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Apocrypha

Ascension of Isaiah

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Richard Laurence (1819)

Credits

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About:

An early Christian work of the 1st and 2nd centuries that joins two parts. In the first (chapters 1–5), the martyrdom of Isaiah: King Manasseh, ruled by Beliar (here "Berial") and Samael, has the prophet sawn in two with a wooden saw after the false prophet Belkira accuses him; along the way Isaiah foretells the coming of the Beloved, his death and resurrection, and the reign of the antichrist.

In the second (chapters 6–11), the vision of Isaiah: an angel leads him through the seven heavens, each more glorious, until he beholds God, and he sees the Lord descend in disguise through the heavens, be born of Mary, be crucified and ascend again to the right hand of the Glory.

The complete text survives only in Ethiopic (Ge'ez). English translation by Richard Laurence (1819), made from the Ethiopic, without the notes.

Source: https://archive.org/details/ascensioisaiaeva00laur

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CHAPTER 1

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1 It came to pass in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, that he sent for his only son Manasseh;

2 And brought him before Isaiah the son of Amos, the prophet, and before Josheb the son of Isaiah, that he might deliver to him the righteous truths, in which he himself had been instructed;

3 Truths relating to the eternal judgments, and to the torments of Gehenna, (that place of everlasting punishment,) of its angels, its principalities, and its powers;

4 Also truths relating to the faith of the Beloved, which had been communicated to him in the fifteenth year of his reign, the year of his reign, when he was visited with sickness.

5 He delivered to Manasseh the writings; which Shemnah the scribe had written, and which Isaiah the son of Amos, and the prophets had given to him; that they might be transcribed and deposited with him; namely, what had been communicated to him alone respecting the judgment of the angels, the destruction of the world, the cloathing of the saints, their departure and change, and respecting the rejection and ascension of the Beloved.

6 In the twentieth year of the reign of Hezekiah, Isaiah saw those prophetic occurrences which he related to Josheb his son, who continued standing while receiving his instructions.

7 Isaiah spoke to king Hezekiah, in the presence of Manasseh, saying; "As God liveth, whose name has not been transmitted to the world, as the Beloved of my Lord liveth, and as the Spirit, who speaks by me, liveth, Manasseh thy son will surely disregard all these precepts and doctrines, and by his hands with torments of body shall I be afflicted.

8 "Samael Malkira also shall minister to him, fulfilling his every wish; and he shall become the disciple of Berial after having been mine.

9 "Many also in Jerusalem and in Judea shall he turn aside from the righteous faith; Berial shall dwell in him; and by his hands shall I be sawn asunder."

10 When Hezekiah heard this, he wept abundantly, rent his garments, put dust upon his head, and fell upon his face.

11 But Isaiah said; "The counsel of Samael respecting Manasseh is accomplished; in these things I cannot indulge thee."

12 Now Hezekiah secretly intended to kill his son Manasseh.

13 But Isaiah said to him; "The Beloved has frustrated thy purpose, nor shall the thought of thy heart be fulfilled; for I by this am called away, to possess the inheritance of my Beloved."

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CHAPTER 2

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1 And it came to pass after the death of Hezekiah, that Manasseh reigned, who forgat his father's precepts, Samael dwelling in him and adhering to him.

2 He likewise ceased to worship the God of his father, serving Satan, his angels, and powers.

3 He perverted also his father's house, those, who, in the presence of Hezekiah, retained the words of wisdom and worshipped God;

4 Giving himself up to the service of Berial. Now Berial is the angel of iniquity, holding the dominion of this world, and known by the name of Matanbukus, who rejoiced over Jerusalem on account of Manasseh, and prevailed with him to drive many into exile, as well as to disseminate impiety in that city.

5 Magic likewise was multiplied there; incantation, augury, divination, fornication, adultery, and the expulsion of the righteous, by Manasseh, by Belkira, by Tabia the judge, by Joannes of Anatot, and by Zalik Nevay.

6 And as to the rest of the acts of Manasseh, behold they are written in the book of the kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem.

7 Now when Isaiah the son of Amos saw the multiplicity of crime, which was committed in Jerusalem, its idolatry in the service of Satan, and its wanton conversation, he fled from that city, and dwelt in Bethlehem of Judea.

8 But there also existed much impiety; retiring therefore from Bethlehem, he took up his abode upon a mountain in a deserted spot.

9 Then Micah the prophet, and Ananias the aged, and Joel, and Habbakuk, and Josheb his son, and many who believed in the heavenly ascent of the faithful, withdrew themselves, and dwelt upon the same mountain;

10 All were covered with sackcloth, all were prophets utterly destitute and naked, and all lamented with great lamentation the error of Israel.

11 Nor had they any food to eat, except the wild herbs which they dug on the mountains, by the cookery of which they were supported with the prophet Isaiah. And they remained upon the mountains and upon the hills two whole years.

12 After this, while still they continued in retirement, there was a certain Samaritan, by name Belkira, of the kindred of Zedekiah the son of Canaan, a false prophet, who dwelt at Bethlehem. Zedekiah the son of Canaan was the relation of his father. It was that Zedekiah who in the days of Ahab king of Israel taught 400 prophets of Baal, and who smote upon the cheek reproving the prophet Michaiah, the son of Amada.

