IT is well known to students of Apocryphal literature that a whole region of that fascinating, but perplexing, subject is covered by works assigned to Jeremiah and his companions, in which the fortunes of an exiled nation are depicted and their hopes of resuscitation and of return are affirmed, with a guarded language and obscure intimations for which Apocalypse is the proper and recognised vehicle. All the great historic figures of the Old Testament, or such as were by common consent regarded as historic, become in turn the lay-figures for the drapery of the Apocalyptist when he wishes to paint approaching desolations, or, in the depth of such desolations, to announce the approaching consolations of Israel. We might say that in Jewish literature (including its prolongation in Christian literature), Apocalypse reigned from Adam to Bar Kochba: but even this lower limit is not
low enough; for there are Apocalypses produced right down to the Middle Ages, whenever days were dark enough to require, or a distant and brightening horizon to suggest them. The rise of Islam is as good ground for an Apocalyptic literature as the various sieges of Jerusalem; Mohammed can be as suggestive as Vespasian or Titus. And when we find as in the present tract a new member of the company which bear the names of Jeremiah and his friends, we need not be surprised that the tradition has lasted so long; we may say of Jeremiah that he being dead yet speaketh; and as a matter of fact, he has been dead just as many times as he may be wanted to speak; so here he is again, as vocal as ever, and we must try and find the date and the provenance of his latest resurrection.

All the great Apocalypses fall, as I think I said somewhere, within the penumbra of the Canonical literature, some of them being actually canonised. Jeremiah and his disciple Baruch will supply us with illustrations. We have not only the Biblical Baruch, but there is also the Apocalypse of Baruch, preserved in Syriac and first edited by Ceriani. As we have shown in a recent publication of Bar Şalibi's reply to a Melchite proselytiser, this Syriac Apocalypse was clearly a part of Bar Şalibi's Canon; and the reference to it here may illustrate the way in which the frontier of the Canon fluctuates from time to time and from country to country. A somewhat similar illustration may be found in the Greek Apocalypse which I re-edited in 1889 under the title of the *Rest of the Words of Baruch*, and which I assigned to the year 136 A.D., for here we found that the Greek Service Books actually appoint this book to be read on the day when they commemorate with the Jews the fall of the beloved city. We must admit that the *Rest of the Words of Baruch* has crept up very close to canonical dignity. When I was editing this work (of which more presently) I made the following observation (p. 9):

"In addition to the three Baruch books to which we have been alluding (Apocryphal Baruch, or simply Baruch, Apocalyptic Baruch, and Christian Baruch) it is very likely that there are other Baruch and Jeremiah books which have perished."

How interesting to find one of these lost books coming to light again, nearly forty years after the published lament for its disappear-
ance: and to myself, how peculiarly interesting to find that the new volume (as we shall see presently) incorporates a large part of what was included in the Christian Baruch, and that it has fallen into my hands to be interpreted, and into the hands of Dr. Mingana, my good friend and colleague in all matters where I am able to accompany him.

The reader will see, at a glance, that the recovered document has come to light from an unexpected quarter. It is a Christian Arabic book, which we distinguish from the actually translated works of Christian fathers in the Arabic tongue, by the term Garshuni; that is, it is a book written in Syriac characters, but in the Arabic language, the said language being commonly popular speech rather than the classical or semi-classical variety. We may imagine that the reason for this duality in the presentation of Christian books, according to which an author speaks in one tongue and writes in another, was sometimes due to the desire to escape Moslem criticism. There was a kind of protection, a guarantee of free speech, about a book written in the Syriac character. Such a protection was appropriate to books like this Apocalypse of ours, which could add to the obscurity inherent in the subject the impenetrability of a scarcely legible script. Popular writings escaped notice and veiled writings became more obscure when transmitted through the medium of Garshuni. Our document is a good illustration of this: the obscurity which it affects has prevented scholars from invading the area in which it is found. We expect to see a number of similar documents, and we will make a personal confession, in view of what is to be found, that we will not, in the future, as we have done in the past, despise a document because it is written in what we have called Christian Arabic.

Now let us make a brief analysis of the book before us. We will give a summary of its contents, and after that will discuss the sources from which the writer has drawn and the relation of the book to the Apocalyptic literature generally. We premise that much of the Garshuni literature to which we have been referring is translated from Syriac into the popular Arabic; the present book is no exception to the general rule: it is a Syriac book; whence the Syriac text came from is another matter. We shall probably find out that there is a Greek text underlying the Syriac. The story begins in true Biblical manner and often in the very terms of the Old Testament with the messages of Jeremiah the prophet to King Zedekiah and to the
people of Jerusalem. They have abandoned Jahweh and gone after Baal and Zeus (I). Judgment is threatened to prince and people. Thereupon Jeremiah is thrown into a muddy prison, as in the Old Testament, after a dramatic dispute with a false prophet, Hananiah, whom again we recognise as an ancient Biblical friend. Jeremiah is rescued from the mire by his servant Ebedmelech, who now becomes as in the Bible a leading character in the Passion Play of Jeremiah. The prophet under Divine compulsion goes a second time to King Zedekiah and renews the vision of approaching judgment, chains and slavery for the king, captivity and massacre for the people. Jeremiah sends his disciple Baruch to the king with a letter in which the word of the Lord is contained (apparently an Apocalypse of some sort). Baruch gets a flogging. Jeremiah is sent for; he utters further Biblical announcements of the coming of the Chaldeans. He is promptly sent back to prison, where he would have died, if it had not been for the friendly offices of his servant Ebedmelech, who bribes the gaoler and keeps alive the saint. After twenty-one days he is released, and it is promised to Ebedmelech that he shall not see the ruin of the city nor taste death until the calamity of the people is past and the wrath of God removed. This mysterious promise and its fulfilment will become the foundation of a whole Act of the sacred drama. Meanwhile Zedekiah goes from bad to worse; he desecrates the sanctuary, which he transfers to Baal and Zeus, and does many impious deeds (which remind one in some details of Herod the Great). At last the crash comes! Jeremiah’s prayers have now only a limited acceptance. The Almighty sends his angels on to the scene. Michael goes to Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon and incites him to war against the Jews. To our surprise we find that the King of Babylon objects; he is a friend of the Jews, not an enemy! He does not want to hurt the people of God. He sends great gifts and a special embassy to Jerusalem. For some reason not very clear the King of Babylon is enraged with the reception of his embassy, and he calls on Cyrus (sic!), his general, to prepare war. But he is still very reluctant, and only moves forward under a sign from heaven. The Chaldeans approach Jerusalem. In the interim Ebedmelech is sent into the country to fetch fresh fruits and to sleep a long sleep through the approaching captivity. The writer now begins to use the Last Words of Baruch, as we shall see more clearly presently.
When Nebuchadnezzar, for whom the writer has a kindly feeling, with the aid of Cyrus, for whom he, strange to say, has no affection, has taken the city, he calls for Jeremiah whom he recognises as a true prophet. Jeremiah makes his last appeal to the Most High, but he is told to take a lamp and see if he can find a single honest man, for whose sake the city may be spared. Jeremiah is now playing the part of Abraham the Patriarch and Diogenes the Cynic, but cannot find his honest man. Knowing the city to be doomed, he makes plans for secreting the vessels and the vestments of the sanctuary, and for the preservation of the Holy Fire, as in the books of the Maccabees. He then puts on sackcloth and marches to Babylon with the captives. The horrors of deportation are told, and the toils and privations of the people are described. So matters go on for the allotted seventy years until Nebuchadnezzar dies and is succeeded by his general Cyrus, who makes the lot of the people worse with added burdens and increasing cruelties.

At this point of the story Ezra comes on the scene, a person who will be wanted in the time of the regeneration of Israel. He is one of the children of the captivity, and naturally suffers with the rest of the Israelite youth from the over-lordship of the Babylonian boys. The writer borrows a framework for introducing Ezra from the Gospel of the Infancy. Like Jesus, he breaks his pitcher at the well, and when the boys deride him, he folds his cloak into a water-tight carrier. Then incensed in heart, and grieved with their contempt, he pours out supplication to the Most High. The prayer and the miracle mark him out as the one who shall deliver the people from captivity. Ezra and his companions thereupon separate themselves from the wanton Babylonian boys, and Ezra works another miracle and raises a flood of water which well-nigh drowned the world, and would indeed have done so, if God had not already made contract against such a disaster.

Cyrus is now on the throne. He insists on a song from the refugees of seventy years ago; when the people sing, the earth quakes and the song is heard in Jerusalem. Evidently the day of redemption is at hand. Ezra and Daniel and Ezekiel then lay their heads together and go out into the wilderness to offer a sacrifice to God and to seek a sign from heaven. Michael is sent down and consumes their sacrifice by fire which he produces from his wand.
Now let us return to Jeremiah, who appears after all not to have left the city, but remained in a sepulchre. (There seems to be some confusion here.) Here Michael the archangel finds him resuming his intercessions for Israel. Michael takes him to Babylon, or finds him there, and bids him assemble the people, who are busy making bricks as in Egypt, and promises him that if Cyrus hardens his heart like Pharaoh, he shall be served as Pharaoh was. Cyrus takes the hint, plays Pharaoh faithfully, and then the thunder clouds of divine wrath appear in the sky. Let my people go, says the prophet. Yes, do go, says Babylon: and away they go with their hearts full of joy and their pockets full of money; and they sing a song in a strange land, because they are exchanging it for their fatherland.

Now we come to the sleeper who had gone to the gardens to fetch fruit, figs, and grapes. He has fallen asleep in the heat, with the basket under his head, while over him a cave or rock had made shelter. This part of the story is a modification of that in the Last Words of Baruch, but wanting somewhat of the dramatic force of the latter. Still it is not wholly lacking. It is a fine situation when one wakes from a sleep of seventy years and finds everything changed except himself and his basket of figs, which are as fresh as if they too had slept. The old man whom he meets, with whom he has a chronological dispute, tells him that Jeremiah has just returned from captivity, and the people are jubilating and the flags flying, and it is like the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Triumphal Entry, for which the writer quotes the Diatessaron of Tatian. Ebedmelech has a great welcome from Jeremiah, and great honour from the people, who indite a song of praise in the good Hebrew manner for all that has occurred.

The rest of the story relates to the discovery and restoration of the lost vessels of the sanctuary, which Jeremiah puts in their proper place, and the vestments on the proper people; while on all hands a new covenant is assented to, for a fresh allegiance to Jahweh, and a final desertion of Baal and of Zeus. The story does not say what became of Jeremiah, who ought to be stoned, according to the tradition in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Last Words of Baruch. But perhaps the writer thought it best not to attach the gloom of a tragedy to the joys of the Return. So he only says that while Jeremiah lived, the people were faithful to their covenant.
We may now go on to say something about the time when our Apocrypha was produced, which depends in part on the sources which have been employed. The simplest method of proceeding will be to establish superior limits of time, by reference to authors quoted whose date is more or less exactly defined.

For example, we have suggested that our Jeremiah has employed an incident in the Apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy, where Jesus carries water in his cloak, after his pitcher has been broken. It may be asked how we know that priority belongs to the Gospel of the Infancy. May not Jesus' miracle have copied Ezra's, since both are apocryphal? The answer to this is very simple; we know the reason for the Jesus miracle, and the reason, when stated, excludes the possible borrowing from Jeremiah. The Gospel of the Infancy is concerned with the proofs of the Divine Nature of Christ, especially of Christ as Creator, fulfilling his own statement that the Son does the same works as the Father. Now amongst the proof-texts which the Old Testament was supposed to furnish for this argument, there is in the book of Proverbs, at the 30th chapter, a fine poetical outburst taken from some Oriental collection, in which the reader is asked:

"Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?"

The passage was supposed to contain a reference to the Son of God; and by the simple expedient of a miraculous carrying of water in a garment, the argument for Divine Sonship became irresistible.

We see, then, the origin of the story in the Infancy Gospel: it is not borrowed from the Apocryphal Jeremiah, but conversely. The date of the Infancy Gospel has never been closely fixed, but it occurs in many versions and has very early MS. tradition, so that it is hardly likely to be as late as the fourth century. Another landmark was

1 Its most popular story is the one where Jesus makes mud sparrows, and bids them fly away, a tale which caught the fancy of Mohammed. It will be noted that this story, also, is designed to prove Christ's creative power, in accordance with the dictum of the Almighty in the first chapter of Genesis, which caused fowl to fly upon the face of the firmament. It is curious in this
the reference in the text of Jeremiah to the rejoicings of the people on their return from captivity, which are cast in the mould of the Triumphal Entry of Jesus to Jerusalem and expressed in the terms of the Arabic Diatessaron of Tatian. The matter is so interesting from various points of view, that we may devote a little space to it.

When Ebedmelech comes back from his long sleep at Jerusalem, and has been convinced of the reality of that portentous ecstasy by an old man whom he meets, the latter says to him:

"This month is the month of Nisan, and this day is the first day in which the prophet Jeremiah reached Jerusalem, after a stay of seventy years in captivity. The words that you utter square with one another. Lo! the people are coming, bringing with them branches of palm trees, and holding in their hands twigs of aromatic bushes and olive trees."

It is evident that the language is here coloured by the account of the Triumphal Entry, and the reference to the carrying of palm branches shows that it is the Gospel of John that is being drawn on. The language itself is peculiar; the text says 'hearts of palm trees' or 'pith of palm trees'. Now in an early Irish Gospel (known as Cod. v or Armachanus) we get a similar rendering of the βατα of John xiii. 2 (medullas palmarum). Comparison with other attempts to render the word into Latin suggests that this is the first Latin rendering, and since we get a similar translation in the Syriac version of Lev. xxiii., 40, where the feast of Tabernacles is described, as well as in the Arabic Diatessaron, we may say that it is a Syriac Gospel of John, which has furnished the 'pith of the palms' both to East and West. This must then be Tatian's translation, made under the influence of the Peshitta of the Old Testament. Since then our Apocryphal Jeremiah is describing a Jerusalem situation, it is John xxxiii., 2 that has influenced him, and not the prescriptions for the Feast of Tabernacles. The date of production of Diatessaron, then, is a superior limit of time to our Apocryphon. A reference to the margins and footnotes will show that the Apocryphal writer has a close acquaintance with the text of the Gospels generally, and that he is connection to note that the Kur'än (ix, 30) maintains the divinity of Christ as a Christian dogma and the divinity of Ezra as a Jewish belief. Perhaps in either case on account of the argument from Prov. xxx, and its illustrated miracle.
under the influence of the Infancy sections both in Matthew and in Luke. With almost equal confidence we may affirm that he was acquainted with the Apocryphal Book of Enoch, from whom he borrows an archangel (Satanael) upon occasion. He also knows the seven archangels of Enoch. For the matter of that, it would be difficult to find a writer of this period, whether canonical or apocryphal, who is not under the influence of Enoch.

We come now to the most obvious of all the sources employed by our writer: a large part of his story, viz. the adventures of Ebedmelech, is taken from the Last Words of Baruch. This work acquires a special interest for us in view of its partial absorption by the newly found Apocalypse; and, as I said above, it is one of my earliest publications, which I am reading again with some satisfaction and with the inclusion of some corrections. In the editing of this text, or rather its re-editing from a number of fresh sources, I had the advantage of the counsel and vastly superior knowledge of Dr. Hort. If his name does not appear on the pages, it was due to his characteristic self-effacement in the work which he did for his colleagues and disciples. For instance, when I was trying to find out why, in the story of Abimelech, the good man had been sent to the market of the Gentiles, according to one of my principal MSS., I consulted Dr. Hort as to the meaning of the term, which was too striking to be other than original. He asked me what was my best MS., and what did my best MS. say? Then a characteristic advice, 'always stick to your best MS.' Nothing further at the time, but next morning there lay on the breakfast-table a closely-written post-card with references for the fair that was set up, when the last Jewish revolt was over, at the Oak of Abraham. In that identification which I promptly worked out, I was certainly a jay in peacock's feathers.

When the book appeared, it was received rather coldly by a certain school of critics, because I had found the date of the document, and involved in that discovery a quotation from the Gospel of John, the earliest known quotation. This would hardly provoke resentment at the present day, when it has ceased to be the fashion to talk of the Fourth Gospel as the product of the latter half of the second century. Critics are not so positive on that point as they were in Dr. Samuel Davidson's day; in other words, they allow other people to know better.
In the working out of the theme of the long sleep of Abimelech or Ebedmelech, I fell into a curious error. Reading in Maracci the account of the Moslem appropriation of the story of the long sleep and the basket of figs, and not being sufficiently adroit in the Kūrān and its commentators, I transcribed the Latin name of the Arabic sleeper in Maracci as Alchedrum, taking the Latin accusative as the proper name. Only two letters in excess, but those two letters brought me a prompt correction from my friend Robertson Smith, who was always ready to help me, and a thousandfold better Orientalist than I, in which he advised me that I had stumbled over the romantic sleeping figure of the Kūrān al Khīdr. A similar correction reached me from Rabbi Kohler of New York, along with some Talmudic parallels, followed by the flattering request (to which I was not disposed to accede) that I would edit the article on Apocrypha in the Jewish Encyclopedia. Dr. Robertson Smith's letter was so interesting, and so like himself, that I am going to subjoin it to my story.

Cambridge,
17th October, 1890,

My dear Harris,

In your Baruch, p. 41, your Alchedrum whom you have from Maracci is of course Al-Khadir or Al-Khīdr, a very obscure personage, who is sometimes regarded as the Moslem St. George. That some doctors suppose him to be the person alluded to in Sura ii., 261 Maracci has (no doubt) from Baidāwī's note on the passage. I think you must be right in supposing that Sura ii., 261 contains an allusion to the story of Abimelech; but did the commentators, who say that Al-Khadir, is the person referred to, say this at a guess, or had they some knowledge of their own about the Christian legend?

I have to remark first of all that the identification of Al-Khadir with the man who slept for 100 years might be suggested by the legend (Ṭabarī i., 412) that Al-Khadir, a companion of Alexander, drank of the water of life (which has a prominent place in the Alexander Romance) and is still alive. Nevertheless it is notable that Ṭabarī also connects him with Abraham and with the dispute about the possession of the well of Beersheba. Abraham is said to have brought this dispute to Alexander (Dhu 'l-Karnain is Alexander, tho' Ṭabarī mentions that some take him to be a different person) and the well was adjudged to Al-Khadir. This looks as if Al-Kh. were mixed up with Abimelech, king of Gerar. That your Abimelech
and the Philistine king should be mixed up will surprise no one who knows the Arab way of using Biblical stories. That great liar the Jew Wahb b. Monabbih identified Al-Khadir with Jeremiah. This too might be a mere guess—the city being Jerusalem—or it may indicate some confused acquaintance with your story. Finally Al-Khadir is commonly taken to be son of Malkān. The patronymic Ibn-Malkān does suggest Abimelech. Of these points the only one that seems to me important is the association with Beersheba. That goes far to prove that the expositors of the Qurān knew your story and connected it with Sura ii., 261.

Yours ever,

(Signed)  W. R. SMITH.

Rabbi Kohler, to whom I alluded above, was as quick as Dr. Robertson Smith to correct my slip over the Moslem sleeper; but he also sent me a mass of Talmudic references, which were marked by the usual Hebrew diversity in dealing with a supposed historical event with a possible chronology. He regarded the Last Words as an original Hebrew book from an Essene writer, and that the victim of popular anger who was stoned in Jerusalem was not Jeremiah, but an Essene hero named Onias, of whom the Talmud tells in Taanith, chapter 3. He also pointed out to me that there was Rabbinical tradition for actually identifying Ebedmelech and Baruch (see Pirke Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 53), and that Ebedmelech was actually made (as in our new Apocryphon) into the servant of King Zedekiah the Distinguished One. Neither the Rabbi nor myself was able to explain the series of anachronisms in the Talmudic treatment of what was evidently a favourite subject; and as to the existence of a Hebrew original for all these various forms of legend, I am content to leave the matter in the hands of those who are better skilled in detecting Hebrew originals than myself.

As it is nearly forty years since the Rest of the Words of Baruch appeared, and I have hardly looked at it since, it has been possible for me to regard it dispassionately, and to say that it really was not a bad book, and might have had a more favourable reception. There is still a good deal to be learned from its pages by the student of Apocrypha. Returning now to the relation between the Last Words and the new Baruch, the priority of the Last Words which turned out not to be the Last Words, will be evident. One of the most striking variations is in the geography of the writer. I was able to show that the Last Words, like its predecessor the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch, was a Jerusalem book, in which one could see
Hebron rise to the south of Jerusalem, and pass on the way thither the gardens of Agrippa, which could be reached either by the main road to Hebron or by the mountain road to Solomon's pools. The modern tourist in Palestine would recognise the provenance of the writer at once. But it was this very exactness of locality which perplexed the later Apocalyptist. He wanted figs, but saw no reason why the gardens of Agrippa should supply them; and as for the mountain road, it might just as well have been the Milky Way. He drops all these identifications, including the *Fair at the Terebinth* where the Jews were sold cheap, as slaves, after the Hadrianic war—in fact he had no geography and wanted none. All that his story needed was a cave for the sleeper and a basket of fruit. The other details have evidently been excised. The hand is not a Jerusalem hand as in the case of the earlier documents.

In passing, we ought, perhaps, to add to what we said previously about the acquaintance of our writer with Christian Gospels. We spoke of Matthew and Luke, but ought not Mark to be also on the horizon? For when we read that the old man argues with Abimelech over his figs and says that this is the month Nisan and Nisan (April) is not the season for figs, we are reminded that the very same expression is used in Mark, when Jesus, on His way from Bethany to Jerusalem, essayed to satisfy His hunger from a certain fig-tree. If, however, this is a Marcan trait, it is also found in the *Last Words*, and must not be set down as a first-hand quotation. Just as the writer obscures the geographical solution, he also destroys the chronology. Seventy years of captivity was classical, but sixty-six was meaningless. Here again the superiority and priority of the *Last Words* was evident. The later MSS. of the *Last Words* fell into the same natural error.

We must now say a few words on the question of the existence or extent of Jewish influences in our new document. A similar enquiry was raised in regard to the *Last Words of Baruch* which was asserted, in certain quarters, to be a bona-fide Jewish document, in spite of the fact that it was obviously coloured by the Christian Gospels. In our new text we have also passages which look like evangelical reflections, but at the same time there are other passages which require the Talmud, or at least the folk-lore traditions embedded in the Talmud, for their elucidation. The most interesting case is that
in which the wife of Nebuchadnezzar makes a personal appeal to him not to engage in hostile movements against the Jews. She bursts into tears when she is informed of her husband's designs. 'What king is there,' says she, 'that engaged in warfare with this people, and was saved? Dost thou not know that this is the people of God, and that everything that they ask from God they obtain it forthwith?' The queen's name is Hilkiah, which, whether masculine or feminine, has a Hebrew cast, and suggests that the lady may have been a captive or a pervert.

Now if we turn to the Talmud, Taanith, xxiv. 2, we find a similar story told of the mother of the Persian king Shapor II.: we notice that here it is the mother and not the wife that makes the appeal:

"Iphra Hormiz, the mother of King Shapor, said to her son, 'Have nothing to do with those Jews, for whatever they ask from their Lord, he gives it to them.' He says to her, 'How so?' She replied, 'They asked for mercy and the rain came.' He said to her, 'It was because of the time of the year that the rain came. But let them ask for rain now, in the time of the summer solstice, and let the rain come.' Whereupon she sent a messenger to Rabbah and said, 'Have a care of yourself; implore mercy and rain will come.'"

This lady, whose name, as we have seen, was Iphra Hormiz, is frequently referred to in the Talmud, so that it has been suspected that she was a Jewish proselyte.

Evidently we have stumbled, in our new Apocalypse, upon the same story that occurs in the Talmud. We must not, however, conclude that there has been direct Jewish influence on our Apocalypse, for the tradition of Iphra Hormiz and her Jewish sympathies was well-known in the East Syrian Church.

