that have gathered faith for a treasure. The variations in the Lat. MSS. and the Versions make it difficult to decide what the true text may have been: 'they that have gathered the treasures of faith', or 'the treasure of the faithful ones', or as rendered by the Revised Version; nevertheless, the meaning would seem to be fairly clear, viz. that the good works which men do have been predestined for them before the Creation. By 'faith' here we must probably understand belief in God which is exemplified by fulfilling His law; the works of the Law are stored up in God's treasury (see further, Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 302 ff.).

6. *then did I consider these things.* i.e. at that time, before the Creation of all the things enumerated God had thought both about these and of the end of the present world-order, and the coming of the Messianic Age.

through me alone, and through none other. This emphasis is significant; it was, no doubt, directed against the belief of intermediate agencies between God and man having taken part in the Creation; Wisdom, the Word, and the Holy Spirit (not in the Christian sense) appear in early Rabbinical literature as occupying an intermediate position between personalities and abstract beings (see also Prov. viii. 22-31, *Wisdom* ix. 1, 2), and words are sometimes used which seem to imply that they had their share in the Creation. These quasi-personalities are referred to in the Targum, the Talmud, and the Midrash, but they play no part in the teaching of official Judaism. It is probable that the words under consideration were also directed against Christian teaching (see, e.g., John i. 1-3).

vi. 7-10. The parting asunder of the times. The Seer asks whether there will be any interval between the end of the present evil world-order and the beginning of the glorious age to come. He is told that there will be no interval, but that one will immediately follow the other.

7 Then answered I and said, What shall be the parting asunder of the times? or when shall be the end of the first, and the beginning of it that followeth?

8 And he said unto me, From ¹Abraham unto ²Abraham, inasmuch as Jacob and Esau were born of him, for Jacob's hand held the heel of Esau from the beginning. 9 For Esau is the end of this world, and Jacob is the beginning of it that followeth.

¹ Perhaps for *Abram*.

² Another reading is, *Isaac*.

10 ¹The beginning of a man is his hand, and the end of a man is his heel; between the heel and the hand seek thou nought else, Esdras.

¹ So the Syriac, &c. The Latin is defective.

7. *What shall be the . . .* i.e. of what kind will be the division between the two times, or ages? The sequel shows that the Seer is inquiring whether the division of time between the two will be long. The ideas upon this subject differed; some held that the Messianic Era would intervene between the end of this world-order and the final consummation of the ages in heaven, when the righteous would enjoy eternal bliss (see vii. 30, 31). Others, represented by the Seer in this passage, held that there would be no such interval; in this case the Messianic Age would not have the earth as its scene, but the world above.

8. *From Abraham unto Abraham.* As Jacob and Esau were born of Abraham through Isaac, they could be spoken of as 'Abraham'. The writer speaks of them as 'Abraham' in order to teach that just as from Abraham to Abraham there could be no break in time, so from the present world-order to the age to come there will be no interval of time; one necessarily follows immediately upon the other.

for Jacob's hand held . . . Emphasizing again that there is to be no interval between the two ages; there is nothing between the heel and the hand that grasps it.

9. *For Esau is the end . . . followeth.* This rendering of Lat., which is more or less what the other Versions (with the exception of Syr.) read, is really quite beside the mark; Esau and Jacob do not symbolize the two ages, whatever symbolic meaning may have been attached to them in later ages (see Box's quotation from *Bereshith Rabba* on Gen. xxv. 26, on pp. 69 ff. of his Commentary); Syr. has preserved the right reading: 'the heel of the first age is Esau; the hand of the second is Jacob'; 'heel' and 'hand' are the important words, not 'Esau' and 'Jacob'; the hand touches the heel, and nothing comes between them; in like manner nothing intervenes between the two ages.

10. *The beginning . . . his heel.* i.e. end and beginning touch without anything intervening. In the text of Lat. some words have fallen out before and after *hominis manus*.

between the heel . . . Esdras. Read: 'Between heel and hand nought else; ponder that Esdras' (μεταξὺ πτέρνης καὶ χειρὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο ζῆτει "Εζρα [Gunkel]). The same truth of there being no interval between the ages is again emphasized.

vi. 11-34. The Seer asks for further information about the signs of the end. He is answered by 'a mighty sounding voice'. The signs of the end are then described. After this the Seer is told that he shall hear greater things yet when he has fasted another seven days.

11 I answered then and said, O Lord that bearest rule, if I have found favour in thy sight, 12 I beseech thee, shew thy servant the end of thy tokens, whereof thou shewedst me part the last night.

13 So he answered and said unto me, Stand up upon thy feet, and thou shalt hear a mighty sounding voice ; 14 and if the place whereon thou standest be greatly moved, 15 when it speaketh be not thou afraid: for the word is of the end, and the foundations of the earth shall understand, 16 that the speech is of them: they shall tremble and be moved: for they know that their end must be changed.

17 And it happened, that when I had heard it I stood up upon my feet, and hearkened, and, behold, there was a voice that spake, and the sound of it was like the sound of many waters. 18 And it said, Behold, the days come, and it shall be that when I draw nigh to visit them that dwell upon the earth, 19 and when I shall make inquisition of them that have done hurt unjustly with their unrighteousness, and when the affliction of Sion shall be fulfilled, 20 and when the seal shall be set upon the world that is to pass away, then will I shew these tokens: the books shall be opened before the firmament, and all shall see together: 21 and the children of a year old shall speak with their voices, the women with child shall bring forth untimely children at three or four months, and they shall live, and dance. 22 And suddenly shall the sown places appear unsown, the full storehouses shall suddenly be found empty: 23 and the trumpet shall give a sound, which when every man heareth, they shall be suddenly afraid. 24 At that time shall friends make war one against another like enemies, and the earth shall stand in fear with those that dwell therein, the springs of the fountains shall stand still, so that for three hours they shall not run. 25 And it shall be that whosoever remaineth after all these things that I have told thee of, he shall be saved, and shall see my salvation, and the end of my world. 26 And they shall see the men that have been taken up, who have not tasted death from their birth: and the heart of the inhabitants shall be changed, and turned into another meaning. 27 For evil shall be blotted out, and deceit shall be quenched; 28 and faith shall flourish, and corruption shall be overcome,

and the truth, which hath been so long without fruit, shall be declared.

29 And when he talked with me, behold, by little and little the place whereon I stood ¹rocked to and fro. 30 And he said unto me, These things came I to shew thee ²this night. 31 If therefore thou wilt pray yet again, and fast seven days more, I shall yet ³tell thee greater things than these. 32 For thy voice hath surely been heard before the Most High: for the Mighty hath seen thy righteous dealing, he hath seen aforetime also thy chastity, which thou hast had ever since thy youth. 33 And therefore hath he sent me to shew thee all these things, and to say unto thee, Be of good comfort, and fear not. 34 And be not hasty in *regard* of the former times, to think vain things, that thou mayest not hasten in the latter times.

¹ After the Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt.

² So the Syriac. The Latin is corrupt.

³ The Latin has *tell thee by day*.

12. *whereof thou shewedst me . . .* Cp. iv. 51—v. 13.

15. *the foundations of the earth . . .* A strange example of personification, elaborated in the following verse.

16. *for they know that their end . . .* Syr. is probably nearer the original, 'for they know that they will be changed at the end', i.e. the end of the present age.

17. *I stood up upon my feet.* The position hitherto had then, presumably, been that of lying down; in how far these visions were dreams and in how far the result of fully conscious meditation is an interesting point; for standing during meditation see, perhaps, John i. 48.

the sound of many waters. Cp. Ezek. i. 24; Rev. i. 15, xiv. 2, xix. 6; doubtless, by this the divine voice is meant; but it is worth considering whether physical excitement did not play a part, for it cannot be questioned that strong pulsation affects the aural nerves, the result of which might well be described as 'the sound of many waters'.

18. *to visit.* In Hebrew the word is used in a favourable sense, 'to visit graciously', and in a sinister sense, 'to punish', according to the preposition by which it is followed; here it is the latter.

19. *make inquisition of . . .* i.e. take vengeance upon. Lat. reads *Et quando inquirere incipiam ab eis qui injuste nocuerunt injustitia sua*; but Ethiop. = *Et tunc inquiram eorum injustitiam qui injuste egerunt*, 'And then will I take vengeance on the unrighteousness of those who have done wickedly.'

and when the affliction of Sion . . . Cp. *Apoc. Bar. xx. 2*: 'Therefore

have I now taken away Sion, in order that I may the more speedily visit the world in its season.' The fall of Jerusalem is one of the signs heralding the near approach of the end, cp. Matth. xxiv. 2, 3; Luke xxi. 20-8.

20. *the seal shall be set upon.* Like a document that has been sealed and is therefore completed.

the world. i.e. the present age.

the books shall be opened. i.e. the books which are kept in heaven, and in which are inscribed the deeds of men, both of the righteous and of the wicked; cp. *Asc. of Isaiah* ix. 21, 22: '... Behold, one of the angels . . . showed me a book, 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 . . .'; here the record of both the righteous and the wicked are recorded; elsewhere it is only the former that are mentioned, e.g. *Enoch* xlvii. 3: 'In those days I saw the Head of Days when he seated himself upon the throne of his glory; and the books of the living were opened before him . . .'; while in *Apoc. Bar.* xxiv. 1, it is said: 'For behold, the days come, and the books shall be opened in which are written the sins of all those who have sinned.' In Rev. xx. 12 we have the well-known words: 'And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is (the book) of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.' See further, especially for the Old Testament basis of the idea, Charles, *Enoch*, pp. 90-2 (1912).

before the firmament. i.e. in the face of the firmament, meaning presumably the angelic host standing on the firmament, cp. *Enoch* xlvii. 3: 'And all his host which is in heaven above, and his counsellors, stood before him . . .'

21, 22. The content of these verses shows clearly that they are out of place; they belong, as Kabisch has shown, after v. 8; that verse ends with: 'and women shall bring forth monsters'; the verse before us (21) comes then appropriately: 'and the children of a year old shall speak with their voices, and women . . .'; it is a continuation of the unnatural prodigies which are among the signs of the end. Then in v. 9 it is said: 'and salt waters shall be found in the sweet . . .'; what is said in verse 22 comes logically before this. If we read from verse 20, 'and all shall see it together', straight to verse 23: 'and the trumpet shall give a sound . . .', the text reads far more smoothly.

23. *And the trumpet . . .* The blowing of the trumpet has various purposes; here it is to inspire fear because of the opening of the books ('they shall suddenly be afraid'); in Matth. xxiv. 31 it is to gather together the elect, cp. Isa. xxvii. 13; in I Cor. xv. 52 it is to

arouse the righteous dead, cp. I Thess. iv. 16; in *Apoc. of Abraham* xxxi it is to announce the coming of the Elect One.

they shall be suddenly afraid. Syr. joins 'suddenly' with the hearing: 'which all men shall suddenly hear and be afraid'; this is more likely to be the correct rendering.

24. *shall friends make war . . . enemies.* These words are, again, out of place, and belong to verse 9 before 'shall destroy one another'. This makes our text read more logically; the trumpet will make men afraid and 'the earth will stand in fear . . .'.

the springs of the fountains shall . . . Cp. *Assumpt. of Moses* x. 6: 'And the sea shall fall even to the abyss; the fountains of water shall fail, and the rivers be afraid'; *Test. xii. Patr.* Levi iv. 1: ' . . . and the sun quenched, and the waters dried up, and the fire cowering and all creation troubled . . .'

three hours. In *Enoch*, as Charles shows (p. 203), 'hours' is used as a period of time; Gunkel takes 'hours' here in a literal sense, viz. that the terrors brought upon the earth were to last three hours.

25. *he shall be saved.* Cp. vii. 27, ix. 7, 8, xiii. 23. *Enoch* xcix. 10: 'But in those days blessed are all they who accept the words of wisdom, and understand them . . . for they shall be saved.' In *Apoc. Bar.* xxix. 2, lxxi. 1 it is those who are dwelling in the Holy Land who will be saved. Cp. also Mark xiii. 13.

26. *And they shall see.* A better reading would be 'then shall appear' (Gunkel), probably this is what the original text had.

who have not tasted death. Cp. Rev. xi. 3 ff. The most obvious among these would be Enoch and Elijah (see Charles, *Enoch*, p. 215); cp. *Ecclus.* xlv. 16; *Wisdom* iv. 10, 11; but tradition reckoned some others as well, cp. verse 49; thus in xiv. 9 Ezra is told that he is to be 'taken away from men'; for Jeremiah see II Macc. ii. 1 ff., xv. 13; Matth. xvi. 14; for Baruch see *Apoc. Bar.* vi. 8, xiii. 1-3, xxv. 1, xl. 2, xlvi. 7, xlviii. 30, lxxvi. 1-3; but there is also an early legend of Moses not having died; Josephus was familiar with this, for he tells of how when Moses was about to die, as the people thought, 'and as he was going to embrace Eleazar and Joshua and was still discoursing with them, a cloud stood over him on a sudden, and he disappeared in a certain valley, although he wrote in the holy books that he died, which was done out of fear lest they should venture to say, that because of his extraordinary virtue he went to God' (*Antiq.* iv. 326). The tradition that he did not die is also seen in the apocalyptic work, *The Assumption of Moses*, belonging to the beginning of the Christian era; there can be no doubt that if we possessed the whole of this book (as we now have it, the narrative ends in the middle of a sentence) we should find that it contained an account of his assumption to heaven. Cp. Matth. xvii. 3, 4; Mark ix. 4, 5; Luke ix. 30-3. Bousset (*Die Religion des Judentums*, p. 233) points out that the origin of the idea of forerunners and companions

of the Messiah is, in all probability, not to be sought in Mal. iii. 23 (iv. 5 in E.V.); he draws attention to the fact that in Persian eschatology the Shaoshyant ('Saviour') is represented as appearing at the end of the world accompanied by men of ancient renown.

and the heart of the . . . shall be changed. See Mal. iv. 6 (Hebr. iii. 24): 'And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.'

into another meaning. Syr. 'into another mind', Ethiop. 'and another heart shall be given them'; cp. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27: 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you . . .'

27, 28. Cp. *Enoch* v. 9. With this verse the eschatological description breaks and is not taken up again until vii. 26.

29. *rocked to and fro.* One expects some explanation of this sudden rocking of the earth; the abrupt break in the eschatological account suggests that originally an earthquake was described, for this was one of the signs of the end; the mention of the rocking of the earth may, therefore, well be a remnant of this.

34. *And be not hasty . . .* i.e. do not worry thyself with useless brooding over these times ('former times' from the point of view of the end), in order that thou mayest not have to suffer fear in the latter times.

THE THIRD VISION: vi. 35—ix. 25

The Vision begins with an enumeration of the works of Creation on the part of the Seer; he gives the reason for this, viz. God has said that He created the world for the sake of Israel, the other nations are nothing to Him; nevertheless, Israel is given over into the hands of these other nations; but if the world was created for Israel why can Israel not enter into possession of it? And how long are the present illogical conditions to continue? So that the reason for recounting the works of Creation is to remind the Almighty, as it were, of what He had done for His people, and to show Him that His purpose is being frustrated by what is now happening. 'How long shall this endure?' asks the Seer (vi. 35-59). The Archangel Uriel then takes up the word, and he says that the righteous must pass through a 'narrow place' in order to attain to the glorious beyond. Although the world was created for Israel it has become a narrow way because of Adam's sin; and it is necessary to pass through the narrow way, with all its perils, if the reward in the Hereafter is to be achieved. Therefore the Seer is bidden to think of that which is to come rather than to worry himself about the present evils (vii. 1-16).

The Seer then makes the statement that since God has ordained that the righteous should receive their inheritance and that the godless should perish, the former will be well able to go through the present evils seeing the hope that is before them; the ungodly, on the other hand, while they too will have to suffer here, have no such hope. This statement is

rebuked by the Archangel, for it is not for the Seer to judge in this matter; indeed, he has made a grave error in claiming what he does for the righteous, for all men are sinners, and it is only by the grace and mercy of God that any attain to happiness hereafter (vii. 17-25).

Then follows an eschatological section dealing with the woes which are to herald the coming of the Messiah, the advent of the Messiah, and the Resurrection and the Judgement (vii. 26-44).

After this the debate is taken up again. The Seer laments that so few will be saved; but he is told that their small number will make them the more precious. The Seer then deplores the evil lot of the great mass of the human race; but he is told that they do but suffer what they deserve, for the Almighty has been very long-suffering with them (vii. 45-74).

In reply to the Seer the Archangel describes the state of men after death and before the Judgement (vii. 75-101).

The Seer then asks whether when the day of Judgement comes the righteous will be permitted to intercede for the wicked; the reply is: 'Then shall no man be able to have mercy on him that is cast in judgement, nor to thrust down him that hath gotten the victory' (vii. 102-15).

Once more the Seer pours forth a lament over the cruel fate of the great mass of men who are thus condemned owing to Adam's transgression; far better would it have been if Adam had never been created. In reply the Archangel reminds him of the words of Moses: 'Choose thee life that thou mayest live'; but the people would not follow his guidance nor that of the prophets. They have but themselves to blame. In any case, there will be more joy over the salvation of the few than sorrow over the destruction of the wicked (vii. 116-31).

To this the Seer wonders how the divine mercy and loving-kindness can be reconciled with the eternal loss of the great mass of men; the reply is: 'The Most High hath made this world for many; but the world to come for few' (vii. 132-viii. 3). But this does not satisfy the Seer; man is a wonderfully created being, how can he perish eternally? (viii. 4-19^a). There follows here the prayer of Ezra (viii. 19^b-36); and the divine reply (viii. 37-62).

The divine reply is now interrupted by another eschatological section. The Seer asks again about the time of the end; he is told that when certain signs appear he may know that the end is drawing near; these signs are then enumerated; and it is said that by works and by faith a man will escape these perils; but for those who have scorned the Law of God there is only torment (viii. 63-ix. 12).

After this the divine reply, interrupted by the preceding section, is taken up again. The Seer is told not to concern himself with the punishment of the ungodly, but to inquire 'how the righteous shall be saved'. Stress is once more laid on the fact that all the troubles of the present world-order are the results of sin; since a small remnant ('a grape out of the cluster', 'a plant out of a great forest') has kept itself from sin, this shall, in very truth be preserved: 'Let the multitude perish then, which

was born in vain ; but let my grape be saved and my plant ; for with great labour have I made them perfect.'

The Vision closes with the promise of further converse with the Archangel (ix. 13-25).

vi. 35-59. After another seven days' fast the Seer is full of eagerness to receive further revelation. He enumerates the works of Creation, which were created for Israel ; therefore the present conditions in which Israel is unable to enter into its inheritance are altogether wrong ; how long is this to last ?

35 And it came to pass after this, that I wept again, and fasted seven days in like manner, that I might fulfil the three weeks which he told me. 36 And in the eighth night was my heart vexed within me again, and I began to speak before the Most High. 37 For my spirit was greatly set on fire, and my soul was in distress. 38 And I said, O Lord, of a truth thou spakest at the beginning of the creation, upon the first day, and saidst thus ; Let heaven and earth be made ; and thy word perfected the work. 39 And then was the spirit hovering, and darkness and silence were on every side ; the sound of man's voice was not yet¹. 40 Then commandedst thou a ray of light to be brought forth of thy treasures, that then thy works might appear. 41 Upon the second day again thou madest the spirit of the firmament and commandedst it to part asunder, and to make a division betwixt the waters, that the one part might go up, and the other remain beneath. 42 Upon the third day thou didst command that the waters should be gathered together in the seventh part of the earth : six parts didst thou dry up, and keep them, to the intent that of these some being both planted and tilled might serve before thee. 43 For as soon as thy word went forth the work was done. 44 For immediately there came forth great and innumerable fruit, and manifold pleasures for the taste, and flowers of inimitable colour, and odours of most exquisite smell : and this was done the third day. 45 Upon the fourth day thou commandedst that the sun should shine, and the moon give her light, and the stars should be in their order : 46 and gavest them a charge to do service unto man, that was to be made. 47 Upon the fifth day thou saidst unto the seventh part, where the water was gathered together, that it should bring forth living creatures, fowls and fishes : and so it came to pass,

¹ The Latin adds *from thee*.

48 that the dumb water and without life brought forth living things as it was bidden, that the peoples might therefore praise thy wondrous works. 49 Then didst thou preserve two living creatures, the one thou calledst Behemoth, and the other thou calledst Leviathan: 50 and thou didst separate the one from the other: for the seventh part, namely, where the water was gathered together, might not hold them both. 51 Unto Behemoth thou gavest one part, which was dried up on the third day, that he should dwell in the same, wherein are a thousand hills: 52 but unto Leviathan thou gavest the seventh part, namely, the moist; and thou hast kept them to be devoured of whom thou wilt, and when. 53 But upon the sixth day thou gavest commandment unto the earth, that it should bring forth before thee cattle, beasts, and creeping things: 54 and over these Adam, whom thou ordainedst lord over all the works that thou hast made: of him come we all, the people whom thou hast chosen. 55 All this have I spoken before thee, O Lord, because thou hast said that for our sakes thou madest ¹this world. 56 As for the other nations, which also come of Adam, thou hast said that they are nothing, and are like unto spittle: and thou hast likened the abundance of them unto a drop that falleth from a vessel. 57 And now, O Lord, behold, these nations, which are reputed as nothing, be lords over us, and devour us. 58 But we thy people, whom thou hast called thy firstborn, thy only begotten, and thy fervent lover, are given into their hands. 59 If the world now be made for our sakes, why do we not possess for an inheritance our world? how long shall this endure?

¹ So the Syriac. The Latin has *the firstborn world*.

35. *the three weeks*. Cp. Dan. x. 2, 3: 'In those days, I, Daniel, was mourning three whole weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled'; cp. *Test. xii Patr.*, Reuben i. 10, where almost the identical words occur.

36. *was my heart vexed*. Cp. Ps. lxxiii. 16, where the thought is similar, viz. perplexity as to the divine ways.

37. *my spirit was greatly set on fire*. Cp. Ps. xxxix. 3 (4 in Hebr.): 'My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire kindled'; cp. also Deut. xix. 6.

38. *thy word perfected the work*. Cp. *Ecclus.* xlii. 15; *Wisdom* ix. 1, xviii. 15, 16; *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 17, and also Ps. xxxiii. 6: 'By the word

of the Lord were the heavens made'; on the subject in general see Oesterley and Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, pp. 204-10 (1911).

40. *a ray of light* . . . In *Slav. Enoch*, xxv. 3 it is said: ' . . . and as the light came forth from the light, there came forth the great world, revealing all the creation, which I had purposed to make.'

41. *the spirit of the firmament*. A mythological *trait* is echoed here; the firmament is conceived of as a being to whom commands are given.

to make a division . . . Cp. Gen. i. 6; Syr. has: 'between waters and waters.'

42. *Upon the third day* . . . Cp. Gen. i. 9-13; cp. *Slav. Enoch* xxx. 1: 'On the third day I ordered the earth to produce great trees, such as bear fruit [and mountains], and every sort of herb and every seed that is sown; and I planted Paradise, and enclosed it . . .'; cp. also *Jubilees* ii. 7.

the seventh part of the earth. The idea of the earth being divided into seven parts is derived from oriental cosmologies.

might serve before thee. Box, following Syr. in part, renders the sentence: ' . . . in order that (issuing) from them, there might serve before thee those who both plough and sow.' Gunkel, on the other hand, believing that the Garden of Eden is referred to here, especially in view of verse 44, renders: ' . . . in order that part thereof might be tilled before thee, which had been sown and planted by God Himself', reading *a deo* for *adeo*; cp. Gen. ii. 15.

45. *and the stars should be in their order*. In *Enoch* lxxii-lxxxii 'The Book of the courses of the heavenly luminaries', the stars receive, relatively, but little notice; the author is mainly concerned with the sun and moon; but he says (lxxiv. 12) that 'the sun and stars bring in all the years exactly, so that they do not advance or delay their position by a single day unto eternity'.

46. *and gavest them a charge to* . . . Cp. Gen. i. 14. To the pagan world of those days the sun, moon, and stars were gods; the Seer combats this by insisting that they do service to man, cp. Ps. civ. 4; their 'service' is dealt with fully in *Enoch* lxxii-lxxxii.

49. *Behemoth* . . . *Leviathan*. Cp. Job xl. 15-24 and lxi. 1-34. These two mythological monsters are of Babylonian origin; they represent the two primeval monsters of chaos (Tiamat and Kingu); for full details see Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, pp. 41-69. In *Apoc. Bar.* xxix. 4 it is said: 'And Behemoth shall be revealed from his place, and Leviathan shall ascend from the sea, these two great monsters which I created on the fifth day of creation, and shall have kept them until that time; and then they shall be for food for all that are left' [i.e. for the righteous in the Messianic Age]. Similarly in *Enoch* lx. 7-9, where further interesting details are given: 'And on that day were two monsters parted, a female monster named

Leviathan, to dwell in the abysses of the ocean over the fountains of the waters. But the male is named Behemoth, who occupied with his breast a vast wilderness named Duidain, on the east of the garden . . . And I besought the other angel that he would show me the might of these monsters, how they were parted on one day and cast, the one into the abysses of the sea, and the other unto the dry land of the wilderness.' Behemoth means 'a colossal monster', the form is plural to intensify the idea; Leviathan means 'coiled together', or the like (cp. Isa. xxvii. 1); both were originally mythological representations of the watery element centred in the ocean.

50. *where the water was . . . hold them both.* This makes it clear whence both monsters originated.

51. *one part, which was dried up.* i.e. 'the vast wilderness named 'Duidain' (or Dendain) of *Enoch* lx. 8.

wherein are a thousand hills. As Box points out, the Haggadic interpretation of 'the cattle on a thousand hills', mentioned in Ps. l. 10, made 'the cattle' there spoken of equivalent to the primeval monster Behemoth; he was so big that he covered the thousand hills.

52. *but unto Leviathan . . . moist.* According to verse 50 both Leviathan and Behemoth were originally water-monsters, but according to this verse the former is a sea-monster, the latter a land-monster; clearly two traditions are represented here.

to be devoured of whom thou wilt, and when. This cryptic allusion is explained in the passage from *Apoc. Bar.* quoted under verse 49, according to which the two monsters shall 'then', i.e. in the Messianic Age, be food 'for all that are left', i.e. the righteous. A trace of some form of this tradition occurs in Ps. lxxiv. 14.

54. *and over these Adam, whom . . .* Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 18: 'And thou didst say that thou wouldst make for thy world man as the administrator of thy works.'

55. *that for our sakes thou . . .* Cp. *Assumpt. of Moses* i. 12. The claim that the world was created for the sake of Israel, or at least, for the righteous in Israel, was originally based on such passages as Deut. x. 15, xiv. 2, and others, which speak of the election of Israel; from this it was deduced, in course of time, that since Israel was specially chosen by God, the world must have been specially created for them.

57. *lords over us . . .* This was the problem which the Seer found so hard to understand. It is interesting to observe that centuries earlier the prophet Habakkuk had been faced with a somewhat similar problem; he, too, saw his people the victim of a power (the Chaldaeans) who did not acknowledge God; but he had not, as this Seer had, the belief in a world to come, in which all things would be rectified. Habakkuk first 'considered' ('I will stand upon my watch, and set me up upon the tower to see what he [God] will say unto me'); when this brought no satisfaction and his doubt still continued, he

came to realize, like our Seer, that the ways of God were beyond his comprehension; nevertheless he would not suffer his faith in God to be weakened because of his lack of knowledge ('the just shall live by his faith'); one difficulty, he says, in effect, cannot affect his faith, when there are so many other things which he sees to strengthen it. Our Seer, so far as the present Vision is concerned, offers no solution of the problem.

vii. 1-16. Continuing the discussion, the Archangel Uriel compares the present world, first, with a narrow river that flows into the wide expanse of the sea, and then with a narrow and dangerous road that leads into a city set in a broad land. Just as a man must pass over such narrow passages in order to enter into the larger sphere, so must Israel pass through this world with all its trials and dangers before he can enter into the illimitable space of immortality. The Seer is, therefore, urged not to worry about the present, but to concentrate his mind on that which is to come.

VII. 1 And when I had made an end of speaking these words, there was sent unto me the angel which had been sent unto me the nights afore: 2 and he said unto me, Up, Esdras, and hear the words that I am come to tell thee. 3 And I said, Speak on, my Lord. Then said he unto me, There is a sea set in a wide place, that it might be ¹broad and vast. 4 But the entrance thereof shall be set in a narrow place so as to be like a river; 5 whoso then should desire to go into the sea to look upon it, or to rule it, if he went not through the narrow, how could he come into the broad? 6 Another thing also: There is a city builded and set in a plain country, and full of all good things; 7 but the entrance thereof is narrow, and is set in a dangerous place to fall, having a fire on the right hand, and on the left a deep water: 8 and there is one only path between them both, even between the fire and the water, *so small* that there could but one man go there at once. 9 If this city now be given unto a man for an inheritance, if the heir pass not the danger set before him, how shall he receive his inheritance? 10 And I said, It is so, Lord. Then said he unto me, Even so also is Israel's portion. 11 Because for their sakes I made the world: and when Adam transgressed my statutes, then was decreed that now is done. 12 Then were the entrances of this world made narrow, and sorrowful and toilsome: they are but few and evil, full of perils, and charged with great toils. 13 For the entrances of the

¹ So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin MSS. have *deep*.

greater world are wide and sure, and bring forth fruit of immortality. 14 If then they that live enter not these strait and vain things, they can never receive those that are laid up for them. 15 Now therefore why disquietest thou thyself, seeing thou art but a corruptible man? and why art thou moved, whereas thou art but mortal? 16 and why hast thou not considered in thy mind that which is to come, rather than that which is present?

1. *the nights afore.* *Primis noctis*; the former nights at the beginning of each vision.

5. *to rule it.* This, obviously, a man could never do; the mistake arose, as Gunkel points out, through the similarity of the two Hebrew words לָרִיחַ 'to rule' and לָרִדַח 'to go down', written without points; cp. the two phrases הָרִיחַ בָּעַם, 'they that rule over the people' (I Kings v. 3 [vi. 16 in E.V.]), and הָרִיחַ הַיָּם 'they that go down to the sea' (Ps. cvii. 23). Read here, therefore, 'whoso then should desire to go to [not 'into'] the sea, to look upon it or to go down upon it [to sail on it] . . .'

6. *Another thing also.* Equivalent to the phrase 'Another parable set he before them', Matth. xiii. 24, and elsewhere.

7. *but the entrance thereof is narrow.* Cp. Matth. vii. 13, 14; Luke xiii. 24; Gunkel refers to *Hermas, Sim. ix. 12, 5*, where a similar picture is given: 'For if thou desire to enter into a city, and that city be walled about and have but one gate, canst thou enter into that city except by the gate which it hath?' But it is only a partial parallel since the main point that our writer has in mind is the narrow and dangerous way which leads to the entrance of the city.

having a fire on the right hand . . . In *Enoch xvii. 5*, it is said: 'And I came to a river in which the fire flows like water'; cp. the rivers of fire Phlegethon and Puriphegethon of Homer. It is also possible that the writer interpreted Ps. lxvi. 12 in this way: 'We went through fire and water but thou broughtest us out into freedom' [so the Versions].

9. *a man . . . the heir.* i.e. Israel; cp. *Apoc. Bar. xlv. 15*; it is, therefore, implied that the world to come is specifically for the chosen people, so verse 10; this particularistic view, though occurring elsewhere in the apocalyptic literature, is not the dominant one among the Apocalyptists. Cp. also Gal. iv. 1-7.

11. *when Adam transgressed . . .* Cp. *Apoc. Bar. xxiii. 4*: 'Because when Adam sinned and death was decreed against those who should be born . . .'

then was decreed that now is done. *Judicatum est quod factum est*, i.e. 'that which hath been made is judged'; the reference is to the

Creation, the created world, which is judged, because of Adam's sin; the whole physical world, that is to say, is condemned; with this contrast Rom. viii. 20, 21: 'For the creation was subjected to vanity [i.e. in respect to its transitoriness], not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it [i.e. man, through his sinfulness], in hope, [i.e. of the children of God], that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.' The Apostle's conception here we find referred to in II Pet. iii. 13: 'But according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness' (though the idea of a world-conflagration in verse 10 is not at all in accordance with St. Paul's teaching), and, above all, in Rev. xxi—xxii. 5. It is interesting to note also that while to the Jewish Seer it is Adam's transgression which brought about the condemnation of the creation, St. Paul regards it as due to the sinfulness of mankind in general. The difference of view here between the Jewish and the Christian point of view is very instructive.

12. *Then were the entrances of this world . . .* This is obviously wrong, for in the earlier verses it is *this* world itself which forms the narrow and dangerous entrance to the world to come. We must read, with Ethiop. and one of the Arab. MS., 'the ways', as against Syr., Lat.; i.e. the paths of life here on earth.

they are but few and evil. Lat. seems corrupt here; it is better to read, with Syr., 'they are (full of) sufferings and evil'. All these things were, according to the Seer, the result of Adam's transgression.

13. *For the entrances.* Read again 'ways', and 'But', so Syr. and Ethiop.; it means the paths in the world of immortality.

the greater world. It should be 'the great world', as in Slav. *Enoch* lxi. 2, lxvi. 7 (Gunkel); Syr. has 'the future world'.

and bring forth fruit of immortality. Et facientes immortalitatis fructum; the meaning of this is not altogether clear; Box cites Prov. xii. 28, 'in the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof is immortality'; but this is no parallel; the Wisdom writer is referring to right living here on earth, but in the passage before us the sphere is already in the future world. How it can be said that the ways of the greater world, i.e. the world of immortality, 'bring forth the fruit of immortality', when immortality has already been attained, is not clear, unless it be assumed that the writer means that by walking in the paths of righteousness in this world, immortality will be attained; but for this the text does not give the slightest justification. The Versions give no help. Probably we have here once more an echo of an earlier conception, this time regarding the food of which those in the world to come partake, so that the verse should read: 'But the paths of the greater world are wide and sure, and bear the fruit of immortality', i.e. along these paths the trees grow which bear the fruit of immortality. That the idea came originally

from Persia seems certain;¹ in a less materialistic form it is found in Isa. xxvi. 19, a difficult passage, but it certainly teaches that the dead bodies of those who rise will partake of the dew of light. In *Enoch* xxiv. 4, 5 it is said that in the abode of immortality there is a tree which has 'a fragrance beyond all fragrance, and its leaves and blooms and wood wither not for ever; and its fruit is beautiful, and resembles the dates of a palm'; so, too, in xxv. 5, 'its food shall be for the elect'. Similarly in the *Test. xii. Patr.* Levi xviii. 10, 11, it is said that the Most High will open the gates of Paradise, and 'shall give to the saints to eat of the tree of life'; the thought is also found in Rev. xxii. 2: 'And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits . . .'; cp. also verse 123 of this chapter and viii. 52.

14. *that are laid up for them.* Cp. I Cor. ii. 9; and with the verse cp. Matth. vii. 14; Acts xiv. 22; Hebr. xii. 7, 8. Box appropriately quotes the *Epistle of Barnabas* vii. 11: 'They that would see me, and attain my kingdom, must lay hold of me through pain and suffering.'

15. *whereas thou art . . .* Armen. has, more pointedly, 'because thou art but corruptible', and 'because thou art but mortal'. It is useless to deplore that which must be; though inevitable, these are merely the necessary preliminaries to eternity and immortality; cp. I Cor. xv. 53, 54.

16. *why hast thou not considered . . .* Cp. II Cor. iv. 18.

vii. 17-25. In the preceding section it has been made clear that the world to come is intended for Israel; the Seer makes the statement—this time it is not in the form of a question—that since God has ordained in His Law that the righteous should inherit the world to come and that the wicked should perish, therefore the righteous, because they are in this world, and necessarily partake of evil in their nature, will suffer here; but they, at all events, have the hope of the world to come; whereas the wicked both suffer in this world and have only to look forward to suffering in the world to come. The sympathy which is discernible for these latter calls forth a rebuke from the divine listener, who points out, having in mind primarily the Jews but including all humanity, that everybody has the chance of obeying the divine precepts; if the great majority have ignored these, they have but themselves to thank for their lot in the world to come.

17 Then answered I and said, O Lord that bearest rule, lo, thou hast ordained in thy law, that the righteous should inherit these things, but that the ungodly should perish. 18 The righteous therefore shall suffer strait things, and hope for wide: but they that have done wickedly² have suffered the

¹ See, e.g., Böklen, *Die Verwandtschaft der jüdisch-christlichen mit der Parsischen Eschatologie*, pp. 113 ff. (1902).

² According to some authorities, *have not suffered . . . and shall not see.*

strait things, and yet shall not see the wide. 19 And he said unto me, ¹Thou art not a judge above God, neither hast thou understanding above the Most High. 20 Yea, rather let many that now be perish, than that the law of God which is set before them be despised. 21 For God straitly commanded such as came, even as they came, what they should do to live, and what they should observe to avoid punishment. 22 Nevertheless they were not obedient unto him; but spake against him, and imagined for themselves vain things; 23 and framed cunning devices of wickedness; and said moreover of the Most High, that he is not; and knew not his ways: 24 but they despised his law, and denied his covenants; they have not been faithful to his statutes, and have not performed his works. 25 Therefore, Esdras, for the empty are empty things, and for the full are the full things.

¹ Another reading is, *There is no judge . . . and none that hath understanding.*

18. *shall suffer.* The sense requires the present tense, as Syr., Ethiop., for the Seer is describing present conditions.

have suffered. Read again, with Syr. the present tense. The negative, which some Lat. MSS. read, is obviously wrong, as the context shows; but one can see the reason of its insertion, for the problem had always been the suffering of the righteous and the prosperity of the wicked in this world (see, e.g., Ps. lxxiii. 12-14 and *Enoch* ciii. 5, 6); this was in the mind of the scribe who inserted the negative; but he did not grasp the meaning of the passage. With the general sense of the verse cp. *Enoch* cii. 4-10, and especially *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 12-14: 'For the righteous justly hope for the end, and without fear depart from this habitation. . . . But unto us there is woe, who also now are shamefully entreated, and at that time look forward only to evils.' The rebuke to the Seer in the next verse for his having made a statement of fact suggests that something may have fallen out of the text; see the prayer referred to in verse 46.

19. *Thou art not a judge above God.* This is the reading of the Lat. MS. C, and is in agreement with the Oriental Versions, which, however, make 'Thou' emphatic; the reading of the other Latin MSS. is wrong (R.V. marg.). Gunkel cites *Apoc. Pauli* 33: *μή σου ἐλεήμων ὑπάρχεις ὑπὲρ τὸν θεόν.* Contrast, on the other hand, II Sam. xxiv. 14.

20. *which is set before them.* This shows that primarily the Jews are thought of, for it could not be said of the Gentiles that the Law of God had been set before them; in verses 22, 23, however, it will be seen that the Gentiles are referred to.

21. *such as came, even as they came.* The reference is to those who

came into the world, i.e. were born; this would, therefore, include all men, Jews as well as Gentiles. The idea that the Law was intended for the Gentiles as well as the Jews occurs in later Rabbinical literature, and probably reflected, as Schechter says, 'the attitude of the Rabbis towards the missionary enterprises of their time' (*op. cit.*, p. 132). Whether this is meant here is doubtful. The Gentiles would naturally be condemned as being outside the covenant and not believing in God; the condemnation of the Jews would apply to those who failed to observe the Law; that the writer does not contemplate the condemnation of *all* is clear from verse 20, 'let *many* that now be perish'. When he says that 'God straitly commanded such as came . . . what they should do to live, and what they should observe to avoid punishment', he is making a statement which he could surely not have substantiated; it is a position he has to assume for the sake of his argument. So far as the Jews were concerned it might hold good; but it could not really apply to the Gentiles, to whom he goes on to refer; nevertheless, this is what has to be assumed in order to give point to the wholesale condemnation of the Gentiles. With this standpoint one cannot fail to contrast St. Paul's attitude: 'What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. . . .'