13 But he was himself reproved by Ahab. And Michaiah was cast into prison with Zedekiah the prophet. They were together with Akaziu the son of Almerem .....

14 Elijah also the Tishbite of Gilead reproved Ahaziah and Samaria, prophesying concerning Ahaziah, that he should die on his bed in his sickness at Samaria, a sickness occasioned by falling through the open work on the top of his palace; because he slew the prophets of the Lord.

15 And when the false prophets of the mountain Juel heard it, who were with Ahaziah the son of Ahab,

16 As well as Ibkira the relation of Zedekiah, they persuaded Ahaziah to trust in the god of Akron, and Michaiah, and Belkira.

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CHAPTER 3

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1 Now Belkira perceived and marked the place, where Isaiah was, and the prophets with him; for he dwelt at Bethlehem, and was attached to Manasseh. He prophesied also falsehood in Jerusalem, where many associated with him, although he was a Samaritan.

2 For when Shalmanezer king of Assyria came and took Samaria, leading away nine parts of the people into captivity, and carrying them into the provinces of the Medes, and to the great river Euphrates;

3 He, being then but young, concealed himself, and came to Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; where nevertheless he did not walk in the ways of his father of Samaria, because he feared Hezekiah.

4 Yet was he found conversing impiously in that city:

5 Until a servant of Hezekiah preferred a charge against him; when he secretly withdrew himself into the country of Bethlehem, and there obtained credit.

6 Now Belkira accused Isaiah and the prophets, who were with him, saying; "Isaiah and his companions prophesy against Jerusalem and against the cities of Judah, saying, that they shall be destroyed, and against the tribe of Benjamin, that it shall be led into captivity, and against thee, O lord, the king, that in iron fetters shalt thou be compelled to move.

7 "They also prophesy falsely to Israel and to Judah.

8 "Isaiah says; I see more than Moses the prophet saw.

9 "Moses asserted, No man can see God and live; but Isaiah says, 'I have seen God, yet behold I live.'

10 "Know therefore, O king, that these are false prophets. Jerusalem also Isaiah has named Sodom, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem has he made the people of Gomorra." Repeatedly did he thus accuse Isaiah and the prophets before Manasseh.

11 Now Berial dwelt in the heart of Manasseh, and in the hearts of the princes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as in the hearts of the officers and counsellors of the king. And the accusation of Belkira was very acceptable.

12 Then Manasseh sent and seized Isaiah.

13 For Berial was highly indignant with Isaiah, on account of the vision and the manifestation, which manifested Samael, and because by him was revealed the coming of the Beloved from the seventh heaven, his change, descent, and form, when he shall be changed into the form of man, his rejection, and the torments, with which the children of Israel shall torment him, as also the coming and doctrine of his twelve Disciples, his suspension on a tree, the day before the sabbath, his suspension in company with men the workers of iniquity, and his burial.

14 "Moreover," said Isaiah, "the twelve, who shall be with him, shall be scandalized at what shall happen to him; and watchmen shall be appointed to guard his sepulchre.

15 "There shall likewise be a descent of the Angel of the Christian Church, which in the latter days will exist in heaven; and of the angel of the Holy Spirit,

16 "And of Michael the archangel, to open his sepulchre on the third day.

17 "When the Beloved shall go forth sitting on the shoulders of the Seraphim; and shall send his twelve Disciples,

18 "To teach all people and all nations his resurrection from the dead, so that those who believe in his crucifixion shall be saved; and finally his assumption shall be into the seventh heaven from whence he came.

19 "Many also, who shall believe in him, shall speak by the Holy Spirit.

20 "And frequent signs and wonders shall take place in those days.

21 "But afterwards upon the subject of his second advent his disciples shall forsake the doctrine of the twelve Apostles, their beloved and pure faith;

22 "While much contention shall take place respecting his coming and the proximity of his approach.

23 "In those days there shall be many attached to office, destitute of wisdom;

24 "Multitudes of iniquitous elders and pastors injurious to their flocks, and addicted to rapine; nor shall the holy pastors themselves diligently discharge their duty.

25 "Many likewise shall barter the honourable cloathing of the saints for the garment of him, who delights in gold. Abundant shall be the respecters of persons in those days, and lovers of this world's honour.

26 "Great too shall be the calumny, and numerous the calumniators, who shall not enjoy the honour of the Lord's approach; and from many shall the Holy Spirit be withdrawn.

27 "Nor in those days shall there be many prophets; neither teachers of confirmed truths, except a few in various places;

28 "On account of a spirit of lying and of fornication, a spirit dishonourable and avaricious, which exists in them, who say, 'Be ye servants of gold, and of those who possess it.'

29 "Great hatred also shall subsist among the pastors and elders one against another.

30 "For much envy shall prevail in the latter days, because every one will discourse of that, which contemplated by his eyes excites his desires,

31 "Disregarding the prophecies of the prophets, who were before me, and my visions also disregarding, that they may utter the ebullitions of their own hearts.