Nor can we altogether ignore the similarity that there is between the tradition that we are discussing and the story in the Gospel of Matthew of Pilate's wife and her dream. Just as the queen-mother of Persia is awakened from her sleep in order to interfere with her husband's anti-Jewish projects, we have the wife of Pilate sending to say that she has suffered much for Jesus in a dream? and just as the mother of King Shapor appeals to him to have nothing to do against those good people the Jews, so we have Pilate's wife appealing
against his doing anything unfriendly to the good man whom he has before him for judgment. Is it possible that she also may have had secret sympathies with the Jews or with Jesus, or an actual acquaintance with Him?

As to Jewish influence generally, it is in the highest degree improbable that such grotesque views of Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar as are presented in our tract can have come from a Jewish source.

II.

A NEW LIFE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

The reason for the existence of a multitude of Apocryphal writings is in the main twofold. There will be in the first instance the class of works in which the Apocryphal writer is dominated by an Apocryphal situation, some concurrence of misfortunes which threaten his nation, or some dreaded recurrence of misfortunes which have left their mark upon past history; the exigency of the time makes the man, who is peculiarly a child of the time, to become a literary artist of the time. He will write, or paint (the two words being primitively equivalent) in lurid colours when he describes the miseries of his people, he will have Gehenna itself for his palette when he lays on the flaming patches of the Divine Judgments. Nor will he always be a mean artist, even if using popular dialect or writing in a half cipher ('he that readeth, let him understand') for along with the moving tale of disasters in the sun and perplexities on the earth, there will rise in his imagination the story of storms succeeded by calm, and a lovelier city to replace the one that was devastated and wasted.

The second class of Apocrypha is due, not to any peculiar strain in the environment of the writer, but to a desire to fill up a deficit in literature, and to complete a story that has been imperfectly told, or perhaps not told at all. Every history, whether personal, local or national, has lacunae in it; if we are interested sufficiently in place, person or people, we shall want to know or we shall pretend to know how those empty spaces may be filled. The pretence to know is of the very essence of a whole line of Apocryphal works.

For instance, the Gospel knows nothing or next to nothing of areas in our Lord's life, where we would like to know much. It is our modern spirit, I suppose, that makes us discontented with such informa-
tion as might be gathered from a Family Bible or a genealogical tree: but those of us who have family Bibles of any age, or ancestral records, are well aware that these too are subject to Apocryphal insertions; and even in the scriptures we suspect that genealogies could be produced because they were wanted, as occurs even to-day in Arab circles. ‘Abraham begat Isaac’ may be historical, at least we hope so, and make it almost creedal; but the fact that Aminadab begat Aram does not provoke belief so readily. It all turns on the point whether master Aminadab and his progeny were produced because the historian wanted them. Now the Biblical story may have supplied these genealogical matters, because the self-respect of a family required them; and in that case they are Apocrypha; but even if that were the case, the modern spirit of history would not be satisfied with them, even if they were flaunted in our face in the forefront of the Gospels. We are sensible of a wider area of lacunae than the person who hunts or imagines family registers.

Now we are not able to tell at what point the hungry student of the life of Christ began asking for more history or for earlier history. Such hungry sheep might look up to St. Mark and certainly not be fed. They would get something from St. Matthew and a little more from St. Luke; might we, for instance, say that St. Luke’s account of our Lord’s visit at twelve years of age to the Temple was a historian’s instinctive intrusion into an uncharted area? It may be so, and will stand, in that case, to St. Luke’s credit, which credit already stands high. But in that case, why did he leave that great Terra Incognita on his map between the life-parallels of twelve and thirty? If he was as interested in a child who could puzzle the doctors with questions and surprise them with quick answers, why has he no interest in the growing boy upon whom the shades of the prison house were beginning to close?

It is in such lacunae that the Apocryphist of our second species finds his opportunity. We cannot, however, fail to be surprised that, with such a canvas lying idle, no artist had seized it for some three centuries after it had been exposed. The Gospels of the Infancy, and the Gospel of the Boyhood are lacuna-Gospels. So are the stories which tell of the Birth, Death and Rapture of the Virgin, whose attractiveness secures them, even at the present day, a place of recognition in the Christian Calendar, from which they can be detached.
with difficulty. From Jesus and His mother the enquiring spirit
naturally passes over to ask for further information as to His great
Forerunner, John the Baptist. The existing history is only vocal about
John where the two lives of John and Jesus overlap, or where one
personality (either of them will do) bears testimony to the righteous-
ness of the authority of the other. And even here it is the Birth-
story and the Mournful Death that take most of the space. Who
would not rejoice, if a papyrus should turn up, to do for John the
Baptist what Mark did for Jesus? So, without raising our hopes too
high, we turn to a recently found Life of John the Baptist in an
Arabic MS. to see if we can gather anything further with regard to
the Baptist, beyond what can be picked up, in the shape of fragments,
from the Gospel itself.

We premise that there are numerous indications in Christian
literature of the desire to fill in what might seem to be deficiencies in
the known story of St. John. One of the most interesting was caused
by the request of our Lord’s disciples that He would teach them to
pray as John also taught his disciples. It was natural to ask what
was the form of prayer which was displaced by the Oratio Dominica.
The answer was supplied by some early Christian and is even now
extant in a Syriac form. It runs as follows in the MS. Add. 12, 138
of the British Museum:

The Prayer which John taught his disciples: “Father, show
me thy Son; Son, show me thy Spirit; Holy Spirit, make me
wise in thy truth.”

But some say it was like this:

“Holy Father, sanctify me by thy truth, and make me to
know the glory of thy greatness, and show me thy Son, and fill
me with thy Spirit, that I may be illuminated with thy
knowledge.”

The next increment to our supposed knowledge is called for by
our sense that Divine Justice had not been satisfied, if Herodias and
her daughter were allowed to go scot free. The student of English
literature will find this very proper sentiment expressed in verse in a
poem of Vaughan the Silurite on the theme of The Daughter of
Herodias. Here is a verse from this poem, with an explanatory
footnote, such as would be required by the ignorance of the reader:
WOODBROOKE STUDIES

Leave then, young Sorceress; the Ice
Will those coy spirits cast asleep,
Which teach thee now to please his eyes
Who doth thy lothsome mother keep.

The note runs as follows: Her name was Salome: in passing over
a frozen river, the ice broke under her, and chopt off her head.

It may be asked where Vaughan in the seventeenth century found
this Apocryphal addition to the New Testament record. It is
certainly found in the East as well as the West, for we have some-
thing of the kind in the commentaries of Bar Šalibi. The first form
of the legend is more difficult to determine. We shall find one form
in the document before us. All that we say at present is that the
Apocryphal story was the outcome of a sense that Justice had not been
satisfied.

But now let us come to our Life of St. John, where we shall find
a curious mixture of history and legend; in the first place the author
has worked over the Biblical account in a very accurate manner;
next, we shall see that he has blended with it an amount of Apocryphal
detail, sufficient to justify us in classifying the writing itself as
Apocryphal; and last of all, when he comes to discourse of the final
disposal of St. John's relics, he reverts from legend to history, and
gives us the means of identifying himself as a real person, of high
standing in the church at Alexandria. He tells us that his name was
Serapion, and that he had been ordained to one of the Egyptian
episcopal centres by Timothy who was Patriarch of Alexandria from
A.D. 380 to 385. The Egyptian origin of our translation (at least of
one of the forms in which our Arabic text has come down to us) is
betrayed by the occurrence of the name of a Coptic month in the
narration. Serapion tells us, in fact, that at a somewhat earlier date
the faithful brought the bones of the Baptist to Alexandria, where a
church was built to receive them, and a magnificent celebration was
held on the second day of the month Baouna. The document, then,
is by provenance Egyptian, and it is historical and can be dated at
the close of the fourth century. The miracles wrought at the tomb
of the saint are also historical, so far as miracles can be, which are
evidently made to order, to enhance the dignity of the newly enshrined.
We must not be surprised if here also, as in so many other cases of
discovery and location of bones of saints, the fervour with which the
miracle-loving people believed and the benevolent saint operated, soon subsided into a normal good feeling without supernatural attestations. No need to give instances of this general statement; they might be compromising to great names in the church. In the matter of belief, non omnes possumus omnia.

Now let us return to the story of the Baptist's birth; it follows closely the scriptural account, but with explanatory additions, mostly of an Apocryphal character. We can easily see the genesis of these. Our document is, in fact, a homily to be read at the festival of the saint. The writer says so:

"The body of the holy John the Baptist, the saint whose feast we are celebrating to-day, remained in Sebaste—which is Nablus of Samaria—for four hundred years."

What more natural, then, than that Serapion, as preacher for the day, should have added to his narrative such current stories as might make the lessons for the day more interesting. It is a practice which still prevails. One may say of it, what Mistress Quickly says, in apology for the presence of a joint of mutton in her Tavern in the holy season of Lent, "all vintners do it." Coming, then, to those points in the Baptist's Infancy Gospel where the people would have liked to ask questions, and perhaps did ask them, one would like to know whether the good man really did eat locusts, and whether his sanctity has a shadow cast over it from his diet. And further, how was it possible for a child of tender years to live in the desert all the years which intervened between his leaving his home, and his return as a prophet to Israel? It is well known that the difficulty over St. John and his carnivorous diet is chronic in the East: as early as the time of Tatian and the Eucriates the biblical text was subject to correction by the substitution of a diet of milk and honey for the offensive locusts. Even before Tatian's day, in Greek-speaking circles in Palestine, the locusts (\(\alpha  \kappa \rho i \delta e\)s) had been replaced by pancakes (\(\epsilon  \gamma  \kappa \rho i \delta e\)s). Those who held to the milk and honey diet for the youthful saint, had to employ their imagination in a further direction, in order to explain how the necessary and constant milk supply was to be obtained in the desert. They settled it by sending St. Elizabeth into the desert with her son. Bar Salibi tells us that this maternal function was discharged for a period of fifteen years, at the close of which time we may assume that Elizabeth died.
that our writer knows something of this tradition is clear—(i) from the fact that Elizabeth actually takes her son into the desert; (ii) that he reduces the abnormal lactation to three years, which is not unusual in the East; (iii) he has a special death in the desert for Elizabeth, over which he dilates as Browning might have done if he had known the story and been enamoured of the theme. For other and similar explanations of St. John and his locusts, the reader may refer to my book, *Ephrem and the Gospel*, pp. 17-19.

The Apocryphal expansions for which we have found the motive deserve a closer attention. Our writer oscillates between a carnivorous and a vegetable diet. First he will have the locusts, and then again he disowns them. We are told that 'the blessed John wandered in the desert with his mother, and God prepared for him locusts and wild honey as food.' But after the death of his mother, when John was only seven years and six months old, the writer says that 'John lived in great asceticism and devotion. His food was grass and wild honey.' Here is another solution of the problem how to keep St. John a vegetarian!

The next problem for the thoughtful mind was the question of the burial of the sainted mother by her seven-year-old child. The situation demanded celestial assistance, a theophany, an angelophany, as well as the aid which women render at such times to the departed. Our Lord appears on a cloud, accompanied by His mother and Salome, and with attendant angels and archangels. This cloud-flying motive was familiar to the Apocryphal mind. Not only had they Christ's promise that the Son of Man should be seen on the clouds of heaven, but the descent into Egypt had been explained by the language of the prophet that the Lord should mount on a white cloud and come into Egypt, where some said the white cloud was Mary. So there was no difficulty; *adest Deus, adest Machina.* Jesus, at the age of seven years, orders the obsequies and makes appropriate predictions.

Really the desert which our writer describes was not a very formidable or distant affair. He combines it with the location of Ain Karim near Jerusalem, which could be reached in a very short space of time without an aeroplane! The New Testament student will notice that our text interprets *eis τόλμη Ἰουδα* in Luke i. 39, as being a town called Judah, for which the authorities may be consulted on one side or the other. Coming now to the somewhat diffusely
treated subject of the relations between the Baptist and the Herodian circle, we find ourselves in a folk-lore atmosphere with an independent development. It is commonly supposed that Herodias, when she had received the head of the Baptist, opened the mouth and pierced with her bodkin the reproving tongue. In our tale she proposes to cut out the tongue, place the eyes in a dish, and use his long hair to stuff her bolster. These incidents, threatened but not occurring, came back as curses are wont to do in biblical and semi-biblical tales, and attached themselves to the fortune of Herodias, whose house came down about her ears, and whose eyes left their sockets. Then the writer shows the motive of his tale. It was the head of the Baptist that had been insulted, and was now being avenged. And it was the head whose fate as a sacred relic he now proposed to tell: for he perhaps had it near him when he was preaching; the people knew it was on hand; it may even have been on exhibition for the day, as often happens on the great days of great saints.

Now the history of relics is the most difficult part of the science of hagiology. On one side it is a history of ecclesiastical lying, a long series of volumes running parallel to the history of the church itself. On the other side it is not to be denied that martyrs and holy men had bones, and that these bones have a permanence to which the body itself lays no claim, and which lends themselves to pious remembrance. Why should not some of them be genuine? One reason, of course, is the tendency of the relic to multiply, to become ubiquitous. John the Baptist's head is a case in point. Our writer says it was preserved at Sebaste, which he wrongly identified with Nablus. It is still said to be there. But then it was also preserved in the great Mosque at Damascus, and again in the town of Homs (Emesa). Our writer says it was preserved for 400 years at Sebaste, and lay there in peace till the time of Julian the Apostate. Then in a time of the imperial rage against the Christians, the churches were desecrated, and men found in the church at Sebaste two coffins; from the contents, which included shirts of camel's hair, it was inferred that these were the coffins of the Baptist and of Elisha, the one having been, by the design of providence for putting things side by side that belonged together, laid in adjacent tombs. So they gathered up the relics and secretly sent them to Alexandria. It does not positively say that the head was there. In fact it was a very elusive head, and had
been flying over the city of Jerusalem for many years and crying out its condemnation of King Herod and his lawless marriage. From which we may infer, if we please, that no one knows what really became of it. There are always various solutions for the history of a relic; but this does not mean that all relics are unhistorical: it would be more correct to say, with a suitable motion of the eyelid, that all of them cannot be historical; say, for example, all the eight-day clocks which are said to have come over in the Mayflower. But now we are spoiling our story by modern illustrations. It is historical to say that some relics supposed to be of the Baptist, were deposited by Bishop Serapion in the church consecrated to his memory in Alexandria at the end of the fourth century.

III.

Uncanonical Psalms.

The next contribution to the unedited Syriac literature consists of a group of Psalms, of no special intrinsic value, but not without interest if they illustrate to us the wide extent of the early hymnology, whether that of the Hebrew community as contained in the conventional Psalter and assigned to King David or imitated in the early Christian Church under the authorship of King Solomon and the title of his Odes. There is a literary bridge between the two collections in those Psalms of the Pharisees which were written a few years before the coming of our Lord, and are also dignified with a Solomonic authorship.

The most elementary criticism of the Psalter as the term is commonly used will show that it is an edited volume, made to order, and limited in its content to 150 songs. Even a child of the present age can see, what the prophets and kings of previous critical ages failed to apprehend, that it cannot be all of it Davidic in origin, and that perhaps none of it is his. It belongs to different ages, and is probably made up, like a modern hymn-book, out of previous handbooks of song, covering a period that reached nearly to the Christian era. The mere fact of its numerical limitation is sufficient to show that it is miscellaneous in character, and contains, in consequence, like all hymn-books, many things which ought to have been left out, and by inference that it has left out a good many things that ought to have been put in.
That simple statement sets the watchman in Oriental lore on the look-out for appendices to the Psalter, and for a more varied authorship than that of David. Indeed, as is well known, the Psalter does not profess to be wholly Davidic, even if it be heavily Davidized. There are other suggestions of individual singers and groups of singers which can hardly be neglected. Perhaps it was that learned group of translators and higher critics, whom we call by the name of the Septuagint, who first speculated on the situation which provoked the Hebrew Psalms, and searched the story of David, in order to make him sing the right thing at the right time. There were musical critics, too, as we can see from the head-lines in Moffatt's translation, to tell us what kind of instruments and what range of voices were proper for any special chant. Good fellows, no doubt, who did not object to using a hymn-book ascribed to the sons of Korah, because Korah had disappeared, so they said, in a theologically accentuated earthquake. But these modifications as to authorship and musical treatment left the popular opinion unchanged; David wrote them, the words expressed his thought and the tunes answered to his harp.

As a Greek MS. expresses it, which I once saw in Jerusalem:
"David sat on the tower which is named after him in Jerusalem, and elegantly composed his Psalms."

A burdensome belief I but then the Psalter itself is a burdensome legacy, from which both the Christian Church and individual believers have suffered much, and from whose dominance the Christian Church is slowly beginning to shake itself loose. The observation which we made as to the over-Davidized head-lines, shows that premature criticism leads to theological disaster; take, for instance, the 110th Psalm, to whose Davidic authorship Jesus found himself committed, which becomes the basis for the Session at the Right Hand of the Father, and the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek!

Our reason for referring to these matters lies in the little collection which is here published: the first Psalm in the group is not new: it is sometimes printed as an Appendix to the Psalter, and is known as the 151st. The reason for it is obvious. Among all the odd situations for Davidic psalmody which the earlier collectors imagined and which the Septuagint has conserved, there was nothing in the form of a triumphal ode over Goliath. There was a song written when the Ziphites told Saul that David was in hiding among them, another when
Joab had defeated 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, while the lovely 34th Psalm is said to be the work of David when he escaped arrest by pretending to be mad; but no word about Goliath! The Sunday schools of that day must have resented the omission! Apparently it was a Greek hand that rectified it and put it as an Appendix to the completed collection. Not that it is ever going to be said or sung. It isn't deep enough for that. Its main purpose is to rectify an omission, which it does awkwardly enough. We do not think it has a Hebrew original; probably it passed from Greek into Syriac, as we have it before us. In the West it does not seem to have had much acceptance, but it may interest some persons of antiquarian taste to know that, in the last century, it was rendered into Lowland Scottish by Dr. Hately Waddell.
IN the following pages I give the translation (accompanied by a critical apparatus) of a rather strange work purporting to contain the history of the events that preceded and followed the deportation of the Jews to Babylon. I have followed in my edition two manuscripts: Paris 65 and Mingana Syr. 240, in the custody of the Rendel Harris Library, Birmingham, designated hereafter by the letters P. and M. respectively. P. is dated 1905 of the Greeks (A.D. 1594), and M. has lost its colophon, but on palaeographical grounds may be ascribed to about A.D. 1650. The former was written at Hamāt, and the latter was recently acquired by me in Kurdistan. No attention has been paid to Paris 238, 273, and 276, because all the above MSS. seem to contain only two different recensions of the story, and Paris 65 and Mingana Syr. 240 offer the best specimen of each recension.

From footnotes found in the following pages the reader will conclude that I believe that P. which is now in Garshūnī was transcribed from a MS. written in Arabic characters and executed in Egypt. The same, however, could not be said of M. This fact induces us to suppose that the two recensions of the story referred to above may provisionally be divided into an Egyptian recension and a Syrian, Palestinian, or Mesopotamian recension. The discrepancies and verbal differences which characterise the two recensions are profound and unmistakeable.

1 P. 32 in Zotenberg’s catalogue.
2 P. 191 in Zotenberg’s catalogue. (The MS. is dated 1785 of the Greeks (A.D. 1474).)
3 P. 212 in Zotenberg’s catalogue. (The MS. is of the sixteenth century.)
4 P. 214 in Zotenberg’s catalogue. (The MS. is of the seventeenth century.)
I first tried to establish from all the above MSS. a good text for the body of the story and relegate the numerous variants to the footnotes, but in the course of my transcription I discovered that the plan was impracticable, and I was driven to the conclusion that the best method to give an adequate idea of each recension would be to edit separately all the text of its best specimen, and this is the reason why the reader finds for his guidance in the present work a complete set of facsimiles of all P. and of all M. The same difficulty presented itself to me in the translation. To note all the variants of each recension seemed to me to be cumbersome and useless, so I confined myself to refer in short notes only to the most important variants exhibited by the two MSS. In a few cases the translation represents a combination of both P. and M. and the purely verbal discrepancies and still more the orthographical variants have been completely ignored.

The Arabic used in the story is grammatically and lexicographically more correct than that used in the "Exhortation to Priesthood" which I edited and translated in the first fasciculus of Woodbrooke Studies, but it is still much below the standard of what a good piece of classic Arabic should be.1 If it comes to be established that the Arabic text is a translation from a foreign language, I might be tempted to assert that the story was originally written in Greek, from which it was translated into Syriac, and that the Syriac gave rise to the recension represented by M. As to the recension represented by P. it was possibly translated either direct from Greek or more probably from a Coptic intermediary, before it came under the influence of the Syrian Copyists.

The story itself appears to me to emanate from a man who lived either in Egypt or in Western (not Eastern) Palestine.

Translation.

We will write concerning 2 the deportation of the Children of Israel to Babylon at the hand of the King Nebuchadnezzar in the days of the prophet Jeremiah.3

1 Only the most important mistakes have been corrected in the footnotes.
2 P.: "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, one God, we will begin by the assistance of God and His help to narrate the history of . . . ."
3 P. adds: "May his prayer protect us and you. Amen."
And the word of God came to the prophet Jeremiah saying: 1  
"Say to the King Zedekiah and to the people of the Children of Israel, 'Why do you add sins to your sins, and iniquity to your iniquity. My eye has seen your deeds, and my ear has heard your sayings. If you had fasted, I would have been merciful to you; and if you had prayed, I would have listened to you, says the Lord Omnipotent. You have not fasted to me, nor have you stretched your hands towards me, but you have fasted to Baal and prayed to Zeus, and you have forgotten the Lord God of Abraham and said, 'Who is the God of Israel?' You have been unmindful of all my goodness to you when I took you out of the land of Egypt, delivered you from the servitude of Pharaoh, and smote the inhabitants of Egypt with plagues. I cared for you like a tender mother cares for her virgin daughters until she delivers them up to the bridegroom, in order that no harm may befall you in all your ways.

'I have glorified you above all nations, and have called you my people, O Children of Israel. I have brought you out of a wilderness full of scorpions and vipers, and made you dwell in the desert forty years while your dresses did not wear out, your shoes were not torn up, and the hair of your heads did not grow up, and in all that length of time your clothing did not show any dirt on it. I gave you the bread of angels from heaven, while a column of light shone upon you by night, and a cloud protected you by day. I guarded you with my right hand and my holy arm, and delivered you from the hands of your enemies and made you possess that for which you had not toiled. I took you out of the depth of the sea, and you beheld your enemies behind you standing by the sea like statues. I sent down angels from heaven to assist you in crossing the middle of the sea, and drowned the chariots of Pharaoh in its depth with promptitude. I ordered the abysses to cover them, and made you enter a land for which you had not toiled, a land that flows with milk and honey, and put your fear in the hearts (of your enemies).

