UNE ✦ SACRA

Apocrypha

Testaments of Isaac and Jacob

✦ ✦ ✦

Anonymous (English translation by S. Gaselee)

S. Gaselee (1927)

Credits

Author	Anonymous (English translation by S. Gaselee)
Date	2nd to 5th centuries
Original language	Coptic
Version	S. Gaselee (1927)
Edition	1.1
Translation	Stephen Gaselee
Source	Internet Archive — The Testament of Abraham, with the Testaments of Isaac and Jacob (1927)
License	CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 · original: Public domain

About:

Two texts continuing the Testament of Abraham, preserved in Coptic, Arabic and Ethiopic and read by the churches of Egypt and Ethiopia at the feast of the three patriarchs. They have an old Jewish origin, but the form that has reached us is Christian (2nd to 5th centuries).

In the Testament of Isaac the archangel Michael announces his death to Isaac; he gives counsel to his son Jacob and to those around him, is taken up to heaven, sees the punishments of sinners and the resting places of the righteous, and dies in peace.

In the Testament of Jacob the same angel comes to Jacob, now old, in Egypt; Jacob blesses his sons and grandsons, rises in vision to the heavens and is buried by Joseph beside his fathers.

English translation from the Coptic by S. Gaselee, published as an appendix to G. H. Box's Testament of Abraham (1927).

Source: https://archive.org/details/the-testament-of-abraham

The Greek words Gaselee gives in parentheses and the folio references of the manuscript are omitted.

See the source listed above for the terms of use of this version. The design of this file belongs to Une Sacra (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0); the text keeps the license listed above.

Digital edition generated on November 26, 2026 by Une Sacra, an open library of sacred texts. · UneSacra.com

Contents

Testament of Isaac

Testament of Jacob

TESTAMENT OF ISAAC

✦

1 This is the coming forth from the body of the Patriarch Isaac, the son of Abraham, on the twenty-eighth day of the month Mesore, in the peace of God. Amen.

2 Now the Patriarch Isaac wrote his Testament and spake his words for the instruction of Jacob his son and of all them that were gathered together unto him, so that the blessings of the Patriarch should be upon those that heard, and upon those also that should come after them.

3 Hearken unto these words of instruction and these refreshing medicines, so that the will of God may be done always upon him that hearkeneth, not only with the outward ear, but in the depth of the heart, and remaineth in faith without doubting: even as it is written: If thou hear a word, let it remain with thee; that is, that a man should strive, when he hath heard it, with endurance, and God shall give him a blessing in that after which he hath sought.

3.2 And again it is written: He shall deny them nothing which the sons of men have asked upon the earth. For if God hath given power to us over every thing that is upon the earth, how much more to him who shall be established in his faith in the words of God and of His saints, not in unbelief, but in a heart made straight in the words of God and of all His saints: and he shall be made an inheritor with the saints in the kingdom of God.

4 But God is compassionate and merciful, who hath accepted robbers and publicans in the generations that are gone by, because of their innocence and their faith that was righteous and surely founded in God: and likewise shall He be with all the generations that are to come.

5 Now it came to pass that when the days of our father the patriarch Isaac were come nigh that he should come forth from the body, God the merciful sent unto him the great holy archangel Michael, the same that He had sent unto Abraham his father.

5.2 At the hour of dawn on the twenty-second day of Mesore he said unto him: Hail, my son, the chosen of God, and His beloved son: now as for the God-loving and righteous old man, our father Isaac, it was his custom daily to speak with the holy angels.

5.3 He cast down his face, he saw him, that he was in the likeness of his father Abraham; he opened his mouth, he lifted up his voice, he cried out in great joy and exultation: I am looking upon thy face even as one that hath looked upon God.

6 The angel said: Take thought, my beloved Isaac, for I have been sent for thee from the living God, to take thee to the heavens unto thy father Abraham, and that thou mayest keep festival with all the saints; for thy father Abraham keepeth watch over thee, and cometh for thee himself. But behold thy throne, it is set up for thee in the heavens, near unto thy father Abraham.

6.2 As for thee and thy beloved son Jacob, ye shall be with an high inheritance that belongeth to all that are in the kingdom of the heavens, in the glory of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for they shall

call you by this name unto all generations, namely, Patriarch and father of all the earth.

6.3 But the God-loving old man our father Isaac answered and said unto the angel: I am astonished at thee exceedingly. Art thou not my father Abraham?

7 The angel said: My beloved Isaac, I am the angel that ministers unto thy father Abraham. Now indeed rejoice and be glad, and be not troubled, for thou shalt not be taken in pain, but it is a rejoicing that thou shalt be taken in honour and rest for ever. Thou shalt be taken from a prison unto a broad place.