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CHAPTER 4

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1 "This therefore, O Hezekiah, and Josheb my son, is the age of those, whom those days shall call.

2 "And after its completion Berial shall descend, the mighty angel, the prince of this world, which he has possessed from its creation. He shall descend from the firmament in the form of a man, an impious monarch, the murderer of his mother, in the form of him, the sovereign of the world.

3 "The plant, which the twelve Apostles of the Beloved have planted, shall he pluck away from them; into his hand shall it be given.

4 "The angel Berial, this king, shall come, and with him shall come all the powers of the world, who in every thing shall be obedient to his will.

5 "At his command the sun shall rise by night, and the moon shall he cause to appear at the sixth hour.

6 "Every thing, which he shall wish to effect in the world, shall he bring to pass. He shall address the Beloved, and say, 'I am God, and before me there was none, no not any.'

7 "Then shall the whole world believe in him.

8 "They shall sacrifice to him, and serve him, saying, 'He is God, and besides him there is no other God.'

9 "Many likewise of those, who had concurred in the reception of the Beloved, shall turn after him.

10 "And the power of his prodigies shall be displayed in every city and country.

11 "In every city also shall his image be erected.

12 "And he shall have power three years, seven months, and twenty-seven days.

13 "And when many believers and saints shall have seen him, for whom they shall wait, him who was crucified, Jesus, the Lord Christ, after that I Isaiah have seen him, him who was crucified and ascended, then shall a few only of those, who shall believe in him, be left to him in those days, while his servants shall fly from desert to desert, expecting his coming.

14 "And after three hundred and thirty-two days the Lord shall come with his angels and holy powers from the seventh heaven, in the splendor of that heaven, and drag Berial and his powers into Gehenna.

15 "Then shall he give rest to those, whom he shall here find in the body, to the pious worshippers of God; and the sun shall be ashamed.

16 "All those also who on account of their faith in him have execrated Berial and his kingdom, and all the saints shall come with the Lord. In their cloathing, in which they dwell above in the seventh heaven with the Lord, shall they come. Spiritually clad shall they descend, and be in this world; and the Lord shall strengthen those with the cloathing of the saints, who shall be found in the body associating with the saints; and he shall minister to those, who have watched in this world.

17 "Afterwards shall they assume their heavenly cloathing, and leave their bodies in the world.

18 "Then shall the voice of the Beloved rebuke in wrath the heaven and the dry land, the mountains, and the hills, the cities and the deserts, the north, the angel of the sun, the moon, and every thing where Berial has been seen and manifested in this world. There shall also be a resurrection and judgment in those days, while the Beloved shall cause to ascend from him a fire, to consume all the ungodly, who shall be, as if they had never been created.

19 "Now the remainder of the vision is written in the vision of Babylon.

20 "The remainder also of my vision of the Lord, behold it is written parabolically in my words, which record that vision in the book of my public prophecies.

21 "And with respect to the descent of the Beloved into hell, behold it is written in the section, in which the Lord says, 'Lo! my Son shall be endowed with wisdom:' and behold every thing relative to him is written in the Psalms and Proverbs of David the son of Jesse, and in the Proverbs of Solomon the son of David, and in the words of Koreh, and Etan the Israelite, and of Asaph, and in the rest of the Psalms, which the angel of the Spirit has dictated.

22 "In the writings also of those, whose names are not unknown, and in the writings of Amos my father, of the prophet Hosea, of Micah, of Joel, of Nahum, of Jonah, of Obadiah, of Habbakuk, of Haggai, of Sephaniah, of Zechariah, and of Malachi, and in the writings of righteous Joseph, and of Daniel."

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CHAPTER 5

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1 On account therefore of these visions Berial was enraged with Isaiah, and dwelt in the heart of Manasseh, and sawed Isaiah asunder with a wooden saw.

2 Now while they were in the act of sawing him, Belkirah stood by accusing him, and all the false prophets stood by, deriding and triumphing over him.

3 Belkirah likewise and Bamkembekus stood before him deriding and reproaching him.

4 Then Berial said to him, "Say I have lied in every thing, which I have spoken. Confess, that the morals of Manasseh are good and upright.

5 "And that the morals of Belkirah are good, as well as of those, who are with him."

6 This he said to him, when they began to saw him.

7 But Isaiah was in a vision of the Lord, with his eyes open, and he saw them.

8 Then Milkiras thus addressed him; "Say that which I shall tell thee, and I will turn their hearts, and will cause Manasseh, and the princes of Judah, the people, and all Jerusalem, to reverence thee."

9 But Isaiah answered and said: "Do not I hold thee accursed in every word, which thou speakest, thou, all thy hosts, and all thy attendants?

10 "For thou canst not deprive me of more than the skin of my body."

11 Then they seized and sawed Isaiah the son of Amos with a wooden saw.

12 And Manasseh, Melakira, the false prophets, the princes, and the people, all stood looking on.

13 But he said to the prophets, who were with him, before he was sawn; "Go ye to the country of Tyre and Sidon, for the Lord has mixed the cup for me alone."