"After all these things which I did for you, you have forgotten my name and said, 'There is no God but Baal and Zeus.' You

1 Note the Biblical parallelism of the following lines.
2 Read: tasidum in M. and dhunuban in P.
3 P. omits the proper name.
4 P. omits "mother."
5 P. "her sons and her . . ."
6 See Exodus, XV, 1 sqq.
have returned to me evil for good, forsaken me, offered sacrifices to Baal, and immolated your sons and daughters to Zeus. You have turned away from me, all of you, old and young, and have committed injustices against one another. The seed of adultery has appeared in your midst, and there is no just judge among you. If you persist in these deeds, says the Lord, I will inflict calamities on you and cause my wrath to flow like a flowing river which does not turn back. Your young men will die smitten with the sword, and your old men of hunger and thirst; your children will be deported while you look at them, and your great city will be destroyed. Your land shall become a deserted waste, because I lost patience with you, says the Lord Omnipotent. I bore with you so that perchance you may repent and return to me, and I return to you. But now I have turned my face away from you.¹

"While you were doing my will and were calling me, 'O Lord, O Lord,' I was listening to you with promptitude; but now were you to cry to me I would not answer you and say, 'Here I am,' nor would I send down to you dew in time and rain in season. In the days when you were obedient to me, all the nations were trembling before you. Each one of you used to chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight,² and my angels preceded you anywhere you halted. But when you offended me, all the earth turned against you; and the sun and the moon mourned³ over you because they beheld your prevarication, your worship of idols, and all the iniquity which is within you, and which you perpetrated before the idol of Zeus.⁴ You kindled my wrath and did not return to me, says the Lord Omnipotent, God of Israel." The prophet Jeremiah rose up then and went to King Zedekiah. He saw him sitting in the Sun-Gate,⁵ and with him was a company of false prophets, who were prophesying falsely to him. When King Zedekiah saw the prophet Jeremiah, he stood up before him and received him and said to him: "O seer, hast thou the word of God in thy mouth in these days?" And Jeremiah the prophet said to him: "Here is the word;" and he narrated to him the word of ¹ About a third of a page is here torn in M.
² Deut. xxxii. 30.
³ Syr. akhri.
⁴ P. omits the sentence which deals with Zeus.
⁵ A proper name of a gate dedicated to the deity Shemesh "sun."
⁶ P. omits "mouth."
God before all the people. When the king heard the words of the prophet Jeremiah he waxed very angry, and asked the people and the false prophets who were round him whether that young man was mad.\(^1\) And Hananiah,\(^2\) the liar, rose up, put on his head horns of iron,\(^3\) and began to speak and say, ‘This is what the Lord God says: “Thou, O king, shalt triumph over thy enemies and over these”—and he made a sign to north, south, east, and west—and proceeded thus: “No one will be able to contradict thee, O king, nor dwell in the land.” And there was then no word of God in the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah.

When the king heard these words from Hananiah, the liar and the deceiver, in the presence of all the false prophets his companions, he said to those of his servants that were present: “Take this Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon, in the lowest pit, which is full of mire,\(^4\) in order that he may die; no other food should be given to him apart from a little bread and water in order that we may know whether the word of God is with him or not.” Then they threw forthwith Jeremiah in the place which the king had designated.

When Abimelech,\(^5\) a servant in constant attendance on the king, heard that King Zedekiah had thrown Jeremiah into prison, he rose up and inquired after the place where King Zedekiah was staying, and went to him. When the king saw the servant approaching him, he said to him: “Be welcome, O faithful servant; thou hast come to-day to us; what is thy request?” And the servant said to him: “O king what has the prophet Jeremiah done, that you should have acted with him in this way? Do you not fear God, O king, in casting the prophet of the Lord into prison and in extinguishing the lamp of Israel which shone on the people of God?” Then King Zedekiah said to him: “Thou hast done well in reminding me to-day of him, O Ephti,\(^6\) take some men with thee, and go and take him out of prison.”

\(^1\) Or: possessed by evil spirits.
\(^2\) P.: Hanina. See Jer. xxviii. 1-17.
\(^3\) Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 11. \(^4\) See Jer. xxxviii. 6.
\(^5\) P.: Ephtimelech throughout. He is evidently the same personage as the one called Ebedmelech (Jer. xxviii. 7), an Ethiopian eunuch in the king’s house. The name given in P. seems to be of Coptic origin and emanates from a MS. the archetype of which was written in Egypt.
\(^6\) The first half of the name of Ephtimelech, the reading of P. M. does not mention any name in this sentence.
Then Abimelech took with him men, old rags, and strong ropes, and repaired to the prison in which Jeremiah was lying; he threw to him the old rags, and let down to him the strong ropes and said: "Attach these to your armholes so that we may draw you up." He did as he was told, and they drew him out of prison and gave him his freedom.

Then the Lord said to the prophet Jeremiah: "O you whom I have elected and honoured, arise and go for the second time to Zedekiah and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'How long will you irritate my spirit, shed innocent blood, cause pregnant women to miscarry, and take the fruit of their wombs and burn it with fire before the statue of Baal. The blood of those whom you have unjustly killed cried towards the throne of my glory, and the cry of the unjustly treated went up to the gates of heaven. Why have you trodden in the path of Manasseh and forsaken the ways of David, your father? If you persist before me in these deeds, I will bring down my wrath and anger on you, and strip you of your glory; I will overthrow your throne and give your kingdom to your enemy who will put out your eyes and place them in your hands, and slay your two children and place one at your right hand and the other at your left; and put a chain round your neck like a dog. In this way you will be deported into Babylon, tied to the chariot of the king Nebuchadnezzar, and you will die there while driving the mule that pulls the stone of the flour-mill. This great people will also be led into captivity with you, and Jerusalem will be destroyed to its foundations, because you have dishonoured my name by your worship of foreign gods and have broken my covenant which I made with your fathers.' All these words utter you before the elders of the children of Israel.'

1 See Jer. xxxviii. 11. P. reads mawākit and M. kawāmit.
2 Cf. 2 Kings xxv. 6-7; Jer. xxxix. 4-7.
3 In early times (and occasionally also in the present day) the stone that ground the corn in a flour-mill was tied to a chain pulled by a horse or a mule.
4 Curiously enough the name of Jerusalem is generally written in P. with a yodh at the beginning, in the Hebrew fashion, instead of an Alaph, in the Arabic and Syriac fashion. This also denotes a Coptic origin to the archetype from which P. emanates.
5 M.: nobles, princes (as in the Bible).
The prophet Jeremiah then said: "No, my Lord and my God, Lord of mercy and creator of the universe; no, O Lord, do not send me to King Zedekiah, because he is a man who hates Thy pious ones, and he will wax angry if I mention Thy name before him, and his anger will be brought to the highest pitch if I mention the name of Thy saints who have been slain and of Thy holy ones who have been stoned. He has further sought my destruction, and if I go back to him he will throw me in the pool of mire, in the lowest dungeon, and I shall die there." The Lord said then to the prophet Jeremiah: "Rise up and go to him. It is I who send you in my name, and be not afraid."

Then the prophet Jeremiah rose up and went to King Zedekiah and to the people of the children of Israel. He had an audience with the king, and he related to him all the words of God. King Zedekiah became exceedingly angry, and ordered the prophet Jeremiah to be thrown for the second time in the lowest cistern, the cistern of mire. When Abimelech heard of the imprisonment of the prophet Jeremiah, he went to King Zedekiah and saved him like the first time and set him free.

Then the word of God came for the third time to the prophet Jeremiah saying: "O Jeremiah whom I have elected, arise and go to King Zedekiah and utter to him the words of the Lord, God of Israel." Then the prophet Jeremiah fell down before the Lord, lifted his hands to Him, worshipped before Him and said to Him: "No, my Lord, do not send me to King Zedekiah, because if I mention to him Thy holy name he will wax angry and kill me." Then the Lord ordered the prophet Jeremiah to write down in a book all that was revealed to him and deliver it to his disciple Baruch, to bring to King Zedekiah. The prophet Jeremiah did what God ordered him to do, and he wrote a letter and sent it to King Zedekiah with his disciple Baruch and ordered him to read it before him and before the company of the children of Israel. And Baruch went to the palace.

1 P. adds: "and the second time." M. omits it.

2 P. writes the name as Yārūṯ throughout with a yā (instead of a bā) at the beginning. This could have happened only in case the Paris MS. which is now written in Garshuni was emanating from an original which was written in Arabic characters, because it is in Arabic characters only that the letters bā and yā have graphically the same form and are only distinguished by a small dot which is generally omitted in old MSS.
of the king whom he saw sitting with his boon-companions. He stood before him with the letter in his hand, and uttered the words of God. When the king heard the speech of the disciple Baruch he became exceedingly angry, took the letter from him, and burned it with fire that he made there before all the children of Israel. He also ordered at once Baruch, the disciple of the prophet Jeremiah, to be flogged—and he was cruelly lashed—and asked him where (his master) lived. The disciple told the king his master’s whereabouts, and the king ordered that he should be brought before him bound with chains and fetters.

The servants went out to look for him and they found him in a sepulchral crypt braiding fresh twigs and leaves. They seized him forthwith and did with him what the king had ordered them to do, and they presented him to King Zedekiah. When he stood before the king, Satan filled the latter’s heart and he began to gnash his teeth at him and said to him: “I will shed your blood and pour it in the plate from which I eat, I will deliver your flesh to the birds of heaven and your bones to the carnivores of the earth, for the written words that your disciple uttered before me. What is between me and you, O Jeremiah, that you should prophesy falsely against me and against my kingdom and say, ‘Your kingdom shall be taken from you and your throne shall be overthrown, and the people shall be deported and Jerusalem shall be destroyed to its foundations?’ I swear to you by the great gods Baal and Zeus that I shall torment you with a grievous torment, and not finish you off quickly, but shall cast you into the lowest pit of the prison, and see whether your words will apply to me truly or not.”

The king ordered him to be tied hands and feet with iron and thrown into the pit which the king had named; he further ordered that no bread and water should be given to him, in order that he may die of hunger and thirst. The prophet Jeremiah turned then towards the king and said to him before the people of the children of Israel: “May God judge between thee and me, O King Zedekiah; I have prophesied for many years on behalf of the Lord, and no lie has ever come out of my mouth, and thou art throwing me for the third time

1 P. omits.
2 For basket making.
3 M. omits the last two sentences.
4 M. omits the adverb.
5 Read fiya for fāya in P.
in prison, in the lowest pit, wishing me to die there. Thou hast confidence in the false prophets who prophesy to thee falsely. This being the case listen to the words of God which are in my mouth:

"Thou hast angered me with thy iniquitous deeds, and I shall turn my face away from thee and from the people of the children of Israel. I shall kindle my wrath and anger against this land, and the king of the Chaldeans shall come with men as numerous as locusts, and shall dismantle to its foundations the rampart of the city of Jerusalem and fix his throne in its midst. And thou, O King Zedekiah, when thou seest these things with thy eyes, pangs of travail will take possession of thee like a woman who gives birth to a child. Thou shalt extend on thy bed and cover thy face with thy mantle as with a shroud, and thy servants will carry thee on their necks like a corpse and run with thee towards the Jordan in order that they may cross it and save thee. God then will move the hearts of the servants of Nebuchadnezzar, who will seek thee in thy bed-chamber and not find thee, and they will follow thee and overtake thee on the river Karmlis; they will throw thee on the ground, uncover thy face, and strip thee of thy mantle, and present thee to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Chaldeans, and thou shalt see his eyes with thy eyes, and thy mouth shall speak with his mouth. He will put a chain round thy neck like a dog, bring thy two sons to thy presence, and slay one at thy right hand and the other at thy left. He will put out thy eyes and place them in thy hands, and carry thee with him to the countries of Babylon, tied to his chariot, with mud, mire and ashes on thy head. Thou shalt eat bread, weeping and sighing, and shalt drink water with grief and hardship, and shalt die there while driving the mule that pulls the stone of the flour-mill."

When Jeremiah finished these words he was seized by the servants to do with him what King Zedekiah had ordered. And the prophet

1 Read jiya for fāya in P.
2 Change the first yā into a rā. The correct form should have been ar-radiyah. M. has the incorrect al-ayādi.
3 Read sūr in M.
4 Read al-lati.
5 Written as "Karlis" in M. The word seems to be of Greek origin. It is somewhat strange that the Jordan should be referred to in the document by this uncommon word. Zedekiah was of course overtaken in the plain of Jericho.
6 P. wrongly "mud."
Jeremiah said to the servants of Zedekiah: “Have a little patience with me until I finish the words of God which are in my mouth.” And King Zedekiah said: “Leave him until he utters all that he has to say.” While the prophet Jeremiah was left alone he turned to all the people standing before the king and said: “Listen to what the Lord Omnipotent says: ‘I protected your fathers when I took them out of the land of Egypt, but because you have forgotten the great goodness I did to your fathers in the desert, you shall be requited with a much greater evil. When I took your fathers out of the land of Egypt, and they dwelt forty years in the desert, their dresses did not wear out, their shoes were not torn up, and the hair of their heads did not grow. You, however, shall be deported and shall be in the way to your destination only a month and your dresses shall wear out and become like old skins; they shall tear up, and you shall sew them with cords made of palm-tree fibres, of alfa, and palm-tree leaves. The hair of your heads shall come down to your shoulders like the hair of women, and instead of the column of light which shone upon your fathers day and night and went before them in their way, you shall be deported and walk in the heat of the sun and the cold of the night, and you shall experience the most intense heat of the summer and severe cold of the winter. I shall order the moon and the stars which shine at night not to shed their light on you, in order that you may be in darkness. You shall crawl on your hands in groping your way, and shall stumble on one another with vehemence, intense pains, and bitter weeping.

“You shall hunger after bread, and thirst after water, and you shall sigh and say, ‘Thou art just, O Lord, and Thou hast done everything with wisdom; Thou hast acted towards us according to our merits.’ Instead of the manna and the quails which God sent to your fathers, and the sweet water which He caused to jet forth for them from the rock, there shall descend on you from heaven, earth, dust, and a fiery wind that will cling to your bodies and inflict on them sores, wounds, and blisters that do not heal. I shall render your drinking water brackish and bitter in your mouths, in order to

1 Read abā'ikum.  
2 Read taskunūn in P., and put the particle lam before the verb.  
3 Read abā'ikum in P.  
4 Read al-lātī tūdi'u.  
5 Lit. as we acted.  
6 Read 'alaikum in P.
desiccate your bodies and dry up your bones. Instead of the light of
the sun that (God) caused to shine on your fathers, you shall have
lice and vermin to consume your bodies. You shall remain seventy
years in the captivity and servitude of the Chaldeans until the Lord
turns His wrath away from you."

When the prophet Jeremiah finished all these words to King
Zedekiah and to the elders and princes of the people who were
surrounding him, they cried one and all, saying, ‘Long live thou King
Zedekiah.’ The king then ordered the prophet to be cast into the
dungeon, in the place where the cistern of mire was found. The
description of this dungeon is that people walked three hours under-
ground in the dark until they reached it; its sides were as thin as a
glass bowl; no one was able to stand in that place, except on the
joint of his knees; it was full of mire and pitch which reached the
armpits\(^1\) of a man. And the prophet Jeremiah remained in that
place for several days in great pains.

When Abimelech, the servant\(^2\) of the king heard the story of the
prophet Jeremiah, he visited him every day, by giving a denarius to
the gaoler in order to let him enter, and gave the prophet Jeremiah
bread and water, and then returned to his master.\(^3\) He did this for
twenty-one days, after which he went to King Zedekiah and said to
him: “I felt the necessity of presenting myself before you for the
sake of the prophet Jeremiah. Was it not sufficient for you,\(^4\) O king,
to imprison the prophet of God a first time and a second time, that you
should have thrown him a third time into prison? You have extinguished
the lamp of the children of Israel, which was shedding light on the
people of God; and he did not speak before thee except what God
had revealed to him.” Then the king said to him, “O Abimelech, you
have done well in reminding me of him to-day; rise up, go and
take men with thee and draw him out of the dungeon, and place him
in a house until we ascertain if his words are true or not, and test the
truth of his sayings.”\(^5\)

\(^1\) M. the hands.  \(^2\) P. the boon-companion.
\(^3\) P. And parts of the fruits of which his master had eaten.
\(^4\) The verb \(akna\)\(\alpha\) “to persuade” is used here for \(kaf\)\(a\) “to be
sufficient,” and this induces us to suppose that the original from which the
Arabic version is derived was Greek. The particle of the interrogative \(alam\)
is missing in P. but is found in M.
\(^5\) The above sentences are often differently worded in the MSS.
Abimelech went then immediately and took with him two servants from the palace of the king, and drew up the prophet Jeremiah from the dungeon, after he had spent there twenty-one days, and placed him in a house of peace and rest. Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Abimelech: "Blessed be thou, O my child Abimelech, because thou hadst pity on me in the time of my trials. Thus says the Lord Omnipotent, 'He who does good to those in trouble, or in prison, and to the poor, God will remember him with His grace, and with His help and assistance.' Thou shalt not see the destruction of Jerusalem, O my child, and thou shalt not go to the hardship of the captivity; thou shalt not die, but shalt live until the Lord turns away His wrath. The sun shall nurture thee and the firmament shall rear thee, and the earth on which thou shalt sleep shall give thee rest, and the stone shall protect thee from the cold of the winter and the heat of the summer, and thy soul shall be in joy and pleasure for seventy years until thou seest Jerusalem in its glory and rebuilt as it was before."

After this King Zedekiah returned to sin before the Lord, and he entered the house of the Lord and took out the two columns of marble which gave light in it without a lamp and placed them in the temple before the statues of Baal and Zeus, and he carried the precious and holy plates to the place where he used to sit and drink with his concubines. He pulled down the altar on which sacrifices were offered, and he made it a table to himself in the temple which belongs to Baal and Zeus. He brought out also the ark of the covenant, and out of the gold of the candle-stick he made a crown which he placed on the head of the idol. He ordered that oxen should be offered to Baal the idol, and summoned the pregnant women in travail and commanded that their offspring should be taken out of their wombs and sacrificed on the fire to Baal and Zeus. He also ordered that all children from two years old and under should

1 P. omits "two."
2 Curiously enough P. also has here "Abimelech."
3 M. omits the last sentence.
4 M. says: "he brought them to the house in which were the idols Baal and Zeus."
5 Read the word with a śād instead of a sin in P.
6 Sic. P., but M. again as above.
7 P. manṣarah and M. better manārah. 8 See Matt. ii. 16.
likewise be sacrificed and their blood taken and offered to Baal and Zeus.¹

In that very day the earth shook and its (four) points quaked, and the Lord thundered from heaven and his wrath spread over all the earth, and He ordered the angel of anger to come down to it with fury, and had it not been for the intervention of the angels and the holy ones who knelt down before the Lord and besought Him to turn away His wrath from His people, all would have perished. The Lord perceived the odour of their sighing and their holy lamentations,² had mercy upon the people of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and removed His wrath and did not destroy them.³

And the word of God came to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, 'Jeremiah, Jeremiah,' and he answered, 'Here I am, O Lord.' And the Lord said to him: "I have sworn that I shall not remove my wrath, and I say to you that I shall not do anything before I have told it to you. Were it not for your prayers that⁴ have surrounded Jerusalem none of its inhabitants would have been alive, and I would have destroyed it to its foundations, because my eyes are covered with tears over the innocent blood of the children that has been shed; they cry and say, 'Avenge our blood.'⁵ Lo, concerning this people among whom you live examine the three following punishments: do you wish me to order Satanael,⁶ the angel of wrath, to destroy them and exterminate them from their young ones to their adults, with their old men and young men? Or do you wish me to inflict famine on them and to command heaven which is above them to become brass and the earth which is below them to become iron, so that no dew may fall from heaven and no fruits should come from the earth; and I shall destroy all the trees and annihilate their storehouses that are full so that they may eat one another and fall in the streets of the city

¹ M. omits Zeus. ² Read tašā’udāṭ in P. ³ M. omits all the last sentence. ⁴ Read al-lāti. ⁵ The meaning of the sentence is literally in P. as follows: "He who is a sinner let us sin" (sic). It is altogether missing in M. and P. adds further: "And who went down to hell that we may know that there is in it grievous torment?" ⁶ About Satanael see the Book of the Secrets of Enoch in Charles' Apocrypha and Pseu. ii. 439 and passim, and the Ethiopic Le livre des Mystères in Pat. Or. i. 73. See also Severus ibn al-muḥaffaẓ, Refutation in Pat. Or. iii. 132-133.
from hunger and thirst? Or do you wish me to allow Nebuchadnezzar who is King of Babylon to subdue them and lord it over them for seventy years, and they be slaves of the Chaldeans to the point of destruction, in order that they may know that I am the God who hold their spirits in my hands?"

When the prophet Jeremiah heard these words from the Lord, he fell down in worship on his face before Him and wept and said: "O God of all mercy; Thou art the God of gods and Creator of the universe. Look, O Lord, upon the children of Thy servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to whom Thou swarest that their seed shall be like the stars of heaven; ¹ no, O Lord, do not destroy them one and all, and let not the angel Satanael come down on them because he will not leave a single one of them. Where is the oath that Thou swarest to our father Abraham, Thy beloved, in saying to Him, 'Thy seed shall not cease under heaven,' and if Thou sendest against them famine and dearth, and Thou restrainest heaven from sending down its dew, and the earth from yielding its fruit, the children of Thy servants will perish from the surface of the earth, and where shall be the covenant that Thou gavest to Thy servant Israel in saying to him, 'Thy children shall remain for ever and ever.' And do not be angry, O Lord, because of the ill-treatment that I receive at the hands of Thy servants: ³ Thy people who sinned against Thee. If Thou orderest for them, O Lord, a deportation by Nebuchadnezzar and a captivity to Babylon, verily a father chastises his sons and a master his servants."

Then the Lord summoned forthwith the angel Michael, the head of the angels, and said to him: "Arise and go to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon and say to him: 'Go to Judea, to the city of Jerusalem, and spread thy hand and the hand of the Chaldeans who are with thee over its land, and bring into captivity all the inhabitants of the land of Israel, lord it over them, and take them to the land of the Chaldeans, and enslave them there for seventy years. Their adults shall do brickwork and clay work, and their old men shall hew wood and draw water, and their women shall spin and weave

¹ Gen. xxii. 17.
² A word is missing at the beginning of the sentence in P.
³ Lit. " because of the affair that I have with Thy servants." Further, P. exhibits: "Do not be angry with me."
wool, and they shall show thee their work every day, and thou shalt make accounts with them as if they were slaves. Act, however, with mercy and justice towards them, because (in the end) I shall have pity upon them.'"

Michael worshipped then the Lord immediately and went in haste to Babylon, which he reached in that very night. He nudged Nebuchadnezzar the king in the right side and said to him: "O Nebuchadnezzar, arise quickly so that I may speak with you." When Nebuchadnezzar awoke from his sleep and saw the angel of God with shining eyes like the star of the morning, with a spear in his hand, with loins girded with a sword, with feet covered with hot polished1 brass, and with a terrifying speech, he said to him: "Woe is me, O my master, because in no time have I seen the like of you. Are you not one of the gods of Babylon?2 Or perchance are you the God who spread heaven and established the earth, and fashioned every thing?" And the angel answered him saying: "I am not God, but His servant. I am one of the seven angels3 who stand before the throne of the Lord God, and here is what the Lord God says, 'Arise with all your might and with the Chaldeans, and spread your hand over all the land of Judea and deport its inhabitants and bring them to the land of Babylon. And they shall be slaves to you: their adults shall work at clay and bricks, and their old men shall hew wood and draw water, and their women shall spin and weave wool, and they shall bring in their work every day like slaves, and you shall settle their accounts, but show mercy towards them. I have delivered them to you for punishment, and after that I shall have pity on them for ever and ever.'"4

And Nebuchadnezzar said to the angel Michael: "Woe is me, O my master, the Lord has perchance waxed angry with me because of the great number of my sins, and He wishes me to go to foreign lands in order to destroy my life in them; do destroy me with your hand; this would be more advantageous for me than that I and all who are with me should die in a foreign land. Who is the king of Babylon, and who is Nebuchadnezzar before the people of God the

1 P. hot. Read maškūl in M. 2 M. which god are you?
3 See about the seven angels the Book of Enoch in Charles' Apocrypha and Pseud. ii. 201.
4 M. omits "for ever."
Most High? And who am I that I should go to Jerusalem and fight the people of God? Is it not the people whom Pharaoh fought, and God drowned him in the abysses, and water covered him? Is it not the people whom the Amorites fought, and they all perished? In this way five nations were destroyed before them. Who am I then, O Lord, that I should fight a just people and conquer it, a people who when they go to war do not take with them any material of war, but, if they stretch out their hands, angels help them from heaven and fight on their behalf?

