

THE INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

An examination of various infancy narratives written between the first and the twelfth century of the Christian Era, with a critical examination and location of their manuscript evidence, together with a presentation of their surviving texts, according to their probable date of creation.

by

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In what follows, certain editorial decisions should be kept in mind.

(1) An attempt has been made to provide the reader with the latest translations available of each of the gospels, or quotations from the Fathers, concerning the birth and childhood of Jesus of Nazareth.

(2) All footnotes are introduced by the symbol: \fn. Where the compiler has inserted an important note of his own creation, that fact is indicated by the symbol: H.

(3) Such poetry as is found is divided into stanzas by the use of a /.

(4) Editorial additions to the text (in the interests of better a better English version) are indicated by simple brackets: (); expansions by ancient writers of the original text (which may be seen when manuscript copies of the different versions are compared with each other) are indicated by square brackets: [] and major variant texts are occasionally indicated in parallel columns.

(5) Such words as appear in Biblicalese (archaisms like *thou didst bless, whence thou art, thou wast*, and numerous others) have been replaced by their modern equivalents.

(6) Every attempt has been made to accurately reproduce non-English translations in terms of spelling and diacritical markings; but where it has been possible to discover *English* versions of these works, they have been printed in preference to any other. On the other hand, where this has not been possible (e.g., in the case of the text of the Armenian Infancy Gospel, or certain Latin infancy gospels), every effort has been exerted to exactly reproduce the translation in hand.

(7) Each document is preceded by a critical introduction to that document in 9-point Times New Roman font. (The documents themselves are in 11-point Times New Roman, and in italics, to distinguish their text from the explanatory material added by H.)

H understands the canonical New Testament to be a small portion of at least 538 gospels, apocalypses, letters, and *acta*, over 90% of which were composed within the first seven Christian centuries in any of 50 languages, the remains of which have, in whole or in part, survived the destruction of the Classical Age. This small group of works—four gospels, a book of acts, 21 letters and an apocalypse—he refers in this book as the Received New Testament. Similarly, he understands the canon of the Jewish Scriptures as the Received Old Testament; and he sometimes uses the word “Received” in a similar manner when referring to certain individual texts of the canon (e.g., the Received Gospel of Matthew), to distinguish them further from other works distinguished at various times by the name of, for example, “Matthew.” Therefore, “Received” and “Canon” are synonymous.

H has inserted directly beneath the text in square brackets the references which are sources for introductions, commentaries or quoted texts directly above them, rather than collecting them all at the end of the book, as is more customary. Similarly, he inserts footnotes directly into the narrative, instead of listing them directly at the bottom of the page on which the texts appear, a practice made necessary by the nature of electronic reproduction.

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There are two accounts of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth in the Received New Testament, and it is appropriate that any discussion of his infancy and childhood should begin with a narration of these, for they are in themselves the earliest of such accounts; and they are also in some manner developed in much of the so-called Infancy Literature (and clearly in such a manner as to be inseparable from it in the minds of their various authors). The first of them in point of time is perhaps that which includes the tradition of the Magi, and which is to be found at Matthew 1: 18-2:12.

-----I: Infancy Material in Matthew-----

Introduction to Matthew

The Received Gospel of Matthew is an account of Jesus' deeds and words, drawn from Christian sources both oral and written, and arranged in a generally biographical order; and all of it is set in a manual of Christian teaching in which Jesus Christ is described particularly as the fulfiller and fulfillment of God's will as disclosed in the Received Old Testament. The subject matter of the book features an infancy narrative (Matthew I:18-25) quite independent of the one in Luke; and from III:1 onwards, Matthew appears to derive the bulk of its narrative material from Mark (almost all of which gospel is incorporated into Matthew's text). There is also (mainly conversational) material which is paralleled in Luke (= the Q material); and there are considerable sections peculiar to Matthew itself.

Among the characteristics of the gospel, one may mention: (1) its tendency to group together similar material which is scattered in Luke (e.g., the contents of the Sermon on the Mount); (2) the fullness with which this gospel records Jesus' teachings; (3) its special interest in the relation of the gospel to Jewish Law, with its stress on Christianity as the *New Law*; (4) the special commission given to Peter (XVI:17-20); and (5) the record of the post-Resurrection appearances in Galilee (Matthew XXVIII).

The work has at least ten ancient witnesses. It was probably known to (1) the author of the Didache (perhaps c.100AD), and (2) Ignatius of Antioch (d.c.110). (3) Papias of Hierapolis (d.c.130) records that Matthew wrote *the Sayings, in the Hebrew tongue*; and if the reference is to the Received Gospel of Matthew, this is yet more early evidence for its ascription to the Apostle. (4) From the time of Irenaeus of Lyons (d.c.220), Matthew was regularly ascribed to the Apostle by name. Commentaries exist on Matthew by (5) Origen of Alexandria (d.c.254); (6) Hilary of Poitiers (d.367); (7) Chrysostom of Constantinople (d.407); (8) Jerome of Strido (d.420); (9) Augustine of Hippo-Regius (d.430); and (10) Peter of Laodicea (who lived during the 7th-8th centuries).

But despite this strong witness for an early date, the fact that it stands first in the Received canon, and that it was the preferred gospel of Orthodox Christianity since the 2nd century, there is reason to suppose that the work may not be dated *very early* in the 1st century AD; and that it may not be by the Apostle Matthew at all.

1. With its strong emphasis upon the Law and its constant dispute with the leaders of Judaism, Matthew certainly would seem to have been written for a Jewish-Christian church in a strongly Jewish environment. But, though the uniquely Matthean Tradition presupposes the scholarly work of teachers acquainted with the Hebrew language, the gospel itself belongs to Greek-speaking Christianity. (a) Its main sources are Greek writings (Mark and Q, the still hypothetical sayings-source widely accepted by critics as having been used by the authors of Matthew, Mark and Luke); (b) its author often substitutes more fluent Greek idioms for the clumsy sentences of his sources; and (c) the Greek of the gospel (so Moulton) is *correct, if rather colorless*.

2. The fall of Jerusalem (70AD) is clearly presupposed in Matthew XXII:6-7—(while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.)—and perhaps also at Matthew XXIII:37-39—(O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate.\fn{Other ancient authorities omit: and desolate.} For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in

the name of the Lord.’”)

3. The name of *Levi* the tax collector at Mark II:14—(As he was walking along, he saw *Levi* son of *Alphaeus* sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him.)—is changed to *Matthew* in Matthew IX:9—(As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called *Matthew* sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him.)—indicating the name in Mark is the older of the two authorities.

4. Modern scholars commonly hold that the author of Matthew draws extensively on Mark, which he expanded with the aid of *Q*. If so, the early tradition that Matthew was written in Hebrew (by which Aramaic is probably meant) is untenable.

5. There is critical opposition to naming *Matthew* as the author of the gospel on the grounds that the Apostle *Matthew* would have no need for such extensive recourse to works by even his fellow Apostles in order to write *his* book, being an eyewitness to the events in question.

6. The author of Matthew is sometimes regarded as the most “ecclesiastical” of the evangelists. (a) The only two occurrences of the Greek word for *church* in the Received gospels occur at Matthew XVI:18 and XVIII:17—(And I tell you, you are *Peter*, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ... If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a *Gentile* and a tax collector.) (b) This, coupled with the fact that of the four Received gospels, Matthew is the one best adapted to public reading, argues for its authorship at some time later than the comparatively unsettled nature of the most primitive beginnings of Christianity.

7. Evidence of developed Christological, doctrinal and liturgical formulations have also been alleged for this gospel, indicating a later 1st century date of authorship.

This evidence would seem to belie the statement of Papias that the gospel was written first in Hebrew by the *Matthew* the Apostle. Indeed, all the evidence would appear to indicate that its otherwise unknown author was a third-generation Christian teacher active during the last third of the 1st century. Matthew is perhaps to be dated c.80AD, but all the evidence is so indirect that it is consistent with any date between c. 65 and 100 (though the ENC, it is true, prefers a date more narrowly drawn to anything between 75-100). In time—perhaps almost at once—a title containing *Matthew*’s name, and signifying Apostolic authority, came to identify the work.

Matthew could have been written somewhere outside Palestine in a strong Greek-speaking Jewish community. Since it was probably used first by Ignatius of Antioch (d.107AD), the coastal district of Syria is perhaps the best suggestion of a possible place of origin, although the city of Antioch itself is unlikely because Antioch also was influenced by Pauline teachings, which are lacking in Matthew.

[ODC, 874-875; OAB, 1171, 1179; ENC, XIV, 1117-1118]

... Now the birth of *Jesus the Messiah*\fn{Or: *Jesus Christ*. *Jesus* is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Joshua*.} took place in this way. When his mother *Mary* had been engaged to *Joseph*, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband *Joseph*, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “*Joseph*, son of *David*, do not be afraid to take *Mary* as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him *Jesus*,\fn{The Hebrew and Aramaic forms of *Jesus* and he will save are similar. The point could be suggested by translating: “You shall call his name ‘Savior’ because he will save.”} for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, / and they shall name him *Emmanuel*,” which means, “God is with us.” When *Joseph* awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son;\fn{Other ancient authorities read: her firstborn son.} and he named him *Jesus*.

In the time of King *Herod*, after *Jesus* was born in *Bethlehem* of *Judea*, *Magi*\fn{Or: astrologers.} from the East came to *Jerusalem*, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising,\fn{Or: in the East.} and have come to pay him homage. When King *Herod* heard this, he was frightened, and all *Jerusalem* with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the *Messiah*\fn{Or: the Christ.} was to be born. They told him, “In *Bethlehem* of *Judea*; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, *Bethlehem*, in the land of *Judah*, / are by no means least among the rulers of *Judah*; / for from you shall come a ruler / who is to shepherd\fn{Or: rule.} my people *Israel*.’” Then *Herod* secretly called for the *magi* and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to *Bethlehem*, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,\fn{Or: in the East.} until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with *Mary* his

mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. ...

[NOAB, NT, 2-3]

Of the years when Jesus of Nazareth was a baby in his mother’s arms, and of the time when he was just learning to toddle about and then to play with other children, there are in the Received New Testament but five accounts; these are the two in Matthew

These accounts concern a flight into Egypt in order to escape the plots of Herod the Great, and the return to Nazareth (Matthew 2:13-15 and 19-23, told only here:

... Now after they\fn{The Magi.} had left,\fn{The manger where, for the Received account, Jesus was born.} an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” Then he got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”\fn{A reference to Hosea 11:1, where the reference, however, is to Israel.} ...

... (When Herod died,\fn{Early in 4BC.} an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then he got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus\fn{One of the sons of Herod the Great, reigned from 4BC-6AD; he was replaced by Coponius, the first of the Roman procurators.} was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth,\fn{A town situated in a secluded valley in lower Galilee, a little north of the Plain of Esdraelon.} so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”); ...

[NOAB, NT, 3-4]

The other account of Jesus birth, which includes the tradition of the shepherds, is much longer, and is to be found at Luke 1:26-2:20; which follows the introduction to that book, just below:

-----II: Infancy Material in

Luke-----

Introduction to Luke

The Received Gospel of Luke has to support its authenticity the facts that from the end of the 2nd century it has been attributed to the Apostle Luke [so Irenaeus of Lyons (d.c.200) and Tertullian of Carthage (d.c.220)]; and also on the grounds that there would be no reason why such an important work should have been falsely assigned to such an otherwise relatively unimportant personage. The date of its composition, however, is doubtful; and its attribution to the Apostle Luke is likewise questionable. The reasoning is as follows:

1. Some scholars, among them Harnack, put it before the death of Paul (64AD), because the Received Acts (also composed by the author of the Received Gospel of Luke) supposedly contains evidence of a date just prior to the martyrdom of its author.
2. A serious objection to this view, however, is the prediction in Luke of the fall of Jerusalem (70AD) in terms much more precise than in any of the other Received gospels; and this has determined many scholars to assign a date of composition between 70-100AD. If the supposed dependence of passages in it on Josephus of Palestine (fl.c.100) could be established, this would seem to require a date at the end of the 1st century AD—as the ODC put it, *during the last third of the 1st century, although the precise date of its composition is unknown.*
3. It also seems clear that Luke was written by a man who knew about Jesus only through traditions of the primitive church and written sources. (a) The original language of the gospel is Greek—and idiomatic Greek at that (indicating the type of language spoken by a person to whom it is a native tongue: H). (b) The author may share with other Received New Testament writings the flavor of 1st century Greek; but his language is more literary than that of his sources. (i) He repeatedly improves the wording of Mark; (ii) he avoids foreign words, whether Latin or Aramaic, used by his sources; (iii) he connects single narratives much more smoothly than either Mark or Matthew; and (iv) realizing that a monotonous sequence of single stories would result in a rather unconvincing picture of Jesus’ life, he makes single

incidents appear as illustrations of the whole of a continuous history—this purpose is served by the frequent introductory phrase, *and it came to pass*—often connected with a date. (c) In the words of NOAB: *Of all four Evangelists, he is preeminently a person of broad culture, capable of adapting his Greek diction to different occasions, writing sometimes formal, classical prose, sometimes a racy narrative style in the vernacular of his own day, and sometimes a Semitic ‘Bible Greek’ in which the Septuagint was written.*

4. Moreover, (a) the tendency shown by the author to omit whatever might offend pagan readers, (b) his comparatively little stress on the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, or quotations from that book (for the Received Old Testament would have been a strange and almost unknown book to most non-Jews), (c) his careful translation of all Hebrew terms—he is the only New Testament author who employs the classical Greek equivalent for the Jewish word meaning *rabbi* (a word which means *master*)—and also (d) the fact that in Luke the Christ is pre-eminently the Savior of all men, the Greek terms for this not occurring in the other Synoptic gospels—all this has led to the conclusion that the author of Luke must also have been a Gentile.

5. Support for the authorship of Luke by the companion of Paul mentioned at Colossians IV:14, II Timothy IV:11, and Philemon :24—(*Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. ... Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you; for he is very useful in serving me. ... and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.*)—is hampered by four other considerations: (a) that II Timothy may not actually be by Paul; (b) that though the terminology used in Luke/Acts is fully consistent with medical authorship, the argument from the use of medical language to prove that the writer of Luke/Acts was a physician is insufficient (so Cadbury, apparently in The Making of Luke-Acts, 1927); (c) the testimony that Luke was the author of the gospel named for him makes its first appearance only from the end of the 2nd century; and (d) that in any case, the kernel of the New Testament canon—the four Received gospels, and the genuine and alleged letters of Paul—had come to be accepted as such only by c.130AD, or some 100 years after the death and resurrection of the founder of the Christian religion (which is quite enough time for the admission into the cultural thought processes of error or wishful thinking, the *actual* participants in the events of the Foundation being, after all, long in their graves. H)

6. Even if it be supposed that the author of Matthew was a Jewish Hellenist (and probably therefore a native Greek-speaker: H), the fact that he lived in a time for which not only the life of Jesus but also the Apostolic Age belonged to past history seems evident from the existence of contradictions between the narratives in Acts (which are by the same author as that of Luke) about Paul, and Paul’s own letters—which, it may be argued, should not have arisen if the author had actually been Paul’s assistant. This further helps point to the last two decades of the 1st century as probably the best date for the creation of Luke.

7. But even this may be too early; for, as far as is known, *neither Luke nor Acts are used before their appearance in the Second Letter of Clement to the Corinthians (c.150AD), or the writings of Justin of Flavia Neapolis (d.c.165) and Marcion of Sinope (d.c.160); and this has led some scholars to prefer the beginning of the 2nd century as the time when the Received Gospel of Luke was written.*

According to most modern critics, this book is made up of four main sources: (a) Mark and Q (for a definition of Q, see the commentary before the Received Gospel of Matthew); (b) the stories attached to the birth of Jesus, which many believe to be from a Jewish-Christian source, but which conservative scholars commonly see as having been principally authored by Jesus’ mother; (c) the Passion narrative; and (d) material unique to Luke, which scholars refer to as L, and which both Streeter (The Four Gospels, 1924, 199-270) and Taylor (Behind The Third Gospel: A Study of the Proto-Luke Hypothesis, 1926)—my sources lists, incompletely, a third commentary: A.R.C. *Leaney, London, 1958*—believe to have at one time formed itself as a Proto-Lucan gospel. These unique passages are as follows: I:5-66; VII:11-17; VII:37-50; XI:27; XV:11-32; XVI:19-31; XXIII:27-31; and XXIII:43.

About where Luke was written, nothing can be said with certainty. If its geographical picture of Palestine is really incorrect (as some think), it is more likely that the author of Luke wrote in Asia Minor or Greece rather than in Syria. Nor is anything known about the Theophilus, to whom both gospel and *acta* are addressed; though NOAB thinks that he was *probably a Roman of high rank*.

[ODC, 13-14, 829; OAB, 1239; ENC, XIV, 410-411; NOAB, NT, 76, 77-80]

... *In the sixth month* {After the conception of John the Baptist. The story of John’s birth is intertwined with that of Jesus, and also figures intimately in the Infancy Material.} *the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.”* {Other ancient authorities add: *Blessed are you among women.*} *But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting his might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born* {Other ancient authorities add: *of you.*} *will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.”* [Luke also tells the story of this conception at 1:5-24: ... *In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly*

according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will be mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, "This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people." ^{\fn{For among Jews, barrenness was regarded as a sign of Divine disfavor.}}} Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her. In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be ^{\fn{Or: believed, for there will be.}}} a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary ^{\fn{Other ancient authorities read: Elizabeth.}}} "My soul magnifies ^{\fn{I. e., declares the greatness of.}}} the Lord, / an my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, / for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. / Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; / for the Mighty One has done great things for me, / and holy is his name. / His mercy is for those who fear him / from generation to generation. / He has shown strength with his arm; / he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. / He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, / and lifted up the lowly; / he has filled the hungry with good things, / and sent the rich away empty. / He has helped his servant Israel, / in remembrance of his mercy, / according to the promise he made to our ancestors, / to Abraham and to his descendants forever." And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home. Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear ^{\fn{This word indicates a recognition of the limits of human understanding and power before God.}}} came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with them. Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, / for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. / He has raised up a horn of salvation for us / in the house of his servant David, / as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, / that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. / Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, / and has remembered his holy covenant, / the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, / to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, / might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness / before him all our days. / And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; / for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, / to give knowledge of salvation to his people / by the forgiveness of their sins. / By the tender mercy of our God, / the dawn from on high will break upon ^{\fn{Other ancient authorities read: has broken upon.}}} us, / to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, / to guide our feet into the way of peace." The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel. In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus ^{\fn{Augustus reigned from 27BC-14AD.}}} that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius ^{\fn{He was at this time a special legate or commissioner of Augustus to carry on a war against a rebellious tribe, the Homonadenses, and as such was military governor of Syria; the civil administration was in the hands of one Varus.}}} was governor of

Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house of family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth\fn{Such cloth bands were customarily wrapped around a newly born infant.} and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,\fn{Or: the Christ.} the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army,\fn{So the Greek.} praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, / and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”\fn{Other ancient authorities read: peace, goodwill among people. The lack of one letter in the later Greek manuscripts accounts for this rendering. Those whom he favors means “those whom God has chosen in accord with his good pleasure.”} When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.” ...

Of the years when Jesus of Nazareth was a baby in his mother’s arms, and of the time when he was just learning to toddle about and then to play with other children, there are in the Received New Testament but five accounts; these two and the one above appear in Luke:

[NOAB, NT, 77-80]

This is the story of the circumcision of the child Jesus, and His presentation in the temple (witnessed by Simeon and Anna\fn{In Greek: Symeon, Hanna.} and their return to Nazareth (Luke 2:21 and 22-39, told only here):

... After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.) ...

... (When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Symeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation\fn{The salvation which the Messiah was to bring.} of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Symeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, he took him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now you are dismissing your slave in peace,\fn{I.e., in a state of peace with God.} / according to your word; / for my eyes have seen your salvation, / which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, / a light for revelation to the Gentiles / and for glory to your people Israel.” And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Symeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” There was also a prophet, Hanna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.); and ...

[NOAB, NT, 80-81]

This is the anecdote of Jesus as a boy discussing the Law with learned teachers in the temple (Luke 2:41-51, told only here:

... Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, ^{\fn{The experts in the Jewish religion.}} listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"^{\fn{Or: be about my Father's interests?}} But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.)

[NOAB, NT, 81]

This meager 1st century account has been heavily supplemented; for it may be easily imagined that details of this nature would be near to the experience of every person in the world who could remember the days of his youth or the times of his parenting. Perhaps even more important: material concerning itself with the birth and family of Mary was also written and elaborated. There was also a literary genre concerned with Joseph, Jesus' father (although this seems to have been much less extensive than the efforts expended on behalf of Mary). That such literature would in fact be of interest to anyone of any age seems equally obvious: who would not be curious about the growth and maturity of one who was alleged to have been during his lifetime not only Perfect God but Perfect Man as well? Rare must be the individual whose intellectual and physical development could not stand an intimate comparison in these matters with the one Being who is alleged, after all, to hold the power to annihilate the soul in the very palm of His Divine hand.

The very first of these books, the Infancy Gospel of James, really does no more than develop what is already known in the Received account concerning the birth stories of John the Baptist and Jesus. I have printed it, however, because it is the very first in historical time of these additional commentaries, and also to demonstrate the nature of these expansions *vis-à-vie* the first accounts of the Received text. The remainder of such infancy literature as I can locate is printed in order of time of first creation: i.e., the first language of existence is printed in regular type, and it is supplemented in boldface type by such major variants as exist in other languages into which the original was translated down through the centuries. A brief critical commentary is also offered at the head of each document.

Variant texts to the standard text, found in other manuscripts of the Infancy Gospel of James, are printed in square brackets: []: sometimes inserted into the body of the standard text, sometimes in paragraphs of their own, occasionally parallel to the standard text, but still enclosed in square brackets. Editorial clarifications to the texts as a whole are made in curved brackets: ():

-----III: The Infancy Gospel of James-----

Introduction to the Infancy Gospel of James

This work is usually credited to James, Jesus' brother (who in the earliest Christian literature is not to be identified with James of Alphaeus, one of the Twelve). As in the Infancy Gospel of Matthew, the titles of the known surviving manuscripts of the Infancy Gospel of James vary greatly: indeed, at least 18 different forms of the *title* exist. The oldest manuscript (Papyrus Bodmer V) has: Birth of Mary. Revelation of James; the later Greek manuscripts usually have: Story, History or Account, and then, either with or without mention of James, give the contents, usually described as Birth of Saint Mary, Mother of God. The Syriac translation bears the title: Birth of our Lord and our Lady Mary. Perhaps not surprisingly, the title is also reported differently by at least one of the ancient Fathers. In the 16th century

(1552:ANF), the book was given its perhaps most recognizable modern title (Protevangelium of James) by Guillaume Postel, a French Jesuit who died in 1581 and whose Latin translation of it was first published by Bibliander (Protoevangelion Jacobi, Fratris Domini, de Natalibus Jesu Christi, et Virginis Mariae: cum Evangelio Vitaque S. Marci Evangelistae, Basel, 1552). This publication represents its introduction to modern Europe: English editions exist by Jones (1722) and Cowper (1867).

Where James is mentioned, it is said that he wrote the work after the death of *Herod* (probably Herod Agrippa I, a grandson of Herod the Great, called Herod in the Received Acts, who according to *that* book puts James to death).

A large number of manuscripts are known to exist. For his edition, Tischendorf (Evangelia Apocrypha, 2nd ed., 1876, 1-50) used 17 of them, the earliest of which belongs to the 9th century. Several linguistic versions are known.

1. GREEK. There are at the moment over 30 known Greek manuscripts alone (perhaps the oldest of which was recently discovered and edited by Testuz (Nativite de Marie, 1958); but from *ancient* times it appears that only a single manuscript of the work has survived. Following the judgment of papyrologists on the paleographical evidence, it has been assigned it to the 3rd century; but this has been objected to as too early, based upon what others see as a very advanced stage of secondary textual expansion, coupled with a number of known secondary or variant textual readings; and it may be that it is closer in age to a known 5th or 6th century fragment published by Grenfell in 1896. The very oldest known Greek text of the work appears to have been dealt with by Ehrhard (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur L.1, 1937, 56f; 69), in the form of some fragments dated prior to the 3rd century. Apart from isolated passages its original language was Greek, and not Hebrew.

2. SYRIAC. A complete and obviously very old Syriac form of the work (5th-6th centuries) has been published by Lewis from two manuscripts (“Apocrypha Syriaca: The *Protevangelium Jacobi* and *Transitus Mariae*” in Studia Sinaitica XI, 1902).

3. ARMENIAN. An Armenian version, agreeing closely with the Greek text, has been found in a codex in the Mechitarist library in Venice, and was first published by Daietsi [1896; an English translation appears in Conybeare (in American Journal of Theology I, 1897, 424-442); see also Peeters, (“Evangelia Apocrypha” in Textes et Documents pour l’Etude Historique du Christianisme II, 1914)].

4. GEORGIAN. A Georgian version (from the Codex Sinaiticus Georgianus VI, 10th century), exhibiting interesting variants, was published by Garitte (in Le Museon LXX, 1957, 233ff).

5. ETHIOPIC. An Ethiopic text has been published by Chaîne (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Series I, Volume VII of the Scr. Aethiop., 1909, 3-19).