7.2 Thou shalt be taken unto joy unfailing, and gladness, and light, and pleasure, and rejoicing, and unfailing freshness. But set in order thy testament and the instruction of thy house, so that thou mayest be translated unto rest: after that, blessed is thy father that begat thee, and blessed art thou thyself: blessed is thy son Jacob, blessed is thy seed that cometh after thee.

8 Now Jacob heard them talking one with the other: he came, he gave ear unto them, but spake not. Our father Isaac said unto the angel with pity in his heart: What shall I do with the light of mine eyes, Jacob, my beloved son? I am afraid because of Esau: thou knowest thyself all the matter.

8.2 The angel said unto him: O my beloved Isaac, if all the Gentiles that are in the earth were gathered together into one place, they would not be able to loosen the blessing thou hast spoken over Jacob in the hour when thou didst bless him.

8.3 The Father hath blessed him: Michael, and all the angels, and all the heavenly ones, and the spirits of all the righteous, and thy father Abraham, all have answered Amen. The steel shall not come nigh him, but he shall be exalted exceedingly and shall spread abroad; he shall be made a mighty nation, and twelve tribes shall come forth from him.

9 Our father Isaac said unto the angel: Thou hast comforted me exceedingly. But let not Jacob know, so that he may not be troubled and weep; because never have I given him pain. The angel of the Lord said unto him: O my beloved Isaac, blessed is every righteous man that cometh forth from the body: blessed are they in their meeting with God.

9.2 Woe, woe, woe unto three times to the sinner, because he has been born into the world. Trouble must there be, O my beloved: therefore do thou thyself instruct thy sons after thy way and all the things which thy father did command thee.

9.3 Hide nothing from Jacob, so that he may write them down unto all the generations that come after him, that all they that love God may work according to them, and obtain for themselves everlasting life. But do thou by all means take thought, because I come unto thee in joy, without delay.

10 The peace which the Lord gave unto us, I give it unto thee: for I must depart with all speed unto Him that sent me.

11 Now when the angel had said this, he arose above the bed of our father Isaac; he departed while our father Isaac watched after him. And he was astonished at the revelation which he had seen, and he said: I shall not see the light until I shall be sought.

11.2 Now while he was saying this, behold Jacob arose: he came nigh unto the door of the bed-chamber of his father: now the angel had cast a slumber upon him, so that he should not hear them speaking. And when he had come nigh unto the place wherein his father slept, he said unto him: My father, with whom speakest thou? His father said: Unto Isaac: Dost thou hear me, O my son?

11.3 Thine aged father hath been sent for to be taken from thee, O my beloved son. He cast his arms about his father; he wept, saying unto him: My strength hath gone and hath left me; thou hast made me an orphan, O my father; I am become fatherless and wretched to-day.

12 And our father Isaac cast his arms about Jacob; he kissed him; both wept until they ceased, while Jacob said: take me with thee, O my beloved Isaac, my blessed father. But his father said: I cannot so ordain, my beloved Jacob. But thanks be unto God that thou too art a father, O my beloved. Tarry until thou art sent for.

12.2 I also remember a day when the high and flourishing cypress was moved, while I spake unto my lord and father Abraham, and I could do nothing. So now, O my son, the ordinance which God hath ordained for each one according to His power—it is come to pass, for the things which are written may not be altered.

12.3 But the Lord knoweth, my son, that behold my heart is heavy indeed because of thee: beside this I rejoice in my going unto the Lord. So now make thyself strong in a princely spirit, and be silent from weeping thus with exceeding weeping.

13 Hearken unto me, O my beloved son, that I may speak with thee. Where is the first creation that God made with His own hands, I mean our father Adam and our mother Eve? where are Abel, and Seth? where are Enos and Mahalaleel? where are Jared and my father Enoch? where are Methuselah and Lamech? where is our father Noah, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, Japheth?

13.2 After these Arphaxad and Cainan and Salah and Eber and Reu and Serug and Nahor and Terah, and my father Abraham and Lot his brother: and all these tasted of death saving only our father Enoch the perfect, who was taken up unto the heavenly parts of the skies.

13.3 After these, therefore, there are twelve generations that shall come from thee, so that Jesus Christ may come forth from thy seed, from a virgin called Mary.

14 And God was with him until he had completed an hundred years, and he did fast every day until sunset, offering up his sacrifices, and those of his household, for the salvation of his soul, and passing the half of the day in his ascetic practices and the half of the night praying unto God: and so he did unto many years. And thrice in the year did he pass forty days without eating, and he drank no wine and ate no fruit and slept not on a bed nor upon a mattress: and he did pray unto God.

15 Now when the multitude heard that the man of God could see clearly, they came together unto him from every country and from every place, to hearken unto his instructions of life, knowing that a spirit of God was speaking in him.

15.2 The great ones that were gathered together unto him said unto him: Our holy father, what is the ordinance that hath been delivered to thee, after this long time on this sort since the light of thine eyes was dimmed? lo and behold, now thou seest clearly.