And the angel Michael said to Nebuchadnezzar: “Every thing you said is true. Every people who keep the commandments of God, no one is able to overcome them; but if they forsake His commandments and His law, He delivers them into the hands of their enemies, and they perish at their hands. Now, this people have sinned, prevaricated, and increased their iniquity; arise thou, then, and destroy them that they may know that God is the only one that lasts for ever and ever.” When the angel Michael finished his words to Nebuchadnezzar, he stretched his hand, anointed him, and fortified him against the (Jewish) people, and went up to heaven.

After the angel Michael had gone, Nebuchadnezzar arose and went to his wife Hilkiah whom he awakened from her sleep. He narrated to her all that the angel had told him. When she heard those words from him she was greatly perplexed and fell down weeping, and said to Nebuchadnezzar: “Woe is me, my lord, and my brother; take me with thee wherever thou goest, because I shall not see thee another time. Who is the king who fought this people and was saved? Dost thou not know that this is the people of God, and that everything that they ask from God they obtain it forthwith?” And Nebuchadnezzar said to her: “It is their God

1 Read Amorāniun. 2 M. omits all this sentence.
3 It is surprising how quickly Nebuchadnezzar became versed in the Jewish history and in the knowledge of the true God.
4 Read sha'bin in P. 5 Read aḥadun in P.
6 The last two verbs are not found in M. 7 In M. Helkenah.
8 Read idtarabat in P. 9 P. wrongly “went out.”
10 P. “when.” 11 Read tadhhab in P.
12 The knowledge of the Queen Helkenah or Hilkiah concerning the Jewish people is as accurate and perplexing as that of her husband.
that has delivered them up to me.” And she said to him: “O my lord, listen attentively to what I am going to say to thee: if thou goest to fight them, take with thee a ram, and when thou art near the city of Judea alight from thy chariot, lay the sceptre of gold that is in thy hand on the head of the ram and let it go; if it take the direction of Judea, follow it, and know that the Lord has delivered them up to thee; but if the ram does not proceed forward to Judea but turns its face towards Babylon, return thou with it and fight not the people of God; if you are like the number of the sand of the sea not a single soul will return alive with thee.”

When the wife said these words to the king, he accepted them from her, and he rose forthwith and summoned his generals Cyrus and Isarus, and narrated to them all that God had promised him through His angel. And they said to the king: “May you live for ever! It is their God that is angry with them. This people has sinned; send therefore at once a messenger to Zedekiah, king of Jerusalem, to convey to him words of conciliation, and despatch gifts with him, and make inquiries whether his people have worshipped foreign gods and forsaken the words of the Lord, and whether they have refused (to listen to) the prophets who were with them and who interceded with the Lord on their behalf. If not, do not proceed to their land, as He has destroyed others who fought them, and fire will come down on us from heaven and consume us along with our land.”

These words pleased King Nebuchadnezzar, who sent forthwith a messenger from his generals, accompanied by a thousand horsemen, and he wrote with him a letter to King Zedekiah, and despatched gifts to him: a great quantity of carmine, gold, and frankincense.

The general departed then for Jerusalem with his party. When he reached it, King Zedekiah was informed that the messenger of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had arrived. He at once went out to meet him, surrounded by the women of the children of Israel dancing before their king. Then King Zedekiah dismounted and received the general of the king (of Babylon) and accepted the gifts

3 P. omits “of gold.”  
4 P. “the holy city.”  
5 M. omits “let it go.”  
6 Read biwajhihi in P.  
7 A leaf is here missing in M.

8 Compare the two last named gifts with Matt. ii. 11.
from him. He took the gold and of it he made a crown which he placed on the head of the idol; as to the frankincense he burnt it before Baal and Zeus. He was also pleased with the letter of the King Nebuchadnezzar, and he wrote to him to Babylon an answer to his letter in the following terms:

"Zedekiah, King of Judea, writes to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, thus: 'Peace be with you. This peace exists between you and me. My gods are your gods, and your gods are my gods.'"

He sealed the letter, handed it to the general, and despatched with him gems and precious stones. When the priests of Baal, the idol, heard (this) they said to the king: "Where is Jeremiah who said, 'The king of Babylon shall come and take possession of this land?""

A few days later the general reached Babylon with the thousand horsemen who were with him, and handed to Nebuchadnezzar the answer to his letter. When the king understood its meaning perfectly he roared like a lion and neighed like the horse which pulls the wheel, and said to Cyrus and his retinue: "Prepare at once your horses, the troops and the soldiers."

And Nebuchadnezzar went forth in those days and with him were all the Chaldeans to the number of six hundred thousand horsemen and six hundred thousand chariots, and on each chariot were sixteen horsemen, in all six thousand thousand thousand, and six hundred thousand,² with spears, weapons, and leather shields, and they marched on the right hand of the king and on his left, until they reached the partition of the roads between Babylon and Jerusalem. There Nebuchadnezzar alighted from his chariot, stripped himself of the royal robe, removed the crown from his head, brought the sceptre of his kingdom, and put it on the head of the ram. The ram took immediately the road of Judea, and the direction of Jerusalem. The king then said to all who were with him: "I am very much surprised," but the Lord God has delivered the (Jewish) people to me." Then the king ordered that his ram⁴ should be brought to him

¹ Read sami'a.
² There is surely much exaggeration in all these numbers, if we understand the computation given here aright.
³ Read muta'ajjibun.
⁴ Read kabshahu.
and placed on the sceptre of his kingdom pitched in the ground; and then he placed his robe at his right hand, and removed his crown and laid it under his feet, and he turned his face towards the direction of the east, and said: "O God whom I do not know, God of the pious Hebrews, and of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, O God whose name I am not worthy to pronounce with my mouth that has sinned and my lips that have deceived. I am afraid that thou shouldest not deliver the (Jewish) people to me because I am a sinner. My sins and those of my people have perchance increased before Thee." Then he proceeded: "O God of Israel and God of heavens and earth, whose name has reached me, the unworthy servant, God who has power over heavens and earth, I beseech thee, O Lord, to tell me whether that man who came to my house and nudged me is Thy angel, and whether it is Thy will that I should fight this people. I implore Thee to give a sign to this effect to me and to these men who are standing before Thee, because I am Thy servant, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. Thou hast, O Lord, hardened in the times of yore the heart of Pharaoh, until the sea submerged him and those who were with him. If I have sinned before Thee, and Thou wishest my destruction, destroy me while I am still in the borders of my own land with all those who are with me; but, O Lord, if Thou truly deliverest (the Jewish people) to me, let the shade of my sceptre return towards me."

And at that instant the sun moved and the shade of the sceptre of Nebuchadnezzar turned towards his head. (The king) then left the sceptre at his left side and the liver of the goat at his right side and said: "O Lord fortify my heart." And the Lord gave him courage.

1 Read yansubahu.
2 Why the east? Can this sentence be attributed to a Christian? The Christians, as we all know, turned their face in prayer towards the east.
3 Read fiya and shafataiya.
4 M. "for my lips are dirty." Here ends the lacuna in M.
5 P. "And he turned his face towards the east, and he prayed and said."
6 M. omits.
7 M. "In this ram that is standing before Thee." There are many verbal discrepancies in all this paragraph between the text of the two MSS.
8 Sic both MSS. P. has erroneously kibar for kabiq "liver." All this is somewhat obscure.
and bravery, and he ascertained that it was the God of the Jewish people who had delivered them to him.

And God who is God of mercy remembered Abimelech and his kindness towards the prophet Jeremiah in the days in which King Zedekiah had imprisoned him in the dungeon. And the Lord did not wish him to be in the captivity of Babylon and in the servitude of Nebuchadnezzar. And the servant Abimelech according to his daily habit went to the garden of his master, who was the boon-companion of Zedekiah, in order to bring him fruits. He took a basket which he filled with grapes, figs, and other fruits from the garden of his master, and covered them with green foliage, and carried them in order to bring them to the house of his master. While he was still on the way God remembered the words which He spoke to the prophet Jeremiah, that he "shall not see the destruction of Jerusalem, nor be under the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon." While he was walking and looking towards heaven, and while the distance (to his destination) was about an hour's (walk), he saw a cave in which there was shade and much refreshing humidity, and he said to himself: "I have gone out before my time, and have not taken to-day bread to the prophet, the man of God, my father Jeremiah; so I shall sit here awhile and sleep for an hour in this refreshing shade." He therefore repaired towards the shade and slept; and he placed the basket near his head, and it was full of grapes, figs, peaches, and pears, covered with foliage. The earth gave him rest, and the rock of the cave expanded over him and covered him like the roof of a house; the dew fortified him and the sun nurtured him, and he did not hunger nor thirst, and he was not affected by the cold of the winter nor the heat of the summer till the time when Jerusalem was destroyed and then rebuilt afresh; (all this happened to him) by the great power of God, which protected him.

After this King Nebuchadnezzar reached Judea, with all his Chaldean generals, and he subjugated all Judea and all the towns round Jerusalem. His troops spread over the land of Israel like locusts, and

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"Here begins a short lacuna in M. Read yurid in P.

It is curious that P. should make of Ebedmelech the servant of a boon-companion of Zedekiah, instead of Zedekiah himself. Even the name of this boon-companion is given below.

See Jer. xxxix. 16-18."
they clapped with their hands and danced with their feet and said:
"Let us go and fight the Hebrews, plunder their possessions and
destroy them, because all other people are now in arms against the
people of Israel whom nobody has dared approach and subdue down
to this day. Their rod was over all the nations by the power of God,
their God who fights for them."

All the young men of the children of Israel fell before Nebuchad-
nezzar, and all their power was weakened, and the people of Israel
became before him like pregnant women at the time of their travail.
He ordered them to gather together before him bound in fetters of
iron. He who was on the roof did not come down except with
bonds, and he who was in the sown field did not enter the city except
with fetters, and each one of them was seized in the spot where he
was, and none was left who did not come to King Nebuchadnezzar
who had fixed his throne at the gate of Jerusalem, the ramparts of
which he had ordered to be demolished instantly.

When King Zedekiah heard this he was greatly agitated and the
pangs of travail overtook him like a woman in labour. He stretched
on his bed and spread his mantle over him and covered his face with
a kerchief, like a shrouded dead man. His servants took him with
the intention of crossing the Jordan with him and fleeing to save
him. And King Nebuchadnezzar gave orders that King Zedekiah be
brought before him, and Cyrus, his general, went to the residence of
Zedekiah, and saw it ornamented with silk, gold, and silver, and his
sleeping chamber perfumed with incense and fine aloes-wood, and
in it was the idol which he used to worship. And God put in the
hearts of the servants of King Nebuchadnezzar to pursue the servants
of King Zedekiah, and they overtook them with the bed-litter on
their shoulders in the valley of the sea of Karmilis. They threw

1 Here ends the second short lacuna in M.
2 There are some verbal discrepancies in the above sentences in the texts
of the two MSS.
3 M. omits "fine aloes-wood."
4 So we translate  sakir of P. which is obscure. M. has safir "falling
leaves" which is still more obscure. This variant could not have arisen
except from a text written in Arabic in which the letters fa' and kaf are
only distinguished by an extraneous dot.
5 This Karmilis in P. and Karlis in M. is given above (p. 360) as a
river and not as a sea or a lake. What is referred to here may possibly be
the Dead Sea or the Lake of Tiberias.
him from their shoulders, and took the mantle that was over him, and presented him to Cyrus the first general of the King Nebuchadnezzar. The latter summoned the Chaldeans and ordered that Zedekiah's eyes be put out and placed in his hands, and that his two children be killed and placed one at his right side and the other at his left, and that a collar be tied round his neck in order that he may be led like a dog. They presented him in this state to King Nebuchadnezzar, who commanded that he should be attached to the tail of his horse as far as Babylon, and that there he should drive the mule that pulls the stone of the flour-mill, and be given for food a small quantity only of bread and water. The King Nebuchadnezzar ordered also that all the elders of the children of Israel should be bound and that their necks should be tied to their feet until the bones of their necks were broken, and that the pregnant women should have stones placed on their wombs until they aborted.

The heart of Nebuchadnezzar was hardened against them like the horses which neigh under the wheels, and he said to the Hebrews: "Where is Jeremiah, the prophet of God, that I may ask him whether I should return to my country and to my land, and inquire of him concerning the ark of the Lord, in which are the tables written with the finger of the Lord, and which, I have been told, proceeds before you." And the congregation of the children of Israel cried with weeping and said: "Where can we find the blessed prophet?" The prophet Jeremiah has been imprisoned by King Zedekiah, who ordered that no bread and no water should be given to him until he dies."

While the Hebrews were saying this, lo! a spirit carried Jeremiah and placed him before King Nebuchadnezzar, and he informed him that the ark was no more because it was on the mountains of Jericho and had disappeared owing to the great quantity of dust that was heaped on it through the effect of the winds. As to the tabernacle of the ark Zedekiah placed it under the idol of Baal. Then the elders of the children of Israel cried and said: "Live, O king, for ever and ever, and allow us to speak before you." And

1 In Arabic the Greco-Roman hafāriḥat.
2 M. adds "by their necks."
3 P. "blesses God whose sons have been imprisoned."
4 Read 'ibrāniyun.
5 P.: he could not find.
6 P. only: "And dust was heaped on it by the winds."
Nebuchadnezzar said to them: "Speak; it is your God who has humbled and dejected you; who is there to save you?" And they said to him: "This prophet whom you have summoned is young, do not listen, therefore, to his words, and be not deceived by his personality, as there is nothing to distinguish him from the other men of his own age; here there is a congregation of the children of Israel standing before you: hand to them staves of olive-trees; he whose staff comes into leaf in his hand is the true prophet."

The king agreed, and summoned before him all the young men of the children of Israel, and their number was two hundred and twenty thousand, and he handed to them staves of olive-trees. In that very moment the angel carried Jeremiah and presented him to King Nebuchadnezzar, while the staff which was in his hand had come into leaf. When the king saw this, he was greatly astonished and rose from his throne and bowed down to the ground before the prophet Jeremiah and said to him: "Thou art the true prophet of God; go, therefore, and ask God, if it is He who has sent me to this land; if not, I shall decamp away from you." And the prophet Jeremiah said to him: "Loosen the fetters of these bound men and give them a little rest from their pain until I go and ask the Lord." And King Nebuchadnezzar loosened their bonds, and the prophet Jeremiah went to the temple of the Lord, and saw it sprinkled with the blood of the young children, and he wept bitterly and said: 'O God, King of all kings, and Lord of all lords, I beseech Thee and implore Thee to-day to look from the height of heavens and show mercy towards Thy people who are under the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, and deliver them from the hands of their enemies and their haters. O God of mercy and compassion have pity." And he bowed down on his face to the ground in adoration, interceding in favour of the people. And a voice came to him from the Lord, saying: "O Jeremiah whom I have elected, thou hast interceded sufficiently for this iniquitous nation and this harsh and insensible people. Dost thou not know that I am a compassionate and merciful God? This people numbers more than eight hundred thousand souls; and in this sixth hour of the day take a lamp in thy

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1 M. adds "what you wish."  
2 Read wa'ädadaḥum in P.  
3 M. omits.  
4 M. omits all these adjectives.  
5 M.: "eight hundred thousand and eighty thousand thousand."
hand and walk in all Jerusalem and see if thou canst find a single man among them in whom there is justice; if thou findest such a one, I shall cancel the deportation order for all the people, and shall not let them go with Nebuchadnezzar; if thou findest one whose mouth is unpolluted by sacrifices to idols, I shall deliver the people from servitude and shall not allow them to go into captivity; if thou findest a single man who loves his brother or his friend, I shall save them all; but if thou findest no one, enter the temple and place the burning lamp on the candlestick, and it will not burn out until seventy years have elapsed, when the people shall have returned, walking in my ways, following my law and not forsaking what is due to me. When thou hast placed the burning lamp in its place, remove the garment of light from thee, and accompany the people into captivity where they shall be under the power of Nebuchadnezzar for seventy years."

When the prophet Jeremiah heard this from the Lord he went out with a burning lamp in his hand. Some men from the people said to him: "O father Jeremiah, why dost thou walk with a burning lamp in daylight?" And he answered: "I am in search of a man in whom there is justice and I am not able to find any." Some others said to him: "O father Jeremiah why dost thou walk with a lamp in daylight?" And he answered: "I am in search of a man whose mouth is unpolluted by sacrifices to idols, and I am not able to find any." Yet some others said to him: "O Father Jeremiah why dost thou walk with a lamp in daylight?" And he answered: "I am in search of a man in whom there is love for his friend or his neighbour, and I am not able to find any."

And Jeremiah searched among all the people, but he was unable to find any man (with the above qualifications). Then he wept bitterly, and went into the temple of God and placed the lamp burning to itself on the candlestick; and he entered the place in which the holy vestments are kept, and brought out the garment of

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1 M. omits the second part of the sentence.
2 Read *akhâhu* in P. M. omits it.
3 M. omits the two last sentences.
4 M. "of prophecy."
5 P. "you."
6 Read *birrun."
7 M. omits "friend" and "neighbour."
8 P. "the house of the Lord."
the High Priest, and he mounted the terrace of the temple and addressed the stone which was the head of the corner:1 "To thee I say that thou hast been a great honour to all those that surround thee and thou hast consolidated them,8 and thou art like the eternal Son of God who shall come into the world: the faithful King, and the Lord of the two testaments, the old and the new;4 for this reason I shall say to thee that this temple shall only be demolished up to the place of the corner-stone;6 this is the reason why thou hast received this honour. Open now thy mouth and receive the garment of the High Priest and keep it with thee until the time God wishes and brings back Israel, his people."6

The stone immediately opened its mouth and received the brodered coat of priesthood from the hand of the prophet Jeremiah. Then he took the mitre on which was written the name of the Lord Sabaoth, the Omnipotent, which Aaron and his sons used to place on their heads at the divine service,7 and lifted it to heaven and said to the sun: "To thee, I say, O owner of the great light, and O hidden chief, I cannot see the like of thee in all the creatures of God, be therefore the keeper of this head covering on the sides of which is written the name of God the Omnipotent, keep it till the day in which God brings back from captivity the children of Israel to this place." And he threw the mitre towards it, and a ray of the sun

1 Cf. Matt, xxi. 42.
2 Put in the feminine form all the verbs and adjectives in P.
3 P. "to all those that sin (sic) against thee and thou hast saved them."

6 These sentences are to be ascribed to a Christian hand.
4 Cf. Luke xxi. 6; Mk. xiii. 2. The corner-stone of the temple seems to be referred by the author to Christ.
6 In the Apocalypse of Baruch (Pat. Syr. ii. 1076-1078) it is the Angels who hide the sacred vessels. In the Second Book of the Maccabees, however, it is Jeremiah who hides the ark, the tabernacle, and the altar of incense. See Charles, Apocrypha and Pseu. i. 133-134. See also Harris, The Rest of the Words of Baruch, p. 23. In the following pages our author seems to be more constantly under the influence of the Last Words of Baruch, and there is no necessity to refer on every occasion to Harris's edition which should be consulted by every reader of the present Apocryphon.
7 The Arabic kuddas from Syr. kuddash is generally applied to the Mass.
8 M.: heating or protecting.
took it up. And Jeremiah hid the rest of the belongings of the house of the Lord.

When Jeremiah finished all this he removed from himself the garment of light in the middle of the temple, and put on sackcloth and girded himself with a linen girdle on his loins, and worshipped the Lord before the sanctuary, and bowed down his head to the ground; then he took the keys of the temple of the Lord and threw them upon the door-post and said: "O threshold of the temple of the Lord, receive these keys until the Lord brings back the people from captivity." And immediately the high door-post received them from the hand of the prophet Jeremiah.

After this Jeremiah presented himself to the king of the Chaldeans. When the people noticed that Jeremiah was wearing sackcloth, and that his head was full of earth, they all cried with wailing and weeping, and threw earth on their heads, because they had ascertained that the Lord had not forgiven them. They were aware of the fact that when Jeremiah entered the temple and interceded in favour of the people, if the Lord had pity on them and had accepted his prayer and his intervention on their behalf, he came out to them wearing a white garment and his head perfumed with scent down to his beard and the opening of his robe.

When Jeremiah finished these things, he said to Nebuchadnezzar: "Ride on thy chariot and proceed to Babylon, because the Lord has delivered this people to thee for punishment; and no harm shall befall thee." And Nebuchadnezzar arose like a lion and went to Babylon, his country. He ordered his generals and the head of his army to gather together all the Jews and march them in front of

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1 Here as below (p. 393) it is very difficult to ascertain what the author had precisely in mind when using the words tailasān, kalansuah, iṣār, mandil, and ridā.

2 M. omits the verb.

3 M. "of prophecy" as above.

4 The Talmud (Ta'anit, c. 4, fol. 29) declares that it was the priests who threw the keys towards heaven. So also The Rest of the Words of Baruch (edit. Harris), p. 51, See Harris (ibid.), pp. 18-19.

5 M.: ashes.

6 M. adds: "And when he came out wearing sackcloth and ashes on his head they knew that God had not pitied them."

7 M. omits "punishment."

8 M. omits this sentence.

9 Read al-yahūd in P.
them. And the prophet Jeremiah walked in front of them weeping, with bare feet and a bare head. When the king noticed him he said to him: "What fault hast thou, O prophet of God? Come and ride with me; but it is not fitting to ride with the king while thou art wearing sackcloth." And the prophet Jeremiah answered him and said: "I have sinned before the Lord more than all the people; by the living Lord, my God, I shall not remove this garment from me until the Lord turns away His wrath and puts an end to the captivity of His people." Then King Nebuchadnezzar ordered his generals to make the prophet Jeremiah ride with them by force.

The Hebrew people walked to Babylon in great hardship and pain, and in less than a month their dresses were spoiled, and became like old and worn out skins, and their shoes were torn from their feet, and the hair of their heads grew up and came down to their shoulders like that of women, and the sun scorched their bodies to the point of destruction, and mud and muck mounted their bodies and stuck to them, and gave rise to blisters, wounds, and sores in their flesh; and the cold of the moon and of the stars affected them by night until they fell down on their faces, and they lost their way in the intensity of darkness that overtook them. They wept and fell upon one another, and were on the point of dying from hunger and thirst; they cried with a sigh and lifted their eyes towards heaven and said: "What a difference between this and the manna and the quails which God gave to Moses, and the spring of sweet water that jetted forth from a rock in the desert." Instead of this God caused dust to come on them from heaven, and changed the sweet water into a brackish and bitter water, until they were affected with a mange and scab for which there was no remedy.

The pregnant women aborted from the fatigue of the journey, and those who suckled threw their young ones from their shoulders

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1 P. omits "weeping."
2 It is curious that our author makes Jeremiah go to Babylon instead of staying in Palestine. Jeremiah is also made to go to Babylon in 2 Baruch in Charles' Apocrypha and Pseud. ii. 485, 499, and in Midr. 'Eser Ga'avyyot (edit. Grünhut, iii. 14).
3 These sentences are not in M. in the place assigned to them by P, and the two MSS. exhibit here considerable verbal differences.
4 Read diquin and sharrin in P. and diquin only in M.
5 Read šarāhna and put all the other verbs and pronouns in fem. plur.
because their breasts dried up from the hunger and thirst that overtook them, and could not give suck to their infants, and they cried with bitter weeping and great grief and said: “O Lord, Thy judgments are just, and everything Thou hast done to us is done with wisdom, because Thou hast requited us according to our deeds; we have sacrificed our children to the idols, and Thou art punishing us according to our works. Because we have revolted against Thee and sinned before Thee, all this calamity has befallen us, and we deserve a punishment more severe than this.”