6. COPTIC. A Coptic (Sahidic dialect) fragment of the Infancy Gospel of James has been printed by Leipoldt (in Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Alteren Kirche VI, 1905, 106f).

7. OLD SLAVONIC. For Old Slavonic manuscripts see Bonwetsch in Harnack (Litg. I, 909f).

8. OLD LATIN. Latin manuscript evidence has not survived because of the condemnation of this book in the West, although doubtless an Old Latin edition was current.

Patristic evidence for the Infancy Gospel of James is as follows.

1. Justin of Flavia Neapolis (d.c.165) in two passages of the Dialogue With Trypho mentions the cave in the Infancy Gospel of James in which Jesus is there said to have been born, and also the supposed Davidic descent of Mary, the mother of Jesus; and though the name of the reference in which that information was found is not mentioned by Justin, it is critically considered probable that he knew of the existence of the Infancy Gospel of James.

2. Clement of Alexandria (d.c.215) is said by the ODC to *still more probably* have known about the existence of this book than Justin of Flavia Neapolis, but does not say where Clement writes down his testimony.

3. Origen of Alexandria (d.c.254) mentions, towards the end of the 2nd century a Book of James (though *where* my sources do not say). It is by no means clear in one of the three references allegedly identifying its existence that Origen refers to our text; but in the two other references he mentions the book by name and says that it, together with the Gospel of Peter, both speak of the brothers and sisters of Jesus (mentioned openly and frankly in the New Testament by the use of a characteristic Greek expression which can have no other meaning than this) as in fact the sons of Joseph by a former wife. This is the first specific mention of the book by title.

4. From the end of the 4th century on, there are numerous allusions in ecclesiastical writings to statements made in the Infancy Gospel of James.

It has been argued, however, the Infancy Gospel of James may not have been written before 150AD.

1. It presupposed the Received infancy stories, particularly in Luke 1ff, and is certainly not to be regarded as their source.

2. It is not derived with the Received infancy stories from a common written source.

3. Apart perhaps from isolated passages, it was not originally written in Hebrew.

Nevertheless, the book belongs to the early ages of the Christian Era.

1. Though it presupposes the Received infancy stories, it makes very free use of them—e.g., it is here that the names of Mary’s parents, Joachim and Anna, occur for the first time—and it is probable that the author of the Infancy Gospel of James is, to some extent, following an oral tradition (i.e., one independent of, or not used by but perhaps contemporary with, the Orthodox versions: H). This indicates that the growth of the Received canon of the New Testament had not yet been completed.

2. Since Origen certainly, and Clement of Alexandria probably, knew the document, and Justin of Flavia Neapolis exhibits very close contacts with its ideas (birth of Christ in a cave; Davidic descent of Mary), its roots must go back to about 150AD (although several chapters must be later additions).

Many scholars have thought the author to have been a Jewish-Christian; but this is disputed on two grounds: (1) ignorance of Palestinian geography and (2) ignorance of Jewish customs (e.g., Jews were not expelled from the community for childlessness, and young girls were not brought up in the temple); which advocates of this reasoning say point to a non-Jewish author.

The literary style of the work is impressive, extremely graphic, and is evidence of a sober, sincere and poetic mind at work. The author uses sources from oral and literary Christian tradition, besides much material from the Received Old Testament, especially the story of Samuel; and the strength of his effort demonstrates that he also knew how to form from a number of traditions an artistic whole.

According to NTA, in which apparently the most recent English translation (1963) is to be found, the author of the Infancy Gospel of James made use of the of the Received gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John; the Received book of Acts; and II Corinthians, I Timothy, James and I Peter. He also made use of other works; and of the 127 verbal or conceptual thought parallels cited by NTA, 71 of them (+55%) are said to be of apocryphal origin.

[ODC, 711, 1240; OAB, 831, 1115; ANT, 38, 447-48; NTA, I, 370-374]

In the Histories of the Twelve Tribes of Israel Joachim was a very rich (man), and he brought all his gifts for the Lord twofold; for he said in himself; “What I bring in excess, shall be for the whole people, and what I bring for forgiveness [of my sins] shall be for the Lord, for a propitiation for me.”

Now the great day of the Lord drew near, and the children of Israel were bringing their gifts. Then they stood before him, and Reubel [Reuben] also, saying: “It is not fitting for you to offer your gifts first, because you have begotten no offspring in Israel.” Then Joachim became very sad, and went to the record of the twelve tribes of the people [and said]: “I have searched whether I am the only one who has not begotten offspring in Israel, and I have found of all the righteous that they had raised up offspring in Israel. And I remembered the patriarch Abraham that in his last days God gave him a son, Isaac.” And Joachim was very sad, and did not show himself to his wife, but betook himself into the wilderness; there he pitched his tent and fasted forty days and forty nights; and he said to himself; “I shall not go down either for food or drink until the Lord my God visits me; prayer shall be my food and drink.”

Meanwhile Anna his wife uttered a twofold lamentation and gave voice to a twofold bewailing: “I will bewail my widowhood, / and bewail my childlessness.”

Now the great day of the Lord drew near, and Euthine [Judith] her maidservant said to her: “How long do you humble your soul, since the great day of the Lord is near, and you ought not to mourn. But take this headband, which the mistress of the work gave me; it is not fitting for me to wear it, because I am [your] slave and it bears a royal mark.”

But Anna said: “Away from me! I did not do this. It is the Lord who has greatly humbled me. Who knows whether a deceiver did not give it to you, and you have come to make me share in your sin!” Euthine answered: “Why should I curse you because you have not listened to me? The Lord God has shut up your womb, to give you no fruit in Israel.”

And Anna was very sad; but she put off her mourning garments, cleansed her head, put on her bridal garments, and about the ninth hour went into her garden to walk there. And she saw a laurel tree and sat down beneath it and implored the Lord, saying: “O God of our fathers, bless me and hear my prayer, as you blessed the

womb of Sarah [our mother Sarah] and gave her a son, Isaac.”

And Anna sighed towards heaven, and saw a nest of sparrows in the a laurel tree and immediately she made lamentation within herself: “Woe to me, who begot me, / What womb brought me forth? / For I was born as a curse before them all and before the children of Israel, / And I was reproached, and they mocked me and thrust me out of the temple of the Lord. / Woe is me, to what am I likened? / I am not likened to the birds of the heaven; / for even the birds of the heaven are fruitful before you, O Lord. / Woe is me, to what am I likened? / I am not likened to the unreasoning [dumb] animals; / for even the unreasoning [dumb] animals are fruitful before you, O Lord. / Woe is me, to what am I likened? / I am not likened to the beasts of the earth; / for even the beasts of the earth are fruitful before you, O Lord. / Woe is me, to what am I likened? / I am not likened to these waters; / for even these waters gush forth merrily, and their fish praise you, O Lord. / Woe is me, to what am I likened? / I am not likened to this earth; / for even this earth brings forth its fruit in its season and praises you, O Lord.”

And behold an angel of the Lord came to her and said: “Anna, Anna, the Lord has heard your prayer. You shall conceive and bear, and your offspring shall be spoken of in the whole world.” And Anna said: “As the Lord my God lives, if I bear a child, whether male or female, I will bring it as a gift to the Lord my God, and it shall serve him all the days of its life.”

And behold there came two messengers, who said to her: “Behold, Joachim your husband is coming with his flocks; for an angel of the Lord came down to him and said to him: ‘Joachim, Joachim, the Lord God has heard your prayer. Go down; behold, your wife Anna has conceived [shall conceive].’” And Joachim went down and called his herdsmen and said: “Bring me ten lambs without blemish and without spot; they shall belong to the Lord my God. And bring me twelve [tender] calves for the priests and elders, and a hundred kids for the whole people.” And behold Joachim came with his flocks, and Anna stood at the gate and saw Joachim coming and ran immediately and hung on his neck, saying: “Now I know that the Lord God has greatly blessed me; for behold the widow is no longer a widow, and I, who was childless, have conceived [shall conceive].”

And Joachim rested the first day in his house.

But the next day he offered his gifts, saying in himself: “If the Lord God is gracious to me the frontlet of the priest will make it clear to me.”

And Joachim offered his gifts, and observed the priest’s frontlet when he went up to the altar of the Lord; and he saw no sin in himself. And Joachim said: “Now I know that the Lord God is gracious to me and has forgiven all my sins.” And he went down from the temple of the Lord justified, and went to his house.

And her six months [her months] were fulfilled, as (the angel) had said: in the seventh [ninth] month Anna brought forth. And she said to the midwife: “What have I brought forth?” And she said: “A female.” And Anna said: “My soul is magnified this day.” And she lay down. And when the days were fulfilled, Anna purified herself from her childbed and gave suck to the child, and called her Mary. ^{fn}{The mother of Jesus of Nazareth. It is in this book that the names of Jesus’ parents are first known.}

Day by day the child waxed strong; when she was six months old her mother stood her on the ground to try if she could stand. And she walked [twice] seven steps and came to her bosom. And she took her up, saying: “As the Lord my God lives, you shall walk no more upon this ground until I take you into the temple of the Lord.” And she made a sanctuary in her bedchamber, and did not permit anything common or unclean to pass through it. And she summoned the undefiled daughters of the Hebrews, and they cared for her amusement.

On the child’s first birthday Joachim made a great feast, and invited the chief priests and the priests and the scribes and the elders and the whole people of Israel. And Joachim brought the child to the priests, and they blessed her, saying: “O God of our fathers, bless this child and give her a name renowned for ever among all generations.” And all the people said: “So be it, [so be it,] Amen.” And they brought her to the chief priests, and they blessed her, saying: “O God of the heavenly heights, look upon this child and bless her with a supreme and unsurpassable blessing.” And her mother carried her into the sanctuary of her bedchamber and gave her suck.

And Anna sang this song to the Lord God: "I will sing praises to the Lord my God, / for he has visited me and taken away from me the reproach of my enemies. / And the Lord gave me the fruit of righteousness, unique and manifold before him. / Who will proclaim to the sons of Reubel [Reuben] that Anna gives suck? [Hearken, hearken, you twelve tribes of Israel: Anna gives suck]." And she laid the child down to rest in the bedchamber with its sanctuary, and went out and served them. When the feast was ended they went down rejoicing and glorifying the God of Israel.

The months passed, and the child grew. When she was two years old, Joachim said to Anna: "Let us bring her up to the temple of the Lord, that we may fulfil the promise which we made, lest the Lord send (some evil) upon us and our gift become unacceptable." And Anna replied: "Let us wait until the third year, that the child may then no more long after her father and mother." And Joachim said: "Very well." And when the child was three years old, Joachim said: "Let us call the undefiled daughters of the Hebrews, and let each one take a lamp, and let these be burning, in order that the child may not turn back and her heart be enticed away from the temple of the Lord." And he did so until they went up to the temple of the Lord. And the priest took her and kissed her and blessed her, saying: "The Lord has magnified your name among all generations; because of you the Lord at the end of the days will manifest his redemption to the children of Israel." And he placed her on the third step of the altar, and the Lord God put grace upon the child, and she danced for joy with her feet, and the whole house of Israel loved her.

And her parents went down wondering, praising and glorifying the almighty God because the child did not turn back [to them]. And Mary was in the temple nurtured like a dove and received food from the hand of an angel. When she was twelve years old, there took place a council of the priests, saying: "Behold, Mary has become twelve years old in the temple of the Lord. What then shall we do with her, that she may not pollute the temple of the Lord?" And they said to the high priest: "You stand at the altar of the Lord; enter (the sanctuary) and pray concerning her, and what the Lord shall reveal to you we will do." And the high priest took the vestment with the twelve bells and went into the Holy of Holies and prayed concerning her. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before him and said to him: "Zacharias, Zacharias, go out and assemble the widowers of the people, [who shall each bring a rod], and to whomsoever the Lord shall give a miraculous sign, his wife she shall be." And the heralds went forth and spread out through all the country round about Judea; the trumpet of the Lord sounded, and all ran to it.

And Joseph threw down his axe and went out to meet them. And when they were gathered together, they took the rods and went to the high priest. He took the rods of all and entered the temple and prayed. When he had finished the prayer he took the rods, and went out and gave them to them: but there was no sign on them. Joseph received the last rod, and behold, a dove came out of the rod and flew on to Joseph's head. And the priest said to Joseph: "Joseph, to you has fallen the good fortune to receive the virgin of the Lord; take her under your care." Joseph answered him: "I have sons and am old, but she is a girl. I fear lest I should become a laughing-stock to the children of Israel." And the priest said to Joseph: "Fear the Lord thy God, and remember all that God did to Dathan, Abiram and Korah, how the earth was rent open and they were all swallowed up because of their rebellion. And now fear, Joseph, lest this happen in your house." And Joseph was afraid, and took her under his care. And Joseph said to her: "Mary, I have received you from the temple of the Lord, and now I leave you in my house and go away to build my buildings; (afterwards) I will come (again) to you; the Lord will watch over you."

Now there was a council of the priests, who resolved: "Let us make a veil for the temple of the Lord." And the priest said: "Call to me pure virgins of the tribe of David." And the officers departed and searched, and they found seven (such) virgins. And the priest remembered the child Mary, that she was of the tribe of David and was pure before god. And the officers went and fetched her. Then they brought them into the temple of the Lord, and the priest said: "Cast me lots, who shall weave the gold, the amiant,\fn{So the text. Apparently, the mineral amianthus is meant, which is green in color.} the linen, the silk, the hyacinth-blue, the scarlet and the pure purple." And to Mary fell the lot of the 'pure purple' and 'scarlet.' And she took them and worked them in her house. At that time Zacharias became dumb, and Samuel took his place until Zacharias was able to speak. But Mary took the scarlet and spun it.

And she took the pitcher and went forth to draw water, and behold, a voice said: "Hail, thou that art highly

avored, the Lord is with you, blessed art you] among women.” And she looked around on the right and on the left to see whence this voice came. And trembling she went to her house and put down the pitcher and took the purple and sat down on her seat and drew out (the thread). And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before her and said: “Do not fear, Mary; for you have found grace before the Lord of all things and shall conceive of his Word.” When she heard this she doubted in herself and said: “Shall I conceive of the Lord, the living God, [and bear] as every woman bears?” And the angel of the Lord said: “Not so, Mary; for a power of the Lord shall overshadow you; Wherefore also that holy thing which is born of you shall be called the Son of the Highest. And you shall call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.” And Mary said: “Behold, (I am) the handmaid of the Lord before him: be it to me according to your word.”

And she made (ready) the purple and the scarlet and brought (them) to the priest. And the priest took (them), and blessed (Mary) and said: “Mary, the Lord God has magnified your name, and you shall be blessed among all generations of the earth.”

And Mary rejoiced, and went to Elizabeth her kinswoman, and knocked on the door. When Elizabeth heard it, she put down the scarlet, and ran to the door and opened it, [and when she saw Mary], she blessed her and said: “Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, that which is in me leaped and blessed thee.” But Mary forgot the mysteries which the [arch]angel Gabriel had told her, and raised a sigh towards heaven and said: “Who am I, Lord, that all the women [generations] of the earth count me blessed?” And she remained three months with Elizabeth. Day by day her womb grew, and Mary was afraid and went into her house and hid herself from the children of Israel. And Mary was sixteen years old when all these mysterious things happened.

Now when she was in her sixth month, behold, Joseph came from his building and entered his house and found her with child. And he smote his face, threw himself down on sackcloth, and wept bitterly, saying: “With what countenance shall I look towards the Lord my God? What prayer shall I offer for her [for this maiden]? For I received her as a virgin out of the temple of the Lord my God and have not protected her. Who has deceived me? Who has done this evil in my house and defiled her [the virgin]? Has the story\fn{Of Adam.} been repeated in me? For as Adam was (absent) in the hour of his prayer and the serpent came and found Eve alone and deceived her and defiled her, so also has it happened to me.” And Joseph arose from the sackcloth and called Mary and said to her: “You who are cared for by God, why have you done this and forgotten the Lord your God? Why have you humiliated your soul, you who were brought up in the Holy of Holies and received food from the hand of an angel?” But she wept bitterly, saying: “I am pure, and know not a man.” And Joseph said to her: “Whence then is this in your womb?” And she said: “As the Lord my God lives, I do not know whence it has come to me.”

And Joseph feared greatly and parted from her, pondering what he should do with her. And Joseph said: “If I conceal her sin, I shall be found opposing the law of the Lord. If I expose her to the children of Israel, I fear lest that which is in her may have sprung from the angels and I should be found delivering up innocent blood to the judgment of death. What then shall I do with her? I will put her away secretly.” And the night came upon him. And behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying: “Do not fear because of this child. For that which is in her is of the Holy Spirit. She shall bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.” And Joseph arose from sleep and glorified the God of Israel who had bestowed his grace upon him, and he watched over her.

And Annas the scribe came to him and said to him: “Joseph, why did you not appear in our assembly?” And Joseph said to him: “I was weary from the journey, and I rested the first day.” And Annas turned and saw that Mary was with child. And he went hastily to the priest and said to him: “Joseph, for whom you are a witness, has grievously transgressed.” And the high priest said: “In what way?” And he said: “The virgin, whom he received from the temple of the Lord, he has defiled, and has stolen marriage with her, and has not disclosed it to the children of Israel.” And the high priest said to him: “Joseph! Joseph has done this?” And [Annas] said to him: “Send officers, and you will find the virgin with child.” And the officers went and found her as he had said, and brought her to the temple. And she stood before the court. And the priest said: “Mary, why have you done this? Why have you humiliated your soul and forgotten the Lord your God, you who were brought up in the Holy of Holies, and received food from the hand of an angel, and heard hymns of praise, and danced before him? Why

have you done this?" But she wept bitterly, saying: "As the Lord my God lives, I am pure before him and I know not a man." And the high priest said to Joseph: "Why have you done this?" And Joseph said: "As the Lord my God lives I am pure concerning her." And the high priest said: "Do not give false witness, but speak the truth. You have stolen marriage with her consummated your marriage in secret], and have not disclosed it to the children of Israel, and have not bowed your head under the mighty hand in order that your seed might be blessed." And Joseph was silent.

And the high priest said: "Give back the virgin whom you have received from the temple of the Lord." And Joseph wept bitterly. And the high priest said: "I will give you [both] to drink of the water of the conviction of the Lord, and it will make manifest your sins before your eyes." And the high priest took (it) and gave (it) to Joseph to drink and sent him into the wilderness [into the hill-country]; and he came (back) whole. And he made Mary also drink, and sent her into the wilderness [into the hill country]; and she (also) returned whole. And all the people marveled, because (the water) had not revealed any sin in them. And the high priest said: "If the Lord God has not made manifest your sins, neither do I condemn you." And he released them. And Joseph took Mary and departed to his house, rejoicing and glorifying the God of Israel.

Now there went out a decree from the king Augustus that all (inhabitants) of Bethlehem in Judaea should be enrolled. And Joseph said: "I shall enroll my sons, but what shall I do with this child? How shall I enroll her? As my wife? I am ashamed to do that. Or as my daughter? But all the children of Israel know that she is not my daughter. The day of the Lord himself will do as [t]he [Lord] wills." And he saddled his ass [his she-ass] and sat her on it; his son led it, and Samuel [Joseph] And they drew near to the third mile(stone). And Joseph turned round and saw her sad, and said within himself: "Perhaps that which is within her is paining her." And again Joseph turned round and saw her laughing. And he said to her: "Mary, why is it that I see your face at one time laughing and at another sad?" And she said to him: "Joseph, I see with my eyes two peoples, one weeping and lamenting and one rejoicing and exulting." And they came half the way, and Mary said to him: "Joseph, take me down from the ass [from the she-ass], for the child within me presses me, to come forth." And he took her down there and said to her: "Where shall I take you and hide your shame? For the place is desert."

And he found a cave there and brought her into it, and left her in the care of his sons and went out to seek for a Hebrew midwife in the region of Bethlehem. [Now I, Joseph, was walking, and (yet) I did not walk, and I looked up to the air and saw the air in amazement. And I looked up at the vault of heaven, and saw it standing still and the birds of the heaven motionless. And I looked at the earth, and saw a dish placed there and workmen lying round it, with their hands in the dish. But those who chewed did not chew, and those who lifted up anything lifted up nothing, and those who put something to their mouth put nothing, but all had their faces turned upwards. And behold, sheep were being driven and (yet) they did not come forward, but stood still; and the shepherd raised his hand to strike them with his staff, but his hand remained up. And I looked at the flow of the river, and saw the mouths of the kids over it and they did not drink. And then all at once everything went on its course (again).]

And he found one who was just coming down from the hill country, and he took her with him, and said to the midwife: "Mary is betrothed to me; but she conceived of the Holy Spirit after she had been brought up in the temple of the Lord." \fn{A variant text to this paragraph reads as follows:}

*

[And behold, a woman came down from the hill country and said to me: "Man, where are you going?" And I said: "I seek a Hebrew midwife." And she answered me: "Are you from Israel?" And I said to her: "Yes." And she said: "And who is she who brings forth in the cave?" And I said: "My betrothed." And she said to me: "Is she not your wife?" And I said to her: "She is Mary, who was brought up in the temple of the Lord, and I received her by lot as my wife. And (yet) she is not my wife, but she has conceived of the Holy Spirit." And the midwife said to him: "Is this true?" And Joseph said to her: "Come and see."]

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And the midwife went with him. And he went to the place of the cave, and behold, a dark [bright] cloud

overshadowed the cave. And the midwife said: “My soul is magnified today, for my eyes have seen wonderful things; for salvation is born to Israel.” And immediately the cloud disappeared from the cave, and a great light appeared, so that our eyes could not bear it. A short time afterwards that light withdrew until the child appeared, and it went and took the breast of its mother Mary. And the midwife cried: “How great is this day to me, that I have seen this new sight.” And the midwife came out of the cave, and Salome met her. And she said to her: “Salome, Salome, I have a new sight to tell you; a virgin has brought forth, a thing which her nature does not allow.” And Salome said: “As the Lord my God lives, unless I put (forward) my finger and test her condition, I will not believe that a virgin has brought forth.”

And Salome went in and made her ready

[And the midwife went in and said to Mary: “Make yourself ready, for there is no small contention concerning you.” And Salome put (forward) her finger]

to test her condition. And she cried out, saying:

“I have tempted the living God; and behold, my hand falls away from me, consumed by fire?”

And she prayed to the Lord.

[And she bowed her knees before the Lord, saying: “O God of my fathers, remember me; for I am the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; do not make me a public example to the children of Israel, but restore me to the poor. For thou knowest, Lord, that in thy name I perform my duties and from thee I have received my hire.”]

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before Salome and said to her: “The Lord God has heard your prayer. Come near, touch the child, and you will be healed.” And she did so. [And she said: “I will worship him, for (in him) a great king has been born to Israel.”] And Salome was healed as she had requested, and she went out of the cave [justified]. And behold, an angel of the Lord [a voice] cried: “Salome, Salome, tell [not] what marvel you have seen, before the child comes to Jerusalem.”

And behold, Joseph prepared to go forth to Judaea. And there took place a great tumult in Bethlehem of Judaea. For there came wise men saying: “Where is the [new-born] king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east and have come to worship him.” When Herod heard this he was troubled and sent officers [to the wise men,]

And sent for them and they told him about the star. \fn{A long variant text to this appears below, continuing from the previous clause in []:}

*

[and sent for the high priests and questioned them: “How is it written concerning the Messiah? Where is he born?” They said to him: “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written.” And he let them go. And he questioned the wise men and said to them: “What sign did you see concerning the new-born king?” And the wise men said: “We saw how an indescribably greater star shone among these stars and dimmed them, so that they no longer shone; and so we knew that that a king was born for Israel. And we have come to worship him.” And Herod said: Go and seek, and when you have found him, tell me, that I also may come to worship him.” And the wise men went forth. And behold, the star which they had seen in the east, went before them,]

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And behold, they saw stars [a star] in the east, and they [it] went before them, until they came to the cave. And it stood over the head of the child [the cave]. And the wise men saw the young child with Mary his mother, and they took out of their bag gifts, gold, and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned by the angel that they should

not go into Judaea, they went to their own country by another way.

But when Herod perceived that he had been tricked by the wise men he was angry and sent his murderers and commanded them to kill all the children who were two years old and under. When Mary heard that the children were to be killed, she was afraid and took the child and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in an ox-manger.

But Elizabeth, when she heard that John was sought for, took him and went up into the hill-country. And she looked around (to see) where she could hide him, and there was no hiding-place. And Elizabeth groaned aloud and said: "O mountain of God, receive me, a mother, with my child." For Elizabeth could not go up (further) for fear. And immediately the mountain was rent asunder and received her. And that mountain made a light to gleam for her; for an angel of the Lord was with them and protected them.

Now Herod was searching for John, and sent officers to Zacharias at the altar to ask him: "Where have you hidden your son?" And he answered and said to them: "I am a minister of God and attend continually upon his temple. How should I know where my son is?" And the officers departed and told all this to Herod. Then Herod was angry and said: "Is his son to be king over Israel?" And he sent the officers to him again with the command: "Tell the truth. Where is your son? You know that your blood is under my hand." And the officers departed and told him all this. And Zacharias said: "I am a martyr of God. Take my blood! But my spirit the Lord will receive, for you shed innocent blood in the forecourt of the temple of the Lord." And about the dawning of the day Zacharias was slain. And the children of Israel did not know that he had been slain.