15.3 But he, the God-loving old man, opened his mouth in laughter and said unto them: My sons and my beloved brethren, it is God that hath healed me. When he saw that I had approached unto the gate of death,

16 He caused this to happen to me as a consolation in my old age.

17 But the priest of God said unto him: Show me the way unto a word of consolation. He said unto him: Keep thy body holy, because it is the temple of God, and the spirit of God dwelleth in it. Keep also thy little flesh pure and holy. Keep thyself, mingle not with men, so that no word of wrath may come out of thy mouth. Keep thyself from slander. Keep thyself from vain-glory.

17.2 Keep thyself, speak not alone with a woman. Keep thyself, speak no idle word from thy mouth. Keep thy hands, so that they be not stretched out to that which is not thine. Offer not up a sacrifice when there is a blemish in thee. Wash in water at the hour when thou desirest to come nigh the altar.

17.3 Mingle not the thoughts of the world with the thoughts of God in the hour when thou shalt stand before Him. Strive to be at peace with all men in the hour when thou shalt offer up sacrifice to God.

18 If thou shalt come to approach unto the altar, thou shalt repeat to thyself an hundred times a prayer unto God, making this confession, speaking after this fashion: God, the incomprehensible, the inscrutable, the invinci-

ble, the hallowed treasure, purify me in love, for I am flesh and blood, and I have taken refuge in Thee.

18.2 I know that I am unclean; Thou shalt cleanse me, O Lord, who have come unto Thee bowed down before Thee. I know that I am unclean; Thou shalt cleanse me, O Lord, who have come unto Thee bowed down so that Thou mayest send upon me the fire that consumeth created matter.

18.3 It is Thy mercy that taketh away mine iniquity; forgive me, sinner that I am, and forgive all Thy creation which Thou hast made. I have no contentions like unto the beasts; I am at peace with all that is made in Thy likeness; I am untroubled by all the evil reasonings that have been made.

19 I am Thy son, I am Thy servant, I am the son of Thine handmaid. I am the sinner, Thou art the forgiver; forgive me in love and hearken unto my prayer, that I may stand at the altar and my sacrifice be made acceptable in Thy sight. Turn me not back because of my sin, but take me unto Thyself like a sheep that is gone astray.

19.2 God that hast been with our father Adam, and Abel, and Noah, and our father Abraham, even Thou shalt be with me. Thou hast been with our father Jacob, even Thou shalt be with me and receive my sacrifice from my hand.

20 When thou hast rehearsed this before thou goest up to the altar, then come, offer up thy sacrifice: and strive earnestly to keep watch upon thyself, for here is the Spirit of the Lord, so that thou shouldst not vex Him: for the work of a priest is no small work. It beseemeth every one among the priests to-day, and unto the lattermost generation, and unto the end of the world, not to be filled with wine, not to be filled with bread, not to be filled with water, not to speak of the happenings of this world, nor listen

to them that speak [of them]: but they should lead all their life instant unto prayer and watching and ascetic practice, until the Lord cometh to seek them in peace.

21 Every man that is upon the earth, whether monk or priest, it beseemeth them to love the well-chosen withdrawing of themselves after a little time, and that they should renounce the world and its evil cares, and remain in the holy angelic service in purity, and become purified before the Lord and His angels, because of their holy sacrifices and their angelic service, which is the type [that they shall perform in the heavens.

21.2 And the angels shall be their companions because of their perfect faith and their purity, and great is their honour before God. Simply, whether he be small or great, it is sinlessness that the Lord seeketh from him: but as for the wicked that commit sin, it behoveth them to repent before God.

21.3 Thou shalt not sin in any of these sins: thou shalt not slay with the sword; thou shalt not slay with the tongue; thou shalt not commit fornication in thy body; thou shalt not commit fornication in thy thoughts; thou shalt not defile thyself; thou shalt not envy; thou shalt not be wroth until the sun set, nor remain in vain glory.

21.4 Thou shalt not rejoice at the fall of thine enemy, nor at that of thy neighbour; thou shalt not blaspheme; thou shalt not teach thy mouth to slander; thine eye shall not look after a woman with concupiscence. Now as for these and things like unto them, we have need of taking great heed, until each one of us be saved from the wrath that shall be revealed in heaven.

22 Now when the multitude that was gathered together unto him had heard these things, they all cried out together in a loud voice, saying : Meet and right are these words of truth. But the God-loving old man kept silence : he drew up the coverlet, he covered his face.

22.2 Now the multitude and the priest kept silence, while he should repose a little : but the angel of his father came unto him; he took him up to the heavens. And he saw in fear and trembling multitudes parted on this side and on that, after the fashion of the last day, and it was a great consternation to see them.

22.3 Some had faces of camels, others had faces of lions and hyaenas and leopards, others had faces of dogs, others had one eye, which was a fearful

23 thing in them. And I beheld, and lo one was brought being pursued; and when they came unto the beasts, they who were going with him drew to one side : the lions came nigh unto him, they rent him in the midst, they tare him limb from limb, they rent him, they ate him.