14 Neither while they were sawing him, did he cry out nor weep; but he continued addressing himself to the Holy Spirit, until he was sawn asunder.

15 This did Berial to Isaiah by the hand of Belkira and Manasseh, because Samael was greatly indignant against Isaiah, from the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, on account of his vision respecting the Beloved;

16 As well as on account of the destruction of Samael, which he saw in a vision of the Lord, while Hezekiah the father of Manasseh still reigned. And the deed was according to the will of Satan.

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CHAPTER 6

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1 The Vision which Isaiah the son of Amos saw in the twentieth year of the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah.\nIsaiah the son of Amos, and Josheb the son of Isaiah, came to Hezekiah to Jerusalem from Galilee.

2 While the king was reclining on a couch, a throne was brought to him; but he refused to sit upon it.

3 And when Isaiah began to converse with him upon the subject of faith and righteousness, all the princes of Israel with the royal officers and counsellors remained sitting. There were likewise thirty prophets present. The sons also of the prophets came from different parts of the country, upon hearing that Isaiah was gone from Galilee to visit Hezekiah.

4 They came, that they might salute him and receive his instructions;

5 That his hand might rest upon them; that they might prophesy; and that he might hear their prophecies. And all of them stood before him.

6 Now while Isaiah conversed with Hezekiah upon the subject of righteousness and faith, they all heard a gate open, and the voice of the Spirit.

7 (For the king had convoked all the prophets, and the people who were found there, and they obeyed his summons: Micah, Ananias the aged, Joel, and Josheb, who sat upon his right hand.)

8 And immediately when they heard it, they all worshipped the voice of the Holy Spirit, all worshipped upon their knees, and glorified the God of righteousness, the exalted One, who exists in the world above, him, who

dwells on high, the holy One, him, who resides in the saints;

9 Giving glory to him, because he had thus graciously granted an entrance to another world, had graciously granted it to man.

10 Now while Isaiah was conversing with the Holy Spirit, and while they all listened in silence, his soul was raised above its ordinary conceptions; nor did he perceive the men, who stood before him.

11 His eyes were wide open, his mouth silent, and his mortal mind elevated above itself;

12 (Yet still did he continue to breathe;) for he beheld a vision.

13 The angel, who was sent to shew it, was not of this firmament, nor was he of the glorious angels of this world, but he came from the seventh heaven.

14 And the people, who stood by, except the circle of the prophets, thought, that holy Isaiah was taken up.

15 Now the vision which he saw, was not of this world, but of the world concealed from human observation.

16 And when he had seen it, he told it to Hezekiah, and to Josheb his son, and to the other prophets, who were present.

17 But the prefects, the officers, and the people did not hear it, except Shemnah the scribe, and Javakem, and Asaph the recorder, because they were servants of righteousness, and had a sweet spirit within them.

Neither did the people hear it, for Micah, and Josheb his son, had caused them to retire, when the knowledge of this world was taken from him, as from one dead.

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CHAPTER 7

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1 The vision, then, which Isaiah saw, he told to Hezekiah, to Josheb his son, to Micah, and to the other prophets.

2 It happened, he said, when I prophesied, according to what you have heard, that I beheld a glorious angel, whose glory was not like that of the angels I had been accustomed to behold, but he possessed a glory and office so great, that I am unable to express it.

3 I saw him when he seized me by my hand, and I said, "Who art thou? What is thy name? And whither wilt thou cause me to ascend?" For the power of conversing with him was granted to me.

4 He replied: "When I have taken thee up, and shewn thee the vision, which I have been sent to shew thee, thou shalt instantly understand who I am; but my name thou shalt not know;

5 "(For it is necessary that thou shouldest return into thy mortal body) but thou shalt perceive whither I shall cause thee to ascend, because for this purpose have I been sent to thee."

6 Then I rejoiced to hear him speak mildly to me.

7 He said, "Dost thou rejoice, because I speak mildly to thee?" He added, "Him who magnified me, shalt thou behold, as mildly and tranquilly he converses with thee.

8 "And the father of him, who magnifies me, shalt thou behold; for from the seventh heaven was I sent in all these things to illuminate thee."

9 We then ascended into the firmament, I and he, where I beheld Samael and his powers. Great slaughter was perpetrated by him, and diabolical deeds, while each contended one against another.

10 For as it is above, so is it below, because a similitude of that which takes place in the firmament, exists also here on earth.

11 I said to the angel, "What is this contention?"

12 He answered; "Thus has it been from the foundation of the world, and this slaughter will continue, until he, whom thou shalt behold, shall come and put an end to it."

13 Afterwards he caused me to ascend above the firmament into heaven;

14 Where I beheld a throne in the midst, and angels both upon the right hand and upon the left.

15 Nor were any like the angels, standing on the right hand; for those standing on the right hand possessed a very great degree of splendor. And they all glorified with one voice, (the throne being in the midst,) glorifying the same object. After them likewise those upon the left hand, but their voice was not as the voice of those upon the right hand, nor was their splendor as the splendor of the others.

16 Then I inquired of the angel, who was conducting me, saying; "To whom is this glorifying addressed?"

17 He replied; "To the Glory of the seventh heaven, to him who in the holy world causes blindness, and to his Beloved, from whom I have been sent to thee, thither is it addressed."