And Nebuchadnezzar brought them to Babylon, and he entered his palace and kissed the faces of his children and his wife. He was filled with joy in seeing them, and he narrated to them all that happened to them from the day he left them and went out of the country of the Chaldeans to the day he came back to them. Then he put on royal garments and sat for the trial of the Hebrews, and the arrangement of the business of their work and hire. He counted them and discovered that they had diminished by two hundred and twenty thousand and fifty souls; these had perished in the way from fatigue, hunger, and thirst, not counting the infants who had died on the arms of their mothers.

King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the adults should do clay-work and brickwork, that the old men should hew wood and draw water, and that the women should spin and weave wool; he further ordered that they should all show their work every day like slaves, and that every day they should be given a little food consisting of bread and water. And the Hebrews served in Babylon under the yoke of slavery, and King Nebuchadnezzar built through them many villages, towers, houses, granaries, and forts on the shores of the sea which surrounds Babylon. The Chaldeans used to go every day to the river with their harps, and guitars, and used to ask the Hebrews, saying: “Show us how you sing to your Lord and your

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1 This sentence is missing in M.
2 The last sentence is missing in P.
3 P. omits “wife.”
4 P. “when he saluted them.”
5 P. “the king did not take a rest but sat.”
6 M. “toil.”
7 Read khadama.
8 Read kashīrah.
9 P. omits.
10 Which sea?
God." And the Hebrews used to answer 1 with weeping and sighing: 
"How can we sing the praise of the Lord in a strange land?" 2 
The people of the Lord were greatly subdued and they cried while 
weeping and sobbing, and said: "The Lord has justly inflicted upon 
us this calamity, according to 3 our deeds." 4 Now, O Lord, look 
upon us, with mercy, because our faces have been put to shame before 
us; Thou our Lord and our God, do not requite us according to the 
iniquity of our deeds, because it is we who 5 have kindled Thy wrath, 
and not listened to Thy prophets in Jerusalem."

The Hebrews toiled for the king in Babylon, and his servants 6 
drove them about, 7 and greatly tormented them. And Jeremiah the 
prophet prayed night and day in Babylon, and interceded with God 
in favour of the people, when he saw their tribulations and their 
pains. 8 As to Zedekiah he was tied to the chariot of Nebuchad-
nezzar until he reached Babylon, and there he was appointed to 
drive the horse of the flour-mill for forty years 9 in captivity. He 
was in great tribulation all this time; then he died in wretchedness 
and bodily exhaustion that he felt more than other people. And 
Nebuchadnezzar showed mercy towards the Hebrews all the time 
of his life. 10

When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon died, he was succeeded 
by Cyrus the Persian, who greatly tormented the Hebrews with 
hunger and thirst, and reduced the rations of the food which they were 
given in the time of Nebuchadnezzar. He gave to each one of them 
one loaf of bread once in two days, and diminished the quantity of water 
to be given to them. He also increased their labours, and inflicted 
upon them grievous harm, and their number began to dwindle. After

1 Read fayakūlu al-'ibrāniyūn. 2 Ps. cxxviii. 4.
3 This 'rwad seems to be a translation of the Syriac heqēf.
4 This phrase is obscure in M. 5 Read al-ladhīn in P.
6 P. "and the Chaldeans."
7 The verb saḥata used in this sense by P. is colloquial. M. omits it.
8 The author is consistent with himself in placing in Babylon the prayers 
of Jeremiah, see above, p. 378.
9 This date seems to be improbable.
10 It is remarkable that Nebuchadnezzar is made in the document to play 
the rôle of a good monarch acting under the orders of God. This reminds 
one of the Romance of Alexander in which the Macedonian conqueror is 
made in Syriac and Arabic literature to play the rôle of a pious man guided 
by Divine Providence.
they had numbered one hundred thousand thousand\footnote{1} and eighty thousand thousand, nothing remained of them but eighty thousand thousand.\footnote{2}

Some Hebrew children, seventy in number, used to learn with Chaldean children.\footnote{3} Among them was a young boy called Ezra. His mother took him to the scribes while he was still very young, not distinguishing good from evil. And the spirit of God was upon him. And the children of the Hebrews and the children of the Chaldeans used to go every day and carry water on their shoulders for their teachers.\footnote{4}

When they went one day to carry water, the jar of Ezra fell down\footnote{5} and broke. Then the children of the Chaldeans turned\footnote{6} to the children of the Hebrews and said to them: “Fie! O miserable, weak, and despicable ones!” And they clapped their hands and said: “O Hebrews, you are weak people in whom there is no energy.”\footnote{6} And they laughed at Ezra, who lifted his eyes towards heaven, sobbed, wept bitterly, and said: “O my Lord, and God Omnipotent, turn towards us and have mercy upon us for the sake of Abraham Thy beloved, and Isaac Thy servant, and Israel Thy holy one. Do not forget the covenant that Thou hast established with Thy servants our fathers, and do not remove from us Thy face and Thy mercy. We are hated by all nations, and despised and rejected in this nation.\footnote{7} Now, O Lord, look upon us, and show us mercy from Thyself. We have sinned before Thee, but Thou art forgiving and merciful, O Lord. Thou forgivest sins and Thou desirest not the death of sinners.”\footnote{8}

When Ezra finished his prayer, he took off his mantle and went...
into the sea, and filled it with water as if it were a jar; then he placed it on his shoulder and walked with his fellow-students, and not a single drop fell from it. When he reached the scribes, he began to sprinkle the place with water from his mantle; then he put it on immediately, and it was as dry as before. When the teacher saw him, he rose up and bowed down to the ground before him and said: “Verily I say unto thee, O Ezra, my child, it is thou who shalt deliver thy people from captivity.”

And Ezra was growing every day in grace before God, and men, he and the other children of the Hebrews. A few days later the children wished to go out to draw water as was their wont. The children of the Chaldeans went out and said to one another: “Let us separate ourselves from the children of the Hebrews, and not have any intercourse with them, and not eat and drink with them, because they do not worship our gods.” And they seceded from them, beat them, sneered at them and insulted their God. When Ezra saw what had happened, he wept over his companions and implored God to help them. Then he struck a rock with his feet, and water sprang from it like a sea, and it increased in volume until it reached the feet of the Chaldeans as if to drown them. The teacher rose up instantly and knelt down before Ezra and kissed his hands and his feet and said to him: “What is there between thee and these dogs? Dost thou wish to destroy all the town because of them?

Then Ezra had pity on his teacher, when he noticed his weeping, and he repaired to the spot where the rock was found and laid his foot on it and said: “O earth, open thy mouth and swallow this water, because the Lord has said, ‘No second flood of water shall come unto the earth,’ but that fire shall come which will consume the

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1 In the Gospel of the Infancy (Cowper’s the Apocryphal Gospels, p. 75, sixth edit.) a similar anecdote is attributed to Christ. See also ibid., pp. 453-454.
2 P. “the school.”
4 This paragraph also is very differently worded in the two MSS.
5 P. omits the last sentence.
6 P. omits the last two sentences.
7 P. omits the last sentence, but adds: “while jetting forth from the stone until it became like a flood.”
8 P. omits.
9 Cf. Gen. ix. 11.
The earth opened then its mouth at once and swallowed all the water. And Ezra rose up and took all the children of the Hebrews, and removed them from the school of the Chaldeans.

After all this King Cyrus summoned the people of the Hebrews before him, and said to them: “Bring me all your harps through which you praise your God, and play them before me.” And they said to King Cyrus: “We fear to play them in a strange land, because our God does not wish it.” And Cyrus said to them: “As you praised your God in Jerusalem so do here.” And they answered him saying: “The sons of Levi whom God has chosen take precedence of us and play the harps.” And King Cyrus summoned the tribe of Levi before all the Hebrews and ordered that they should begin and sing to the accompaniment of the harps. They came before them and played the harp, and while shouting in unison they clapped their hands and beat the earth with their feet. Then the ground lifted immediately those who were standing on it, and mounted upwards, as if to cause the children of Israel to descend upon their own land, and their voices were heard that day in Jerusalem.

The Chaldeans feared then and became disturbed, and a cloud came down from heaven, and overshadowed the temple in Jerusalem. All those who were in Jerusalem ascertained in that day that the Lord had mercy upon the people of Israel, and that He was willing to deliver them from captivity. When Cyrus, king of the Chaldeans, noticed what had happened through the play on the harps, he feared greatly and said to the Hebrews: “Do not move the strings of your harps with your hands as long as you are in these countries, until you go to your own countries and praise your God in the town of Jerusalem.”

When the seventy years of the captivity had elapsed, there were

1 Read: *yutahhiruha* in P.
2 M. “and brought them to.”
3 M. “and play the harps.”
4 M. “And immediately the ground upon which they stood shook and mounted upwards.”
5 Read: *fakha*a.
6 P. omits “in Jerusalem.”
7 M. “Do not take out your harps.”
8 P. adds “as was your wont.”
three young men: Ezra son of Yaratha, and Daniel son of Betariah, and Ezekiel son of Buzi, to whom God spoke, and who prophesied in Babylon. They said to one another: "Let us take a lamb and go out to the desert and there offer a sacrifice to the God of Israel, as our fathers were wont to do, for the remission of their sins, and God used to send down to them from heaven a rod of fire and receive their sacrifices after they had offered them. Let us go and do the same because the grace of God and His mercy have perhaps come near us, and the Lord will send His angel to receive our sacrifice from us." And they did this.

Then Ezra took wood of atraphis, wood of styrax, and wood of ebony, in all three varieties of wood, placed a ram on the wood, turned his face towards the sunrise, and looked towards Jerusalem, and prayed to God of Israel, saying: "O Lord God of our pious fathers, the One and Eternal God, who heard Abel, the first murdered man, and took his revenge from his brother Cain; who created the

1 P. Neriah. A confusion with the father of Baruch. Yaratha may be a mistake for Seraiah (Ezra vii. 1). The mistake may have arisen through Arabic characters which do not differ considerably in the two names; this graphic difference is still slighter with Betariah, the father of Daniel, who follows immediately.

2 M. Refubah. I do not know anything about this man. Betariah may be a mistake for Seraiah (Ezra vii. 1) caused by the very slight difference in the letters of the Arabic script of the two names. See the following and preceding notes.

3 P. Baradi. The difference between Buzi and Baradi is very slight in Arabic script, and here and elsewhere it shows that the original from which the Garshuni MS. of Paris emanates was written in Arabic characters. The mistaken reading Baradi could hardly have arisen otherwise.

4 The verb as 'ada seems here to be a translation of the Syriac assekh used in the sense of "to offer" a sacrifice.

5 P. "an angel." P. adds "to God."

6 P. omits this sentence.

7 Read minna. minnan of P. seems to be an echo of the Syriac minnan.

8 What kind of a tree is it? There is no ebony in Babylon.

9 Note that the author makes mention here also as above in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, of the direction of the East.

10 Jerusalem is not East of Babylon. We might conclude from this sentence that the author of the document was writing in a country situated West of Palestine. Could this country be Egypt?

11 Lit. the first martyr. Can this denote a Christian hand?
image of Seth beforehand according to His own image, and removed from him the power of darkness; who caused Enoch to ascend to heaven with his body on account of the purity of his heart, and taught him the secrets of heaven and what is to take place at the end of the world; who delivered Noah because of his justice, and granted to him the power of Adam before his fall and made him the lord of everything which is under heaven: I pray Thee and beseech Thee, O Lord, O Omnipotent God, to hear my supplication and listen to my prayer, and to my tears. Remember the covenant which Thou hast made with our father Abraham when Thou saidst to him, 'If thy sons keep My covenant, I will destroy their enemies.' Now, O Lord, I implore Thee to visit Thy servants, who are ready to die for Thy holy name. Listen to us to-day from the height of Thy heaven, and receive our sacrifice, smell its odour, and show pity and forgiveness to Thy people.”

When Ezra finished his prayer with his brethren who were with him, their supplication reached the throne of the Lord, and their words penetrated the hearing of the Lord Sabaoth, who sent His angel, in the figure of a man, to take up their offerings to the Lord. Michael, the head of the angels, came down from heaven, and stood on their altar, and burned the wood and the lamb with a rod of fire that he held in his hand, and after the fire had consumed everything that was there, he ascended to heaven. He stood up in the air, looked at the three young men, and blessed them with the heavenly blessing, and then heaven opened and received him.

As to the prophet Jeremiah he went while wearing sackcloth to King Cyrus. He further interceded with the Lord in favour of the people, and while standing in prayer before the Lord, he said: “O Lord, O Lord, O God of my spirit and of my body, listen now to the supplication of Thy servant on behalf of the tribulations of this

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1 Was the author familiar with the Book of Enoch?  
2 P. omits “prayer.”  
3 Read abina in P.  
4 Not found verbatim in Gen.  
5 P. “We are slaves unto death for . . .”  
6 Remove the final atiph in P.  
7 P. adds “in the firmament.”  
8 P. “purified” or “appeared to.”  
9 Here also the author is consistent with himself in placing Jeremiah in Babylon.  
10 M. omits this sentence.
people against whom the days of Thy wrath have ended. Fulfil (Thy promise about) the appointed time that Thou hast decreed for the deliverance of Thy people.” And the Lord summoned the angel Michael saying: “Make haste and go down to the land of the Chaldeans, and save the people and take them out of their captivity. If the inhabitants of Babylon impede them, I shall make heaven stick to the earth and I shall cause My wrath to dwell in them until they allow them to go from under their hands. Go also to the prophet Jeremiah, My elected one, and impart this news to him; take him to the king of Babylon, and deliver the people from him. If the king of the Chaldeans impedes them I shall destroy him with his people as I destroyed Pharaoh in the times of yore with the Egyptians who were with him, and all his chariots.”

While the prophet Jeremiah was in the sepulchral vault weeping over the sins of the people, the angel Michael came to him and said to him: “Peace be with you, O elected prophet of God. Grow cheerful because it is time for cheerfulness.” And the prophet Jeremiah looked at Michael, the angel of God, and said to him: “Here I am, O angel of the Lord. I recognised thy greeting, and thy words have strengthened my bones. Where wast thou that thou didst not appear to me till this day in which I am in great trouble with this people, like a father with his children?” And the angel said to the prophet Jeremiah: “Here I am to-day before you in order to deliver your people, because I have been sent by God for this purpose, on account of your prayer which has been accepted. Thus says the Lord whom I serve, I have mercy on this people and I wish to send them back to their land and their country in order that they may serve Me there. If the kings of Babylon do not allow them to go, I shall wax angry with them and destroy their land, in order to force them to send them back, and if in spite of this they refuse I shall do with them what I did with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.”

After the angel Michael had said this to the prophet Jeremiah, he addressed him thus: “You remain here until I go and summon all the

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1 The word used is the Greek νας. What does the author mean by this term?
2 P. omits this sentence.
3 P. adds “O man of God.”
4 M. “thou servest.”
5 P. omits this sentence.
6 P. omits this sentence.
7 P. omits.
people to you.” And the angel Michael went out and took the form of a Hebrew man, and assembled all the people of Israel in one place as if they were one man, and he repaired to those who were making bricks and clay and said to them: “You have worked sufficiently; go now to your father Jeremiah, because the Lord has saved you from this toil.” And he went to those who were hewing wood and drawing water, and said the same thing to them. And he went to town to those women who were weaving wool, and he said to them: “You have had enough work and toil; the Lord has saved you from your work, and given you deliverance. Come on and go to your father Jeremiah.” And none was left, but all gathered together. The angel Michael gathered them all together with the prophet Jeremiah, and all went to King Cyrus and to the first general of the Chaldeans. And Jeremiah said to Cyrus and to Emesis his first general: “Listen to the words of the Lord, God of Israel.” And he began to repeat to them the words uttered to him by the angel Michael. And Cyrus and Emesis said to the prophet Jeremiah: “And who is the God of Israel? You, O Hebrews, return to your work, and throw such words away from you.” And the king ordered the prophet Jeremiah to be flogged before them; and this was done in a cruel way. And King Cyrus and Emesis went then out of the palace, and ordered the superintendents of the work of the Hebrews to strike the latter and torment them until they did their duty. And Cyrus and Emesis rode and went out themselves in order to torment the Hebrews.

In that very hour a cloud and mist appeared, the earth shook, a big earthquake occurred, wind became fierce, the sun suffered eclipse in the middle of the day, and darkness covered the earth. The inhabitants of the earth mixed pell-mell, horsemen with the crowds, and the feet of the horses that were ridden sunk deep into the earth like pegs; until all the Chaldeans cried to King Cyrus and to Emesis and said to them: “Is not this sufficient for you? Do you wish the Lord to do with us as He did with the Amorites?” As to King Cyrus he fell from his horse and his backbone broke; likewise the first general Emesis fell and his right arm broke to the elbow-joint.

1 Read shubh in P.
2 In P. it is Jeremiah who gathers them together.
3 M.: vizier.
4 In P. “In your blasphemy.”
5 P. “with you.”
6 P. omits this sentence.
Then the two cried: “O God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Israel, God of the Hebrews, have pity on us; we have sinned against Thee, because we have not allowed Thy people to get out of our land. We pray Thee and beseech Thee, O Lord, to have mercy upon us and not to punish us for our sins. Pity us and heal us, and we shall let them go to their land in joy and peace.”

And the prophet Jeremiah had pity on them when he heard their words and their sobs, and he approached King Cyrus and raised him up from the ground and healed his bone which was broken; he did likewise heal the arm of the first general of the Chaldeans.

When the Lord noticed that their hearts had turned away from that on which they were bent, He gave orders and the earth and all the inhabited globe became quiet, and the sun shone on the surface of the earth. Then King Cyrus and Emesias summoned the Hebrews, reckoned their working days, and paid them their wages in full, and gave them much gold and silver. The king helped then the prophet Jeremiah to mount his own steed, and clothed him in royal garments, and placed his crown upon his head, and delivered to him many horses, mules, and camels, laden with provisions for the journey. He further wrote letters to all the land of the Chaldeans ordering its inhabitants to welcome the prophet Jeremiah and his people (when they passed by them), and wish them Godspeed in joy and merriment, and to honour them and render service to them until they left them. And the king presented also the prophet Jeremiah with twelve slaves.

And the prophet Jeremiah left the towns of the Chaldeans with all the people of the Hebrews. The number of the Hebrews who went out of Babylon was eighty thousand thousand; they had thus diminished by a hundred thousand thousand during their stay in captivity.

When they left Babylon they began with prayers and supplications, saying: “Rise, rise, O Jerusalem, and rejoice, and wear thy silver.”

1P. omits the verb.  
2M. omits “silver.”
3In all the following sentences the subject in P. is “the King,” but in M. the subject is the indefinite “they.”
4Read jimāl in P. for himāl. This variant could not have arisen except through Arabic characters in which the letters jim and hā are distinguished only by an extraneous dot.
5M. “ten.”
6M. adds “in Babylon.”
diadem in joy and gladness, because thy children who had left thee with tears,1 fear, and sadness,2 have come to thee with joy,3 and jubilation.” And the prophet Jeremiah went out to his land in joy and gladness,4 and all the towns of the Chaldeans honoured him, and horsemen were riding before him up to Jerusalem in order to praise it and to honour it with the people; and in this state they reached Jerusalem.

As to the servant Abimelech, he awoke from his sleep and went out of the place in which he was sleeping, and the stone that was over him moved away.5 He looked at the basket6 of grapes, figs, and other fruits7 and saw that their dust was still on them, and noticed that the green foliage with which they were covered had become longer and broader. And Abimelech said to himself: “I have not overslept and my head is still heavy with sleep; I shall get some more rest and rise up and go to town, because it is time for me to take some food to the prophet Jeremiah, my blessed father, who is in prison.”

When Abimelech awoke from his sleep, exactly seventy years had elapsed.8 He carried the basket9 of grapes, figs,10 and other fruits, which were as fresh as when they were picked, and entered Jerusalem. When he saw that its rampart was demolished and the town itself destroyed, and when he noticed that vines and fig-trees were just showing their buds, the palm-trees their spadices, and the sycamore trees their sprouts, he was amazed and bewildered. When he went inside the town and noticed that its streets had changed and its walls had either altered or were demolished, and that the destroyed buildings in it were reconstructed, and the reconstructed buildings in it destroyed, and when he did not find in it anyone whom he could recognise, his mind became confused, and he stood and said: “O my Lord and my God, what is this delusion that has overtaken me?”

1 P. adds “in subjection.”
2 Put a wāw before the word in P.
3 P. “peace.”
4 M. omits this sentence.
5 P. omits the last sentence.
6 M. “baskets.”
7 Read ḥākīḥāh in P.
8 Cf. the story of the “Seven Sleepers.” In 4 Baruch (Charles’ Apocrypha and Pseud. ii. 533), Abimelech falls asleep in the garden of Agrippa and does not awake for sixty-six years and not seventy. See Harris, The Rest of the Words of Baruch, p. 13.
9 M. “baskets.”
10 P. omits “figs.”
11 Read al-lati.
Then he saw an old man collecting firewood, and he went to him, and the old man said to him: “What can I do for my son?” And he said to him: “What did King Zedekiah do to-day with my father, the prophet Jeremiah? Did he free him from the dungeon?” And the old man said to him: “What are these words you are uttering, my son? Who is Zedekiah, and who is Jeremiah? Seventy years have elapsed this day from the day in which Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, and carried the people into captivity to Babylon, and the prophet Jeremiah was among them.” And Abimelech said to him: “Had you not been an old man I would have said to you that you were mad. I went a little while ago to the garden of my master and brought him fruits, but my eyes being somewhat heavy, I slept for a short time. Is it in this short time that the people were carried into captivity? Is it possible that darkness has overtaken them and covered them? Or that the moon has swallowed them that I am unable to see any of them?”

The old man answered then and said: “You are truly a holy man, and God spared you the sight of the destruction of Jerusalem, the great tribulations of the road and the subjection to Nebuchadnezzar. He has brought down sleep upon you in order that you may see Jerusalem reconstructed as in the days of her glory. If you wish to ascertain the truth of my words: this is the first day in which the prophet Jeremiah arrived accompanied by all the people; this should be a proof for you that Jerusalem has returned to its former state. You are truly a holy man of the Lord, who had pity on you and granted you rest for seventy years, until the people came back to their place. O my son, these grapes and figs which are with you, the present time is not their season. Look, my son—and you are a holy man of God—look at the trees, how they are at this time of year, and know that this is not the time for grapes and other fruits.

1 In M. “and he went to him and said to him “Father, is this the town of Jerusalem?”

2 Read, innama ana in P. for anakama.

3 P. names here the master Hermis and distinguishes him from King Zedekiah whose servant Ebedmelech was. See above, p. 371.

4 Read na’astu in P. “the darkness of the night.”

5 P. “the firmament.”

6 P. omits the name.

7 P. omits.

8 M. has here asjār the vulgar Arabic for asḥār (a sin instead of a shin).
This month is the month of April, and this day is the first day in which the prophet Jeremiah reached Jerusalem, after a stay of seventy years in captivity. The words that you have uttered square with one another. Lo, the people are coming now and with them branches of palm-trees and holding in their hands twigs of aromatic bushes and olive-trees.

Then Abimelech saw the prophet Jeremiah riding the horse of the king and shining like the sun, and he hastened to him and bowed down before him. When Jeremiah saw him he dismounted from his horse, embraced him, cried aloud to him and said: “Be welcome, be welcome, O my beloved Abimelech! Look at the honour that God bestowed on you. He does this to anyone who is merciful and charitable to his fellow-creatures. You had pity on me in the day of my tribulations, and the Lord has overshadowed you with His holy hand and placed you in a refreshing sleep till you saw Jerusalem reconstructed and glorified for the second time. You have not tasted of the food of subjection, nor have you borne the yoke of King Nebuchadnezzar during the last seventy years which we spent in captivity and persecution. God spared you this great hardship because of your charitable deeds. Let all those who hear your story do acts of charity and mercy with everybody, and God will spare them all trouble.”