23.2 Then did they cast him up again, and he became like to himself again and when he came further than the lions, they likewise did thus unto him. They did simply give him into each other's hands, and each one would rend him and eat him and cast him up, and he would become like to himself, yea, his own self again.

23.3 I said unto the angel : My Lord, how many sins then hath this man committed, that all these things are done unto him ? The angel said unto me : This man whom thou hast seen hath passed five hours being at enmity with his neighbour : he died without peace being made with one another.

24 Lo and behold, he is given into the hands of five tormentors : they pass a year tormenting him for each hour, in requital for the five hours which he passed being at enmity with his neighbour. The angel spake again unto me : O my beloved Isaac, thinkest thou that there are no more save these ? Believe, O my beloved Isaac, that there are seventy thousand tormentors.

24.2 Every hour that a man shall be at enmity with his neighbour, he must go into the hands of these tormentors, until the end of a year of days for each hour, if he have not repented of his sins before he came forth from the body.

24.3 He led me further unto a river of fire : I saw that it was in waves, and its waves were forty cubits high; and the noise of it was like a thunder of heaven.

25 I saw a multitude of souls plunged in it nine cubits deep, and they who were in that river were crying out, weeping with a loud voice and great sighing; [the river] hath not afflicted the righteous, but it is the sinners whom it doth burn, knowing them because of the great stink that surroundeth them.

25.2 I saw the depth of the abyss, whose smoke rose exceeding high; I saw a multitude of men that were cast down therein, crying out, weeping each one of them with his sighing. The angel said unto me : Look down and see these others also.

25.3 And when I had seen them he said unto me : These that are plunged down into the cold, these are they that have committed the iniquity of Sodom, and so they are tormented exceedingly. Again I saw another depth, full of sleepless worms and snakes; and there were men that were plunged down into it, crying out, weeping.

26 Again I saw Abtelmoluchos, that is set in charge of the torments, and he was all fire, beating the tormentors of Hell, saying unto them : Beat them, so that they they may know that God is.

27 Again I saw another great depth, which was all fire, and there was a multitude of men beneath it, crying out, weeping, every one with sighing. The angel said unto me : Look with thine eyes and see all the punishments. But I said unto the angel : Mine eyes reach not far enough to see them : but I will look. How long then are these in punishments ?

27.2 He said unto me : Until the merciful God have pity upon them. Now after these things the angel took me up into the heavens. I saw my father Abraham: I worshipped him, and he greeted me together with all the saints. All of them were gathered together: they honoured me because of my father.

27.3 They walked with me, they took me to the veil of the Father : I cast myself down, I worshipped Him with my father and all the saints. We all sang a hymn unto Him, crying out and saying : Holy, holy, holy.

28 Lord Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy holy glory. The Lord said unto my father from the holy place : Every man that shall give the name of my beloved Isaac to his son, my blessing shall be in his house for ever. Well hast thou come, O Abraham the faithful; well has thy blessed and good root come.

28.2 Now indeed all requests that thou desirest, seek after them in the name of thy beloved son Isaac, and they shall be fulfilled unto thee to-day to be a covenant for ever. My father Abraham said : Thine is the power, O Lord the Almighty.

28.3 The Lord said unto my father from the holy place : Every man that shall give the name of my beloved Isaac unto his son, or write his testament and lay it in his hand for a blessing, My blessing shall not fail in that house for ever and ever.

29 Or if he give to eat to a beggar that is an-hungered on the day of the commemoration of my beloved Isaac, it shall make him acceptable unto you in My kingdom. My father Abraham said : Lord God Almighty, if it be impossible for him to write his testament, let Thy mercy take hold upon him, for Thou art merciful and compassionate.

29.2 The Lord said unto Abraham : Let him give bread unto them that are an-hungered and the poor, and I will give him unto you in My kingdom, and he shall come with you unto the first hour of the thousand years. Our father Abraham said : If he be poor and cannot find bread ?

29.3 The Lord said : Let him pass the night of My beloved Isaac without slumber, and I will give him unto you as an inheritor in My kingdom. My father Abraham said : If he be weak and this be impossible for him, let Thy mercy take hold upon him in love.

30 The Lord said unto him : Let him offer up a little incense in My name and on the day of the commemoration of My beloved Isaac, and I will give him to you as a son in My kingdom.

30.2 And again, if he cannot find incense, let him busy himself about his testament and meditate upon it on the day of My beloved Isaac thy son: but again if he know not how to meditate, let him go and listen to it from them that meditate.

30.3 Again, if he can do none of these things, let him go within his house, and shut his door upon him, and pray an hundred times, and I will give him to you as a son in My kingdom. But it is better than all these if he offer up a sacrifice in the name of My beloved Isaac.