18 Again he took me up into the second heaven, the height of which was as the height from the earth to heaven and the firmament.

19 The first heaven was distinguished by a right side and a left, by a throne in the midst, and by the splendor of angels. These things also were in the second heaven; but he who sat upon the throne in the second heaven possessed a glory greater than all.

20 Abundant indeed was the glory of the second heaven; but the splendor of the angels there resembled not that of those, who were in the first heaven.

21 Then I fell on my face to worship him who sat upon the throne; but the angel, my conductor, did not suffer me, saying; "Worship not, neither the angel, nor the throne of him, who is of the sixth heaven, from whence I have been sent to conduct thee, before I tell thee to worship in the seventh heaven.

22 "For above all the heavens and their angels thy throne is placed, thy cloathing, and thy crown, which thou shalt thyself behold.

23 "And rejoice with great joy; for those, who love the Most High and his Beloved, shall, at the end of their lives, by the angel of the Holy Spirit, ascend thither."

24 Then he took me up into the third heaven, where in like manner I beheld those, who were upon the right hand and upon the left, and where also a throne was in the midst, and one sitting upon it, but no record of this world was there commemorated.

25 And I said to the angel, who was with me; "Because the splendor before me will be changing, while I ascend through the different heavens, because there is here no knowledge of the world, vain would prove the attempt to commemorate it."

26 He answered me, saying; "No commemoration takes place on account of its irksomeness. Nothing however is concealed which is here transacted."

27 I then wished to be informed how, if not commemorated, it became known. He answered me saying; "When into the seventh heaven, from whence I was sent, I have caused thee to ascend, into that, which is above these, immediately shalt thou understand, that there is nothing concealed from the thrones, and those, who dwell in the heavens, nor from the angels; and that the splendor, with which they shine, and the glory of him, who sits upon the throne, is greater, as well as the glory of the angels upon the right and upon the left hand more excellent, than that of the heaven, which is under them."

28 Again he took me up into the fourth heaven, the height of which from the third was greater than from the earth to the firmament.

29 There again I saw angels, upon the right hand and upon the left, and one sitting upon a throne in the midst, and there likewise they glorified.

30 There too the splendor and glory of the angels on the right hand exceeded that of those on the left.

31 Again also the glory of him, who was sitting on the throne, exceeded that of the angels who were upon the right hand, as their glory also exceeded that of those, who were below them.

32 Then he took me up into the fifth heaven.

33 Where again I perceived that the angels upon the right and the left side, as well as he, who sat upon the throne, possessed a greater glory than those of the fourth heaven.

34 The glory also of those, who were upon the right side, surpassed that of those, who were upon the left, from a triple to a fourfold proportion.

35 While the glory of him, who was upon the throne, exceeded that of the angels, who were upon the right side;

36 As their glory possessed a greater degree of splendor, than that of the angels in the fourth heaven.

37 Then I glorified him, whom no one names, the potent Being, who dwells in the heavens, whose name has never been revealed to any mortal, him who thus transmits glory from heaven to heaven, who augments the splendor of the angels, and renders still more brilliant that of him, who sits upon the throne.

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CHAPTER 8

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1 Moreover he took me up into the ether of the sixth heaven, where, immediately as I ascended, I saw an effulgence, which I had not perceived in the fifth heaven.

2 The angels existed in great glory.

3 A holy splendor and a throne was also there.

4 Then I said to the angel, who was conducting me, "What is this, which I behold, my Lord?"

5 He replied; "I am not thy Lord, but thy associate."

6 I further inquired of him, saying, "Are there then no associates of angels?"

7 He said; "Yes; of the sixth heaven and above, in which from this time there is neither a left side, nor a throne placed in the midst; but it is connected with the potency of the seventh heaven, where dwells he, who is never named, and his Elect, whose name is unrevealed, nor are all the heavens capable of discovering it.

8 "For he alone it is, whose voice all the heavens and the thrones obey. I therefore have received power, and been sent to bring thee up here, that thou mightest behold this splendor;

9 "That thou mightest see the Lord of all these heavens and these thrones;

10 "Who shall nevertheless be changed, until he assume your form and your similitude.

11 "Wherefore I say unto thee, Isaiah; because into thy mortal body that which is human must return, that, which has neither perceived, nor ascended, nor understood the things which thou hast understood;

12 "That, what thou shalt be, thou shalt behold, for thou shalt participate in the lot of the Lord; by the portion of a tree shalt thou come here, and thence is derived the potency of the sixth heaven and of the ether."

13 Then I greatly magnified my Lord, because by the same kind of death which shall happen to him, I shall be transported to heaven.

14 He continued; "Hear further this from thy fellow servant. When from an alien body by the angel of the Spirit thou hast ascended hither, then shalt thou assume the cloathing, which thou shalt behold; and other numbered, laid up, cloathings shalt thou see.

15 "Then also shalt thou be equal to the angels of the seventh heaven."

16 He now took me up into the sixth heaven, where there was neither a left side, nor a throne in the midst, but all were alike in their appearance, and their splendor was equal.