24. *law, . . . covenants; . . . statutes.* At first sight one would think that this could only apply to the Jews, but in the present context there can be no doubt that the Gentiles are referred to. The Seer refers first to the Jews (verse 20) and then goes on to refer to the Gentiles, and in a loose way speaks again of the Law; see further the note on verse 21.

25. *for the empty are empty things . . .* For the form cp. Tit. i. 5: *πάντα καθάρᾳ τοῖς καθαρῶις*; see also Matth. xiii. 12.

vii. 26-[44]. That this section breaks the argument which has hitherto proceeded very soon becomes clear. The incongruities which it contains and the contradictions, when compared with other parts of the book, can, however, be paralleled in other apocalyptic books.¹ After two introductory verses, it is said that the Messianic kingdom will come and last for four hundred years, and then primeval chaos will supervene for seven days, after which will come the end of this age. Then the Resurrection and the Day of Judgement are described.

¹ See Intr. § II, i.

26 For behold, the time shall come, and it shall be, when these tokens, of which I told thee before, shall come to pass, that the bride shall appear, even the city coming forth, and she shall be seen, that now is withdrawn from the earth. 27 And whosoever is delivered from the foresaid evils, the same shall

see my wonders. 28 For my son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and shall rejoice them that remain four hundred years. 29 After these years shall my son Christ die, and all that have the breath of ¹life. 30 And the world shall be turned into the old silence seven days, like as in the first beginning: so that no man shall remain. 31 And after seven days the world, that yet awaketh not, shall be raised up, and that shall die that is corruptible. 32 And the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell therein in silence, and the ²secret places shall deliver those souls that were committed unto them. 33 And the Most High shall be revealed upon the seat of judgement³, and compassion shall pass away, and longsuffering shall be withdrawn: 34 but judgement only shall remain, truth shall stand, and faith shall wax strong: 35 and the work shall follow, and the reward shall be shewed, and good deeds shall awake, and wicked deeds shall not sleep.⁴ [36] And the ⁵pit of torment shall appear, and over against it shall be the place of rest: and the furnace of ⁶hell shall be shewed, and over against it the paradise of delight. [37] And then shall the Most High say to the nations that are raised from the dead, See ye and understand whom ye have denied, or whom ye have not served, or whose commandments ye have despised. [38] Look on this side and on that: here is delight and rest, and there fire and torments. Thus ⁷shall he speak unto them in the day of judgement: [39] This is a day that hath neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, [40] neither cloud, nor thunder, nor lightning, neither wind, nor water, nor air, neither darkness, nor evening, nor morning, [41] neither summer, nor spring, nor heat, nor ⁸winter, neither frost, nor cold, nor hail, nor rain, nor dew, [42] neither noon, nor night, nor dawn, neither shining, nor brightness, nor light, save only the splendour of the glory of the Most High, whereby all shall see the things that are set before them: [43] for it shall endure as it were a week of years.

¹ Lat. *man*.

² Or, *chambers*. See ch. iv. 35.

³ The Syriac adds *and the end shall come*.

⁴ The passage from verse [36] to verse [105], formerly missing, has been restored to the text.

⁵ So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin MSS. have *place*.

⁶ Lat. *Gehenna*.

⁷ So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin has *shalt thou speak*.

⁸ Or, *storm*

[44] This is my judgement and the ordinance thereof; but to thee only have I shewed these things.

26. *these tokens . . . I told thee before.* See vi. 20-4.

the bride shall appear, even . . . This, as Gunkel has shown, is a misreading on the part of the Lat. of what the Greek must have read, viz: *καὶ φανήσεται ἡ νῦν μὴ φαινόμενη πόλις*, for which the Latin translator read, *ἡ νύμφη* instead of *ἡ νῦν μὴ*, with Rev. xxi. 2, perhaps, in his mind (unless it is deliberate Christian overworking): 'And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.' The Armen. text reads: *manifestabitur urbs quae nunc non apparet*. Read here, therefore, 'then shall the city appear that now is not seen'. It is the heavenly Jerusalem that is meant.

and she shall be seen . . . from the earth. Lat. *et ostendetur quae nunc subducitur terra*, 'and the land which is now hidden shall be seen', the reference is to Paradise; cp. *Apoc. Bar.* iv. 1-3, where the heavenly Jerusalem and Paradise are mentioned together. It will be noticed that the appearance of the heavenly Jerusalem and of Paradise is represented as occurring before the advent of the Messiah; that is very incongruous; the heavenly Jerusalem, according to the ordinary eschatological scheme, only becomes manifest at the end of the world; but here it is represented as appearing at the beginning of the 400 years during which this world is still to last (see verse 28); so, too, in the case of Paradise, which does not belong to the present age at all. Such incongruities, as we have noticed before, are not uncommon among the Apocalyptists.

28. *my son Jesus.* This is clearly a Christian correction of the original text; all the other Versions have either 'my son the Messiah' (Syr., Arab.) or 'my Messiah' (Ethiop., Armen.).

shall be revealed. Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxxix. 7: 'And it will come to pass when the time of his consummation [i.e. the 'fourth kingdom' = the Roman empire] that he should fall has approached, then the principate of my Messiah will be revealed'; cp. also *Enoch* xxxviii. 2.

with those that be with him. In view of what we have just seen to be the hand of a Christian editor it is evident that these would have been either the saints who had died and who would come with Christ at his *parousia* (I Thess. iii. 13), or else the angelic hosts (II Thess. i. 7; Jude 14); but the original writer would be thinking of what he had said in vi. 26.

shall rejoice them that remain. The reference is to those who will have survived the terrors which precede the advent of the Messiah.

four hundred years. Box gives the following valuable note on this: 'The classical Rabbinical passage on the subject is the following early (pre-Hadrianic) Baraitha (*T.B. Sanh.* 99^a): "R. Eli'ezer (ben Hyr-qanos) says, The days of the Messiah will be 40 years, as it is said,

Forty years long was I grieved with this generation (Ps. xciv. 10)!" R. Ele'azar ben 'Azarya says, "70 years, as it is said, *It shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten 70 years according to the days of one King.* Who is the King specially singled out? Answer: that is the Messiah." Rabbi Jose the Galilaean says, "Three generations, for it is said, *They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another* (lit. a generation, generations, i.e. three generations) . . ." Another Baraitha: R. Eliezer (ben Hyrkanos) says, "The days of the Messiah shall be 40 years; here it stands written, *He humbled thee, suffered thee to hunger, and (then) fed thee* (Deut. viii. 3), and there it is written, *Make us glad according to the days thou hast humbled us and the years wherein we have seen evil*" (Ps. xc. 15). R. Desa says: "400 years; here it stands written, *And they (Israel) shall serve them, and they (their oppressors) shall humble them 400 years* (Gen. xv. 13), and there it is written, *Make us glad according to the days thou hast humbled us*" (Ps. xc. 15). R. Jose the Galilaean says, "365 years, according to the number of the days of the sun (solar year), for it is said, *For a day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come*" (Isa. lxiii. 4)."

The number 400 thus is, as Gunkel has also pointed out, a combination derived from Ps. xc. 15 and Gen. xv. 13. The quaint Rabbinical way of using 'proof-texts' without the remotest consideration of the meaning of the passage in its context—something similar was also done by the compilers of the Gospels—must not blind us to the value of the quotation given above; for it shows us that it comes from the same school of thought as the text under consideration.

The prophets of old looked for a Messianic kingdom here on earth; the dominant apocalyptic expectations were centred in a transcendental Messianism not belonging to this world at all; in the passage before us an intermediate position is taken up, viz. a temporary Messianic era on this earth (cp. Rev. xx. 3), and after this the Resurrection, the Judgement, and Paradise.

29. *shall my son Christ die, and . . .* 'Christ' is, of course, a mis-interpretation, the Greek *Χριστός* = מָשִׁיחַ (Messiah). The thought of the death of the Messiah at the close of his reign on earth is without parallel, especially after what is said in verse 28, where the Messiah's pre-existence is implied. It is certain that the writer of the book would not have made the statement that the Messiah would die like ordinary men. This has been inserted by a later hand, though with what purpose it is difficult to say. Possibly it is a Christian interpolation in reference to the death of our Lord. In the *Apoc. Bar.*, after the Messianic reign on earth has been described (xxix. 3-8), it goes on to say: 'And it will come to pass after these things, when the time of the advent of the Messiah is fulfilled, and He will return in glory [i.e. to Heaven, whence He came], then all who have fallen asleep in hope of Him shall rise again.' This conception of the

Messiah, like that of xiii. 26, xiv. 9, of our book, is what one would normally expect in apocalyptic literature.

30. *And the world shall be turned* . . . Cp. vi. 29; i.e. *Tohu wa-bohu* shall again supervene: 'And the earth was waste and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep' (Gen. i. 2), the end is to be like the beginning. Against this idea we have in *Apoc. Bar.* iii. 7, 8 the question: 'Shall the world return to its nature (of aforesaid), and the age revert to primeval silence?' The context makes it clear that this will not be the case, according to the writer.

so that no man shall remain. It does not say by what means this entire disappearance of the human race is to be brought about; in vi. 20 there is a similar indefiniteness, see also *Apoc. Bar.* xlv. 9: 'For every thing that is corruptible will pass away, and every thing that dies will depart, and all the present time will be forgotten, nor will there be any remembrance of the present time, which is defiled with evils' (cp. xxxi. 5). This is a development of the view, represented, e.g., in vi. 16, that the world will undergo a metamorphosis (cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xlix. 3, *Enoch* xlv. 4, 5), and this development was due to the growing pessimism of the apocalyptic writers, who regarded humanity as irretrievably wicked and the material world itself as evil. The final step in the development was total destruction either by water (e.g. *Enoch* x. 2, xciii. 4, lxxxiii. 3, 4; *Jubilees* v. 11, 12), or by fire (e.g. *Sib. Orac.* 173 ff.; Dan. vii. 10; *Pss. of Sol.* xv. 6, 7; II Pet. iii. 10-12).

That the actual destruction of the world itself is not directly contemplated in our book is probably due to Gen. viii. 21, 22: ' . . . neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest . . . shall not cease.'

It should, however, be added that the logical sequence of these three ideas, viz. the metamorphosis of all creation, the passing away and out of remembrance of the world and all that is in it, and the destruction of all things whether by water or fire, is not necessarily a chronological one; the Apocalyptists absorbed much from extraneous sources, and their speculations led them into holding such diverse views, that an ordered development is not to be looked for.

31. *the world, that yet awaketh not. Qui nondum vigilat saeculum,* the reference is to the world to come.

shall be raised up. The existence of this other world is taken for granted, though where it exists is not indicated; it is described as 'bright waters' in *Apoc. Bar.* lvii. 1-3; this passage is an important one, and must be quoted in full: 'And after these (waters) thou didst see bright waters; this is the fount of Abraham. . . . Because at that time the unwritten law was named among them, and the works of the commandments were then fulfilled, and belief in the coming judgement was then generated, and hope of the world that was to be renewed was then built up, and the promise of the life that should

come hereafter was implanted. These are the bright waters which thou hast seen.'

and that shall die that is corruptible. But it has already been said, in verse 30, that 'no man shall remain'; these words, however, are explained in the verses which follow, namely, all those who had lived in the corruptible world before the 'seven days' will rise from the dead, when the Judgement will come, and those that have done evil ('that is corruptible') will go to 'the furnace of hell' (verse 36).

32. *And the earth shall restore . . .* Cp. *Enoch* li. 1: 'And in those days shall the earth also give back that which has been entrusted to it, and Sheol also shall give back that which it has received, and Hell shall give back that which it owes'; cp. also Dan. xii. 2; *Apoc. Bar.* xi. 4; I Thess. iv. 13 ff.; II Pet. iii. 4.

the secret places. See note on iv. 35. Elsewhere in the book this refers to the abode of the souls (spirits) of the righteous only. This verse teaches definitely the resurrection of the body, and the reference is, as the context shows, to the wicked as well as to the righteous. The teaching on this subject varies among the different writers of the apocalyptic literature. In agreement with the verse before us, *Enoch* xxii. 3, 4 teaches the resurrection of the body and the spirit of both the righteous and the wicked: 'These hollow places have been created for this very purpose, that the spirits of the souls of the dead should assemble therein, yea, that all the souls of the children of men should assemble there. And these places have been made to receive them till the day of their judgement, and till their appointed period, till the great judgement comes upon them'; cp. also *Test xii. Patr.* Benjamin x. 1, *Sib. Orac.* iv. 180. But in *Enoch* xci. 10, no mention is made of the body, so that presumably the spirit alone is raised, and the resurrection is for the righteous only: 'And the righteous shall arise from their sleep, and wisdom shall arise and be given to them', cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxx. i, 2. See, on the other hand, the long account of the nature of the risen body in *Apoc. Bar.* xlix, li. These variations, as well as different views as to the time of the resurrection—whether before or after the judgement—show the fluid condition of the doctrine of the resurrection during the period, approximately, 200 B.C.—A.D. 100.

33. *the seat of judgement.* The 'throne' of judgement is better, a conception found frequently in apocalyptic literature, Dan. vii. 9; *Enoch* xlv. 3, lv. 4, lxii. 3, 5, lxix. 27, 29; *Test. xi Patr.* Levi v. 1; Rev. xx. 11, and elsewhere.

Syr. adds after this: 'and then shall the end come', and one of the Arabic Versions also adds: 'then will the world come wholly to an end, and the destruction will draw near.'

compassion shall pass away . . . Cp. *Enoch* xiii. 3, 4 and xiv. 7, where Enoch's intercession on behalf of sinners is of no avail, and see also vii. 102-5.

34. *faith shall wax strong*. Faithfulness, rather than faith (belief) must be meant; for 'wax strong' Lat. has *convalescet*; Syr. = *exsultabit* or *virescet* (Ceriani); 'triumph' (Box) is no doubt the right English equivalent.

35. *the work*. As Wellhausen points out, and as the sense demands, 'work' here must have the sense of 'recompense' for work, as the Hebr. word הַעֲשֵׂה , so Ps. cix. 20; Isa. xl. 10.

shall follow. Cp. Rev. xiv. 13, '... for their works follow them'.

and good deeds shall awake . . . One of the Arabic Versions has: 'and the righteous shall appear, and the guilty and the sinners shall not remain hidden'. With the verse compare Matth. vi. 1-4, xxv. 31-46.

[36] Bensly's 'Missing Fragment' begins here, see R.V. marg.

the pit of torment. Lat. has 'the place of torment', cp. Luke xvi. 28; James's emended text *lacus tormenti*, so Ethiop. and emended Syr., cp. Jude 7; Rev. xix. 20, xxi. 10, while Arab. has *the abyss of torment*, cp. *Enoch* x. 13 'the abyss of fire'; xc. 26 ff, xci. 9, xcvi. 3; *Slav. Enoch* lxiii. 4; *Apoc. Bar.* xlv. 15, lix. 2; Rev. ix. 2 ('the pit of the abyss'). This idea of fiery torment is not Jewish in its origin; in reading all the evidence there seems little room for doubt that it was taken over from Iranian eschatology (see Böklen, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-25), and it is not improbable that it was developed from the belief in the destruction of the world by fire, also Iranian teaching; but there is one striking difference between the Iranian belief and the form it assumed in Jewish eschatology; according to the former hell-fire was purificatory, according to the latter it meant annihilation, or else it lasted eternally; see, further, Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*, pp. 517 ff., *Antichrist*, pp. 60 ff., 162.

the place of rest. i.e. Abraham's bosom, cp. Luke xvi. 23.

the furnace of hell . . . *the paradise of delight*. i.e. respectively, Gehenna and Paradise (the Garden of Eden). We have, thus, what appear to be two parallel ideas: the lake of torment against the place of rest, and Gehenna against Paradise; it may well be, especially in view of the extraneous origin of the ideas—at any rate in part—that there is here some confusion of thought; on the other hand, it may be explained by supposing that in one case punishment or rest *before* the resurrection is thought of, in the other, the similar fate *after* the resurrection; but Jewish eschatology is so full of inconcinnities that it would be precarious to dogmatize.

[37] *And then shall the Most High* . . . Here it is, therefore, the general resurrection of the entire human race that is taught; as we have seen, that is not always the case in Jewish eschatology. All the nations are condemned, including the Jewish nation; so that here again there is no consistency among the apocalyptic writers, for at times the wicked among the Jews are, equally with the wicked among the nations, consigned to torment. But the view that the nations

would be condemned to eternal punishment is fully comprehensible when one remembers that during the whole of the period of Jewish eschatological writing the nations were primarily represented by the Seleucid and the Roman empires; the detestation in which these were held, for justifiable reasons, would fully account for this view, quite apart from the fact of their worship of many gods and their non-recognition of the One and only God.

whose commandments ye have despised. Cp. iii. 7.

[38] *Look on this side and on that.* Lat. *Videte contra et in contra*; but Syr., 'Look over against you'; the nations are thought of as being on the other side to that on which the Most High is standing, they are already in fire and torment; cp. Luke xvi. 23, 24.

[39-42] With these verses cp. *Sib. Orac.* iii. 85 ff.; after it has been said that a flow of ceaseless torrent of liquid fire shall burn up the earth and all things, it continues: 'And then no longer does one pay heed to the planetary spheres that laugh aloud, nor to night nor daybreak, nor to day following day, nor to spring and summer, autumn and winter. And then shall come forth the judgement of the great God, in the great age, when all these things come to pass.'

This is one of the passages in our book (cp. also iv. 36, 37; v. 4, 5, 36, 37; vi. 1-5; vii. 113, 114; viii. 20-7, 52, 53; ix. 3; x. 21-4; xi. 40-5; xiv. 13, 14, and other passages) which are in poetical form; even in translation one can discern the ancient Hebrew form of poem in which two short lines constitute couplets of parallel ideas.

[43] *a week of years.* Cp. Dan. ix. 24, 25, where the seventy weeks= seventy weeks of years. 'It should be noted that the word for "week" (*shabu'a*) in the Hebrew of the Mishna often has the technical meaning of a year-week (seven years) in connexion with the Sabbatical year' (Box).

[44] *the ordinance thereof.* Lat. *Constitutio ejus*, i.e. the way or order in which it is carried out; one of the Arabic Versions paraphrases the words thus: 'And this is the measure of those things which have been ordained, and their order.'

vii. [45-61]. The Seer deplors the sad fact that the joys of the world to come will be the lot of so few, while the torments will be for so many. By means of a parable the Seer is taught that the value of the few is far greater than that of the many. Therefore God will rejoice over the few, and He will not grieve over the many that perish.

[45] And I answered, I said even then, O Lord, and I say now: Blessed are they that be now alive and keep the *statutes* ordained of thee. [46] But as touching them for whom my prayer was made, *what shall I say?* for who is there of them that be alive that hath not sinned, and who of the sons of *men* that hath not transgressed thy covenant? [47] And now I see, that the world to come shall bring delight to few, but torments unto many.

[48] For an evil heart hath grown up in us, which hath led us astray from these *statutes*, and hath brought us into corruption and into the ways of death, hath shewed us the paths of perdition and removed us far from life ; and that, not a few only, but well nigh all that have been created.

[49] And he answered me, and said, Hearken unto me, and I will instruct thee ; and I will admonish thee yet again: [50] for this cause the Most High hath not made one world, but two. [51] For whereas thou hast said that the just are not many, but few, and the ungodly abound, hear *the answer* thereunto. [52] If thou have choice stones exceeding few, ¹wilt thou set for thee over against them according to their number *things of lead and clay* ?

[53] And I said, Lord, how shall this be ?

[54] And he said unto me, Not only this, but ask the earth, and she shall tell thee ; intreat her, and she shall declare unto thee. [55] For thou shalt say unto her, Thou bringest forth gold and silver and brass, and iron also and lead and clay: [56] but silver is more abundant than gold, and brass than silver, and iron than brass, lead than iron, and clay than lead. [57] Judge thou therefore which things are precious and to be desired, whatso is abundant or what is rare.

[58] And I said, O Lord that bearest rule, that which is plentiful is of less worth, for that which is more rare is more precious.

[59] And he answered me, and said, ¹Weigh within thyself the things that thou hast thought, for he that hath what is hard to get rejoiceth over him that hath what is plentiful. [60] So also is the ¹judgement which I have promised: for I will rejoice over the few that shall be saved, inasmuch as these are they that have made my glory now to prevail, and of whom my name is now named. [61] And I will not grieve over the multitude of them that perish ; for these are they that are now like unto vapour, and are become as flame and smoke ; they are set on fire and burn hotly, and are quenched.

¹ The Latin is here corrupt.

[45] *I said even then.* See verses 17, 18 ; the words are not identical, but their import is the same as what now follows.

Blessed are they that be now alive. Lat. *Beati praesentes* ; but Syr., 'Blessed are all they that have come', i.e. into this world.

[46] *thy covenant*. Lat. *sponsionem tuam*, Syr. 'thy commandments'. In these two verses, as often elsewhere, a distinction is made between the few righteous and the many wicked; as against this, in iii. 20-2 and iv. 29-31, 38; the universality of sin is taught, especially is this the case in viii. 35. Outside our book the possibility of sinlessness is sometimes taught, though this is restricted to the patriarchs (in our book, iii. 12, 13, Abraham is chosen from among those who 'did wickedly', and must therefore be presumed to have sinned like them.)

[47] *that the world to come . . . many*. This is the rendering of Syr., not of Lat., which reads: *quoniam ad paucos pertinebit futurum seculum jocunditatem facere, multis autem tormenta*. Here, as Bensly points out, Lat. misread in the Greek text *μελήσει* (*pertinebit*), the right reading being *μελλήσει* (*incipiet*).

[48] *an evil heart*. See note on iii. 20.

and into the ways of death. Syr.: 'and made known to us the ways of death', this is the better reading as a verb is wanted; cp., moreover, iii. 7 and iv. 30.

[52] *wilt thou set . . . clay*. Read, with one of the Arab. Versions: 'wilt thou add to them lead and clay?' All the other texts are corrupt. 'The comparison', says Bensly, 'implies that the number of the elect (to borrow the epithet used in the Latin) cannot be increased by the addition of baser elements.' The words are a reply to all that the Seer had said in verses 45-8; he sees that there are so few righteous and so many wicked men that in the age to come there will be but few to partake of its joys; so he puts in a plea for the great mass of the wicked urging that they are the victims of the 'evil heart' with which, after all, the whole of humanity is tainted. The reply put into the mouth of the Most High represents the pessimistic attitude of the Apocalyptists towards the world in general. It is instructive to contrast with this our Lord's reply to one who asked him, 'Are there few that be saved?' The answer concludes with the words: 'And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last' (Luke xiii. 23-30).

[54] ff. While it is true enough that the comparison set forth in what follows is for the purpose of emphasizing what is believed to be the truth, that because a thing is rare therefore it is precious, nevertheless, the analogy offered must strike one as naïve, and, indeed, cynical—though it is not to be supposed that this was intended; to compare the precious and base metals of the earth with human souls in such a connexion as this well illustrates the undeveloped spirituality of the writer, intensely serious and good as he was; and one cannot but think of the contrast with the outlook of the whole passage which is presented in such sayings as that in Luke xix. 10: 'For the

Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost'; cp. Matth. xviii. 14.

intreat her. Lat. *adulare ei*, such a strong expression is difficult to account for; Gunkel thinks that perhaps it was the rendering of the Hebrew *הִתְלַחֵץ*; it may be so, but this word is never translated by the verb *adulare* in the Vulgate. Syr. has 'speak to her', Ethiop. 'persuade her'.

[59] *Weigh . . . that thou hast thought.* This is the rendering of the Ethiopic, representing, no doubt, the right text. Lat. is corrupt.

what is hard to get. Lat. *quod difficile est*, Syr., Ethiop. 'what is rarer', which is more in conformity with the context.

[60] *So also is the judgement . . .* So Syr.; Lat. *Sic et a me reprobata creatura*, misreading *κρίσις* as though *κρίσις*.

inasmuch as these . . . So Syr.; but for 'prevail' we should render 'be established'. The reading of Lat. is . . . *gloriam meam nunc dominationem fecerunt* (read, with Bensly, *dominatioem*).

of whom my name is now named. One of the Arab. Versions has, more correctly, 'over whom my name is called', cp. Deut. xxviii. 10, Jer. xiv. 9, &c.; the phrase is used almost invariably in reference to Israel, but in Am. ix. 12 in reference to the Gentiles.

[61] *And I will not grieve over . . .* Cp. *Enoch* xciv. 10: ' . . . He who created you will overthrow you, and for your fall there shall be no compassion, and your Creator will rejoice at your destruction'; cp. lxxxix. 58, xcvi. 2. This somewhat debased conception of God is also to be discerned in some Old Testament passages, Ps. ii. 4, xxxvii. 12, 13, though in these passages there is no thought of the torment hereafter as in the verse before us.

they that are now like unto vapour. Cp. Ps. cxliv. 4; Job. vii. 9; Hos. xiii. 3; and *Apoc. Bar.* lxxxii. 3: 'For lo, we see now the multitude of the prosperity of the Gentiles, though they act impiously, but they will be like vapour'; *Wisd.* ii. 4: 'And our life will pass away like the traces of a cloud, and be scattered as mist when chased by the beams of the sun', see also Jas. iv. 14.

and are become . . . smoke. Syr.: 'and are comparable with smoke, and regarded as the flame which has burned and is quenched'; cp. *Apoc. Bar.* lxxxii. 6: ' . . . though they keep not the statutes of the Most High, but as smoke will they pass away'; *Wisd.* ii. 2: 'And hereafter we shall be as though we had not been, for smoke is the breath of our nostrils'; but the connexion is different from that of the passage under consideration.

vii. [62-74]. The Seer, realizing that it is due to human understanding that men have sinned and will therefore suffer torment, envies the animal creation; for the beasts of the field, having no understanding, do not sin, and have therefore no need to fear the Judgement. The Most High then speaks, and tells the Seer that it is just because men

have understanding and are therefore in a position to discriminate between good and evil, that they will be subject to the Judgement. They will have no excuse when the last times come. The Most High has been very longsuffering, though this, it is true, has not been for their sakes; the times have been foreordained, i.e. God cannot go back upon the determination of His will.

[62] And I answered and said, O thou earth, wherefore hast thou brought forth, if the mind is made out of dust, like as all other created things? [63] For it were better that the dust itself had been unborn, so that the mind might not have been made therefrom. [64] But now the mind groweth with us, and by reason of this we are tormented, because we perish and know it. [65] Let the race of men lament and the beasts of the field be glad; let all that are born lament, but let the fourfooted beasts and the cattle rejoice. [66] For it is far better with them than with us; for they look not for judgement, neither do they know of torments or of salvation promised unto them after death. [67] For what doth it profit us, that we shall be preserved alive, but yet be afflicted with torment? [68] For all that are born are ¹defiled with iniquities, and are full of sins and laden with offences: [69] and if after death we were not to come into judgement, peradventure it had been better for us.

[70] And he answered me, and said, When the Most High made the world, and Adam and all them that came of him, he first prepared the judgement and the things that pertain unto the judgement. [71] And now understand from thine own words, for thou hast said that the mind groweth with us. [72] They therefore that dwell upon the earth shall be tormented for this reason, that having understanding they have wrought iniquity, and receiving commandments have not kept them, and having obtained a law they dealt unfaithfully with that which they received. [73] What then will they have to say in the judgement, or how will they answer in the last times? [74] For how great a time hath the Most High been longsuffering with them that inhabit the world, and not for their sakes, but because of the times which he hath foreordained!

¹ The Latin is here corrupt.

[62] *O thou earth, wherefore hast thou brought forth.* There is no reason for not following the Lat. here: 'O thou earth, what (*quid*)...'

This thought of the pre-existence of the body is found also in Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16 (in verse 13, 14 ordinary birth is referred to):

'My frame was not hidden from thee,
When I was made in secret,
And curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth;
Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance,
And in thy book hath it all been written.'

In this passage, however, the Psalmist (though there are differences of opinion on this) is referring to the pre-existence of the risen body, as the context shows (verse 18 and cp. 7-12); just as God prepares the body in the womb for life on this earth, so does He also prepare another body in the intermediate state for the life that is to be (see, further, the present writer's *Life, Death, and Immortality*, pp. 172-8 [1911]). The pre-existence of the ordinary earthly body seems to be adumbrated in Job. i. 21: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither'; as Ball says: 'Clearly the womb to which a man returns at death is not the womb from which he emerges at birth. He returns to the dust (xxi. 26; xxxiv. 15; Eccles. iii. 20), or the ground, out of which man was originally taken (Gen. iii. 19), or the earth (Eccles. xii. 7), cp. I Cor. xv. 47 ἐκ γῆς, said of the first man. The earth, therefore, would seem to be here regarded as the common Mother of humanity into whose womb or bosom it returns at death . . . (*The Book of Job*, pp. 109 ff. [1922]; cp. v. 48, 50 of our book). König takes the same view (*Das Buch Hiob*, p. 48 [1929]); Driver and Gray take another, but unconvincing, view (*The Book of Job*, pp. 19 ff. [1921]). Parallel to this is *Ecclus.* xl. 1: 'From the day that he cometh forth from his mother's womb until the day of his returning to the mother of all living' (Hebr. text). More direct, however, is *Assumpt. of Moses* i. 14, where it is said of Moses: 'And so He planned and ordained me, who before of old was prepared . . . (*Excogitavit et invenit me, qui ab initio orbis terrarum preparatus sum* . . .).

if the mind is made out of dust . . . This materialistic conception is due to the fact that the Hebrews had always regarded the heart, which is part of man's body created out of the dust, as the seat of understanding. But with this old-world view contrast verse 78 (see note there).

[63] *For it were better that the dust* . . . Cp. iv. 12 and *Slav. Enoch* xli. 2: 'Blessed is the man who was not born, or, having been born, has never sinned before the face of the Lord, so that he should not come into this place, to bear the yoke of this place', see also *Enoch* xxxviii. 2, *Apoc. Bar.* x. 6.

[64] *by reason of this we* . . . The fact of having understanding is an additional torment to men because the knowledge of undergoing suffering hereafter makes this the more terrible.

[65] *Let the race of men lament* . . . In thus making the beasts of the

field more enviable than men the Seer's despair of humanity runs counter to the teaching of the past, cp., e.g., Gen. i. 26: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth', and especially Ps. viii. 4-8 (Hebr. 5-9); but the Seer does this purposely, for he wishes to emphasize the ominous fact that man, so far from being the lord of Creation, as he was intended to be, has become fated, through sin, to be a more pitiable creature than the animals. Whether the element of despair or irony predominates here may be left an open question!

[66] *for they look not for judgement . . .* Gunkel quotes *Apoc. Esdr.* (ed. Tischendorf, p. 5): τὰ ἄλογα κάλλιον εἰσιν παρά τὸν ἄνθρωπον ὅτι κόλασιν οὐκ ἔχουσιν ἡμᾶς δὲ ἔλαβες καὶ εἰς κρίσιν παρέδωκας.

[67] *For what doth it profit us . . .* The Seer here reckons himself among the sinners, cp. verse [48]; see, on the other hand, e.g., vi. 32-4.

[68] *are defiled with iniquities.* So Syr.; Lat. has *commixti sunt iniquitatibus*; cp. *Apoc. Bar. xxi. 19*: ' . . . and until what time will those who transgress in the world be polluted with much wickedness?'

[69] *peradventure.* Omit, with Syr., Ethiop. This verse is perhaps the most pathetic in the whole book. From verse 67 we have seen that the Seer reckoned himself among sinners, so that he is faced with the awful truth that for him too there is nothing but the prospect of eternal torment in the world to come. The earlier Apocalyptists, convinced of their own righteousness in a world of sinners, looked forward to the world to come as the time of deliverance from all the miseries and sufferings of the present world. But here is one who, through a growing sense of sin, realizes that he belongs to the great multitude of those for whom the terrors of the Judgement are reserved; and he sees no means of release, no hope of redemption, nothing but the pathetic cry that it would be better if after death he did not come into the Judgement! It is small wonder that the book resounds throughout with the notes of pessimism and despair. And then we think, in contrast, of one who had similarly gone through the same heart-breaking struggle, knowing his exceeding sinfulness, and realizing a like hopelessness, but who came to the knowledge of the deeper and blessed truth, who cried, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?' and could answer, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Rom. vii. 13-25)! True, our Seer, at long last, found rest to his soul, but in the light of what has been said of his conviction of sinfulness, we may well wonder whether, in spite of the message he believed himself to have received, doubts did not sometimes arise; that message occurs in viii. 48, 49: 'But in this thou shalt be glorified before the Most High in that thou hast humbled thyself, as it becometh thee, and

hast not reckoned thyself among the righteous, therefore thou shalt be glorified the more.' One is forced to ask whether a man such as the Seer, with his deep sense of sinfulness, could be permanently convinced that he was able to attain justification and salvation by means of his good works of self-abasement and humility (cp. also verse 77). Whether, on the contrary, the thought did not sometimes occur to him that a sinner cannot obliterate sin through a sinner's merits, and that something more was required than merely doing what he ought to do? 'When ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which it was our duty to do' (Luke xvii. 10).

[70] *he first prepared the judgement . . .* Among the various things which were created before the beginning of the world, according to Jewish teaching, were Paradise and Gehenna, and therefore also the Judgement; this is in accordance with the deterministic doctrine taught by all the Apocalyptists. But if the Judgement was created before men as a constituent part of the divine economy, its fulfilment is inevitable, and no man can escape it; what God has determined before the world began cannot be altered. This is what the Seer is insisting upon here.

[71] *the mind groweth with us.* i.e. it is part and parcel of the body.

[72] *having understanding they . . .* i.e. because man has understanding he is responsible for his deeds; cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xv. 5, 6: 'Man would not rightly have understood my judgement if he had not accepted the law, and if his fear had not been rooted in understanding. But now, because he transgressed though he knew, yea, on account of this also, he shall be tormented because he knew'; cp. xix. 3, xlviii. 40, 'each of the inhabitants of the earth knew when he was committing iniquity'; cp. also lv. 2, Luke xii. 48.

[73] *What . . . in the judgement . . . ?* Cp. verse 33, where the Most High is described as sitting on the seat of judgement; here the accused who stand before Him, knowing through their understanding that they have no defence, are silent; cp. *Enoch* xlix. 4: 'And he shall judge the secret things, and none shall be able to utter a lying word before Him.'

[74] *not for their sakes, but because of . . .* i.e. the divine longsuffering, like the Judgement, together with the period at which the last times should come, is predetermined; Cp. note on iv. 37.

vii. [75-101]. The Seer now inquires about the state of the departed. A detailed reply is given: first, the spirit, on leaving the body, adores the Most High; this applies both to the righteous and the wicked. Thereafter, if the spirit be one of the wicked it wanders and is in torments; and these torments are of seven kinds, each of which is described. Then, as to the righteous departed; after they have first rejoiced at seeing the glory of God, they enter into seven kinds of joyous rest; these are likewise all described. Finally, the Seer is told that the

righteous, immediately after the spirit leaves the body, are able to contemplate for seven days the seven kinds of rest which they are about to enjoy; then they enter into their habitations, where, in happiness, they rest in great quietness, guarded by angels. (This last detail is given previously, in verse 95.)

[75] And I answered and said, If I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, shew this also unto thy servant, whether after death, even now when every one of us giveth up his soul, we shall be kept in rest until those times come, in which thou shalt renew the creation, or whether we shall be tormented forthwith.

[76] And he answered me, and said, I will shew thee this also; but join not thyself with them that are scorers, nor number thyself with them that are tormented. [77] For thou hast a treasure of *good* works laid up with the Most High, but it shall not be shewed thee until the last times. [78] For concerning death the teaching is: When the determinate sentence hath gone forth from the Most High that a man should die, as the spirit leaveth the body to return again to him who gave it, it adareth the glory of the Most High first of all. [79] And if it be one of those that have been scorers and have not kept the way of the Most High, and that have despised his law, and that hate them that fear ¹God, [80] these spirits shall not enter into habitations, but shall wander and be in torments forthwith, ever grieving and sad, in seven ways. [81] The first way, because they have despised the law of the Most High. [82] The second way, because they cannot now make a good returning that they may live. [83] The third way, they shall see the reward laid up for them that have believed the covenants of the Most High. [84] The fourth way, they shall consider the torment laid up for themselves in the last days. [85] The fifth way, they shall see the dwelling places of the others guarded by angels, with great quietness. [86] The sixth way, they shall see ²how forthwith some of them shall pass into torment. [87] The seventh way, which is ³more grievous than all the aforesaid ways, because they shall pine away in confusion and be consumed with ⁴shame, and shall be withered up by fears, seeing the glory of the Most High before whom they have sinned whilst living, and before whom they shall be judged in the last times. [88] Now this is

¹ Another reading is, *him*.

² Lat. *greater*.

³ The passage is corrupt.

⁴ The Latin is here corrupt.

the order of those who have kept the ways of the Most High, when they shall be separated from the corruptible vessel. [89] In the time ¹that they dwelt therein they painfully served the Most High, and were in jeopardy every hour, that they might keep the law of the lawgiver perfectly. [90] Wherefore this is the teaching concerning them: [91] First of all they shall see with great joy the glory of him who taketh them up, for they shall have rest in seven orders. [92] The first order, because they have striven with great labour to overcome the evil thought which was fashioned together with them, that it might not lead them astray from life into death. [93] The second order, because they see the perplexity in which the souls of the ungodly wander, and the punishment that awaiteth them. [94] The third order, they see the witness which he that fashioned them beareth concerning them, that while they lived they kept the law which was given them in trust. [95] The fourth order, they understand the rest which, being gathered in their chambers, they now enjoy with great quietness, guarded by angels, and the glory that awaiteth them in the last days. [96] The fifth order, they rejoice, *seeing* how they have now escaped from that which is corruptible, and how they shall inherit that which is to come, while they see moreover the straitness and the ¹painfulness from which they have been delivered, and the large room which they shall receive with joy and immortality. [97] The sixth order, when it is shewed unto them how their face shall shine as the sun, and how they shall be made like unto the light of the stars, being henceforth incorruptible. [98] The seventh order, which is greater than all the aforesaid orders, because they shall rejoice with confidence, and because they shall be bold without confusion, and shall be glad without fear, for they hasten to behold the face of him whom in their lifetime they served, and from whom they shall receive *their* reward in glory. [99] This is the order of the souls of the just, as from henceforth ¹is announced unto them, *and* aforesaid are the ways of torture which they that would not give heed shall suffer from henceforth. [100] And I answered and said, Shall time therefore be given unto the souls after they are separated from the bodies, that they may see that whereof thou hast spoken unto me? [101] And he said, Their freedom

¹ The Latin is here corrupt.

shall be for seven days, that for seven days they may see the things whereof thou hast been told, and afterwards they shall be gathered together in their habitations.