30.4 And again, every one that shall do all these things that I have spoken, they are inheritors with them that are in My kingdom.

31 Every one that shall be careful about his life (and they that write his testament), or do any compassionate thing, even unto one cup of water, or he that shall write his testament or meditate upon it in faith with all his heart and believe in all these things which I have spoken, My power and the power of the Holy Ghost shall be with them, and shall guide them in all the world; and no difference shall there be in My city, and I will give them unto you as sons in My kingdom, and they shall come unto the first hour of the thousand years.

31.2 My peace be with you all, O My holy athletes. When He had finished saying these things, all the heavenly ones sang a hymn, crying out and saying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of Thy holy glory. The Father spake unto Michael from the holy place: Michael, My faithful steward, call a multitude of angels with all the saints.

32 And the Lord our God went up

33 on the chariot of the Cherubim, while the Seraphim went before Him, and the angels and all the saints. Now when he had spoken these things, Jacob sped unto his father Isaac, he kissed his lips, weeping. Our father Isaac touched him, giving him a sign with the winking of his eyes, meaning: Be silent.

34 Our father Abraham said unto the Lord: My Lord, remember my son. Isaac also answered and said unto the Lord My Lord, remember my son Jacob. The Lord said unto him: My power shall be with him, and he shall be glorified in My name. He shall rule over the land of the inheritance, and the enemy shall gain no advantage over him.

34.2 Our father Isaac said unto Jacob: My beloved son, keep this commandment which I give into thy hand to-day. Keep watch over thyself exceedingly. Afflict not the likeness of God; for what thou shalt have done unto the likeness of man, thou hast done unto the likeness of God, and God shall do the same unto thee also in the hour when thou shalt meet Him.

34.3 This is the beginning and the end. Now when he had said this, the Lord took away from his body his soul, which was white like snow.

35 He greeted it, He set it upon a chariot with Him, He took it up to the heavens, while the Seraphim went before Him and all His holy angels. He granted unto him the good things of His kingdom, and all requests which our father requested from the Lord, He granted them unto him for a covenant for ever.

36 This is the coming forth from the body of our lord and father Abraham and our beloved father Isaac; Abraham indeed on the twenty-eighth day of Mesore, and Isaac too on the same twenty-eighth day of this month Mesore, being an hundred and eighty years old, And the day when our father Abraham offered him up as a sacrifice to God was the eighteenth day of Emshir: the heavens and the earth were full of the sweet savour of his sacrifice unto the Lord.

36.2 But our father Isaac, like silver that is tried and made excellent and purified through fire—of this sort are all who shall be purified through our father Isaac the patriarch. For on the day when Abraham the patriarch his father offered him up as a sacrifice to God, the sweet savour of his sacrifice went in unto the veil of the Almighty.

37 Blessed is every man that shall do an act of mercy on the day of the holy patriarchs Abraham and our father Isaac; they shall be made sons unto them in the kingdom of God.

37.2 For our Lord hath founded a covenant with them for ever; He shall keep it with them and those that shall come after them, saying unto them: Every man that shall do an act of mercy in the name of My beloved Isaac, I will give him unto you as a son in the kingdom of the heavens, and he shall come with you unto the first hour of the thousand years.

37.3 So that they shall keep festival in the ages of light in the kingdom of our Lord and our King Jesus Christ; His is the glory and the honour and the power and the worship to the age of all ages. Amen.

38 Remember the disciple that wrote, Makarius, that the Lord may give rest unto his miserable soul. Amen.

Une Sacra · edition 1.1 · unesacra.com · CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

TESTAMENT OF JACOB

✦

1 This again also is the coming forth from the body of our father the Patriarch Jacob, who is called Israel, on the twenty-eighth day of the month Mesore, in the peace of God. Amen.

2 Now it came to pass when the days of our beloved father Jacob the Patriarch, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, drew nigh that he should come forth from the body, and the God-loving Jacob was advanced in days, the Lord sent unto him Michael the archangel; and he said unto him: Israel, my beloved and thou good root, write thy words of instruction for thy sons, and establish for them thy testament, and take care for thine household; for the time is come that thou shalt go unto thy fathers and have joy with them for ever. But the God-loving Jacob, when he heard these words from the angel, answered and spake unto him on this wise: My lord (now it was his custom daily to speak with angels); he spake unto him on this wise: May the will of the Lord be done.

3 And God blessed our father Jacob. He put him in a solitary place whither he could retire, making his prayers unto God day and night: angels came to seek after him, watching over him, saving him, giving him strength in all things. God blessed him; and his people multiplied in the land of Egypt exceedingly.

3.2 For in the time when he came down into Egypt unto Joseph his son, his eyes were dimmed through much weeping and grief for Joseph his son; but when he came down into Egypt, he saw clear, when he beheld the face of Joseph his son.