17 And permission being given me, I glorified, I with them and that angel, and our glorifying was like theirs.

18 There all invoked the first, the Father, and his Beloved the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, all with united voice.

19 But their voice was not like that of the angels, which were in the five heavens.

20 Nor alike was their utterance, but a different voice, as well as a more copious effusion of light was there.

21 Then, while I continued in the sixth heaven, I regarded as darkness the brilliancy, which I had seen in the five heavens;

22 Rejoicing and glorifying him, who had thus graciously bestowed light on those, who wait in expectation of his promise.

23 And I supplicated the angel who was conducting me, that from this time forward I might not return into a world of mortality.

24 Wherefore be assured, O Hezekiah, Josheb my son, and Micah, that great darkness is here, darkness indeed great.

25 Now the angel, who was conducting me, knew what I thought, and he said; "If in this light thou hast rejoiced, how much more wilt thou rejoice in the seventh heaven, from whence I have been sent to thee, when thou shalt behold the light, where the Lord is, and his Beloved, who will hereafter be called in the world the Son.

26 "For he who is to exist in a corruptible world has not yet been revealed; nor the cloathing, the thrones, and the crowns, which are reserved for the saints, for those, who shall believe in that Lord, in him, who will descend in your form; since there the light is great and wonderful.

27 "With respect however to thy returning into the body no more, understand that the days are not accomplished for thy coming here."

28 Hearing this, I became sorrowful, but he said, "Grieve not."

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CHAPTER 9

✦

1 Then he raised me into the ether of the seventh heaven. Moreover I heard a voice, exclaiming; "Whither would he ascend who dwells among strangers?" I feared and trembled.

2 It spoke of me. And while I trembled, behold, from the same place another voice was uttered, which said, "Let holy Isaiah be permitted to ascend hither, for here is his cloathing."

3 Then I inquired of the angel who was with me, and said; "Who is he that prohibited me? and who he that favoured my ascent?"

4 The angel answered; "He who prohibited thee is he, who dwells above the splendor of the sixth heaven.

5 "And he who turned thee back again is thy Lord God, the Lord Christ, who will be called in the world, Jesus; but his name it is impossible to understand, until he has ascended from mortality."

6 He then took me up into the seventh heaven, where I beheld a miraculous light and angels innumerable.

7 There also I saw all the saints from Adam:

8 Holy Abel, and every other saint.

9 There too I beheld Enoch, and all coeval with him, who were without the cloathing of the flesh: I viewed them in their heavenly cloathing, resembling the angels, who were standing there in great splendor.

10 Nevertheless they sat not upon their thrones, nor were splendid crowns upon their heads.

11 Then I inquired of the angel, who was with me, how it happened, that they had assumed their cloathings but not their thrones and crowns.

12 He said; "Crowns and thrones of glory they have not yet received, but they shall understand and know what their thrones, and what their crowns shall be, after the Beloved has descended in the form, in which thou shalt see him descend.

13 "For the Lord shall descend into the world in the latter days, and after his descent shall be called Christ. He shall take your form, be reputed flesh, and shall be man.

14 "Then shall the God of the world be revealed by his Son. Yet will they lay their hands upon him, and suspend him on a tree, not knowing who he is.

15 "In like manner also shall his descent, as thou wilt perceive, be concealed from the heavens, through which he shall pass altogether unknown.

16 "But after he has escaped from the angel of death, on the third day he shall rise again, and continue in the world five hundred and forty-five days.

17 "And many also of the saints shall ascend with him, whose spirits shall not receive their cloathing, until the Lord Christ shall ascend himself, and with him shall they ascend.

18 "Then therefore shall they assume their cloathing, and thrones, and crowns, when he shall have ascended into the seventh heaven."

19 I repeated the inquiry, which I made in the third heaven.

20 He replied; "Every thing which is done in the world is known here."

21 And while I was yet talking with him, I perceived one of the angels, who were standing by, more splendid than that angel who had directed my ascent from the world.

22 He shewed me books, but not books like those of this world, and he opened them. They contained things written in them, but the writing resembled not the writing of this world. Permission being given to me, I read them. And behold the transactions of the children of Israel were written therein, transactions, with which, my son Josheb, thou art well acquainted.

23 Then I said; "In truth there is nothing concealed from the seventh heaven, which is done in the world."

24 And when I saw there many cloathings laid up, many thrones, and many crowns,

25 I said to the angel, who was conducting me; "Whose are these cloathings, thrones, and crowns?"

26 He answered; "These cloathings belong to many in the world, who will receive their faith from him, to whom will be ascribed the name, of which I have spoken; to many, who will keep his words, confiding in them and in his cross: for such are they reserved."

27 Then I beheld one standing, whose glory surpassed that of all, whose glory was great and wonderful.

28 And while I was contemplating him, all the saints and angels, whom I had seen, advanced towards him. Adam, Abel, Seth, and all the saints of old approached, worshipped, and glorified him, all with united voice. I myself also glorified with them, and my glorifying resembled theirs.