Rather, at the hour of the salutation the priests were departing, but the blessing of Zacharias did not meet them according to custom. And the priests stood waiting for Zacharias, to greet him with prayer and to glorify the Most High. But when he delayed to come, they were all afraid. But one of them took courage and went into the sanctuary. And he saw beside the altar congealed blood; and a voice said: "Zacharias has been slain, and his blood shall not be wiped away until his avenger comes." And when he heard these words, he was afraid, and went out and told the priests what he had seen. And they heard and saw what had happened. And the panel-work of the ceiling of the temple wailed, and they rent their clothes from the top of the bottom. And they did not find his body, but they found his blood turned into stone. And they were afraid, and went out and told all the people: "Zacharias has been slain." And all the tribes of the people heard it and mourned him and lamented three days and three nights. And after the three days the priests took counsel whom they should appoint in his stead. And the lot fell upon Symeon. Now it was he to whom it had been revealed by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death until he had seen the Christ in the flesh.

Now I, James, who wrote this history, when a tumult arose in Jerusalem on the death of Herod, withdrew into the wilderness until the tumult in Jerusalem ceased. And I will praise the Lord, who gave me the wisdom to write this history. Grace shall be with all those who fear the Lord.

[NTA, I, 374-388; ANT, 38-49; ANE, VIII, 361-367]

-----IV: The Infancy Gospel of Thomas-----

Introduction to the Infancy Gospel of Thomas

The Infancy Gospel of Thomas has come down to us, in whole and in part, in a number of interwoven linguistic traditions.

1. GREEK. For the Greek form of this work there are only a few very late and rather unreliable manuscripts, classified by Tischendorf (*Evangelia Apocrypha*, 1876, 140-157, 159-163) according to two recensions—A, a longer form with 19 chapters, undoubtedly the older of the two Greek forms, and represented by (i) three complete manuscripts of the 15th-16th centuries, two of which (at Bologna and Dresden) being in almost complete agreement with one another—the Bologna manuscript was published with a Latin translation by Mingarelli in 1764; the Dresden, of the 16th century, was edited by Thilo—and a third (at Mt. Athos) first brought to light by Coteler in his edition of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, 1672; and (ii) a fragment (at Paris), number 239 of the Greek papyrus collection in the National Library, first published in 1700, which gives, after chapter seven, the beginning of a story about Jesus and a cloth-dyer, a passage found in no other manuscript of the Greek tradition, but known from the Latin, Arabic and Armenian versions of this gospel, a discovery which could mean that the (later) Arabic and Armenian versions are considerably closer to the original form of this gospel than the extant Greek manuscripts

would lead one to believe—and **B**, a shorter form with 11 chapters, from a single paper manuscript of the 14th or 15th century, which Tischendorf discovered in one of the monasteries on Mt. Sinai and first published. (ANF also states that a second Greek fragment, from Vienna and edited by Lambecius, belongs to the Greek **A** tradition.) James (Apocryphal New Testament, 1924) translates the Greek and Latin versions.

2. SYRIAC. The Bollandist Paul Peeters (“Evangiles Apocryphes” in Textes et Documents pour l’Etude Historique du Christianisme II, 1914, introduction) has said that all the various forms of the material on the nativity of Jesus Christ go back ultimately to a Syriac original, which he assigns to a time before the 5th century. However that may be, of special importance are two older manuscripts of a shorter Syriac recension, both of which at points diverge considerably from either Greek **A** or **B**, while at the same time demonstrating striking contact with the extant Latin tradition: **(a)** the text of a London manuscript of the 6th century, edited by Wright (Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament, 1865) and later reprinted by Budge (The History of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the History of the Likeness of Christ, 1899, 217-222); and **(b)** a second manuscript, of the 5th-6th century, collated by Meyer in Gottingen for a 1922 revision of Hennecke’s Neutestamentliche Apokryphen. The Syriac tradition is also preserved in a Vatican manuscript (Codex Vaticanus Syriacus 159), a text to which Peeters assigns very high value as standing especially close to the Syriac original which he regards as the basis of all editions of stories about the childhood of Jesus the Christ. James has suggested that the form in which the gospel has been transmitted to modern times is in fact the skeleton of the old one—i.e., lacking those discourses which conveyed the doctrinal teachings of the book—and should be regarded as an expurgated version.

3. LATIN. The Latin Infancy Gospel of Thomas was first edited by Tischendorf (Evangelia Apocrypha, 156f) from a late Vatican manuscript. It goes beyond the Greek and Syriac versions in having at the beginning stories about the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt—stories which are in partial agreement with those found in the Arabic and Armenian infancy gospels, and the Latin Infancy Gospel of Matthew. An Old Latin witness (at Vienna)—a palimpsest of the 5th-6th century—seems to be very important because (in agreement with a late Latin manuscript of the Infancy Gospel of Matthew (number 1652 of the Latin manuscript collection of the National Library of France), it appears to establish that the London Syriac manuscript [above, **(a)**] does actually preserve a very good ancient tradition. The story concerning the miracle of the cloth-dyer occurs in a Milan manuscript (Ambrosian L.58), edited by Ceriani (Canonical Histories and Apocryphal Legends, 1873), being the first miracle after the return of the Holy Family from Egypt.

4. GEORGIAN. A fragment of the Georgian tradition, also related to the Syriac but hitherto barely noticed in the West, has been published by Garitte (“Le Fragment Georgien de l’Evangile de Thomas” in Revue d’Histoire Ecclesiastique LI, 1956, 513-520).

5. ETHIOPIC. An Ethiopic version, preserved as the eighth part of a gnosticizing work entitled The Miracles of Jesus, was published with a French translation by Grebaut (in Patrologia Orientalis XII.4, 1919, 625-642; see also his comments in Revue de l’Orient Chretien XVI, 1911, 255-265, 356-367).

6. OLD SLAVONIC. There are three sources available for Old Slavonic traditions: **(a)** Bonwetsch (in Harnack, Litg. I, 910); **(b)** Ludtke (“Die Slawischen Texte des Thomas-Evangeliums” in Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbucher VI, 1928, 490-508); and **(c)** the Russian works of Speranskij (in Peeters, Evangiles Apocryphes II, xviii, note 3).

The following ancient Fathers cite the Infancy Gospel of Thomas:

1. Irenaeus of Lyons [d.c.200, Against All Heresies I.xiii.1—(*They\fn{The Marcossians,} adduce, too, this false invention, that when the Lord as a child was learning the alphabet, and his teacher said, as the custom is: Say Alpha; he answered: Alpha. But when the teacher bade him say Beta, the Lord answered: first tell thou me what Alpha is, and then will I tell thee what Beta is. And this they interpret as meaning that he alone knew the unknown mystery, which he manifested in the form of Alpha.*)] It seems probable from Irenaeus’ language that the Marcossians took this from an apocryphal writing; that it was probably from the Infancy Gospel of Thomas is born out from the fact that the story occurs in Greek **A** (chapter 6), and exists in all infancy gospels in some form; and also in book four of the Letter of the Apostles to the Christians of the World.

2. Hippolytus of Rome [d.c.234, Against All Heresies V.vii—(*The Naassenes speak of a nature of man at once hidden and manifesting itself, which they say is within man, and is the kingdom of heaven that is sought after: and they deliver this concerning it, expressly, in the gospel entitled according to Thomas, in these words: He that seeketh me will find me in children from seven years old and upwards: for there am I manifested, who am hidden in the fourteenth aeon.*)]

3. Origen of Alexandria [d.c.254, Homily I on Luke—(*There is also current the Gospel according to Thomas.*)]

4. Eusebius of Caesarea (d.c.340, apparently at Ecclesiastical History III:xxv.3f) names the work among those books undoubtedly spurious.

5. Cyril of Jerusalem [d.c.386, Catecheses IV.36; VI.31—(*And of the New Testament read the four gospels only. The others are apocryphal and harmful. The Manichaeans also wrote a Gospel according to Thomas, which, though colored with the fragrance of a gospel name, corrupts the souls of the simpler. ... Let no one read the Gospel according to Thomas, for it is not by one of the twelve apostles, but by one of the three wicked disciples of Manes.*)]

6. The Decretum Gelasianum (6th century) condemns as apocryphal *Gospel under the name of Thomas, which the Manichaeans use.*

7. The Stichometry of Nicephorus (c.850) enters under the title *Apocrypha of the New Testament are the following: The Gospel of Thomas, 1300 lines.*

Both the [Arabic Infancy Gospel](#) (translated from the Syriac), and the [Armenian Infancy Gospel](#) are of importance to the [Infancy Gospel of Thomas](#) at least as parallel texts.

1. The infancy story of the miracle of the cloth-dyer is found at [Arabic Infancy Gospel](#) XXXVIII; and at great length at [Armenian Infancy Gospel](#) XXI. Thilo (apparently in his [Codex Apocryphus Nuevo Testamentum](#), Leipzig, 1832, 150) quotes an Islamic version, and shows that the tale was current in Persia. There seems little doubt that it stood in the more complete texts of this gospel; and it is also found in the mediaeval French and English vernacular versions. It is as follows:

One day, when Jesus was running about and playing with some children, he passed by the workshop of a dyer called Salem. They had in the workshop many cloths which he had to dye. The Lord Jesus went into the dyer's workshop, took all these cloths and put them into a cauldron full of indigo. When Salem came and saw that the cloths were spoiled, he began to cry aloud and asked the Lord Jesus, saying: "What have you done to me, son of Mary? You have ruined my reputation in the eyes of all the people of the city; for everyone orders a suitable color for himself, but you have come and spoiled everything." And the Lord Jesus replied: "I will change for you the color of any cloth which you wish to be changed," and he immediately began to take the cloths out of the cauldron, each of them dyed in the color the dyer wished, until he had taken them all out. When the Jews saw this miracle and wondered, they praised God.

2. Similarly, another miracle (that of the children in the oven) does not occur in the known Greek or Latin texts of this gospel, but is nevertheless present in chapter XL of the Arabic, in the Syriac (the one found in Budge's [History of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the History of the Likeness of Christ](#)), and also in the French and English mediaeval vernaculars (in which tales the children are changed into pigs). Its occurrence in both Eastern and Western Christian traditions means that this story probably formed part of the original text of this gospel. It is as follows:

And it came to pass that Jesus went out one day and saw a company of children playing together, and he went after them, but they fled before him and went into an oven. And Jesus came after them and stood by the door and said to the women who were sitting there: "Where are the children who came in here before me?" And the women said unto Jesus: "No children came here." Then Jesus said unto them: "Then what are the beings that are inside the house?" And the women said unto him: "They are goats." And Jesus said unto them: "Let the goats which are in the oven go out to their shepherd." And there came forth from the oven goats which leaped round about Jesus and skipped joyfully. And when the women had seen what had taken place, they wondered, and great fear laid hold upon them. Then the women rose up and did homage unto Jesus, and they made supplication to him, saying: "O Jesus, son of Mary, good shepherd of Israel, have compassion upon your handmaidens; for you came to heal and not to destroy." And Jesus answered and said to them: "Verily the children of Israel are like unto the black folk among the natives, for the black ones seize the outer side of the flock and harass their shepherd: even thus are the people of Israel." Then the women said unto him: "Your disciples could never hide themselves away from you, and they could never harass you, for they perform your will and they fulfill your commandments." {The Arabic has: "Lord, you know all things and nothing is hidden from you. Now we pray you and ask of your goodness that you would restore unto these children your servants their former state."} And Jesus gave the word of command and said unto the goats: "Come, O children, my lay-fellows, and let us play together." And straightway while these women were looking on, they were changed from the similitude of goats and became children again. And they went after Jesus. And from that day the children were not able to flee from Jesus; and their parents admonished them saying: "See that you do everything that Jesus the son of Mary commands you to do."

[And perhaps it is not accidental (in view of the tradition that Thomas visited India) that it is precisely the material in the [Infancy Gospel of Thomas](#) for which parallels exist in Indian, Egyptian and Persian legends. For the Indian, see van Eysinga ([Indische Einflüsse auf Evangelische Erzählungen](#), 1909); for Egypt see Norden ([Die Geburt des Kindes](#), 1924); and for Persia, see Cheyne ([Biblical Problems](#), 1904). Tales of the childhood of Krishna and of Buddha have been cited, which have a colorable resemblance to some of those in the [Infancy Gospel of Thomas](#); and it should not be forgotten that Thomas the apostle was connected with India by a tradition probably a good deal older than the [Acts of Thomas](#) (before 250), which is strongly defended by the Christians of Malabar—that they were evangelized by the Apostle Thomas, and that he was martyred and buried at Mylapore, near Madras.]

A direct relationship between this work and the [Coptic Gospel of Thomas](#) cannot, however, be traced, although it has been suggested that the teaching of the boy Jesus on the allegorical meaning of the alphabet in the [Infancy Gospel of Thomas](#) may be the narrative starting point for gnosticising speculations of the [Coptic Gospel of Thomas](#).

There are discrepancies between the texts of the three known Greek manuscripts of this infancy gospel, and very wide divergences between the Syriac translation and the Latin, to which it is partly related. Often the divergences are much shorter, like the Syriac, which seems to preserve much that is primitive. It is hard to decide which of them is in fact the oldest, because while later editors of the material

in these versions tend to excise anything offensive, the natural tendency at the same time is always towards physical expansion of the text. Similarly, the titles vary widely: The Stories of Thomas the Israelite, the Philosopher, Concerning the Works of the Childhood of the Lord (so Greek A); The Writing of the Holy Apostle Thomas Concerning the Conversion of the Lord in His Childhood (so Greek B); The Infancy of the Lord Jesus (so the Syriac); The Boyhood of Jesus According to Thomas (so the Latin).

The man who collected the legends and composed the gospel was endowed with a gift of vivid story-telling, especially when he depicts scenes from ordinary life. Readers were also attracted by a book quite free of theological bias: it enjoyed wide popularity, as the many translations and its later gospel use testify. For some ancient Christians the work may have appeared excessively embellished with miracles; and there might have been the feeling, in some quarters, that the Jesus it portrays was rather often devoid of ethical feeling, and had indeed been removed from any necessity of a purely human development. Perhaps a reaction against this is to be found in the History of Joseph the Carpenter (below) which stresses the meekness of the child Jesus (so Morenz, in Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literature LVI, 1, 43; see also IX).

The text of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas printed by NTA (which is the one used here) notes 22 verbal or conceptual parallels with the Received New Testament, most of them to be found in Luke, but a few in Mark and even one in Romans; and Irenaeus of Lyons (d.c.200) clearly says that the Marcosians possessed a document containing a portion of chapter six. The work was thus probably written at some time during the 2nd century. All that can be said about the author with any certainty is that the must have been a Gentile Christian, since his work betrays no knowledge of Judaism; but he has also been supposed a gnostic, a docetic, and a Marcosian (by those who follow Hippolytus' assertion that he was a follower of Mani.)

[ANF, 352, 395, 402; NTA, I, 364, 388-401; ECC, 83; ANT, 14-16, 22,24, 49, 55, 58, 66-70]

The Latin begins its tradition of this work in the following manner:

When there was a tumult because search was made by Herod for our Lord Jesus Christ, that he might slay him, then an angel said to Joseph, "Take Mary and her child and flee into Egypt from the face of them that seek to slay him." Now Jesus was two years old when he entered Egypt.

And as he walked through a sown field he put forth his hand and took of the ears and put them upon the fire and ground them and began to eat. \fn{ A variant Latin text adds: And he gave such favor to that field that year by year when it was sown it yielded to the lord of it so many measures of wheat as the number of the grains which he had taken from it. }

Now when they had entered into Egypt they took lodging in the house of a certain widow, and abode in the same place one year.

And Jesus became three years old. And seeing boys playing he began to play with them. And he took a dried fish and put it into a basin and commanded it to move to and from, and it began to move. And again he said to the fish, "Cast out your salt that is in you and go into the water." And it came to pass. But when the neighbors saw what was done they told it to the widow woman in whose house his mother Mary dwelt. And she when she heard it hastened and cast them out of her house.

And as Jesus walked with Mary his mother through the midst of the market-place of the city, he looked about and saw a master teaching his pupils. And behold, twelve sparrows which were quarrelling one with another fell from the wall into the lap of the master who taught the boys. And when Jesus saw it he laughed and stood still. Now when that teacher saw him laughing, he said to his pupils in great anger, "Go, bring him here to me." And when they had brought him, the master took hold on his ear and said, "What did you see that you laughed?" And he said to him, "Master, see, my hand is full of corn, and I showed it to them, and scattered the corn, which they are carrying away:\fn{ James adds in danger after the word away. } for for this cause they fought with one another that they might partake of the corn." And Jesus did not leave the place until it was accomplished. And for this cause the master labored to cast him out of the city together with his mother.

And behold, an angel of the Lord met with Mary and said to her, "Take the child and return into the land of the Jews: for they are dead who sought his life." So Mary arose with Jesus, and they went into the city of Nazareth, which is in the inheritance of his\fn{ James has here: (her?). } father. But when Joseph departed out of Egypt after the death of Herod, he took Jesus into the wilderness until there was quiet in Jerusalem from them that sought the life of the child.\fn{ Another variant has here: And Mary arose with Jesus, and they went to the city of Capernaum which is of Tiberias, to the inheritance of her father. But when Joseph heard that Jesus was come out of Egypt after the death of Herod, he took him, etc. Yet another variant has: After these things an angel of the Lord came to Joseph and to Mary the mother of Jesus and said to them,

“Take the child, return into the Land of Israel, for they are dead that sought the life of the child.” And they arose and went to Nazareth where Joseph possessed the goods of his father. And when Jesus was seven years old, there was quiet in the realm of Herod from all them that sought the life of the child. And they returned unto Bethlehem and abode there. }

From this point the Latin tradition follows the Greek plan of the book, though with many variants. What follows is the translation given in NTA (1963, Greek A), against which I have supplied the Greek B and Latin variants from ANT (1924). NTA says: “In the absence of a critical edition it seemed advisable to translate the text of the Greek ms. A, and to supply only important variants of the Syriac version.”

I, Thomas the Israelite, tell and make known to you all, brethren from among the Gentiles, all the works of the childhood of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mighty deeds, which he did when he was born in our land. \fn{ **Greek B adds here: in the fifth year of his age.** } The beginning is as follows. \fn{ **The Latin has: It is a glorious work for Thomas the Israelite the apostle of the Lord to tell of the works of Jesus after he came out of Egypt unto Nazareth. Hear therefore all of you, beloved brethren, the signs which the Lord Jesus did when he was in the city of Nazareth: as it is said in the first chapter.** } }

When this boy Jesus was five years old he was playing at the ford of a brook, and he gathered together into pools the water that flowed by, and made it at once clean, and commanded it by his word alone. \fn{ **Greek B says: Then he said: “I will that you become clean and wholesome waters.” The Latin has no speech.** } He made soft clay and fashioned from it twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath when he did this. \fn{ **Or: made them.** } And there were also many other children playing with him. Now when a certain Jew saw what Jesus was doing in his play on the Sabbath, he at once went and told his father Joseph: “See, your child is at the brook, and he has taken clay and fashioned twelve birds and has profaned the Sabbath.” \fn{ **Greek B reports the speech as from a child: “Behold, thy child plays about the brook, and has made sparrows of the clay, which is not lawful.” The Latin reports the speech as from children: “Lo, your son was playing with us and he took clay and made sparrows which it was not right to do upon the Sabbath, and he has broken it.” } } And when Joseph came to the place and saw (it), he cried out to him, saying: “Why do you do on the Sabbath what ought not to be done?” \fn{ **Greek B has: “Why do you behave this way and profane the Sabbath?” The Latin has: “Why have you done this which it was not right to do on the Sabbath?” } } But Jesus clapped his hands and cried to the sparrows: “Off with you!” \fn{ **Greek B reports the speech: “Go you, take your flight, and remember me in your life.” The Latin has: “Go forth into the height and fly: you shall not meet death at any man’s hands.” } } And the sparrows took flight and went away chirping. \fn{ **The Latin has: and began to cry out and praise almighty God.** } } The Jews were amazed when they saw this, and went away and told their elders what they had seen Jesus do.******

But the son of Annas the scribe \fn{ **The Latin simply calls him: a Pharisee.** } was standing there with Joseph; and he took a branch of a willow and (with it) dispersed the water which Jesus had gathered together. When Jesus saw what he had done he was enraged and said to him: “You insolent, godless dunderhead, what harm did the pools and the water do to you? See, now you also shall wither like a tree and shall bear neither leaves nor root nor fruit.” \fn{ **Greek B reports this speech: “O ungodly and disobedient one, what hurt have the pools done you that you have emptied them? You shalt not finish your course, and you shall be withered up even as the branch which you have in hand.” The Latin has: “O you of Sodom, ungodly and ignorant, what hurt did the fountain of water do you, which I made? Lo, you shall become like a dry tree which has neither roots nor leaf nor fruit.” } } And immediately that lad withered up completely; and Jesus departed and went into Joseph’s house. But the parents of him that was withered took him away, bewailing his youth, and brought him to Joseph and reproached him: “What a child you have, who does such things.” \fn{ **The Latin has: “Behold what your son has done: teach him to pray and not to blaspheme.” } }****

After this again he went through the village, and a lad ran and knocked against his shoulder. \fn{ **Greek B says: a certain child cast a stone at him and smote his shoulder. The Latin says he smote Jesus on the arms.** } Jesus was exasperated and said to him: “You shall not go further on your way,” \fn{ **Literally: go all the way. James translates: “You shall not finish your course”, which is the wording of Greek B. The Latin, however, has: “So finish your course.” } } and the child immediately fell down and died. But some, who saw what took place, said: “From where does this child spring, since his every word is an accomplished deed?” \fn{ **The Latin has: “Where does this child come from?” } } And the parents of the dead child came to Joseph and blamed him and said: “Since you have such a child, you cannot dwell with us in the village; or else teach him to bless and not to curse. For he is slaying our children.” \fn{ **Greek B adds: “and every thing that he says becomes a perfect work.” The Latin has: “It is not right that such a child should be among us.” And he departed and took him with him. And they said to him, “Depart out of this place; and if you must be with us, teach him to pray and not to blaspheme: for our sons lose their senses by him.” } }******

And Joseph called the child aside and admonished him saying: “Why do you do such things that these people (must) suffer and hate us and persecute us?”^{\fn{The Latin has: “Why do you blaspheme? They that dwell in this place conceive hatred against us.”}} But Jesus replied: “I know that these words are not yours; nevertheless for your sake I will be silent. But they shall bear their punishment.”^{\fn{A Syriac variant has: “If the words of my father were not wise, he would not know how to teach children.” And again he said: “If these children were born in wedlock they would not be accursed. Such will see no torment.” The Latin has: “I know that these words are not mine but yours: yet for your sake I will hold my peace: but let them see their own foolishness.”}} And immediately those who had accused him became blind. And those who saw it were greatly afraid and perplexed, and said concerning him: “Every word he speaks, whether good or evil, was a deed and became a marvel.”^{\fn{The Latin makes these words come from the mouths of the blind.}} And when they^{\fn{So the text. James has in brackets: (he?)}} saw that Jesus had so done, he arose and took him by the ear and pulled it hard. And the child was angry and said to him: “It is sufficient for you^{\fn{Or: them.}} to seek and not to find, and most unwisely have you acted. Do you not know that I am yours? Do not vex me.”^{\fn{Greek B has for this speech: “It suffices you.” The Latin has: “It suffices you to see me and not to touch me. For you do not know who I am, which if you knew, you would not grieve me. And although I am with you now, yet I was made before you.”}}

Now a certain teacher, Zacchaeus by name, who was standing there, heard in part Jesus saying these things to his father, and marveled greatly that, being a child, he said such things. And after a few days he came near to Joseph and said to him: “You have a clever child, and he has understanding. Come, hand him over to me that he may learn letters, and I will teach him with the letters all knowledge, and to salute all the older people and honor them as grandfathers and fathers, and to love those of his own age.” And he told him all the letters from Alpha to Omega clearly, with much questioning. But he looked at Zacchaeus the teacher and said to him: “How do you, who do not know the Alpha according to its nature, teach others the Beta? Hypocrite, first if you know it, teach the alpha, and then we shall believe you concerning the Beta.” Then he began to question the teacher about the first letter, and he was unable to answer him. And in the hearing of many the child said to Zacchaeus: “Hear, teacher, the arrangement of the first letter, and pay heed to this, how it has lines and a middle mark which goes through the pair of lines which you see, (how these lines) converge, rise, turn in the dance, three signs of the same kind, subject to and supporting one another, of equal proportions; here you have the lines of the Alpha.”^{\fn{The text appears to be corrupt. James says about this description that “what follows is really unintelligible in this and in all the parallel texts: a literal version would run somewhat thus:” ... how that it has lines, and a middle mark, which you see, common to both, going apart; coming together, raised up on high, dancing, (“a corrupt word”) of three signs, like in kind, (“a corrupt word”) balanced, equal in measure;}}

[For this paragraph, Greek B has: ... And on the morrow he took him by the hand and led him to a certain teacher, Zacchaeus by name, and said unto him, “Take this child, O master, and teach him letters.” And the other said, “Deliver him to me, my brother, and I will teach him the Scripture, and I will persuade him to bless all men and not to curse them.” And when Jesus heard that he laughed and said to them, “You speak that^{\fn{I.e., as if.}} you know, but I have knowledge more than you, for I am before the worlds. And I know when the fathers of your fathers were begotten, and I know how many are the years of your life.” And every one that heard it was amazed. And again Jesus said to them, “Do you marvel because I said to you that I know how many are the years of your life? Of a truth I know when the world was created. Behold, now you do not believe me: when you shall see my cross, then you will believe that I speak truth.” And they were astonished when they heard all these things. ...]