3.3 And Jacob Israel cast himself down upon his face, upon the neck of Joseph his son; he worshipped him, weeping and saying: Now let me die, because I have seen thy face once more and thou still livest, O my beloved; and Joseph was king over the whole of Egypt.

4 Jacob dwelt in the land of Goshen seventeen years; he became exceeding old, full of days; he kept all the commandments and the fear of the Lord: and his eyes were dimmed so that he saw no man, because of his exceeding old age.

5 He lifted up his eyes unto the light of the angel which spake with him, having the likeness and the face of his father Isaac; he was afraid and troubled. The angel said unto him: Be not afraid, Jacob. I am the angel that have walked with thee since thy childhood. I chose thee, that thou shouldst receive the blessing of Isaac thy father and Rebecca thy mother.

5.2 I am with thee, O Israel, in every thing that thou doest and every thing that thou hast seen. It is I that delivered thee out of the hand of Laban when he pursued after thee; I gave thee all his possessions, I blessed thee, and all thy wives, and thy children, and all thy beasts. It is I again that delivered thee from the hands of Esau.

5.3 It is I again that showed thee the way into the land of Egypt, O Israel; I have made thee to spread out exceedingly.

6 Blessed is thy father Abraham, because he became a friend of God on high through his hospitality. Blessed is thy father Isaac that begat thee, because his sacrifice was made perfect, pleasing unto God. Blessed art thou also, O Jacob, because thou didst see God face to face, and thou didst gaze upon the host of the angels of God on high.

6.2 Thou didst see the ladder set up upon the earth, with its head stretching unto heaven; thou didst see also the Lord standing upon the head thereof in power unspeakable; thou didst cry aloud, saying: This is the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

6.3 Blessed art thou, because thou hast found strength in God, and been mighty among men; now therefore be not troubled, O beloved of God.

7 Blessed art thou, O Israel, and blessed is all thy seed, for ye shall be called Patriarchs until the consummation of this age; for verily ye are my people, and ye are the root of the servants of God. Blessed is every people that shall emulate thy holiness and thy virtues and thy righteousness and thy good doings.

7.2 Blessed is the man that shall keep the remembrance of you on your honourable feast. Blessed is he that shall do a deed of charity in your name, or give a cup of water unto a man, or bring a perfect offering unto your holy place or any holy place in your name, or give hospitality unto a stranger, or go to visit the sick, or comfort an orphan, or clothe one that is naked in your name; he shall lack no good thing in the world [and he shall gain] in the age also that is to come life eternal.

8 And more still for him that shall write your life with its labours, or shall write it with his hands, or read it with attention, together with him that shall hear it with faith and confirmation of their heart, and him that shall emulate your doing; for they shall be forgiven all their sins, and they shall be a gift unto you in the kingdom of the heavens.

8.2 Now then arise, that thou mayest be taken from labour and sorrow unto eternal repose, and thou shalt be brought unto rest unceasing and repose unfailing and light unsetting, and joy and gladness and spiritual plea-

sure [evphrosyne]. Now therefore charge thy words unto thy sons; and peace be with thee, for I must go unto Him that sent me.

9 Now when he had thus spoken unto him, the angel went back away from him in peace up to the heavens, while he looked after him. And they that were in the house heard him confessing the Lord, giving praise unto Him with blessings.

9.2 And all his sons were gathered together unto him, from the smallest to the greatest, all weeping and being heavy at heart, saying: He departeth and leaveth us. And they would say unto him: O our beloved father, what shall we do, for we are sojourners in a strange land?

9.3 Jacob said unto them: Be not afraid; for God appeared unto me in Mesopotamia, saying: I am the God of thy fathers. Be not afraid; I am with thee for ever, and thy seed for ever that shall come after thee. The land whereon thou standest, I will give it to thee and thy seed for ever.

10 And again He said unto me: Be not afraid to go down into Egypt; I will go with thee down into Egypt, so that I may make thee to multiply, and thy seed to flourish for ever, and Joseph to lay his hands upon thine eyes. And thy people shall multiply exceedingly in Egypt; then they shall return unto Me in this place, and I will do good unto them for thy sake. Now therefore shall ye remove from this place.

11 Now after this the days of Jacob Israel drew nigh that he should come forth from the body. He called Joseph; he spake unto him after this fashion: If I have found grace in thy sight, then put thy blessed hand upon my thigh, and swear unto me an oath in the sight of the Lord, to lay my body in the sepulchre of my fathers.

11.2 But Joseph said unto him: I will do according to thy word, O my beloved father. His father said unto him: I will that thou swear. And Joseph swore unto Jacob his father according to these words, to take his body unto the sepulchre of his fathers. And Jacob bowed himself upon the neck of his son.

12 Now after these things, one sought for Joseph, saying: Behold, thy father is troubled. He took his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh; he came unto Israel his father. When Israel saw them, he said unto Joseph: Who are these of thine, O my son? Joseph said unto Jacob Israel his father: These are my sons which God gave me in the land of my lowliness.