29 Immediately all the angels approached, worshipped, and glorified.

30 He then became changed, and appeared like an angel:

31 When instantly that angel, who was conducting me, said, "Worship him;" and I worshipped.

32 The angel added; "This is the Lord of all the glory, which thou hast beheld."

33 And while I was still conversing, I perceived another glorious being, who was similar to him in appearance, and whom the saints approached, worshipped, and glorified, while I myself also glorified with them; but his glory was not transformed into a glory resembling theirs.

34 Immediately also the angels approached and worshipped.

35 Then I beheld the Lord and a second angel, both of whom were standing.

36 The second, which I saw, was upon the left hand of my Lord. I asked who this was. My conductor said to me; "Worship him; for this is the angel of the Holy Spirit, who speaks by thee and other saints."

37 Then the eyes of my soul being opened, I beheld a great glory; but immediately became incapable of seeing, as well the angel, who was with me, as all the angels, whom I had before seen, worshipping my Lord.

38 Nevertheless I perceived, that the saints with great strength beheld that glory.

39 My Lord now approached me and the angel of the Spirit, and said, "Behold it has been permitted thee to see God, and on thy account strength has been given to the angel, who is with thee."

40 Then I saw that my Lord worshipped and the angel of the Holy Spirit, and that both of them together glorified God.

41 When immediately all the saints approached, and worshipped.

42 All the saints and angels approached and worshipped, and all the angels glorified.

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CHAPTER 10

✦

1 Immediately after this I distinguished the voices and glorifyings, which I had before heard in the six heavens, which I had heard as I ascended thither.

2 All were addressed to him, to the glorious Being, whose glory I was unable to look upon.

3 I myself both heard and saw the glorifying addressed to him.

4 The Lord also and the angel of the Spirit heard and saw all.

5 For all the glorifying, which was transmitted from the six heavens, was not only heard but rendered visible.

6 I heard also the angel, who was conducting me, saying; "This is he, who is more exalted than the most exalted in every holy world, he who inhabits and dwells in the righteous, he who is called by the Holy Spirit, through the mouths of the saints, the Father of the Lord."

7 Then I heard the words of the highly exalted, the Father of my Lord, speaking to my Lord, the Christ, who will hereafter be called Jesus:

8 "Go," said he, "descend through all the heavens; descend to the firmament, and the world, even to the angel, who is in hell, but who has not yet been hurled to utter perdition.

9 "Assimilate thyself to the appearance of all, who are in the five heavens;

10 "To the form of the angels of the firmament, and carefully guarding thyself be assimilated, even to the angels, who are in hell.

11 "Neither shall all the angels of the world know, that thou, with me, art the Lord of the seven heavens, and of their angels, nor shall they know, that thou existest with me.

12 "Then when with a celestial voice I shall have convoked the angelical and splendid host of the heavens, and when I shall have enlarged the sixth heaven, that thou mayest judge and destroy the principalities, the angels, and the gods of the world, as well as the world, which belongs to them, then shalt thou reign.

13 "For they have uttered falsehood, and said; 'We exist, and besides us there is no God.'

14 "Nor when from the gods of death thou shalt ascend to thy own place, shalt thou undergo a change in passing through the different heavens, but with splendor shalt thou ascend, and sit at my right hand.

15 "Then too shall the principalities and powers of the world worship thee."

16 This I heard, which the great Glory spoke while issuing directions to my Lord from the seventh heaven.

17 And accordingly I beheld, when my Lord departed from that heaven, entering into the sixth.

18 Then the angel, who took me up from the world, and who was still with me, said; "Understand, Isaiah, and observe, that thou mayest see the change of the Lord and his descent."

19 I looked; and when the angels perceived him, immediately those of the sixth heaven glorified and praised him; for he was not changed into the form of the angels there. They glorified him, and I likewise glorified with them.

20 I saw also when he descended into the fifth heaven; and became assimilated in that heaven to the form of the angels there. But they glorified him not, because his form resembled theirs.

21 Immediately he descended into the fourth heaven, and assumed in like manner the form of the angels there.

22 Who, when they saw him, glorified him not, nor praised him, because his form resembled theirs.

23 Again I saw, when he descended into the third heaven, and took the form of the angels, who were in that heaven.

24 But there those, who watched the gate of that heaven, required a passport, which the Lord, as one unknown, gave to them; neither when they saw him did they glorify and praise him, because his form resembled theirs.

25 Moreover I saw, when he descended into the second heaven, and there again gave a passport; for those, who watched the gate, required it, and the Lord gave it.

26 I saw likewise when he became assimilated to the angels of the second heaven, who, when they beheld him, did not glorify him, because his form resembled theirs.

27 Again I saw, when he descended into the first heaven, where also he gave a passport to those, who watched the gate; and where he assumed the form of the angels upon the left side of the throne; but they neither glorified, nor praised him, because his form resembled theirs.

28 Of me however no one made inquiries, on account of the angel, who was conducting me.

29 Again he descended into the firmament, where the Prince of this world dwells, and where also he gave a passport to those upon the left side, his form resembling theirs; who, instead of glorifying him, were contentiously destroying each other; for there exists the power of evil and of short-lived contention.