[For this paragraph, the Latin has: ... There was therefore a man named Zacchaeus who heard all that Jesus said unto Joseph, and he marveled in himself and said, “I have never beheld such a child that spoke so.” And he came near to Joseph and said to him, “You have a wise child: deliver him to me to learn letters, and when he is learned in the study of the letters, I will teach him reverently that he not become foolish.” Joseph answered and said to him, “No man is able to teach him but only God. Do you think that this young child will be the occasion unto us of a little torment, my brother?”^{\fn{James notes here: “There should be mention of a cross in this sentence. Syriac has: Do you think that he is worthy to receive a little cross? See below.”}} But when Jesus heard Joseph saying these things, he said to Zacchaeus, “Truly, O master, all things that proceed out of my mouth are true. And I am before all men, and I am Lord, but you are the children of strangers: for to me is given the glory of them^{\fn{Or: of the worlds.}} but to you nothing is given: for I am before all worlds. And I know how many are the years of your life, and when you shall raise that standard^{\fn{I.e., the cross.}} whereof my father spoke, then you shall understand that all things that proceed out of my mouth are true.” But the Jews who stood by and heard the words which Jesus spoke, marveled and said, “Now have we seen such wonders and heard such words from this child, as we have never heard neither shall hear from any other man, neither from the chief priests nor the doctors nor the Pharisees.” Jesus answered and said to them, “Why do you marvel? Do you think it an incredible thing that I have told you the truth? I know when you were born, and your fathers: and if I should say more to you, I know when the world was created, and who sent me to you. When the Jews heard the word which the child spoke, they were wroth because they were not

able to answer him. And the child turned himself about and rejoiced and said, "I spoke to you a proverb; but I know that you are weak and do not know anything." Now that master said to Joseph, "Bring him unto me and I will teach him letters." And Joseph took the child Jesus and brought him to the house ^{\fn{A variant text adds here: of a certain master.}} where other children also were taught. But the master began to teach him the letters with sweet speech, and wrote for him the first line which goes from Alpha unto Tau, and began to flatter him and to teach him; ^{\fn{James inserts here: (and commanded him to say the letters:), perhaps because the Latin text is corrupt.}} but the child held his peace. Then that teacher smote the child on the head, and when the child received the blow, he said to him, "I ought to teach you and not you teach me. I know the letters which you would teach me, and I know that you are to me as vessels out of which come nothing but sound, and neither wisdom nor salvation of the soul." And beginning the line he spoke all the letters from Alpha even to Tau fully with much quickness: and he looked upon the master and said, "But you do not know how to interpret Alpha and Beta: how would you teach others? Hypocrite, if you know and can tell me concerning Alpha, then I will tell you concerning Beta." But when the teacher began to expound concerning the first letter, he was not able to give any answer. Then Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Hearken to me, O master, and understand the first letter. Give ear to me, how it has two lines ^{\fn{James inserts at this point: (eight quite unintelligible descriptive phrases follow).}}..."]

Now when Zacchaeus the teacher heard so many such allegorical descriptions of the first letter being expounded, he was perplexed at such a reply and such great teaching and said to those who were present: "Woe is me, I am forced into a quandary, wretch that I am; I have brought shame to myself in drawing to myself this child. Take him away, therefore, I beseech you, brother Joseph. I cannot endure the severity of his look, I cannot make out his speech ^{\fn{Or: my word.}} at all. This child is not earth-born; he can tame even fire. Perhaps he was begotten even before the creation of the world. What belly bore him, what womb nurtured him I do not know. Woe is me, my friend, he stupefies me, I cannot follow his understanding. I have deceived myself, thrice wretched man that I am. I strove to get a disciple, and have found myself with a teacher. My friends, I think of my shame, that I, an old man, have been overcome by a child. I can only despair and die because of this child, for I cannot in this hour look him in the face. And when all say that I have been overcome by a small child, what have I to say? And what can I tell concerning the lines of the first letter of which he spoke to me? I do not know, my friends, for I know neither beginning nor end of it. ^{\fn{Or: him.}} Therefore I ask you, brother Joseph, take him away to your house. He is something great, a god or an angel or what I should say I do not know."

[For this paragraph, Greek B has: ... Now Zacchaeus wrote the alphabet in Hebrew, and said to him, "Alpha." And the young child said, "Alpha." And again the master said, "Alpha," and the young child likewise. Then again the third time the master said, "Alpha." Then Jesus looked upon the teacher and said, "You that do not know the Alpha, how can you teach another the Beta?" And the child beginning at the Alpha said of his own accord the two and twenty letters. And thereafter he said, "Hear, O master, the ordinance of the first letter, and know how many incomings and lines it has, and marks, common, going apart, and coming together." And when Zacchaeus heard such designations of the one letter he was amazed and had nothing to answer; and turning about he said to Joseph, "My brother, this child is of a truth not earthly born: take him away therefore from me." ...]

[For this paragraph, the Latin has: ... Now when Zacchaeus saw that he so divided the first letter, he was confounded at such names, and at his teaching, and cried out and said, "Woe is me, for I am confounded. I have hired shame to myself by means of this child." And he said to Joseph, "I beseech you earnestly, my brother, take him away from me; for I cannot look upon his face nor hear his mighty words. For this child is able to subdue the fire and to restrain the sea, for he was born before the worlds. What womb bare him or what manner of mother brought him up I do not know. O my friends, I am astray in my wits, mocked, wretched man that I am. I said that I had a disciple, but he is found to be my master. I cannot overcome my shame, for I am old, and I cannot find the wherewithal to answer him, so that I am like to fall into heavy sickness and depart out of the world or go away from this city, for all men have seen my shame, that a child has ensnared me. What can I answer any man, or what words can I speak, for he has overcome me at the first letter! I am confounded, O you my friends and acquaintances, and I can find neither first nor last to answer him. And now I beseech you, brother Joseph, remove him from me and take him to your house, for either he is a sorcerer or a god or an angel, and what to say I do not know." ...]

And while the Jews were trying to console Zacchaeus, the child laughed aloud and said: "Now let that which is yours bear fruit, and let the blind in heart see. I have come from above to curse them and call them to the things above, as he commanded who sent me for your sakes." And when the child had ceased speaking, immediately all those were healed who had fallen under his curse. And no one after that dared to provoke him, lest he should curse him, and he should be maimed.

[The Syriac version has the following important variant text of Zacchaeus and the boy Jesus: ... But a

teacher, whose name was Zacchaeus, heard him speaking with his father, and said: "O wicked boy!" And he said to Joseph his father: "Till when will you not choose to hand over this boy, that he may learn to be fond of children of his years, and may honor old age?" Joseph answered and said: "And who is able to teach a boy like this? Does he think that he is equal to a small cross?" Jesus answered and said to the teacher: "These words which you have spoken, and these names, I am strange to them; for I am apart from you, though I dwell among you. Honor in the flesh I have not. You art by the law, and in the law you abide. For when you were born, I was. But you think that you are my father. You shall learn from me a doctrine, which another man knows not and is not able to learn. And (as for) the cross of which you have spoken, he shall bear it, whose it is. For when I am greatly exalted, I shall lay aside whatever mixture I have of your race. For you do not know from where you came; for I alone know truly when you were born, and how long time you have to remain here." But when they heard, they were astonished, and cried out and said: "O wonderful sight and hearing! Words like these we have never heard man speak, neither the priests, nor the scribes, nor the Pharisees. Where was this (one) born, who is five years old, and speaks such words? Man has never seen the like of this." Jesus answered and said to them: "You wonder at what I have said to you, that I know when you were; and yet I have something more to say to you." But they, when they heard, were silent, and were not able to speak. And Zacchaeus the teacher said to Joseph: "I will teach him whatever is proper for him to learn." And he made him go into the school. And he, going in, was silent. But Zacchaeus the scribe began to tell him (the letters) from Alpha, and was repeating to him many times the whole alphabet. And he said to him that he should answer and say after him; but he was silent. Then the scribe became angry, and struck him with his hand upon his head. And Jesus said: "A smith's anvil, being beaten, can learn, and it has no feeling; but I am able to say those things, which are spoken by you, with knowledge and understanding." The scribe answered and said: "This (child) is something great. He is either God, or an angel, or—what I should say I know not." Then the boy Jesus laughed and said: "Let those in whom there is no fruit, produce fruit; and let the blinded see the fruit of life of the Judge." ...]

[For this paragraph the Latin has: ... And Jesus turned himself to the Jews that were with Zacchaeus and said to them, "Now let all them that do not see, and let them understand who do not understand, and let the deaf hear, and let them arise who have died by my means, and let me call them that are high unto that which is higher, even as he that sent me to you has commanded me." And when the child Jesus ceased speaking, all the afflicted were made whole, as many as had been afflicted at his word. And they dared not speak to him. ...]

One day, when Jesus was running about and playing with some children, he passed by the workshop of a dyer called Salem. They had in the workshop many cloths which he had to dye. The Lord Jesus went into the dyer's workshop, took all these cloths and put them into a cauldron full of indigo. When Salem came and saw that the cloths were spoiled, he began to cry aloud and asked the Lord Jesus, saying: "What have you done to me, son of Mary? You have ruined my reputation in the eyes of all the people of the city; for everyone orders a suitable color for himself, but you have come and spoiled everything." And the Lord Jesus replied: "I will change for you the color of any cloth which you wish to be changed," and he immediately began to take the cloths out of the cauldron, each of them dyed in the color the dyer wished, until he had taken them all out. When the Jews saw this miracle and wonder, they praised God.

[James gives the following Latin version from a Milan manuscript, which he translates: ... It came to pass on a day that the blessed Virgin Mary went unto the house of a certain neighbor of hers which was of the craft of a dyer. And the child Jesus, her glorious son, followed her as is the wont of boys to follow their mothers. Now while the Virgin Mary spoke with the man to whom she had come, the child Jesus went to the place wherein that man was wont to practice his trade, and found there divers vessels containing several dyes; and likewise he found divers cloths belonging to many men, which those men had given to be dyed. All of these cloths the child took and wrapped them together and sunk all of them in a vessel wherein was only a black dye. Now when this thing which he had done came to the knowledge of that man, he began to be sore vexed and to complain greatly against the mother of Jesus. And he said to his mother, "Alas! Behold what your son has done: he has brought all my labor to nothing. But know thou this for certain, that the child shall not be let go by me till the damage that he has done be made good." But the mother of Jesus when she heard these things from the man began to say to her son, "My beloved son, what have you done? Why have you done this? For I hoped that I should have great joy of you: for I know how I had you^{i.e., received you?} But you, whereas you ought to make me glad in all things, as you have done always, now contrariwise make me sad." The child Jesus answered his mother <and said: Wherein have I grieved you?>. The blessed virgin said to him, "See, you have destroyed all the labor of this man." But Jesus said unto her, "How have I destroyed it?" His mother answered and said to him, "Because, whereas he had the cloths from many men to give to each one of their cloths a several dye, you have made of all of them a dye of one color. Now, therefore, I must amend that which you have done." But the beautiful child Jesus when he heard that came near to the vessel wherein he had cast the cloths, and according to the will of the master he drew out from there every cloth dyed of a several color and gave them unto the man. And when that man saw it, together with the mother of the Lord, he glorified the child, and they had him in great admiration. But the virgin, the mother of the Lord, embraced her son in her arms and kissed him, and so being filled with great joy returned to her house with Christ her son.]

Now after some days Jesus was laying in the upper story of a house, and one of the children who were playing with him fell down from the house and died. And when the other children saw it they fled, and Jesus remained alone. And the parents of him that was dead came and accused him of having thrown him down.\fn{The Latin makes them say: "Truly you made him fall."} And Jesus replied: "I did not throw him down." \fn{The Latin has: "I never made him fall."} But they continued to revile him. Then Jesus leaped down from the roof and stood by the body of the child, and cried with a loud voice: "Zenon" \fn{Greek B spells it: Zeno, as also the Latin.}—for that was his name—"arise and tell me, did I throw you down?" \fn{The Latin has: "Zeno, Zeno, arise and say if I made you fall."} And he arose at once and said: "No, Lord, you did not throw me down, but raised me up." \fn{The Latin has: "No, Lord."} And when they saw it they were amazed. And the parents of the child glorified God for the miracle that had happened and worshipped Jesus.

After a few days a young man \fn{In the Latin he is a certain boy of that village.} was cleaving wood in a corner, \fn{So the text. James and others emend the text and read: in the neighborhood. The Latin lacks: in a corner.} and the axe fell and split the sole of his foot, and he bled so much that he was about to die. And when a clamor arose and a concourse of people took place, the child Jesus also ran there, and forced his way through the crowd, and took the injured foot, and it was healed immediately. And he said to the young man: "Arise now, cleave the wood and remember me." \fn{Greek B reports the speech: "Arise, cleave your wood." The Latin has: "Arise and cleave the wood and remember me."} And when the crowd saw what happened, the worshipped the child, saying: "Truly the spirit of God dwells in this child." \fn{Greek B has no speech from the crowd. The Latin has them say: "Of a truth we believe surely that you are God."}

When he was six years old, his mother gave him a pitcher and sent him to draw water and bring it into the house. But in the crowd he stumbled, and the pitcher was broken. \fn{The Latin says they broke his pitcher.} But Jesus spread out the garment \fn{The Latin has: the cloak.} he was wearing, filled it with water and brought it to his mother. And when his mother saw the miracle, she kissed him, \fn{Instead of the rest of this sentence, the Latin at this point ends with: and said, "Lord, hearken to me and save my son."} and kept within herself the mysteries which she had seen him do.

Again, in the time of sowing the child went out with his father to sow wheat in their land. And as his father sowed, the child Jesus also sowed one corn of wheat. \fn{According to the Latin, Jesus put forth his hand and took of the corn so much as he could hold in his hand, and scattered it.} And when he had reaped it and threshed it, he brought in a hundred measures; \fn{The Latin adds: of good corn.} and he called all the poor \fn{The Latin adds: and the widows and fatherless.} of the village to the threshing-floor and gave them the wheat, and Joseph took the residue of the wheat. \fn{The Latin adds: for a blessing; and James inserts: [of Jesus].} He was eight years old when he worked this miracle. \fn{Greek B does not have this miracle.}

His father was a carpenter and made at that time \fn{The Syriac and Latin insert here: only.} ploughs and yokes. \fn{The Latin adds: for oxen.} And he received an order from a rich man to make a bed for him. \fn{The Latin has the man say: "Sir, make me a bed serviceable and comely."} But when one beam was shorter than its corresponding one and they did not know what to do, the child Jesus said to his father Joseph: "Put down the two pieces of wood and make them even from the middle to one end." \fn{The manuscripts have: at the middle part.} And Joseph did as the child told him. And Jesus stood at the other end and took hold of the shorter piece of wood, and stretching it made it equal with the other. And his father Joseph saw it and was amazed, and he embraced the child and kissed him, saying: "Happy am I that God has given me this child." \fn{Greek B reports this incident as follows: ... And when he came to the eighth year of his age Joseph was required by a certain rich man to build him a bed, for he was a carpenter. And he went forth into the field to gather wood, and Jesus also went with him. And he cut two beams of wood and wrought them with the axe, and set one beside the other and measured and found it too short; and when he saw that he was vexed and sought to find another. But Jesus seeing it said to him, "Set these two together so that the ends of both are even." And Joseph, though he was perplexed concerning this, what the child should mean, did that which was commanded. And he said again to him, "Take firm hold of the short beam." The Latin makes this into one speech: "Be not troubled, but take hold of this beam by the one end and I by the other, and let us draw it out."} And Joseph took hold on it, marveling. Then Jesus also took hold of the other end and pulled the (other) end thereof and made it also equal to the other beam, and said to Joseph, "Be no more vexed, but do your work without hindrance." \fn{The Latin has Him say: "Behold, fashion what you will."} And he when he saw it was exceedingly amazed, and said within himself, "Blessed am I because God has given me such a son." And when

they departed into the city Joseph told it to Mary, and she when she heard and saw the wonderful mighty works of her son rejoiced, glorifying him.\fn{At this point, Greek B ends. Greek A continues:}

And when Joseph saw the understanding of the child and his age, that he was growing to maturity,\fn{In the Latin, Joseph saw that he had such great grace and that he increased in stature.} he resolved again that he should not remain ignorant of letters; and he took him and handed him over to another teacher.\fn{In the Latin: another doctor.} And the teacher said to Joseph: “First I will teach him Greek, and then Hebrew.”\fn{In the Latin this becomes: Then that doctor said to Joseph: “What manner of letters would you teach this child?” Joseph answered and said: “Teach him first the letters of the Gentiles and after that the Hebrew.”} For the teacher knew the child’s knowledge and was afraid of him.\fn{In the Latin, this sentence becomes: Now the doctor knew that he was of an excellent understanding, and received him gladly.} Nevertheless he wrote the alphabet and practiced it with him for a long time;\fn{Probably: repeated it to him many times, as in the Syriac. The Latin says that he taught him for the space of some hours: but Jesus held his peace and answered nothing.} but he gave him no answer. And Jesus said to him: “If you are indeed a teacher, and if you know the letters well, tell me the meaning of the Alpha, and I will tell you that of the Beta.”\fn{In the Latin, this becomes the power of Alpha and the power of Beta.} And the teacher was annoyed and struck him on the head. And the child was hurt and cursed him, and he immediately fainted and fell to the ground on his face.\fn{In the Latin he fell down and died.} And the child returned to Joseph’s house. But Joseph was grieved and commanded his mother: “Do not let him go outside the door, for all those who provoke him die.”\fn{In the Latin this is not a quotation.}

And after some time yet another teacher, a good friend of Joseph, said to him: “Bring the child to me to the school. Perhaps I by persuasion\fn{In Latin: with much gentleness.} can teach him the letters.” And Joseph said to him: “If you have the courage, brother, take him with you.”\fn{The Latin has: “If you are able, take him and teach him, and it shall be done gladly.”} And he took him with fear and anxiety,\fn{Latin: with fear and great boldness.} but the child went gladly. And he went boldly into the school and found a book lying on the reading-desk and took it, but did not read the letters in it, but opened his mouth and spoke by the Holy Spirit and taught the law to those that stood by. And a large crowd assembled and stood there listening to him, wondering at the grace of his teaching such utterances.\fn{In the Latin they hearkened attentively, and the teacher sat by him and heard him gladly and entreated him to continue teaching. And many people gathered together and heard all the holy doctrine which he taught and the beloved words which proceeded out of his mouth, marveling that he being a little child spoke such things.} But when Joseph heard it, he was afraid and ran to the school, wondering whether this teacher also was without skill.\fn{Or: maimed. James has: or smitten with infirmity.} But the teacher said to Joseph: “Know, brother, that I took the child as a disciple;\fn{Instead of as a disciple, the Latin has: to teach him and instruct him.} but he is full of great grace and wisdom; and now I beg you, brother, take him to your house.”\fn{The Latin adds: with joy, because the grace which he has is given him by the Lord.} And when the child heard this, he at once smiled on him and said: “Since you have spoken well and have testified rightly, for your sake shall he also that was smitten be healed.” And immediately the other teacher was healed. And Joseph took the child and went away to his house.

Joseph sent his son James to bind wood\fn{In the Latin, he is to gather straw.} and take it into his house,\fn{This clause is not in the Latin.} and the child Jesus followed him. And while James was gathering the sticks, a viper bit the hand of James. And as he lay stretched out and about to die, Jesus came near and breathed upon the bite, and immediately the pain ceased, and the creature burst,\fn{This clause and the one before it are not in the Latin.} and at once James became well.

And after these things in the neighborhood of Joseph a little sick child died, and his mother wept bitterly. And Jesus heard that great mourning and tumult arose, and he ran quickly, and finding the child dead, he touched his breast and said: “I say to you, do not die but live and be with your mother.”\fn{The last four words are not in the Latin.} And immediately it looked up and laughed.\fn{The Latin has simply: it arose.} And he said to the woman: “Take him and give him milk and remember me.” And when the people standing round saw it, they marveled and said: “Truly, this child is either a god or an angel of God, for every word of his is an accomplished deed.”\fn{The Latin words this: “Truly this child is from heaven; for now has he set free many souls from death and has saved all them that hoped in him.” From this point there is a gap in the Latin tradition until the Greek A begins with “But the Scribes and Pharisees said,” Are you etc., below.} And Jesus departed from there and played with other children.

After some time a house was being built and a great disturbance arose, and Jesus arose and went there. And

seeing a man lying dead he took his hand and said: "I say to you, man, arise, do your work." And immediately he arose and worshipped him. And when the people saw it, they were amazed and said: "This child is from heaven, for he has saved many souls from death, and is able to save them all his life long."

And when he was twelve years old his parents went according to the custom to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover with their company, and after the Passover they returned to go to their house. And while they were returning the child Jesus went back to Jerusalem. But his parents supposed that he was in the company. And when they had gone a day's journey, they sought him among their kinsfolk, and when they did not find him, they were troubled, and returned again to the city seeking him. And after the third day they found him in the temple sitting among the teachers, listening to the law and asking them questions. And all paid attention to him and marveled how he, a child, put to silence the elders and teachers of the people, expounding the sections of the law and the sayings of the prophets. And his mother Mary came near and said to him: "Why have you done this to us, child? Behold, we have sought you sorrowing." Jesus said to them: "Why do you seek me? Do you not know that I must be in my father's house?" But the scribes and Pharisees said: "Are you the mother of this child?" And she said: "I am." And they said to her: "Blessed are you among women, because the Lord has blessed the fruit of your womb. For such glory and such excellence and wisdom we have never seen nor heard." And Jesus arose and followed his mother and was subject to his parents;^{\fn{The last six words of this sentence are not in the Latin.}} but his mother kept (in her heart) all that had taken place.^{\fn{The Latin words this clause: all the great signs which Jesus wrought among the people, in healing many that were sick.}}

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and grace. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.^{\fn{Greek A ends here. The Latin has for this paragraph: And Jesus increased in stature and wisdom, and all that saw him glorified God the Father Almighty: Who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen. All these things have I, Thomas the Israelite, written and recorded for the Gentiles and for our brethren, and likewise many other things which Jesus did, which was born in the land of Judea. Behold, the house of Israel has seen all these from the first even to the last, even how great signs and wonders Jesus did among them, which were exceedingly good. And this is he who shall judge the world according to the will of his Father, immortal and invisible,}}^{\fn{James says in a note: "The text is corrupt here: I have tried to mend it."}} as the holy Scriptures declares and as the prophets have testified of his works among all the peoples of Israel: for he is the Son of God throughout all the world. And unto him belongs all glory and honor everlastingly, who lives and reigns God, world without end. Amen.

[NTA, I, 388-401; ANT, 49-68; ANF, VIII, 395-404]

-----V: Infancy Material at Ascension of Isaiah 11:5-17-----

Introduction to the Ascension of Isaiah

Knowledge from the Antique Age about the existence of the Ascension of Isaiah is available in several places.

1. The birth story of Jesus in the Ascension of Isaiah is from the first part of the 1st century AD, and a part also of the Infancy Gospel of James (c.150).
2. The statement at Ascension of Isaiah 11:16—that the descent and nativity of the *Beloved* were hidden from *the heavens and all the princes and all the gods of this world*—certainly looks like an earlier form of a passage in Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians 19:1 (107AD)—(*Mary's virginity was hidden from the prince of this world; so was her child-bearing, and so was the death of the Lord.*).
3. The presence of prophets is mentioned side by side with that of pastors and presbyters at Ascension of Isaiah 3:27, a Jewish-Christian characteristic that reappears in the Didache (between 100-150), and in the shepherd Shepherd of Hermas (between 140-155AD).
4. The Resurrection is described in terms very similar to those at Gospel of Peter 13:55-57 (c.150AD)—(*And they went and found the sepulcher open: and they drew near and looked in there, and saw there a young man sitting in the midst of the sepulcher, of a fair countenance and clad in very bright raiment, which said to them, "Where have you come from? Whom do you seek? Not him that was crucified? He is risen and is departed; but if you do not believe it, look in and see the place where he lay, that he is not here: for he is risen and is departed from where he was sent." Then the women were frightened and fled.*).
5. The words of Ascension of Isaiah 11:14—(*And another prophet said, honoring the Father, "Neither did we hear her voice, neither did a midwife come in,"*)—are actually quoted in Acts of Peter 24 (c.150-200AD)—(*And another prophet said, honoring the Father: "Neither did we hear her voice, neither did a midwife come in."*), and so must have predated the Acts of Peter.
6. Irenaeus of Lyons (d.c.200AD, Against All Heresies I:30) describes a Gnostic movement, possibly Ophite, as providing the best parallel to the Vision of Isaiah portion of the Ascension of Isaiah; but does not name the book he used.