12.2 Israel said: Bring them nigh unto me. Now the eyes of Israel were darkened through his exceeding old age, so that he could not see clear. And he brought them nigh unto him; he kissed them. When Israel had embraced them, he said: God shall add to thy seed. And Joseph made his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, bow down before him upon the ground.

12.3 Joseph brought Manasseh under his right hand and Ephraim under his left hand. Israel changed his hands; he laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim and his left hand upon the head of Manasseh.

13 And he blessed them; he gave them their inheritance, saying: God, before whom my fathers were pleasing, Abraham and Isaac, the God which fed me from my childhood unto this day; the angel which redeemed me from all my tribulations, bless these lads that are my sons, that have my name named upon them and the name of my holy fathers Abraham and Isaac.

13.2 They shall increase and multiply; they shall become a great nation upon the earth. Afterward Israel said unto Joseph: I shall die; and ye shall return again unto the land of your fathers, and God shall be with you. Lo and behold, thou hast received a blessing above thy brethren, for I have taken the Amorites with my bow and my sword.

14 Jacob called all his sons; he said unto them: Come ye all together unto me, that I may tell you that what shall befall you, and again that which shall befall each one of you in the last days. All the sons of Israel were gathered together unto him, from the least to the greatest.

14.2 Jacob Israel answered and said unto his sons: Hear, ye sons of Jacob; hearken unto Israel your father, from Reuben my first-born unto Benjamin. He told them what should become of the twelve sons according to their names and their tribes in the blessing of heaven. Then was all the multitude of men silent, that he might repose a little while. He was taken up to the heavens, so that he might walk through the places of repose.

15 And behold a multitude of tormentors came out, each of them different in appearance, ready to torment the sinners, namely, the whoremongers, and the harlots, and the effeminate, and them that defile themselves with men, and the adulterers and them who have destroyed the creature of God, and the sorcerers, and the poisoners; and them that do violence, and the servers of idols, and the idlers, and the slanderers, and the double-tongued.

15.2 In short, for every sin whereof we have spoken, there is a great punishment, the fire that is not quenched, the place where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth and the worm that sleepeth not. And it is a fear-

ful thing when thou art brought before the judge, and it is a fearful thing to come into the hands of the living God. Woe unto all sinful men, for whom these tortures and these tormentors are made ready.

16 And again after these things I was taken up; he showed me the place wherein my fathers were, Abraham and my father Isaac, which was all light, and they were full of life and joy in the kingdom of the heavens, in the beloved city. And he showed me all the places of repose, and all the good things made ready for the just, and the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor have they come unto the heart of man: these things which God hath made ready for them that shall love Him and do His will upon earth, if they shall have made an end well doing His will.

17 After these things Jacob said unto his sons: Lo and behold I am to be taken away and laid with my people. Lay my body with my people in the double sepulchre in the field of Ephron the Hittite, wherein they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; wherein they buried Isaac, in the pathway of the field; with the sepulchre that is therein which was purchased from the children of Heth.

17.2 And when Jacob had made an end of saying these things, he drew up his feet upon the bed, he came forth from the body like unto all men. And the Lord came from heaven, and Michael and Gabriel went with him, and multitudes of legions of angels, singing before His face. They received the soul of Jacob Israel into abodes of light with his holy fathers, Abraham and Isaac. Now these are the years of the life of Jacob Israel the Patriarch.

18 Joseph set him before Pharaoh when he was an hundred and thirty years old, and other seventeen years did he live in Egypt; all these make an hundred and forty and seven years. He fell asleep in a green old age, being perfect in every virtue and spiritual grace together: he gave praise unto God in all his ways, in the peace of God. Amen.

19 Joseph fell upon his father: he kissed him, weeping for him. And Joseph commanded his servants that were embalmers, saying: Embalm my father well, after the manner of the Egyptians. They spent forty days embalming Israel, and when they had finished the forty days of the embalming of Israel, they spent other eighty days mourning for him.

19.2 Now when the days of the mourning of Pharaoh were ended, wherein he wept for Jacob because of his love for Joseph, Joseph spake with the great ones of Pharaoh saying unto them on this wise: If I have found grace in your eyes, speak for me unto Pharaoh the king, saying: My father made me swear, when he was about to come forth from the body, saying, Bury my body in the sepulchre of my fathers, in the land of Canaan; now let him command me that I may bury my father there, and come again.

20 Pharaoh the king spake unto Joseph the wise, saying: Go in peace and bury thy father, according to the oath which he made thee swear. Take with thee the chariots and the cars and all the great ones of my kingdom, and whomever thou shalt require from among my servants. Joseph worshipped God before Pharaoh; he went from him.

20.2 Joseph went up to bury his father; there went with him all the servants of Pharaoh, and the elders of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and all the house of Israel. And there went up with him the

chariots and the horsemen; the host became exceeding great.