[75] *whether after death . . .* The Seer here raises the question as to the state of the departed during the interval from the time when they first enter the future life to the time of the new creation: will they be at rest, or will they be in torment? As the Judgement does not take place until the end of the present age this is, of course, a very pertinent question, for the object of the Judgement is to acquit or condemn; are the wicked to be condemned before the Judgement, and are the righteous to enjoy their rest until it has been determined that they deserve it? Although the Seer does not express these thoughts, it is obvious that they must have been in his mind. In the reply that is given it is clear that the lot of the wicked and the righteous, respectively, is determined immediately after death, and therefore before the Judgement takes place; and no attempt is made to account for the incongruity; the Judgement might just as well never take place. It must be remembered that the eschatological utterances of the Apocalyptists are the outcome of pure speculation, and it is no wonder that they differ not only from one another, but that a Seer will not infrequently be self-contradictory. In the present case, e.g., while it is said, as we have seen, that punishment or reward follow immediately after death, during the intermediate state (so, too, verses 117, 126), in iv. 41 it is said that all the departed spirits go to Sheol, in its traditional meaning, and yet in vii. 87 punishment is to come after the Judgement, though the wicked are already suffering torment. A different description of the state of the departed is given in *Enoch* xxii; there we read of four hollow places which 'have been created for this very purpose, that the spirits of the souls of the dead assemble therein . . . and these places have been made to receive them till the day of their judgement . . .'; the departed are divided into four categories (Charles believes only three originally), and they await the day of Judgement; there are the righteous, the sinners who in this world received no retribution, the sinner who did receive retribution in this world, and a class symbolized by Abel, whom Charles describes as the martyred righteous (for another view see *Enoch* li. 1). Differing from this is what is said about the state of the departed in *Apoc. Bar.* xxxvi. 10, 11; there in symbolical language (the cedar and the forest 'by whose means wickedness persisted', verse 7), it is said: 'Do thou also therefore depart, O cedar, after the forest, which departed before thee, and become dust with it, and let your ashes be mingled together; and now recline in anguish, and rest in torment till thy last time come, in which thou wilt come again, and be tormented still more.' In so far as the wicked are tormented immediately after death this agrees with our Seer's view in the passage before us; but

when Baruch says that later the wicked will come again and be tormented still more, he must mean that this worse torment is inflicted as the result of the Judgement (see also xxx. 2-4); of this our Seer says nothing in this passage; nor does he say anything about the Resurrection, whereas Baruch says that the righteous will, for a time, rejoice in their 'treasuries' (i.e. the chambers to which they go immediately after death), and then 'when the time of the advent of the Messiah is fulfilled, and he will return in glory, then all who have fallen asleep in hope of Him shall rise again' (xxx. 1, 2).

These points by no means exhaust the discrepancies regarding the eschatological outlook of the Apocalyptists, but they are sufficient to illustrate this. And it is necessary to emphasize the fact, otherwise readers of the apocalyptic literature find themselves in a maze by trying to reconcile statements which are irreconcilable. Finally, it should be pointed out that contradictory statements in one and the same book do not necessarily imply diverse authorship, though this is doubtless sometimes the case; it is certain that the Apocalyptists did not consistently hold the same views regarding many things, nor did this trouble them, and therefore they were quite content to let incongruities remain in their writings.

[76] *but join not thyself . . .* This anticipates to some extent what is said in viii. 48, 49.

[77] *thou hast a treasure of good works . . .* The word 'good' should be omitted; it is self-evident that works accepted by the Most High are good. Cp. viii. 33, and *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 12, 13: 'For the righteous justly hope for the end, and without fear depart from this habitation, because they have with thee a store of works preserved in treasuries. On this account also these without fear leave this world, and trusting with joy they hope to receive the world which thou hast promised them.' On this important subject of the efficacy of works the difference between *Apoc. Bar.* and our book is well worth noting. Regarding the former Charles's summary is valuable: 'The righteous are saved by their works (li. 7); they are justified by the law (li. 3); for righteousness is by the law (lxvii. 6). Their works impart confidence to the righteous with respect to God when they pray for themselves or others . . . (lxiii. 3, 5, lxxxv. 2). But the works of the righteous avail not themselves only; they are a defence also to the unrighteous among whom they dwell (ii. 2), and even after their death their works are regarded as a lasting merit on the ground of which mercy should be shown to Sion (xiv. 7, lxxxiv. 10). Again, these works are conceived as going before them to the next world, and being there guarded in the treasure chambers of God (xiv. 12), where they will be kept safely till the final judgement (xxiv. 1); hence the righteous hope for the end, and leave the world without fear (xiv. 12)' (*The Apocalypse of Baruch*, p. 26 [1896]). For a similar belief in Iranian eschatology see Böklen, *op. cit.*, pp. 41 ff. In our present

Apocalypse there is no such stress laid on the merit of works; here and there, it is true, they are mentioned; in viii. 33, e.g., it is said: 'For the righteous which have many works laid up with thee, shall for their own deeds receive reward'; and cp. vii. 35; but that they are not regarded as wholly indispensable is seen from viii. 36: 'For in this, O Lord, thy righteousness and thy goodness shall be declared, if thou be merciful unto them which have no store of good works.' So that in this respect there is a striking difference between the two Apocalypses.

but it shall not be shewed thee . . . Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxiv. 1: 'For behold, the days come and the books will be opened in which are written all the sins of all those who have sinned, and again also the treasuries in which the righteousness of all those who have been righteous in creation is gathered.' When it is remembered how the Seer reckons himself among the sinners, and thus does not realize that, as the passage before us shows, he has many good works to his credit of which he has, therefore, no knowledge, one is reminded of *Matth.* xxv. 31-40, where the deeds of mercy on the part of the righteous have become so natural to them that they appear as of no account until the King says to them: 'Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.'

[78] *When the determinate sentence . . .* Lat. *terminus sententiae*. There is no reference here to the foreordained time when a man should die, fully as the Apocalyptists believed in this; what is here meant is the 'decisive decree', as Box well renders it.

as the spirit leaveth the body. Lat. uses the word *inspiratio* here, but in iii. 5 *spiritum vitae*; in each case, however, the Hebrew *neshamah* (breath) or *ruach* (spirit) of God is what lies behind the word. At death the body returns to the dust whence it came, and the spirit to God whence it came. These were the two elements of which man was made. The older Hebrews had no word for body in the sense of the Greek *σῶμα* (*beten* was part of the body, the 'belly' or 'womb'), but when they spoke of man himself, the *ego*, they used the word *nephesh*, which, unfortunately, but inevitably, we translate 'soul'; and this often creates confusion of thought; the only way in which our word 'soul' connotes the Hebrew *nephesh* is in such a phrase as: 'not a soul was present'.

to return again to him . . . Cp. *Eccles.* xii. 7; this passage, here quoted, is interpreted in accordance with the developed belief concerning man and the future life. The Preacher conceived of man after death as ceasing to exist, but here the Seer teaches that the spirit (*ruach* is the word used in the Hebrew of *Eccles.* xii. 7) retains its individuality hereafter; how he presented to his mind the form or appearance of the individual in this spirit state it would be profoundly interesting to know (for clearly there was no body, this had

returned to the earth), but of this nothing is said, unless we are to suppose that he believed the resurrection of the body (see verse 32) took place immediately after death; this, however, seems hardly possible because he looks for the Judgement yet to come.

[79] *that have been scorers.* Both the wicked as well as the righteous are thus thought of as appearing before the Most High immediately after death.

that hate them that fear God. The God-fearers (*Chasidim*) are often spoken of as the victims of the goddess in earlier days; it appears to have been the same when the Seer lived.

[80] *habitations.* These abodes of the righteous departed are called here *habitationes*, in verses 85, 101, 121, *habitacula*, and in iv. 35, vii. 32, 95, *promptuaria*.

but shall wander . . . Cp. *Midrash Rabba* to Eccles. iii. 2: 'There is a tradition: the souls of the pious, as well as those of the ungodly, shall ascend into the height; only (with this difference) that the former are placed in the treasury, while the latter are tossed about on the earth'; and in the Talmud (*Sabbath* 152 b) it is said that the souls of the wicked have no rest until the judgement (quoted by Box).

in seven ways. Gunkel points out that the idea of these seven ways, or modes, of torment, as well as the seven forms of bliss, came ultimately from Babylonian belief, and was taken over by Judaism, where it became a fixed tradition; but, as he says, the spiritualized form in which the idea is here presented is very different from the crass descriptions found elsewhere. See further, Böklen, *op. cit.*, pp. 35 ff.

[82] *a good returning.* Lat. *reversionem bonam*, which quite obviously represents the Hebrew תְּשׁוּבָה טוֹבָה, 'a good repentance'; the thought is a remarkable one, implying, as it does, the desire for repentance which cannot be fulfilled.

[83] *they shall see the reward laid up . . .* Cp. Dives and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 23.

[85] *of the others.* Syr. 'of the other souls'.

with great quietness. Syr. 'in great peace', referring, of course, to the souls of the righteous.

[86] *how forthwith some of them . . .* Lat. *quemadmodum de eis pertransiet in cruciatum*; read *quoniam amodo pertransient in cruciatum*, 'that from henceforth they shall pass over into torment'. This 'way' refers to immediate torment, the fourth 'way' refers to future torment.

[87] *with shame.* The Lat. MSS. vary between *honoribus* (= τιμαῖς) *horroribus*, and *doloribus* (= ἀτιμίας), but we should in any case read the sing. with all the Versions.

[88] *separated from the corruptible vessel.* i.e. the *neshamah*, or *ruach* (see note on verse 78), returns to God, the body to the earth. The teaching here, implying as it does that the body has been merely a prison-house for the spirit, is different from that of I Cor. xv. 53,

'for this corruptible must put on incorruption', with which must be read II Cor. v. 2-4, '... longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven . . .'; the spirit needs a 'clothing', a 'spiritual body', to express itself. Our Seer, while not expressing here the orthodox Jewish doctrine of a resurrection of the material body, does not express belief in a 'spiritual body', an expression which, though it is a contradiction in terms owing to the limitations of human speech, does contain a living truth.

[89] *that they dwelt therein.* Lat. has *commoratae*, for which Bensly reads *commorationis*. Syr.: 'that they abode in the vessel', i.e. the body; so Ethiop. *painfully*, Lat. *cum labore*.

[92] *the evil thought which was fashioned . . .* In the *Midrash, Bereshith Rabba* xxvii and in the Talmud (*Kiddushin* 30 b) it is said that God created the *Yetzer ha-ra'* (= 'the evil tendency' or 'bias'), and in the latter it is further said: 'I (God) created for him, i.e. for man, in order to counteract the *Yetzer ha-ra'*, the Law as a means of healing. If ye occupy yourselves with the Law, ye will not fall into the power of it.' This belief, that God created the evil tendency in man, must have been widely held at one time; it is combated by Ben-Sira in the words: 'Say not, "From God is my transgression"', for that which he hated he made not', and Jas. i. 13: 'Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot tempt with evil, and he himself tempteth no man.' Our Seer, by implication, accepts the former view when he says, 'which was fashioned together with them', for he must be referring to the creation of man.

that it might not lead them astray . . . From verse 89 we may gather that, in accordance with the orthodox view, it was by means of observing the Law that they were kept from being led astray.

[93] *the perplexity.* Syr. 'the whirling' = *σμπλοκή* (Gunkel); Lat. *complicationem* (marg. of MS. *C confictionem*). Between some of the respective 'ways' of the wicked and the righteous there is a direct antithesis, though this does not hold good in each case; if a contrast is intended in this second 'way', then the 'perplexity', or mental confusion, will refer to the inability of the wicked to repent. On the other hand, the mention of the wandering of the souls of the ungodly would suggest their confused erring spoken about in verse 80, though the Seer does not explain how the righteous in their chambers can follow these wanderings to see how the ungodly fare.

the punishment that awaiteth them. That this should be reckoned among the 'ways' of the righteous is unedifying, cp. *Enoch* lxii. 12: 'And they [the wicked] shall be a spectacle for the righteous and for his elect; they shall rejoice over them . . .'; see also xxvii. 2, 3; xlvi. 9.

[94] *they kept the law . . . in trust.* It is difficult to say whether this means that they kept the Law faithfully, or that they kept the Law which was entrusted to them; in any case, the main point, that they kept the Law, is unaffected.

[95] *they understand.* i.e. they appreciate to the full.

[96] *how they have now escaped . . . corruptible.* Gunkel pointedly remarks that there is an underlying thought here that corruptibility does not belong to the being of man, but that it is something alien and inimical. It can certainly be shown that, according to ancient Babylonian and Hebrew thought, man was originally intended to be immortal (see the present writer's *Immortality and the Unseen World*, pp. 190-9 [1921]).

and the large room which . . . Syr. has: 'and the wide expanse which they shall receive, and the joys of which they shall partake; and they shall become immortal.'

[97] *their face shall shine as the sun . . .* Cp. verse 125, Dan. xii. 3; in *Enoch* civ. 2 it is said to the righteous: 'Now ye shall shine as the lights of heaven, ye shall shine, and ye shall be seen' (see also xxxix. 7, li. 5). So, too, in *Apoc. Bar.* li. 3: 'Also, as for the glory of those who have now been justified in my law . . . their splendour will be glorified in changes, and the form of their face will be turned into the light of their beauty, that they may be able to acquire and receive the world which does not die'; and Matth. xiii. 43: 'Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.'

[98] *to behold the face of him.* Cp. Matth. v. 8, Rev. xxii. 4.

they shall receive their reward. Cp. Rev. xxii. 12.

[100] *Shall time therefore be given . . .* See note on verse 75.

[101] *for seven days.* The idea is here expressed that for seven days from the time that the spirit departs from the body there is an interval before the righteous spirit enters into his habitation (chamber) for rest until the end of the age. Where, was it supposed, did the spirit sojourn during these seven days? And what was the point of this interval? Some antique conception must lie at the base of this. An interesting passage is quoted by Bousset (*op. cit.*, p. 297) from the *Bíos 'Adám* 43: 'Ye are not to mourn beyond six days, but on the seventh day be at peace, and rejoice over him (i.e. the departed), from that day God and we, the angels, rejoice over the righteous soul that has departed from the earth.' He refers also to the Talmud (*Sabbath* 152 a), where it is said that the spirit hovers over the body for seven days after death. More frequent, however, are the indications in ancient literature that this hovering is only for three days (Bousset, as above, and Böklen, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 ff.), and it seems probable that the seven days idea is a development. There are reasons for the view that behind both lies the ancient belief of the spirit's journey from earth to heaven, which plays an important part in Iranian eschatology (Böklen, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 ff.). In Mithraism, too, the same belief is held (Cumont, *Textes et Monuments relatifs au Mystères de Mithra*, p. 38 [1899]). Interesting in this connexion is the account of Enoch's journey through the seven heavens (*Slav. Enoch* iii-xxi); an echo of the spirit's journey occurs in *Pirke de Rabbi*

Eliezer (p. 257, G. Friedlander's translation): 'All the seven days of mourning the soul goeth forth and returneth from its former home to its sepulchral abode, and from its sepulchral abode to its former home.'

vii. [102-15]. The Seer asks whether on the day of Judgement it will be permitted for intercession to be made on behalf of sinners, but is told that this cannot be. Then he cites cases from the past in which intercession was made on behalf of the wicked, and asks why this cannot be done again. The answer is that this is no parallel; what was done during the present world-order is one thing; it is quite different in the day of Judgement when this world-order will have passed away.

[102] And I answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, shew further unto me thy servant whether in the day of judgement the just will be able to intercede for the ungodly or to intreat the Most High for them, [103] whether fathers for children, or children for parents, or brethren for brethren, or kinsfolk for their next of kin, or ¹friends for them that are most dear. [104] And he answered me, and said, Since thou hast found favour in my sight, I will shew thee this also: The day of judgement is ²a day of decision, and displayeth unto all the seal of truth; even as now a father sendeth not his son, or a son his father, or a master his slave, or a ¹friend him that is most dear, that in his stead he may ³be sick, or sleep, or eat, or be healed: [105] so never shall any one pray for another ⁴in that day, neither shall one lay a burden on another, for then shall all bear every one his own righteousness or unrighteousness.

36 [106] And I answered and said, How do we now find that first Abraham prayed for the people of Sodom, and Moses for the fathers that sinned in the wilderness: 37 [107] and Joshua after him for Israel in the days of ⁵Achar: 38 [108] and Samuel ⁶in the days of Saul; and David for the plague: and Solomon for them that *should worship* in the sanctuary: 39 [109] and Elijah for those that received rain; and for the dead, that he might live: 40 [110] and Hezekiah for the people in the days of Sennacherib: and many for many? 41 [111] If therefore now, when corruption is grown up, and unrighteousness increased,

¹ So the Oriental versions.

² The Latin has *a bold day*.

³ The Latin has *understand*.

⁴ So the Syriac. The Latin omits *in that day . . . another*.

⁵ That is *Achan*.

⁶ So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin omits *in the days of Saul*.

the righteous have prayed for the ungodly, wherefore shall it not be so then also ?

42 [112] He answered me, and said, This present world is not the end ; the full glory abideth ¹not therein : therefore have they who were able prayed for the weak. 43 [113] But the day of judgement shall be the end of this time, ¹and the beginning of the immortality for to come, wherein corruption is passed away, 44 [114] intemperance is at an end, infidelity is cut off, but righteousness is grown, and truth is sprung up. 45 [115] Then shall no man be able to have mercy on him that is cast in judgement, nor to thrust down him that hath gotten the victory.

¹ Omitted in the Latin.

[102]-[105] Cp. ix. 9-12. There is a poignancy about both the form and content of this passage which is very appealing. The emphatic denial of there being any chance for lost souls through the intercession of the righteous comes strangely after the moving words of these verses. There must be some reason for this ; and probably the reason was a dogmatic one. 'It would appear', says Box, 'from the emphatic way in which it is insisted that intercession by the living for the living is alone possible while the present order lasts, that the Apocalyptist is aiming at some counter-doctrine of intercession for the dead. Certainly no room seems to be left in his theology for prayers for the dead. The eternal destiny of the soul is fixed by the course of the earthly life. Those who died enter immediately upon an existence of bliss or woe which but anticipates the final doom of the Judgement ; and this doom, according to our present passage, is fixed and unalterable.' Similar to our author's teaching is that of the book of *Enoch* ; so in *Apoc. Bar. lxxxv. 12* : 'For lo, when the Most High will bring to pass all these things, there will not be there again an opportunity of returning [or repentance], nor a limit to the times . . . nor change of ways, nor place for prayer, nor sending of petitions [cp. *Enoch* xiii. 4, 6], nor receiving knowledge, nor giving of love, nor place of repentance, nor supplication for offences, nor intercession of the fathers, nor prayer of the prophets, nor help of the righteous.' In *Slav. Enoch* liii. 1, also, it is said : 'For there is no person there to help any man who has sinned.' The contrary belief occurs in Rabbinical writings (see, e.g., the passages cited by Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 329), but that it was prevalent at the time at which our Seer lived may be seen from the *Testament of Abraham* xii-xiv, belonging to the first century A.D. ; here we have the account of a soul before the Judge who opens the book and finds that its sins and its righteousness are equally balanced ; it is, therefore, not given over to the tormentors, but, on the other hand, it cannot be saved and enter into bliss. Then Abraham asks Michael : 'What is lacking to the soul for it to be

saved?' And he is told: 'If it win one righteousness over and above its sins it enters into salvation.' Thereupon Abraham said: 'Let us make a prayer on behalf of this soul, and see if God will hearken unto us. . . . Then they made prayer and supplication on behalf of the soul, and God heard them; and when they rose up from their intercession, they no more saw the soul standing there. And Abraham said to the angel: Where is the soul which thou didst hold in the midst? And the angel said: It has been saved by thy righteous prayer, and behold, an angel light-bearer has taken it and carried it into Paradise.' In *Sib. Orac.* ii. 312 ff., 331 ff., it is told how the righteous intercede for the wicked departed, but this, in all probability, is a Christian interpolation.

vii. [116-31]. The Seer, who is now convinced that there is no hope for sinners, laments the fact that Adam ever existed, and that he had the power to sin; for as things are there is for the great mass of humanity only misery here and punishment hereafter. Adam sinned, with the result that all who came after him are affected. What use is the promise of immortality to those who because, as Adam's descendants, they are sinners, and have therefore no hope? The reply is that this is 'the condition of the battle'. Moses guided the people aright, so they had their chance; but they refused to be guided by him, and, later, by the prophets. There will, in the hereafter, be less sorrow at the destruction of the wicked than joy over the saved.

46 [116] I answered then and said, This is my first and last saying, that it had been better that the earth had not given *thee* Adam: or else, when it had given *him*, to have restrained him from sinning. 47 [117] For what profit is it for all that are in this present time to live in heaviness, and after death to look for punishment? 48 [118] O thou Adam, what hast thou done? for though it was thou that sinned, the evil is not fallen on thee alone, but upon all of us that come of thee. 49 [119] For what profit is it unto us, if there be promised us an immortal time, whereas we have done the works that bring death? 50 [120] And that there is promised us an everlasting hope, whereas ourselves most miserably are become vain? 51 [121] And that there are reserved habitations of health and safety, whereas we have lived wickedly? 52 [122] And that the glory of the Most High shall defend them which have led a pure life, whereas we have walked in the most wicked ways of all? 53 [123] And that there shall be shewed a paradise, whose fruit endureth without decay, wherein is abundance and healing, but we shall not enter into it, 54 [124] for we have walked in unpleasant places? 55 [125]

And that the faces of them which have used abstinence shall shine above the stars, whereas our faces shall be blacker than darkness? 56 [126] For while we lived and committed iniquity, we considered not what we should have to suffer after death.

57 [127] Then he answered and said, This is the ¹condition of the battle, which man that is born upon the earth shall fight; 58 [128] that, if he be overcome, he shall suffer as thou hast said: but if he get the victory, he shall receive the thing that I say. 59 [129] For this is the way whereof Moses spake unto the people while he lived, saying, Choose thee life, that thou mayest live. 60 [130] Nevertheless they believed not him, nor yet the prophets after him, no, nor me which have spoken unto them; 61 [131] so that there shall not be such heaviness in their destruction, as there shall be joy over them that are persuaded to salvation.

¹ Or, *intent*

[116] *This is my first . . .* i.e. he concludes with the subject with which he began, see iii. 5 ff., cp. vii. 63.

to have restrained him from sinning. The Seer can hardly mean the earth as the subject here; he must mean God, and therefore, by implication, he must have been led to the conclusion that the prevalence of sin was ultimately due to the divine will; yet in verses 127-9 and viii. 56 he recognizes the power of human free-will to refrain from sin. The incongruity of thought could hardly have been avoided so long as he held the view expressed in verse 118 of the effect of Adam's sin falling on all that come of him. See further on the subject the notes on verse 52.

[118] See notes on iv. 30, 31.

[124] *we . . . in unpleasant places.* Lat. *in ingratīs locis conversati sumus*, which, on the face of it, does not read convincingly; Violet suggests a Greek text: ἀχαρίστοις τρόποις ἀνεστράφημεν, 'we lived in unseemly ways', cp. Eph. ii. 3: ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἀνεστράφημέν ποτε ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν, 'among whom we all also once lived in the lusts of our flesh'.

[125] *blacker than darkness.* Cp. *Enoch* x. 4, 5, xlvi. 6, lxii. 10, lxiii. 11; *Matth.* viii. 12, xxii. 13; and *Jude* 13, 'for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved for ever'. Hell as a place of darkness is a remnant of the old Sheol conception, cp. *Job* x. 22, 'the land of darkness', *Ps.* cxliii. 3, which is of Babylonian origin; for Iranian belief see Böklen, *op. cit.*, p. 128. Elsewhere, and frequently, Hell is represented as a place of fire, which is a later conception.

[127] *the condition of the battle.* i.e. the decree concerning the conflict.

[128] *if he be overcome . . .* The Seer does not say who the enemy is against whom man fights in this contest, but in view of verse 92 it must be the evil *Yetzer*; *Ecclus.* xv. 14–17 is instructive in this connexion: ‘God created man from the beginning [and delivered him into the hand of him that spoileth him],¹ and placed him in the hand of his *Yetzer*. If thou so desirest, thou canst keep the commandment, and it is wisdom to do His good pleasure; and if thou trust Him, of a truth thou shalt live. Poured out before thee are fire and water, stretch forth thine hand unto that which thou desirest. Life and death are before man, that which he desireth shall be given him’ (Hebrew text).

he shall receive the thing that I say. As Gunkel says, in all that has preceded the Seer invariably speaks of the fate of sinners; the angel, on the other hand, always deals with the reward of the righteous.

[129] *Choose thee life . . .* Quoted from Deut. xxx. 19; cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xix. 1, *Assumpt. of Moses* iii. 11, 12. Life is here used of eternal life, as always by the Apocalyptists; in earlier Hebrew usage it always means the best things of earthly life.

[130] *no, nor me.* The angels speak in the name of God; cp. the frequent usage of the later prophets.

[131] Cp. verses 60, 61.

¹ These words do not belong to the original text.

vii. [132]—viii. 3. The Seer, after enumerating seven divine attributes expressing God’s mercy, implicitly appeals to the Most High on behalf of the mass of mankind who are sinners. But his appeal is in vain; he is answered: ‘There be many created, but few shall be saved.’

62 [132] I answered then and said, I know, Lord, that the Most High is now called merciful, in that he hath mercy upon them which are not yet come into the world; 63 [133] and compassionate, in that he hath compassion upon those that turn to his law; 64 [134] and longsuffering, for that he long suffereth those that have sinned, as his creatures; 65 [135] and bountiful, for that he is ready to give rather than to exact; 66 [136] and of great mercy, for that he multiplieth more and more mercies to them that are present, and that are past, and also to them which are to come; 67 [137] (for if he multiplied not *his mercies*, the world would not continue with them that dwell therein;) 68 [138] and one that forgiveth, for if he did not forgive of his goodness, that they which have committed iniquities might be eased of them, the ten thousandth part of men would not remain living; 69 [139] and a judge, *for* if he did not pardon them that

were created by his word, and blot out the multitude of offences, 70 [140] there would peradventure be very few left in an innumerable multitude.

VIII. 1 And he answered me, and said, The Most High hath made this world for many, but the world to come for few. 2 I will tell thee now a similitude, Esdras; As when thou askest the earth, it shall say unto thee, that it giveth very much mould whereof earthen vessels are made, and little dust that gold cometh of: even so is the course of the present world. 3 There be many created, but few shall be saved.

¹ Lat. *contempts*.

[132] is now called *merciful*. There can be little doubt that both here and in all the verses which follow, the Syr. retains the form of the original, namely a noun, not an adjective: 'the merciful one' here, and in what follows, 'the compassionate one', 'the longsuffering one', &c.

them which are not yet come . . . These words are well explained by Box: 'God, in spite of His foreknowledge which enables Him to foresee man's future sins before he is born, is yet tender and compassionate towards him, treating him as righteous and free from sin until he actually commits sin; cp. *Midrash Rabba* to Gen. xxi. 17, where God says "I judge man" (as to whether they are righteous or wicked) "according to his time" (i.e. as he is at the time, without taking into account his future sins). In the passage Ishmael (not yet having sinned) is counted as pious.' It will be noticed that here, as always in Rabbinical literature, there is no idea of sin being transmitted because of Adam's transgression.

[133] *that turn to his law*. There are two possible meanings of these words; if, according to Volkmar, they represent *τοῖς ἀναστροφῆν ποιουμένοις ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτοῦ*, they will refer to those whose manner of life is in accordance with the Law (cp. verse 129); Hilgenfeld supposes a Greek text: *τοῖς ἐπιστρεφομένοις εἰς τὸν νόμον αὐτοῦ*, in which case the reference will be to those who show their repentance by turning to the Law.

[134] *as his creatures*. Lat. *quasi suis operibus*; the meaning is that God is longsuffering to sinners because He created them; they are the works of His hands, cp. the Sept. of Isa. lxiv. 7, 8, where, after a confession of sinfulness, it continues, *καὶ νῦν, κύριε, πατήρ ἡμῶν σὺ, ἡμεῖς δὲ πηλός, ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου πάντες ἡμεῖς* ('. . . we are all the works of thine hands').

[135] *he is ready to give rather . . .* Cp. Acts xx. 13: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

[136] *that are present . . . past . . . to come*. i.e. those now living, those who have died, and those not yet born.

[137] *if he multiplied not his mercies.* Lat., which has simply *non multiplicaverit*, looks as though the reference were to the increase of men on the earth; Syr., Ethiop.: 'if he did not multiply his mercy', referring to what has been said in the preceding verse.

the world would not continue with . . . Lat. *non vivificabitur saeculum . . .* It is difficult to account for the R.V. rendering, for the meaning, as the next verse clearly shows, is that if it were not for God's mercies nobody in the world could attain to life hereafter. As Box says, following Simonsen, 'this agrees with the doctrine of the school of Shammai, according to which the truly pious passed at once, after death to bliss; the very wicked went at once to Gehenna, while the intermediate class (which comprised the vast majority) were only consigned to Gehenna for a time, God's goodness and kindness being shown in allowing their release therefrom, so that they ultimately passed to eternal life.'

[138] *for if he did not forgive . . .* Contrast with what is here said the words in verses 60, 61, 131.

that they which have committed iniquities . . . of them. Lat. *ut alleventur hi qui iniquitates fecerunt de suis iniquitatibus*; Syr. 'that sinners might be delivered from their iniquities'.

the ten thousandth part . . . living. Here again the Revised Version seems to have missed the point; Lat. has *non poterit decies millensima pars hominum vivificari*, meaning that not a ten-thousandth part of humanity would be able to attain to life, i.e. eternal life.

[139] *a judge.* Though all the Versions have this, the rendering is, as Gunkelsays, wrong; for, as in all the previous verses, so here one expects a noun which corresponds with the verb—the merciful one who shows mercy, the compassionate one who has compassion, the longsuffering one who is longsuffering—so that here we expect the Pardoner to correspond with 'if he did not pardon'; the mistake arose through the similarity of the two Hebrew words, שֹׁפֵט 'judge', and שֹׁמֵט ; the root of the latter, with the meaning 'to remit', does not occur in Biblical Hebrew, but is common in later Hebrew (Jastrow, *Talmud Dict.* s.v.).

created by his word. Cp. Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9.

the multitude of offences. Lat. *multitudinem contemptionum*, Syr. ' . . . of their sins'.

The seven epithets of God enumerated in verses 132–9 are evidently taken from the similar number occurring in Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7: ' . . . a God compassionate and gracious, longsuffering and of great mercy and faithfulness; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin' (cp. the enumeration of the gifts of the spirit in Isa. xi. 2, 3).

The Bensly fragment ends here.

VIII. 1. *for . . . for.* Lat. *propter*, 'for the sake of'.

2. *As when thou askest the earth.* Cp. verse 54.

3. *There be many created, but . . .* Cp. Matth. xx. 16, xxii. 14.

viii. 4-19^a. The Seer, in perplexity, utters words of despair. He then addresses the Almighty and speaks of the wonderful work of creation that man is; but yet all men are sinners; he will, therefore, pray to God both for himself and for them.

4 And I answered and said, Swallow down understanding then, O my soul, and let *my heart* devour wisdom. 5 For thou ¹art come hither without thy will, and departest when thou wouldest not: for there is given thee no longer space than only to live a short time. 6 O Lord, that art over us, suffer thy servant, that we may pray before thee, and give us seed unto our heart, and culture to our understanding, that there may come fruit of it, whereby every one shall live that is corrupt, who beareth the ²likeness of a man. 7 For thou art alone, and we all one workmanship of thine hands, like as thou hast said. 8 Forasmuch as thou quickenest the body that is fashioned now in the womb, and givest it members, thy creature is preserved in fire and water, and nine months doth thy workmanship endure thy creature which is created in her. 9 But that which keepeth and that which is kept shall both be kept ³by thy keeping: and when the womb giveth up again that which hath grown in it, 10 thou hast commanded that out of the parts of the body, that is to say, out of the breasts, be given milk, which is the fruit of the breasts, 11 that the thing which is fashioned may be nourished for a time, and afterwards thou shalt order it in thy mercy. 12 Yea, thou hast brought it up in thy righteousness, and nurtured it in thy law, and corrected it with thy judgement. 13 And thou shalt mortify it as thy creature, and quicken it as thy work. 14 If therefore thou shalt ¹lightly and suddenly destroy him which with so great labour was fashioned by thy commandment, to what purpose was he made? 15 Now therefore I will speak; touching man in general, thou knowest best; but touching thy people *will I speak*, for whose sake I am sorry; 16 and for thine inheritance, for whose cause I mourn; and for Israel, for whom I am heavy; and for the seed of Jacob, for whose sake I am troubled; 17 therefore will I begin to pray before thee for myself and for them: for I see the falls of us that dwell in the land; 18 but I have heard the swiftness of the

¹ So the Syriac. The Latin is incorrect.

² So the Syriac. The Latin has *place*.

³ So the Syriac. The Latin is imperfect.

judgement which is to come. 19 Therefore hear my voice, and understand my saying, and I will speak before thee.

5. *thou art come hither without thy will . . .* Lat. *convenisti enim obaudire* (reading ἀκούσαι instead of ἄκουσα) *et profecta es nolens*; Syr. as R.V. The pre-existence of the soul is again implied here. In these two verses the Seer seems to be bemoaning the fact that however much wisdom he may acquire he will not live long enough to be able to obtain enough for the purpose of understanding the problems that have presented themselves to his mind. Similarly, but with fuller detail, *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 8-11.

6. *suffer thy servant, that . . . thee.* Lat. *si permittes servo tuo ut oremus coram te*; here *si* represents the Hebr. אִם , 'if thou wouldst suffer', i.e. 'O that thou wouldst suffer', cp. Ps. lxxxi. 8 (Hebr. 9): 'O Israel, if thou wouldst hearken unto me' (Violet).

who beareth the likeness of a man. Lat. *qui portabit locum hominis*, reading τόπον instead of τύπον. It will be noticed here that the Seer prays for humanity in general, a universalistic note which is by no means always found in our book.

7. *For thou art alone.* Read, with Syr., 'For thou art One'; cp. Isa. xlv. 6, and Deut. vi. 4.

we all one workmanship of thine hands. Cp. Isa. xlv. 11, lx. 21; and in connexion with this and the previous verse note the contrast in *Apoc. Bar.* xlviii. 24: 'For we are all named one people, who have received one law from One, and the law which is amongst us will aid us, and the surpassing wisdom which is in us will help us.'

8. In this and the following verses the Seer speaks of the wonderful way in which man is formed in the womb; of how God takes care of him, and sees that from the first he is nourished; and of how, as he grows up, God gives him the means of spiritual sustenance. Since man is thus in body and mind God's handiwork, the Almighty is fully within his rights to do what He will with His own, to destroy him, or to keep him alive; but—and this is what the Seer is leading up to—if God has taken so much trouble over His handiwork, and at one stroke, as it were, annihilates it, why did He ever create it? The answer to this very pointed question is postponed; but when it does come, or rather purports to come, it is no real answer at all; indeed, how was it possible for this pessimistic Apocalyptist, with his false doctrine of sin, his narrow ideas of man, his inadequate conception of God, and his phantastic views of the hereafter—how was it possible for him to answer this question? Nevertheless, it is extremely interesting to see how this sincere seeker after truth wrestled mentally with himself, and realized how unsatisfactory his standpoint and his outlook were; so far as his writing tells us, he never reached a solution of his doubts and difficulties, at least what *we* could call a solution.

thy creature is preserved in fire and water. The meaning is that the constituent elements of the body of man (God's creation), namely fire and water, hold him together; this idea of what the human body is composed was borrowed from oriental thought; a modified form of it occurs in the Midrash *Wajjikra Rabba*, where, among the comments on Lev. vii. 12, it is said that God created man of the elements of the upper and the lower worlds; the element of the upper, i.e. the heavenly, world is the breath of God, that of the lower world, the earth, dust (Wünsche's translation, p. 61 [1884]). Box refers to Philo, *De Mundi* Op. 51, where the human body is spoken of as compounded from earth, water, air, and fire.

and nine months . . . which is created in her. Render: 'and for nine months doth that which thou hast formed (*tua plasmatio*, i.e. the womb) carry thy creature (i.e. the child) which thou didst create therein.'

9. *that which keepeth . . .* See R.V. marg. note. Paraphrased the meaning is: both the womb which keeps the child, and the child preserved therein are protected under the guardianship of God.

giveth up again that . . . An implicit reference to the pre-existence of the soul; the interesting description of this conception is given by Rabbi Jochanan in *Tanchuma; Pikkude* 3 (translated by Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 225 ff.).

11. *may be nourished for a time.* There should be a full stop here. What follows, to the end of verse 13, was originally a rhythmical piece of six lines (Gunkel).

and afterwards . . . i.e. Thereafter thou dost uphold it in Thy mercy.

12. *thou hast brought it up.* The verbs should here all be in the present tense; it is a description of God's care of every individual.

13. *And thou shalt mortify . . .* Paraphrased, the words mean that since this being is God's creation it is within His power and right either to destroy it or to preserve it alive. The context forbids our interpreting the 'quickenings' in reference to the future life.

14. *to what purpose was he made?* Gunkel refers appropriately to *Apoc. Esdrae* (ed. Tischendorf, p. 27): *κύριε, εἰ ἐλογίζου ταῦτα, διὰ τί ἔπλασας τὸν ἄνθρωπον;* and *Apoc. Sedrach* 4: *διὰ τί ἐκοπίσας ἀχράντους σοῦ χεῖρας καὶ ἔπλασας τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἤθελες ἐλεῆσαι αὐτόν;*

15. *touching man in general, thou . . .* The Seer is quite willing for any fate to befall the Gentile world; his real concern is his own people; a particularistic trait.

but touching thy people . . . Lat. *de populo autem tuo quod mihi dolet;* the 'will I speak' of R.V. is not wanted; we have here another metrical piece of four lines, thus: 'but touching—

thy people for whom I grieve,
 thine inheritance for whom I mourn,
 Israel for whom I am sad,
 the seed of Jacob for whom I am troubled!—

As to what is said or thought about this people is purposely left blank, with far more telling effect. The *quod* of Lat. must be a corruption.

17. *for myself and for them.* The Seer again includes himself among the sinners.

the falls. Lat. *lapsos*, according to other MSS. *lapsus*.

that dwell in the land. As Israel has been particularized it would seem that Palestine is meant, rather than the earth in general.

18. *but I have heard the swiftness . . .* According to Lat. the meaning is that he prays because of the near approach of the Judgement; but it is doubtful whether the Latin text is correct; Syr. has: ' . . . the decree of judgement', meaning that he prays because the decree of the punishment of sinners has been put forth; the Armen. implies the same; Gunkel renders: 'the sternness of the coming Judgement' (Armen. *inclementiam magnam*).

19^a. *and understand my saying.* Lat. *et intellege sermonum meorum*, a Greek construction, *σύνες τῶν λόγων μου*, cp. Ps. v. 1 (2 in Hebr.): *σύνες τῆς κραυγῆς μου* (Bensly, *Missing Fragment*, p. 87); Syr. 'and hearken unto the words of my prayer'.

viii. 19^b-36. The beautiful prayer which now follows is liturgical in structure; there is first the address to God, containing divine attributes; then follow the petitions, which are interspersed with confession and intercessory prayer; and it concludes with an ascription of praise. The outstanding notes are: the glorifying of God, the appeal to the divine mercy, the acknowledgement of unworthiness, and intercession for sinners.

This prayer occurs as the 'Confessio Esdrae' among the *Cantica* of the Vulgate; so, too, *Apoc. Bar.* xlviii (Gunkel).

The beginning of the words of Esdras, before he was taken up. And he said,

20 O Lord, thou that ¹abidest for ever, whose eyes are exalted, and whose chambers are in the air; 21 whose throne is inestimable; whose glory may not be comprehended; before whom the hosts of angels stand with trembling, 22 ²at whose bidding they are changed to wind and fire; whose word is sure, and sayings constant; whose ordinance is strong, and commandment fearful; 23 whose look drieth up the depths, and whose indignation maketh the mountains to melt away, and whose truth beareth witness: 24 hear, O Lord, the prayer of thy servant, and give ear to the petition of thy handywork; 25 attend unto my words, for so long as I live I will speak, and so long as I have

¹ Or, *inhabitest eternity*

² According to the chief Oriental versions. The Latin has, even they *whose service taketh the form of wind, &c.*

understanding I will answer. 26 O look not upon the sins of thy people ; but on them that have served thee in truth. 27 Regard not the doings of them that deal wickedly, but of them that have kept thy covenants in affliction. 28 Think not upon those that have walked feignedly before thee ; but remember them which have willingly known thy fear. 29 Let it not be thy will to destroy them which have lived like cattle ; but look upon them that have ¹clearly taught thy law. 30 Take thou no indignation at them which are deemed worse than beasts ; but love them that have alway put their trust in thy glory. 31 For we and our fathers have ²passed our lives in ³ways that bring death : but thou because of us sinners ⁴art called merciful. 32 For if thou hast a desire to have mercy upon us, then shalt thou be called merciful, to us, namely, that have no works of righteousness. 33 For the just, which have many *good* works laid up with thee, shall for their own deeds receive reward. 34 For what is man, that thou shouldest take displeasure at him ? or what is a corruptible race, that thou shouldest be so bitter toward it ? 35 For in truth there is no man among them that be born, but he hath dealt wickedly ; and among them ⁵that have lived there is none which hath not done amiss. 36 For in this, O Lord, thy righteousness and thy goodness shall be declared, if thou be merciful unto them which have no store of good works.