7. Origen of Alexandria (d.c.254AD, Commentary on Matthew 10:18)—(And *Isaiah* is reported to have been *sawn asunder* by the people; and if any one does not accept the statement because of its being found in the *Apocryphal Isaiah*,)—provides a reference by name to the Ascension of Isaiah.

8. Mention of the Ascension of Isaiah occurs at Apostolic Constitutions 6:16. (latter half of the 4th century AD)—(And among the ancients also some have written apocryphal books of Moses, and Enoch, and Adam, and Isaiah, and David, and Elijah, and of the three patriarchs, pernicious and repugnant to the truth.).

9. Epiphanius of Salamas (d.403AD) refers to the Ascension of Isaiah at Panarion 40:2.

10. Cedrinus the Byzantine (fl. 11th century; very little is known about his life; he may have been a monk), in his Synopsis Historiarum (which ends with the year 1057AD), records that in a Testament of Hezekiah, Hezekiah says that the Antichrist will rule for three years and seven months (1290 days). This so closely resembles the figures at Ascension of Isaiah 4:2 (3 years, 7, months, 27 days, for a total of 1317 days), that the Ascension of Isaiah is held to be Cedrinus' source. [So Charles (*op.cit.*, 28, 32-33) who suggested that the period of time is supposed to be 1335 days according to the *Julian calendar*.] However, since both Cedrinus' number (1290) and that recorded at Ascension of Isaiah 4:4 (1335) appear in the Received Daniel (1290 at Daniel 12:11, and 1335 at Daniel 12:12)—(And from the time that the continual burnt offering is taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits and comes to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.)—it would seem that the Received Old Testament book of Daniel should be regarded as the source of both figures, and that the testimony from Cedrinus the Byzantine about the existence of a Testament of Hezekiah provides merely the indication of a book other than the present Ascension of Isaiah, and that he had no idea of its contents.

The Ascension of Isaiah has survived the destruction of Antiquity in parts of six languages (completely only in Ethiopic), as follows:

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE DISCOVERED FRAGMENTS OF THE ASCENSION OF ISAIAH IN TERMS OF LANGUAGE, LOCATION, AND PUBLICATION INFORMATION

GREEK ... chapters 2:4-4:4 ... Grenfell & Hunt, Amherst Papyri I, 1900.

GREEK ... chapters 6-11 ... Charles, Ascension of Isaiah, 1900.

LATIN ... chapters 2:14-3:13 ... Mai, 1828; Migne, Patrologia Latina XIII, 1844-1835, cols. 629-630; Charles, 1900. The Latin was translated from (so ANF) a now lost Slavonic recension.

LATIN ... chapters 6-11 ... Gieseler, 1832; Charles, 1900; in Venice, 1922

LATIN ... chapters 7:1-19 ... Mai, 1828; Migne, 1844-1845; Charles, 1900.

SLAVONIC ... chapter 6-11 ... Charles, 1900 (Latin translation of the Slavonic); more undoubtedly in Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament II, 1913, 155-162.

COPTIC ... chapters 1:1-5 ... Lacau, Le Museon LIX, 1946, 453-467.

COPTIC ... chapters 2:3-12 ... Lefort, Le Museon LI-LII, 1938-1939, 24-32, 7-10--the text does not give the volume numbers; this is my assumption. (H).

COPTIC ... chapters 3:25-28 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 5:7-8 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 6:7-11 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 7:12-15 ... Lefort, 1938-1939.

COPTIC ... chapters 7:10-15 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 7:28-32 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 8:16-17 ... Lefort, 1938-1939; Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 9:9-11 ... Lefort, 1938-1939; Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 9:28-30 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 10:9-11 ... Lefort, 1938-1939; Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 10:17 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 11:14-16 ... Lacau, 1946.

COPTIC ... chapters 11:24-31 ... Lefort, 1938-1939.

COPTIC ... chapters 11:35-40 ... Lefort, 1938-1939; Lacau, 1946.

DANISH ... chapters 1-5 ... Hammershamid (De Gammeltestamentlige Pseudepigrapher III, Copenhagen, Oslo and Lund, 1958, 303-315).

ETHIOPIC ... the entire work ... Charles, 1900. Schmithals (The Apocalyptic Movement: Introduction and Interpretation, Nashville, 1975, 206) says this was a work used particularly in the Ethiopian church.

HEBREW ... For connections between the Ascension of Isaiah and the Dead Sea Scrolls see Flusser ('The Apocryphal Book for Ascension Isaiaie and the Dead Sea Sect' in Israel Exploration Journal III, Jerusalem, 1953, 30-47).

*

The Ascension of Isaiah is divided into two major parts, neither of which forms a unity in itself, and both of which differ in their

contents. They are: **(A)** chapters 1-5, (of which 3:13-5:1 forms in it an independent entity), which narrates the martyrdom of Isaiah, and of which chapter 1:2b-5a and the main part of verse 13 are also separate); and **(B)** chapters 6-11 (of which 11:2-22 forms an independent entity), which describe a heavenly journey or vision of the prophet Isaiah.

A. CHAPTERS 1-5.

1. Chapter 1 was early regarded by Dillmann (Ascension Isaiaie, 1877, ix-xiii; Realencyclopaedia für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche XII, 1883, 359-360) as the gift of the original creator of the book (whom Dillman saw as the person who combined its original sections—a Martyrdom of Isaiah and a Vision of Isaiah—but without certain other elements [including 3:13-4:21], which Charles (The Ascension of Isaiah, 1900, xxxviff) would differentiate later as the Testament of Hezekiah]. Somewhat later, Littmann (Jewish Encyclopedia VI, 1907, 643) sustained these opinions about chapter 1 and the division of the work into three parts; as did Tisserant (Ascension d’Isaiaie, 1909, 59). Robinson (in Hasting’s Dictionary of the Bible II, 1899, 500) substantially followed Dillmann, but thought that two hands only need to be found in the book, and that a Christian author took the Jewish Martyrdom of Isaiah and composed the remainder. Charles would date all three of his independent works to the 1st century AD; and he believed the first of them in origin to be Jewish, and the other two Christian. [These opinions he stated again somewhat later, with Box (The Ascension of Isaiah, 1919, 7-8).] It should also be mentioned that some scholars have argued for a unity of text which speaks with a Christian voice, though doubtless resting on traditions derived from Jewish sources. So in this vein are Burkitt (Jewish and Christian Apocalypses, 45ff, 72ff); James (The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament, 81ff); and Burch (“The Literary Unity of the Ascension Isaiah” in Journal of Theological Studies XX, 1919, 17ff).

2. The martyrdom narrated in the first section, then, is critically thought to be a Jewish writing of uncertain date, the substance of which was known [so Hebrews 11:37—(*They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented*)] in the 1st century AD. All of the authorities mentioned above in **(1)** believe that the martyrdom was originally Jewish.

3. Ascension of Isaiah 3:13-4:21 (INT says 3:13b-4:18)—a section comprising almost the whole of Charles’ Testament of Hezekiah—is clearly of Christian origin. It is a Christian apocalypse purporting to be a vision of Isaiah’s which he related to Hezekiah, ruler of Judah (716-687BC). This is thought critically true particularly of the passage (4:2ff) that tells of the coming of Christ and of the end of the world. Also in this passage occurs a clear identification with the emperor Nero as Antichrist. He is described as the incarnation of Beliar, the ruler of this world; and as *a lawless king, the slayer of his mother, and the persecutor of the Church, into whose hands one of the twelve Apostles shall be delivered, who shall set himself up as a god and be sacrificed to by all men*. This Neronian Antichrist passage resembles that in Revelation 13, Mark 13 and II Thessalonians 2:1-12. Russell (Between the Testaments, London, 1960, 85) dates this section to the first half of the 1st century AD, and treats it as an independent document. This section Bartlett (The Apostolic Age, 1900, 521ff) believes to have been composed between 64AD (the date of the Neronian martyrdoms) to 68AD (the death of Nero), and preferably 65-66. Beer (Realencyclopaedie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche XVI, 1905, 261) would assign this section to the early 2nd century AD at the earliest, however; and Stokes (in Smith and Wace’s Dictionary of Christian Biography III, 1882, 300) thought the book took its present shape at some time during the 3rd century AD.

B. CHAPTERS 6-11

1. The Vision of Isaiah section is a revelation made to Isaiah by an angel concerning the heavenly world and the passage through it of the *Beloved* and his descend and ascent. This last part belongs to the literary genre of visions, typical of apocalyptic, in which the heavenly world and its secrets are shown to a seer in the course of an ascension to Heaven in which he is assisted by an angel. It is one of the most characteristic features of Jewish-Christian literature. The view that chapters 6-11 is a separate piece is made certain by the fact that the passage is absent from the Latin version first published in 1522; and from the three Slavonic versions as well. (The division of the whole of the Apocalypse of Isaiah into two distinct parts is simultaneously confirmed by the fact that in the versions mentioned only the vision is recorded.) The vision, which describes the ascension of Isaiah through the seven heavens and the revelation of the future redemption through Christ, may have originated in the 2nd century AD. The remaining parts distinguished above are also Christian productions.

2. NTA (II,643) says also that the section 11:2-22 forms an independent unit within chapters 6-11.

3. In addition, although Irenaeus’ Gnostic movement which he describes at Against All Heresies 1:30 does provide the best parallel to this second section of the Apocalypse of Isaiah, the Vision still seems to be a modification of that movement’s basic theology—that a being called Christ united with a human named Jesus, thus producing Jesus Christ, who departed from Jesus before his crucifixion, but who later assisted Jesus in rising from the dead—which is also delivered without the fantastic mythology of extreme Gnosticism. If so, this would tend to place the Vision of Isaiah in the 2nd century AD.

There remains the question of *where* chapters 1-5 were written.

1. They are quite typical of Palestinian Jewish-Christian apocalyptic. On the other hand, they do not exhibit characteristics of the Asiatic community, the millenarianisms (at 4:16) being exhibited in only a very attenuated form. This suggests as the place of composition the center where Palestinian Jewish-Christians seem mostly to have gathered after the year 70AD: namely, in Antioch.

2. With regard to the religious background, there is no reason for assuming that there were especially marked Essenic influences: the use of the term *Beliar* (4:2) was common in Judaism. The setting is therefore that of ordinary Judaism, or more exactly of Jewish gnosis, the distinguishing feature of which is the claim to a knowledge of heavenly mysteries. This does not imply any kind of heterodoxy: there is not a trace of Gnosticism in the book, and its theology of the Trinity and of the Incarnation are archaic, but not heretical. The work is

interesting because it represents an original form of gnosis, an early example of Christian theology, borrowing its modes of expression from the Jewish apocalyptic. Together with the Gospel of Peter it shares a similar Resurrection account, and also the tale of Jesus passing through the seven heavens at His descent, putting on the form of the angels. Similarly, there is a parallel between the great importance to the author of the Ascension of Isaiah of the virginal character of Mary, and that enunciated by the Odes of Solomon.

The application to Christ of the term *Beloved* is in the Ascension of Isaiah, as also at Letter of Baranabas 3:6, a characteristic of a document of a Jewish-Christian type; and it is also the earliest document which refers explicitly to the martyrdom of Peter in Rome (4:3). A further indication of an archaic character to the Ascension is that the Trinitarian theology of the work is expressed in terms of angelic beings. And there is the fact that the author expects the end of the world to be near—the statement that there would be some who knew Jesus living at the time of his Second Coming, together with the resemblances to the Received apocalypse, might indicate a late 1st century or early 2nd century date of composition. The simple church organization—only elders, shepherds, and a diminishing number of prophets are mentioned—indicates a similar period, as does the blame placed upon the Jews alone for the crucifixion of Jesus. The complete silence concerning Paul—even though his martyrdom is mentioned—might indicate a time in the early 2nd century AD, when Paul was in eclipse.

[ANE, 704; ANT, 325; DAN, 12-14, 21, 27, 31, 35, 38, 40, 41; ROW, 123-126; NTA, I, 197; II, 307, 642-663,792; INT, 744-746; BET, 85; SCH, 206]

... And after this, I beheld, and the angel who talked with me and conducted me and said to me, "Attend, Isaiah, son of Amoz, because for this purpose have I been sent from God." And I saw the family of David the prophet a woman named Mary, who was a virgin, and betrothed to a man called Joseph, a carpenter, and he also was of the seed and family of the righteous David, of Bethlehem in Judah. And he came to his portion.

And when she was betrothed, it was found that she was with child, and Joseph, the carpenter, wished to put her away. But the angel of the Spirit appeared in this world, and after that Joseph did not put Mary away, but kept her; but he did not reveal the matter to anyone. And he did not approach Mary, but kept her as a holy virgin, although she was with child. And he did not yet live with her for two months.

And after two months, when Joseph was in his house, and his wife Mary, but both alone, it came to pass, while they were alone, that Mary straightway beheld with her eyes and saw a small child, and she was amazed. And when her amazement wore off, her womb was found as it was before she was with child. And when her husband Joseph said to her, "What made you amazed?", his eyes were opened and he saw the child and praised God, that the Lord had come to his portion.

And a voice came to them, "Tell this vision to no one." But the report concerning the child was noised abroad in Bethlehem. Some said, "The virgin Mary has given birth before she was married two months," and many said, "She has not give birth: the midwife has not gone up to her and we have heard no cries of pain." And they were all in the dark concerning him, and they all knew of him, but no one knew whence he was. And they took him and came to Nazareth in Galilee.

And I saw, O Hezekiah and Jasub my son, and declare before the other prophets who stand here that this was hidden from all the heavens and all the princes and every god of this world. And I saw: in Nazareth he sucked the breast like a baby, as was customary, so that he would not be recognized. And when he grew up he performed great signs and wonders in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem. ...

[INT, 744-746]

VI: Infancy Material (the "New Source") in the Arundel and Hereford Manuscripts and the *Leabhar Breac*

Introduction

The Arundel and Hereford manuscripts referred to here are Latin works, first edited in 1927 by M. R. James (Latin Infancy Gospels, 1927), from two manuscripts: **(a)** the so-called Hereford Manuscript (13th century), and **(b)** the Arundel Manuscript (14th century). The Hereford writing comes from the library of the Dean and Chapter of Hereford Cathedral, and may have belonged to the Grey Friars of Hereford; the Arundel folio seems to have come from the Carthusians of Mainz, and, James says, *is in many ways superior to the Hereford MS*. He notes that *in the narrative of the Birth of Christ an entirely new source is used, which retains marked traces of Docetic views, and must in my judgment be as old as the second century*. James calls it *a new form of the Apocryphal*

story of the Birth of the Virgin and the Birth of Christ, in Latin. The fact, he continues, that we are dealing with a document hitherto unfamiliar appears in the first lines of paragraph 69; and the last episode in which the source appears is in that of the Magi. (Indeed, it may be taken to disappear in Arundel with the words *detinuit autem eos*, and in Hereford with the words *letantesque in bonis domini*.) The new matter is copious, and it is of a complexion quite different from that which we have been reading in the first part of the book. Symeon, a son of Joseph, is named as the source of the information it contains: the choice of Symeon to fill the part of eyewitness, and be the prominent one among Joseph's sons, to the complete exclusion of James, who is not only prominent in early tradition but actually figures in the *Infancy Gospel of James* as the narrator of the history, is very notable.

Since the story of the birth of Jesus in this gospel is strongly docetic in character, and since among the patristic writers Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 325) in *Catech.* XII does once or twice coincide with the Source (specifically at paragraph 78), James has raised the question whether perhaps we have here a source comparable with the docetic *Gospel of Peter* (c.200AD). According to my lights, he says, we have to find a second-century gospel of Docetic complexion which may be presumed to have contained a narrative of the nativity. I can think of but one such book, and that is the *Gospel of Peter*: and, as I have already said in one or two magazine articles, I favor the idea that from the *Gospel of Peter* our New Source was taken. Certainty in this matter, however, is unattainable (so NTA) without close comparison of the manuscripts with all the rest of the material.

In addition to the Latin of the New Source of these two manuscripts, James notes that since 1895 there has been in print an Irish version of a good deal of the matter of our new Latin text. Father E. Hogan, S. J., in his *Legends and Homilies from the Leabar Brecc* (R. I. A. Todd lectures Series, vol. VI) gives us the *Legends of the Childhood of Christ* from that famous MS., with an English version, which the kindness of the Council of the Royal Irish Academy allows me to use freely here. Quite recently, he continues, further light has come from Irish sources. Mr Robin Flower in his admirable *Catalogue of the Irish MSS. In the British Museum* (vol. ii., 1926, p. 534) describes a fragmentary copy of the text published by Father Hogan, and adds some illuminating notes, among them the references to the MS Arundel 404 which led me to examine that copy.

I reprint here the relevant part of the Irish legend (Appendix C, below; his short survey of their relationship to the Latin follows in Appendix D). Father Hogan has divided his whole volume into numbered sections, which are convenient for purposes of references. Those which concern us more or less directly are nos 58-108.

Besides the *Leabhar Breac* and the extracts in Egerton 1781 (xv. cent.) described by Mr Flower, a little more evidence from Ireland is available, and very probably yet more will be forthcoming. But it is very noteworthy that the Gospel-book written in 1138 at Armagh by Maelbrigte (now MS. Harley 1802) has one or two marginal annotations drawn from our text. The most remarkable of these was found and printed by Mr Flower (l.c. p. 535) [it is not printed here: H]. ... The real importance of these notes is that they prove that our text was current in Ireland early in the twelfth century. (It is also noteworthy that we have here to do with an Infancy source which has turned up on the Continent, and in England and Ireland, evidence of a rather widespread circulation. H)

What follows, then, are the sections of both Latin manuscripts, in parallel columns of Latin, in which the New Source is to be found, numbered according to James.

In addition, James has taken the trouble to translate into English both sections of Arundel and Hereford dealing with chapters 73-74; and they, too, will be found here, in comparative parallel columns, appended to the end of the Latin transcription as Appendix A. (NTA provides a more modern translation, but from only one of the manuscripts, and I have thus made use of James' work in preference to it.)

After this, I have printed Hogan's Irish version of James' entire Latin New Source (as Appendix C); and after that James' comparison of it with his Latin New Source (the analysis of the Irish version in the left hand column, and the analysis of the Latin version in the right as it appears in the numbered paragraphs of the Irish).

See also on this:

1. Robinson (in *Journal of Theological Studies* 1928, 205-207);

2. Lagrange (in Revue Biblique, 1928, 544-557);
3. Capelle (in Revue Benedictine 1929, 79ff);
4. Bonaccorsi (in Vangeli Apocrifi I, 1948, 232-259, extracts, Italian translation);
5. Ferri (in Studi Mediolantini e Volgari I, 1955, 119-125); and
6. de Santos Otero (Los Evangelios Apocrifos, 1956, 276-292, extracts, Spanish translation).

[NTA, I, 406-407; MRJ, preface; LIG, ix-xxxi, 64-89]



Thomas Howard, 21st Earl of Arundel (1586-1646). W says that he was a prominent English courtier during the reigns of King James I and King Charles I, but he made his name as a Grand Tourist and art collector rather than as a politician. When he died he possessed 700 paintings, along with large collections of sculpture, books, prints, drawings, and antique jewellery. Most of his collection of marble carvings, known as the Arundel marbles, was eventually left to the University of Oxford. ... Arundel's important collection of manuscripts passed on his death to his son, the 22nd Earl, and later to his grandson, Henry Howard (afterwards 6th Duke of Norfolk). In 1666, Howard divided the collection between the Royal Society and the College of Arms. The Royal Society sold its portion to the British Museum in 1831, and they now form the Arundel manuscripts within the British Library.

Arundel Manuscript

69. Et introierunt in speluncam. Dixitque ei Ioseph Vade visita Mariam. Et cum vellet intrare in interiorem speluncam timuit eo quod lux magna resplendebat in ea que non defecit neque in die neque per noctem quam diu ibi Maria mansit. Dixit ergo Ioseph Marie Ecce Zachelem obstetricem adduxi tibi que ecce foris stat ante speluncam. que pre splendore nimio huc intrare non audet nec enim potest. Audiens hec Maria subrisit. cui dixit Ioseph Noli subridere sed cauta esto, venit enim ut inspiciat te ne forte indigeas medicina. Et iussit eam intrare ad se et stare cepit ante eam. Cumque per horarum spacium permisisset se Maria scrutari exclamauit obstetrix voce magna et dixit Domine deus magne, miserere, quoniam hoc nunquam nec auditum adhuc nec visum est sed neque in suspicionem habitum ut mamille plene sint lacte et natus masculus suam matrem virginem ostendat. Nulla pollucio sanguinis facta est in nascente, nullus dolor in parturiente apparuit. Virgo concepit, virgo peperit et postea quam peperit uirgo perdurat.\fn{Ps M. xiii. 3.}

70. Cumque tardaret obstetrix in spelunca introiuit Ioseph, occurritque illi obstetrix et prodierunt ambo foris inueneruntque Symeonem stantem, et interrogauit eam Symeon dicens Domina, quid agitur de puella? Potest aliquam spem uite habere? Dicit illi obstetrix Quid dicis, homo? Reside et narrabo tibi rem admirabilem. Et eleuans oculos ad celum obstetrix clara voce dixit Pater omnipotens quid est <quod> hoc vidi tale miraculum in quo stupeo? Que sunt opera mea quod digna fui videre sancta tua sacramenta, ut illa hora preparares ancillam tuam huc venire et videre mirabilia bonorum tuorum, domine? Quid faciam? quomodo possum enarrare que vidi? Dicit ei Symeon Rogo te ut quod vidisti indices mihi. Dicit illi obstetrix Non te latebit hec res, quod multorum bonorum est. Itaque intende in verba mea et in corde tuo retine.\fn{New.}

71. Cum introissem ad puellam inspiciendam inueni eam faciem sursum habentem et intendentem in celum et secum loquentem. Ego very suspicor quia or-

Hereford Manuscript

69. Et introduxit eam secum in hospicium. Erat autem uespera. Intranses uero uiderunt lumen splendidissimum radiare in circuitu spelunce ubi erat Maria, ita ut non auderet illuc mulier approximare. Accedens autem Ioseph ad Mariam dixit ei Ecce adduxi tibi obstetricem Zelam honestam, que pro foribus stat, quoniam pre splendore luminis huius huc accedere non potest. Audiens autem Maria subrisit iussitque eam introducere ad se. Veniens ergo Ioseph ad obstetricem dixit ei Ingredere, precepit enim tibi domina, et uisita eam. Tunc introiuit obstetrix ad Mariam in speluncam, in qua non deficiebat lux permanens neque in die neque in nocte. Cum autem permisisset eam se scrutari, exclamauit uoce magna cum admiratione obstetrix dicens Domine deus magne et omnipotens, miserere, quoniam hoc nunquam auditum est nec visum, ut mamille plene sint lacte et natus masculus suam matrem ostenderet uirginem. Nulla pollucio sanguinis apparuit in nascente, nullus dolor factus est in pariente. Virgo concepit. uirgo peperit. et postquam peperit uirgo perdurat.\fn{as A.}

70. Cum autem diu multum <que> duraret obstetrix in spelunca cum Maria, tandem circa cantum gallorum uoluit Ioseph intrare ad eos et scire quomodo ageretur cum Maria. At occurrit ei obstetrix et exeuntes ambo foris inuenerunt Symeonem expectantem. Statim uero interrogauit Symeon obstetricem dicens Cum domina mea quomodo agitur? Respondit eis obstetrix et dicit eis Sedete hic, et ego uobis narrabo ualde mirabilia dei que omnis uiuens homo obstupescat et mirabitur. Hec dicens mulier leuauit manus suas et oculos ad celum et uoce clara dixit Omnipotens domine deus, pater celi et terre, que sum ego que uiderem tanta magnalia tua? uel que sunt opera mea in conspectu tuo quod dignam me fecisti uidere sancta tua sacramenta? et preparasti me ancillam tuam ministram fieri misteriorum celestium, ut huc uenirem et uiderem mirabilia operum tuorum? Domine, quid faciam? Quomodo queam enarrare ea que me uidere fecisti? Dicit ei Symeon Rogo tamen ut quicquid uideris indices, nec abscondas a nobis. Tunc dicit obstetrix Itaque intendite uerba mea atque firma memoria in corde uestro retine<te>. Absit hoc a me, ut quicquam a uobis abscondam. nec uos atebit hec res que tantorum bonorum est.\fn{as A.}

71. Cum enim introissem ad puellam inspiciendam inueni eam faciem suam sursum habentem atque in celum intendentem secumque loquentem. Intellexi

abat et benedicebat altissimum. Cum ergo venissem ad eam dixi ei Filia, dic michi, non aliquem dolorem sentis aut aliquis locus membrorum tuorum tenetur dolori<bus>? Illa autem quasi que nichil audiret et sicut solida petra ita immobilis permanebat, in celum intendens.\fn{New.}

72. In illa hora requieuerunt omnia silencio maximo cum timore. Nam et venti cessauerunt non dantes flatum suum neque aliquis ex foliis arborum motus est neque aquarum sonitus auditus est neque mouerunt se flumina neque maris fluctuatus erat, et omnia aquarum nascentia siluerunt neque vox hominum sonuit, et erat silentium magnum. Nam et ipse populus (polus) cessauit ab ea hora ab agilitate cursus. Mensure horarum pene transierant. omnia cum timore magno siluerant stupencia †nos expectantes aduentum altitudinis <dei> terminum seculorum.\fn{New. cf. Prot. xviii. No second † is indicated.}