20.3 And they stayed at the threshing-floor of Gadad which is upon the bank beyond Jordan: they mourned him there with a great and very sore mourning: and they made a mourning for him for seven days.

21 They that dwelt in the lower land heard the mourning that was made at the threshing-floor of Gadad; they said: This grievous mourning is of the Egyptians. Unto this very day they call that place: The mourning of the Egyptians.

21.2 They carried Israel and buried him in the land of Canaan in the double sepulchre which Abraham bought for the price of silver of Ephron the Hittite before Mamre. And Joseph returned into Egypt, and his brethren with him, and the host of the house of Pharaoh. Joseph lived after the death of his father for many more years, being a king in Egypt. But Jacob Israel died, and was laid with his people.

22 Behold now we have told you these things for your assurance as to the coming forth from the body of our father the Patriarch Jacob Israel, up to the measure which we could reach, seeing that it is written in the spiritual scriptures of God and the ancient compositions of our holy fathers the Apostles, even I, Athanasius your father.

22.2 If ye desire to know the establishment of this testament of the Patriarch Jacob, take unto you the Genesis of the prophet Moses the lawgiver and read therein; your mind shall receive light, ye shall find these things and more written concerning it.

22.3 Ye shall find God and His angels, God being their friend while they were still in the body, and speaking with them many times; in many passages of the scripture. And again that He spake in many passages in the

scripture with the Patriarch Jacob, saying: I will bless thy seed like the stars of the heaven.

23 And again Jacob was speaking with Joseph his son, saying: My God appeared unto me in the land of Canaan, at Luz. He blessed me, saying: I will bless thee, and make thee multiply, and make peoples and nations spring from thee; I will give this land unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

24 Lo therefore, O my beloved, we have heard these things concerning our fathers the Patriarchs; let us emulate therefore their doings, and their virtues, and their love of God, and their love of men, and their hospitality, so that we may be worthy to become sons unto them in the kingdom of the heavens; so that they may pray for us unto God, that He may deliver us from the punishments which are in Hell, even those which the holy Patriarch Jacob rehearsed in his words full of all sweetness, when he was instructing his sons concerning the punishments, calling them the sword of the Lord God. These are the river of fire that is prepared, making great waves for the sinners and for them that have defiled themselves.

25 These are the things which the Patriarch Jacob revealed when he was instructing the rest of his sons, so that they who love learning might listen and do that which is good for all time, and love one another, and love charity and pity; for pity is praised above judgement, and charity covereth a multitude of sins; and again, he that hath pity upon the poor lendeth on usury unto God.

26 Now therefore, my sons, let us not fail in prayer and fasting, and remain ye in expectation, for these are the things that drive away the devils. My sons, keep yourselves from fornication, and wrath, and adultery, and every evil thing; but especially violence and blasphemy and thieving; for there is no violence that shall inherit the kingdom of the heavens; nor shall any whoremonger, nor effeminate, nor he that defiles himself with men, nor blasphemer, nor covetous, nor idolater, nor curser, nor impure person, or in short of any of those that we have declared unto you, that shall inherit the kingdom of God.

26.2 My sons, glorify the saints, for it is they who pray for you that your seed may multiply, and that ye may inherit the earth in an everlasting inheritance. My sons, be hospitable, that ye may obtain the portion of our father Abraham, the great Patriarch.

27 My sons, love the poor, that as thou doest unto the poor here, so may God give thee the bread of life for ever in the heavens, unto the end; he that shall give a poor man to eat of the bread that is here, God shall give him to eat from the tree of life.

27.2 Clothe the poor man that is naked here upon earth, that He may put upon thee a robe of glory in the heavens, and that thou mayest become a son of our holy fathers the Patriarchs Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the heavens for ever.

27.3 Have a care unto the word of God here and remember the saints that they may write their counsels and their hymns which give comfort to them that hear them, so that they may write thy name also in the book of

life in the heavens, and number thee with the number of His saints that have pleased Him in their generation and now take their place with the angels in the place of the living.

28 For we are keeping the remembrance of the saints, our fathers the Patriarchs at this season year by year. Our father Abraham the Patriarch on the twenty-eighth day of Mesore. Again, our father Isaac the Patriarch on the twenty-eighth day of Mesore.

28.2 And again, our father Jacob on the twenty-eighth day of this same month Mesore, even as we have found it written in the ancient compositions of our holy fathers that were pleasing unto God.

28.3 Through their supplications and their prayers may it happen unto us all together to obtain their part and their inheritance in the kingdom of our Lord and our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Through Him is . . . the glory of the Father with Him, and the Holy Ghost, the giver of life, now and always and for ever. Amen.

29 Remember me, that God may forgive me all my sins, and give me understanding, and give me rest without sin. Amen.

Une Sacra · edition 1.1 · unesacra.com · CC BY-NC-SA 4.0