¹ The Syriac has *received the brightness of thy law*.

² So the Syriac and Æthiopic versions.

³ Lat. *manners*.

⁴ Another reading is, *shalt be*.

⁵ So the Syriac. There appears to be an error in the Latin text.

19^b. *The beginning of . . . And he said*. This does not belong to the original text, but the words were prefixed to the prayer at an early date, for they occur in Lat. (of which there are two recensions), Syr. and Ethiop.

Esdras, before he was taken up. It is clear from this that there must have been the belief that Ezra, like Enoch and Elijah, did not die (his death is not recorded in the Old Testament) but was taken up to heaven. There is no book called the Ascension, or Assumption, of Esdras, like the *Assumption of Moses*, and the *Ascension of Isaiah* ; but an *Apocalypse of Esdras*, in Syriac and Ethiopic, is preserved. The former has been published, with a German translation, in the *Zeitschrift für die A.T. Wissenschaft*, vi, pp. 199-210 (1886).

20. *that abideth for ever*. Lat. *qui inhabitat seculum*, cp. Isa. lvii. 15, 'that inhabiteth eternity', Sept.: *κατοικῶν τὸν αἰῶνα*. As Gunkel points out, the Greek *αἰῶν* is here equivalent to 'Heaven' ; cp. iii. 18,

the dwelling-place of God. In *Pirke Abóth* v. 30 the phrase 'the will of thy Father which is in Heaven' occurs; cp. Matth. vi. 9, &c.

whose chambers are in the air. For the old-world idea of God's dwelling-house on high cp. Am. ix. 6, '... that buildeth his chambers in the heavens', II Kings vii. 2, 19, '... if the Lord should make windows in the heavens . . .?' Ps. lxxviii. 23, '... and opened the doors of the heavens'; in Ps. civ. 3, 'Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters'. There is the ancient conception, also of Babylonian origin, that the universe is composed of two stories, the upper one of which, where God had His dwelling, being founded upon the lower (cp. Deut. xxxiii. 13). For the Babylonian prototype see Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, pp. 401 ff.

21. *whose throne is inestimable.* Cp. Ezek. i, the mystery and wonderfulness of God's throne (the chariot) is a conception which did not originate with Ezekiel; his description is based on early mythological-cosmological material; God's throne is ultimately heaven itself. For God's throne see *Enoch* xiv. 18, *Assumpt. of Moses* iv. 2, *Test xii Patr.* Levi v. 1, and, though this is based largely on Ezek. i, *Pirke de R. Eliezer*, ch. iv (Friedlander's transl, pp. 22 ff.); it is said there, among other things, that God's throne 'is high and suspended above in the air', 'fire is flashing continually around His throne'.

whose glory may not be comprehended. The glory of God was thought of as a wonderful glowing light that surrounded Him and whereby all the regions above were suffused. Doubtless this conception goes back ultimately to astral religion.

before whom the hosts of angels . . . Cp. *Enoch* lxi. 10: 'And He will summon all the host of the heavens, and all the holy ones above, and the host of God, the Cherubin, Seraphin, and Ophanin ('wheels'), and all the angels of power, and all the angels of principalities . . .'

22. *at whose bidding . . . and fire.* So one of the Lat. Versions and Syr., cp. Ps. civ. 4: 'Who maketh winds his messengers, His ministers a flaming fire' (or 'flame and fire', according to many commentators); in this Psalm there is a personification of the forces of nature who are obedient to the divine commands (cp. Ps. cxlviii. 8); but according to the Seer the angels are changed into wind and fire; similarly the Sept. of this Psalm (= ciii): 'Who maketh His angels winds, and His ministers a flaming fire.'

whose word is sure . . . constant. Cp. Ps. cxix. 89; as Box pointedly remarks, 'there seems to be a clear allusion here to one of the oldest prayers in the Synagogue Liturgy, the benediction which follows the *Shema*', and is known as *Ge'ulla* ("Redemption"). This piece begins with the words used in our passage, viz. *sure* (or *true*) and *constant* (Hebr. אֱמֻנָה וְיִשְׁרָאוֹת), and is so referred to in the oldest Rabbinical sources (cp. e.g., Mishna, *Tamid* v. 1); and the subject of the opening part of the benediction is God's word, *True and constant, established*

and enduring . . . is this thy word (i.e. the preceding *Shema*) unto us for ever . . .’ In this prayer occur also the words: ‘And His throne is established, and His kingdom and faithfulness endure for ever’, with which cp. verse 21.

23. *whose look drieth up the depths.* A reminiscence, in a more refined form, of the ancient *Tehom* myth; cp. Isa. li. 10, ‘Art not thou that which dried up the sea, the waters of *Tehom Rabbah* (the great deep)?’ Ps. lxxiv. 13: ‘Thou didst split in twain the sea in thy strength.’ (See, further, the present writer’s *The Evolution of the Messianic Idea*, pp. 45 ff. [1908].)

maketh the mountains to melt away. A reminiscence of the old Iranian eschatological belief of the destruction of the world by fire (see Böklen, *op. cit.*, pp. 115 ff.).

whose truth beareth witness. So most of the Versions, but one of the Arabic Versions has *permanet nec desinit*. Gunkel quotes from the *Apoc. Constit.* viii. 7, which has the whole verse: οὗ τὸ βλέμμα ξηραίνει ἄβυσσον καὶ ἡ ἀπειλή τήκει ὄρη, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. From this and the Arabic Version it is evident that the true reading is, ‘whose truth endureth for ever’ (cp. Ps. cxvii. 2). The mistake in our text is easily accounted for, וְעַד (‘for a witness’) being read instead of עַד (‘for ever’).

28. *that have walked feignedly . . .* Lat. *in conspectu tuo false conversati sunt*; the reference, in view of the next clause, seems to be to such as made a show of walking in the fear of the Lord, but who were, in reality, far from Him.

29. *which have lived like cattle.* What is meant is those who are utterly dull of comprehension, like the beasts of the field, and who cannot, therefore, discern what the coming Judgement will mean for them. Cp. Ps. lxxiii. 22, where the psalmist, in self-condemnation at his stupidity in not having been able to understand the divine ways, compares himself with a beast of the field.

that have clearly taught thy law. Lat. *qui legem tuam splendide docuerunt*, this is to be preferred to the Syr. (see R.V. marg.) because there is a contrast between those who are ignorant and those who by their insight are able to understand the Law and explain it clearly to others.

30. This verse seems to be synonymous with the preceding one; *worse than beasts* corresponds with *them that have lived like cattle*, and *they that have always put their trust in thy glory*, with *them that have clearly taught thy law*; the glory of God was seen in His Law, ‘thy glory’ and ‘thy Law’ are parallel terms.

In verses 26-30 the Almighty is besought to turn away His attention from the wicked and only to take account of the righteous; in other words, divine mercy is sought on behalf of the wicked because of the good deeds of the righteous; cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 7.

31. In this verse the thought of the universality of sin comes into

the mind of the Seer, and he pleads for the mercy of God irrespective of any good deeds of men.

but thou because of us sinners . . . i.e. but thou, just because we are sinners, art called merciful. The Seer again reckons himself among the sinners.

32. *if thou hast a desire to . . .* We should rather express this by 'if it be thy will to have mercy upon us'.

then shalt thou . . . righteousness. i.e. just because God shows mercy when there are no good works which can claim His mercy, He is called the Merciful One. This is, in effect, the teaching of justification without works, which is somewhat striking in view of other passages in our book. Rom. iii. 19-26 should be read in this connexion.

33. *For the just . . .* Cp. vii. 77, *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 12, 13.

35. *there is no man . . .* Here again the universality of sin is insisted on. Gunkel quotes *Apoc. Esdrae* (ed. Tischendorf), p. 30: *καί τις ἄρα ἄνθρωπος γεννηθείς οὐχ ἥμαρτε;*

36. *if thou be merciful unto . . .* Gunkel again appropriately quotes *Apoc. Esdrae* (ed. Tischendorf), p. 25: *οὕτως καὶ ὁ δίκαιος ἀπέλαβεν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἁμαρτωλοὺς ἐλέησον· οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐλεήμων εἶ.*

One cannot fail to notice the inconsistency of thought in these verses; in 26-30 mention is made of sinners and the righteous, and the wickednesses of the former are to be overlooked on account of the good works of the latter; in 31, 32 all men are sinners who have no good works to their credit, hence the divine mercy is appealed to; in 33 the righteous have a treasury of good works by means of which they are to receive reward; in 34, 35 men are considered so insignificant that they are not worth being angry about; and all men are sinners; in 36 God's mercy is again appealed to on behalf of those who have no good works to their credit. This inconsistency may be due to the additions of some later scribe; but this is by no means a necessary supposition; the Apocalyptists were not logical thinkers, we find again and again in their literature statements which cannot be reconciled one with another; the writers seem to be groping after truth, and owing to the many-sidedness of truth they were unable to reach a proper synthesis. But this characteristic of the apocalyptic writers is one of the attractive *traits* of their literature, because one sees the process of thinking, and observes devout minds searching in perplexity and with uncertain steps for the goal of truth.

viii. 37-40. The Seer is told that the Almighty will not consider the sinners, but will rejoice over the righteous.

37 Then answered he me, and said, Some things hast thou spoken aright, and according unto thy words so shall it come to pass. 38 For indeed I will not think on the fashioning of them which have sinned, or their death, their judgement, or their

destruction: 39 but I will rejoice over the framing of the righteous, their pilgrimage also, and the salvation, and the reward, that they shall have. 40 Like therefore as I have spoken, so shall it be.

37. *Some things hast thou spoken aright.* In reference to the earlier part of the prayer, verses 20-4.

according unto thy words so . . . In verses 26-36 the Seer had prayed that God would ignore the wicked and their doings and that He would turn His attention to the righteous only. This, the Almighty says, He will do; but, as the next verse shows, not in the sense intended by the Seer. God will, indeed, take no thought of the sinners, but, it is added, nor yet of their death, judgement, and destruction. That, of course, was not what the Seer had meant.

38. *the fashioning of them . . .* Lat. *plasma eorum*, in reference to the *Yetzer*, which can mean either the forming of man as an act of creation, or his (evil) bias, inclination; one of the Arabic Versions has 'my creation', so that the former of these is probably what is meant.

death, their judgement, or their destruction. The Almighty will not think of these, but they are nevertheless to take place.

39. *the framing of the righteous.* Lat. *justorum figmentum*; according to Syr. and one of the Arabic Versions, *figmentum* must be understood as corresponding to *plasma* in verse 38, and must therefore mean the framing or creation of the righteous.

their pilgrimage also, and . . . that they shall have. Lat. *peregrinationis quoque et salvationis et mercedis receptionis*; that the difficulty of these genitives was felt is seen by the fact that some MSS. have plurals—*es*; Box holds, rightly we believe, that the wrong construction arose under the influence of the genitive *justorum*, the following words being attracted into it, and that the error was due to copyists either in the Greek or Latin text. This is the more likely inasmuch as the Latin text as we now have it has so many errors.

their pilgrimage. This corresponds to 'death' in verse 38, and refers to the 'going from home' (*ἀποδημία*, for the verb see Matth. xxi. 33, Mark xii. 1, Luke xv. 13), i.e. from the body. What is death to the wicked is but a 'pilgrimage' to the better land for the righteous; Gunkel appropriately refers to II Cor. v. 6-8.

40. *as I have spoken.* This must be 'as thou hast spoken', see verse 37 and the note there; it is to be as the Seer had *spoken*, but not as he had thought.

viii. 41-5. The heavenly messenger tells the Seer that while much seed may be sown not all comes to fruition; so it will be with those 'who are sown' in the world. To this the Seer replies that the seed perishes because God has given either too much or too little rain; so it is with

man. But the Seer refrains from drawing the natural inference; instead he prays for divine mercy on man.

41 For as the husbandman soweth much seed upon the ground, and planteth many trees, and yet not all that is sown shall ¹come up in due season, neither shall all that is planted take root: even so they that are sown in the world shall not all be saved.

42 I answered then and said, If I have found favour, let me speak before thee. 43 Forasmuch as the husbandman's seed, if it come not up, seeing that it hath not received thy rain in due season, or if it be corrupted through too much rain, ²so perisheth; 44 likewise man, which is formed with thy hands, and is called thine own image, because he is made like *unto thee*, for whose sake thou hast formed all things, even him hast thou made like unto the husbandman's seed. 45 Be not wroth with us, but spare thy people, and have mercy upon thine inheritance; for thou hast mercy upon thine own creation.

¹ Lat. *be saved*.

² So the printed Latin text. The earlier MSS. are corrupt.

44. *likewise man*. Most of the Lat. MSS. read *hic pater et filius homo* but the MS. M reads *sic pat̄ et filius homo*, which Gunkel emends as *sic patitur* . . . translated from the Greek: οὕτως πάσχει καὶ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου (= the Hebr. דָּבָר בְּנֵי אָדָם 'the son of man' in the sense of a human being); we should, therefore, understand the verse as an expression of surprise that the son of man, created in the image of God, should be compared with the seed of the husbandman.

45. *spare thy people* . . . Cp. Joel ii. 17, where very similar words occur. Gunkel quotes from *Apoc. Sedrach* 13 and *Apoc. Esdrae* (ed. Tischendorf, pp. 25, 26): ἐλέησον τὴν σὴν πλάσιν· οἰκτείρησον τὰ ἔργα σου.

viii. 46-62. The Seer is reproached for seeming to love the creature more than the Creator. He is comforted by being told that he is honoured by the Almighty because of his humility in not reckoning himself among the righteous. Many that have walked in pride will be punished, but for him Paradise is opened. Further, the Seer is bidden to ask no more questions about those who are perishing; the fate that will overtake them is only what they deserve; they have despised the Most High; indeed, they have denied that God exists; therefore the Judgement is about to come.

46 Then answered he me, and said, Things present are for them that now be, and things to come for such as shall be hereafter. 47 For thou comest far short that thou shouldest be able

to love my creature more than I. But thou hast brought thyself full nigh unto the unrighteous. *Let this never be.* 48 Yet in this shalt thou be admirable before the Most High; 49 in that thou hast humbled thyself, as it becometh thee, and hast not judged thyself *worthy to be* among the righteous, so as to be much glorified. 50 For many grievous miseries shall befall them that in the last times dwell in the world, because they have walked in great pride. 51 But understand thou for thyself, and of such as be like thee seek out the glory. 52 For unto you is paradise opened, the tree of life is planted, the time to come is prepared, plenteousness is made ready, a city is builded, and rest is¹ allowed, goodness is perfected, wisdom being perfect aforehand. 53 The root of *evil* is sealed up from you, weakness is done away from you, and ²[death] is hidden; hell and corruption are fled into forgetfulness: 54 sorrows are passed away, and in the end is shewed the treasure of immortality. 55 Therefore ask thou no more questions concerning the multitude of them that perish. 56 For when they had received liberty, they despised the Most High, thought scorn of his law, and forsook his ways. 57 Moreover they have trodden down his righteous, 58 and said in their heart, that there is no God; yea, and that knowing they must die. 59 For as the things aforesaid shall receive you, so thirst and pain which are prepared *shall receive* them: for the Most High willed not that men should come to nought: 60 but they which be created have themselves defiled the name of him that made them, and were unthankful unto him which prepared life for them. 61 And therefore is my judgement now at hand, 62 which I have not shewed unto all men, but unto thee, and a few like thee.

¹ The Syriac has *established*.

² After the chief Oriental versions.

47. *For thou comest far short . . . than I.* The Seer has shown great love for his fellow creatures, but he is quite wrong if he thinks he loves them more than God does. For the Seer himself this thought of the love of God was very precious; if it came into his mind that, in spite of his frequent appeals to the divine mercy, the love of God was not shown to the great mass of mankind by forgiveness, a sufficient reply would be found in verses 56-8, where their wilful and persistent wickedness is emphasized. What must, however, cause some surprise is the total absence of any thought there of repentance on the part of sinners (though it is mentioned in ix. 11). With all his love for men

the Seer believes them to be so hardened in sin that he does not contemplate the possibility of their repenting. This attitude is due to the pessimism which is characteristic of the Apocalyptists in general, and it is to be in great measure explained by the condition of the times.

But thou . . . unrighteous. Let this *never* be. This somewhat ambiguous sentence means that the Seer had often reckoned himself among the unrighteous, but that he is to do so no more. Syr. has: 'Thou hast oft-times placed thyself (compared thyself with) among the unrighteous; let it not be so.'

48. *Yet in this . . .* i.e. For this very reason he will be honoured by the Most High, viz. because of his humility.

49. *so as to be much glorified.* i.e. he will be the more honoured because of his humility in not accounting himself righteous, cp. Luke xviii. 13, 14.

50. *because . . . pride.* As Box well remarks, 'the emphasis laid by the author on the virtue of humility and the sin of pride is remarkable. The latter was a conspicuous and besetting fault of a section of the Pharisaic party in the first half of the first century (cp. Mark xii. 38 f., Matth. xxiii. 5 f.; see also, for a more general reference, Luke xiv. 7-11); and the present passage seems to be directed by the author against some of his contemporaries (end of first cent. A.D.).'

52. *For unto you is paradise opened.* Gunkel quotes *Apoc. Sedrach* 13: *ὁ παράδεισός σοι ἤνοιγήη*. The joys enumerated have all been long in readiness; this is often taught by the Apocalyptists, cp. *Apoc. Bar.* iv. 3: '. . . that which was prepared beforehand here from the time when I took counsel to make Paradise . . .'; this is also taught in Rabbinical literature, e.g. in the Talmud, *Pesachim* 54 a, *Nedarim* 39 b (Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 344).

a city is builded. Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* iv. 2-6; Rev. iii. 12, xxi. 2, 9, 10.

wisdom being perfect aforehand. For the existence of wisdom personified before the beginning of the world, see Prov. viii. 22 ff.; cp. also I Cor. ii. 7: '. . . even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory.' With the verse as a whole cp. I Pet. i. 3, 4: '. . . and inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.'

53. *The root of evil.* 'The root' is a technical term; 'of evil' is explanatory; cp. iii. 22 and *Enoch* xci. 8: 'In those days violence shall be cut off from its roots, and the roots of unrighteousness together with deceit, and they shall be destroyed from under heaven.'

is sealed. Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxi. 23: '. . . and let Sheol be sealed so that from this time forward it may not receive the dead' (cp. also *Wisd.* ii. 5), and contrast Isa. v. 14: 'Sheol hath enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth without measure.'

death is hidden. The omission of 'death' in all the Lat. MSS. must be accidental; all the Versions have it, and the sense demands it.

Cp. Rev. xxi. 14. For death and Hades (in the next verse) being mentioned together cp. Rev. i. 18, xx. 14.

hell and corruption . . . 'Hell' = Hades; following Syr. we should read: 'Hades hath fled, corruption is forgotten.'

54. *and in the end is shewed* . . . Syr. 'and in the end the treasures of life appear'.

56. *when they had received liberty*. i.e. free-will; Ben-Sira says: 'Life and death are (placed) before man, that which he desireth shall be given him' (*Ecclus.* xv. 17, Hebr.).

they despised the Most High . . . The Seer has, in the first instance, fellow-Jews in mind.

57. *his righteous*. i.e. the pious ones, 'saints' (*Chasidim*), cp. with this verse the words of a *Chasid* in Ps. lxxxvi. 14 (verse 2, 'I am godly', lit. 'I am a *Chasid*').

58. *knowing they must die*. Cp. Isa. xxii. 13; *Wisd.* ii. 5, 6; I. Cor. xv. 32.

59. *For as . . . shall receive you*. Better, following Syr.: 'therefore, as the things aforesaid (i.e. in verses 52-4) await you.'

thirst and pain. Cp. Luke xvi. 24: ' . . . that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.'

for the Most High willed not . . . cp. Matth. xviii. 14, I Tim. ii. 4.

62. *which I have not shewed* . . . The revelations concerning the last times were given only to men like the Seer, i.e. Apocalyptists.

viii. 63—ix. 13. In reply to the Seer's question as to *when* the signs of the end shall come, the angel tells him that when a certain part of the signs shall have occurred, then will be the moment when the Most High will visit the world. Some of the signs are then described. Those who have done good works or who have faith will be saved; the rest shall perish.

Then answered I and said, 63 Behold, O Lord, now hast thou shewed me the multitude of the wonders, which thou wilt do in the last times: but at what time, thou hast not shewed me.

IX. 1 And he answered me, and said, Measure thou diligently within thyself: and when thou seest that a certain part of the signs are past, which have been told thee beforehand, 2 then shalt thou understand, that it is the very time, wherein the Most High will visit the world which was made by him. 3 And when there shall be seen in the world earthquakes, disquietude of peoples, devices of nations, wavering of leaders, disquietude of princes, 4 then shalt thou understand, that the Most High spake of these things from the days that were aforesaid from the beginning. 5 For like as of all that is made in the world, the

beginning ¹is evident, and the end manifest; 6 so also are the times of the Most High: the beginnings are manifest in wonders and mighty works, and the end in effects and signs. 7 And every one that shall be saved, and shall be able to escape by his works, or by faith, whereby he hath believed, 8 shall be preserved from the said perils, and shall see my salvation in my land, and within my borders, which I have sanctified for me from the beginning. 9 Then shall they be amazed, which now have abused my ways: and they that have cast them away despitefully shall dwell in torments. 10 For as many as in their life have received benefits, and yet have not known me; 11 and as many as have scorned my law, while they had yet liberty, and, when as yet place of repentance was open unto them, understood not, but despised ²it; 12 the same must know ²it after death by torment. 13 And therefore be thou no longer curious how the ungodly shall be punished; but inquire how the righteous shall be saved, ³they whose the world *is*, and for whom the world *was created*.

¹ So the Syriac. The Latin *is* corrupt.

² Or, *me*

³ So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin has *and whose . . . created, and when*.

63. *but at what time . . .* Cp. iv. 33, Mark xiii. 4.

IX. 1. *Measure thou . . .* Calculations regarding times and seasons are characteristic of the apocalyptic literature.

2. *the Most High will visit . . .* Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxv. 1 ff.

3. *when there shall be seen . . .* With what follows cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxvii. 2 ff.

4. *that the Most High spake of these things . . . beginning.* The signs just enumerated had been handed down from of old, and the Seer doubtlessly regarded the traditions embodied in the apocalyptic literature as divine revelations dating from the earliest times. 'The apocalyptic writers almost certainly drew their material from popular tradition. Many of the ideas which receive various embodiment in this literature, were derived, doubtless, from the common stock of the popular consciousness; their ascription to or association with the great heroic figures of antiquity, like Enoch, Abraham, Isaiah, Elijah, or the twelve patriarchs, may also be a feature derived from the popular consciousness' (Oesterley and Box, *op. cit.*, p. 36).

5, 6. The meaning of these two difficult verses is not made altogether clear in the Revised Version since neither Lat. nor Syr. are free from error. On the basis of Ethiop. Gunkel renders: 'For just as everything that has happened in the world has a [hidden] beginning in the word, i.e. God's creative word, but an end that is manifest

(*consummatio in manifestatione*), so also are the times of the Most High; their beginning is in word [cp. verse 4. 'the Most High spake of these things] and portents and in power, and their end is in acts and wonders.' The verses may be paraphrased thus: Everything that happens in the world is first predetermined by the divine creative word, of which, obviously, nobody can know anything, it is only in the mind of God, hidden from mortals; but when the time comes for the predetermined events to happen, then everything becomes manifest. Just in the same way is it with the times of the Most High; these, too, are by the word communicated to chosen vessels, but hidden from the rest of the world; when, however, the consummation of the times is due, then they will be manifest by signs and wonders, earthquakes, commotions, &c. It is all in reply to the Seer's question in viii. 63 as to *when* the last times will happen. Gunkel quotes Justin, *Apol.* i. 12, 10: *ὅθεν καὶ βέβαιοι γινόμεθα πρὸς τὰ δεδιδαγμένα ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πάντα, ἐπειδὴ ἔργω φαίνεται γινόμεθα, ὅσα φθάσας γενέσθαι προείπεν· ὅπερ θεοῦ ἔργον ἐστί, πρὶν ἢ γενέσθαι εἰπεῖν καὶ οὕτως δειχθῆναι γινόμενον ὡς προείρηται.*

7. *by his works, or by faith.* Cp. xiii. 23; the mention of faith in these two passages is noteworthy, cp. also vi. 5; elsewhere works alone are spoken of, vii. 77, viii. 33. Cp. Rom. iii. 27, iv. 4, 5; Gal. v. 6; Jas. ii. 18 ff.

8. *my salvation in my land . . . which I have sanctified . . .* Cp. xii. 34, xiii. 48; *Apoc. Bar.* xxix. 2: 'For at that time I will protect only those who are found in those self-same days in this land'; and lxxi. 1: 'And the holy land will have mercy on its own, and will protect its inhabitants at that time.' In later days the Rabbis taught that only those who dwelt in the land of Palestine would be saved (on this see Volz, *op. cit.*, pp. 308, 309).

ix. 14–22. The Seer insists once again on the terrible fact that it is the great mass of humanity that is condemned to perdition. In reply, he is told, first, that there was a time when no man spoke against God; but now, in spite of the Law given to direct men aright, they are corrupt. Therefore God destroyed this world, but saved 'a grape out of a cluster, and a plant out of a great forest'. So it must be now, let the multitude perish, but let the grape and the plant be saved, for these were perfected with great labour. Thus the Vision, and the Seer's perplexities, receive no real solution.

14 And I answered and said, 15 I have said before, and now do speak, and will speak it also hereafter, that there be more of them which perish, than of them which shall be saved: 16 like as a wave is greater than a drop.

17 And he answered me, saying, Like as the field is, so is also the seed; and as the flowers be, such are the colours also; and

such as the work is, such also is the ¹judgement *thereon*; and as is the husbandman, so is his threshing-floor also. For there was a time in the world, 18 even then when I was preparing for them that now live, before the world was made for them to dwell in; and then no man spake against me, 19 for ²there was not any: but now they which are created in this world that is prepared, both ²with a table that faileth not, and a law which is unsearchable, are corrupted in their manners. 20 So I considered my world, and, lo, it was destroyed, and my earth, and, lo, it was in peril, because of the devices that were come into it. 21 And I saw, and spared them, but not greatly, and saved me a grape out of a cluster, and a plant out of ³a great forest. 22 Let the multitude perish then, which was born in vain; and let my grape be saved, and my plant; for with great labour have I made them perfect.

¹ So the Æthiopic and Arabic. The Latin has *creation*. ³ So the Syriac.

² So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin has *great tribes*.

17. *Like as the field is, so . . . seed.* Cause and effect; if the soil is well tended the seed will bear fruit; but if it is not looked after the seed will suffer, and yield poorly.

and as the flowers be . . . Similarly, if the flowers are tended the bloom will be beautiful; if neglected, their colour soon fades.

and such as the work . . . Read here: 'As the worker so the work'; Lat. *qualis opera, talis et creatio*, represents best what the original must have been; though its real meaning was missed. 'Judgement', of Ethiop., Arab. is due to a misreading of *κρίσις* for *κρίσις*. The meaning is that the kind of work produced depends upon how the worker works.

as is the husbandman . . . i.e. if the husbandman is industrious his harvest will be abundant (the Hebrew *תֶּבֶן*, 'threshing-floor', also means what is in it, i.e. the garnered store, cp., e.g. Gen. 1. 10 and Hos. ix. 1). The four illustrations given are intended to be parallels of the central theme which follows: as most men are wicked so will their lot in the world to come be evil.

there was a time in the world. i.e. there was a time, or period, during the present age; there are only two ages: the age to come and the time preceding this; the creation of the material world was an episode which took place during the present age (*αἰῶν*).

18. *even then when . . . to dwell in.* Lat. *et tunc cum essem parans eis, his qui nunc, antequam fieret illis saeculum, in quo inhabitarent*; as Box says, 'the Lat. misses and obscures the point. To say that there was a time in the history of the world—which had been created for man's sake—when sin and rebellion did not exist, viz., before man had

appeared on the scene, adds point to the divine indictment of the human race, that follows; but to say (as the Lat. text says) that before the world was made, man did not exist, and therefore could not sin, is banal.' He well renders the whole sentence, following what was apparently the Greek from which Syr. was translated: 'For there was (a time) in the eternal ages when I prepared for those that now exist—before they had come into being—a world wherein they might dwell.'

19. *there was not any.* So Syr.; Lat. omits the negative.

but now they . . . i.e. those who were originally intended by God to enter into the world to come—a world which had been prepared for them—are become corrupt.

with a table that faileth not. The reference is to the feast which the blessed shall partake of in the world to come; cp. *Enoch* lxii. 14: 'And the Lord of spirits will abide over them, and with the Son of Man shall they eat, and lie down and rise up for ever and ever' (cp. *Slav. Enoch* xlii. 5). See also *Matth.* viii. 11: '. . . many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down ["recline" at table] with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven'; and *xxvi.* 29: 'I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom'; cp. *Rev.* xix. 7, the marriage feast of the Lamb.

a law which is unsearchable. Lat. *lege investigabili*; this mistake, which is found in all the Versions (the passage is wanting in Armen.), arose from the confusion between νόμος 'law' and νομός 'pasture' or 'field'; the reference is to the unexplored, and therefore mysterious, meadow in Paradise; some ancient myth must be alluded to here.

21. *but not greatly.* Lat. *vix valde*, = πάνν μόγυς (Lupton), 'with great difficulty'.

a great forest. So Syr., Ethiop.; the Lat. confused ὕλη, 'forest' and φυλή, 'tribe' (*de tribu multa*).

ix. 23-5. The Seer is bidden to go for seven days into a field, and to eat nothing but the flowers of the field; he is to pray continually; after that the angel will come to talk to him again.

23 Nevertheless if thou wilt cease yet seven days more, (howbeit thou shalt not fast in them, 24 but shalt go into a field of flowers, where no house is builded, and eat only of the flowers of the field; and thou shalt taste no flesh, and shalt drink no wine, but *shalt eat flowers only*;) 25 and pray unto the Most High continually, then will I come and talk with thee.

24. *where no house is builded.* i.e. where no house has ever been built, cp. x. 51, 53.

but . . . flowers only. But in verse 26, 'and did eat the herbs of the field'; Ethiop. has here, 'the fruit of the field'.

25. *continually.* Syr. 'earnestly'.

THE FOURTH VISION: ix. 26—x. 59

The Seer goes, as commanded, to the field called Ardat. He then addresses the Most High, recalling the divine mercies of the past, especially the giving of the Law which was intended to be the glory of God's chosen people. But Israel would not observe it. Nevertheless, the Law could not perish, being of God, though they who had received it perished because of sin.

There follows then a Vision: the Seer sees a woman in deep mourning because of the loss of her only son; for thirty years she had prayed for a child, in vain; then her prayer was heard. Her son grew up, and in course of time he took a wife; but as he entered into the marriage-chamber he fell down and died. It was to tell her sad story to the Seer that she came to the field where he was abiding.

But the Seer reproaches the woman for her mourning; is it right, he asks her, that she should mourn when all are mourning for Sion, the mother of all, who is full of sorrow? The woman has lost but one son, whereas Sion has lost a great multitude. The Seer therefore tells her to bear her sorrow with good courage; but she will not be comforted, and desires to die. Then the Seer speaks further words of comfort, promising her that the Most High will be merciful to her and give her rest from her sorrow. And while the Seer speaks with the woman she becomes transfigured, and presently in place of the woman the Seer sees 'a city builded'. And in his fear he calls for the Archangel Uriel. To him Uriel comes, and the Seer beseeches him to explain the Vision he has seen. The explanation of the Vision then follows: The woman who is overwhelmed with grief is the heavenly Sion (x. 25); her son is the earthly Jerusalem; his death refers to the destruction of the city in A.D. 70 (x. 48). For further details see the notes.

Finally, the Seer is bidden to remain in the field, and is told that the Most High will reveal to him what will happen to those who dwell on the earth in the last days.

A careful examination of this allegorical Vision, with its interpretation, shows that there were various points in the former which are not explained in the latter, e.g. What is the interpretation of the special care in bringing up the son, and of the son dying on his marriage night? Or of the sudden extinguishing of the lights? Who are the neighbours who rejoice with the parents, and afterwards come to condole with the mother? What is the significance of the thirty years' unceasing prayer? What is the purpose of the woman coming into the field of Ardat after the second night of her son's death? And why does she pretend to be asleep in order to flee from her home while all the others are asleep? And why does she refuse to return to her home? And what is the interpretation of the wilful desire to die, and the means intended to be taken to ensure this? And finally, what is the interpretation of the promise to the mother that she will find her son alive again? In the interpretation

these points are not referred to, let alone any explanation of them. The reason of this, as Gunkel points out, is that we have here some popular story (cp. the story of Tobit), which has been utilized by the Seer, just because of its being well known, for the purpose of driving home the lessons he wished to teach; the details of the story which were of no use to him in his allegorical interpretation he simply left without further notice. The story has not been told in full, but that it ended happily may be gathered from x. 16, which evidently reflects the original story of how, when the mother at length returned home again, she found her son alive. The suggestion may be hazarded as to the possibility of this story having been originally based upon (but greatly elaborated) the narrative of Samuel and Hannah; some of the main *motifs* are very similar: a barren woman praying earnestly for a son; the prayer being finally answered; the loss of her son—in the case of Samuel, his being given to the Lord; his being found again—in the case of Samuel, his subsequent position of honour among his people. How a Biblical story was sometimes elaborated can be seen by this very story of Samuel as told in the *Biblical Antiquities of Philo*, a work belonging to the same time as our book (see M. R. James's English translation of this, pp. 214–18 [1917]).

ix. 26–8. The Seer goes to the field of Ardat and eats the herbs. After seven days he lies down upon the grass; and since his heart is troubled he speaks to the Most High.

26 So I went my way, like as he commanded me, into the field which is called ¹Ardat; and there I sat among the flowers, and did eat of the herbs of the field, and the meat of the same satisfied me. 27 And it came to pass after seven days that I lay upon the grass, and my heart was vexed again, like as before: 28 and my mouth was opened, and I began to speak before the Most High, and said,

¹ The Syriac and Æthiopic have *Arphad*.

26. *the field which is called Ardat*. The spelling of this name varies considerably in the Versions; its meaning is quite uncertain. The Armen. has *Ardab* (ԱՐԴԱԲ), which Gunkel says is an oriental corn-measure and may quite conceivably be the name of a field. It is possibly some secret word, perhaps an acrostic, with some eschatological significance; in any case, the field itself must be regarded as symbolical.

ix. 29–37. The Seer recalls the divine mercies of the past, which culminated in the giving of the Law. But through sin those who received the Law perished; the Law itself, however, could not perish. Three analogies are then put forth: the ground receives seed, the seed disappears, but the ground endures; the sea receives ships, the ships

ultimately perish, but the sea is still there; a vessel receives matter for food or drink; these are consumed, but the vessel remains intact. Similarly, the Law was intended to bring forth fruit, but through the non-observance of the Law the fruit came to nought, so far as the people were concerned, and they who should have gathered the fruit perished, but the fruit itself could not perish, being of the Law; 'the Law perisheth not, but remaineth in its honour'. The analogy is not quite complete, but it answers its purpose, since the main point which the Seer desires to emphasize is that the Law is enduring.

29 O Lord, thou didst shew thyself among us, unto our fathers in the wilderness, when they went forth out of Egypt, and when they came into the wilderness, where no man treadeth and that beareth no fruit; 30 and thou didst say, Hear me, thou Israel; and mark my words, O seed of Jacob. 31 For, behold, I sowed my law in you, and it shall bring forth fruit in you, and ye shall be glorified in it for ever. 32 But our fathers, which received the law, kept it not, and observed not the statutes: and the fruit of the law did not perish, neither could it, for it was thine; 33 yet they that received it perished, because they kept not the thing that was sown in them. 34 And, lo, it is a custom, that when the ground hath received seed, or the sea a ship, or any vessel meat or drink, and when it cometh to pass that that which is sown, 35 or that which is launched, or the things which have been received, should come to an end, these come to an end, but the receptacles remain: yet with us it hath not happened so. 36 For we that have received the law shall perish by sin, and our heart also which received it. 37 Notwithstanding the law perisheth not, but remaineth in its honour.

36. *our heart also which received it.* Lat. *et cor nostrum quod suscepit eam, viz. legem*; but it was not by receiving the Law that they sinned; but by breaking the Law the heart conceived and brought forth sin (cp. Ps. vii. 14; Hebr. 15: 'Behold, he travaileth with iniquity; yea, he hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood'). According to the text as it stands the heart has received the Law and perishes, so that logically the Law perishes too, which is just what does not happen, as the next verse says. Gunkel renders: 'we that have received the Law must perish because of our sin, together with our heart, in which it (i.e. sin) was committed; but the Law does not perish . . .'; that expresses what must have been in the Seer's mind.

37. *remaineth in its honour.* Syr., Armen. 'abideth in its glory'; the Law, coming from God, is eternally glorified; cp. Rom. vii. 14.

ix. 38—x. 24. The Seer, in the middle of his meditation, suddenly becomes aware of the presence of a woman in deep sorrow close beside him. In reply to his inquiry as to the cause of her grief, the woman tells her sad story; how that, after thirty years of barrenness, she at last bore her husband a son, by the mercy of God. When her son reached a marriageable age she found him a wife; but after the marriage-feast, her son, on entering the bridal chamber, fell down dead. Unable to find solace, she fled from her home and came into the field where the Seer was meditating; here she was now determined to remain, mourning and fasting until released by death. The Seer upbraids her for her exaggerated grief, bidding her remember that her loss of one son is nothing compared with the loss of many sons which Sion is suffering, and for which all are sorrowing. He tells her to take courage, and that, if she bows to the will of God, she will see her son again; in the meantime she must go back to her husband. His words are of no avail; the woman determines to remain where she is, and to die. The Seer then makes a further appeal to her, reminding her of the desolate state of Jerusalem, the desecration of the sanctuary, and the captivity of the people; and, above all, he says, Sion has lost 'the seal of her honour'. He urges her, therefore, again to be comforted, and God will give her rest.

38 And when I spake these things in my heart, I looked about me with mine eyes, and upon the right side I saw a woman, and, behold, she mourned and wept with a loud voice, and was much grieved in mind, and her clothes were rent, and she had ashes upon her head. 39 Then let I my thoughts go wherein I was occupied, and turned me unto her, 40 and said unto her, Wherefore weepest thou? and why art thou grieved in thy mind?

41 And she said unto me, Let me alone, my lord, that I may bewail myself, and add unto my sorrow, for I am sore vexed in my mind, and brought very low.

42 And I said unto her, What aileth thee? tell me. 43 She said unto me, I thy servant was barren, and had no child, though I had a husband thirty years. 44 And every hour and every day these thirty years did I make my prayer to the Most High day and night. 45 And it came to pass after thirty years that God heard me thine handmaid, and looked upon my low estate, and considered my trouble, and gave me a son: and I rejoiced in him greatly, I and my husband, and all my ¹neighbours: and we gave great honour unto the Mighty. 46 And I nourished him with great travail. 47 So when he grew up, and I came to take him a wife, I made a feast day.