73. Cum erego approximaui hora processit virtus dei in palam. Et stans puella intuens in celum ut uninea facta est. Iam enim procedebat terminus bonorum. Cum vero processisset lux adorauit eum que se vidit enixam. Erat autem ipse infans solummodo (solis modo) circumfulgens uehementer mundus et iocundissimus in respectu, quoniam totum pax pacans solus apparuit. In illa autem hora qua natus est audita ext vox multorum inuisibilium una voce dicencium Amen. Et ipsa lux que nata est multiplicata est et de claritate luminis sui solis lumen obscurauit. et repleta est hec spelunca lumine claro cum odore suauissimo. Sic autem nata est hec lux quemadmodum ros de celo descendit super terram. Nam odor illius super omnem odorem unguentorum fragrat.\fn{New.}

74. Ego autem steti stupens et mirans et timor apprehendit me. Intendebam enim in tantam claritatem luminis nati. Ipsa autem lux paulisper in se residens assimilauit se infanti et in continenti factus est infans ut solent infantes nasci. et assumpsi audaciam et inclinaui me et tetigi eum, leuauique eum in manibus meis cum magno timore, et perterrita sum quod non erat pondus in eo sicut hominis nati. et insepexi eum, et non erat in eo aliqua coinquinatio, sed erat quasi in rore dei altissimi totus nitidus corpore, leuis ad portandum, splendidus ad respiciendum. et dum nimis mirarer eo quod non ploraret sicut soliti sunt nati infantes plorare, et dum tenuissem eum in faciem eius inten-

autem quod oraret et benediceret deum altissimum. Dixique ad eam Dic mihi filia si aliquem dolorem sentis uel aliquam molestiam membrorum tuorum pateris? Illa autem quasi nichil audiret et sicut petra immobilis celum tantum intendens permanebat.\fn{as A.}

72. In ipsa autem hora quiescebant omnia cum summo silentio. Nam et uenti cessauerunt nullum dantes amplius faltum, neque aliquod folium arborum motum est, neque aquarum sonus quisquam auditus est, nec mouerunt se flumina. sed nec ulla uox hominum. uolucrum. bestiarum aut nullius animalis penitus super terram audiebatur Ipsa etiam celi sidera cessauerunt ab agilitate sui cursus. Erat itaque maximum silentium super omnem terram, quia erant omnia stupentia et expectantia aduentum altitudinis magni dei quasi terminum seculorum.\fn{as A.}

73. Cum autem appropinquaret hora ut procederet in palam uirtus dei, perstitit puella immobiliter intuens in celum. Iam enim adueniebat tempus omnium bonorum uel benedictionum. Et cum processisset infans deus de uentre uirginis matris, statim ipsa que genuit prima adorauit eum quem uidit se enixam. Est autem infans ad modum solis circumfulgens uehementer. Mundissimus itaque est et iocundissimus aspectu super omnes pueros. Ideoque in illo pax uera omni mundo aduenit. In illa ergo hora qua egressus est de matre audita est uox multitudinis inb sublimitate celi clarissime dicens Amen, amen, amen. deo alleluia. Ipsa quoque lux que iam nata est claritate lucis sue obumbrabat solis lucem. Nam et hec spelunca impleta est lumine claro et omni odore suauissimo. Sic autem nata est hec lux quemadmodum nascitur ros qui de celo descendit in terram. Odor etiam illius est super omnem odorem unguentorum fragrans.\fn{as A.}

74. Ego autem hec omnia cernens steti stupens ualde et admirans uehementer. Timor enim magnus apprehendit me cum in tantam claritatem nati luminis intendissem. Ipsa uero lux paulisper in sese residere cepit et assimilauit se infanti. Et in continenti splendore natus est infans sicut solent alii infantes nasci. Tunc itaque sumens audatiam inclinaui me ad puerum et postquam adorauit eum ausa sum tangere illum. Leuauit ergo eum in manibus meis timore simul et gaudio repleta ingenti, eo quod eum cum portarem nullum sensi omnio pondus habere. Cum uero eum circumspicerem, non erat in eo aliqua coinquinatio, sed omni gratia plenus et quasi in rore dei altissimi totus (? lotus), corpore ni-

dens risit ad me iocundissimum risum, aperiensque oculos intendit in me argute, et subito [r]egressa est lux magna de oculis eius tanquam choruscus magnus.\fn{New.}

75. Symeon audiens autem hec respondit. O beata mulier que digna fuisti hoc nouum visum et sanctum videre ac predicare, et ego felix sum qui hec audierim licet non uiderim sed tamen crediderim. Dicit illi obstetrix Habeo tibi indicare adhuc rem mirabilem ut stupeas. Respondit Symeon Indica domina, quod hec audiendo gaudeo. Dicit ei obstetrix Illa <hora> qua tuli infantem in manus meas vidi eum mundum corpus habentem et non coinquinatum sicut solent homines cum immundicia nasci. et existimaui in corde meo ne casu intus in matrice puelle fetus secandi (secundi) remansissent. solet enim mulieribus contingere in partu et ex ea causa periclitari et deficere animo. Statimque vocaui Ioseph et dedi infantem in manibus eius Et accessi ad puellam et tetigi eam et inueni eam mundam a sanguine. Quomodo autem referam? quid dicam? Non mecum conuenio. ignoro quomodo possim narrare tantam claritatem dei viui. Tu autem domine testis es mihi quod tetigi eam manibus meis et inueni hanc puellam que genuit, uirginem non solum a partu sed et <.....>\fn{New. James indicates here dittography for about 1¼ lines of his text.}

76. Dixit ad eam Symeon Dedit tibi aliquam mercedem? Respondit obstetrix Ego magis debeo mercedem et gratiam et oracionem et promisi sacrificium immaculatum deo offerre qui dignatus est me huius sacramenti inspectricem et consciam esse. Nam ego per me ipsam munus offero pro muneribus que offeruntur in templo domini. ¶ Et hec dicens ait ad discipulam suam Filiola tolle cathedram et eamus. Hodie enim vidit mea senectus parturientem sine doloribus et uirginem peperisse. si tamen debeat dici hic partus. Suspicio enim in animo meo quod tradidit se voluntati dei qui permanet in secula. Et hec dicens ibat cum illa.\fn{New.}

tidus, in portando leuis ac splendidus in respiciendo. Illa igitur hora qua tuli infantem <in> manus meas Respiciens uidi eum corpus habere mundissimum et nulla parte coinquinatum sicut solent alii infantes cum immundicia nasci. Deum autem intra me stupens ualde hec mirarer, etiam animaduerti quia non ploraret sicut omnes solent homines primum nati plorare. sed insuper dum super genua mea tenerem eum intendens in dulcissimam faciem illius, risit ad me iocundissimo risu intendens oculis in me nimis argute. et subito processit ex oculis eius lux magna tanquam coruschus.\fn{as A.}

75. Et quia solet mulieribus par<i>entibus aliquocies contingere cogitauit in corde meo ne casu aliquo intus in matrice puelle fetus secundi residissent et ex ipsa cura eam periclitari atque animo deficere timebam. Accessi ad eam et pertrectans manibus meis inueni eam penitus ab omni non solum sanguine sed etiam aliqua corporis pollutione uel macula omni genere esse mundissimam. Sed quomodo hec referam? Vel quid dicam? Non me tante gratie condignam inuenio quo possim enarrare tanta dei magnalia que in hoc uidi partu deifico. Tu autem, domine deus magne et misericors, testis mihi es quod manibus meis tetigi diligentius eam, inuenique hanc puellam que genuit hunc puerum esse uirginem non solum ante partum sed etiam post natum ex ea masculum. Igitur cum hec omnia ita uidissem, exclamans uoce magna benedixi dominum deum Israel ac magnificaui. ¶ Cum autem hoc audiisset ab ea Symeon, mirari cepit ac dicere O beata es, mulier, que digna habita es hanc nouam uisionem uidere et predicare. Ego quoque felicem me estimo qui hec audire, licet non uiderim, et credere me sentio. Statim autem obstetrix dedit infantem in manus Ioseph. Ioseph uero inuoluit eum in pannis et posuit ibi in presepio.\fn{as A, but altered in order and with omissions.}

76. Tunc dixit ad obstetricem Symeon Ergo quam mercedem tibi dabimus? Respondit illa Magis autem ego debeo mercedem laudacionis et gratiarum acciones inpendere deo meo qui me dignam facere dignatus est huius tanti sacramenti inspectricem esse et ministram Et quia promisi me sacrificium immaculatum offerro in templum domini Magis ego memetipsam offerro munus prop muneribus deo omnipotenti. ¶ Et cum hec dixisset obstetrix, ait ad discipulam suam Tolle filiola cathedram nostram et abeamus. hodie enim uidi in mea senecta mirabile dei, scilicet uirginem parientem et sine omni dolore enixam infantem. Vere enim agnosco de hac puella

quod tradidit se uoluntati dei, cuius timor castus permanet in seculum seculi. Hec itaque cum locuta est recesserunt utreque a loco.\fn{as A. }

77. Factum est ergo dum ambulat occurrit eis alia obstetrix nomine Salome et salutauerunt se inuicem. Dicit ei obstetrix Nouam rem habeo tibi dicere, Salome. Illa respondit. Quid tale est? Obstetrix dicit Virgo peperit masculum, et natura uirginis clausa permanet, quod difficile aliquando visum est. Dicit ei Salome Viuit dominus plane quia nisi ipsa probauero non credam uirginem peperisse. Ait illi obstetrix Eamus pariter ad eam. cumque introissent ad Mariam dixit ei Salome. Filia, tu patere ut conspiciam te et cognoscam si hec que Rachel dixit michi uera sunt. Cum hoc permisisset Maria, in conspectu suo scrutauit diligenter, et ita inuenit quemadmodum dixerat ei obstetrix.\fn{Prot. xix.3, xx. Ps M. xiii.4. }

78. Ut autem abstraxit manum suam dexteram ab inspectu subito arefacta est ex splendore nimio. Et pro dolore cepit uehementissime angustiari, et flens clamabat dicens Ve iniquitati et incredulitati mee quoniam temptaui dominum, et ecce manus mea ardet ab igne. Et figens genua coram domino dixit. Domine deus patrum meorum memor esto mei quoniam ex semine sum Abrahe Ysaac et Icabod Ne modo prodigium hoc facias filiis Israel. et redde me pauperibus tuis, domine. tu nosti quod semper te timui et in tuo nomine hiis omnem curam exhibui et omnes pauperes sine acceptione curaui uel si tribulationem intuli et mercedem meam a te expectaui. a uidua et orphano nichil accepti et inopem a me uacuum non dimisi. et ecce misera facta sum propter incredulitatem meam quoniam audenter accessi temptare uirginem tuam que peperit magnum lumen. uirgo post partum permanens.\fn{Prot. xix.3, xx. Ps M. xiii.4. }

79. Et cum hec loqueretur apparuit ante eam iuuenis splendidus dicens ei. Salome accedens ad puerum adora eum. infer manum tuam et continge, et ipse eam saluam faciet. quia ipse est qui te saluabit saluator mundi et omnium spes credencium in eum. ¶ Et confestim accedens Salome ad puerum dixit Domine, tangamne te an primum adorem te? ¶ Et adorans infantem tangit fimbrias pannorum in quibus erat in-

77. Factum est autem illis abeuntibus [ut] occurrit eis in uia alia obstetrix cui nomen erat Salome. Cui dicit Zelam Nouam rem habeo tibi dicere, O Salome. at illa Quid itaque est? Illa respondit Uirginem uidi hodie enixam masculum filium, et naturalia uirginis integra et clausa permanentia sunt, quod nunquam ante hoc in mundo uisum est nec auditum. Dicit ei Salome Et est uir quem uirgo peperit? Respondit altera Virgo igitur uirum peperit. Dixit itaque Salome Viuit dominus quod non credam unquam uirginem peperisse nisi ipsa probauero mittamque ipsa manus meas diligenter perscrutans eam. Et ait ei Zelam Eamus itaque reuertentes ad eam pariter. Et cum peruenientes introissent iterum ad Mariam Dicit ei Salome Patere ut te perspiciam, domina quatinus agnoscere ualeam si uera sint que mihi Zelam de te indicauit. Cumque Maria libenti animo permisisset, mittens Salome manum suam diligentissime eam perscrutari cepit et ita omnia inuenit quemadmodum ei Zelam obstetrix dixerat.\fn{as A. }

78. Ut autem manum suam abstrahere ad se uoluit, statim arida facta est. Etenim pro nimio dolore anxiosa clamare cepit, flere ac dicere. Ve ue iniquitati et incredulitati mee, que temptare presumpsi dominum deum. ob hoc ecce manus mea temeraria ardet igne inuisibili et incomparabili. Tandem autem rediens ad se ipsam fixit genua sua in orationem ad dominum his uerbis deprecans Domine deus Israel, momento patrum meorum et miserere mei quoniam sum ex semine Abraham, et non facias me prodigium in Israel que semper te timui et pro tuo nomine curam pauperibus orphanis ac uiduis semper exhibui. Domine, tu scis quomodo omnes pauperes tuos sine ullius rei acceptione studui curare, nichil unquam mercedis a quoquam accipiens. inopes uacuos non dimisi. Et ecce propter meam incredulitatem misera ipsa facta sum propter quod audacter presumpsi accedere et temptare uirginem tuam que mundo lumen magnum hodie peperit Et post partum uirgo permanebit.\fn{as A. }

79. Cum autem hec orando loqueretur, apparuit ante eos iuuenis facie splendidus, qui dixit ad eam Si uis tibi, mulier sanitatem perditam redintegrare, accedens ad natum puerum infer illi manum tuam, et ipse eam saluam faciet, quia ipse est saluator mundi atque uita et gaudium omnium in se credencium. Et hec dicens disparuit.\fn{At this point James leaves the rest of the printed line of his text blank, and

volutus, statimque sana facta est manus eius. Et exiens foris clamare cepit magnalia virtutum que videbat et que passa fuerat et quemadmodum curata est, ita ut ad predicacionem eius multi crederent dicentes Hic puer qui filius dei est Rex natus est in Israel.\fn{Ps M. xiii.5. (Prot. xx.)}

80. Iter autem facientibus obstetrice et Salome facta est vox dicens Salome, vide ne ultra dixeris que vidisti mirabilia donec intret puer in Ierusalem.\fn{Prot. xx.4}

81. Ioseph autem procedens de spelunca in atrio dixit O noua ciuitas O peregrinus partus. quomodo factus sum ego pater ignoro, quoniam ecce hodie natus est mihi filius qui est omnium dominus. Hoc cum diceret exiit ad viam foris dicens Iustum est mihi hodie aliquid querere ad victum nostrum preterea dum sit natalis pueri huius. Credo enim quod hodie in celis gloria magna colitur et gaudium est uniuersis archangelis et omnibus virtutibus celorum. ideoque iustum est mihi hunc diem iustificare in quo gloria dei apparuit in omnem terram.\fn{New.}

82. Et cum hec diceret vidit pastores venientes et ad alterutrum dicentes Circuimus ecce totam Bethleem et non inuenimus quod dictum est nobis extra ciuitatem Intremus ergo et in hiis locis queramus proximis. Dixit ad eos Ioseph Numquid agnum aut hedum venalem habetis vel gallinas vel oua? at illi dixerunt ei Nichil horum sic habemus nobiscum. Dixit eis Ioseph Nec herbas rusticas aut caseum? Responderunt ei O homo, quare derides nos? Propter aliam rem magnam venimus, et tu nos interrogas de rebus venalibus. Dicit eis Ioseph Quid est propter quod venistis? At illi dixerunt Si audis miraberis. Dicit eis Ioseph Si dixeritis mihi et ego vobis dicam rem mirabilem quam habeo in hospitali meo.\fn{New.}

83. Dicunt ei pastores In hac nocte que transiit vigilantes sedebamus in monte et luna orta est clara tanquam dies serenus, nos autem secundum consuetudinem custodiebamus pecora nostra propter fures uel lupos, et eramus nobis inuicem fabulas nar-

begins his next (the following) sentence flush-left.} Confestim autem Salome accedens ad presepe in quo reclinatus infans iacebat adorauit primum prostrata in terram dixitque cum tremore. ¶ Domine rex nate, redime me a calumpniis hominum ut predicare merear aduentum tuum gloriosum in hunc mundum, et fac me dignam tangere presepe tuum splendidum et honorabile quatinus recuperetur manui mee sanitas quam per incredulitatem meam amittere merui. ¶ Et hec dicens cum manu extenta tangeret presepe et pannos infantis statim pristinae sanitati restituta est manus eius. Exiens autem de spelunca clamare cepit uoce magna et dicere Iste puer qui hic hodie natus est filius dei uerus et rex Israel est.\fn{as A, with expansion.}

80. Cum autem egressa essent inde ut reuerterentur dixit Zelam obstetrix ad Salome Vide ne indicaueris ulli homini omnia mirabilia domini que uidisti hodie usquequo puer ueniat in Ierusalem.\fn{as A.}

81. Post hec autem Ioseph egressus de spelunca illa processit et stetit in atrio ciuitatis et clara uoce dixit O peregrina ciuitas. O nouus hodie partus. Et quomodo factus sum ego pater ignoro, quoniam ecce natus est dominus uniuerse creature. Iustum est igitur hodie cum sit natalis talis pueri Et nos procurare aliquid ad uictum nostrum. Credo enim quod hodie in celis gloria sit et gaudium magnum uniuersis angelis et archangelis et omnibus uirtutibus oculorum (celorum) eorum. Ideoque est oportunum et mihi diem hunc glorificare in quo gloria dei apparuit in terra.\fn{as A, with omissions.}

82. Hec autem secum cum Ioseph loqueretur uidet eminus pastores ouium tres properantes. Et cum aproximarent audiuit inter se colloquentes Ergo peragrauimus totam Bethleem et necdum inuenimus quod promissum est nobis. Eamus itaque extra ciuitatem Forte in istis proximis locis reperiemus gaudium de quo dictum est nobis Audiens hec Ioseph accedens ad eos sic locutus est Dicite mihi, propter quid uenistis?\fn{as A, with omissions.}

83. Qui dixerunt ad eum Ista nocte que iam transiit uigilantes uigilias noctis circa pecora nostra eramus consistentes in monte, et ecce orta est luna clarissima quasi esset dies serenus Et cum de hac luce admodum leti et exhilarati inuicem nos cohor-

rantes. alii autem cantantes et in inuicem nos abalienantes. et valde leti eramus in illa hora. Cum autem hec inter nos agerentur subito apparuit nobis vir magnus et potens ab oriente veniens Venit ergo ad nos circumfulgens in claritate dei et in circuitu eius magnam multitudinem quadrigarum vidimus, cumque vidissemus nimio pauore perterriti cecidimus in facies nostras. Illa (Ille) autem magna voce dixit nobis Nolite timere pastores. ecce enim veni ad uos euangelizare vobis claritatem dei et gaudium magnum non solum vobis sed et omnibus gentibus, qui <a> est <natus> hodie Christus dominus qui est saluator omnium virtutum celorum et hominum. Ecce hodie manifestatus est in Bethleem ciuitate Daud. Itaque ite et inuenietis eum pannis inuolutum et positum in presepio. Ipse est enim filius dei qui venit dare gentibus et omnibus in eum credentibus vitam eternam. Et cum hec dixisset nobis audiuius voces multorum de celis angelorum cantantium et dicentium Gloria in altissimis deo et in terra pax hominibus bone voluntatis. ¶ Hec autem dicebant cantantes sed et alia multa. et ideo huc venimus ut respiciamus hec. videamus et donum dei secundum quod dictum est nobis. \fn{New.}

84. Hoc audito Ioseph dixit. Non mihi continget ut ego vobis abscondam hoc mysterium Venite itaque et videte. Ecce enim ipse puer qui natus est hic est in hospicio meo. Ipse est Christus dominus. Dicunt ei pastores Benedicte homo ostende nobis ipsum puerum. Dicit eis Ioseph. Venite et videte ubi positus est in presepio. Qui abierunt simul. ¶ Cumque intendissent in presepio et uidissent puerum procidentes adorauerunt eum. dixeruntque ad Ioseph Vidimus puerum dei gracia plenum. nos autem adorabimus archanum eius. Ipse autem respiciens nos risit iocundissime per effigies multas semper species mutans. Primum ostendit se nobis quod sit iocundissimus, quod sit austerus et timendus, sit suauissimus et humanus Iterum vero pusillus et magnus. Et subito cum aperuisset oculos, ex oculis illius lux magna et de ore eius exiit odor suauissimus. Dixerunt ergo ei O beatissime homo, qualis tibi natus est filius qui te saluum faciat. Et quia nos dignatus es cum pace suscipere et permisisti nos in domum tuam interiore et dei claritatem uidere, petimus te ut venias in conuentum omnium nostrum, ut simul iocundemur, quia uniuersi pastores offerimus munera deo omnipotenti. Unde rogamus te ut non fastidiaris venire, ut hodie nobiscum epuleris. \fn{New.}

tantes gratularemur, subito apparuit nobis uir quidam magnus et potens ab oriente descendens ad nos, habens in circuitu suo magnam multitudinem quadrigarum. Nos autem ut eum uidimus ita uenientem ad nos nimio pauore perterriti cecidimus in terram. Ille autem cum magna uoce locutus est nobis dicens Nolite timere, O pastores, propter aduentum meum, quia ecce ueni euangelizare claritatem dei et gaudium magnum attuli uobis, non solum autem uobis sed et omni populo. cunctisque gentibus terrarum, quia hodie natus est nobis in Israel Christus magnus qui est saluator omnium uirtutum celorum et hominum in mundo. et ecce hodie manifestabitur in Bethleem. Ite ergo illuc, et inuenietis eum pannis inuolutum et positum in presepio animalium, qui est uerus filius dei et ipse uenit dare pacem gentibus et uitam eternam. Hec adhuc eo nobis loquente Audiuius uocem magnam de celis multorum angelorum cantantium et dicentium Gloria in altissimis deo et in terra pax hominibus bone uoluntatis. ¶ Hec autem et alia que erant ad audiendum dulcia cantantes dicebant. et ideo huc properauimus ut uideamus et recipiamus donum dei secundum quod dictum est nobis. \fn{as A, with omissions.}

84. Respondit autem eis Ioseph Et mihi igitur absit ut gloriam dei abscondam nec celem uobis misterium cuius factus sum con<s>cuis et minister Venite itaque et uidete gratiam domini. Ecce enim ipse puer qui hodie mundo nasci dignatus est hic in mea mansione uideri potest. Dixerunt pastores O homo benedicte, ostende nobis ipsum puerum ut eum possimus adorare. Dicit eis Ioseph Ergo intrate et uidete eum positum in presepio. Cui (Qui) ingressi uiderunt puerum in presepe uagentem, et procidentes adorauerunt eum. Post hec egressi ad Ioseph dixerunt Vidimus itaque puerum gratia dei plenum, quem cum adorarem aperuit in nos oculos suos arrisitque nobis iocundissime Mutauit autem etiam effigiem Et primo se nobis ostendebat hylarem atque iocundum, de-inde austerum et metuendum. Hinc suauissimum et humanum Postea uero pusillum et magnum. Cumque leuaret in nos oculos suos, subito processit ex oculis eius lux magna Et de ore eius odor suauissimus egrediebatur. O beatum te hominem, cui talis filius hodie natus est. Et quia nos in pace suscepisti et permisisti in domum tuam intrare et dei claritatem intueri Petimus ut digneris ad conuentum humilitatis nostre una uenire, quatinus simul de benedictione domini iocundemur, quia uniuersi pastores hodie munera domino deo omnipotenti oblaturi sunt. Rogamus ergo te ut non tibi sit fastidium uenire nobiscum Ut epulemur hodie in domo. \fn{New.}

85. Dicit eis Ioseph. Bene quidem fecistis quod ita locuti estis. Ago gracias, mihi autem non est iustum venire uobiscum et relinquere puerum cum matre eius. sed plane scitote me uobiscum esse. Dicunt ei pastores. Ergo quia tibi sic placuit nos pergitis, et mandamus tibi pingue lactis et recentes caseos. dicit eis Ioseph Ite cum pace. at illi abierunt gaudentes et glorificantes deum, asserentes hoc quod angelos uiderunt in media nocte ymnum dicentes deo et ab ipsis audierunt quod natus saluator hominum esset qui est Christus dominus in quo restitueretur salus Israel. \fn{*New. Asserentes—salus Israel, Ps M. xiii.6.*}

86. Tercia autem dies tunc erat. ad ipsum uero presepium bos et asinus genua flectentes adorabant. Tunc impletum est quod dictum <est> per Ysaiaem prophetam Agnouit bos possessorem suum et asinus presepium domini sui. Ipsa autem animalia in medio habentes eum flectebant genua adorantes eum ut impleretur quod dictum est per Abacug prophetam dicentem In medio duorum animalium innotesceris. In eodem autem loco commorati sunt cum infante tribus diebus. Sexta autem die Bethleem ingressi sunt <et ibi> compleuerunt septimum diem. Octauo autem die circumcisione completa nomen accepit quo uocatus est ab angelo infans. Postquam autem dies purgacionis illuxit habuerunt nota (uota) pauperum quod not fuerat eis supplementum diuitum. \fn{*Ps M. xiv, xv.1.*}