30 I saw likewise, when he descended, and became assimilated to the angels of the air, and appeared like one of them.

31 But there he gave no passport, because they were plundering and assaulting each other.

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CHAPTER 11

✦

1 After this I looked again; when the angel, who conversed with me and conducted me, said; "Understand, Isaiah son of Amos, for on account of that, which will now be revealed, was I sent to thee from God."

2 And I beheld of the lineage of David the prophet a woman, by name Mary, who was a virgin, and betrothed to a man, by name Joseph, a carpenter. He also was of the seed and lineage of righteous David, and of Bethlehem of Judea.

3 I saw, that he came to her abode, and that after she was betrothed, she was found pregnant; and that Joseph the carpenter was inclined to put her away.

4 Then the angel of the Spirit appeared in the world; after which Joseph did not put away Mary; nor reveal the circumstance to any one.

5 Neither did he approach her; but preserved her, as a holy virgin, notwithstanding her pregnancy.

6 Nor did he dwell with her for two months.

7 After however two full months Joseph and Mary were in the house alone together.

8 Then while they were thus alone, and while Mary was attentively gazing on the ground, she suddenly perceived with astonishment a small infant lying before her.

9 She found likewise, as soon as her astonishment had ceased, that her womb was as before void of pregnancy.

10 And when Joseph exclaimed; "What astonishes thee?" his eyes became opened; and beholding the infant he glorified God, because the Lord was come to his inheritance.

11 Then a voice was heard, saying; "Tell that, which has been seen, to no one."

12 Nevertheless a report concerning the infant was circulated throughout Bethlehem.

13 Some said, that the virgin Mary brought forth two months before.

14 While many affirmed, that she did not bring forth at all, that a midwife went not up to her, and that the cries of childbearing were not heard. And all were in the dark respecting him, for all knew that he was, but knew not whence he was.

15 Then they took him, and came to Nazareth of Galilee.

16 And I perceived, O Hezekiah, Josheb my son, and ye other prophets, whom standing before me I am now addressing, that he was concealed from all the heavens, the principalities, and the gods of this world.

17 I descried him also in Nazareth sucking as an infant, and in conformity with his condition as one unknown.

18 When however he was grown up, I saw, that he performed great signs and wonders, in the land of Israel and Jerusalem;

19 That foreigners hated him and raised up the children of Israel against him, not knowing who he was; that they delivered him to the king, and crucified him; and that he descended to the angel of death.

20 In Jerusalem I beheld him hanging on a tree;

21 And after the third day rising again, and remaining on earth for a certain period.

22 Then the angel, who was conducting me, said; "Understand, Isaiah." When immediately I saw him send forth his twelve Disciples, and ascend from the world.

23 I beheld him likewise in the firmament, where, as his form was not changed to theirs, all the angels of the firmament and Satan both perceived and worshipped him.

24 Greatly however did they grieve, saying; "How has our Lord descended to us, and we discovered not the splendor, which belongs to him, which we now discern, and which distinguishes him in the sixth heaven."

25 He then ascended into the second heaven unchanged, where all the angels were on the right side and on the left, with the throne in the midst;

26 Where too they worshipped, and glorified him, saying; "How was our Lord concealed from us, while he descended, so that we perceived him not."

27 In like manner also he ascended into the third heaven, where in similar terms they exclaimed, and glorified.

28 And in the fourth and fifth heaven they expressed themselves in precisely the same manner.

29 But there the glorifying became united; nor was he afterwards changed.

30 Again I saw, when he ascended into the sixth heaven, that they worshipped and glorified him;

31 And in all the heavens the glorifying became continually augmented.

32 I saw him also ascend into the seventh heaven, where all the saints and all the angels glorified him, and where instantly I perceived, that he sat down on the right hand of that great Glory, the splendor of which, as I have told you, I was incapable of beholding.

33 I perceived likewise that the angel of the Holy Spirit sat down on the left hand.

34 The angel, who said to me; "Isaiah son of Amos, I preserve thee, for great are the things, which are communicated to thee; and thou hast been instructed in that, of which the child of humanity is ignorant.

35 "But thou must return to thy mortal cloathing, until thy days are accomplished; then shalt thou come hither." These things I saw.

36 Now while Isaiah was addressing all those, who were standing before him, they glorified. He then conversed with king Hezekiah, saying; "These things assuredly have I spoken.

37 "The world shall be consumed;

38 "And all this vision be accomplished in the last generation."

39 Isaiah likewise adjured him not to communicate these things to the people of Israel, that he might not subject them to human perversion.

40 "But then," he said, "shall you communicate them, when you shall be permitted by the Holy Spirit to assume your heavenly cloathings, thrones, and crowns of splendor, which are reserved for you in the seventh heaven."

41 On account of these visions and prophecies, Samael Satan sawed asunder by Manasseh Isaiah the son of Amos the prophet.

42 And such were the things, which Hezekiah delivered to Manasseh in the twenty-sixth year of his reign;

43 Who nevertheless forgot them, not treasuring them up in his heart; but abandoning himself to the service of Satan.\nHere ends Isaiah the Prophet with his Ascension.

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