X. 1 And it so came to pass, that when my son was entered

¹ Lat. *townsmen*.

into his wedding chamber, he fell down, and died. 2 Then we all overthrew the lights, and all my ¹neighbours rose up to comfort me: and I remained quiet unto the second day at night. 3 And it came to pass, when they had all left off to comfort me, to the end I might be quiet, then rose I up by night, and fled, and came hither into this field, as thou seest. 4 And I do now purpose not to return into the city, but here to stay, and neither to eat nor drink, but continually to mourn and to fast until I die.

5 Then left I the meditations wherein I was, and answered her in anger, and said, 6 Thou foolish woman above all other, seest thou not our mourning, and what hath happened unto us? 7 how that Sion the mother of us all is full of sorrow, and much humbled. 8 ²It is right now to mourn very sore, seeing we all mourn, and to be sorrowful, seeing we are all in sorrow, but thou sorrowest for one son. 9 For ask the earth, and she shall tell thee, that it is she which ought to mourn for so many that grow upon her. 10 For out of her all had their beginnings, and others shall come; and, behold, they walk almost all into destruction, and the multitude of them is utterly rooted out. 11 Who then should make more mourning, ³she, that hath lost so great a multitude, or thou, which art grieved but for one? 12 But if thou sayest unto me, My lamentation is not like the earth's, for I have lost the fruit of my womb, which I brought forth with pains, and bare with sorrows: 13 but *it is with* the earth after the manner of the earth; the multitude present in it is gone, as it came: 14 then say I unto thee, Like as thou hast brought forth with sorrow; even so the earth also hath given her fruit, namely, man, ever since the beginning unto him that made her. 15 Now therefore keep thy sorrow to thyself, and bear with a good courage the adversities which have befallen thee. 16 For if thou shalt acknowledge the decree of God to be just, thou shalt both receive thy son in time, and shalt be praised among women. 17 Go thy way then into the city to thine husband.

18 And she said unto me, That will I not do: I will not go into the city, but here will I die.

19 So I proceeded to speak further unto her, and said, 20 Do not so, but suffer thyself to be prevailed on by reason of the

¹ Lat. *townsmen*.

² See the Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt.

³ So the Syriac.

adversities of Sion; and be comforted by reason of the sorrow of Jerusalem. 21 For thou seest that our sanctuary is laid waste, our altar broken down, our temple destroyed; 22 our psaltery is brought low, our song is put to silence, our rejoicing is at an end; the light of our candlestick is put out, the ark of our covenant is spoiled, our holy things are defiled, and the name that is called upon us is profaned; our freemen are despitefully treated, our priests are burnt, our Levites are gone into captivity, our virgins are defiled, and our wives ravished; our righteous men carried away, our little ones betrayed, our young men are brought into bondage, and our strong men are become weak; 23 and, what is more than all, the seal of Sion—for she hath now lost the seal of her honour, and is delivered into the hands of them that hate us. 24 Thou therefore shake off thy great heaviness, and put away from thee the multitude of sorrows, that the Mighty may be merciful unto thee again, and the Most High may give thee rest, even ease from thy travails.

38. *upon the right side.* Cp. iv. 47; Mark x. 37, 40, xvi. 5; Luke i. 11. The right-hand side is, in eschatological thought, the place of joy, see Matth. xxv. 33, 34; it is also the side which brings good fortune; cp. John xxi. 6. See also Ezek. iv. 4-6.

44. *day and night.* Lat. *nocte ac die*, as one would expect; according to the Hebrew division of the twenty-four hours night comes first, cp. Gen. i. 5, &c., 'and there was evening and there was morning, one day'.

47. *I came to take him a wife.* It is, no doubt, due to the requirements of the Vision that the mother is represented as procuring a wife for her son; ordinary Jewish usage of all ages, so far as we know, required the father to fulfil this duty; it is taken for granted in the Talmud (e.g. *Kiddushin* 41 a, 'A man must not betroth his daughter while she is a minor'). Gen. xxi. 21 deals with different conditions altogether.

I made a feast day. One of the most important parts of a marriage was the wedding feast; the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, went to the house of the bride's father to bring her home; the marriage procession was then formed (cp. Judg. xiv. 1, I Macc. ix. 39, Matth. xxv. 1 ff.); the feast was held in the house of the bridegroom or of his father, as the case might be (Gen. xxix. 22; Tob. viii. 20, 21).

X. 1. *entered into his wedding chamber . . . died.* Cp. Tob. vii. 11, viii. 1. The marriage-chamber was called the 'Chuppah'; Abrahams says that 'in the East the association of the actual cohabitation (*chuppah*) with the marriage ceremony long continued, but in Europe

by the fourteenth century the *chuppah* had become a mere religious emblem' (*Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 200 [1896]).

2. *we all overthrew the lights*. Syr. 'I overthrew . . .' Weddings always took place at night. Whether the lights at the marriage-feast were the same as those carried during the marriage-procession (Matth. xxv. 7 ff.) is questionable.

my neighbours . . . to comfort me. Cp. Mark vi. 38; similarly at a time of rejoicing the neighbours assembled, Luke xv. 6, 9.

I remained quiet. This is intended to express the depth of her grief; ordinarily there was loud weeping and lamentation.

3. *to the end I might be quiet*. After it has just been said 'I remained quiet . . .', this hardly gives sense; Syr., on the other hand, has ' . . . when they all slept, believing that I was also asleep, then rose I . . .'

4. *until I die*. The story of the disconsolate woman ends here, excepting that in verse 10 a happy ending to what the original story may have been is reflected (see, further, the introduction to this section).

5. *the meditations wherein I was*. Lat. *sermones in quibus adhuc eram*, so Armen., but Syr., Ethiop. 'the thoughts with which I had been occupied'. These words evidently do not belong here, they have already occurred in their proper place, ix. 39.

7. *Sion the mother of us all*. Cp. Gal. iv. 26, 'Jerusalem . . . which is our mother'.

is full of sorrow, and much humbled. The other Versions suggest that the text here was originally fuller; on the basis of them Gunkel renders: 'in deep grief, in dire affliction, in bitter mourning'.

9. *ask the earth . . .* Just as the earth, from whom such multitudes have come, and who must mourn them all, or almost all, for they have perished, so has Sion lost the great mass of her children, for whom she, too, must mourn.

12, 13. The argument put forth is not much to the point, and the answer given in verse 14 is difficult to understand; where is the parallel of the earth bringing forth man and a woman giving birth? The earth brings forth fruits, not men.

14. *Like as thou hast . . .* Although not actually expressed, it is implied that the earth also 'brought forth with sorrow', i.e. with pangs. It can hardly be supposed that the Seer had something in his mind similar to Rom. viii. 19-22; possibly some ancient myth may lie at the back of the idea.

16. *if thou shalt acknowledge . . .* Gunkel refers to *Pss. of Sol.* viii. 7: 'I thought upon the judgements of God since the creation of heaven and earth; I held God righteous in His judgements which have been from of old.'

thou shalt both receive thy son . . . This reads strangely after verse 1, where it is said that the son had died; the reference cannot be to

receiving him again in the world to come, as the next sentence shows; nor is there any hint of his being raised from the dead; it is evident that we have here an echo of the folk-tale which has been utilized.

and shalt be praised among women. This can only be in reference to the birth of a son, and cannot therefore refer to the son that had died. This is further evidence of the loose way in which the folk-tale has been dealt with; see, further, the introduction to this section.

17. . . . *to thine husband.* Hitherto the husband has received the scantiest attention, he is only incidentally mentioned in ix. 43; in the original story he must have played a more important part.

20. *Do not so.* Lat. *noli facere sermonem hunc*; Syr. more forcibly: 'No woman! no woman! do not do this thing' (lit. 'this word', in reference to her utterance).

21. *our sanctuary.* Lat., owing to misunderstanding of the original, has *sanctificatio nostra*. Syr. has the plural both here and in the next sentence, 'altars'.

22. *our psaltery is brought low.* Lat. *psalterium nostrum humiliatum est*; Syr. 'our worship (liturgy) is done away with'. The word 'psaltery' is equivalent to the Hebrew *nebel* 'harp', used in the worship.

the light of our candlestick is put out. The reference is to the *menórah*, the seven-branched candlestick, the central lamp of which was the *nēr tamíd*, the 'continual lamp' (see Exod. xxv. 32, xxvii. 20; Lev. xxiv, and often elsewhere). The *menórah* with its perpetual light stood in front of the Ark of the Covenant. The putting-out of this light meant the end of the Temple services. When, after the desecration of the Temple, Judas Maccabaeus rededicated it, special mention is made also of the relighting of the lamps: '. . . and they lighted the lamps that were upon the candlestick, and they gave light in the temple' (I Macc. iv. 50). After the destruction of the Temple, when its place was taken by the Synagogue, the *menórah* with its lamps was represented by a single light, also called the *nēr tamíd*, suspended from the ceiling, in front of the 'holy ark', which contained the rolls of the Law. To this day, when a synagogue is dedicated, the two chief ceremonies are the lighting of the *nēr tamíd* and the placing of the rolls of the Law in the Ark.

the ark of our covenant is spoiled. After the destruction of Solomon's Temple the Ark of the Covenant is no more heard of; no mention is made of it in I Macc. iv. 47-51, where the renovation of the furniture of the Temple is detailed. In the later Temples there was nothing corresponding to the Ark of the Covenant (cp. Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* i. 152). In the passage before us, therefore, the Seer purports to be living in Exile.

our holy things . . . These are enumerated in I Macc. iv. 47-51. In *Pss. of Sol.* ii. 3 it is said: 'They defiled the holy things of the Lord', in reference to the furniture of the Temple.

freemen. Lat. *liberi nostri*; but the other Versions have 'nobles'.

As Box points out, however, the Hebrew *chor* (pl.), a late word, common in *Nehemiah*, and there used of the magistrates and chief officials of the city (cp. Neh. ii. 16, &c.), is from a root meaning 'to be free'.

our priests are burnt. Josephus, in describing the burning of the Temple, tells of how the priests 'retired to the wall, that was eight cubits broad, and there they tarried; yet two men of eminence among them . . . threw themselves into the fire, and were burnt . . .' (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 279, 280).

With this verse should be compared I Macc. ii. 7-13, though the reference is not, of course, to the same episode.

23. *the seal of Sion . . . of them that hate us.* The seal or signet-ring symbolized the royal authority (cp. Esther iii. 10, viii. 2, I Macc. vi. 15), though the symbol of this was not confined to the ring; it may therefore be the symbol of Sion's independence which had now been lost. But Box suggests an interesting alternative; his words are well worth quoting: 'The recognized means of expressing sovereign freedom and national independence was by the issue of a national coinage. And this was actually done in A.D. 66-70 in Jerusalem. The national coinage was the emblem and, as it were, the sealed product (*σφραγίς* means both the *seal* and the *impression of the seal*) of national freedom. After the *débâcle* in A.D. 70 this was suppressed, and Roman coins were struck containing emblems of the Jewish defeat, and inscribed *Judaea devicta*, &c.; and, worst of all, the willing tribute, in the form of the Temple tax, which had flowed into Jerusalem from all parts of the Jewish Dispersion, for the maintenance of the Temple worship, was diverted by Vespasian, and devoted to the purposes of heathen worship. Is it not possible that our text contains a covert allusion to these painful evidences of lost national freedom and independence?' This idea strikes one as being as interesting as it is suggestive.

x. 25-8. The Seer, while thus speaking to the woman in deep grief, suddenly sees her face transfigured, and he becomes sore afraid. Then the woman utters a great cry, the earth quakes at the sound thereof, and on looking again the Seer beholds her no more, but instead 'a city builded'. In great fear again the Seer calls upon the Archangel Uriel; in entire misunderstanding of the Vision he has seen, the Seer thinks that the prayer he had offered (ix. 29 ff.) had been ignored; that prayer was that he might learn something concerning Israel's future glory; but now he is simply in perplexity and fear caused by the Vision; he does not realize that the Vision is in truth the answer to his prayer; the transfigured woman is, in reality, the heavenly Jerusalem, Israel's glory. The sequel explains this to him.

25 And it came to pass, while I was talking with her, behold, her face upon a sudden shined exceedingly, and her countenance glistened like lightning, so that I was sore afraid ¹of her, and

¹ The Syriac has *to draw near unto her, and my heart was greatly astonished, and when I mused &c.*

mused what this might be; 26 and, behold, suddenly she made a great cry very fearful; so that the earth shook at the noise. 27 And I looked, and, behold, the woman appeared unto me no more, but there was a city builded, and a place shewed itself from large foundations: then was I afraid, and cried with a loud voice, and said, 28 Where is Uriel the angel, who came unto me at the first? for he hath caused me to fall into this great trance, and mine end is turned into corruption, and my prayer to rebuke.

25. *her face upon a sudden shined exceedingly.* The bright shining dazzles the Seer so that he cannot see the metamorphosis.

and her countenance glistened like lightning. Lat. *et species coruscus fiebat vultus ejus.* 'her face (or appearance) became a flashing sight'; Syr. 'and the appearance of her face became like the appearance of lightning'. Cp. Rev. xii. 1: 'And a great sign was seen in heaven; a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.'

26. *and, behold, suddenly . . . fearful.* Syr. 'she cried out suddenly with a loud and fearful cry'. The division of the sentences in Syr. makes smoother reading.

27. *a city builded . . . foundations.* Cp. the elaborated account of the heavenly Jerusalem and its foundations in Rev. xxi. 9-21.

28. . . *who came to me at the first?* See iv. 1.

mine end is turned into corruption. Violet pointedly suggests that 'mine end', which is read by all the Versions, is due to a corruption (or a misreading) of the Hebrew text, which had originally 'my prayer'; the similarity of the two words is very close. This is highly probable, since the Seer had prayed that the revelation of Israel's future glory might be vouchsafed to him (ix. 29-37, esp. 31, 37); but his non-realization of the meaning of this Vision induces him to feel that his prayer has not been heard; the words 'is turned into corruption' are better rendered by Syr., 'has come to nothing'.

my prayer to rebuke. Syr. 'my request to shame', i.e. disappointment.

x. 29-59. The Archangel Uriel comes at the Seer's call, and finds the latter in a swoon. He is raised up by the heavenly visitor and is asked as to the cause of his disquietude. The Seer replies that it is because he cannot understand the meaning of the Vision he has seen, and begs to have it explained. There follows the interpretation of the Vision. The woman is Sion, the 'city builded', i.e. the heavenly Sion. The thirty years of barrenness represent the three thousand years since the creation of the world, during which there was no offering of sacrifices in her. After that time Solomon built the Temple; then Sion bore

a son, i.e. the earthly Jerusalem; the death of the son was the destruction of Jerusalem. Here the interpretation of the Vision breaks off, and nothing is said as to what was meant by the restoration of the son to his mother. The Archangel concludes by telling the Seer that the Most High has thus rewarded him for his piety by answering his prayer and revealing to him what is to be the future glory of Israel. He is bidden to contemplate the glorious city, which is thus represented as being still visible to him. Finally, the Seer is told that in the following night further visions will be vouchsafed to him.

29 And as I was speaking these words, behold, the angel who had come unto me at the first came unto me, and he looked upon me: 30 and, lo, I lay as one that had been dead, and mine understanding was taken from me; and he took me by the right hand, and comforted me, and set me upon my feet, and said unto me, 31 What aileth thee? and why art thou so disquieted? and why is thine understanding troubled, and the thoughts of thine heart? 32 And I said, Because thou hast forsaken me: yet I did according to thy words, and went into the field, and, lo, I have seen, and yet see, that which I am not able to express. 33 And he said unto me, Stand up like a man, and I will advise thee. 34 Then said I, Speak on, my Lord; only forsake me not, lest I die frustrate of my hope. 35 For I have seen that I knew not, and hear that I do not know. 36 Or is my sense deceived, or my soul in a dream? 37 Now therefore I beseech thee to shew thy servant concerning this trance.

38 And he answered me, and said, Hear me, and I shall inform thee, and tell thee concerning the things whereof thou art afraid: for the Most High hath revealed many secret things unto thee. 39 He hath seen that thy way is right: for that thou sorrowest continually for thy people, and makest great lamentation for Sion. 40 This therefore is the meaning of the vision. 41 The woman which appeared unto thee a little while ago, whom thou sawest mourning, and begannest to comfort her: 42 but now seest thou the likeness of the woman no more, but there appeared unto thee a city in building: 43 and whereas she told thee of the death of her son, this is the solution: 44 This woman, whom thou sawest, is ¹Sion, ¹whom thou now seest as a city builded; 45 and whereas she said unto thee, that she hath been thirty years barren, *it is*, because there were three ¹thousand

¹ So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin is incorrect.

years in the world wherein there was no offering as yet offered in her. 46 And it came to pass after three ¹thousand years that Solomon builded the city, and offered offerings: then it was that the barren bare a son. 47 And whereas she told thee that she nourished him with travail: that was the dwelling in Jerusalem. 48 And whereas she said unto thee, My son coming into his marriage chamber died, and that misfortune befell her: this was the destruction that came to Jerusalem. 49 And, behold, thou sawest her likeness, how she mourned for her son, and thou begannest to comfort her for what hath befallen her; ²these were the things to be opened unto thee. 50 For now the Most High, seeing that thou art grieved unfeignedly, and sufferest from thy whole heart for her, hath shewed thee the brightness of her glory, and the comeliness of her beauty: 51 and therefore I bade thee remain in the field where no house was builded: 52 for I knew that the Most High would shew this unto thee. 53 Therefore I commanded thee to come into the field, where no foundation of any building was. 54 For in the place wherein the city of the Most High was to be shewed, the work of no man's building could stand. 55 Therefore fear thou not, nor let thine heart be affrighted, but go thy way in, and see the beauty and greatness of the building, as much as thine eyes be able to see: 56 and then shalt thou hear as much as thine ears may comprehend. 57 For thou art blessed above many, and with the Most High art called by name, like as but few. 58 But to-morrow at night thou shalt remain here; 59 and so shall the Most High shew thee those visions in dreams, of what the Most High will do unto them that dwell upon earth in the last days. So I slept that night and another, like as he commanded me.

¹ So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin is incorrect.

² Omitted in the Oriental versions.

29. *the angel who . . . first.* The angel (i.e. archangel) 'whose name was Uriel', iv. 1.

30. *and, lo, I lay . . . dead.* Cp. Dan. viii. 18, x. 9; Rev. i. 17.

36. *Or is my sense deceived . . .* The Seer here undesignedly witnesses to the reality of the Vision he had seen; in the ecstatic state what is perceived and experienced is not mediated through the exercise of normal faculties. It is not as though his senses of seeing and hearing had been deceived, or that he had been dreaming; had that been the case there would be no cause for perplexity; but he

knows that it was a reality which he had experienced, and which he could not understand.

37. *concerning this trance.* Lat. *de excessu hoc*; Syr. 'concerning this fearful vision'.

38. *the things whereof thou art afraid.* What in the Vision had inspired the Seer with fear was the transfiguration of the woman (verse 25), and the sight of the 'city builded' (verse 27); but his main cause of fear was that his prayer and the expectation that the future glory of Israel would be revealed to him, would, as he believed, be disappointed.

hath revealed many secret things unto thee. Lat. *revelavit tibi mysteria multa*; Wellhausen regards *multus* as a Hebraism for *magnus*, so that we should read 'great' for 'many' (Gunkel); this is what one would expect, for it is the kind of revelations, rather than their number, which is spoken of in the text.

39. *He hath seen that thy way is right.* Lat. *Vidit enim rectam viam tuam*; Syr. 'for he hath seen thine uprightness'.

thou sorrowest . . . great lamentation. His deep sorrow for his people and for Zion are signs of a true and upright spirit.

42. *a city in building.* Lat. *civitas aedificari*; read, with all the Versions, 'a city builded'; cp. verse 44.

44. *Sion, whom thou now seest . . .* i.e. the heavenly Jerusalem.

45. *three thousand years.* So all the Versions, except Armen. which has 'many years'; but Lat. has 'three years'; this reading is adopted by Gunkel (following Wellhausen), who explains them as the three years of Solomon prior to the building of the Temple (I Kings vi. 1), and takes them to represent mystically three world-years, i.e. 3,000 years from the Creation of the world to the building of the Temple.

in her. i.e. in Zion.

48. *My son.* i.e. the earthly Jerusalem; we should expect Jerusalem to be represented as a daughter; but it is represented as a son because of the adaptation of the folk-tale, in which the child of the disconsolate mother is a son.

50. *hath shewed thee . . .* Because of the sanctified sorrow of the Seer he is rewarded by the sight of the heavenly Jerusalem. Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* iv. 3, 4. For the new Jerusalem see *Enoch* xc. 28, 29; *Apoc. Bar.* xxxii. 2-4; *Hebr.* xii. 22; *Rev.* iii. 12, xxi. 2, 10.

55, 56. *as much as thine eyes . . . as much as thine ears . . .* On these words Gunkel well remarks: 'The prophet had therefore seen and heard much which he does not impart. This is a *trait* which clearly shows that we have here to do with a real experience; the vision finally becomes so glorious, so transcendent, that the Seer ceases from all further attempt at describing it (cp. the ἄρρητα ῥήματα, which St. Paul heard during his ecstatic trance, II Cor. xii. 4).' Cp. also I Cor. ii. 9. Gunkel quotes Uhland's

beautiful words from *Die verlorene Kirche* (they would be spoilt in translation):

'Was ich für Herrlichkeit geschaut
Mit still anbetendem Erstaunen,
Was ich gehört für sel'gen Laut,
Als Orgel mehr und als Posaunen:
Das steht nicht in der Worte Macht.'

57. *art called by name.* Cp. Isa. xlv. 3, 4.

58. *But to-morrow at night.* Lat. *Nocte autem quae in crastinum futura est*, i.e. the night which shall be after to-morrow, showing that the present Vision took place during the day-time. In most cases it would seem that such visions were experienced in the night, as, e.g. the Zechariah night-visions (see Dan. ii. 19, Zech. i. 8).

59. *visions in dreams.* Lat. *visiones somniorum*. It is clear that the Apocalyptists, and no doubt, too, the prophets of old, experienced more than one type of vision. In the apocalyptic literature there is, it is true, an implied contrast between the Apocalyptists, as the recipients of divine messages, and the prophets of old. The Apocalyptists, though in some real respects prophets among the people, recognize that they stand on a lower level than the prophets of ancient times; and therefore they do not claim the authority implied in the phrase: 'This saith the Lord'. It is not easy to see how they explained to themselves the difference; probably they never attempted to do so; but it is certain that they did not arrogate to themselves equality with the prophets. They did, none the less, believe themselves to be special instruments of God, recipients of divine messages concerning the future, like the prophets. Of the ways whereby these messages were believed to be received there is, in the first place, the ordinary dream, e.g. in xi. 1, during natural sleep; the dream may have been prompted by previous meditation (cp. iii. 2 ff.); that an ordinary dream was sometimes, on account of its vividness, believed to have been a vision, i.e. a supernatural representation, may be gathered from such a passage, e.g., as *Enoch* lxxxiii. 6, 7: 'And my grandfather Mahalalel waked me as I lay near him, and said unto me, "Why dost thou cry so, my son, and why dost thou make such lamentation?" And I recounted to him the vision which I had seen.' Another way was by means of a trance, deliberately induced by fasting; this is the case in our present apocalypse (e.g. vi. 31, cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xii. 5); it is well known that rigid fasting has an extraordinary effect in stimulating mental vision. The messages claimed to have been received are often represented in a mysterious pictorial form which necessitates an interpretation. It is probable that in most cases the accounts of visions which we have in the apocalyptic literature are, at any rate in part, the results and formulated expressions of concentrated thought. It must be remembered that contemplativeness and a vivid imagination are especially character-

istic of the oriental mind. Deep and sustained pondering, aided by great imaginative powers, develops the faculty of creating mental visions ; and by the Apocalyptists, earnest and pious men, with their conviction that they were chosen vessels, these mental visions were regarded as divine messages. There is, therefore, some justification for believing that the procedure in the formulation of these apocalyptic visions was somewhat after this manner: First, concentrated thought and deep pondering upon the problems of life, the final solution of which would be seen when the approaching end of the present world-order came about. Then there would follow, naturally enough, mental pictures, the results of this concentrated contemplation. These mental pictures would, to some extent, be conjured up during full consciousness, and be based, in part, on traditional ideas ; being thus deeply impressed upon the mind, they would, as can easily be understood, be uppermost during the workings of the sub-conscious mind during sleep or trance ; this would, in part, but only in part, account for the bizarre *traits* in the details of the visions which often occur. Then there would be the final step of forming the necessarily confused mental pictures into a more or less coherent whole, and committing the result to writing, with the addition of explanations.

This may appear to be a somewhat prosaic and matter-of-fact way of accounting for the visions of the Apocalyptists, and to eliminate the supernatural element entirely ; but this is not intended ; the ways whereby the divine will is communicated to men are manifold ; and if the essence thereof is blurred because of human transmission that is nothing more than what is to be expected ; the Apocalyptists pondered on things divine ; and the human mind, with all its limitations, when expectant and opened to receive the divine word, never does so in vain ; therein lies the supernatural element.

PART III

THE EAGLE VISION

(*Chapters xi, xii*)

The Seer dreams, and in his dream he sees an eagle rising up from the sea. This eagle has twelve feathered wings and three heads. As it rises the winds blow upon it and clouds gather round it. Then, from its wings other wings grew, eight in number: as the sequel shows, they were smaller, and these were opposed to the twelve wings; but the other wings decreased in size. In the meantime the three heads, of which the middle one was the largest, were sleeping. The eagle then flew upwards and ruled over the earth with its inhabitants; and all men were subject to it. And as he watched the Seer saw the eagle rising upon its talons, and it began to speak to its twelve wings telling them not to watch all at the same time, but to do so in turn; but the heads, it said, were to wait till the end. The voice of the eagle came not from any of the three heads, but from the midst of its body. Further, the Seer sees a wing appearing on the right side, and it ruled over the earth; but this wing soon disappeared. Then another wing appeared and reigned for a long time, and this wing likewise disappeared, but not until a voice was heard telling it that none after it should reign for even half as long. Each wing in turn arose and ruled, and then disappeared. After this the smaller wings rose up to rule; some of these ruled and others did not; at last, there was nothing left on the eagle's body but its three heads and six little wings. Of these wings two were divided from the rest and remained under the head on the right-hand side, the other four remaining where they were. These four all attempted to rule; two did so, but quickly disappeared; and when the last two attempted to rule, the middle head, which was the greatest of the three heads, awoke, and, joining itself to the two other heads, devoured the last two wings. Then the middle head ruled the whole earth with much oppression; but suddenly it disappeared, while the two other heads ruled; then the head on the right side devoured that on the left. Thereupon the Seer hears a voice which bids him observe carefully what is now to come; and he sees a roaring lion approaching from a wood; it speaks with a man's voice and denounces the eagle for its tyrannous rule, declaring that destruction will soon overtake it. And while the lion was still speaking the eagle's head disappeared; then the remaining wings sought to reign, but they soon also disappeared. Finally, the whole body of the eagle was burned, and 'the earth was in great fear'.

Then the Seer awakes, exhausted by what he has gone through; and he prays that the interpretation of the vision may be vouchsafed to him. This is granted, and the interpretation follows: The eagle is the fourth

kingdom which appeared in vision to Daniel; this is a kingdom which will arise on earth and be of greater power than any that has hitherto existed. In this kingdom twelve successive kings will reign, the second of whom will reign longest; this is the meaning of the twelve wings. The voice which spoke from the centre of the eagle means that during the middle of the period of the existence of the kingdom great commotions will arise, and it will be gravely jeopardized; but it will not fall yet; indeed, it will, on the contrary, regain its original power. As to the eight smaller wings, this means that eight kings will reign in the kingdom whose rule will be of short duration; two of them will perish when the middle period of the kingdom will have come; four will be kept until the time when the end of the kingdom approaches; and two will be reserved for the end. The meaning of the three heads of the eagle is that when the time draws near for the end of the kingdom, the Most High will raise up three kings who will renew many things in the kingdom, and will greatly oppress the peoples. They are called the heads of the eagle because their wickedness will sum up and bring to a head all the evil of which the kingdom has been guilty. Of these three heads, the first, though he will die on his bed, will yet suffer torments; the two others will be devoured by the sword. The two wings which remained under the head on the right-hand side will rule for a short time after the disappearance of the head; their reigns will be feeble and troublous; these two will be reserved for the end. The Lion is the Messiah, kept by the Most High unto the end of days; he will be of the seed of David, and will punish the evil-doers, but the others he will make joyful until the coming of the end.

The Seer is then told to write in a book all that he has seen in order that he may instruct those who are wise and who will keep the secrets imparted to them.

It is then told how the people, who had been expecting the return of Ezra after seven days, grew impatient, and came to him and besought him not to leave them. Ezra comforts them by assuring them that he will not forsake them; he promises to return to them after certain days, but for the present he must remain where he is. The people then return home.

xi. 1—xii. 3^a. The Vision.

XI. 1 And it came to pass the second night that I saw a dream, and, behold, there came up from the sea an eagle, which had twelve feathered wings, and three heads. **2** And I saw, and, behold, she spread her wings over all the earth, and all the winds of heaven blew on her, ¹and the clouds were gathered together against her. **3** And I beheld, and out of her wings there grew

¹ So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin has only *and were gathered together*.

other wings over against them ; and they became little wings and small. 4 But her heads were at rest : the head in the midst was greater than the other heads, yet rested it with them. 5 Moreover I beheld, and, lo, the eagle flew with her wings, to reign over the earth, and over them that dwell therein. 6 And I beheld how that all things under heaven were subject unto her, and no man spake against her, no, not one creature upon earth. 7 And I beheld, and, lo, the eagle rose upon her talons, and uttered her voice to her wings, saying, 8 Watch not all at once : sleep every one in his own place, and watch by course : 9 but let the heads be preserved for the last. 10 And I beheld, and, lo, the voice went not out of her heads, but from the midst of her body. 11 And I numbered ¹her wings that were over against the other, and, behold, there were eight of them. 12 And I beheld, and, lo, on the right side there arose one wing, and reigned over all the earth ; 13 and so it was, that when it reigned, the end of it came, and it appeared not, so that the place thereof appeared no more : and the next following rose up, and reigned, and it bare rule a great time ; 14 and it happened, that when it reigned, the end of it came also, so that it appeared no more, like as the first. 15 And, lo, there came a voice unto it, and said, 16 Hear thou that hast borne rule over the earth all this time : this I proclaim unto thee, before thou shalt appear no more, 17 There shall none after thee attain unto thy time, neither unto the half thereof. 18 Then arose the third, and had the rule as the others before, and it also appeared no more. 19 So went it with all the wings one after another, as that every one bare rule, and then appeared no more. 20 And I beheld, and, lo, in process of time the ²wings that followed were set up upon the ³right side, that they might rule also ; and some of them ruled, but within a while they appeared no more : 21 some also of them were set up, but ruled not. 22 After this I beheld, and, lo, the twelve wings appeared no more, nor two of the little wings : 23 and there was no more left upon the eagle's body, but the three heads that rested, and six little wings. 24 And I beheld, and, lo, two little wings divided themselves from the six, and remained under the head that was upon the right side : but four remained in their

¹ The Syriac has *her little wings, and, &c.*

² The Syriac has *little wings.*

³ The Æthiopic has *left.*

place. 25 And I beheld, and, lo, these ¹under wings thought to set up themselves, and to have the rule. 26 And I beheld, and, lo, there was one set up, but within a while it appeared no more. 27 A second also, and it was sooner away than the first. 28 And I beheld, and, lo, the two that remained thought also in themselves to reign: 29 and while they so thought, behold, there awaked one of the heads that were at rest, *namely, it* that was in the midst; for that was greater than the two *other* heads. 30 And I beheld how that it joined the two *other* heads with it. 31 And, behold, the head was turned with them that were with it, and did eat up the two ¹under wings that thought to have reigned. 32 But this head held the whole earth in possession, and bare rule over those that dwell therein with much oppression; and it had the governance of the world more than all the wings that had been. 33 And after this I beheld, and, lo, the head also that was in the midst suddenly appeared no more, like as the wings. 34 But there remained the two heads, which also in like sort reigned over the earth, and over those that dwell therein. 35 And I beheld, and, lo, the head upon the right side devoured it that was upon the left side.

36 Then I heard a voice, which said unto me, Look before thee, and consider the thing that thou seest. 37 And I beheld, and, lo, as it were a lion roused out of the wood roaring: and I heard how that he sent out a man's voice unto the eagle, and spake, saying, 38 Hear thou, I will talk with thee, and the Most High shall say unto thee, 39 Art not thou it that remainest of the four beasts, whom I made to reign in my world, that the end of my times might come through them? 40 And the fourth came, and overcame all the beasts that were past, and held the world in governance with great trembling, and the whole compass of the earth with grievous oppression; and so long time dwelt he upon the earth with deceit. 41 And thou hast judged the earth, but not with truth. 42 For thou hast afflicted the meek, thou hast hurt the peaceable, thou hast hated them that speak truth, thou hast loved liars, and destroyed the dwellings of them that brought forth fruit, and hast cast down the walls of such as did thee no harm. 43 Therefore is thy insolent dealing come up unto the Most High, and thy pride unto the Mighty. 44 The

¹ The Syriac has *little wings*.

Most High also hath looked upon his times, and, behold, they are ended, and his ages are fulfilled. 45 And therefore appear no more, thou eagle, nor thy horrible wings, nor thy evil little wings, nor thy cruel heads, nor thy hurtful talons, nor all thy vain body: 46 that all the earth may be refreshed, and be eased, being delivered from thy violence, and that she may hope for the judgement and mercy of him that made her.

XII. 1 And it came to pass, whiles the lion spake these words unto the eagle, I beheld, 2 and, lo, the head that remained appeared no more, and ¹the two wings which went over unto it arose and set themselves up to reign, and their kingdom was small, and full of uproar. 3 And I beheld, and, lo, they appeared no more, and the whole body of the eagle was burnt, so that the earth was in great fear:

¹ So the chief Oriental versions.

XI. 1. *I saw a dream.* The phrase suggests seeing in an ecstatic state, which is doubtless what is meant; cp. Isa. i. 1, Zech. i. 8, Dan. vii. 2, *Apoc. Bar.* xxxvi. 1, *Enoch* lxxxiii. 2, lxxxvi. 1.

from the sea. Cp. Dan. vii. 3; it is doubtless true, as Box says, that for the Orientals the Roman Empire came up from the sea; but while the eagle here symbolizes the Roman Empire and has nothing to do with the primeval monster, often identified with the sea (cp., e.g., Ps. lxxiv. 13), yet the sea is sometimes identified with the evil principle, see Rev. xxi. 1, where the new heaven and the new earth are spoken of in which there can be no evil, and therefore it is said 'the sea is no more'; see *Assumpt. of Moses* x. 6: 'And the sea shall fall even to the abyss', and cp. Isa. xxvii. 1, *Enoch* lx. 7. So that the Seer appropriately represents the symbol of the wicked Roman Empire as issuing from the sea personified as wickedness.

an eagle. Symbol of the Roman Empire whose military emblem was an eagle, cp. xii. 10, 11; similarly in Dan. vii. 3, 4, the first beast which came up from the sea 'was like a lion, and had eagle's wings', a symbol of Babylon (cp. Ezek. xvii. 3; Jer. xlvi. 40, xlv. 22). In Rev. xiii. 1 the 'beast coming out of the sea' symbolizes, as here, the Roman Empire.

twelve feathered wings, and three heads. Cp. Dan. vii. 6, where the beast has four wings and four heads. The three heads here symbolize Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian; see Box's valuable excursus on the whole subject, pp. 261-6 of his Commentary. It is only the Lat. that has 'twelve wings', all the other Versions have simply 'wings'. Dan. x-xii seems also to enumerate twelve kings (Gunkel).

2. *spread her wings over . . .* i.e. asserted her dominion; cp. verses 5, 6.

all the winds of heaven blew on her. Cp. Dan. vii. 2, '... and, behold, the four winds of heaven brake forth upon the great sea'; cp. also Zech. ii. 6, vi. 5; *Enoch* xviii. 2.

3. *other wings over against them.* i.e. 'anti-wings', symbolizing military provincial governors who revolted against the emperor; $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\upsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma = \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\varsigma$, $\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\upsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma = \acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\upsilon\varsigma$ (Gunkel).

and they became little . . . i.e. they were subdued.

4. *were at rest.* i.e. they were not troubled by 'anti-wings'.

7. *uttered her voice.* Lat. *misit vocem*, a Hebraism; cp. Prov. i. 20, Jer. x. 13, xxv. 30, and elsewhere.

8. *Watch not . . .* This must mean that the rulers are not to reign all at once, but each in turn; they are to watch (rule) 'by course' (per tempus= $\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\kappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu$). It is obvious that they could not all reign at once; but this is an account of a vision; see, however, the Add. Note at the end of this chapter.

sleep. This, again, is not meant literally, it is the symbolic language of the vision.

9. *but let the heads be preserved . . .* i.e. they are to await their appointed time for ruling.

10. *the voice . . . from the midst of her body.* The eagle represents symbolically the Roman Empire which is describing the course of its history, so that obviously the heads, i.e. the rulers, could not utter this. Gfrörer thinks that the voice coming from the midst of the body points to the fact that every new emperor awaited with impatience the death of his predecessor.

11. *her wings.* But Syr. has 'her little wings', i.e. the 'anti-wings'.

12. *on the right side.* There is much force in Box's contention that these words look like an addition; if they formed an original part of the text one would expect 'a corresponding mention of the wings on the left side, and we should expect some comment upon the symbolical significance of right and left in the interpretation. But nothing of the kind occurs. Consequently we are justified in regarding the words here as an interpolation.' On the other hand, the left side is mentioned in verse 20, by Ethiop., which has clearly preserved the correct reading; and that there is no mention of this in the interpretation is not in itself significant since other points in the Vision are also without mention in the interpretation.

13. *the end of it came.* i.e. the ruler perished.

the place thereof . . . Cp. Ps. ciii. 16.

the next following. Lat. *sequens*; Syr. 'the second wing'.

19. *with all the wings.* i.e., presumably, those on the right-hand side.

20. *upon the right side.* Some Ethiop. MSS. have 'on the left side'; although all the other Versions, excepting the two Arabic Versions which omit the words altogether, have 'right', this must be a later gloss; 'left' is what is required.

24. On the difficult question as to which rulers reference is here made, see Add. Note.

25. *these under wings*. Lat. *hae subalares*; Syr. 'those four little wings'.

32. *and bare rule*. Syr. 'and humbled', i.e. oppressed.

35. As Gunkel points out, up to and including this verse, past history is dealt with; the verses which follow describe the future.

36. *Look before thee, and . . .* This special injunction is given because the most important part of the Vision is now to come. Syr. 'Look before thee, Esra.'

40. *And the fourth came . . .* Syr. better: 'But thou art come as the fourth, and hast overcome all . . . and hast held . . . and so long time hast dwelt.'

44. *they are ended, and his ages . . .* i.e. the predetermined times are fulfilled; this is in accordance with what is frequently taught in the apocalyptic literature that the entire course of world history has been predetermined by God. Cp. Gal. iv. 4.

45. *thy hurtful talons*. Probably the Roman armies are meant (Box); they are not referred to in the interpretation.

46. *that she may hope for . . .* i.e. the kingdom of God.

xii. 3^b-9. The Seer awakes from his dream-vision greatly agitated by the experience he has had, and physically prostrate. He prays for strength, and asks for an interpretation to be vouchsafed to him of the fearful vision he has seen.

Then awaked I by reason of great ecstasy of mind, and from great fear, and said unto my spirit, 4 Lo, this hast thou done unto me, in that thou searchest out the ways of the Most High. 5 Lo, I am yet weary in my mind, and very weak in my spirit; nor is there the least strength in me, for the great fear wherewith I was affrighted this night. 6 Therefore will I now beseech the Most High, that he will strengthen me unto the end. 7 And I said, O Lord that bearest rule, if I have found favour in thy sight, and if I am justified with thee above many others, and if my prayer indeed be come up before thy face; 8 strengthen me then, and shew me thy servant the interpretation and plain meaning of this fearful vision, that thou mayest perfectly comfort my soul. 9 For thou hast judged me worthy to shew me the end of time and the last times.