87. Ioseph autem post dies paucos id est die tredecimo [] \fn{**James indicates here this size of bracketed gap.**} respiciens ad uiam itineris uidit turbam uiatorum ueniencium ad speluncam. \fn{*New.*}

88. Nam et stella ingens a uespere usque ad matutinum super speluncam splendebat, cuius magnitudo nunquam uisa fuerat ab origine mundi. Nam et prophete qui erant in Ierusalem dicebant hanc stellam indicare natiuitatem Christi qui restaurare promissus est non solum Israel sed et omnes gentes. \fn{*Ps M. xiii.7.*}

88a. Venerunt autem ab oriente in Iherosolimam <magi> munera deferentes magna, qui instanter interrogabant Iudeos dicentes Ubi est rex Iudeorum qui natus est? Uisa <enim> eius in oriente stella [et] cognouimus eius aroma (? horoma, horama), uenimusque adorandi eum gracia. ¶ Hec opinio perueniens ad Herodem regem turbauit eum et ita terruit ut mitteret ad scribas et Phariseos et doctores populi et inquireret ab eis ubi nasciturum Christum prophete

85. Respondit eis Ioseph et dixit Gratias quidem ago quod ita locuti estis. sed mihi iustum non uidetur in presenti ire uobiscum et relinquere puerum cum matre sua. Verumptamen plane scire uos uolo nos uobiscum esse. Dixerunt ei pastores Cum ita tibi placet, ecce transmittemus huc pinguedinem lactis et mellis et recentes caseos, postulantes quod hec recipere non renuas. Tunc dixit eis Ioseph Ite in pace domini cum benedictione. Illi autem abierunt gaudentes et glorificantes deum. \fn{*New.*}

86. Illis siquidem recedentibus erant ad ipsum presepe Bos et asinus iugiter genua flectentes et adorantes dominum. Tunc adimpleta est propheta quam predixit deus per Ysaiaem prophetam Agnouit bos possessorem suum et asinus presepe domini sui. Ipsa autem animalia in medio eum habentes non cessabant genua sua flectendo adorare ut adimpleretur etiam propheta Abacuc dicentis In medio duorum animalium innotesceris. \fn{*Ps M. xiv.*}

87. Adhuc autem illis in eodem loco degentibus post aliquot dies Ioseph ex eadem spelunca egressus et respiciens ad uiam rectam orientis uidit eminens ueniencem non modicam turbam comeantium uiatorum equitum et ad speluncam properantium. \fn{*New.*}

88. Nam et stella ingentissimi fulgoris splendebat iugiter [et] ad speluncam a uespertino tempore usque in matutinum, que nunquam antea uisa est ab origine mundi. sed et prophete qui fuerunt eo tempore in Ierusalem dicebant hanc stellam natiuitatem regis Christi indicare qui adueniret nascens restaurare non solum gentem Israel se<d e>t omnes gentes mundi. \fn{*Ps. M. xiii.7.*}

88a. \fn{**James has no 88a from the Hereford manuscript.**}

predixerunt. At illi dixerunt ei secundum quod scriptum est quod in Bethleem Iuda que non est minima in principibus Iuda exiret dux qui regeret populum Israel. Tunc Herodes rex vocauit eos ad se et diligenter exquisiuit ab eis quomodo apparuisset eis stella. et dimisit eos, rogans ut diligenter inquirerent et dum inuenirent sibi renunciarent ut et ipse veniens ipsum adoret collatis sibi muneribus optimis promiscuis atque plurimis Euntibus autem in via apparuit stella et quasi ducatum prestaret antecedebat eos quousque peruenirent ubi erat puer. Videntes autem stellam hauserunt (habuerunt?) maximam leticiam.\fn{Ps M. xvi. 1,2.}

89. Ioseph autem videns eos dixit Putas qui sunt hii qui veniunt huc ad nos? Vide<n>tur mihi de longinquo venientes huc appropriare. Igitur surgam et vadam obuam eis. Ergo cum procederet dixit ad Symeonem. Videntur mihi isti qui veniunt agnos (augures) esse. Ecce enim omni non cessant momento respiciunt et inter se disputant. Sed et peregrini mihi videntur esse quod et habitus eorum differt ab habitu nostro; quin illorum vestis amplissima est et color fuscus, Denique et pilleos habent in capitibus suis et in pedibus eorum sunt sarabee velud opere deficientes. Ecce steterunt et me intenderunt. ecce iterum huc veniunt. Cum ergo peruenissent ad speluncam ait ad illos Ioseph Qui estis vos? Dicite mihi. Illi autem audaciter introire volebant. Nam et direxerunt se introire. Et dixit ad eos Ioseph Per uestram salutem dicite mihi qui estis, quod sic vos dirigitis in hospicium meum? Et illi dixerunt Quia noster dux hic coram nobis intrauit. unde quam ob rem interrogas nos huc misit < > \fn{James indicates these brackets with this much space in his text.} Dixit eis Ioseph Rogo uos ut mihi dicatis cuius rei causa huc venistis. Dicunt ei illi Dicimus tibi quod salus communis est.\fn{New.}

90. Videmus(-imus) in celo stellam regis Iudeorum et venimus adorare eum, quia sic scriptum est in libris antiquis de signo stelle huius quod cum hec stella apparuerit nascetur rex eternus et dabit iustis uitam inmortalem. Dicit eis Ioseph Iustum erat ut primum Iherosolimam inquireretis, quod ibi est sanctimonium domini. Responderunt ei Fuimus Iherosolimam et indica<ui>mus regi quod Christus natus est et ipsum querimus. Ille vero dixit nobis Ego quidem ignoro ubi natus sit. continuo vero misit ad omnes inquisitores scripturarum et ad omnes magos et ad principes sacerdotum et doctores, et venerunt ad eum. Interrogauitque eos ubi Christus nasceretur. At illi dixerunt In Bethleem Iude. Sic enim scriptum est de illo Et tu Bethleem terra Iuda

89. Dixit igitur Ioseph ad Symeonem Qui[s] putas sunt isti qui huc festinant ad istam speluncam? De longinqua enim regione uidetur mihi illos aduentare, quoniam et <h>abitus ipse eorum a nostro habitu differt. Nam uestimenta eorum amplissima erant et color corporis eorum fuscus. Denique et pilleos habebant in capitibus, et in pedibus caraballa (saraballa) uelut opere indeficienti. Dixit ergo Ioseph. Surgam et procedam in obuam hominibus istis. uidentur enim mihi inter eos quidam augures esse. Ecce enim omni hora in celum aspiciunt, indeque disputantes sunt Cum autem hec Ioseph dixisset, concito gradu uenientes tetenderunt ad speluncam Dixitque eis Ioseph Per uestram salutem dicite mihi, qui estis uos, et qua causa duxistis iter uestrum huc ad hospitium nostrum? Illi autem dixerunt ad eum Quia dux nostri itineris introiuit huc ante nos. Ab oriente enim uenimus, et deus nos misit huc Causa autem nostri aduentus salus communis est.\fn{New. Matter transposed. }

90. Vidimus enim in regione stellam claritatis immense de celo super regem nuperrime natum huius gentis Iudeorum effulgere, et uenimus huc adorare eum et ei munera nostra offerre. Scriptum est enim in libris antiquissimis de signo huius stelle, quoniam quando hec apparuerit mundo nascitur rex eternus qui dabit iustis uitam inmortalem. Respondit eis Ioseph et dixit Oportebat quidem uos ut hunc Regem natum quem dicitis primum in Ierosolima regia ciuitate requir<er>etis ubi est templum et sanctimonium domini. Illi autem dixerunt ei Et nos quidem in Ierosolima<m> fuimus, et locuti sumus ei qui ibi regnum habere uidetur, et indicauius ei quia Christus in regno suo reuera natus est, quem nos utique adorare et muneribus adho<no>randum de

non eris minima in principibus Iuda. ex te enim exiet dux qui regat populum meum Israel. Quod nos ut audiimus cognouimus et venimus adorare eum. Nam et hec stella que apparuit precessit nos ex quo profecti sumus. Hoerodes vero cum audisset hos sermones timuit et occulte inquisiuit a nobis tempus stelle, quando apparuit et nobis euntibus dixit. Inquire diligenter, et cum inueneritis eum renunciate mihi ut et ego veniam et adorem eum.\fn{New.}

91. Deditque nobis ipse Herodes dyadema suum quo utebatur in capud suum. Hoc autem dyadema mitram habet albam. et anulum regalem gemmam habentem, signum incomparabile quod rex Persarum ei munus misit, precipiens ipse nobis Herodes dare munus hoc puero. Nam et ipse Herodes promisit se munus ei offerendum si reuersi fuerimus ad eum. Et accipientes munera profecti sumus ab Iherosolima. Et ecce stella que apparuerat nobis precessit nos ex quo profecti sumus ab Iherosolima usque in locum istum. Et ecce in hac spelunca intrauit in qua tu stas et non permittis nos ingredi. Dicit eis Ioseph Ego iam uos non neco(-go). sequimini illam, quia deus est dux uester. Preterea non tantum uester sed et omnibus quibus uoluit manifestare gloriam suam. Hec audientes magi introierunt et salutauerunt Mariam dicentes Aue gracia plena, et accedentes ad presepium inspexerunt et uiderunt infantem.\fn{New.}

92. Ioseph uero dixit Symeon fili, intende et uide quid faciant isti peregrini intus. me enim non decet insidiari eis. Et fecit sic. Et dixit patri suo Ecce introeuntes salutauerunt puerum cecideruntque in faciem super terram. et more barbarico adorant eum singulatimque osculantur pedes infantis. Quid est hoc quod faciunt? ignoro. Dicit illi Ioseph Vide diligenter. Respondit Simeon Ecce aperiuunt thesauros suos et offerunt ei munera. Dicit ei Ioseph Que illi offerunt? Symeon respondit Suspikor quod illa munera ei offerunt que misit Herodes rex. Nam ecce obtulerunt ei de peris suis aurum thus et mirram. et Marie multa munera dederunt. Dixit ei oscu-

patriis nostris profecti requir<er>emus. Ipse autem respondit siquidem (se quidem) ignorare locum ubi nasci eum oporteret, sed continuo misit et conuocari ad se precepit omnes inquisitores scripturarum omnesque magos et uniuersos principes sacerdotum et doctores legis eorum. Qui cum uenissent ad eum interrogauit eos diligentissime rex ubi Christum nasci sperarent. At illi responderunt ei dicentes In Bethleem ciuitate Iuda, quia scriptum est de illa olim in prophetia Et tu Bethleem terra Iuda nequaquam minima es in principibus Iuda. ex te enim exiet dux qui regat populum meum Israel. Tunc ergo rex ille cum audisset sermones istos ab eis timuit, et conuocans nos ad se in secreto diligenter inquisiuit a nobis tempus quando primum nobis stella aparuisset. Cui cum consequenter ad inquisita responsum daremus, precepit nobis dicens Euntes igitur studiose querite natum puerum in ciuitate Bethleem Et cum eum inueneritis renunciate mihi iterum huc uenientes Ut et ego possim simul uobiscum ad eum ire et muneribus meis eum adhonore.\fn{New.}

91. Dedit etiam nobis diadema suum quo ipse ante in capite suo utebatur, simul et anulum manus sue Regalem gemmam in se habentem, quem rex Persarum ei miserit iamdudum, signum incomparabile, precipiens nobis hec munera dare puero usquequo ipse ueniens per se ipsum sua ei dona nobiscum offerat. Tunc nos acceptis his ab eo mandatis huc profecti sumus. Et ecce stella que nos antea duxerat precedebat nos ad istum locum, et iam hic restat super speluncam hanc. Et cur nos non permittis illo intrare? Dicit Ioseph Ego quidem non prohibebo uos sequi ducem itineris uestri, quia deus dux uester est, quibus se uoluit ita manifestare. Hec dicente ad eos Ioseph magi introierunt in speluncam, salutaueruntque Mariam dicentes Aue domina dignissima, omni gratia plena. Accesseruntque ad presepe in quo iacebat deus et uiderunt infantem et adorauerunt deum.\fn{New.}

92. Dixit itaque Ioseph ad Symeonem Intende diligenter et uide que uelint facere peregrini isti Dum autem respiceret Symeon dixit Pater, ecce introeuntes adorant infantem, cecideruntque proni in faciem suam, atque singuli ipsorum osculantur pedes eius sed et apertis thesauris suis quos secum detulerunt offerunt ei munera. At Ioseph Quid, inquit, offerunt? Dixit Symeon Suspikor quia illa munera que misit ei Herodes rex, nam aurum. thus. et mirram offerunt. Set et Marie etiam dona dederunt. Dixitque Ioseph Melius faciunt hi peregrini de longinquis nacionibus huc uenientes quam pastores gentis nostre qui sine muneribus huc gratis introierunt\fn{(with omis-

lati sunt infantem et non sicut pastores illi nostri qui sine muneribus huc venerunt. Interumque dicit ei Intende diligencius et uide quid faciant. Intendens ergo Symeon dicit ecce interum adorauerunt puerum, et ecce huc exeunt.\fn{New.}

93. Illi autem exierunt et dixerunt ad Ioseph O beatissime vir, nunc scies quis est hic puer quem nutris. Dicit eis Ioseph Suspicio quoniam filius meus est. Dicunt ei illi Maius est nomen eius quam tuum. Sed forte ita est quod tu dignus es nominari pater illius quoniam seruis ei non quasi filio tuo sed ut deo et domino tuo. et tangens eum manibus tuis obseruas cum magno timore et diligencia. Noli ergo nos quasi ignorantes attendere. illud a nobis cognosce quoniam cui tu assignatus es nutritor, ipse est deus deorum et dominus dominancium, deus et rex uniuersorum principum ac potestatum, deus angelorum et iustorum. ipse est qui eruet omnes gentes in suo nomine, quoniam illius est maiestas et imperium et <confringet> mortis aculeum et dissipabit inferni potestatem. Illi seruiant reges et omnes tribus terre adorabunt eum, et illi omnis lingua confitebitur dicens Tu es Christus Ihesus liberator et saluator noster. tu enim es deus, patris eterni uirtus et claritas.\fn{New.}

94. Dicit eis Ioseph Unde hec cognouistis que mihi dicitis? Dicunt ei magi Sunt apud nos (uos) scripture veteres prophetarum dei in quibus scriptum est de Christo quemadmodum aduentus illius habet esse in hoc seculo. Item sunt apud nos antiquiores scripture scripturarum in quibus scriptum est de eo. Nam de cetero quod interrogasti nos unde hoc nos scire possimus, audi nos. A signo stelle didicimus. hoc enim nobis solis super specie apparuit. De cuius specie nemo unquam potuit dicere. Hec enim stella que est orta designat quod regnabit stirps dei in splendore diei. et non circuibat in centro celi sicut solent stelle que sunt fixe uel eciam planete que licet certum seruent temporis cursum, hii tamen cum sint immobiles et incerte prouidencie iste semper errantes dicuntur esse, sola autem hec est sine errore. Nam et totus polu id est celum uidebatur nobis non posse eam capere in sua magnitudine, sed neque sol potuit eam obscurare claritate luminis sui sicut ceteras stellas Ipse autem sol infirmior factus est uiso splendore aduentus ipsius. Nam stella hec uerbum dei est. Quod (quot) enim stelle tot uerba dei sunt. Verbum autem dei deus inenarrabile. Sicut hec stella inenarrabilis. et ipsa nobis comes fuit in uia in qua iter fecimus uenientes ad Christum.\fn{New.}

sions),}

93. Magi autem adorato intus puero diucius et oblati muneribus suis egressi sunt dixeruntque ad Iosep. Beatissimus es uir qui dignus es puerum talem nutrire. Namque ob hoc nuncupatur (nuncupaberis) pater eius, quia seruiet ei non quasi filio sed ut domino tuo. et quia tanges eum manibus tuis, et hoc cum magno timore et reuerentia. Maior (maius) est enim nomen eius quam tuum. Noli ergo nos attendere quasi ignaros, quoniam hic qui (cui) assignatus es cui (quasi) nutritorius infans, ipse est deus deorum et dominus omnium dominorum rexque uniuersorum principum et potestatum ac uirtutum et dominus deus angelorum. Ipse enim arguet omnes reges et reget cunctas gentes in uirga nominis sui, quoniam ipsius est maiestas et imperium, confringere mortis aculeum atque dissipare inferni potestatem. Ipsi itaque seruiant omnes tribus terre, et omnis lingua confitebitur eum dominum dicens Tu es Christus dominus saluator noster, quia tu es eterni patris uera uirtus et claritas.\fn{New.}

94. Dixit eis Ioseph Unde ergo uobis alienigenis scire hec talia que profertis? Et dixerunt ei Sicut sunt apud uos ueteres scripture antiquorum prophetarum qui scripserunt de Christo et de aduentu eius in hoc seculum, similiter et apud nos sunt antiquiores scripture in quibus de Christo significatum esse manifeste cognoscitur. Sed et stelle signo nobis apparentis eius iam aduentus in mundum hunc tempus cognouimus, de cuius specie splendoris siue fulgoris nemo potest digne effari. Hec enim stella nobis orta apparuit primum in die natiuitatis pueri huius, et circuibat polum celi sola sine errore, non sicut solent hec telle que celo fixe sunt Cum autem eam primum contemplantur, uidebatur nobis totum polum non posse capere eam sua magnitudine. sed neque sol ipse potuit eam sua claritate obumbrare, sed inferior factus est <quam> splendor illius. Nam hec stella uerbi dei est et ipse (?ipsa) nobis comes fuit et dux in uia hac qua ambulauimus huc perueniendi ad Christum.\fn{as A.}

95. Dixit itaque eis Ioseph In hiis omnibus dictis que locuti estis nimis iocundastis me. Peto autem uos ut dignemini mecum esse hodie. Dixerunt ei illi Rogamus te, permitte nos proficisci iter nostrum Sic enim precepit nobis rex ut cicius reuertamur ad eum. Detinuit autem eos.\fn{New.}

APPENDIX A: CHAPTERS 73-74 IN ENGLISH

When therefore the hour drew near the power of God came forth openly and the maiden standing looking toward heaven became like a †vine†.

For now was coming forth the end of good things.

But when the light had come forth she adored him whom she saw she had brought forth.

Now that child was shining round about like the sun, mightily, pure and most pleasant in aspect.

inasmuch as he alone hath appeared †wholly† peace making peace.

Now in that hour wherein he was born there was heard a voice of many invisible ones saying with one voice Amen.

and that light which was born was multiplied and with the brightness of its light it darkened the light of the sun

and this cave also was filled with bright light, with a most sweet perfume.

Now this light was so born like as dew from heaven descended upon the earth.

For the perfume of it is fragrant more than all the scent of ointments.

Now I stood amazed and marveling, and fear laid hold upon me, for I was looking upon so great brightness of the light that was born.

But that light by little and little withdrawing into itself, made itself like to be an infant, and in a moment it became an infant as infants are wont to be born

and I put on boldness and bowed myself and touched him and lifted him up in my hands with great fear and I was smitten with fear for there was no weight in him as of a man that is born

and I looked upon him, and there was not in him any defilement, but he was as it were all shining (or washed) with the dew of the most high God, light in

95. Dixit eis Ioseph Omnia que locuti estis diuinitate edocti estis. i<c>circo peto ut dignemini hic nobiscum hodie esse. Responderunt ei dicentes Magis rogamus ut benedicens nobis permittas nos proficisci, quia preceptum est nobis a rege ut uerlociter inuento puero reuertentes ueniamus ad eum. qui tamen cum ab eo coacti mansissent ibi illo die epulantes letantesque de bonis domini,\fn{as A.}

APPENDIX A: CHAPTERS 73-74 IN ENGLISH

When therefore the hour drew near for the power of God to come forth openly the maiden continued immovably looking toward heaven.

For now was approaching the time of all good things or blessings.

And when the infant god had come forth of the womb of the virgin mother, forthwith she who bore him first adored him whom she saw she had brought forth.

Now that child is shining all about like the sun mightily. Most pure also, and pleasant in aspect more than all children.

And therefore in him true peace is come to all the world.

So in that hour wherein he came forth from his mother there was heard the voice of a multitude in the height of heaven saying most clearly Amen, amen, amen. Alleluia to God.

Also that light which was now born with the brightness of its light overshadowed the light of the sun.

For this cave also was filled with bright light and with every sweetest perfume.

Now this light was so born like as the dew is born which descendeth from heaven upon the earth.

The perfume of it also is fragrant beyond all the scent of ointments.

Now I when I saw all this stood greatly amazed and marveling mightily, for great fear laid hold upon me when I looked upon so great brightness of the light that was born.

But that light by little and little began to withdraw into itself and made itself like an infant, and in †the encompassing brightness† an infant was born like as other infants are wont to be born.

Then therefore I put on boldness and bowed myself to the child and when I had worshipped him I dared to touch him. I lifted him up therefore in my hands, being filled at once with fear and great joy because when I carried him I felt that he had no weight at all.

But when I looked him round about there was not in him any defilement, but he was full of all grace,

*and as it were all shining (or washed) with the dew
body to bear, and bright to look upon*

*and as I wondered much because he did not cry like
as infants newborn are wont to cry*

*and as I held him, looking upon his face, he smiled
upon me with a most merry smile, and opening his
eyes he looked upon me sharply and suddenly there
came forth a great light from his eyes, as a great
lightning.*

APPENDIX B: CONTENT COMPARISON

- 69.** Mary, smiling, is cautioned by Joseph (Ps.-M. xiii. 3)
70. ‘about cockcrow’ omitted in A; Symeon inquires about the ‘puella’ A.; He asks ‘can she live’ A.
75. Symeon’s speech to the midwife ‘O beata’ interrupts her story. She then says she has greater wonders to tell, and speaks of the Virginity *post partum*.; She continues ‘I went out. Joseph wrapped up the child.’
79. Salome’s address to the child.; ‘Many believed at her preaching’ (Ps.-M. xiii. 5).
80. A Voice from heaven warns Salome not to speak (= Protev. Xx. 4).
82. \fn
{**James has here an entire blank line.**}; Joseph’s first talk with the shepherds.
83. They describe their pastimes as they watched.; The words ‘natus est nobis’ are not in A.
84. for ‘nos autem adorabimus archanum eius,’ A.
85. A omits honey.; A has clauses of Ps.-M. xiii. 6.
86. A has the matter of Ps.-M. xv. 1.
88a. After ‘Nam et stella—omnes gentes’ A has the matter of Ps.-M. xvi. 1 and 2 to ‘gaudio magno.’
89. The questioning of the Magi by Joseph before they make answer.
91. A adds a clause describing Herod’s diadem as having a mitra alba.
92. In A Symeon has more to say. Joseph repeatedly tells him to watch the Magi.
93. In A Joseph says to the Magi ‘suspitor quoniam filius meus est.’; The descriptions of the Star differ in A and H.
94. ‘All stars are words of God.’

[NOTE: Ps.-M = Pseudo-Matthew (In Infancy Gospel of Matthew); Protev. = Protevangelium (In Infancy

Gospel of James).]

*of God most high in his body, light to bear and bright to look upon. In that hour then when I took the child into my hands I looked and saw that he had his whole body most pure and in no part defiled as other infants are wont to be born, with uncleanness, and while I, much amazed in myself, marveled hereat, I noted also that he did not cry as all men are wont to cry when newborn
but furthermore as I held him upon my knees looking upon his most sweet face, he smiled upon me with a most merry smile looking with his eyes on me very sharply, and suddenly there came forth of his eyes a great light like lightning.*

APPENDIX B: CONTENT COMPARISON

- 69.** not in H.
70. H has it; domina H; not in H.
75. H puts the whole of the midwife’s speech together, and makes Symeon’s follow it.; H. After Symeon’s speech ‘she gave the child to Joseph’ etc.
79. longer in H.; not in H.
80. H. Zelam warns Salome.
82. H specifies three shepherds.; not in H.
83. not in H.; H has them.
84. H has only ‘quem cum adoraremus.’
85. H butter and honey (sent by the shepherds).; not in H.
86. not in H.
88a. not in H.
89. H shortens this.
91. not in H.
92. H shortens.
93. not in H.; The descriptions of the Star differ in A and H.
94. not in H.

[In the Irish manuscript below, material in curved brackets: () : was apparently supplied by Fr. Hogan,

its original editor. I made notes out of some of them.]