When Jeremiah finished his address to him, they all entered the town together. And Abimelech did not cease to be held in honour by the prophet Jeremiah and by the rest of the people all the time of his life. When the prophet Jeremiah entered the town he glorified God with this canticle:

1 M. Nisān (the Syriac and Hebrew month), but P. Barāmūdah, which seems to prove the Egyptian origin of the MS. from which the prototype of P. was derived. Barāmūdah extends from March 27th to April 25th.
2 In Arabic Kutūb an-nakhl “the pith of palm-trees.” The same expression is used in the Arabic Diatessaron of Ibn at-Tayib published by Ciasca (p. 149) to express John xii. 13. I believe that the word emanates from the Peshitta Old Testament (Lev. xxiii. 40) in which the Syriac words are exactly lībbawāṭha d-dhiḳṭā. The Arabic expression seems to be a literal translation of the Syriac. See further Bulletin of the Bezan Club, No. iii. pp. 14-17, 1926.
3 P. “death and troubles.”
4 Read aḥadin in P.
5 M. omits this sentence.
6 P. omits this sentence.
"Rejoice, O Jerusalem! Arise and wear thy diadem. Thy sons had gone out of thee with tears and sadness, and have now come to thee in joy and jubilation. Let heaven rejoice and earth jubilate over the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who have returned to their land. Let our fathers take their harps in their hands, and sing before the Lord, because God has brought back again their children who had been carried into captivity in which they had almost perished; Let Cherubim and Seraphim sing and praise with us over the sons of Abraham, and let them rejoice over the children of Israel who have returned again to their land and their country."

When Jeremiah entered the door of the Temple, he said to the door-post: "To thee I say, O threshold of the house of God, bring out the keys which I had confided to thee." And it immediately brought out the keys and delivered them to the prophet Jeremiah. And he opened the door of the Temple and he went into it with all the people, and they worshipped before the Lord. And he entered the Holy of Holies where he saw the lamp burning as if it was fresh, and its light was shining, in the way in which he had left it, without diminution. It was with it that he had searched Jerusalem to discover if there was in it a man in whom there was mercy, and he did not find any. All of them worshipped God saying: "Holy, holy, holy! Thou art, O Lord, a just Lord, in all Thy actions, and Thou hast done everything with wisdom. Thou didst with us all this in order to punish us in the measure of our sins, and Thou hast requited us in proportion with our iniquities."

The prophet Jeremiah called the sons of Aaron and said to them: "Arise now and offer sacrifices to the Lord, and be pure according to the prescriptions of your priesthood." And he also went up to the terrace of the house of the Lord, and he stood on the corner-stone, and said: "To thee I say, O stone, Open thy mouth and bring out thy trust: the garment of the High Priest, because we are in need of

1 M. "Arise, arise."
2 P. "Let our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob take their harps."
3 The first letter of the word "Cherubim" is a shin instead of a kaf in P. This also denotes the Egyptian (Coptic) origin of the prototype of P.
4 Read aiyyatuha in P.
5 Read al-latii.
6 M. "Thou art holy, O Lord and just in all Thy actions."
7 Read kahnutikun.
it." And it brought out the garment, and Jeremiah handed it to the High Priest. And after that he went out before the sun, and said to it: "To thee, I say, O sun, the great luminary of heaven, bring out the mitre which I confided to thee and on which is the name of the Lord, the Holy One, because the Lord had mercy on His people, and we are in need of it for the service of the altar." Then the prophet Jeremiah stretched his hand towards the rays of the sun and the mitre came down from it, and he handed it to the High Priest. And he handed also to the High Priest the rest of the vestments of the house of the Lord which he had taken with him to Babylon.

[And the head of the priests who came with them from captivity wore the priestly robe, the garment and the mitre on which was written the name of the Lord, and the prophet Jeremiah put on the garment of the prophetic office—which God had ordered him to remove from him when he went into captivity and place in the Temple until his return from the deportation to Babylon—and approached the sanctuary of the Lord. The latter was filled with the glory of God, which spread over all the Temple and the people, and the glory of the Lord increased upon them with His mercy. And the God of Israel dwelt among them with the Cherubim and Seraphim].

As to the sons of Aaron they performed their duty, each one according to his own rank and order, and shouted with their horns, and offered sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord descended and filled all the house. And the fire came down from heaven and consumed the holocaust. All the people observed as a feast the twenty-fifth day of April and glorified the Lord with great joy.”

1 Here as above (p. 377) it is very difficult to ascertain what was in the author's mind in using such terms as "ta'lasān, kalamsuah, ʿisār, mandil, and ridd".

2 M. “And Jeremiah spread his mantle and the mitre fell in it.”

3 Read al-latī.

4 Here again P. writes “Cherubim” with an initial shin, which denotes an Egyptian origin.

5 All this paragraph between brackets is missing in M.

6 P. adds “and harps.”

7 In Arabic hamalū “they lifted” which denotes the Syriac asēk meaning “to lift,” and “to offer sacrifice.” (See above p. 384.)

8 Here again M. has the Hebrew-Syriac Nīṣān and P. the Coptic Barmūdah which indicates its Egyptian origin.

9 Mingana 240 ends here with the following colophon: “Glory, praise, honour, and worship be to the Lord of hosts for ever and ever, Amen!”

Here
[And the prophet Jeremiah worshipped before the Lord and said: "Blessed be the Lord, God of Israel, and blessed be His name for ever and ever. He remembered His holy covenant and His oath to our father Abraham that his seed will last for ever.¹ He looked from the heights of heaven upon His people and the heirs of His inheritance, He saw their grief and the sobbing of their hearts, delivered them with His mighty arm and powerful hand, and brought them back to His holy Temple. To Him be glory, honour, majesty, and power, because He is the God of Israel, who destroyed His enemies who turned their hearts away from His service, and sacrificed to the idol of Baal, and worshipped it instead of God, their Lord, and offered incense to gods made with hands, and offered the blood of infants to the stars of heaven and to demons, and impeded them from walking in the way of God, their Lord. For this reason God delivered them to their enemies in order that they may wreak vengeance upon them. They uprooted their memory from the earth, and destroyed their seed from among the children of Israel, His people."

[Then the prophet Jeremiah arose and turned² his face towards the people, and congratulated them on their safety and beautiful deliverance. He blessed them and made a covenant with them that they shall not relinquish the service of God, their Lord, and worship the idol of Baal for a second time. And they offered in that day numerous sacrifices, burnt-offerings, holocausts, and they rejoiced greatly in the house of the Lord, and thanked God immensely, and glorified His name, saying: "Blessed be the name of the Lord, God of Israel, who visited and delivered His people, and saved them from the hardships of the Chaldeans; who took them out of Babylon and ends the story of the children of Israel and glory be to the Lord of lords, and King of kings, for evermore, Amen! And praise be to the Lord of the worlds, Amen! Here ends the story of the deportation of the children of Israel from Jerusalem into Babylon. May God have pity on the weak scribe, on the reader and the pious hearers. Amen! Amen! Amen!"

I give in the lines above between brackets the translation of the end of the story in the Paris MS. This end seems to be a later addition and is much under the influence of the Gospel of St. Luke i. 67-73.

¹ There is much resemblance between these words and the hymn of Zacharias in Luke i. 67, 72-73.
² Read: amāla.
brought them to His land and His inheritance, which He granted to them; who returned to them their kingdom, prophecy, and priesthood; who did not allow His wrath to dwell with them for ever, but had pity on them and delivered them."

[And the people did not cease to serve God with a good and perfect service, and with offerings and sacrifices, in all the lifetime of the prophet Jeremiah. And glory, praise, and thanks be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, now and for evermore, Amen.]

[Here ends, by the assistance of the Holy Trinity, this great story of the deportation of the children of Israel into Babylon. Remember, O Lord, Thy sinning servant, Cyriacus, who is unworthy of the name of man, because of the great number of his sins. He copied this from a bad MS., and he who finds in it a mistake and corrects it, God will forgive him his sins, because its scribe is the weakest, the most imperfect, and the lowliest of all the (men) of the world.]

\[1\text{ The copyist.}\]
(ii) A New Life of John the Baptist.

PREFATORY NOTE.

I give in the following pages the text and the translation (accompanied by a critical apparatus) of an unknown life of John the Baptist. I have edited the text from two MSS. of my own collection, numbered Mingana Syr. 22 and Mingana Syr. 183, in the custody of the Rendel Harris Library, Birmingham. (Hereafter M. 22 and M. 183). In spite of a thorough search I have failed to discover the existence of a third MS. in the public libraries of Europe the catalogues of which are at my disposal.

The MSS. exhibit short lacunæ, but fortunately these lacunæ do not affect identical passages, and by collating the two I was able to establish a complete, continuous, and unbroken text. M. 22 is also in many places in a bad state of preservation, and some words and occasionally whole lines have disappeared from it, apart from the lacuna of one leaf referred to in the present edition. This deficiency has, however, been supplied from M. 183 and the words that are missing in the former MS. are inserted between parentheses and marked (a a). M. 22 is dated 1838 of the Greeks (A.D. 1527) and M. 183 has no colophon, but on palæographical grounds it may be ascribed to about A.D. 1750. In spite of some important variants, there is reason to believe that both MSS. represent a single recension of the story, although M. 22 may be supposed to have been written for the use of Egyptian Christians and M. 183 for that of Syrian Christians.

If we are to believe the contents of the story, it was written by Serapion, bishop of a town in Egypt, during the Patriarchate of Theophilus who governed the sea of Alexandria in 385-412. But from the mention of Theodosius the Great in connection with some events of the narrative, it may be affirmed with a good deal of probability that Serapion was writing in one of the years falling within A.D. 385-395.

If the story is a translation from Greek, as in many passages it
appears to be, the translator must have used his proper names such as 'Ain Kārīm, Assuan and Homs in the form in which they were known in his day. Without entering into minute details, I may state, however, that the text seems to contain sentences that have been interpolated by authors or copyists who might have lived at a date much later than that of Serapion. Some notes that I have ventured to add to the narrative will, I hope, help the reader to form his own opinion on the value of the story in the domain of history, exegesis, and Apocryphal literature.

In the edition I placed in the main body of the page the text of M. 22 and in the footnotes the various readings exhibited by M. 183, but in the translation I followed the text of either of the two MSS. that appeared to me to be more genuine and archaic. I have transcribed the text in Garshūnī (Arabic in Syriac characters) as it is found in the MSS., and given a facsimile of each MS. to show the reader its palæographic peculiarities. The Arabic style used in the story is in correctness and excellency of diction about equal to that used in the “Apocryphal Jeremiah” published above.

TRANSLATION.

With the assistance of God and His divine guidance we begin to write the life of the holy Mar John the Baptist, son of Zacharias: may his intercession be with us. Amen!

There was an aged priest-Levite1 from the tribe of Judah, whose name was Zacharias. He was a prophet who rose among the children of Israel in the days of Herod, King of Judaea. He had a God-loving wife, called Elizabeth,2 and she was from the daughters of Aaron, from the tribe of Levi. She was barren and had no children, and she and her husband were advanced in years. They were both righteous and pious people, guiding their steps by all the commandments and ordinances of God. And Zacharias was officiating constantly in the Temple of the Lord. When it fell to him,

1 How could Zacharias have been at the same time a priest, a Levite, and from the tribe of Judah? Can Judah be a mistake for Abia, and can the preceding word Kābitah be translated by course, order (Luke i. 5, and 1 Chron. xxiv. 10)?

2 M. 22 uses the Greek form of the name and M. 183 the Syriac form throughout.
during the turn of his division, to burn incense to the Lord, he entered the Temple according to his habit, at the time of the burning of the incense, and the angel of the Lord appeared to him immediately, standing on the right of the altar. When Zacharias saw him he was frightened and startled. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, but rather rejoice, O Zacharias! God has heard your prayer, and your wife Elizabeth shall conceive and bear you a son, who shall be called John; you shall have joy and delight, and many shall rejoice over his birth. He shall be great before the Lord, and he shall not drink any wine or strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in the womb of his mother, and shall reconcile many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He shall go before Him in the spirit and with the power of Elijah, in order to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him."

Zacharias was astonished at these words, and doubt overtook him, because no child had been born to him. He did not remember Abraham, the head of the Patriarchs, to whom God gave Isaac, after he had reached the age of a hundred years, nor his wife Sarah who was also barren like his own wife. Zacharias said, therefore, to the angel: "How can this happen to me while I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years?"

And the angel answered and said to him: "I am the angel Gabriel. I have been sent to speak to you and bring you this news. And from now you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when this takes place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in due course." And he disappeared from his sight.

Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zacharias wondering at his remaining so long in the Temple. When he came out he was unable to speak to the people, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the Temple, and he kept making signs to them. And as soon as his term of service was finished, he returned home. And Elizabeth got information of the affair (from God).

In those days Elizabeth conceived, and lived in seclusion till the fifth month, because she felt somewhat ashamed. She feared to

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1 Many of these data and of those which follow are more or less faithfully taken from the first chapter of Luke.

2 M. 183 has the "sixth month." This appears to be against Luke i. 24. The discrepancy between the two texts can, however, be accounted for by
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appear in her old age while pregnant and milk dripping from her breasts. She lived in a secluded room¹ of her own house, and Zacharias also lived likewise. Between them stood a locked door, and they did not speak at all to anyone in all those days. When she reached her sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, from the house of David; and the name of the virgin was Mary. When the angel came into her presence he said to her:

"Rejoice, O Mary, because you have been favoured with a grace from God. You shall be with child and shall give birth to a son, who shall be called Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called 'Son of the Most High.'" And Mary said to the angel: "How can this happen to me while I have not known any man?" And the angel said to her: "The Holy Spirit shall descend upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you, because the child that is born of you is holy and shall be called 'Son of God,' and lo Elizabeth who is related to you is also expecting a child in her old age, and it is now the sixth month with her who is called barren, because with God there is nothing impossible." And she had no doubt on the matter but said to the head of the angels: "I am the servant of the Lord, let it be with me as you have said." He then greeted her and disappeared.

Mary was astonished at the fact that Elizabeth was expecting a child, and kept saying in her heart: "Thy acts are wonderful and great, O God Omnipotent, because Thou hast given descendants to an old and barren woman. I shall not cease walking until I have met her and beheld the wonderful miracle which God has performed in our times: a virgin giving birth to a child,² and a barren woman suckling."³

In those days she rose up in haste and went into the hill-country, to the town of Judah, and she entered the house of Zacharias, and

¹ Syr. Kātōnā. ² Presumably Mary herself. ³ Presumably Elizabeth.
The latter went to her with great joy and delight, and greeted her, saying: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

The holy and pious virgin embraced then the true turtle-dove, and the Word baptised John while still in the womb of his mother. And David appeared in the middle and said: "Mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other." And immediately after John moved in the womb, as if wishing to come out and greet his master. After they had finished their mutual greetings, the Virgin stayed with Elizabeth three months, until the latter's time was near, and then returned to her home.

When the holy Elizabeth gave birth (to her son) there was a great joy and delight in her house, and after eight days they went to circumcise him, and wished to call him Zacharias. His mother, however, said: "No, call him John." And they said to her: "You have no relation of that name." And she said to them: "Ask his father about his name." And he asked for a writing-tablet and wrote thus: "His name is John." When he had written this he recovered the use of his tongue forthwith, and he glorified God who had granted him this great mercy, and uttered prophecies concerning his son John the Baptist, and was cognisant of the gift that he had received from God.

John grew up in a beautiful childhood and sucked his mother two years. The grace of God was on his face, and he grew up fortified by the Spirit. When Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, behold magians came from the East saying: "Where is he that is born, the King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard these words he was troubled by what he had heard from the magians that (that child) was the King of the Jews, and he immediately desired to kill him.

Then the angel of the Lord appeared forthwith to Joseph and said to him: "Arise and take the child and his mother and flee into the land of Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word."

1Ps. lxxxv. 10. 2Read abâhu. 3This was, and often is now, a general habit in the East. 4Many of the above sentences are a more or less faithful rendering of the second chapter of Matthew.
Then Herod sought the Master in order to destroy Him, but he did not find Him, and he began to kill all the children of Bethlehem. And Elizabeth feared that her son John might be killed like them, and she took him immediately to Zacharias in the Temple, and she said to him: "My lord, let us go with our son John to some other countries, in order to save him from Herod the unbeliever, who is murdering children because of Jesus the Christ. Mary and Joseph have already gone to the land of Egypt. Get up quickly that they may not kill our son, and change our joy into grief." And Zacharias answered and said to her: "I must not leave the service of the Temple of the Lord and go to a foreign land the inhabitants of which worship idols." And she said to him: "What should I do in order to save my infant child?" And the old man answered and said to her: "Arise and go to the wilderness of 'Ain Kārim, and by the will of God you will be able to save your son. If they seek after him, they will shed my blood instead of his."

How great was the amount of grief that occurred at that time when they separated from each other! The holy Zacharias took the child to his bosom, blessed him, kissed him and said: "Woe is me, O my son John, O glory of my old age! They have impeded me from having any access to your face which is full of grace." He then took him and went into the Temple, and blessed him, saying: "May God protect you in your journey!"

Immediately after Gabriel, the head of the angels, came down to him from heaven holding a raiment and a leathern girdle, and said to him: "O Zacharias, take these and put them on your son. God sent them to him from heaven. This raiment is that of Elijah, and this girdle that of Elisha." And the holy Zacharias took them from the angel, prayed over them, and gave them to his son, and fastened on

1 Read yapji.
2 Dr. C. Schick (Zeitsch. des Deut. Pal. Vereins, 1899, p. 86) writes: "Nach der Tradition ist 'Ain Kārim, ein Dorf 1½ Stunden westlich von Jerusalem, der Geburtsort Johannes des Täufers." He further identifies "wādi s-Sarār, half an hour west of 'Ain Kārim, where there is a small spring of water called Ain al-Habs, with the "wilderness" of Matt. iii. 1, in which John preached (ibid., p. 90). Schick discusses also the antiquity of the tradition on pp. 88-90 of his article (q.v.). The wilderness of Judea in which John dwelt is generally understood to mean the wild waste which lies to the west of the Dead Sea.
him the raiment which was of camel's hair with the leathern girdle. He then brought him back to his mother and said to her: "Take him and bring him into the desert, because the hand of the Lord is with him. I have learnt from God that he will stay in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel."

The blessed Elizabeth took the child while weeping and Zacharias also was weeping, and the latter said: "I know that I shall not see you again in the flesh. Go in peace. May God guide you." Elizabeth walked then away with her son, and went into the wilderness of 'Ain Kārim, and stayed there with him.

It happened that when King Herod sent troops to Jerusalem to kill its children, they\(^1\) came and began to kill children till the evening. That day was the seventh of September.\(^2\) When they began to return to their king, behold, Satan came to them and said: "How did you leave the son of Zacharias without killing him? He is hidden with his father in the Temple. Do not spare him but kill him in order that the king may not wax angry with you. Go for him, and if you do not find the son, kill the father in his place."

The troops did what Satan taught them, and went to the Temple early in the morning, and found Zacharias standing and serving the Lord, and they said to him: "Where is thy son whom thou hast hidden from us here?" And he answered them: "I have no child here." They said to him: "You have a child whom you have hidden from the king." And he answered and said: "O cruel ones whose king drinks blood like a lioness, how long will you shed the blood of innocent people?" They said to him: "Bring out your child so that we may kill him; if not, we shall kill you in his place." And the prophet answered and said: "As to my son, he has gone with his mother to the wilderness, and I do not know his whereabouts."

Now when Zacharias has said goodbye to Elizabeth and his son John, he had blessed him and made him a priest, and afterwards delivered him to his mother, who said to him: "Pray over me O my

\(^1\) Read \textit{ajnādahu}.

\(^2\) \textit{Tūl}, this month corresponds with September (old style). Inno Menologium or Martyrologium of the Eastern Churches as printed in the \textit{Pat. Orient. x. 1-343} is the feast of the Holy Innocents referred to the seventh of September. The author apparently is writing here in a purely historical way without any reference to the ecclesiastical commemorations of saints.

\(^3\) Read \textit{tasīkūna}. 
holy father, so that God may render my path in the wilderness easy." And he said to her: "May He who made us beget our child in our old age, direct your path." Then she took the child and went into the wilderness in which no soul lived.

"O blessed Elizabeth, your story is truly wonderful and praiseworthy. You did not ask for an adult to accompany you, and you knew neither the way nor a hiding place. You did not care to provide food nor a little drinking water for the child. You did not say to his father Zacharias: 'To whom are you sending me in the wilderness?' At that time there was neither a monastery in the desert nor a congregation of monks so that you may say: 'I shall go and stay with them with my son.' Tell me, O blessed Elizabeth: whom did you trust, inasmuch as the evangelist testifies to the fact that you were advanced in years without having had any child, and now you have been suckling this child of yours for three years?" Listen now to the answer of the blessed Elizabeth:

"Why are you astonished at me that I am going alone into the wilderness? What should I fear while a kinsman of God is in my arms? Behold Gabriel is accompanying me and paving the way for me." And she said: "I have confidence in the kiss that Mary, His mother, gave me, because when I greeted her the babe leaped with joy in my womb, and I heard both babes embracing each other in our wombs." And Elizabeth added: "I went and put on my son a raiment of camel's hair and a leathern girdle in order that the mountain of the holy wilderness may (in future) be inhabited, and in order that monasteries and congregations of monks may increase in it and that sacrifice may be offered in it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. If God assisted Hagar and her son when they wandered in the desert, and they were only slaves, how will He not apply to us the precedent that He has himself established beforehand?"

In the above words we have described to you the merits of the holy Elizabeth. Let us now proceed and commemorate the holy

1 Read ayyatuka. 2 Read kabiran. 3 Read ayyatuha.

4 The author stated above that John sucked his mother two years; he probably refers here to the beginning of the third year.

5 Read wa-yarfa'u.

6 All the above lines are therefore a literary digression on the part of the author. The same thing happens below with regard to Zacharias.
Zacharias, the martyr, and relate to you a few of his numerous merits:

"I should wish to praise your true life, but I fear to hear a reproof from you, similar to that you made to the blessed Elizabeth. I am full of admiration for you, O pious Zacharias! In the time when the soldiers of Herod came to you and asked you saying: "Where is your infant son, the child of your old age?"—You did not deny the fact and say: "I have no knowledge of such a child," but you simply answered: "His mother took him into the desert." And when Zacharias uttered these words to the soldiers concerning his son, they killed him inside the Temple, and the priests shrouded his body and placed it near that of his father Berechiah in a hidden cemetery, from fear of the wicked (king); and his blood boiled on the earth for fifty years, until Titus son of Vespasian, the Emperor of the Romans, came and destroyed Jerusalem and killed the Jewish priests for the blood of Zacharias, as the Lord ordered him.

As to the blessed John he wandered in the desert with his mother, and God prepared for him locusts and wild honey as food, in accordance with what his mother was told about him not to let any unclean food enter his mouth. After five years the pious and blessed old mother Elizabeth passed away, and the holy John sat weeping over her, as he did not know how to shroud her and bury her, because on the day of her death he was only seven years and six months old. And Herod also died the same day as the blessed Elizabeth.

The Lord Jesus Christ who with His eyes sees heaven and earth saw His kinsman John sitting and weeping near his mother, and He also began to weep for a long time, without anyone knowing the cause of His weeping. When the mother of Jesus saw Him weeping, she said to Him: "Whay are you weeping? Did the old man Joseph or any other one chide you?" And the mouth that was full of life answered: "No, O my mother, the real reason is that your

1 Possibly read as-shahid.
2 This sentence about Titus and Vespasian is missing in M. 22.
3 From Syriac ittniš.

4 Herod the Great died in 4 B.C., but the Chronology on which the Christian era is based is of course erroneous. See the Encyclopaedias and the Dictionaries of the Bible under "Chronology." Can any historical value be attached to our author's statement concerning the year of the death of Herod?
kinswoman, the old Elizabeth, has left my beloved John an orphan. He is now weeping over her body which is lying in the mountain.”