3. *and said unto my spirit*. An interesting indication of the Seer's conception of his personality.

5. *I am yet weary . . .* Cp. Dan. vii. 15. Note the distinction between mind, spirit, and body here; instead of 'mind', which Lat.

reads, the other Versions have 'soul'. Cp. I Thess. v. 23, 'and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire . . .'

6. *unto the end.* i.e. until he has heard the interpretation, which may inspire further trepidation.

7. *if I have found favour . . .* It is interesting to observe the logical sequence of the three steps of approach to God which are here presented; first, finding favour in the sight of God, i.e. divine grace, preceding human effort; then, justification in the sight of God, man being still a passive instrument; and, finally, the prayer offered to God, in which man takes an active part. The words 'if my prayer indeed be come up . . .' are believed by Gunkel to be in reference to vi. 32 ('For thy voice hath surely been heard before the Most High'); but this seems extremely improbable, if, as seems certain, this Eagle Vision is an entirely independent piece (see Intro.).

9. *to shew me the end . . .* This reference to the end of the present world order and the last times is, as Kabisch points out, inappropriate here; that subject has nothing to do with the theme of this Vision which deals solely with the downfall of the Roman Empire.

xii. 10-34. The Seer receives the interpretation of the Vision.

10 And he said unto me, This is the interpretation of this vision which thou sawest: 11 The eagle, whom thou sawest come up from the sea, is the fourth kingdom which appeared in vision to thy brother Daniel. 12 But it was not expounded unto him, as I now expound it unto thee or have expounded it. 13 Behold, the days come, that there shall rise up a kingdom upon earth, and it shall be feared above all the kingdoms that were before it. 14 In the same shall twelve kings reign, one after another: 15 whereof the second shall begin to reign, and shall have a longer time than *any* of the twelve. 16 This is the interpretation of the twelve wings, which thou sawest. 17 And whereas thou heardest a voice which spake, not going out from the heads, but from the midst of the body thereof, this is the interpretation: 18 That¹ after the time of that kingdom there shall arise no small contentions, and it shall stand in peril of falling: nevertheless it shall not then fall, but shall be restored again to its first estate. 19 And whereas thou sawest the eight under wings sticking to her wings, this is the interpretation: 20 That in it there shall arise eight kings, whose times shall be but small, and their years swift. 21 And two of them shall perish, when the middle time approacheth: four shall be kept for a while until the time of the

¹ The Oriental versions have *in the midst of*.

ending thereof shall approach: but two shall be kept unto the end. 22 And whereas thou sawest three heads resting, this is the interpretation: 23 In the last days thereof shall the Most High raise up three ¹kingdoms, and renew many things therein, and they shall bear rule over the earth, 24 and over those that dwell therein, with much oppression, above all those that were before them: therefore are they called the heads of the eagle. 25 For these are they that shall accomplish her wickedness, and that shall finish her last end. 26 And whereas thou sawest that the great head appeared no more, *it signifieth* that one of them shall die upon his bed, and yet with pain. 27 But for the two that remained, the sword shall devour them. 28 For the sword of the one shall devour him that was with him: but he also shall fall by the sword in the last days. 29 And whereas thou sawest two under wings passing ²over unto the head that is on the right side, 30 this is the interpretation: These are they, whom the Most High hath kept unto his end: this is the small kingdom and full of trouble, as thou sawest. 31 And the lion, whom thou sawest rising up out of the wood, and roaring, and speaking to the eagle, and rebuking her for her unrighteousness, and all her words which thou hast heard; 32 this is the anointed one, whom the Most High hath kept unto the end ³[of days, who shall spring up out of the seed of David, and he shall come and speak] unto them and reprove them for their wickedness and their unrighteousness, and shall ⁴heap up before them their contemptuous dealings. 33 For at the first he shall set them alive in his judgement, and when he hath reproved them, he shall destroy them. 34 For the rest of my people shall he deliver with mercy, those that have been preserved throughout my borders, and he shall make them joyful until the coming of the end, even the day of judgement, whereof I have spoken unto thee from the beginning.

¹ The Oriental versions have *kings*.

² So the Syriac. The Latin has *over the head*.

³ The words in brackets are added from the Syriac.

⁴ The Syriac has *set in order*.

11. *The eagle* . . . Cp. xi. 1. The eagle was, as we have seen, the military emblem of the Roman power.

the fourth kingdom which appeared . . . In Dan. vii. 7 the fourth beast symbolized the Greek Empire. In *Daniel* the four kingdoms are the Babylonian, the Median, the Persian, and the Greek or Mace-

donian (the Syriac Version of *Daniel* identifies the fourth kingdom with that of the Greeks, cp. *Sib. Orac.* iii. 388-400, where the Seleucidae or Greek rulers of Syria are identified, in veiled form, with the fourth kingdom; and cp. also Josephus, *Antiq.* x. 270-5; see Charles's Commentary on *Daniel*, pp. 166 ff. [1929]). In the passage before us, however, the eagle symbolizes the Roman Empire. This interpretation, which identified the Roman Empire with the fourth kingdom, is found in the New Testament (Luke xxi. 20, cp. Rev. xiii. 1 ff.), but it probably originated in the first century B.C.; for with the assertion of the power of Rome in the East this reinterpretation was inevitable. Probably from Pompey's time onward Rome came in certain circles in Palestine to be identified with the fourth kingdom, see *Psalms of Solomon* ii. 29, and (later) *Assumption of Moses* viii. ix (Charles, *op. cit.*, pp. 170 ff.). Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* xxxix. 5: 'And after these things a fourth kingdom will arise, whose power will be harsh and evil far beyond those which were before it . . .' In the 13^b Talmud, *Aboda Zara* 2^b, and in the Midrashic literature, Dan. vii. 23, 'The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth', is interpreted of Rome (*Jewish Encycl.* x. 394). In the passage before us, therefore, as we have seen, the eagle symbolizes the Roman Empire; and the Seer thus gives a different interpretation to the *Daniel* vision from that of the writer of that book.

12. *But it was not expounded unto him, as I . . .* i.e. he put a different interpretation on what is meant by the 'fourth kingdom' from that intended in the book of *Daniel*. The words may be, as Violet suggests, an ancient gloss.

13. *the days come, that . . .* The Seer is purported to be prophesying in Babylonia during the Exile.

14. *shall twelve kings reign.* Cp. xi. 1. See Additional Note at the end of this chapter.

15. *whereof the second . . . a longer time . . .* Cp. xi. 13^b-17; the first (xi. 3^a) is not mentioned here.

17. *a voice which spake, not going out . . .* Cp. xi. 10, but it is presumably the voice mentioned in xi. 15 that is meant.

18. *That after the time of . . .* Lat. *quoniam post tempus regni illius*; this is due to a misunderstanding, *quoniam* represents $\delta\tau\iota$ (=Hebr. $\text{וְ$) introducing direct narration, and should not be translated; and *post*, as Syr. shows, is due to a misreading ($\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ for $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\acute{\nu}$ 'between whiles'); we should, therefore, read with Syr., Armen., 'in the middle of the period of that kingdom'.

to its first estate. Lat. *in suum initium*; Armen., Arab. 'to its original power'; Lat. misunderstood the sense of $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\eta}$ here. There is nothing in the Vision itself corresponding to what is said in this verse.

19. *the eight under wings.* Cp. xi. 3, 11.

sticking to her wings. Lat. *coherentes alis ejus*. Syr. 'growing out of her wings', Armen. 'sprouting out around her great wings';

this last, though paraphrastic, is doubtless the meaning; cp. next verse and xi. 25.

20. *That.* See note on verse 18.

in it. i.e. within the Roman Empire.

there shall arise eight kings. Cp. xi. 11, 25.

21. *when the middle time approacheth.* i.e. the middle time of the kingdom.

the time of the ending thereof. i.e. of the ending of the kingdom.

two shall be kept unto the end. Cp. xi. 24.

unto the end. i.e. the end of the kingdom.

22. *three heads resting.* Cp. xi. 1, 23, 29.

23. *In the last days thereof.* i.e. of the kingdom.

three kingdoms. So Lat., but Syr. reads with all the other Versions 'three kings'.

and renew many things. Lat. *renovabit*, is a misunderstanding of the passage; the subject is not the Most High, but the three kings raised up by Him; these three kings will renew many things; we must therefore read *renovabunt*, following Syr., Ethiop., Armen.

therein. i.e. in the kingdom.

they shall bear rule over the earth. Cp. xi. 30-2.

24, 25. *therefore are they called the heads of . . .* There should be no full stop after eagle, the sentence runs on; the Revised Version rendering, 'they that accomplish' misses the word-play which Lat. has taken over from the Greek: *ipsi vocati sunt capita aquilae, isti enim erunt, qui recapitulabunt . . .* (αἱ κεφαλαί . . . οἱ ἀνακεφαλαιοῦν); the latter is certainly, as Gunkel says, an apocalyptic term; 'at the end of world-history everything evil that is now scattered and isolated, and similarly everything that is good, will be gathered together.'

and that shall finish her last end. i.e. shall consummate the final downfall of the Roman Empire.

26. *the great head appeared no more.* Cp. xi. 33.

it signifieth *that one of them . . .* Lat. *quoniam unus ex eis*; for *quoniam* see note on verse 18; obviously, there is something wrong with the text here, and the same applies to all the Versions: 'And whereas thou sawest the great head disappearing (*non apparescens*) one of them shall die upon his bed . . .'; in the original text there must have been some reference to the three heads (cp. xi. 29-35), especially as they are mentioned in the next verse.

28. *the sword of the one shall devour . . .* Cp. xi. 35; see Additional Note.

but he also shall fall . . . There is nothing corresponding to this in the Vision.

29. *whereas thou sawest two under wings.* Cp. xi. 28, 31, 33.

passing over unto the head. Lat. *treicientes* (*trajicientes*) *super caput . . .* but Syr. 'passing over unto the head'; cp. verse 2.

30. *unto his end.* i.e. unto its end, the eagle, or the Roman Empire. *this is the small kingdom . . .* Cp. verse 2; Lat. *hoc erat regnum exile, et turbationis plenum*; but Syr. 'their rule shall have an end and shall be full of confusion'.

as thou sawest. Cp. verse 3.

31. *And the lion . . .* Cp. xi. 37 ff.

and all her words. Lat. *et omnes sermones ejus*, as no words of the eagle are recorded, but only deeds, it is better to take the obvious Hebrew equivalent as meaning here 'deeds'. The Hebrew *dabar* usually means 'word'; but it occurs very often in the Old Testament in the sense of 'act' or 'work' or 'thing', e.g. Judg. xviii. 7, I Kings xi. 41, Jer. v. 28, &c.

32. *this is the anointed one.* Lat. *Hic est unctus*, i.e. the Messiah. *whom the Most High hath kept unto the end.* The reference here is to the transcendental Messiah who has existed before all time, cp. Dan. vii. 13, 14: 'and behold, there came one on [so the Sept. and Pesh. not 'with'] the clouds of heaven, one like unto the Son of man . . . and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom . . .'; in *Enoch* xlvi. 6 it is said: 'And for this reason hath he [i.e. the Son of Man] been chosen and hidden before Him, before the creation of the world and for evermore'; similarly in *Enoch* lxii. 7: 'For from the beginning the Son of Man was hidden, and the Most High preserved him in the presence of His might, and revealed him to the elect.'

[*of days . . . he shall come and speak.*] These words, from Syr., are wanting in Lat.; but this cannot have been what the original text read because the words after the brackets, 'unto them and reprove them . . .', presuppose some reference to the wicked in what preceded. Moreover, the bracketed words, 'who shall spring up out of the seed of David', are in reference to the earthly Messiah. It is most improbable that the transcendental Messiah and the earthly Messiah should be spoken of together in this way in a Jewish writing. In a Christian (or Christianized) book it is different because in the Church the doctrine of the Messiah had undergone a change; hence we can understand what is said in Rev. v. 5, 'behold, the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome . . .'; and in xxii. 16, 'I Jesus . . . I am the root and the offspring of David'; here the, originally Jewish, belief in a transcendental and an earthly Messiah coalesce through the Christian doctrine of the dual nature of Christ.

and their unrighteousness. Syr. inserts a verb here, no doubt rightly, 'and rebuke them for their unrighteousness'.

33. *For . . . set them alive . . . destroy them.* In the interpretation of the Vision in *Apoc. Bar.* xxxvi, given in xxxviii-xl, the following words occur (xl. 1, 2), they are strongly reminiscent of the passage before us: 'The last leader of that time will be left alive, when the multitude of his hosts will be put to the sword and be bound, and they

will take him up to Mount Sion, and My Messiah will convict him of all his impieties, and will gather and set before him all the works of his hosts. And afterwards he will put him to death, and protect the rest of my people which shall be found in the place which I have chosen.'

34. This verse deals with the earthly Messianic kingdom—'and he shall make them joyful until the coming of the end'—and agrees, therefore, with what is said about the earthly Messiah in verse 32, but not with what is said there about the heavenly Messiah.

that have been preserved . . . i.e. those who have survived the period of the Messianic woes which precede the advent of the Messiah, cp. v. 1-12, vi. 18-24; vii. 27.

xii. 35-9. The Seer is told to write in a book all that he has seen in his dream-vision, and to keep this secret; yet he may make known the things which he has seen to those who are able to understand them and who will keep them secret. He is then told to wait seven days more, when he will receive further revelations if the Most High so wills.

35 This is the dream that thou sawest, and this is the interpretation thereof: 36 and thou only hast been meet to know this secret of the Most High. 37 Therefore write all these things that thou hast seen in a book, and put them in a secret place: 38 and thou shalt teach them to the wise of thy people, whose hearts thou knowest are able to comprehend and keep these secrets. 39 But wait thou here thyself yet seven days more, that there may be shewed unto thee whatsoever it pleaseth the Most High to shew thee. And he departed from me.

35. *This is the dream that thou sawest* . . . See xi. 1.

36. *thou only hast been meet to know* . . . An illustration of the conviction among the Apocalyptists that they were chosen vessels of the Almighty, and that what they saw and heard were actual revelations and messages vouchsafed to them.

37. *Therefore write all these* . . . *in a book*. That the writing down of their dream experiences was the rule among the Apocalyptists is evident from the frequent mention of this; e.g. Dan. vii. 1, ' . . . then he wrote the dream'; *Enoch* xiv. 1, 'the book of the words of righteousness', and Enoch is called 'the scribe of righteousness' in xii. 4, xv. 1; cp. lxxxii. 1, ' . . . all these things I am recounting to thee and writing down for thee'; *Ascen. of Isa.* iv. 20, ' . . . according to my words which are written in the book . . .'; *Apoc. of Abrah.* i. 1, 'the book of the revelation of Abraham', similarly *Assumpt. of Moses* i. 1. *put them*. i.e. all the things he had seen.

in a secret place. On this Box well remarks: 'This representation is common in Apocalyptic literature. It partly serves to reflect the

originally esoteric character of the teaching which was treasured in Apocalyptic circles—'apocrypha' in its original connotation (*ἀπόκρυφος* = *esoteric, secret*), and carried with it no disparaging meaning—and partly serves to explain why, when the books were made known, their existence for so long a time previously had been unsuspected: cp. Dan. viii. 26 ("but thou, shut thou up the vision"), xii. 4 ("seal the book even to the time of the end"), ch. xii. 9 . . .'

38. . . . *to the wise of thy people.* The reference is to fellow-Apocalypticists, who could understand the many cryptic allusions, and who would keep the secrets until the time for them to be made known.

39. *yet seven days more.* Cp. v. 19, ix. 23.

xii. 40-51. The people, who are represented as having been waiting for the Seer (Esdras) during his seven days of withdrawal, now come to him in great grief thinking that he has forsaken them. He comforts them by telling them that he has not forsaken them, and promises to come to them if they will return to the city. The Seer then remains alone for seven days in the field.

See, further, the Additional Note at the end of this chapter.

40 And it came to pass, when all the people ¹saw that the seven days were past, and I not come again into the city, they gathered them all together, from the least unto the greatest, and came unto me, and spake to me, saying, 41 What have we offended thee? and what evil have we done against thee, that thou hast utterly forsaken us, and sittest in this place? 42 For of all the prophets thou only art left us, as a cluster of the vintage, and as a lamp in a dark place, and as a haven for a ship saved from the tempest. 43 Are not the evils which are come to us sufficient? 44 If thou shalt forsake us, how much better had it been for us, if we also had been consumed in the burning of Sion! 45 For we are not better than they that died there. And they wept with a loud voice. And I answered them, and said, 46 Be of good comfort, O Israel; and be not sorrowful, thou house of Jacob: 47 for the Most High hath you in remembrance, and the Mighty hath not forgotten you ²for ever. 48 As for me, I have not forsaken you, neither am I departed from you: but am come into this place, to pray for the desolation of Sion, and that I might seek mercy for the low estate of your sanctuary. 49 And now go your way every man to his own house, and after these days will I come unto you. 50 So the people went their way into the city, like as I said unto them: 51 but I sat in the

¹ So the Syriac. The Latin has *heard*.

² So the Syriac.

field seven days, as *the angel* commanded me; and in those days I did eat only of the flowers of the field, and had my meat of the herbs.

41. *What have we offended thee?* Lat. *Quid peccavimus tibi*. The *mise en scène* is the Babylonian Exile, and the people are represented as being unable to do without the leadership of their 'prophet'.

42. *of all the prophets thou only*. Ch. i. 1.

46. *O Israel . . . house of Jacob*. The two names occur together in ix. 30.

47. *for ever*. So Syr., Lat. has *in contentione*, misreading *εἰς αἰῶνα* as *εἰς ἀγῶνα* (Gunkel).

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE EAGLE VISION

That the 'interpretation' of the Vision given in xii. 10-34 does not correspond in all points with the details given in the Vision itself is clear as soon as one sets them side by side; and, in any case, the meaning of the 'interpretation' itself is not always clear. There are differences of opinion as to who are meant by the various rulers referred to, and to designate these with certainty in every case is perhaps not possible; for it may well have been that the author was not fully conversant with the details of Roman history, and that for this reason his presentation of what he believed to have been the facts may not be correct in all particulars. To go into the details of the various opinions put forward by scholars, and the arguments adduced in support, is not called for here; nor is this a vital matter; but the more generally accepted view may be set forth.

The *Eagle* clearly symbolizes the Roman Empire, and the purpose of the Vision is to depict the expansion and power of the Empire ('she spread her wings over the earth', xi. 2, 5), and its subsequent downfall. It is also generally agreed that the three heads represent the three Flavian emperors, Vespasian and his two sons, Titus and Domitian; the head in the midst, which was greater (xi. 4, 29), represents Vespasian, who rules first; Titus is the head on the left, and Domitian that on the right; the father thus stands in the centre, supported by his two sons. These three would, naturally enough, come under a special category, since they lived at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and took their part in this. In the text it is said that the middle head disappeared, and then awoke (xi. 29) and joined itself to the other two heads; the reference here, as Gfrörer points out, is to the time when Vespasian had been proclaimed emperor by his legions, and thereupon left Judaea, thus disappearing for a time from the scene. Titus then took over the chief command in Judaea, while Domitian sought to gain Rome for his father. So that the two sons were the active ones, and Vespasian seemed for the time being to have receded into the background. Then he awakes as ruler of the Empire. When it is said that the head that was in the midst

suddenly appeared no more (xi. 33) and that it shall 'die upon his bed, and yet with pain' (xii. 26), the reference is, again, to Vespasian who died of fever (Suetonius, *Vesp.* xxiv). Domitian, the head on the right side 'which devoured the head on the left', i.e. Titus (xi. 35), refers to the murder of the latter, as was rumoured, by his brother.¹ Finally, of Domitian it is said that 'he also shall fall by the sword in the last days' (xii. 28); this evidently means that he would be slain at the advent of the Messiah.² In the Vision these three heads are represented as, in a certain sense, reigning together (xii. 22-5); 'this would be a natural representation during the reign of Vespasian with whom Titus was associated as a colleague in the government of the empire, while the younger son, Domitian, was constantly in the public eye' (Box).

The *six wings on the right-hand side* represent Caesar, Augustus (xi. 17), Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. The Jews, like the Greeks, reckoned Julius Caesar as the first emperor. The state of affairs in the Empire on the death of Nero was such that the Jews may well have believed that the Roman Empire was breaking up (cp. xii. 18). One upstart rose up against another, and many rumours regarding claimants to the throne may have circulated in Judaea; so that even those who only attempted to gain the throne may have been regarded as rulers, cp. xi. 21, 'some also of them were set up, but ruled not' (. . . *sed non tenebant principatum*).

The *six wings on the left-hand side* (xi. 20, 21) represent Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vindex, Nymphidius, Piso. The last three, it is true, were never emperors, but to one who, like our author, was conversant with the general trend of events there was much in the doings of these three men which would have justified their being regarded as rulers; thus, Vindex headed a revolt in Gaul, and was certainly credited with the intention of seeking the higher power; Nymphidius, at one time commander of the imperial bodyguard under Nero, sought the throne before Galba arrived in Rome; and Piso Licinianus was nominated by Galba as co-ruler with himself; but he shared the fate of Galba and was made away with by the praetorians.

Box, following Wellhausen and others, believes that in the original form of the Vision these twelve wings represented the six Julian emperors from Caesar to Nero, reckoning the wings as pairs; he suggests that 'the reckoning by pairs in the original vision was intended only to apply to the twelve wings, and had a symbolical significance. The pairs served to emphasize the greater dignity and power of the real emperors as contrasted with the ephemeral rulers symbolized by the little wings. In order to exaggerate the contrast the latter were intended to be reckoned singly.' Looking at things from the point of view of the Jewish Seer,

¹ Suetonius, *Vita Domit.* ii says: *non cessavit (Domitianus) insidias struere fratri clam palamque, quoad correptum gravi valetudine, priusquam plane efflaret animam, pro mortuo deseri jussit.*

² The author of this Vision must therefore have written before the death of Domitian (A.D. 96).

we doubt the validity of this theory, although it is fully recognized that a certain difficulty arises in connexion with the *twelve* rulers; for, as pointed out above, there was some justification in reckoning the three last names mentioned as rulers; an apocalyptic writer would not, in any case, feel himself tied to exactitude in such matters; that is never characteristic of the Apocalyptists. The theory of pairs of wings is not accepted by Gfrörer, Gunkel, Schürer, or Kabisch; indeed, the last of these scholars criticizes it in his book (pp. 159-61), and shows that it is not tenable; it is certainly difficult to reconcile the idea of pairs of wings with the words of xii. 14, where it is said that twelve rulers shall reign one after another; see also xii. 20.

Lastly, we come to the *eight anti-wings*, or feathers. It is here that we meet with what is the most difficult part of the interpretation. One thing is, at any rate, clear, viz. that the reference must be to rulers of some kind who were subordinate to the supreme power; and the words of the text do not make it necessary to assume that they were in opposition to the central authority. Gfrörer rightly insists that a Jewish writer would naturally have in mind the local rulers in Palestine; some reference to these is the more to be expected in that otherwise we should have here a Jewish representation of current history, which contained nothing of direct interest to Jews; the object of the Vision is to show that the all-extending power of the world-empire is to be destroyed by the Messiah, whose advent is to be looked for in the near future, and this is to be followed by the deliverance of the Jewish people from the yoke of their oppressors: 'for the rest of my people shall he deliver with mercy, those that have been preserved throughout my borders, and he shall make them joyful until the coming of the end' (xii. 34), is one of the comments of his Vision made by the Seer. Is it likely that he would have nothing to say about those rulers with whom the Jews of Palestine were brought into immediate contact? These local rulers were appointed by and directly responsible to Rome, and the bitterness against the Roman power would necessarily be extended to those ruling in the land of the Jews. But there is something else; the writer of this Vision, as his conception of a transcendental Messiah shows, strongly opposed the party of the extremist Zealots with their fanatical belief in the coming of an earthly Messiah; the rift between those who believed in a heavenly Messiah, conquering the world with spiritual weapons, and those who looked for a Messianic leader who would destroy his enemies at the head of an army, is luridly illustrated by Josephus' account of the siege of Jerusalem. To our Seer, therefore, the Zealot leaders were as distasteful as the Roman emperors and their local representatives; all were equally the enemies of the true Israel and of the heavenly Messiah.

To indicate with certainty who were meant by these eight under wings (*subalares* xii. 19-21) may be impossible, nevertheless Gfrörer's¹ contention has a great deal to be said in its favour: the first two wings represent

¹ *Geschichte des Urchristenthums*, i, pp. 69-93 (1838).

Herod the Great and Agrippa I; only these two ruled alone over the whole of Judæa, the other members of the House of Herod ruled over only parts of the land. Of the remaining six, two perish, the manner of their death not being specified, two are devoured by the middle head, and two are destroyed by the Messiah. The first four of these represent Eleazar, John of Gischala, Simon Bar-Giora, and John the Idumæan; all of these sought to rule. Eleazar and John the Idumæan were killed by the Jews; John of Gischala and Simon Bar-Giora were put to death by the emperor Vespasian. These four leaders of the revolt can rightly be described as attached to the Roman eagle, though in opposition, because the land remained Roman in spite of their attempts to gain freedom. The last two wings represent Agrippa II and Berenike; of these two wings it is said that 'they passed over unto the head that is on the right side' (*duæ subalares trajecerunt super caput quod est a dextra parte*, xii. 29). Both Agrippa II and his sister Berenike went over to the side of Rome, after having done their best to keep the Jews from ruin through their revolt. They are kept for the Messiah to punish ('these are they whom the Most High hath kept unto his end') because of their unfaithfulness to the Jewish people. They both survived for long the destruction of Jerusalem.

THE VISION OF THE MAN FROM THE SEA

(Chapter xiii)

The Seer dreams a dream by night; before him lies the expanse of the ocean; suddenly a wind arises and the waves begin to toss. In the midst of the storm appears one in the likeness of a man, who flies with the clouds of heaven. At the look of him everything trembles, and at the sound of his voice all that hear it are consumed in fire. Then from the four winds a great multitude was gathered to make war against him. But the man from the sea ascended a great mountain—whence it came the Seer could not see—and the great multitude, though in great fear, fought against him; then there issued forth from the mouth of the man from the sea fire and flame and sparks, and the great multitude that had come to fight against him was wholly consumed by the fire. Thereupon the man came down from the mountain and bade a peaceful multitude come to him; some came willingly, others had to be brought by force.

The Seer then awakes, and prays the Most High for an interpretation of the Vision, unfolding at the same time his thoughts about what he had seen, namely the evil plight of those who shall be left 'in those days', and the yet worse plight of those who will not be left; for the latter understand what joys are laid up in the last days, but know that they cannot attain to them; while those that are left shall see great miseries, but they, at any rate, do not know what is laid up in the last days.

The interpretation of the Vision is then given: it begins with a paren-

thetic explanation regarding those who are left, and those who are not left, i.e. the dead. The interpretation proper is then proceeded with. The man from the sea is the pre-existent Messiah; the great multitude that come to fight against him represents the nations, whom the Messiah will destroy; the peaceable multitude symbolizes the ten tribes who had been carried away captive by Shalmanasar, the Assyrian king, into another land. The interpretation closes with some further words about the man from the sea. The Seer is then told that because his life has been wise and upright, therefore this Vision has been granted to him; a reward is laid up for him hereafter.

xiii. 1-13^a. The Vision.

XIII. 1 And it came to pass after seven days, I dreamed a dream by night: 2 and, lo, there arose a wind from the sea, that it moved all the waves thereof. 3 And I beheld, and, lo, ¹[this wind caused to come up from the midst of the sea as it were the likeness of a man, and I beheld, and, lo,] that man ²flew with the clouds of heaven: and when he turned his countenance to look, all things trembled that were seen under him. 4 And whensoever the voice went out of his mouth, all they burned that heard his voice, like as the ³wax melteth when it feeleth the fire. 5 And after this I beheld, and, lo, there was gathered together a multitude of men, out of number, from the four winds of heaven, to make war against the man that came out of the sea. 6 And I beheld, and, lo, he graved himself a great mountain, and flew up upon it. 7 But I sought to see the region or place whereout the mountain was graven, and I could not. 8 And after this I beheld, and, lo, all they which were gathered together to fight against him were sore afraid, and yet durst fight. 9 And, lo, as he saw the assault of the multitude that came, he neither lifted up his hand, nor held spear, nor any instrument of war: 10 but only I saw how that he sent out of his mouth as it had been a flood of fire, and out of his lips a flaming breath, and out of his tongue he cast forth sparks ⁴of the storm. 11 And these were all mingled together; the flood of fire, the flaming breath, and the great storm; and fell upon the assault of the multitude which was prepared to fight, and burned them up every one, so

¹ The words in brackets are added from the Syriac.

² So the Syriac. The Latin has *grew strong*.

³ So the Syriac and other Oriental versions.

⁴ So the Syriac and Arabic.

that upon a sudden of an innumerable multitude nothing was to be perceived, but only dust of ashes and smell of smoke: when I saw this I was amazed. 12 Afterward I beheld the same man come down from the mountain, and call unto him another multitude which was peaceable. 13 And there came ¹much people unto him, whereof some were glad, some were sorry, some of them were bound, and other some brought of them that were offered:

¹ Lat. *the faces of many people.*

1. *And it came to pass after . . .* These words are put in for the purpose of joining this Vision to what has preceded. Originally this Vision formed an entirely independent piece and was in no way connected with the preceding Vision (see Intr. § II. iii).

I dreamed a dream by night. Lat. *somniavi somnium nocte*; but Syr. better, 'I saw a dream by night'; for 'seeing' a dream or vision cp. Isa. i. 1; Ezek. xii. 27, xiii. 16, &c.

3. [*this wind . . . and, lo,*] So Syr.; these words are accidentally omitted by Lat. owing evidently to the two clauses beginning with, 'and I beheld and lo'; all the other Versions have the passage, differing only slightly from Syr.

this wind caused to come up. The wind is, of course, thought of as God's instrument obeying His command, cp. verse 52 and the words in *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo*, xxi. 2: 'Thou knowest more than all, O Lord, what moveth the heart of the sea before it rageth' (M. R. James's transl., 1917).

the likeness of a man. Cp. Ezek. i. 5, Dan. vii. 13, *Enoch* xlvi. 1; in verse 32='my son', i.e. the Son of God, the Messiah.

flew. Lat. *convalescebat*. 'grew strong', but read *convolabat* (Violet), with all the Oriental Versions.

flew with the clouds of heaven. Cp. Isa. xix. 1, Dan. vii. 13, 'there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man'; but the Sept. reads, '. . . on the clouds of heaven'. In the verse before us the conception of a pre-existent Messiah is clear, but his coming from the sea, on the one hand, and with (or on) the clouds, i.e. from heaven, on the other, bring before us two irreconcilable ideas; on the question as to where these ideas came from see Additional Note at the end of this chapter.

4. *as the wax melteth when . . .* For the figure cp. Mic. i. 4, *Enoch* i. 6; and with the thought of the whole passage cp. *Sib. Orac.* iii. 72 ff.: 'But when the threatenings of the great king [i.e. the Messiah] come near to fulfilment, and a fiery power comes through the deep to land and burns up Belial and all men of pride, even all that put their trust in him; then shall the world be ruled beneath a woman's hand [i.e. Rome], and obey her in all things.'

5. *to mak ewar against the man . . .* See, on this subject, Additional Note at the end of this chapter.

6. *he graved himself a great mountain.* Cp. Dan. ii. 45. The great mountain symbolizes the new Sion, see verses 35, 36. See also Rev. xiv. 1.

7. *But I sought . . . I could not.* The ancient mythological material which lies at the back of the whole of this representation (verses 2-11) explains this verse. The Seer is making use of the old-world traditions, and applying them, and it is natural enough that he does not understand some of the details. This mountain does not belong to the earth at all, any more than a transcendental Messiah, or a heavenly Jerusalem; the idea is adapted from Iranian eschatology, which, in all probability was influenced by earlier Babylonian mythology. The mountain was originally the holy mountain of the gods, where they dwelt, and was conceived of as standing in the north, according to another ancient belief, in the east. Adaptations of the idea occur in the Old Testament, e.g. Isa. xiv. 13, 'the mount of God', Ezek. xxviii. 14, 'the holy mountain of God'; see, further, Additional Note.

8. . . . *to fight against him.* Another adaptation of ancient Babylonian material handed down long since; the theme, also in an adapted form, is treated in Ezek. xxxviii. 14 ff., xxxix.

9-11. With the mythological *traits* contained in these verses cp. Isa. xxx. 27, 28, and see also Isa. xi. 4 for the idea of slaying 'with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips'; so, too, *Enoch* lxii. 2, where it is said of the Messiah that 'the word of his mouth slays all the sinners'.

13. *were bound.* i.e. those who came from captivity; cp. Isa. xlii. 7.

brought of them that were offered. Cp. Isa. lxvi. 20: 'And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an offering unto the Lord . . .'

xiii. 13b-20. The Seer offers a prayer that the Most High will explain the Vision to him. The prayer is followed by some thoughts as to the relative misfortune of those who will live to see the end of the present world-order and those who will die before the end. These verses (16-20) are quite out of place in this context, and give the impression of not belonging to the original text.

Then through great fear I ¹awaked, and prayed unto the Most High, and said, 14 Thou hast shewed thy servant these wonders from the beginning, and hast counted me worthy that thou shouldest receive my prayer: 15 and now shew me moreover the interpretation of this dream. 16 For as I conceive in mine understanding, woe unto them that shall be left in those

days! and much more woe unto them that are not left! 17 for they that were not left shall be in heaviness, 18 understanding the things that are laid up in the latter days, but not attaining unto them. 19 But woe unto them also that are left, for this cause; for they shall see great perils and many necessities, like as these dreams declare. 20 Yet is it ¹better for one to be in peril and to come into ²these things, than to pass away as a cloud out of the world, and not to see the things that ²shall happen in the last days.

¹ Lat. *easy*.

² So the Syriac.

14. *from the beginning.* i.e. from the time when the Seer first began to have the visions.

and hast counted me . . . i.e. the Seer is counted worthy of having his prayer accepted by God; Syr. has, 'and though I am not worthy, thou hast held me to be worthy, in that thou receivest my prayer'.

16. *woe unto them . . . in those days.* The reference is to the period preceding the coming of the Messianic kingdom, when men will live through the terrors spoken of, e.g. in v. 1 ff., vi. 18 ff., ix. 1 ff.

much more woe . . . that are not left. Here the reference is to those who will not be alive when the Messianic kingdom comes, the joys of which they will not experience; they know what those joys will be, and are therefore the more to be pitied because they will not partake of them, see verse 18.

19. This verse gives the reason of the woe of those spoken of in verse 16.

like as these dreams declare. See the passages referred to in the note on verse 16.

20. The meaning of this verse is that it is better for men to live through the terrors which precede the coming of the Messianic kingdom, so that they may enter into the joy of this kingdom, than that they should die before the terrors are experienced and not enjoy the happiness of the kingdom. In other words, better to suffer and then enjoy, than not to suffer nor to enjoy.

xiii. 21-4. Before coming to the interpretation of the Vision the Most High is made to refer to the thoughts which the Seer has expressed in verses 16-20, which are, of course, not part of the Vision.

And he answered unto me, and said, 21 The interpretation of the vision shall I tell thee, and I will also open unto thee the things whereof thou hast made mention. 22 Whereas thou hast spoken of them that are left behind, this is the interpretation: 23 He that shall ¹endure the peril in that time shall keep them

¹ So the Syriac.

that be fallen into danger, even such as have works, and faith toward the Almighty. 24 Know therefore, that they which be left behind are more blessed than they that be dead.

21. *the things whereof . . .* i.e. the thought expressed in verses 16-20.

22. *that are left behind.* Syr., Ethiop., Arab. add, 'and those that are not left behind'; these words are required, the omission in Lat. must be accidental.

this is the interpretation. Obviously the words do not require any interpretation, they are merely the reflections of the Seer.

23. What is said in this verse is merely an addition to the thoughts of verses 16-20.

He that shall endure the peril. So the Syr., which is clearly wrong; Lat. has *qui adferet periculum*; 'he that bringeth the peril', in reference to the Messiah, since his advent is preceded by the 'Messianic woes'.

shall keep them . . . danger. Cp. *Enoch* xlvi. 4: 'He [i.e. the Son of Man] shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall . . . the hope of all those that are troubled of heart.'

even such as have works, and faith. Cp. ix. 7; *Enoch* xxxviii. 2, cii. 4; *Apoc. Bar.* xiv. 12.

toward the Almighty. Syr. 'toward the Most High and Mighty One'.

24. *they which be left behind. . . .* The same conclusion as that contained in verse 16.

xlii. 25-56. The interpretation of the Vision.

25 These are the interpretations of the vision: Whereas thou sawest a man coming up from the midst of the sea, 26 the same is he whom the Most High hath kept a great season, which by his own self shall deliver his creature: and he shall order them that are left behind. 27 And whereas thou sawest, that out of his mouth there came wind, and fire, and storm; 28 and whereas he held neither spear, nor any instrument of war, but destroyed the assault of that multitude which came to fight against him; this is the interpretation: 29 Behold, the days come, when the Most High will begin to deliver them that are upon the earth. 30 And there shall come astonishment of mind upon them that dwell on the earth. 31 And one shall think to war against another, city against city, place against place, people against people, and kingdom against kingdom. 32 And it shall be, when these things shall come to pass, and the signs shall happen which I shewed thee before, then shall my Son be revealed, whom thou sawest

as a man ascending. 33 And it shall be, when all the nations hear his voice, every man shall leave his own land and the battle they have one against another. 34 And an innumerable multitude shall be gathered together, as thou sawest, desiring to come, and to fight against him. 35 But he shall stand upon the top of the mount Sion. 36 And Sion shall come, and shall be shewed to all men, being prepared and builded, like as thou sawest the mountain graven without hands. 37 And this my Son shall rebuke the nations which are come for their wickedness, *with plagues* that are like unto a tempest; 38 and shall taunt them to their face with their evil thoughts, and the torments wherewith they shall be tormented, which are likened unto a flame: and he shall destroy them without labour by the law, which is likened unto fire. 39 And whereas thou sawest that he gathered unto him another multitude that was peaceable; 40 these are the ten tribes, which were led away out of their own land in the time of Osea the king, whom Salmanasar the king of the Assyrians led away captive, and he carried them beyond the River, and they were carried into another land. 41 But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt, 42 that they might there keep their statutes, which they had not kept in their own land. 43 And they entered by the narrow passages of the river Euphrates. 44 For the Most High then wrought signs for them, and stayed the springs of the River, till they were passed over. 45 For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called ¹Arzareth. 46 Then dwelt they there until the latter time; and now when they begin to come again, 47 the Most High stayeth the springs of the River again, that they may go through: therefore sawest thou the multitude gathered together with peace. 48 But those that be left behind of thy people are they that are found within my holy border. 49 It shall be therefore when he shall destroy the multitude of the nations that are gathered together, he shall defend the people that remain. 50 And then shall he shew them very many wonders.

51 Then said I, O Lord that bearest rule, shew me this: wherefore I have seen the man coming up from the midst of the sea.

¹ That is, another land.

52 And he said unto me, Like as one can neither seek out nor know what is in the deep of the sea, even so can no man upon earth see my Son, or those that be with him, but in the time of ¹his day. 53 This is the interpretation of the dream which thou sawest, and for this thou only art enlightened herein. 54 For thou hast forsaken thine own *ways*, and applied thy diligence unto mine, and hast sought out my law. 55 Thy life hast thou ordered in wisdom, and hast called understanding thy mother. 56 And therefore have I shewed thee this; for there is a reward laid up with the Most High: and it shall be, after other three days I will speak other things unto thee, and declare unto thee mighty and wondrous things.

¹ So the Oriental versions. The Latin omits *his*.

25. *the interpretations.* All the Versions, except Lat., have the singular.

26. *hath kept a great season.* Cp. verse 52, and *Enoch* xlvi. 2, 3: 'And at that hour the Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and his name before the Head of days. Yea, before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of Spirits.' On the subject of the pre-existent Messiah see Additional Note at the end of this chapter.

which by his own self . . . creature. Lat. *qui per semetipsum liberabit creaturam suam*; according to this reading it is the Most High who will Himself deliver His creature; this is in accordance with what is said in verse 29, but is not in harmony with the general sense of the Vision, according to which it is the Messiah who will deliver the righteous, see verses 39 ff.; as Wellhausen has pointed out, Lat. understood the Greek as *δι' αὐτοῦ*, 'by his own self', or 'through himself', instead of as *δι' αὐτοῦ*, 'through whom', i.e. the Messiah (Gunkel). Syr. reads: 'through whom he will deliver his creation', so similarly Ethiop. and one of the Arab. Versions.

and he shall order them . . . The meaning seems to be that he, i.e. the Messiah, will bring in among those who have survived the new order of things which he will establish at his advent. The Messiah thus appears here as deliverer and redeemer.

29-32. These verses break the course of the interpretation, and evidently do not belong here, or else they are a later insertion.

29. *when the Most High . . . to deliver.* This, as we have seen (verse 26), is out of harmony with the general sense of the Vision.

32. *then shall my Son be revealed.* Cp. Dan. vi. 13, *Enoch* lii. 9. *Pss. of Sol.* xviii. 5, Matth. xxiv. 30, Mark xiii. 26.

33. . . . *and the battle they have one . . .* In verses 8, 9 they are all

gathered together to fight against the Messiah; here, as in verse 31, it is internecine warfare among the peoples, while in verse 34 they combine to fight against the Messiah (as in verses 8, 9); this last *trait* does not appear in Matth. xxiv. See, further, Additional Note.

34. *And . . . shall be gathered together.* Lat. *Et colligetur in unum multitudo innumerabilis*; Gunkel renders: 'And an innumerable multitude shall be gathered at one spot', cp. Rev. xvi. 16: 'And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon' (see also xix. 19).

36. *And Sion shall come.* i.e. shall appear, see the words which follow.

being prepared and buildd. Cp. x. 27. As Box rightly points out, this verse is almost certainly an interpolation; for in the previous verse Sion=mount Sion; 'which is not unnaturally identified with the mysterious mountain of the Vision, but here Sion=the heavenly city. How can this be identified with a mountain, upon the summit of which the Messiah stands?'

graven without hands. Cp. Dan. ii. 34, 45, a stone 'cut out of the mountain without hands'.

37, 38. These verses purport to be an interpretation of the 'flood of fire', the 'flaming breath', and the 'sparks of storm', mentioned in verse 10; but it is clear that in the verses before us there is no proper parallel to these; moreover, the interpretation of the various fiery elements is quite inconsistent with what is logically expected; that is to say, since in verse 10 the fiery elements come forth from the Messiah, the explanation of them ought to be in reference to the Messiah; but in the verses before us this is not the case; for here we have two of the fiery elements explained in reference to the nations, and one in reference to the Law; thus, the nations' wickedness is compared with the tempest, their torments with a flame, and the Law is likened to fire; so that none of the fiery elements are explained as having anything to do with the Messiah, from whom they all come. That the Latin text is corrupt is plain enough, but the Versions give no help. Nevertheless, the *content* of the passage, as we now have it, shows that even if we had the original Hebrew text before us, it would offer no interpretation of the fiery elements mentioned in verse 10. And the reason for this is not far to seek. The author of our book has utilized ancient mythological material in the construction of the Vision; the original meaning of this material he probably did not understand; but even if he did, it was not of a nature to permit of an interpretation such as he needed; he was, therefore, forced to construct an interpretation of his own. The consequent incongruity is thus easily understood.

40-50. Regarding this legend of the ten tribes Box has well summarized the full account which Volz and Bousset have gathered from various sources: 'Down to the first Christian century, from the

Exile', he says, 'the Jewish people, as a whole, were still conceived ideally as made up of twelve tribes, bearing the old names (cp. *Test. xii Patr.*, and in the New Testament Acts xxvii. 7, Jas. i. 1, Rev. vii. 5, &c.); the Jewish population in Palestine and in the Diaspora was regarded as made up of representatives of all the twelve tribes. At the same time, however, the feeling prevailed, especially during the last two centuries of the Temple's existence, that the kernel of the Jewish population of Palestine, more especially in the province of Judaea (the country surrounding Jerusalem) was the home *par excellence* of the two tribes of Judah and Levi. . . . Thus, side by side with the ideal division of the whole people into twelve tribes there grew up another division into two groups; two tribes and ten tribes. The latter were regarded as having fallen into idolatry, and had therefore been punished (cp. Tobit i. 4 f., *Assump. of Moses* iii. 4 f.). After being distinguished in this way as a separate group of ten (9½ tribes) it was a natural development of later reflection to picture these tribes as living in a particular place, out of contact with the rest of the world and there awaiting the moment when they should return. Their return occupies a definite place in the eschatological scheme which contemplated the gathering together of dispersed Israel within the borders of the Holy Land. In their far-distant home they are supposed to have worked out their repentance for their former idolatry by a strict adherence to the commands and the Law of God. It was that they might be enabled to do this the better that they had removed further inland, after their first deportation, to a remote country' (Volz, *op. cit.*, pp. 311 ff.; Bouset, *op. cit.*, pp. 236 ff.).

40. *the ten tribes*. Syr. and one of the Arab. Versions have 'nine-and-a-half', Ethiop. 'nine'; the number nine-and-a-half is 'based upon an obvious misapprehension; it can only mean the total of the twelve tribes minus the 2½ trans-Jordanic tribes (Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh, cp. Josh. xxii. 7 ff.); thus the nine-and-a-half tribes would include Judah and Benjamin (=southern kingdom). The "ten tribes" is, of course, a purely ideal designation of the Northern kingdom here' (Box).

in the time of Osea the king . . . Other Lat. MSS. read *Josiae*, so Syr. and one Arab. Version, probably due to a corruption in the text. Cp. II Kings xvii. 1-6.

whom. Lat. *quem*, as though in reference to Hoshea only; but, as Wellhausen points out, this is due to a misunderstanding of the Hebr. indeclinable '*asher*, 'who', which referred equally to the 'ten tribes'.

the River. i.e. the Euphrates. Cp. *Apoc. Bar.* lxxxviii. 1, where mention is made of the nine-and-a-half tribes 'which were across the river Euphrates'.

41. . . . *into a further country, where never mankind dwelt*. See

note on verse 40. Cp. Josephus, *Antiq.* xi. 133: '... then the entire body of the people of Israel remained in that country, wherefore there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.' In the Greek *Apoc. Bar.* lxxvii. 19-22 it is told of how Baruch sent an eagle with an epistle to the nine-and-a-half tribes; he says to it: 'And now go and tarry not in any place . . . till thou hast passed over the breadth of the many waters of the river Euphrates, and hast gone to the people that dwell there . . .' They are to be summoned to return when the Messianic time begins in order to join the Messiah (see, further, Bousset, *op. cit.*, pp. 237 ff.). Cp. the synagogal prayer *Shemoneh 'Esreh*, the tenth benediction of which runs: 'Sound the great horn for our freedom, and lift up the ensign to gather all our exiles from the four corners of the earth to our own land.'

44. *stayed the springs of the River.* This is, of course, part of the legend, Josh. iii. 14-16 forming the precedent for our Seer.

45. . . . *of a year and a half.* Another legendary trait.

is called Arzareth. i.e. 'Eretz 'achereth, 'another land', Deut. xxix. 25-8 (Hebr. 24-7); so Schiller-Szinessy in the *Journal of Philol.* iii. 114 (1870), referred to by Schürer, *Gesch. des jüd. Volkes*, ii. 627 (1907). Syr. *Arsaph*, and adds that it is 'at the end of the world'.

46. *until the latter time.* i.e. until the last days; Ethiop. 'until the end of the days'.

47. . . . *stayeth the springs of the River again.* Cp. Isa. xi. 15, 16: 'And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his scorching wind shall he shake his hand over the River, and shall smite it into seven streams, and cause men to march over dryshod . . .'

48. *But those that be left behind . . .* This verse is evidently an interpolation as it breaks the course of the narrative; if anywhere, it should come after the words 'the people that remain', in the next verse; but even there it is not required, for those who are left after the destruction of the nations must include those who have returned from the Diaspora as well as those who have remained in the Holy Land.

50. *very many wonders.* Lat. *multa plurima portenta*; Syr. 'many wonders'. The reference is to what will be experienced in the Messianic kingdom.

52. *Like as one can neither . . .* This is no explanation of what was seen in the Vision; the Seer evidently did not understand the meaning of the mythological element in the tradition he utilized; he had, therefore, to construct his own explanation.

those that be with him. There is no mention of these in the Vision. This was another mythological trait occurring in the tradition handed down which the Seer did not understand; he would doubtless have

interpreted those who came with the Messiah as angel-hosts, cp. Matth. xxiv. 31, xxv. 31.

but in the time of his day. So Syr.; Lat. has *in tempore diei*. The words mean 'excepting, or until, the day on which the Messiah appears'.

xiii. 57. 58. The Seer, having received the interpretation of the Vision, gives thanks to God, and returns into the field.

57 Then went I forth and passed into the field, giving praise and thanks greatly unto the Most High because of his wonders, which he did from time to time; 58 and because he governeth the time, and such things as fall in their seasons. And there I sat three days.

57. *and passed into the field.* Cp. xii. 51; the reference to the field is in order to bring this Vision into connexion with the preceding; but as the Vision before us is an independent piece, these verses cannot have belonged to the original text.

from time to time. Lat. *per tempus* (= *ἀνὰ καιρόν*, Violet); the Most High had always shown wonders to His own.

58. *he governeth the time.* This is in accordance with the doctrine of Determinism always taught by the Apocalyptists.

and such things . . . seasons. Lat. *et quae sunt in temporibus inflata* = *καὶ ὅσα ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς φέρεται* = $\text{D}^{\text{H}}\text{Y}^{\text{H}} \text{K}^{\text{H}} \text{S}^{\text{H}}\text{N}$ (Gunkel); Syr. 'and what comes in the times'.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE VISION OF THE MAN FROM THE SEA

As we have already seen, there are in this Vision and its interpretation certain incongruities which suggest, on the one hand, that the author did not himself understand some of the details of the former, and, on the other, that he gave an explanation of his own of these which is quite unconvincing. That the author utilized ancient traditional mythological material, to which he added some elements which were needed in the interests of his adaptation of this, can, we believe, be shown.

I

The tradition utilized was some form of the ancient Babylonian Epic of Creation. It will suffice if we give an outline of this, touching, however, only on those details which are required for bringing out the meaning of the Vision.¹

Apsu and Tiamat, the Ocean and the Deep, brought forth the gods

¹ Ball, *Light from the East*, pp. 1-18 (1899); Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, pp. 401-19 (1895); Grossmann, *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-judischen Eschatologie*, pp. 334-65 (1905).

before the beginning of things. Tiamat, the mother of the gods, determines to destroy her offspring.¹ She gathers her hosts for the conflict; Kingu, her son, she elects as leader of her forces, 'bringing forth monster-snakes; sharp-fanged were they, unsparing of attack; with venom for blood their body she filled. Raging pythons with terrors she clothed. . . . She posted vipers, basilisks, and dragons, giant asps, furious hounds, scorpion-men, fierce white snakes, fish-men, and chimaeras . . .'; and the command goes out: 'Let the opening of your mouth damp the fire, let the highest in valour [i.e. Kingu] quench the glowing heat.'

Regarding the last sentence Gunkel says that the meaning seems to be that power is given to the gods (i.e. those siding with Tiamat), whose element is darkness, to overcome the fire, i.e. the element of light, which they hate. The gods who are on the side of Apsu are full of fear, but Marduk offers himself as champion to meet Tiamat and her horde in combat. Marduk is then made lord of all, and is chosen to fight the forces of evil. He takes his armour, 'he forms the lightning before him which he fills with a blazing flame', and it is said, 'when Kingu looked upon him he grew confused in action, lost his senses, became foolish in deed, and the gods his helpers, who supported him, seeing their leader in fear, were seized with panic'; he [Marduk] challenges Tiamat, who thereupon is seized with fear, she loses her senses; then she screamed aloud, and rose up wildly, 'through the depth of her being she quaked'. Then Marduk stations the four winds, south, north, east, and west, to hem in Tiamat; he raises up a tempest to the confusion of Tiamat; he mounts his chariot, the gods, his helpers, accompanying him. Thereupon the conflict begins. Tiamat and her forces are defeated and flee before Marduk; but he pursues them, and overtakes them. Then 'he made strong his ward over the captive gods, and Tiamat he slew . . .'; with the further details we are not here concerned.

In comparing the Vision with the relevant points of this Creation myth it will be seen that there are some striking parallels:

The man in the Vision comes from the sea. Our author accepts this without question because it was part of the tradition; but clearly he did not understand what it meant, otherwise he would not have given the kind of interpretation contained in verse 52. In the Babylonian myth, it is true, Marduk does not arise from the sea, but inasmuch as he is the offspring of Apsu and Tiamat, the Ocean and the Deep, he is not inappropriately represented as coming from the sea in the Vision.²

It is then said in the Vision that this man 'flew with the clouds of heaven'; this point, again, is not mentioned in the Babylonian myth; but as Marduk is a god he comes from the heavenly spheres; and that in some form of the myth the clouds of heaven were conceived of as bearing him is evident from the echoes of this preserved in some Old Testament passages; Ps. xviii. 9 ff. (Hebr. 10 ff.). 'He bowed the heavens also and

¹ The reason for this was probably because she feared they would gain the ascendancy over her; but the part of Tablet I which told of this is broken.

² On this, see further below, p. 161.

came down, and thick darkness was under his feet'; the thick darkness can only mean clouds, cp. Exod. xx. 21; so, too, Ps. civ. 3, 'who maketh the clouds his chariot'; in Isa. xix. 1, again, it is said, 'Behold Yahweh rideth upon a swift cloud' (cp. also Rev. i. 7, 'Behold, he cometh with the clouds').

In the interpretation of the Vision reference is incidentally made to those who accompanied the Man from the sea (verse 52, 'those that be with him'); this must have figured in the original form of the tradition; in the Babylonian myth specific mention is made of the gods who accompanied Marduk. Further, in the Vision it is said that when the Man 'turned his countenance to look, all things trembled that were seen under him'; and a little farther on it is said that they who 'were gathered together to fight against him were sore afraid, and yet durst fight' (verse 8). In the myth this is paralleled by the fear and impotent rage of Tiamat when Marduk faces her and declares his purpose of combating her. The next point in the Vision is the effect of the voice of that Man upon all who heard it; 'all they burned that heard his voice, like as the wax melteth when it feeleth the fire'; this is presently elaborated: 'I saw how he sent out of his mouth as it had been a flood of fire, and out of his lips a flaming breath, and out of his tongue he cast forth sparks of the storm' (verse 10). In the myth, as we have seen, Kingu is commanded to 'damp the fire', and 'quench the glowing heat'; this is in reference to Marduk; and later it is said that Marduk 'forms the lightning before him, which he fills with a blazing flame'.

Then the Vision goes on to tell of 'the multitude of men, out of number' who came to make war against the Man from the sea. This is an adaptation by our author, for his particular purposes, of the account in the Babylonian myth of the onslaught of Tiamat and her host. What is said in the Vision about the Man from the sea that 'he neither lifted up his hand, nor held spear, nor any instrument of war', had no parallel in the Babylonian myth; on the contrary, much stress is laid there on the material weapons of Marduk. It is quite conceivable that in this particular our author purposely modified the mode of warfare of this Man from the sea in order to enhance his picture of the transcendent Messiah.

Of the great mountain which the Man from the sea 'graved for himself' something will be said below; there is no mention of this in any form of the myth that is known.

The Vision then tells of the annihilation of the 'innumerable multitude' which had come to fight against the Man from the sea; this is paralleled in the Babylonian myth by the destruction of Tiamat and her host. The reference to the 'peaceful multitude' is an addition by the author for his special purposes.

II

There are yet a few *traits* in the Vision to be considered which find no place in the Babylonian myth.

In verse 3 it is said that the wind caused the Man to come up from

the midst of the sea ; it is very doubtful whether this idea ever figured in the early forms of the myth ; our author, as is clear enough from various points in his Vision, was unaware of the origin of the myth he utilized ; the form of it which was before him must have mystified him in a number of particulars ; one of these certainly was why and how the Man came up from the sea ; the first he made no attempt to answer, that was entirely out of his ken ; but he could frame an answer satisfactory to himself regarding the way in which the Man was made to ascend ; the thought of the wind as God's instrument was familiar to him from the Old Testament, he therefore adopted this idea, even though he realized (as one feels he must have done) that, in this connexion, it was somewhat jejune.

More important, however, is his description of the figure who arrives from the sea as having the 'likeness of a man'. If, from what has so far been said, there is some justification in believing that the figure of Marduk was the prototype of the Man from the sea, it must be acknowledged that there is nothing in the Babylonian myth which speaks of him in this way ; he is a god, and to have described him as being in the 'likeness of a man' would have been inappropriate, to say the least. This element, therefore, is one for which another origin must be sought. It may well be that our author drew upon *Daniel* (vii. 13, 'one like unto a son of man') and *Enoch* (xlv. 1, 'the appearance of a man') for his conception ; but that does not help us much in discovering the original source of the conception to which all were indebted. Gressmann points out how, in gathering the *data* regarding this 'Man' from these three books, he appears as world-ruler, world-regulator (i.e. setting in order the affairs of the world), world-redeemer, and world-judge. This is a picture very far removed from anything that the Babylonian Creation myth presents of the hero-god Marduk. One thing which must be insisted upon is that the conception of a transcendent Messiah is quite un-Jewish ; the Messiah of the Jews was an earthly Messiah, belonging to the house of David ; therefore the heavenly Messiah idea must have been taken over by the Jewish Apocalyptists from some external source ; and as in our Vision the representation of this heavenly Messiah is one of the most essential particulars, and that of being in the likeness of a man cannot have been derived from the Babylonian hero-god Marduk, there is only one other external source from which it can have been derived, and that is from Iranian eschatology.

Without going into the details of this, it will suffice to say that according to this eschatological scheme, there appeared at a certain time a world-redeemer who came to combat the evil powers present in the world ; this was Shaoshyant, the 'redeemer', of miraculous birth, for he was born of a virgin who, while bathing in a lake, conceived through the seed of Zoroaster which had lain hidden there. His work it was to purge the world of wickedness through overcoming the powers of evil ; after the victory over these the end of the world comes, the dead are raised

and judged, fire comes from heaven and burns up the world; all men have to pass through the fire; for some it is like passing through warm milk; for others it is a purging of all evil that clings to them; ultimately all men are to be saved, and enjoy the bliss of the new world. It is, however, the figure of Shaoshyant in the Iranian eschatological scheme which is of main importance in the present connexion; like the Man from the sea, he comes from the watery element; he is born of man, yet his birth is miraculous, and he is therefore of a transcendental character; he comes as world-ruler to set all things right in a renovated world through overcoming the powers of evil; he is a world-redeemer, and he is also a world-judge.

It is therefore clear that there are some distinct points of parallelism between the Man from the sea in our Vision, with its interpretation, and the Iranian Shaoshyant. On the other hand, there are, as we have seen, some striking similarities in the account of the Vision and the Babylonian Creation myth with its hero-god Marduk. Our conclusion, then, is this: While it is granted that in our present state of knowledge the matter does not admit of proof, it does seem as though in the mass of floating traditional eschatological material utilized by our author there was contained a mixture of Babylonian and Iranian elements; our author made use of this material and manipulated it according to his requirements; but while there was much in it which coincided with the Jewish eschatology with which he was familiar, there were some things which he did not understand; but his not understanding them did not deter him from incorporating them.

A further illustration of the presence of various elements is, perhaps, the strange detail given in verses 6, 7 of our Vision, where it is said that the Man from the sea 'graved himself a great mountain, and flew upon it. But I sought to see the region or place whereout the mountain was graven, and I could not.' What the meaning of this can be it is hard, perhaps impossible, to say; it is unnecessary, as it stands, for the purposes of the Vision, for it would have been more striking and dramatic for the 'Man' to have come 'with the clouds of heaven' (verse 3) than that he should meet his foes on the top of a mountain. The subject was evidently included because it figured in some way in the tradition; the Seer did not understand it; the words, 'I sought to see the region or place whereout the mountain was graven, and I could not' are an acknowledgement of this, and his 'interpretation' (verses 35, 36) is quite beside the mark, for there is no correspondence between the heavenly Sion 'prepared and builded', and this mountain.

It may be asserted without fear of contradiction that in the traditional material utilized by the author, more was said about this mountain than appears here; and this, likewise, our author did not understand, and therefore he refrained from incorporating it in his Vision, though he could not omit the mention of the mountain itself if it figured, as it must have done, in the tradition.

When we turn to the ancient sources to inquire what significance such a mythological mountain may have had, it will be seen that several lines of investigation present themselves. It may be that none of these will help in solving the problem; nevertheless, a brief consideration of the subject is demanded.

To begin with Iranian eschatology: There is the mention of a mountain near the lake Kansu in which the seed of Zoroaster lay hidden; this was called 'the mountain of the Lord', and it was inhabited by the faithful. But Shaoshyant, though he rises up from the lake, is in no way brought into connexion with this mountain; nevertheless, it is possible that in an earlier phase of the myth this mountain was the same as the high mountain reaching to the heavens on which Paradise was situated. 'On the mountain Hukairyra belonging to the Hara-berezaiti range, lay the garden of Yima, who was king in the Golden Age, originally the first man.'¹ Although this idea does not belong to Iranian mythology in its origin, there is always the possibility that this was the medium through which it came to Jewish circles.

In the Vision the reference to the mountain is quite cursory, it is evidently a fragment of the tradition which is included just because it played a part in the tradition, though the Seer may have had but a vague idea of its significance as a heavenly mountain; hence his own *naïve* words about the Man from the sea having 'graved himself a great mountain'. In the original myth this mountain was, no doubt, the abode of the first man, the *Urmensch*, with whom the transcendental Messiah is identified.

As already remarked, the tradition may possibly have come to the Jews through the medium of Iranian eschatology after the Exile. But that it was known in earlier days in Israel and was adapted is quite certain; and it may therefore have come directly from Babylonian mythology and not through the medium of Iranian belief.

Turning then to Babylonian mythology we have the mention of the dwelling-place of the gods being on a high mountain called Arallu, which had its counterpart in an earthly mountain;² echoes of this occur, e.g., in Isa. xiv. 13, 14 (from the oracle concerning Babylon): 'And thou saidst in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; and I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost part of the north (cp. Job xxxvii. 22, Ezek. i. 4, 5, *Enoch* xviii. 6 Charles's note); I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High' (cp. Ezek. xxviii. 14, 16, where 'the holy mountain of God' is spoken of). In this, and other passages (especially in *Ezekiel* and *Daniel*) the mountain lies in the north; but elsewhere it is thought of as lying in the east; thus, in *Jubilees* iv. 26, among the four places belonging to God, there is the Garden of Eden, and 'the mountain of the East'. Fragmentary and vague as these references are, nevertheless they are sufficient to show that the traditional Babylonian

¹ Bousset, *op. cit.*, p. 489.

² Jeremias, *Handbuch der orientalischen Geisteskultur*, pp. 130 ff. (1929).

belief in a great mountain being the abode of the gods was well known in Israel. In the Vision it is this mountain which is referred to; and although it plays no part in the account which follows, it is probable that the writer had a vague idea of its significance in the tradition, and represented the Man from the sea as 'flying' on to it because he was conceived of as a transcendental Messiah who had his abode among the supernatural beings.

EZRA AND THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

(Chapter xiv)

The object of this Appendix, which is not a Vision in the sense of the earlier Visions of our book, is to claim inspiration for apocalyptic books, and thereby to commend them to those who regarded the canonical books of the Old Testament as alone inspired. Whence the Redactor obtained this literary piece it is impossible to say, but it seems to have been taken from a book which contained other traditions about Ezra,¹ and to have been added here as an appropriate conclusion to the Visions which Ezra was believed to have had.²

The narrative tells of how Ezra heard a voice from a bush bidding him lay up in his heart all the dreams and interpretations which he had heard, for he is about to be taken away from the world, which will soon come to an end. Ezra then beseeches the Almighty that he may be inspired to write down all the things that had been written in the Law, now destroyed. He is told to withdraw for forty days, to take with him five scribes who can 'write swiftly', and with their help to write down all these things. He obeys this command, and is inspired to write by drinking a cup of water which has the colour of fire. By this means he is enabled to remember all that he had previously heard in visions. He dictates this to the five scribes, and by the end of forty days ninety-four books are produced. He is then commanded to publish twenty-four of them (these are the books of the Old Testament), which both the worthy and the unworthy may read; but the remaining seventy are to be kept secret, and to be read only by those who are wise among his people.

In the Latin the narrative ends very abruptly, the conclusion being wanting; but this has been preserved by the Oriental Versions.

¹ Echoes of traditions about Ezra are preserved in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* (Friedlander's translation, pp. 56, 300 [1916]).

² For references in patristic writings to this appendix see James, *op. cit.*, pp. xxxvii. ff.

xiv. 1-8. *The Lord's command to Ezra.*

Ezra is commanded by God to lay up in his heart all that he has seen and heard; part of this he is to publish openly, and part he is to keep secret.

XIV. 1 And it came to pass upon the third day, I sat under

an oak, and, behold, there came a voice out of a bush over against me, and said, Esdras, Esdras. 2 And I said, Here am I, Lord. And I stood up upon my feet. 3 Then said he unto me, In the bush I did manifestly reveal myself, and talked with Moses, when my people were in bondage in Egypt: 4 and I sent him, and ¹he led my people out of Egypt; and I brought him up to the mount of Sinai, where I held him by me for many days; 5 and told him many wondrous things, and shewed him the secrets of the times, and the end of the seasons; and commanded him, saying, 6 These words shalt thou publish openly, and these shalt thou hide. 7 And now I say unto thee, 8 Lay up in thy heart the signs that I have shewed, and the dreams that thou hast seen, and the interpretations which thou hast heard:

¹ Another reading is *I*.

1. *upon the third day*. Armen., probably rightly, 'after the third day' (cp. xiii. 56); so, too, one of the Arab. Versions.

I sat under an oak. As Kabisch points out, some special, well-known oak is meant, as in *Apoc. Bar.* vi. 1, '... and at the time of the evening I, Baruch, left the people, and I went forth and stood by the oak'; the oak referred to was, as Charles says, near or in the Kidron valley, and thus in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Similarly in *lxxvii.* 18, '... I, Baruch, came and sat down under the oak under the shadow of the branches'; the next verse refers to his writing there. It is also evidently referred to in *lv.* 1, '... I sat there under a tree, that I might rest in the shade of the branches'.

there came a voice out of a bush. Cp. *Exod.* iii. 4, 'God called unto him out of the bush'.

Esdras, Esdras. Similarly in *Exod.* iii. 4, the repetition, 'Moses, Moses'; cp. *I Sam.* iii. 10, where God calls: 'Samuel, Samuel'.

2. *Here am I*. So in *Exod.* iii. 4, *I Sam.* iii. 4.

3. *In the bush I did* . . . The point, as Gunkel shows well in his translation, is: 'I have already once revealed myself by a bush.'

4. *and he led*. So Syr., Arab. and two of the Lat. MSS., but the better reading is 'and I led', so the other two Lat. MSS., Ethiop., Armen. It is noteworthy how the references to this historical event run right through the Old Testament and occur, too, in post-Biblical literature. It is regarded as the real beginning of Israelite history.

out of Egypt. One Lat. MS. adds: 'with great power and a mighty arm, and I led them into the desert'; Syr. adds: 'and I brought them into the desert.'

5. *and shewed him the secrets* . . . There must at one time have been many traditions about Moses, traces of these are to be found in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, e.g. pp. 314 ff. (Friedlander's translation), and a

number of interesting details from various sources have been gathered by James, *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament*, pp. 42 ff. (1920). See, too, the *Assumption of Moses*, i. 16, 17, x. 12, xi. 1.

and the end of . . . Syr. 'and declared to him the end of . . .', similarly Ethiop., Armen., Arab.

6. *and these shalt thou hide*. The reference here cannot be to the Oral Law, in spite of the fact that in later days this was traced back to Moses, because the Oral Law was taught as openly as the Written Law. The reference can only be to the apocalyptic teaching; it is true that this, too, was published in course of time, but it is evident from the words before us (cp. verse 26), as well as from various indications elsewhere in the apocalyptic literature, that at one time much of the apocalyptic tradition was current only among those who were properly initiated.

8. *Lay up in thy heart*. This represents a Hebrew idiomatic expression; cp. Isa. xli. 22, Hag. i. 5, 7, and elsewhere.

signs . . . dreams . . . interpretations. These form an interesting summary of the means whereby divine communications were made to the Apocalypists.

xiv. 9-18. *The Announcement to Ezra of his approaching removal from the world, the end of which is not far*.

Ezra is told of his near departure from this world, and to prepare for this.

9 For thou shalt be taken away from men, and from henceforth thou shalt remain with my Son, and with such as be like thee, until the times be ended. 10 For the world hath lost its youth, and the times begin to wax old. 11 ¹For the world is divided into twelve parts, and ten parts of it are gone already, ²even the half of the tenth part: 12 and there remain of it two parts after the middle of the tenth part. 13 Now therefore set thine house in order, and reprove thy people, comfort the lowly among them, ³and instruct such of them as be wise, and now renounce the life that is corruptible, 14 and let go from thee mortal thoughts, cast away from thee the burdens of man, put off now thy weak nature, 15 and lay aside the thoughts that are most grievous unto thee, and haste thee to remove from these times. 16 For yet worse evils than those which thou hast seen happen shall be done hereafter. 17 For look, how much the world shall be weaker

¹ Verses 11, 12 are omitted in the Syriac. The Æthiopic has *For the world is divided into ten parts, and is come unto the tenth: and half of the tenth remaineth. Now &c.*

² Lat. *and*.

³ The Latin alone omits *and . . . wise*.

through age, so much the more shall evils increase upon them that dwell therein. 18 For the truth shall withdraw itself further off, and leasing be hard at hand: for now hasteth ¹the eagle to come, which thou sawest in vision.

¹ So the Oriental versions.

9. *thou shalt be taken away* . . . Since Ezra is treated as in some ways parallel with Moses (verses 1 ff.), it is possible that this mention of Ezra's translation was meant, in the mind of the writer, to be a parallel to the translation of Moses spoken of in a Hebrew Apocalypse of Moses (Charles, *Assumption of Moses*, in *Apoc. and Pseud. of the O.T.*, ii. 409). This translation of Ezra is referred to in an *Apocalypse of Esdras* mentioned by James (*Lost Apocrypha*, p. 81).

with my Son. For the thought of the pre-existence of the Messiah ('Son of Man') cp. *Enoch* xlvi. 2, 3: 'And at that hour that Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and his name before the Head of Days. Yea, before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of Spirits.' For the Messiah as the 'Son of God' cp. xiii. 32, 37, 52, *Enoch* cv. 2. Enoch, like Ezra, is translated to heaven to be with the Son of Man: 'And it came to pass after this that his name during his lifetime was raised aloft to that Son of Man and to the Lord of Spirits from among those who dwell on the earth.'

with such as be like thee. The reference is to those elect ones who stand in the presence of the Messiah, the 'Elect One'; cp. *Enoch* xxxix. 6, 7: 'And the righteous and elect shall be without number before Him (the Elect One) for ever and ever. And all the right and elect before Him shall be strong as fiery lights.'

until the times be ended. Here the advent of the Messiah is thought of as taking place at the end of the world; in vii. 28 ff., on the other hand, the Messiah comes to reign on earth before the end.

10. *For the world hath lost its youth* . . . Cp. v. 50-5 and *Apoc. Bar.* lxxxv. 10: 'For the youth of the world is past, and the strength of the creation is already exhausted, and the advent of the times is very short, yea, they have passed by . . .'

11, 12. These verses do not occur in Syr., Armen.; possibly they were added from some other Apocalypse.

11. *the world*. i.e. the history of the world.

twelve parts. i.e. periods; Ethiop. 'ten'.

ten parts. This should be 'nine parts', since from what follows ten and a half parts are already passed. On the intricate and not very inspiring subject of world epochs in the apocalyptic literature, see Volz, *op. cit.*, pp. 165 ff.

13. *set thine house in order*. As the words which follow show, Ezra's 'house' is that of his people, the house of Israel.

and instruct . . . be wise. This is added from Syr., with which the other Versions agree.

14. *mortal thoughts . . .* Syr. 'the burden of humanity', cp. II Cor. v. 4 (Gunkel): 'For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up in life.'

15. *haste thee to remove.* *Festina transmigrare*, cp. verse 9. One of the Arab. Versions has, 'and haste to be removed', which is apparently an attempt to bring the words into harmony with verse 9, 'thou shalt be taken away'; the other Versions all read as though Ezra were bidden to take the initiative, but the sense must be that Ezra is to haste putting his house in order so that he may be ready to be removed, i.e. he is the passive instrument in God's hands.

18. . . . *and leasing be hard at hand.* Cp. *Enoch* xci. 5-7, and in our book vi. 27, 28, vii. 33.

for now hasteth the eagle to come. Cp. xii. 23-5, and the words in Luke xvii. 37, which come at the end of the apocalyptic section xvii. 22-37: 'Where the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together.'

xiv. 19-26. *The Restoration of the Holy Scriptures.*

Ezra fears that if he is taken away from his people there will be nobody to guide them in the right way. He, therefore, prays that the Holy Spirit may enter into his heart whereby he may be able to write down all the Holy Scriptures again, which had been destroyed; by this means his people will have guidance to do what is right.

19 Then answered I and said, ¹I will speak before thee, O Lord. 20 Behold, I will go, as thou hast commanded me, and reprove the people that now be: but they that shall be born afterward, who shall admonish them? for the world is set in darkness, and they that dwell therein are without light. 21 For thy law is burnt, therefore no man knoweth the things that are done of thee, or the works that shall be done. 22 But if I have found favour before thee, send the Holy Spirit into me, and I shall write all that hath been done in the world since the beginning, even the things that were written in thy law, that men may be able to find the path, and that they which would live in the latter days may live. 23 And he answered me and said, Go thy way, gather the people together, and say unto them, that they seek thee not for forty days. 24 But look thou prepare thee many tablets, and take with thee Sarea, Dabria, Selemia,

¹ The Latin omits *I will speak.*

Ethanus, and Asiel, these five, which are ready to write swiftly ; 25 and come hither, and I shall light a lamp of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out, till the things be ended which thou shalt write. 26 And when thou hast done, some things shalt thou publish openly, and some things shalt thou deliver in secret to the wise: to-morrow this hour shalt thou begin to write.

19. *I will speak.* So the Oriental Versions; Lat. omits.

20. *that shall be born afterward, who . . .* This solicitude for those who will be unable to profit by his guidance and teaching may be paralleled by what St. Paul says in Phil. i. 23, 24: 'But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better; yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.'

they that dwell therein are without light. As the next verse shows 'light' here refers to the Law, a thought which often finds expression both in the Old Testament and in post-Biblical Jewish literature, e.g. Ps. cxix. 105, Prov. vi. 23, and in the Midrash, *Shemoth Rabba xxxvi*, and *Wajjikra Rabba xxxi*.

21. *thy law is burnt.* The Seer, placing himself in the time of Ezra, makes the latter refer to the destruction of Jerusalem in B.C. 586; in II Kings xxv. 9 it is said that Nebuzaradan 'burnt the house of the Lord', and it is assumed, from the later point of view, that the Law was destroyed at the same time; the result was, as it is said in iv. 23 of our book, that 'the law of our forefathers is made of none effect'.

no man knoweth . . . It is in the Law, i.e. the Pentateuch, that the mighty acts of God are recounted, but all the Holy Scriptures are, of course, included, as the next verse shows.

or the works that shall be done. i.e. the works that God will yet do, in reference to such passages as begin with, 'In that day', and others of similar character, viz. eschatological prophecies.

22. *the Holy Spirit.* In Jewish theology it is not always that personality is imputed to the Holy Spirit; in the Midrash, *Bereshith Rabba lxxxv*, e.g., the activity of the Holy Spirit is described as light from God, and as a divine mode of utterance; in the *Jerusalem Targum* on Gen. xliii. 14 as the 'spirit of prophecy'; but elsewhere He is clearly thought of as a Person, e.g. in the Midrash *Wajjikra Rabba vi*, where the Spirit is spoken of as the defender of Israel, and as He Who enumerates before God the merits of Israel; in the Midrash *Debarim Rabba xi*, again, quotations from the Scriptures are referred to as the Spirit's utterances. In the passage before us the Holy Spirit is clearly thought of as a person by whose guidance Ezra will be enabled to write; cp. Hebr. iii. 7, x. 15; I John v. 7.

thy law. Here 'law' clearly refers to the Old Testament in general. *that they which would live . . . may live.* Syr.: 'that they which

would live may find the way at the end', i.e. in the world to come; cp. *Apoc. Bar.* lxxvi. 5: '... that they may learn so as not to die at the last time, but may learn in order that they may live at the last times.'

23. *that they seek thee not for forty days.* Similarly Moses withdrew for forty days when he received the law from God, *Deut.* ix. 9; cp. *Exod.* xxiv. 18.

24. *many tablets.* Lat. *buxos multos*; as Box points out, *buxos*=*πυξία*, Hebr. *lūchōth*, the word used of the stone tables; in later Hebrew it is used of writing-tablets (*πίναξ*).

Sarea. i.e. Seraiah, according to i. 1 the father of Ezra, but see the note there.

Dabria. i.e. Dibri, *Lev.* xxiv. 11, belonging to the tribe of Dan.

Selemia. i.e. Shelemiah, *Jer.* xxxvi. 14, the son of Cush, who in the Spanish text is given as the father of Ezra (see note on i. 1).

Ethanus. i.e. Ethan, *I Chron.* ii. 6; but Syr., Ethiop., Armen. have Elkanah (cp. *I Sam.* i. 1, *II Chron.* xxviii. 7).

Asiel. Perhaps='Azil (*I Chron.* xv. 18), which should be, according to Buchanan Gray (*Hebrew Proper Names*, pp. 210, 224, 307, 309), 'Uzziel.

26. *some things . . . openly.* i.e. the Old Testament Scriptures.

some things . . . in secret. i.e. the Apocalypses, see note in verse 6.

xiv. 27-36. *Ezra's last words to his people.*

Ezra recalls the past history of his people, and tells them how they, like their fathers, have transgressed the commandment of God. He urges them to right living in order that hereafter they may obtain mercy.

27 Then went I forth, as he commanded me, and gathered all the people together, and said, 28 Hear these words, O Israel. 29 Our fathers at the beginning were strangers in Egypt, and they were delivered from thence, 30 and received the law of life, which they kept not, which ye also have transgressed after them. 31 Then was ¹the land, even the land of Sion, given you for a possession: but ye yourselves, and your fathers, have done unrighteousness, and have not kept the ways which the Most High commanded you. 32 And forasmuch as he is a righteous judge, he took from you for a while the thing that he had given you. 33 And now ye are here, and your brethren are among you. 34 Therefore if so be that ye will rule over your own understanding, and instruct your hearts, ye shall be kept alive, and after death ye shall obtain mercy. 35 For after death shall the judgement come, when we shall live again: and then shall the

¹ Another reading is, *a land in the land of Sion.*

names of the righteous be manifest, and the works of the ungodly shall be declared. 36 Let no man therefore come unto me now, nor seek after me these forty days.

31. *the land of Sion.* The land is called after the place where God dwelt, cp. Ps. lxxvi. 2 (3 in Hebr.).