When the Virgin heard this she began to weep over her kinswoman, and Jesus said to her: “Do not weep, O my virgin mother, you will see her in this very hour.” And while he was still speaking with his mother, behold a luminous cloud came down and placed itself between them. And Jesus said: “Call Salome and let us take her with us.” And they mounted the cloud which flew with them to the wilderness of ‘Ain Kārim and to the spot where lay the body of the blessed Elizabeth, and where the holy John was sitting.

The Saviour said then to the cloud: “Leave us here at this side of the spot.” And it immediately went, reached that spot, and departed. Its noise, however, reached the ears of Mar 1 John, who, seized with fear, left the body of his mother. A voice reached him immediately and said to him: “Do not be afraid, O John. I am Jesus Christ, your master. I am your kinsman Jesus, and I came to you with my beloved mother in order to attend to the business of the burial of the blessed Elizabeth, your happy mother, because she is my mother’s kinswoman.” When the blessed and holy John heard this, he turned back, and Christ the Lord and His virgin mother embraced him. Then the Saviour said to His virgin mother: “Arise, you and Salome, and wash the body.” And they washed the body of the blessed Elizabeth in the spring from which she used to draw water for herself and her son. Then the holy virgin Mart 2 Mary got hold of the blessed (John) and wept over him, and cursed Herod on account of the numerous crimes which he had committed. Then Michael and Gabriel came down from heaven and dug a grave; and the Saviour said to them: “Go and bring the soul of Zacharias, and the soul of the priest Simeon, 3 in order that they may sing while you bury the body.” And Michael brought immediately the souls of Zacharias and Simeon, who shrouded the body of Elizabeth and sang for a long time over it.

And the mother of Jesus and Salome wept, and the two priests made the sign of the cross 4 on the body and prayed over it three times

1 Syriac word meaning “my Lord” used before the names of saints and of ecclesiastical dignitaries.
2 Feminine of Mar explained in the previous note.
4 Syr. ṭṣḥam, which literally means “to imprint.”
before they laid it to rest in the grave; then they buried it, and sealed the grave with the sign of the cross, and went back to their own places in peace. And Jesus Christ and His mother stayed near the blessed and the holy John seven days, and condoled with him at the death of his mother, and taught him how to live in the desert. And the day of the death of the blessed Elizabeth was the 15th of February.¹

Then Jesus Christ said to His mother; ‘Let us now go to the place where I may proceed with my work.’ The Virgin Mary wept immediately over the loneliness of John, who was very young² and said: ‘We will take him with us, since he is an orphan without anyone.’³ But Jesus said to her: ‘This is not the will of My Father who is in the heavens. He shall remain in the wilderness till the day of his showing unto Israel. Instead of a desert full of wild beasts, he will walk⁴ in a desert full of angels and prophets, as if they were multitudes of people. Here is also Gabriel, the head of the angels, whom I have appointed to protect him and to grant to him power from heaven. Further, I shall render the water of this spring of water as sweet and delicious to him as the milk he sucked from his mother. Who took care of him in his childhood? Is it not I, O my mother, who love him more than all the world? Zacharias also loved him, and I have ordered him to come to him and inquire after him, because although his body is buried in the earth, his soul is alive.

‘As to Elizabeth his mother, she will constantly visit him and comfort him, as if she was not dead at all. Blessed is she, O my mother, because she bore my beloved. Her mouth will never suffer putrefaction, because she kissed your pure lips; and her tongue will not be dismembered in the earth, because she prophesied concerning you and said: ‘Happy is she who believed that the promise that she received from the Lord would be fulfilled’⁵; nor will her womb

¹ In a Jacobite Menologium (Pat. Orient. x. 36) the feast of Elizabeth is fixed on the 16th of December. In another Menologium her death is assigned to the 10th of February (Pat. Orient. x. 140 index). In a Coptic-Arabic Menologium her feast is on the 26th Tut (= 23 September). See Pat. Orient. x. 189, 233 (index) and 253. In the Ethiopic Menologium (Smith’s Dict. of Christian Antiquities, i. 606) her feast is on the 16th Jakatit (= 10 February). I do not believe that any of the above dates (including that given by our document) has any historical value.

² Read ṣaghiran.
³ Read ahadin.
⁴ Read yasir (with sin).
⁵ Luke i. 45.
And my beloved John will last for ever, and he will see us and be comforted."

These words the Christ our Lord spoke to his mother, while John was in the desert. And they mounted the cloud, and John looked at them and wept, and Mary wept also bitterly over him, saying: "Woe is me, O John, because you are alone in the desert without anyone. Where is Zacharias, your father, and where is Elizabeth, your mother? Let them come and weep with me to-day."

And Jesus Christ said to her: "Do not weep over this child, O my mother. I shall not forget him." And while he was uttering these word, behold the clouds lifted them up and brought them to Nazareth. And He fulfilled there everything pertaining to humanity except sin.

And John dwelt in the desert, and God and His angels were with him. He lived in great asceticism and devotion. His only food was grass and wild honey. He prayed constantly, fasted much and was in expectation of the salvation of Israel.

And Herod the Younger who reigned over Judea, lived with his brother's wife, in the second year of his reign. He did not marry her openly, but he used to find an opportune moment to send after her and usher her in his bedchamber which was full of corruption, and there perpetrate their abomination. At that time Gabriel, head of the angels, taught John in the desert to say: "O King, you have no right to live with the wife of your brother, while he is still alive." And he repeated this, crying in the desert, as the angel had taught him. In the night people could hear his voice, and Herodias used to light a lamp and search the bedchamber, believing that somebody may have intruded into it, but found nobody, and only heard the voice.

The two began then to have misgivings on account of this happen-

1 See note of p. 447.  
2 Read aḥadin.  
3 Read in the dual form yaṭṭāa and yabkiā.  
4 The author seems to identify the "locusts" used in the Gospel in connection with the food of John, with a kind of grass. This is also the opinion of some ancient writers.  
5 I.e. Herod Antipas. This epithet is applied to him in order to distinguish him from Herod the Great, son of Antipater.  
6 Read furṣatān.  
7 Read nifākahuma.  
8 Mark vi. 18. Read ḥayyun.
ing, and Herodias said to Herod: “Arise and despatch troops to the desert of ‘Ain Kārim, in order that they may kill John, because the voice we hear is his.” God, however, was with the lad, and delivered him from their hands. When she ascertained that through him there would be no peace for her in her (iniquitous) act, she persuaded the wicked king who gave her the following promise: “If we happen to hear this voice again, we shall summon the magicians and inform them to take hold of John and kill him secretly.” And the voice did not cease to worry them.

And the wicked Herodias said: “How can this John, a wanderer in the desert and in the wilderness, a man whose body is not fit to wear the clothing of men, but a raiment of camel’s hair, rebuke the king of his own country, whose authority extends to his own region?” Then Herodias said to the king: “What pleases you to do, do it openly, and do not believe that anyone in this region will blame you for it, except John, and when opportunity offers itself we shall get rid of him.” It is in this way that the adulteress set the heart of Herod on their sin, and persuaded him to deliver his brother to death, and to marry her openly.

And John did not cease to rebuke Herod every day in the desert until he was thirty years old. As to Jesus, He increased in wisdom, stature, and grace with God and men, and did not show any deeds of His Divinity, but acted with humility towards all men. And when He was twelve years old, He began to rebuke the Teachers and deceivers of the people. And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, who reigned after Augustus, when Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and when Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, in that year the word of God came unto John, son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. He came into the countries that surround the Jordan preaching and saying: “Repent ye for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” And people from all the region of Judæa and Jerusalem went out to him and were baptised by him in the Jordan confessing their sins.

In those days the Saviour came to him from Galilee to the Jordan and said to him: “Baptize me.” When John saw God standing before him and wishing to be baptized by him, he was seized with

1 Read akhāhu.  
2 Luke ii. 52.  
4 Matt. iii. 2.  
5 Mark i. 5, Matt. iii. 5-6.
great fright and said to him: "He who made the children of Israel walk in the Red Sea and drink sweet water from a solid rock,\(^1\) stands before His servant who is in need to be baptized with His Divine hands, and says ‘Baptize me’! And he began to turn away from Him. But (Jesus) said to him: "Stop now; it is thus that we must fulfill all righteousness."\(^2\)

Then both of them went down into the water, and the holy John baptized Him, saying: "I baptize the One Whom the Father has sent to establish\(^3\) a great sacrament."\(^4\) And immediately after the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, like a dove. And John saw it face to face, and the Father cried saying: "This is my beloved Son in whom I delight, obey Him." And our Saviour came out of the water and went forthwith into the desert. As to John, he remained near the Jordan, baptizing all those who came to him.

In that time Herod rose against Philip his brother and intrigued against him with the Emperor Caesar, saying: "The one whom you have appointed to be the ruler of Trachonitis,\(^5\) who is Philip, has misgoverned your region, and said: "I shall not pay tribute to the king because I am also a king." Caesar waxed greatly angry and ordered Herod to dispossess him of his region and to confiscate all his estate and his house, and not to have any pity, not even on his soul. Herod acted on the orders of the Emperor and plundered the region of his brother Philip with his house and all his possessions, and reigned over his region.

And Philip had a wife called Herodias, who had a daughter by the same Philip, called Arcostiana.\(^6\) The mother was even more adulteress than the daughter. When Philip became poorer than anybody else, Herodias hated him greatly, and said to him: "I shall not remain with you any more, but shall go to your new lord Herod who is better than you." Then she wrote immediately to Herod saying: "Herodias writes to Herod as follows: 'Now that you have all Syria.

\(^1\) Read samma\(^7\).
\(^2\) Matt. iii. 15.
\(^3\) Here are two pages in M. 22 filled with scribblings, diagrams, and computations by various owners, but the text of the life of the Baptist is continuous.
\(^4\) Or: to fulfill a great mystery.
\(^5\) In the original: Antarachonia.
\(^6\) The name is given below as Uxoriana, which by its connection with the Latin uxor seems to be more accurate. M. 183 has, however, Orcostiriana.
under your sway and you reign over all the earth, you have not taken me as your wife. I am very beautiful and better than all the women of Judæa. I have also a daughter the like of whom I have never seen in all the world for beauty and stature. I wish to be your wife. I hated your brother very much in order to strengthen your kingdom.”

When these cunning words reached the wicked (king), he was pleased with them, and he immediately gave orders that she and her daughter be taken out of the house of Philip. When Philip saw that his wife was being taken from him by force, he wept bitterly and said to his daughter: “You stay with your father in case your mother is taken from me.” But the adulteress said to him: “I shall not stay with you, but shall accompany my mother wherever she goes.” They were, therefore, taken both of them and presented to Herod, who was greatly pleased with them, because he was an adulterer.

They performed marvels of diabolical cunning, and the wicked king lived daily with both of them in adultery. Some people, however, brought their story to the knowledge of John the Baptist on behalf of Philip, Herodias’ husband. Now John was considered by all as a prophet, and everybody praised him because he was teaching the people and saying: “Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, because every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.”

When John heard the news from Philip he was much afflicting at the perdition of Herod and Herodias, and he immediately sent a message to Herod and said to him: “John the Baptist, son of Zacharias, tells you, O Herod, that you have no right to marry the wife of your brother, while he is still alive.” When Herod heard these words he was much frightened and perplexed, and he went to Herodias and said to her: “O Herodias, what shall we do? It is the end of our sinful union as it has been brought to the knowledge of John the Baptist, and behold he has rebuked me. Woe to us, because our sins have increased greatly and reached the ears of the prophets.”

The wicked woman said then to him: “Long live you, O king! Who is John, the wearer of camel’s hair, to contradict and rebuke a mighty monarch like you? He surely deserves that somebody should

1 Read akhāka.
2 Read bihimṣa, and place all the following verbs in the dual form.
3 Matt. iii. 8, 10.
pull out and cut off his tongue.” And he said to her: “What can we do? We cannot bear the rebuke of that great (prophet).” And she answered and said to him: “Summon him here and I will kill him, and we shall continue our mutual relations in peace.” And she performed before him obscene acts and immoral artifices, and Satan filled his heart against the holy and just man Mar John\(^1\) the Baptist, and he dispatched soldiers against him, who seized him and cast him in prison.

Then Herodias summoned him out of prison to her presence and said to him: “What is your business with me, O chaste man, that you wish to separate me from the king? I conjure you by the God of your father not to do this with me again. To tell you the truth, if you are silent concerning me and do not rebuke me another time, I shall deliver you from prison and bestow great favours upon you.” And the holy Mar John the Baptist said to her: “I say to you, O Herodias, not to live with Herod while your husband Philip is alive.” When the wicked woman heard this, she was incensed with anger against him and said to him: “You will surely die at my hands, and I shall put the hair of your head in the pillow on which\(^2\) I lay my head with Herod, and I shall bury your head in the place where I wash after having enjoyed myself with the king.” John then said to her: “The Lord will allow you to kill me but my head\(^3\) you will not see. It will remain after me, and proclaim your iniquity and shame to all the world. Woe to you for my unjust murder, because your end is at hand.”

She then said to his keepers: “Take him and keep him in prison with fetters, and if he escapes, you shall lose your souls.” And the soldiers took him and kept him in prison with chains. And Herodias tried to induce Herod to kill him, but he said to her: “I cannot kill him in this way. People will rise against me, drive me out, and bring accusation against me to the Emperor, who will take my kingdom from me as he took that of my brother Philip.” And he said to her:

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1 See note of p. 447.  
2 Read allati.  
3 The Arabic text uses constantly the word ra’s “head” in feminine, which is absolutely contrary to the genius of all the Semitic languages. This proves that the work is of Egyptian origin, and that it emanates from a Greek or a Coptic original, or at least that it was written by a Copt who was under the influence of the language of Homer in which kephalh is feminine.
“Show me a better method of doing away with him.” And she said to him: “I will tell you a word, and if you listen to it, you will have an opportunity of killing him.” And he said to her: “Tell it to me.” And she said to him: “Behold the envoys of the king are with you, arise and prepare a dinner for them, to which you will invite all your high officials; and your birthday falls also in these days. When people become hilarious and begin to get drunk with wine, I shall send in my daughter dressed in her best clothes, and she will dance before you, O king, with her sweet face. When she has done this ask her, saying, ‘Desire of me whatever you like,’ and you will swear to her by the life of the Emperor that you will give her whatever she wishes. She will then ask for the head of John, and you will have an opportune moment to cut off his head.”

Herod was circumvented by the reasoning of the adulteress, and began to fulfil her desires, as he loved her because of her beauty and diabolical artifices. In that very day he prepared the dinner, and the messengers of the Emperor were sitting next to him. When they began to get drunk the accursed Uxoriana entered the room, and on her were strings of gold and silver, perfumes and jewellery of high value, and presented herself to all the company. She danced with a diabolical passion, and Satan filled the hearts of the guests with evil and passion through her iniquitous artfulness. All were pleased with her, and Herod was proud and said to her: “Ask me for whatever you like, and by the life of the Emperor Tiberius Caesar, I will give it to you, even if it be the half of my kingdom and my possessions.”

And she said what she was taught by her mother: “I wish here to have the head of John the Baptist, on a dish.” The king began to be very sad, on account of the oath he had taken by the life of the Emperor, and he owned to the guests that he was unable to break his oath.

He therefore dispatched an executioner, who went to the prison and there cut off John’s head on a dish, on the second of the month of

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1 This sentence is missing in M. 122.
2 Read risul.
3 Read surra.
4 Or: thought.
5 The story is in many places a faithful rendering of Mark iv. 17-29.
6 Read hadha in M. 22.
September, and he brought it to Herod, who handed it to the girl, and the girl handed it to her mother. Now, before the messengers of the king and the executioner had gone to him, to behead him, John had said to his disciples: “Behold the king has sent men to cut off my head. They have already left with unsheathed swords in their hands, and with lanterns, lamps, and weapons. What is happening in this hour will happen in the night in which Christ will be betrayed. As to me, my head will be cut off and be shown on a dish, but the Christ will be lifted up on the cross, in order that He may purify all with His pure blood; as to me I am going to my place, but woe to the king who ordered my head to be cut off; many calamities will befall him, and the people of Israel will be scattered because of him. As to you, do not be afraid, because no one will be able to do you any harm.” He then opened his mouth and blessed and glorified God for his incomprehensible gifts, saying: “I bless Thee and praise Thee, O invisible Father, O visible Son, and O comforting Holy Spirit.”

Let us now proceed to describe the story of the head of the blessed Mar John the Baptist. When it was brought before Herodias, the eyes of the holy John were open and his ears were hearing as in his lifetime. The adulteress spoke then with ire before the head as follows: “O accursed one, who were not ashamed to look at the king in the face and answer him, I shall put out your eyes with my

1 Itūl. M. 183 has: “On the twenty-ninth of the month of August. The Armenian Synaxarium printed in Pat. Or. v. 454 fixes also the feast of the Decollation of the Baptist on the 19th of Navasard (= 29th August). So also is the case with the Syrian Menologia and Martyrologia printed in Pat. Or. x. pp. 45, 85, 101, 106, 112, 129, and 131. In the Menologium printed ibid. on p. 53 this feast is assigned to the 15th of December. The same feast is assigned to the 7th of January on pp. 54, 69, 94, 103, 109, 117, and 129. In a Greek life of the saint printed in Pat. Or. iv. 527-541 the head is reported to have been cut off on the 29th of the month of Dystros, which in Greco-Arab calendars of Gaza corresponds with 15th or 25th of March. None of the above dates seems to me to have any historical value. In the Greek Synaxarium of Constantinople printed by the Jesuit Delehaye in 1902 (Col. 934) the Baptist is also murdered on the 29th of August. For the date of the festival of the Decollation of the Baptist in the different churches of the West, see Smith’s and Cheetham’s Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, i. 882-883.

2 Cf. John xviii. 3.

3 Read ru’iya.

4 Read alladhi.
hands and place them on a dish, and I shall cut off the tongue which used to say to the king that it was unlawful for him to marry Herodias, his brother's wife. As to the hair of your head and of your beard I shall pluck it and place it under the feet of my bedstead."

She said all this with malice and wickedness, and she stretched her hand to hold the head of Mar John the Baptist and do with it what she had said. But immediately after the head of the blessed John let the locks of its hair rise from the dish, and it flew to the middle of the convivial room before the king and his high officials. In that very moment the roof of the house was opened and the head of John flew in the air. As to Herodias her eyes were put out and fell on the floor and the roof of her room fell upon her, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed her up to her neck, and she went alive to the depth of hell. As to her daughter she became mad and broke all the utensils of the dinner party. In her madness she went to the icy pond and danced on it, and by order of the Lord the ice broke under her and she sank to her neck. In vain did the soldiers endeavour to pull her up, because the Lord did not wish her deliverance. Then they cut off her head with the very sword that was used to kill John the Baptist. Then a fish cast her out of the pond, dead. May God not have mercy upon her!

In that moment Herod also had a sudden stroke before his guests. When his agent noticed these great miracles, he repaired quickly to the prison, took the body of the saint and gave it to his disciples, who took it to the town of Sebaste where they buried it near the body of the prophet Elisha. As to his head, it flew over Jerusalem, and cried for three years to the town, saying: "It is not lawful for you, O Herod, to marry the wife of your brother while he is still alive." After it had cried for three years, it went to all the world shouting and pro-

1 From Syr. kaitoma as above.

2 In the apocryphal Letter of Herod to Pilate it is written: "My daughter Herodias was playing upon the water (i.e. the ice) and fell in up to her neck. And her mother caught at her head to save her, and it was cut off, and the water swept her body away. My wife is sitting with the head on her knees weeping." James' The Apocryphal New Testament, pp. 155-156. The Syriac text of the letter has been edited by Rahmani, Studia Syriaca, ii, 17-18.

3 Even in the time of Yākūt, the well known Muslim geographer, the grave of John the Baptist was shown at Sebaste (Mu'jam al Buldān, iii. 33, edit. Wüstenfeld).
claiming the horrible crime of Herod, and repeating the words: "It is not lawful for you, O Herod, to marry the wife of your brother while he is still alive."

Fifteen years after it had been cut off it ceased proclaiming, and rested on the town of Homs. The faithful who were in that town took it and buried it with great pomp. A long time after, a church was built on it, which is still standing in our time. And the head of the holy John the Baptist was buried there fifteen years after the resurrection of Christ, the Lord, and it remained there down to our own days.

As to the body of the holy John the Baptist, the saint whose feast we are celebrating to-day, it remained in Sebaste—which is Nābulus of Samaria—for four hundred years. Then a pagan king, whose name was Julian, reigned over the world. He had been a Christian at the beginning of his reign, but after that Satan filled his heart and he forsook the faith of our Lord the Christ and worshipped fire. He ordered temples and places of worship to be built in every place where idols could be worshipped, and intimated that such a temple should be erected in the town of Sebaste where lay the body of the holy Baptist. People, however, were unable to comply with the order and to worship idols in that place, on account of the (holy) bodies that were buried there.

They, therefore, assembled and informed the Emperor that as bodies of holy men were buried there, they had been delayed in their building of the temples. Then he said to them: "Go and burn (the

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1 The well known north Syrian town. Hims would be a more exact pronunciation of the word. The same Arab geographer, Yākūt, tells us (ibid. ii. 335) that a fourth part of the Church of St. John at Homṣ was turned into a mosque at the time of the Arab conquest.

2 The author was therefore writing before the sixth century or the time in which a head supposed to be that of John the Baptist was sent to Constantinople. See Barsalī’s Treatise against the Melchites and my notes on it in the first fasc. of Woodbrooke Studies. In the author’s time of writing, which according to the present story is, by necessity, a year within A.D. 385–395, the head of the saint was still at Emesa.

3 The present history is, therefore, a kind of homily or panegyric pronounced or written by Bishop Serapion.

4 The clause "which is Nābulus of Samaria," only found in M. 183 and not in M. 22, is apparently an addition of a late copyist. In a preceding passage where the text of M. 22 has no lacuna the same clause is missing in it although found as in the present case in M. 183, which on the whole seems to represent a more modern recension of the story.
bodies) with fire.” The Lord, however, did not allow the fire to come near the place where lay the coffins of the prophets, but the same fire consumed a great number of the pagans who had kindled it, and great treasures were brought to light there. Above one of the coffins was seen a vessel containing a leathern girdle, a raiment of camel’s hair, a frock, and two leathern belts. The faithful who were in that place understood immediately that the coffins belonged to John the Baptist and to the prophet Elisha, and they wished to remove them from there, but from fear of the wicked Emperor they were not able to do so. When, however, God destroyed him with a death more wretched than that of any other, pious men assembled there and carried the two coffins to the sea with the intention of bringing them to Alexandria, to the holy Father, the Patriarch Athanasius, because they said: “There is in these days no one in the world worthy to take care of these except Father Athanasius, the Patriarch of Alexandria.”

When they reached the sea they found a boat bound for Alexandria, and they boarded it with the coffins. They journeyed on the sea and landed on the shores of Alexandria, but as they were unable to disclose their affair to any one because the time was not convenient for that, they went direct to the Patriarch and related to him all that had occurred, and how they were moved by the Holy Spirit to bring the coffins to him. He was greatly pleased with them and went by night to the boat with his brother, and they took the remains in a kerchief and brought them with them, and (the Patriarch) placed them with him in a place in his dwelling, and he did not disclose their whereabouts to anyone. And this Father wished to build a church to John the Baptist, and he was not able to do so because of the troubles caused by the wicked ones.