33. *now ye are here.* i.e. in exile, in Babylon.

and your brethren are among you. Cp. xiii. 41 ff., i.e. the ten tribes in the land of Arzareth (Gunkel).

34. *if . . . ye will rule over your own understanding.* Lat. *Si imperaveritis sensui vestro*; Syr. if ye water your souls; the reference is to the passions.

and instruct your hearts. Lat. *et erudieritis cor vestrum*; it is the heart which, according to Hebrew ideas, was the seat of the understanding.

ye shall be kept alive. The reference is to life after death; cp. verse 22.

35. *For after death . . .* The sequence here is: death, judgement, resurrection, followed by heaven or hell for the righteous and wicked respectively; the conceptions regarding this varies, but the subject is too large to be dealt with here, see Volz, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 ff., 237 ff., 325 ff.

xiv. 37-48. *The Restoration of the Holy Scriptures.*

Esra receives the cup of inspiration preparatory to his work of dictating to the five scribes the ninety-four books of the Holy Scriptures. He is bidden to publish twenty-four, but the other seventy are to be reserved for the wise. The conclusion of the book, which tells of Ezra being carried away from men, is not found in the Latin; but it is contained in the Oriental Versions.

37 So I took the five men, as he commanded me, and we went forth into the field, and remained there. 38 And it came to pass on the morrow that, lo, a voice called me, saying, Esdras, open thy mouth, and drink that I give thee to drink. 39 Then opened I my mouth, and, behold, there was reached unto me a full cup, which was full as it were with water, but the colour of it was like fire. 40 And I took it, and drank: and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit retained its memory: 41 and my mouth was opened, and shut no more. 42 The Most High gave understanding unto the five men, and they wrote by course the things that were told them, in ¹characters which they knew not, and they sat forty days:

¹ So the Oriental versions.

now they wrote in the day-time, and at night they ate bread. 43 As for me, I spake in the day, and by night I held not my tongue. 44 So in forty days were written ¹fourscore and fourteen books. 45 And it came to pass, when the forty days were fulfilled, that the Most High spake unto me, saying, The first that thou hast written publish openly, and let the worthy and unworthy read it: 46 but keep the seventy last, that thou mayest deliver them to such as be wise among thy people: 47 for in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge. 48 And I did so.

¹ So the Oriental versions. The copies of the Latin vary and are corrupt.

39. *but the colour of it was like fire.* The cup of inspiration spoken of in this verse is aptly compared by Box with Philo's conception, 'which was influenced by the Platonic idea of the ecstatic or God-intoxicated seer. . . . The representation of the cup here as being the medium by which the prophet receives inspiration is peculiar. It certainly suggests Essene affinities; the idea of divine power being sacramentally mediated was familiar to the members of this sect.' For an entirely different effect brought about by drinking of the cup which is given to the wicked, see Ps. lxxxv. 8 (Hebr. 9).

40, 41. *my heart uttered understanding . . .* Syr. expresses more realistically this fourfold result of drinking from the cup of inspiration: 'My heart bubbled over with understanding, my breast poured forth wisdom, my spirit retained its memory, and my mouth was opened, and closed not.'

wisdom grew in my breast. This curious idea is not found elsewhere; Violet believes that the Greek may have had *κοιλία* ('belly'), which the renderings of Lat., Syr., and Ethiop. may quite possibly suggest; in this case, he refers to John vii. 38, 39: 'He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; but this he spake of the Spirit which they that believed on him were to receive.'

42. *gave understanding unto . . .* They, too, are inspired, but in a far less measure than Ezra.

they wrote by course. i.e. they wrote in turn (Armen. *alternis*).

in characters which they knew not. So the Oriental Versions; Lat. has gone quite astray (*noctis, quas*, cp. next verse). The mention of 'characters which they knew not' is interesting; the reference is to the change from the older 'Hebrew' to the Assyrian' or 'Aramaean' script; when precisely this took place cannot be said; without doubt it was a gradual process. It is evident from Matth. v. 18 ('one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law') that in the time of our Lord the Hebrew Scriptures were written in new 'Assyrian' or

square letters, since the 'jot' (=the letter *yodh*) was the smallest letter in this form of the Hebrew letters; in the earlier 'Hebrew' script the *yodh* was not the smallest letter of the alphabet. On the other hand, the ancient script is found on coins as late as the time of the revolt of Bar-Kochba (A.D. 135). Probably the new script was used for literary purposes, the older one for inscriptions and the like. According to Jewish tradition the change was introduced by Ezra who was supposed to have brought the new script from Babylonia when he came to Palestine at the beginning of the fourth century B.C.; the square type of the letters, it was said, was called 'Assyrian' (אשורית) because it came from the land that was once Assyria; this does not seem likely; the name was more probably given because of the 'square' (משקל, *me'ashar*) form of the new script. In the Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 21 b, it is said: 'The law was given to Israel at first in 'ibri (Hebrew) writing in the holy tongue; in the days of Ezra it was given to them again in Assyrian writing, and in the Aramaic tongue. Israel then chose the Assyrian writing and the holy tongue, and left to the *Idiotes* the 'ibri writing and the Aramaic tongue. . . . Although the law was not given through him, the writing was changed by him, as it is said, "The writing of the letter was written in the Syrian ('Arāmīth = Aramaean) character, and set forth in the Assyrian tongue".' (Ezra iv. 7.) Jerome mentions the tradition in his *Prologus Galeatus* (Preface to I, II Kings) in the words: *Certum est, Esdram scribam legisque doctorem, post captam Hierosolimam et instaurationem templi sub Zorobabel alias literas reperisse quibus nunc utimur, cum ad illud usque tempus iidem Samaritanorum et Ebraeorum characteres fuerint.*

43. *I spake in the day, and by night . . .* Cp. *Slav. Enoch* xxiii. 3-6: 'And Vretil [one of the archangels, verse 11] instructed me thirty days and thirty nights, and his lips never ceased speaking; and I did not cease thirty days and thirty nights writing all the remarks. And Vretil said to me, "All the things which I have told thee thou hast written down . . ." And I wrote all out continuously during thirty days and thirty nights, and I copied out all accurately, and I wrote 366 books.'

44. *fourscore and fourteen books.* So the Oriental Versions; Lat. has 904 which is obviously corrupt.

45. *The first that thou hast written.* Lat. *priora quae scripsisti*; Syr. 'the four and twenty books which ye wrote first', similarly one of the Arab. Versions; this is clearly the right reading as the reference is to the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Canon.

46. *the seventy last.* The Apocalypses, see note on verse 6.

47. *for in them is the spring of understanding . . .* It is clear from these words that the apocalyptic writings were held in much higher honour than the Old Testament Scriptures by the writer and those who belonged to his school of thought; so that it can readily be

understood why the apocalyptic literature came to be looked upon with dislike in Rabbinical circles.

48. *And I did so.* Lat. breaks off here without adding the conclusion to the book; this was doubtless due to the addition of the next two chapters, which do not, however, belong to the book. The conclusion is preserved in the Oriental Versions. Syr. runs: 'And I did so, in the seventh year of the sixth week, five thousand years, three months, and twelve days, after the Creation. At that time Ezra was translated and taken up to the place of those like unto him, after he had written all these things. And he was called the writer of the knowledge of the Most High for ever and ever.' Armen. and Arab. add 'Amen'.

PART IV

APPENDIX

(*Chapters xv, xvi*)

xv. 1-4. Ezra is bidden to speak to his people and to write down the words which the Lord will put into his mouth. He is told that he need not fear those against whom he is to speak, for, being unbelievers, they will die in their unbelief.

XV. 1 Behold, speak thou in the ears of my people the words of prophecy, which I will put in thy mouth, saith the Lord: 2 and cause thou them to be written in paper: for they are faithful and true. 3 Fear not their imaginations against thee, let not the unbelief of them that speak against thee trouble thee. 4 For all the unbelievers shall die in their unbelief.

1. *Speak thou.* Although nobody is addressed by name, it is presumably Ezra who is meant. The abrupt way in which the chapter begins shows that at one time it must have belonged to something preceding it. James believes that xv, xvi were originally written as an Appendix to iii-xiv; and, as he says, there are no indications that they were ever current in a different position or form from that in which we have them. Against this view it may be urged that in an Appendix one might reasonably expect some greater approximation to the subject-matter of the main work. James truly says that 'we must get rid of the idea that we are dealing with an apocalypse of the ordinary type; indeed, though apocalyptic elements do occur in these chapters, it is a question whether they can be properly described as an apocalypse at all'; that is precisely the case, and it is just for that reason that these two chapters appear so inappropriate as an Appendix to iii-xiv. Then there is the further fact that like i, ii, these chapters are treated as a separate book, at any rate in the later Latin MSS., i.e. they have the title III Esdras; it is worth considering whether these two chapters did not originally belong to some entirely different work, now lost. How they became attached cannot, of course, be said now; but there are many other instances of fragments, large and small, which have been attached to a context different from their original position.

the words of prophecy. This, in the main, rightly describes the contents of these chapters, which are largely modelled on certain of the Old Testament prophetic books, especially those of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, and Nahum.

which I will put in thy mouth. Cp. Isa. li. 16, Jer. i. 9.

2. *to be written in paper.* i.e. papyrus (*Cyperus Papyrus*); the plant was cultivated in the Delta of Egypt and was called *P-apa* by the Egyptians (see Exod. ii. 3, Isa. xviii. 2). The papyrus, when manufactured for the purpose of writing, was called by the Greeks *χάρτης*, in Latin *charta*. Cp. II John 12, 'I would not write them with paper and ink'; and in III Macc. iv. 20 (*circa* 100 B.C.) it is said that the registration of the Jews in Alexandria could not be continued because 'even the paper manufactory, and the pens which they used for writing had already given out'. Probably τὰ βιβλία mentioned in II Tim. iv. 13 were papyrus rolls.

they are faithful and true. Cp. Rev. xxi. 5: 'Write: for these words are faithful and true'; and xxii. 6.

4. *in their unbelief.* The Spanish text adds: *et omnis qui credit fide sua salvus erit*, a supplement which seems to come from Hab. ii. 4, and is probably to be rejected (James).

xv. 5-9. The Lord's vengeance will come upon the whole earth on account of the wickedness of men.

5 Behold, saith the Lord, I bring evils upon the whole earth; sword and famine, and death and destruction. 6 For wickedness hath prevailed over every land, and their hurtful works are come to the full. 7 Therefore saith the Lord, 8 I will hold my peace no more as touching their wickedness, which they profanely commit, neither will I suffer them in these things, which they wickedly practise: behold, the innocent and righteous blood crieth unto me, and the souls of the righteous cry out continually. 9 I will surely avenge them, saith the Lord, and will receive unto me all the innocent blood from among them.

9. *and will receive unto me all...* According to the ancient Hebrew idea the life or soul of a man is in the blood (cp. Lev. xvii. 11, 14), so that 'to receive all the innocent blood' means that God will receive all the souls of the righteous.

xv. 10-13. A denunciation against the land of Egypt because of its maltreatment of God's people.

10 Behold, my people is led as a flock to the slaughter: I will not suffer them now to dwell in the land of Egypt: 11 but I will bring them out with a mighty hand and with a high arm, and will smite Egypt with plagues, as aforetime, and will destroy all the land thereof. 12 Let Egypt mourn, and the foundations thereof, for the plague of the chastisement and the punishment

that God shall bring upon it. 13 Let the husbandmen that till the ground mourn: for their seeds shall fail and their trees shall be laid waste through the blasting and hail, and a terrible star.

10. *in the land of Egypt.* It is held generally that what is referred to in these verses is the calamity mentioned by Eusebius in his *Eccles. History*, vii. 21, 22; a terrible famine, followed by a plague, carried off two-thirds of the population of Alexandria. This happened during the reign of Gallienus (A.D. 260-8).

13. *a terrible star.* Cp. verses 35, 39; probably a comet is meant, cp. *Sib. Orac.* iii. 334-6: 'But in the west a star shall shine, which men will call the long-haired star, a sign of the sword, of famine and death to men, of the slaughter of great captains and men of renown'; also v. 155 ff., viii. 191 ff., and Rev. viii. 10, 11.

xv. 14-27. An eschatological section; the signs of the end; a denunciation against sinners.

14 Woe to the world and them that dwell therein! 15 for the sword and their destruction draweth nigh, and nation shall rise up against nation to battle with weapons in their hands. 16 For there shall be sedition among men; and waxing strong one against another, they shall not regard their king nor the chief of their great ones, in their might. 17 For a man shall desire to go into a city, and shall not be able. 18 For because of their pride the cities shall be troubled, the houses shall be destroyed, and men shall be afraid. 19 A man shall have no pity upon his neighbour, but shall make an assault on their houses with the sword, and spoil their goods, because of the lack of bread, and for great tribulation.

20 Behold, saith God, I call together all the kings of the earth, to stir up them that are from the rising of the sun, from the south, from the east, and Libanus; to turn themselves one against another, and repay the things that they have done to them. 21 Like as they do yet this day unto my chosen, so will I do also, and recompense in their bosom. Thus saith the Lord God: 22 My right hand shall not spare the sinners, and my sword shall not cease over them that shed innocent blood upon the earth. 23 And a fire is gone forth from his wrath, and hath consumed the foundations of the earth, and the sinners, like the straw that is kindled. 24 Woe to them that sin, and keep not my commandments! saith the Lord. 25 I will not spare them:

go your way, ye rebellious children, defile not my sanctuary. 26 For the Lord knoweth all them that trespass against him, therefore hath he delivered them unto death and destruction. 27 For now are the evils come upon the whole earth, and ye shall remain in them: for God shall not deliver you, because ye have sinned against him.

15. *nation shall rise up against nation.* A common apocalyptic trait. Cp. Joel ii. 22 ff., *Enoch* xcix. 4, Mark xiii. 8, Luke xxi. 10.

18. *men shall be afraid.* Cp. Luke xxi. 26.

20. *from the rising of the sun . . .* For *ab oriente* the French MS. *A* has a *borea*, and for a *libano* the French MS. *C* has *et libie*. On these readings James says: 'The question between *boreas* (*A*) and *oriens* (*SCM*) is difficult; in *A* it is coupled with *nothus* which is also a Greek word, and there is an intelligible tendency in copyists to simplify or translate such words. The fact that *septemtrio* and *meridianus* are subsequently employed (verse 34) should make us chary of saying that only one set of terms would be employed by our author.' Then as to a *libano* he says: 'I am rather inclined to prefer *libie* to *libano*, for *libano* appears in *M*, where it is most likely a correction of *libie*. *Libie* will not, of course, stand quite as it is, but *libe* would be an accurate translation of $\lambda\beta\acute{o}\varsigma$. *Lips* is the form used in the *mappa mundi* in Beatus' Commentary on the Apocalypse.'

21. For the thought in general cp. *Enoch* xli. 4-8.

22. *over them that shed . . .* Cp. *Enoch* xlvii. 4.

27. In this verse it is the destruction of the earth in the last day that is thought of, not its renovation; the ideas regarding this differ, though the former is the prevailing one among the Apocalyptists. Where an earthly, as distinct from a heavenly, Messianic kingdom is contemplated the idea of the destruction of the earth would, of course, be inappropriate; on the other hand, in vii. 29, 30 there is the exceptional view that the entire human race will disappear, including the Messiah, at the end of the Messianic kingdom on earth.

xv. 28-33. A Vision recounting wars in Syria. For the historical events referred to see the notes.

28 Behold, a vision horrible, and the appearance thereof from the east! 29 And the nations of the dragons of Arabia shall come out with many chariots, and from the day that they set forth the hissing of them is carried over the earth, so that all they which shall hear them may fear also and tremble. 30 Also the Carmonians raging in wrath shall go forth as the wild boars of the wood, and with great power shall they come, and join battle

with them, and shall waste a portion of the land of the Assyrians with their teeth. 31 And then shall the dragons have the upper hand, remembering their ¹nature; and if they shall turn themselves, conspiring together in great power to persecute them, 32 then these shall be troubled, and keep silence through their power, and shall turn and flee. 33 And from the land of the Assyrians shall the liegion wait besiege them, and consume one of them, and upon their host shall be fear and trembling, and sedition against their kings.

¹ Or, *birth*

28. *Behold, a vision horrible . . . the east!* The historical background of these verses is, briefly, as follows: In A.D. 226 the Sassanid dynasty of Persia took the place of the moribund Parthian kingdom, and Iran rose once more to great importance. During the reign of Sapor I (A.D. 240-73) the Persians attacked and conquered the Roman province of Syria. But these successes were put an end to by Odenathus, a forceful and ambitious citizen of Palmyra, and his wife Zenobia, the Palmyrene queen. They drove the Persians back to the Euphrates, and beyond. Needless to say that the Jews suffered severely during these two invasions. The defeat of this formidable enemy in the eastern part of the Roman Empire was appreciated by Rome; but the rise of the new conqueror Odenathus, was a further menace; in the weakened state in which the Roman Empire found itself at this time peace in the east was essential, and Gallienus made a virtue of necessity by recognizing Odenathus as co-emperor (A.D. 264). On a Palmyrene inscription of the year A.D. 271 he is called 'king of kings'; but there is no evidence that he himself assumed this title; the inscription was not erected until after his death (G. A. Cooke, *North Semitic Inscriptions*, p. 290 [1903]). Only a few years after, in A.D. 267, Odenathus was murdered by his cousin, Maeonius, in Emesa, at the instigation, as some said, of his wife, Zenobia. In the reign of Aurelian (A.D. 270-5) Zenobia was defeated, and Palmyra (Tadmor), whither she had retreated, was besieged and captured (A.D. 273). The cryptic form in which the writer clothes his narrative makes it a little difficult to follow the course of events; but it is evident that what is recorded in verse 30 should precede what is said in verse 29.

29. *the nations of the dragons of Arabia.* 'The nations' is merely an exaggerative description of the miscellaneous horde gathered together by Odenathus. The 'dragons of Arabia' is a not inappropriate term to apply to the wild marauding troops brought by Odenathus; the dragons or 'fiery serpents' ('seraphim serpents' in Num. xxi. 6) came from the wilderness (Deut. viii. 15, Isa. xxx. 6); 'Arabia' is used here loosely of the great Arabian desert which

reached to the confines of Palmyra (cp. 'Tadmor in the wilderness', I Kings ix. 18).

the hissing of them. *Et sibilatus eorum* is the right reading; *et sic flatus eorum* of the ordinary Vulgate text is a corruption. Cp. the Sept. of Jer. xlvi. 22, 'like a hissing serpent'. An interesting passage from Herodotus (ii. 75) is worth quoting here: 'There is a place in Arabia situated very near the city of Buto, to which I went, on hearing of some winged serpents; and when I arrived there, I saw bones and spines of serpents in such quantities as it would be impossible to describe. . . . It is reported that, at the beginning of spring, winged serpents fly from Arabia towards Egypt. . . .'

over the earth. Over the land, i.e. Syria, is meant.

30. *the Carmonians.* This should be Carmanians and refers to the Sassanian troops under Sapor I. Carmania (Kirman) was the name of the southern province of the Parthian Empire and bordered to the north on the Iran plateau. The mention of them should come before that of 'the dragons of Arabia', for the attack of Odenathus was made after Sapor I had invaded Syria.

the wild boars of the wood. Cp. Ps. lxxx. 13 (14 in Hebr.).

the land of the Assyrians. i.e. Syria, see note on ii. 8.

31. *then shall the dragons . . .* In reference to the victory of Odenathus over Sapor I.

remembering their nature. *Nativitatis suae memores*; the writer is presumably referring to his own description of the respective peoples as 'dragons' and 'boars', according to which the former would naturally prevail.

and if they shall turn themselves . . . The use of the pronouns in this and the next verse is a little confusing; the meaning is: When they (the army of Odenathus) . . . to persecute them (the Persians), then these (the Persians) shall be troubled, and keep silence through their (the army of Odenathus) power, and shall turn and flee (i.e. the Persians).

33. *the liar in wait.* i.e. Maeonius.

and consume one of them. i.e. Odenathus.

and sedition against their kings. The reference here is probably to the revolt of the Palmyrenes against Aurelian.

xv. 34-45. As the historical references in the preceding section give clear indications as to date, it becomes possible to understand what the historical background of this section is; the vagueness of the references would otherwise make it very difficult to know what the writer had in mind. By the middle of the third century A.D. the internal state of the Roman Empire had become deplorable, and the mutinous armies made it impossible for the emperors to defend the empire from foreign enemies. The result was that the frontiers were invaded at almost every point. Of particular importance in the present connexion was the invasion of Asia Minor by the Goths and Scythians from the north of the Euxine; 'a powerful kingdom of

Goths and Sarmatians', says Rostovtzeff, 'which had grown up in south Russia, was advancing towards the lower waters of the Danube, and making descents by sea from Panticapæum upon the Eastern provinces' (*A History of the Ancient World*, ii. 309 [1927]).

34 Behold, clouds from the east and from the north unto the south, and they are very horrible to look upon, full of wrath and storm. 35 They shall dash one against another, and they shall pour out a plentiful ¹storm upon the earth, even their own star; and there shall be blood from the sword unto the horse's belly, 36 and to the thigh of man, and to the camel's hough. 37 And there shall be fearfulness and great trembling upon earth: and they that see that wrath shall be afraid, and trembling shall take hold upon them. 38 And after this shall there be stirred up great storms from the south, and from the north, and another part from the west. 39 And strong winds shall arise from the east, and shall shut it up, even the cloud which he raised in wrath; and the star that was to cause destruction by the east wind shall be violently driven toward the south and west. 40 And great clouds and mighty and full of wrath shall be lifted up, and the star, that they may destroy all the earth, and them that dwell therein; and they shall pour out over every high and eminent one a terrible star, 41 fire, and hail, and flying swords, and many waters, that all plains may be full, and all rivers, with the abundance of those waters. 42 And they shall break down the cities and walls, mountains and hills, trees of the wood, and grass of the meadows, and their corn. 43 And they shall go on stedfastly unto Babylon, and destroy her. 44 They shall come unto her, and compass her about; the star and all wrath shall they pour out upon her: then shall the dust and smoke go up unto the heaven, and all they that be about her shall bewail her. 45 And they that remain shall do service unto them that have put her in fear.

¹ *Lat. star.*

34. *from the east.* The Spanish MS. *C* adds *et ab occidenti*, which James thinks may be right; the other Spanish MS. *M* reads *oriente occidente*, which supports this.

35. *a plentiful storm.* From what is said in the preceding verse, 'storm' is evidently what is meant, but the Latin text has *sidus*, due probably to the mention of the 'star' in the next sentence.

even their own star. This refers, presumably, to one of the military leaders; but the meaning is obscure.

blood from the sword unto . . . Cp. *Enoch* c. 3: 'And the horse shall walk up to the breast in the blood of sinners, and the chariot shall be submerged to its height'; similarly Rev. xiv. 20: ' . . . and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses . . .', the writer has adapted this apocalyptic picture with further elaboration of his own.

38. *And after this shall there be . . .* It is impossible to indicate with certainty the different military movements here referred to, the writer clearly had more detailed knowledge of these than has come down to us. Lupton thinks that 'from the west' may perhaps refer 'to the insurrection of Aureolus in Italy; as, in like manner, the counterblast from the east, that was to drive back this storm-cloud, would prefigure the return march of Gallienus, when he shut and besieged the insurgents in Milan'.

39. *the cloud which he raised . . . and the star.* In view of the several nations which took part in these troubles it is too precarious to surmise who are here meant. Similarly in the following verses, the events described cannot be identified; it may be a general description of the terrible havoc wrought by the contending armies.

41. *flying swords.* It hardly seems necessary to take this in the sense of omens (Lupton); the words are omitted by one of the Spanish MSS. (*M*); cp. *Sib. Orac.* iii. 672: 'Fiery swords shall fall from heaven on the earth; great flashing torches, flaming through the midst of them'; an apocalyptic picture.

43. *Babylon.* i.e. Rome; but what the writer can be referring to in verses 44, 45 it is not possible to say.

xv. 46-63. A denunciation against 'Asia' (Odenathus) for associating himself with 'Babylon' (Rome) as co-emperor.

46 And thou, Asia, that art partaker in the beauty of Babylon, and in the glory of her person: 47 woe unto thee, thou wretch, because thou hast made thyself like unto her; thou hast decked thy daughters in whoredom, that they might please and glory in thy lovers, which have alway desired thee to commit whoredom withal! 48 Thou hast followed her that is hateful in all her works and inventions: therefore saith God, 49 I will send evils upon thee; widowhood, poverty, famine, sword, and pestilence, to waste thy houses unto destruction and death. 50 And the glory of thy power shall be dried up as a flower, when the heat shall arise that is sent over thee. 51 Thou shalt be weakened as a poor woman with stripes, and as one chastised with wounds, so that thy mighty ones and *thy* lovers thou shalt not be able to

receive. 52 Would I with jealousy have so proceeded against thee, saith the Lord, 53 if thou hadst not always slain my chosen, exalting the stroke of thine hands, and saying over their ¹dead, when thou wast drunken, 54 Set forth the beauty of thy countenance? 55 The reward of a harlot shall be in thy bosom, therefore shalt thou receive recompense. 56 Like as thou shalt do unto my chosen, saith the Lord, even so shall God do unto thee, and shall deliver thee into mischief. 57 And thy children shall die of hunger, and thou shalt fall by the sword: and thy cities shall be broken down, and all thine shall perish by the sword in the field. 58 And they that be in the mountains shall die of hunger, and eat their own flesh, and drink *their own* blood, for very hunger of bread, and thirst of water. 59 Thou unhappy above all shalt come and shalt again receive evils. 60 And in the passage they shall rush on the ²idle city, and shall destroy some portion of thy land, and mar part of thy glory, and shall return again to Babylon that was destroyed. 61 And thou shalt be cast down by them as stubble, and they shall be unto thee as fire; 62 and shall devour thee, and thy cities, thy land, and thy mountains; all thy woods and thy fruitful trees shall they burn up with fire. 63 They shall carry thy children away captive, and shall spoil thy wealth, and mar the glory of thy face.

¹ Lat. *death*.

² Another reading is, *hateful*.

46. *Asia*. i.e. Odenathus, whose kingdom, after his defeat of Sapor I, was an Asiatic power.

partaker in the beauty. i.e. in the power and position of Rome as the great world-power. The Vulgate reads *concors in spem*, which in this context is inappropriate.

47. *woe unto thee* . . . The exaggerative expressions here used may be due to the writer's elaboration of what is said in Rev. xiv. 8: 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which had made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication'; xvii. 4, 5: 'And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet . . . even the unclean things of her fornication, and upon her forehead a name written, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the abominations of the earth"'; cp. also xviii. 2, 3.

52-4. In these verses 'Asia' is addressed, the reference being to Aurelian's victory over Zenobia, which is ascribed to the act of God. 'With jealousy' would be better expressed by 'with zeal'.

53. *slain my chosen*. Whether this refers to Jews or Christians depends upon the view taken regarding the author; unlike chaps. i, ii there is nothing specifically Christian in these chapters (the New Testament references in xvi. 18-78 are Christian interpolations); the references to the book of Revelation do not necessarily point to Christian authorship as this book comes largely from Jewish apocalyptic sources. It is also to be noted that in these chapters there is no denunciation of the Jews such as is found in chaps. i, ii.

54. *Set forth the beauty . . . i.e. a mocking of the dead*.

61 ff. A reference to the defeat of Zenobia and the fall of Palmyra.

xvi. 1-17. A woe against Babylon, Asia, Egypt, and Syria. The dreadful condition of the world in general depicted in this section may well be in reference to the decades of anarchy and war which only ceased with the advent of Diocletian to the imperial throne, when, for a time at least, he restored order. All the terrors which came upon mankind during these times are directly ascribed to God. No particular events are referred to; it is a vivid description of the general state of destruction and calamity under which the world was groaning.

XVI. 1 Woe unto thee, Babylon, and Asia! woe unto thee, Egypt, and Syria! 2 Gird up yourselves with sackcloth and garments of hair, and bewail your children, and lament; for your destruction is at hand. 3 A sword is sent upon you, and who is he that may turn it back? 4 A fire is sent upon you, and who is he that may quench it? 5 Evils are sent upon you, and who is he that may drive them away? 6 May one drive away a hungry lion in the wood? or may one quench the fire in stubble, when it hath once begun to burn? 7 May one turn again the arrow that is shot of a strong archer? 8 The Lord God sendeth the evils, and who shall drive them away? 9 A fire shall go forth from his wrath, and who is he that may quench it? 10 He shall cast lightning, and who shall not fear? he shall thunder, and who shall not tremble? 11 The Lord shall threaten, and who shall not be utterly broken in pieces at his presence? 12 The earth quaketh, and the foundations thereof; the sea ariseth up with waves from the deep, and the waves of it shall be troubled, and the fishes thereof also, at the presence of the Lord, and before the glory of his power: 13 for strong is his right hand that bendeth the bow, his arrows that he shooteth are sharp, and shall not miss, when they begin to be shot into the ends of the

world. 14 Behold, the evils are sent forth, and shall not return again, until they come upon the earth. 15 The fire is kindled, and shall not be put out, till it consume the foundations of the earth. 16 Like as an arrow which is shot of a mighty archer returneth not backward, even so the evils that are sent forth upon earth shall not return again. 17 Woe is me! woe is me! who will deliver me in those days ?

XVI. 1. *Babylon . . .* By Babylon here is meant not merely Rome, but the whole Roman Empire; the mention of the other three lands means that the whole world of those days is addressed.

2. *sackcloth and garments of hair.* Signs of mourning and humiliation, cp. II Sam. iii. 31, Am. viii. 10, Rev. vi. 12, 'the sun became black as sackcloth of hair', Isa. l. 3.

15. . . . *till it consume . . . the earth.* Cp. II Peter iii. 10, an apocalyptic *trait* borrowed originally from Persian eschatology; cp. *Sib. Orac.* iv. 173 ff.: 'Then shall fire come upon the whole world . . . And he (i.e. God) shall burn the whole earth . . .'

xvi. 18-67. This long and rambling section is, in the main, written in the style of the Old Testament prophets to whom the writer is often indebted for words and phrases. There are also some quotations and reminiscences from the New Testament; these, in all probability, do not belong to the original form of the section; the haphazard and disjointed way in which the sentences are put down makes interpolations very easy.

18 The beginning of sorrows, and *there shall be* great mournings; the beginning of famine, and many shall perish; the beginning of wars, and the powers shall stand in fear; the beginning of evils, and all shall tremble! what shall they do in *all this* when the evils shall come? 19 Behold, famine and plague, tribulation and anguish! they are sent as scourges for amendment. 20 But for all these things they shall not turn them from their wickedness, nor be always mindful of the scourges. 21 Behold, victuals shall be so good cheap upon earth, that they shall think themselves to be in good case, and even then shall evils grow upon earth, sword, famine, and great confusion. 22 For many of them that dwell upon earth shall perish of famine; and the other, that escape the famine, shall the sword destroy. 23 And the dead shall be cast out as dung, and there shall be no man to comfort them: for the earth shall be left

desolate, and the cities thereof shall be cast down. 24 There shall be no husbandman left to till the earth, and to sow it. 25 The trees shall give fruit, and who shall gather them? 26 The grapes shall ripen, and who shall tread them? for in *all* places there shall be a great forsaking: 27 for one man shall desire to see another, or to hear his voice. 28 For of a city there shall be ten left, and two of the field, which have hidden themselves in the thick groves, and in the clefts of the rocks. 29 As in an orchard of olives upon every tree there be left three or four olives, 30 or as when a vineyard is gathered there be some clusters left by them that diligently seek through the vineyard; 31 even so in those days there shall be three or four left by them that search their houses with the sword. 32 And the earth shall be left desolate, and the fields thereof shall be for briers, and her ways and all her paths shall bring forth thorns, because no sheep shall pass therethrough. 33 The virgins shall mourn, having no bridegrooms; the women shall mourn, having no husbands; their daughters shall mourn, having no helpers. 34 In the wars shall their bridegrooms be destroyed, and their husbands shall perish of famine.

35 Hear now these things, and understand them, ye servants of the Lord. 36 Behold, the word of the Lord, receive it: disbelieve not the things whereof the Lord speaketh. 37 Behold, the evils draw nigh, and are not slack. 38 Like as a woman with child in the ninth month, when the hour of her delivery draweth near, within two or three hours doleful pains compass her womb, and when the child cometh forth from the womb, there shall be no tarrying for a moment: 39 even so shall not the evils be slack to come upon the earth, and the world shall groan, and sorrows shall take hold of it on every side. 40 O my people, hear my word: make you ready to the battle, and in those evils be even as pilgrims upon the earth. 41 He that selleth, let him be as he that fleeth away: and he that buyeth, as one that will lose: 42 he that occupieth merchandise, as he that hath no profit by it: and he that buildeth, as he that shall not dwell therein: 43 he that soweth, as if he should not reap: so also he that pruneth *the vines*, as he that shall not gather the grapes: 44 they that marry, as they that shall get no children; and they that marry not, as the widowed. 45 Inasmuch as they that labour

labour in vain ; 46 for strangers shall reap their fruits, and spoil their goods, overthrow their houses, and take their children captive, for in captivity and famine shall they beget their children : 47 and they that traffick traffick to become a spoil : the more they deck their cities, their houses, their possessions, and their own persons, 48 the more will I hate them for their sins, saith the Lord. 49 Like as a right honest and virtuous woman hateth a harlot, 50 so shall righteousness hate iniquity, when she decketh herself, and shall accuse her to her face, when he cometh that shall defend him that diligently searcheth out every sin upon earth.

51 Therefore be ye not like thereunto, nor to the works thereof. 52 For yet a little while, and iniquity shall be taken away out of the earth, and righteousness shall reign over us. 53 Let not the sinner say that he hath not sinned : for he shall burn coals of fire upon his head, which saith, I have not sinned before God and his glory. 54 Behold, the Lord knoweth all the works of men, their imaginations, their thoughts, and their hearts. 55 Who said, Let the earth be made ; and it was made : Let the heaven be made ; and it was made. 56 And at his word were the stars established, and he knoweth the number of the stars. 57 Who searcheth the deep, and the treasures thereof ; he hath measured the sea, and what it containeth. 58 Who hath shut the sea in the midst of the waters, and with his word hath he hanged the earth upon the waters. 59 Who spreadeth out the heaven like a vault ; upon the waters hath he founded it. 60 Who hath made in the desert springs of water, and pools upon the tops of the mountains, to send forth rivers from the height to water the earth. 61 Who framed man, and put a heart in the midst of the body, and gave him breath, life, and understanding, 62 yea, the spirit of God Almighty. He who made all things, and searcheth out hidden things in hidden places, 63 surely he knoweth your imagination, and what ye think in your hearts. Woe to them that sin, and would fain hide their sin ! 64 Forasmuch as the Lord will exactly search out all your works, and he will put you all to shame. 65 And when your sins are brought forth before men, ye shall be ashamed, and your own iniquities shall stand as your accusers in that day. 66 What will ye do ? or how will ye hide your sins before God and his angels ?

67 Behold, God is the judge, fear him: leave off from your sins, and forget your iniquities, to meddle no more with them for ever: so shall God lead you forth, and deliver you from all tribulation.

19. *as scourges for amendment.* This is in accordance with an often recurring doctrine of the prophets: God brings calamities upon his people in order to turn their hearts to Him; cp. also Prov. iii. 11, 12.

21. *Behold, victuals . . .* The sudden, but fleeting, plenty will only aggravate the evils.

so good cheap. 'An expression often found in old writers, answering to the French *à bon marché*' (Lupton).

38, 39. These words recall what in the apocalyptic writings are spoken of as the 'birth-pangs' of sufferings of the Messiah, i.e. the time of travail which is to precede the advent of the Messianic Age; cp. Matth. xxiv. 8, Mark xiii. 9, 'All these things are the beginning of travail.' The idea was deduced from such passages as Hos. xiii. 13 ff., Joel ii. 10 ff., Mic. vii. 1-6, Zech. xiv. 6 ff., Dan. xii. 1. The verses under consideration are not, it is true, in an apocalyptic setting, but both they and other indications in the section suggest the adaptation of apocalyptic thought which seems to have been at the back of the writer's mind.

41-4. These verses are strongly reminiscent of I Cor. vii. 29-31.

49-50. *Like as a right honest . . .* As James says: 'It is clear that *justitia* must answer to *mulier bona* and *iniquitas* to *fornicaria*. We must read *fornicariam mulier idonea et bona valde* with S**.'

xvi. 68-78. The concluding section of this part of the book seems to be referring to some definite event; but where there is no indication of date, and where the allusions are not sufficiently precise, and might refer to more than one event, it is difficult to decide what that event may have been. Nevertheless, it may be stated with some confidence that there are some grounds for the belief that the writer had the persecution of Decius (A.D. 249-51) in mind when he wrote; the reasons for this contention will be briefly given in the notes. But if this is, indeed, the case, it will follow that this last section comes, in all probability, from an author different from the rest of these chapters (xv, xvi). There are reasons for believing that, apart from this section, they may have been written by a Jew; but verses 68-78 must have come from the hand of a Christian.

68 For, behold, the burning wrath of a great multitude is kindled over you, and they shall take away certain of you, and feed you with that which is slain unto idols. 69 And they that consent unto them shall be had in derision and in reproach, and be trodden under foot of them. 70 For there shall be ¹in divers

¹ The Latin is uncertain.

places, and in the next cities, a great insurrection upon those that fear the Lord. 71 They shall be like mad men, sparing none, but spoiling and destroying them that still fear the Lord. 72 For they shall waste and take away their goods, and cast them out of their houses. 73 Then shall be manifest the trial of mine elect; even as the gold that is tried in the fire. 74 Hear, O ye mine elect, saith the Lord: behold, the days of tribulation are at hand, and I will deliver you from them. 75 Be ye not afraid, neither doubt; for God is your guide: 76 and ye who keep my commandments and precepts, saith the Lord God, let not your sins weigh you down, and let not your iniquities lift up themselves. 77 Woe unto them that are fast bound with their sins, and covered with their iniquities, like as a field is fast bound with bushes, and the path thereof covered with thorns, that no man may travel through! 78 ¹It is even shut off, and given up to be consumed of fire.

¹ Or, *They are every one shut out, &c.*

68. *the burning wrath of . . .* This may well be in reference to the action of the Roman populace against the Christians as a result of the edict of Decius in the winter of A.D. 250. There was a strong movement under this emperor in favour of the ancient pagan religion; the first step in this would naturally be against those who were its foremost enemies. The persecution started in Rome where Decius endeavoured to purify the city of those who were believed to have been, through their enmity to the ancient religion, one of the main causes of the misfortunes from which the empire had suffered at the hands of the Goths.

. . . *that which is slain unto idols.* The first demand made upon the Christians was to offer sacrifice to heathen deities, and, as this passage shows, they were forced to partake of the victims offered (cp. Acts xv. 20, xxi. 25; I Cor. viii. 1 ff.).

69. *they that consent unto them.* Early Church writers, especially Cyprian, tell of the weakened faith of many Christians at this time, and deplore the want of zeal and steadfastness; numbers of Christians, it is said, were willing to offer sacrifice.

shall be had in derision. Doubtless a reference to the bolder spirits who were ready to obtain the crown of martyrdom.

trodden under foot. Possibly we have a reference here to the subsequent treatment of the *Lapsi* and *Libellatici* (Cyprian, *De Lapsis*, passim).

70. *For there shall be in divers places.* The Vulgate text, *erit enim locis locus*, is clearly corrupt, read, . . . *locis multis* (Fritzsche).

in the next cities. i.e. neighbouring cities (*vicinas*). Many of the great cities of the Empire followed the example of Rome; Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.* vi. 40, 41) mentions especially Alexandria.

insurrection. A rising up against.

71, 72. A very clear account of persecution.

73. *even as the gold that is tried . . .* Cp. Zech. xiii. 9, I Pet. i. 7.

77, 78. A denunciation against those who had failed to remain steadfast.

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