The bodies remained therefore hidden in the place in which Father Athanasius had secretly placed them, until the time of his

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1 Read hiya for hum. The construction of the Arabic sentence denotes a Syriac or a Greek original.
2 This is against the statement of Theodoret who relates that the coffin of the saint was broken and his remains were burnt and their ashes scattered. *Pat. Gr.* lxxii, 1091. See also Woodbrooke *Studies* (fasc. 1).
3 Athanasius was Patriarch of Alexandria from 328 to 373.
4 Arians?
5 The word here used generally means “fountain.” Can it refer to baptismal font?
death. After his death he was succeeded by Father Peter, whose throne was occupied after his death by Father Timothy, who ordained my humble self, your Father Serapion, to this see, without merits on my part.

After his death, he was succeeded by Father Theophilus who is now sitting on the (Patriarchal) see. In his time the grace of God increased, and the faith was strengthened through the pious Theodosius and God united the Emperor and the Patriarch with ties of love. The former threw open the temples in which were treasures, and especially the great temple of Alexandria, in which there was great quantity of gold and silver. And the pious Theodosius honoured the Patriarch, made him superintendent of all the treasures, and said to him: "O Father Theophilus, take these and enrich the churches with them, from this town to Asswan, for the glory of God and His saints." After this he began to build churches. The first church to be built was one under the name of the holy Mar John the Baptist in the great city of Alexandria. He adorned it and made it a great church and wished to place in it the body of the holy Mar John the Baptist. When he had finished it completely, he thought of consecrating it, and he sent immediately to all the bishops under his jurisdiction to congregate for the consecration of the church.

The invitation was also sent to my weakness, and I went with the rest of the bishops to the Pope, the Father Theophilus of

1 Peter ii. succeeded Athanasius from 373 to 380.
2 Timothy succeeded Peter from 380 to 385.
3 I cannot ascertain the identity of this Serapion, who was evidently a bishop of a town in Egypt. For chronological reasons he cannot apparently be identified with Serapion Scholasticus, bishop of Thmuis, nor with Serapion, bishop of Tentya.
4 Theophilus was Patriarch of Alexandria from 385 to 412. He is credited with an Apocryphal vision which describes the flight of Christ into Egypt and the mode of life of the holy family in that country. Cf. Baumstark, Gesch. d. Syr. Lit. p. 70, and Syr. MS. Mingana, No. 5 ff. 1-18 b and No. 39 ff. 56 b-70 b, both in the custody of Rendel Harris Library, Birmingham.
5 Theodosius died in 395.
6 Or: Assuan. A town in Upper Egypt and Capital of the Egyptian province of Nubia and of the district called in antiquity Yebu, "land of elephants." The island of Elephantine is included in it, and in Greek times it was called Syene.
7 Read bitakrisiha.
8 The word "Pope" was in early times applied to the Patriarchs of Alexandria and not of Rome.
Alexandria. When it came to his knowledge that all the bishops were nearing the city of Alexandria, he was pleased with us, like one who had found much booty. He came out to meet us accompanied by all the (clergy) who were in the city. We entered the city and stayed some days with him. After this he began to consecrate the church, and he took us and showed it to us, and we found in it wonderful buildings, and he said to us: "O my children, this is the place designated for the purpose by Athanasius, whom time did not favour." And Father Theophilus added: "I was walking with them while I was a simple acolyte at that time and serving him. And when he came to this place, he said to me: 'O my son, Theophilus, if you can find opportunity, build in this place a church to Mar John the Baptist and place his bones in it, and after I had built this place, I remembered the saying of the man of God, the Father Athanasius, especially when I bethought me that my Father was like the prophet David, who wished to build a house to God, but was not favoured with it, on account of wars in which he was continually engaged, and God said to him: "Thou shalt not build a house for me, but the one who comes out of thy loins shall build it for me," and this was Solomon. Since I have finished with the wars against the pagans, I considered myself worthy of building this church which is under the name of the holy Mar John the Baptist, the morning star."

When the second of the month of June came, he took us to the place where the body was placed, and we did not know the right spot, but after praying nocturns God showed it to him. And when he brought it out, he called all the inhabitants of the town and they assembled to him with many lanterns and lamps so that the night shone like day. He let the bishops carry the coffin on their heads and the Patriarch preceded them, and the deacons were singing with majesty and splendour, until we brought the coffin to the church in great pomp. When we entered the church, the Patriarch took hold of the coffin, embraced it, and allowed all the people to be blessed by the holy body, which he placed afterwards inside the church on a chair at a corner of the altar. He then prepared to consecrate the

1 Read bi-takris.  
2 Read arāna.  
3 Read abnuatan 'ajibatan.  
4 1 Chron. xxviii. 3, 6; Cf. 2 Sam. vii. 13; 1 Kings v. 3.
church in that day, and we said mass, and all of us received the sacrament from the Patriarch, and it was the second day of the month Baouna.¹

After this the Patriarch said goodbye to us, and we left the town, each one of us going to his own country, in the peace of God. Amen.² And the body of the holy Mar John the Baptist wrought miracles, prodigies, and wonders of healings in the people of the Lord Jesus Christ. The miracles (which we will mention below) will bear witness to this.

Praise, glory, and power are due to you, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who is one in nature, now, always, and for ever and ever.

¹In M. 183 ḫesirān (June). The second day of the Coptic month Baouna corresponds with our 27th of May. In the Arab Coptic Menologia (Pat. Or. x. 204), the feast of the finding of the bones of the Baptist actually falls on the second day of Baouna or the 27th of May. That a church was built in Alexandria in order to contain the supposed relics of the Baptist sent from Sebaste to Athanasius is attested by Rufinus, Hist. Eccl. xi. 28; Theodoret, Hist. Eccl. iii. 3; Theophanes, Chronographia, i. 117 (edit. Classen). It seems therefore to be historical that a church was built in Alexandria under the name of the Baptist by Theodosius the Great on the site of the temple of Serapis, and finished under the reign of Arcadius. On the other hand it seems to me false to assert that the church contained any bones of the saint. See Barsalibi’s Treatise against the Melchites in Woodbrooke Studies, fasc. 1, and for further details see Smith’s and Cheetham’s Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, i. 881-884.

²The story ends here. What follows appears to be by a later hand.
In the name of God, one in nature, and three in persons and attributes, and by the help and assistance of God we will narrate the miracles of the precursor, Saint John the Baptist, which God wrought through him on the day of the consecration of his Church. May his intercession be with us! Amen.

The First Miracle.

There was in the town a girl of a respectable family, the pangs of whose labour had lasted three days without having been delivered of her child, as it was her first babe. The midwives who were present said to her parents: “The babe has died in her womb, and she cannot live.” All began to weep over her because she was much loved by them. When men who were carrying the body of Mar John the Baptist to the church reached the house of the girl singing, she asked her parents: “What are these voices?” They answered her: “A Christian was martyred for the name of Jesus Christ, and the Christians are carrying his body and observing a feast for him.”

Now the girl and her parents were pagans. And she said to them: “Carry me to this window so that I may see the body.” And four attendants carried her and brought her to the spot she had desired. When she looked down she saw a great and indescribable pomp, and she cried aloud: “O my Lord Jesus Christ for whose holy name this man has been martyred, deliver me from this calamity of mine, through the intercession of this holy man, in order that all may know that you, Jesus Christ, are the only God.” While she was saying these words, the babe who was in her womb came out while she was being carried, and he was found to be alive. People were amazed and cried, saying: “Jesus Christ, the God of this martyr, is the only God.” And all of them believed and gave to the infant the name of John, and were baptised in the Church of Mar John the Baptist, and remained Christian till the day in which they passed away in the peace of the Lord. Amen.

¹ Read al-latî. ² As usual read takrîs. ³ Read kunna yakulna. ⁴ Read ash-shâhid.
The Second Miracle.

A rich official of the town had a daughter betrothed to a man. A great wedding was prepared for her because she was very rich. On the night in which her husband was to be with her, the holy Mar John, the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, appeared to her in great glory, and she was frightened, but he said to her: “Do you know who I am?” And she answered: “No, my lord.” And he said: “I am John the Baptist, the precursor of Christ. When you rise to-morrow go to my church, and take the sign and abundance of your salvation from what you will see on my grave where my body lies.” And he disappeared from her sight.

And she rose in the night and went and sat near the door of the church till the morning. When the door of the church was opened she made haste and entered and went to the place in which the coffin was buried. She immediately saw on the grave of the holy Mar John the Baptist a garment of sackcloth, a belt of leather, and a veil. When she noticed them she was amazed and said: “This garment is not for a worldly life,” and she ascertained that God wanted her to be a virgin. She then threw immediately in the church the garment of gold that she was wearing, and put on that which she saw on the grave, and went out glorifying God and His saint, Mar John the Baptist, and she became a virgin till the day of her death through the intercession of John the Baptist. May this intercession be with us! Amen.

The Third Miracle.

There was in the town a cripple who worshipped idols. Everyone knew him, children and grown ups. When he walked he used to drag his feet on the ground and wrap tightly on them a piece of leather in order that they might not move to and fro. He used to sit every day at the door of the church in order to receive alms from the church-goers.

One day he made bold to enter the church, in order to put oil on his feet from the lamp of the martyr Mar John the Baptist. For this purpose he loosened the leather that was wrapped on his feet and

1 Greek ἄρχων through the Syriac ἄρχων.
2 Or: he prepared.
3 Read اَحَادِين.
oiled them from the oil of the lamp. Immediately after his limbs became strong. When he noticed the miracle he raised himself up and cried, saying: "The God of Mar John the Baptist is the one true God." He then received the baptism and became a Christian till he died in the peace of the Lord. Amen.

*The Fourth Miracle.*

There was in the town a woman afflicted with dropsy, and her body was swollen all over. She was very rich, but no physician was able to heal her. She rose up and went to the church of the holy Mar John the Baptist and was oiled with the oil of the lamp which burns before the body of the saint, towards the sanctuary; and she slept there. While she was asleep her body was torn open and all the foul matter went out of it, and she awakened from her sleep sound and in good health. And she went home glorifying God—to whom be everlasting glory! Amen.

*The Fifth Miracle.*

There were two blind men in the town who were friendly to each other and ate jointly from the same alms. They went to the church of the holy Mar John the Baptist and oiled their eyes with the oil of the lamp that burns over the body of the saint. The eyes of one of them saw but not those of the other. The latter had a heavy heart, stood up and confessed to God, saying: "O my Lord Jesus have pity on the weakness of my faith, and give light to my eyes as Thou gavest to those of my friend, because to Thee belong power, glory, and honour for ever and ever. Amen." He recited this prayer to the Lord on the grave of the blessed saint Mar John the Baptist, and he immediately saw, and he and all the onlookers glorified God.

Glory, power, and majesty be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit who is consubstantial, One God, now, always, and for ever and ever! Amen.

1 Read *ahadun*.  
2 Read *liba'idihima*.  
3 Read *fa'atayā*. 
1 Omits.  2 Omits.  3 Places this sentence before the preceding one.  4 Omits.  5 Omits.  6 throughout.  7 Omits.  8 Omits.  9 Omits.  10 Omits.  11 Omits.


ملأب بـ١١١. تجَكَّبْ لَمْ يأبَدْ صمامًا فَكَوَّنَّ نَفْسَهُمْ فَكَوَّنَّ نَفْسَهُمْ بَلْ يأبَدْ صمامًا فَكَوَّنَّ نَفْسَهُمْ فَكَوَّنَّ نَفْسَهُمْ.

ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.

ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

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ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

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ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

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ملأب [لمثك]، ملأب الملاحم، فنيدك، وملأب الملاحم من دم

ملأب صمام: ألا أسد صمام، كلاً صمام، عامة للعبيد، عامة للعبيد.
WOODBROOKE STUDIES

الكلمة التي تُطالب بتطبيقها في السياق هي: "العمل الجاد يتطلب توجيه إنستانتين لاستمراره في الحالة الحاسمة للساحة. لا إشكال من القياسات الجيدة، كل شيء وكأنهم يجريون لك. أنت تجلس في الساحة، ت municate الكلمة، تواصل مع العالم. الصمت المثالي للحياة. كل شيء يجري هو ما هو عليه.

1. omitت.
2. indent
3. indented
4. indented
5. indented
Add: l. 1. 968

The John Rylands Library

And so throughout.

Omits.

Add: l. 14.

And

Add: l. 15.

Omitted.

Add: l. 13.

Omitted.

Add: l. 12.

Omitted.

Add: l. 11.

Omitted.

Add: l. 9.

Omitted.

Add: l. 7.

Omitted.

Add: l. 6.

Omitted.

Add: l. 4.

Omitted.

Add: l. 2.

Omitted.

Add: l. 1.

Omitted.

Add: l. 0.

Omitted.

Add: l. 0.
Add: 

1. *sic*

2. Adds *οποιον*.

3. ομως.

4. Adds *οποιον*.

5. *ομως*.

6. Adds *οποιον*.

7. Adds *οποιον*.

8. Adds *οποιον*.


10. Adds *πληθυνων*.

11. Adds *διαφωνων*. 
WOODBROOKE STUDIES 471

[Text in Arabic]

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Notes:
Omits. Here begins a lacuna in Mingana 183.  
In the following lines the words placed between parentheses and ending with an interrogation point have only been guessed, as they are more or less illegible or have completely disappeared from Mingana 22.
WOODBROOKE STUDIES

31
Here ends the lacuna in Mingana 183.  

1 Here ends the lacuna in Mingana 183.  

2 Omits.  

3 Adds ٨٢٩.  

4 Omits.  

5 Adds ٨٢٩.
WOODBROOKE STUDIES 475

1 Adds. 2 Adds. 3 Adds. 4 Adds. 5 Omit.
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...
WOODBROOKE STUDIES 477

[Text in Arabic]

1 Adds جم.  2 Adds ص.  3 Adds خ.  4 Adds ص.  5 Adds جم.  6 Adds ص.  7 Adds خ.  8 Adds ص.  9 Adds خ.  10 Adds ص.  11 Adds خ.  12 Adds ص.  13 Adds خ.  14 Adds ص.
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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[proposition 1]... on the one hand and the other hand... are described as... for... the... conditions... of... factors...

For example...

1. Adds "on the one hand"...
2. Omits...
3. Adds "on the other hand..."
4. Omits...
5. Adds "...are described as... for... the... conditions... of... factors..."
6. Adds "...are described as... for... the... conditions... of... factors..."
7. Omits...
8. Adds "...are described as... for... the... conditions... of... factors...
9. Omit...
10. Adds "...are described as... for... the... conditions... of... factors..."
11. Omit...
12. Adds "...are described as... for... the... conditions... of... factors..."
13. Omit...
14. Adds "...are described as... for... the... conditions... of... factors..."
I.

[Omits.]

[Omits.]

[Omits.]
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1. Adds [sic].

2. Omit. 4. Adds [sic].


Omits. Here begins a lacuna in Mingana 22.

1 Omits. Here begins a lacuna in Mingana 22.
2 Omits also.
Here ends the lacuna of Mingana 22.

1 Here ends the lacuna of Mingana 22.  
2 Adds لکوی":  
3 مصنفه  
صفه کل ویسه مصنفه
العديد من الكتابات العربية واللغات الأخرى.

1. Adds erroneously.
2. omits.
3. Adds.
4. Adds.
5. Adds.
6. Adds.
7. Adds.
8. Adds.
10. omits.
11. omits.
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Omits (as usual).  2 Omits.  3 4 Omits.  5 Omits.

6 Adds (as usual).  7 Omits (erroneously.)  8 Omit.  9 Adds 30.

10  حسب.  11 كلاً.  12 مسأة للواصِب.
[Omitted.]

8 Omits. 9 Adds. 10 Omits. 11 Adds. 12 Omit. 13 Adds.
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1 Omits. 2 Adds. 3 Adds. 4 Adds. 5 Adds. 6 Omits. 7 Omits. 8 Omits. 9 Adds. 10 Adds.
(iii) Uncanonical Psalms.

Prefatory Note.

I give in the following pages the text and the translation of five uncanonical Psalms. Psalm I is found in many MSS. of the Syriac Psalter where it is known as Ps. cli and where it is often introduced as follows: "This Psalm was said by David on himself, when he fought Goliath." It is a translation from Greek, but I have remarked in a footnote that its first verse seems, in thought but not in phraseology, to be reminiscent of the corresponding verse of the famous Gnostic "Hymn of the Soul." If this comparison were proved to be possible, we would be allowed to hold the contrary view, viz. that the "Hymn" itself was under the influence of the "Psalm"; this, however, is a question on which we cannot dwell at present as it is beyond the scope of our present studies.

The four other Psalms are only found in the interesting work entitled Durrāša, "Discipline," or more generally ma’wātha, "Centuries," of the Nestorian writer Elijah of Anbar who died about 940. The work is represented by some other MSS. all of which are, however, much later than the one marked Mingana Syr. 31 in the custody of the Rendel Harris Library, Birmingham. The MS. has unfortunately lost a few of its final leaves and is consequently undated, but on palaeographic grounds it may be assigned to about A.D. 1340. It formerly belonged to the Nestorian writer Isho’yahb bar Mukaddam who died about 1445, and who in an inscription on fol. 90b informs us that he collated a large part of it with an autograph of the author himself. There is reason to believe that at least six out of the eight other MSS. in existence are mere transcripts of this Mingana Syr. 31. A fascimile of the pages containing the Psalms accompanies the

1 See, for instance, vol. i. pp. 35, 124, 125, 137, 138, 140, 405 of Wright’s Catalogue of the B.M. MSS.
2 Mentioned by Baumstark, Gesch. d. Syr. Lit. 238.
3 It was lately acquired by me in Kurdistan.
4 See about him Baumstark, ibid., p. 329.
translation. I have also compared the translation with Syr. MS. Mingana 51 (ff. 100 b-105 a) of about A.D. 1550, in the custody of Rendel Harris Library, Birmingham.

The source of the author for some of these uncanonical Psalms is unknown to me, but there is no doubt that he was drawing upon excellent material at his disposal. There is in the matter of elevation of thought and diction considerable difference between all these uncanonical Psalms, and in reading those numbered 2 and 3 we almost feel that we are perusing the Bible itself. Their Hebrew parallelism is perfect and there are grounds for believing that they are a direct translation from Hebrew or Aramaic. Psalms 1, 4-5 refer more or less distinctly to the deliverance of David from the wild beasts of 1 Sam. xvii. 34-36.

TRANSLATION.

The Five Psalms of David, which are not written in the Series of the Psalms.

1.

Thanksgivings of David.

I was the youngest of my brothers, and a child in the house of my father. I shepherded the sheep of my father, and met a lion and also a wolf, and I slew them and rent them. My hands made an organ, and my fingers fitted a harp. Who will show me to my Lord? —He, my Lord, became my God. He sent his angel and removed me from the sheep of my father, and anointed me with the oil of unction. The Lord was not pleased with my elder and handsome brothers, and I went to meet the Philistine, who cursed me by his idols; but I unsheathed his sword, cut off his head, and banished the insult from the children of Israel.

1 Compare this verse with the beginning of the Edessene Gnostic hymn of the Soul: “While I was a small child, and dwelling in my kingdom in the house of my father.” Bedjan’s Acta. iii. 110.

2 From 1 Sam. xvii. 34-36 we know that David was met by a lion and a bear and not a wolf. The variant may be explained by the graphic resemblance that exists in Syriac between the words bear and wolf. This verse is missing in Greek.

3 The Greek is: “Who will show it to my Lord? He is the Lord, He heareth me.”

4 The Greek is: “Of His unction.”
Prayer of Hezekiah when Surrounded by Enemies.

Praise God with a loud voice, and proclaim His glory in the congregation of many people. Praise His magnificence in the assembly of the just, and make known His majesty in the company of the pious. Extol His praise, and narrate His exalted dignity in unison with the righteous. Unite your souls with the good and with the meek in order to magnify the Most High. Gather together in order to proclaim His might, and be not tired in showing forth His salvation, His power, and His glory to all the children. It is in order that the majesty of the Lord may be made manifest that Wisdom has been given, and it is in order that it may proclaim His works that it has been made known to men; for the spreading of His might among the children, and instructing the weak-hearted in His glory: those who are remote from its good advices, and far from its doors. Because the Lord of Jacob is high, and His majesty is on all His servants. The Most High shall be as pleased with the one who magnifies Him as with the one who offers pure flour, and the one who offers he-goats and calves, and the one who makes the altar smell with the odour of many holocausts, and as with the incense from the hands of the righteous. His voice is heard from thy righteous doors, and there is admonition from the voice of the pious, and true satisfaction from their food and their drink, when taken in fellowship. Their resting place is in the law of the Most High, and their speech is for the proclamation of His might. How remote is His word from the wicked, and how difficult it is for all evildoers to understand it! Behold the eye of the Lord looks upon the righteous, and He will increase His mercy on those who praise Him, and from the time of evil He will deliver their soul. Blessed be the Lord who delivered the needy from the hand of the strangers, and saved the meek from the hand of the evildoers, who raises power from Jacob, and the judge of the Gentiles from Israel, in order that He may lengthen His sojourn in Zion and adorn all our people of Jerusalem.

1 Or: yourselves.
2 Or: His works.
3 I.e. Wisdom (fem.).
4 Lit. "Horn."
When the People Received Permission from Cyrus to Return to their Country.

O Lord, I have cried to Thee: listen to me; I have lifted my hands to the habitations of Thy holiness: incline Thy ear to me, and grant me my request, and do not refuse my prayer. Build my soul, and do not destroy it, and do not expose it before the unrighteous. Remove from me those who would requite me with evil, O Lord, just judge. Do not judge me according to my sins, because all flesh does not triumph before Thee. Make me, O Lord, understand: Thy law and teach me Thy judgments, and many will hear Thy works and the Gentiles will bear witness to Thy majesty. Remember me, and do not forget me, and do not inflict on me calamities more than I can bear. Cast away from me the sins of my youth, and let them not remember my chastisement. Purify me, O Lord, from the evil leper, and let him not keep walking to me. Dry up his roots from me, and let not his leaves stretch over me. O Lord, Thou art great, and that is why my prayer is answered. Whom should I implore to give me anything, and what is the power of the sons of men before Thee, O Lord, my trust? I cried to the Lord, and He answered me and made whole the wound of my heart. I lay down and slept, I dreamed and was helped, and Thou, O Lord, hast sustained me. They have wounded my heart, but I shall receive (joy) because the Lord has delivered me; let me rejoice now in their confusion! I trusted in Thee and I shall not be confounded: grant honour for ever, and for ever and ever save Israel, Thy elect, and the children of Jacob, Thy chosen.

Said by David when Fighting the Lion and the Wolf which took a Sheep from his Flock.

O my God, O my God, come to my help. Help me and save me. Deliver my soul from the murderer. Let me not go down to Sheol in the mouth of the lion, and let the wolf devour me not. Is

1 Or: thank.
2 Lit. "Do not make me enter the things that are harder than I am."
3 Cl. Ps. xxv. 7.
4 Or: leprosy.
it not sufficient for them that they lay in wait for the flock of my father, and took out a lamb from the flock of my father, that they wish now to destroy my soul? Have pity, O Lord, and deliver Thy elect from destruction, in order that he may repeat Thy praises in all his moments, and glorify the name of Thy Majesty. When Thou hast delivered him from the hands of the lion which destroys and the wolf which devours, and Thou hast returned the booty from the hands of the beasts. O my Lord, send speedily a deliverer from before Thee, and pull me out of the open abyss that wishes to secure me in its depths.

5.

Said by David when Thanking God who saved him from the Lion, and the Wolf both of which he Killed.

Praise the Lord, O ye all the peoples; magnify Him and bless His name, because He has delivered the soul of His elect from the hands of death, and saved His chosen from destruction. And He delivered me from the snare of Sheol, and my soul also from the unfathomable pit. Because if my salvation had not come from Him but a very short time before it did come, I would have been cut into two pieces for two beasts. He sent, however, His angel who closed the open jaws which were about to devour me, and saved my life from destruction. Let my soul magnify Him and exalt Him for all His favours that He did and is doing for me.

1 The Hebrew word Adônai.