**APPENDIX C: THE IRISH VERSION OF THE NEW SOURCE IN ARUNDEL AND HEREFORD,
AFTER HOGAN, WHICH HE FOUND USED IN THE FOLLOWING HOMILY:**

58. For they are three Gospels that are read and sung in Christian churches on Christmas night. This is (the) night in which was born Jesus Christ the Savior of the seed of Adam. Luke the evangelist indeed, the sage, the perfect sage and chief pupil of the Apostle Paul, it is he that wrote the two first Gospels of them. But John the youth, bosom-fosterling of Christ Himself, it is he wrote the last of them: it is of (from) these Gospels has been sung here truly. True it is indeed that it was in the time of Octavius Augustus those prophesied things came, and it is then was born Christ. For when they were a-levying the Caesarian tribute through all the world, then came Joseph and Mary from Nazareth of Galilee to Bethil of Judah, i.e. to the city of David son of Jesse, for of the seed of David were Joseph and Mary, and it was not allowed (them) to pay their tribute in another place save in their own fatherland. And so Joseph and Mary came from Nazareth of Galilee to Bethlehem of Judah, like the others, and their family, i.e. Abion and Simeon and James of the Knees, the three sons of Joseph there, and it is James of the Knees that told the narrative from Mary's birth to Christ's birth, and from Christ's birth to his crucifixion. And it is or [because of] this that he is called Christ's brother, for his being like-bearded to Christ, for the beards of both were alike. The second reason why James of the Knees was called Christ's brother (was) for his being a son to Joseph, i.e. pater Christi. And it is that James of the Knees that took the abbacy of Jerusalem after Christ in the land of Israel, and he was a sister's son to Mary; it is he that the Jews slew afterwards.

59. Mary too came thither, being pregnant from the Holy Ghost at that time; and thither came along with her the five virgins that used to be in her train for ever without being parted from her. These are the names of those virgins, Sefur, Supstanna, Rabecca, Ratiel, Agizabeth. Why then came Mary with her virgins thither? It is not hard to tell, to pay the Caesarian tribute; for there was not in the whole world of man or woman, young or old, but paid every one that tribute. And Joseph said, when he heard the criers collecting the tribute, that it would be right to pay the tribute in respect of cattle and treasure and land, food and clothing, and all the things one possessed, out of which the tribute had to be paid. When Joseph heard of the tribute being levied, he set out with his family to pay the tribute. Moabitus was the first name of Joseph.

60. They went towards Bethlehem and Ephrath (Cornian) the city of David. It is there that the Virgin Mary was weary, for she could not ride or go \fn{ **Travel on foot.** } for her time was near to her then. Then Mary is left in that fortress, and James and Simeon along with her, and those five virgins. Joseph and Abion then went on to Bethlehem to Judah to pay the tribute and to seek a lodging-house. Now when Joseph reached the middle of the city, he sat down on a large stone there, and great weakness and heaviness came upon Joseph through joy and reverence, and he was afterwards dispraising the state of exile greatly, and this is what he said. "For though the exile be wealthy" quoth he "he is called poor. If however he be poor, he is hated and without honor, and he will bear the name of contemptible. I regret today my exile from thee, Bethlehem of Judah" said Joseph. "It is through poverty and indigence I went from thee. Ill is the land where I have been until today" said he \fn{ **I.e., of the land of Galilee.** } "ill its food and its folk and its humanity and bad (are) the neighboring cities for dwelling in them, for one has not much spirit among them when once he is turned towards them."

61. So then he begins dispraising exile greatly, and much-praising his own original fatherland and said thus "Happy and righteous is every one who will not be in exile" said he. After that Joseph went in search of lodgings across Bethlehem, and there saw a certain small single house on the outskirts out beyond the rest, being alone without house or dwelling in its neighborhood, a little, tiny, narrow, low-roofed cabin. He went thereupon to look at the house, and said, "It seems to me" quoth he "that this is a guests' cabin, and it is fitting for us to be in, and it is easier for the Virgin to bring forth in it, since it is far from thoughts of men and from the summoning of the people."

62. In this wise then was that house, having on it the aspect of a little cave \fn{ **I.e. a stall, in which used to be an ass and a young ox.** } belonging to the master of the house, and one little round stool on the floor of the house, on which the guests used to sit. "Let us stay here, son" said Joseph "for the sake of the exalted Virgin who is coming wearily towards us, and be thou here awaiting her, and I might go into the city to know if I might find it in one to whom aught of my craft may be pleasing in exchange for this night's supper." While then Joseph was setting out to go

seek for food, then he heard the voice of the crier and man of proclamation through the open places of the city, outward, who said thus: "Hebrew men and children of Israel, come ye all to pay the Caesarian tribute; for Cyrinus King of Syria and the underkings of the Roman kings are going now after a short time to Rome: and this is what he says, that all the tribute is to be brought to Rome to Octavius Augustus; and come ye all to pay the tribute in this wise, namely, your grandson, your children, and your bondmaids, and your sons and your slaves and your tribes: and show ye your gold and your treasure and your cattle, your finery\fn{ Lit., glory, decus, ornatus.} and your clothes and come all in that way, and give them up to the judgment of the king and lord; and let each come according to his age, both young and old."

63. And this is why they were all brought thither, because there was not one who was not under a distinct tax according to his age. And the same herald said, "Every one that hides away from the King whatsoever he may have, let everything he conceals be taken from him, and whatever else he shall have in the world." Thus was Joseph at that time standing in front of the house, and he heard the proclamation again, and said "It is enough thou proclaimest, man," said he "for everyone that shall have\fn{ I.e., that shall have anything.} will give it up without resistance. Myself first among them; nought have I but my implements of trade, and they shall go to you if you will: and come to see my lodging for it is not a house at all that I have, but a certain little cave with a she ass's stall in it, and not more than two wretched poor people would it be fit to be in it." And he was greatly dispraising his dwelling.

64. The tax gatherers then went to view the house, and they saw not of furniture there save one little stool, and even that was not theirs, but belonged to the lodging house keeper, and Joseph's implements of trade. "Take them with you" said Joseph "if you wish them." "We do not at all" said they. "And no wonder that you do not wish that" quoth Joseph "it is from them that I get a little food for myself and for the Virgin who was entrusted to me in this land Israel, and that I get a little food for my family through them;\fn{ The tools.} and take them\fn{ The children.} in their own discharge."

65. After that discussion the tax gatherers took him\fn{ Abion?} in place of Joseph with his children, and in respect of Mary with her virgins. And after the tribute was thus taken Joseph came to the door of the house, and was looking out on the roads, and he feared that his family would be carried off by the tax gatherers. It is then that Joseph saw his family come towards him, Mary with her virgins, and James of the Knees on her left side, and Simeon on her right, and the virgins behind her. They having so arrived, Joseph said to Simeon "You are long \fn{ I.e., long a-coming.} good friends" quoth he: Simeon said "It is not we that delayed, but the Virgin" said he "for her time has come now, and she is weary, and every hour of her time, that she came forward, it seemed to us that she would bring forth the illustrious Offspring that is in her womb: and it is certain that she will bring forth tonight, and let all service be done by us for her."

66. Thereupon Mary came into the house, and Joseph said to Simeon "Fetch water" quoth he "and wash the Virgin's feet, and give her food: seek then and buy everything that will please her, and certain we are, that she will bring forth tonight the new, very powerful Offspring that is in her womb; and there has not been found before Him His like, and shall not be found after Him, and no one knows but it is this Child that saves the human race." The eighth day before the Kalends of January precisely was that night according to the day of the solar month, and thirteenth of the moon, and Sunday according to the day of the week. And Mary having gone into the house, immediately began to pray and to make crosfigil,\fn{ With arms stretched out in form of a cross.} her face upwards to heaven. Then said Simeon to his father "I see the Virgin speaking" quoth he "and I see not to whom she speaks." "To the angels of heaven" said Joseph.

67. Then Joseph saw Mary weeping and in heavy dolor, and saw her forthwith rejoicing and in great joy. "What is that, Virgin" said Joseph "that at one time thou hast jubilation and joy, at another time dolours and sorrow?" She answered him "Two peoples that I see" said she "one people of them weeping and sorrowing, and the other people glad and overjoyed." "That has a special suitableness" said Joseph "i.e. those are the people of the Jews who are destined to crucify Christ and to scatter His disciples afterwards; it is they, then, that are grieving. The people of the Gentiles, again, is the other people: they are rejoicing and exulting, for it was to them it was destined to believe in Christ thereafter." Joseph said then "Go into thy bed, Virgin" quoth he "and sleep therein; and let Simeon put oil under thy feet, and rest so, till God brings birth to thee."

68. They were thus for a long space of the night, at which time James of the Knees told her the charities and the mysteries and the secrets of Christ, and somewhat of the miracles of the divine Offspring; and not more than\fn{I.e. none but.} angels or apostles, or God Himself, would be fit to tell them on account of their height and holiness, the manifest miracles in general that have been and shall be and are now. But when the Virgin was bringing forth her Son, all the elements were silent and motionless without stirring, without shaking, doing homage to their Creator, for there was not in all created things aught that was not aware of the Creator but the unbelieving Jews alone. Thereafter while Joseph was in front of the house, and Mary within the house, there came at once a shining light cloud down from heaven until it was over the cave and the city, as it were the sun that was rising over the middle of the city and cave. It is then that Mary brought forth her Son, and all the miracles were worked that we have already mentioned. For it has not come to anyone to tell or to recount them, and if it had come, it were not in vain for him.

69. Then was filled the cave with a very great fragrance as is (exhaled) from a (precious) ointment, and from wine, and from the tree-perfume of the whole world: the cave was filled with it, so that all were satisfied therefrom for a long time; and the very great and conspicuous star was seen above the cave from morning till evening, and its like was not seen before or after, nor (aught) that was equal to it. Mary set her Son to rest thereafter with (swaddling) clothes of white linen about Him in the stall of the ass and the young ox, for no other place was found for Him in the guest-house. And the irrational creatures then recognized their creator, for they were licking Him and adoring Him, both the ass and the young ox, He being in the middle between them. Then was fulfilled what the prophet said of old, namely, Esaias\fn{Ezecias.} the son of Amos. And when the animals had offered their licking and worship, Mary takes her Son in her bosom then, and she was perfectly healthy in body and mind, for she had no pains or birth-pangs, and there was not ache or soreness for her in body or in flesh, but as the sun's light would pass through glass, without sigh, without sickness, without harm.

70. Joseph went afterwards into the cave, and saw Mary, and her Son on her bosom; she giving her breast to Him, for she had indeed paps flowing like the gushing of spring-water. Joseph came then, and Simeon, glad and overjoyed, after him; and Joseph said "Go, son" quoth he "and behold Him for whom thou wert seeking, the Savior, on the breast of Mary His own mother, and welcome Him and be merry and cheerful to Him." And they two then bade welcome to the Son. Afterwards came the morning of the next day, and then was fulfilled every miracle and every wonder, every prediction and every prophecy that was made in the Old Law and in the New Testament concerning the Divine Child, and it is little of His miracles and wonders that is related here. Joseph was exultant and very joyous, praising and exalting the Divine child thus. Afterwards Joseph said "I had better go into the city to buy food for the Virgin and for my family, for this festival is a noble and honorable festival in heaven and on earth, for today was born the Lord of men and angels, and gods, and all other creatures besides.

71. "Today came into the world He through whom the world has abided (?) (or was judged). † Today the power of the devil was weakened, and the power of the church heavenly and earthly was strengthened. † Today was dispersed the light of wisdom and knowledge to the Israelite people who were in the darkness of ignorance and unwisdom. † Today are glorified and honored the holy prophets, their prophecy being fulfilled. † Today was seated the venerated food of the angels amid the mean food of men in the stall of a she ass and a young ox. † Today the irrational animals without intelligence have recognized their Creator: for every separate creature is intelligent towards its Creator. † Today first appeared the kingly star to the three druids who came with it on their way to adore Jesus. † Today has been given the supremacy and kingship of the heavenly city to a man, i.e. to Christ, Son of the Living God.

72. "Today the angels of heaven have submitted to the men of earth; for a king from (among) men has taken kingship over the angels. † Today has been made an awful law\fn{Or covenant.} amicably between the two realms of the lord, between heaven and earth. † Today have been opened the doors of the Heavenly City, so that the doors of heaven are wide opened to the human race to enter and dwell therein. † Today shall quarrels and evil sentiments be driven out of the world. For the Prophet of the Eternal Truth and the True Peace has come into it, Christ the Son of the Living God. † Today the true love of mankind\fn{Better perhaps: Today the Eternal Father's true love of the human race was known.} has been recognized by the Heavenly Father, when the Second Person of the Godhead assumed humanity to succor them, for in bondage under the devil they died for the fault and transgression of

Adam and Eve till this day.”

73. Of the Tidings of the Shepherds this. Now Joseph was for a long time thus discoursing to his sons James of the Knees and Simeon and Abion, and praising Christ, and foretelling every good thing thereafter. And Joseph said again “It is better for me” quoth he “to go to buy a little food for the Virgin.” He went then and was on the streets and causeways of Bethlehem till part\fn{Break?} of day. As he was there he saw a certain large band come towards him talking to one another. Joseph draws near to them then, till he was listening to them, and he was seeking too to buy food from them. This is what they said. “We have searched” said they “the whole city and we do not find in it Him whom we seek. Let us go then forth out of the city” said they “and let us also search if He may be outside the city without.” Then Joseph said to them “Have ye any milk for sale?” said he. “We have none at all” said they. “Have ye eggs or cheese?” said Joseph.

74. “Good man,” said they “why do you come to us? It is not to trade that we have come, and it is not that that concerns us, but a marvelous strange piece of news we have” said they. “We are seeking Him and we do not find Him, for He is wonderful and strange” said they. “If He is indeed wonderful, it is He that happens to be with me in my house” said Joseph: and he said to them then “Who are ye, and whence have ye come?” “We” said they “are the shepherds of the city of Bethlehem, and we were last night on the top of a tower in the east of the plain of Bethlehem.” (a thousand paces east from Bethlehem, a very great hill this, and there the shepherds of Bethlehem all come together keeping their cattle from dogs and thieves and other beasts, and in the nights it was usual for them to be there). “Well then we were there” said they “guarding our cattle, and all of us in one place, some of us asleep, some watching, some story-telling to one another, some singing songs and ditties, another lot sporting, and boating, and humming, another set whistling and telling tales. Thus we were with much merriment in that fashion. After the rising of the moon towards us, as we were there at midnight, we saw a certain cloud-light from the east coming straight until it lighted all the plains of Bethlehem. Thus then was that cloud, having a comely, shining, conspicuous, venerable form in its midst, and there were many different kinds of music in that cloud, and each kind of music thereof was as sweet as another.

75. “That very great light having reached us, horror and fear seized us, and we placed our faces all against the ground. Whereupon an angelic voice said from the cloud ‘Be ye not’ said he ‘in dread or fear, since for this I have come, to tell tidings to you and to the whole people, tidings to which its equal or like has not been found from the beginning of the world till tonight. For today was born the Savior Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, in the city of David, in Bethlehem of Judah, to succor mankind who died in Adam, God of Gods, and Heaven of men, and Power of powers, Man over men, King over kings, gentle Soldier without wrath, without pride, without pomp. Go ye to Him” said he “and ye will find Him with little (swaddling) clothes of white linen about Him, in the ass’s manger.’ And when he had done saying that, then uttered the angelic host that was along with him the melodious ever-sweet song, Gloria in excelsis deo et in terra pax omnibus bone uoluntatis tue. Laudamus te etc.... in gloria Dei patris. Amen.”

76. The Shepherds were telling these tidings to Joseph, and they said “We have searched the city” said they “and we have not found in it Him whom we are seeking.” Joseph said to them “Let not that which God has manifested for you be hidden from you. Come now, behold your search” said he. “Hail to thee” said the Shepherds “for to thee first has been manifested God: that is the greatest good that has come and that will come.” Then Joseph went before them to the door of the house. The Shepherds go after him into the house with much rejoicing. Joseph tarries without, behind them, and lifted his face up to heaven, saying “O great God, great is this miracle! We thought that none other but ourselves had knowledge of the Divine birth, and yet the shepherds heard it, they being a thousand paces from Bethlehem eastwards.”

77. Simeon said “Wonder not” said he “at anything of what thou shalt hear about this Child, but only believe truly what I tell thee, that it will be a short (time) till the men of the world will recognize His miracles and His marvels.” As they were for a long time in that conversation, Simeon and Joseph, then came the Shepherds out from the stall and said “We have seen the Son of the Heavenly Father” said they. “How is that?” said Joseph. “Fairer than earth” said they † “More wonderful than heaven † Brighter than sun † Clearer than streams † Sweeter than honey † Greater than the universe † Higher than heaven’s hosts † Comelier than angels † Nobler than the world † Wider than the universe His speech † Better than the world † More precious than creatures † Eye does not

reach Him ‡ And He finds not room in ears, ‡ The world has not found and shall not find His like.”

78. And they said “We have kissed His feet” said they “and we have licked His hands, and we have beheld His face, and He has done miracles and great wonders in our presence; and good luck to thee, Joseph” said they “for there has not been given to a man ever before thee, nor shall there come to anyone after thee, a dignity like the dignity which has been conferred on thee: and give us a love for Him” said they “for we are contented so far, since thou hast permitted us to behold the Divine brightness.” “What is it then that ye wish?” said Joseph. “It is not difficult to say: thy coming with us” said they “to drink wine and to amuse and enjoy yourself, for today our chief has a great banquet for us, that is, the chief of the Shepherds. It is indeed customary for him to prepare a great feast every year for the Shepherds: on the eighth of the Kalends of January precisely that feast is held.” “I will not go however” said Joseph “as that would not be right for me, forsooth, to leave Mary and her child without their having food and drink: but, indeed, my soul and heart are with you” said Joseph “and take my blessing.” “Since thou comest not with us” said the Shepherds “every best thing we shall have shall reach you, to wit, fresh cheese and milk and a crown of thorns, and wine, and good wheat and honey, and hen-eggs, and vegetables and herbs likewise; and even as thou art towards the little babe, so also shalt thou be with us.”

79. Now the reason why the Savior was first seen by the Shepherds is because they were without sleep, a-watching and waiting for the light of day. This is what that denotes, whoso wishes to obtain everlasting life ought to be without sleep in the night time, a-watching for eternal light, that is, the countenance of almighty God. The Shepherds then went away. And Joseph, and Mary, and Christ were in the guest-house like that, and all these viands were given to them by the Shepherds as we have previously stated.

80. They (Joseph, Mary, and Christ) were there some time longer. As Joseph was there standing in front of the house on a certain day, he saw a great band of people coming towards him from the east straight onwards, and then Joseph said to Simeon “Who are these that are coming towards us, my son?” said he. “Methinks that it may be from afar they might have come.” Now Joseph came towards them and he said to Simeon “I fancy, my son” said he “that it is the omen art of Druids, and it is soothsaying they are practicing, for they take not a single step without looking up, and they are discussing and communing with one another among themselves; and as it seems to me” said he “they are people of a strange race, and it is from foreign regions they have come, as they have not the same form or color or look as our people have. For white and wide are their tunics, and purple and even-colored are their mantles, and they have long reddish hoods, and speckled and gapped shoes, like a king or chieftain, by their appearance.”

81. Now there were three warriors in front of that band, to wit, a handsome and venerable man, bearded, gray, and fawn-like, named Melcisar, it is he that gave the gold to Christ; another man, bearded, with very long brown hair, named Balcisar, it is he that gave the incense to Christ; another man, also fair, without beard, named Hiespar, it is he that gave the myrrh to Christ. Other names for these kings were Malcus, Patifaxat, Caspar, that is Malcus was Melcisar, Patifaxat was Balcisar, Caspar was Hiespar.

82. Said Joseph “It is well they march on” said he “and they are unfatigued though it is from afar they come.” After that then they came to the place where Joseph was, and his son, that is Simeon. They however went past Joseph to the house. Joseph went with them, and he said and said “Who are ye?” said he “tell me for God’s sake, and whither go ye to the house without my leave?” “Our leader and lord went before us to this little dwelling, and after him we go” said they. “Whence then have ye come?” said Joseph. “From the east” said they “from the eastern part of India, and from the lands of Arabia and from Callatian\fn{Kallacda? Chaldean.} lands and various other regions of the east of the world” said they. “Wherefore have ye come?” said Joseph. “That is not difficult to tell” said they “to wit, the King of the Jews and the King of the whole world was born in this land, and we have come to seek Him and to adore Him and to contemplate Him” said they. “Whence did ye understand that?” said Joseph. “Not hard to tell is that” said they “(on account of) its being in our old books and old writings from the time of the first man till today, that whatever be the time we should behold a star like this over our land, (we were) to go with it what way soever it would go, as it was a sign of the King of the world. For it is by that King, it stands in prediction and prophecy, that we ourselves and the human race are to be saved after His birth immediately.” “What causes you not to go into Jerusalem to seek Him, as it is the capital city of this land, and in it is the temple of the Lord, and there also is the abode of the King of the Jews, to wit, of Herod?”

83. “We have gone (thither) already” said they “and when we reached the city, then the star departed from us, and we did not see it at all, and we went into the house in which King Herod was, and told him the King of the Jews was born in his territory, and that His royal star was before us from the east of the world up to this, and it went from us here. And we were inquiring of the King and of the Jewish people likewise the place in which He was born, and they said they did not know. Then were gathered to Herod all his magi and sages, and his folk of learning and knowledge, and he asked of them the place where they had in prophecy that the King of the Jews was to be born. They all said ‘In Bethlehem of Juda’ said they ‘as the Holy Ghost declared by the mouth of King David son of Jesse *De diversario in spelunca nasci Christum* in Bethelhem. And again the head of authors and prophets, Jesus himself said on his own behalf “*Tu Bethelhem terra Iuda nequaquam minima es in principibus Iuda, ex te enim exiet dux qui regat populum meum Israel.*” Thou Bethlehem of Juda, land and country of Juda son of Jacob, thou art great and thou art wonderful amongst the towns of the land of all Judea, and it is in thee shall be born the leader and king that shall rule the Israelite people.”

84. Then and there great trembling and fear seizes the aforesaid Herod, and he said “What place else should the son of the King of the Jews be born in but my house?” Then said the magi “The son of the King of the world is he who has been born.” Then indeed there were great deliberations and many considerations in the mind of King Herod. Then again were summoned to him the wise men of the Jewish people, and he again inquired of them diligently where in prediction and prophecy was (to be) the birth of that King. They all said “in Bethlehem of Juda” said they.

85. Thereupon Herod said to the magi who had come to adore Christ “Go” said he “to Bethlehem of Juda, and if ye find Christ therein, come back to me that I may myself go to adore Him; and take” said he “my royal diadem to Christ,”^{fn{I.e. a King’s diadem of the gold of Arabia, full of precious stones and ornate carbuncles: and that was the diadem which was on the head of Herod himself every day.}} “And take also this royal ring to Him with a brilliant gem in it, for which equal or like has never been found of the gems of the world. It was given to me by the King of the Persians, and give ye it to that King; and when ye shall come back, I shall go myself to adore Him, bringing with me other gifts for Him which shall be better than those.”

86. “We have brought then those presents” said the magi “and we came out of the city, and immediately our royal star was shown to us, and that was a great joy to us; and then it came on till it is over this house and over its top, and it entered the house in our presence, and thou forsooth dost not let us go after it.” Fitting indeed was the thing that happened there, that is, the magi and kings in one person adoring the King of truth and the Author of prophecy at first before all.^{fn{I.e., at first and before all others.}} However, though they were magi by reason of prophesying and prediction, kings were they for dignity and pre-eminence and strength and power. But the reason they were called magi was on account of the prediction and prophecy they made concerning the Lord’s birth, and as they told it in every land from the land of India, and the land of Arabia and the Sillachacda^{fn{ Cilicians. v.1. Kallachacda, Kallacda ut supra? Chaldeans.}} to the country of Juda, that the Savior was born, i.e. the Son of the King of the world, at that time. Of the tidings of the magi hitherto, and of their predictions in every land (from one) to another, from the east quarter of the world to the land of Juda and to Bethlehem.

87. And then they were asking Joseph’s permission to enter the house. Now Joseph said to them “I will not hinder you” said he “(as to) what God himself has revealed to you.” Joseph indeed was glad that all people in general had a knowledge of these tidings and that it was manifested to them. “God bless thee” said they “and we will go to see the Savior and God of men.” Then they entered the house and saluted Mary and said then “*Ave tu benedicta, gratia plena.* Hail, thou art blessed and thou art full of grace.” They then went to the crib, and were contemplating Christ in it. After the magi had gone into the house, said Joseph to Simeon “Go after them, my son,” said he “and watch them cautiously, that thou mayest see and know what they do to the Child; for it is not proper for me to watch and look closely at them.”

88. Simeon went after them and was looking at them. Then the magi were with their faces on the ground in prostration and lying down before the Son of God. Wonderful to Simeon seemed the rite they were performing, and he mentioned it to Joseph. “See still” said Joseph “what they are doing.” They rose up after that, and they opened out (some) of their presents and gave them to Christ. “What is the thing they gave him?” said Joseph. “I

can tell you” said Simeon “gold and incense and myrrh, and the presents Herod gave them.” Then James of the Knees i.e. the brother of Christ himself, said that the magi gave many other presents to Christ, i.e. remarkable purple of imperishable light, and a bright pearl, and a garland of fresh grass which never withers, but has a pure purple blossom for ever, and a thorough-braided wreath of various fresh grasses, with blossom of purple on them as if it were that moment they were out, and a large linen cloth new and pure bright, for which equal or like was not found. Such indeed was the greatness of its brightness that people saw lightnings rising from it as a sunlike star or as sparks from a great fire when its glow is greatest. They then gave a royal wand with gems of glass and precious stones for which equal or like has never been found in the junction of the making of creatures from the beginning of the world to its end, unless it be the firmament by reason of the multitude of stars and precious stones in it, like the sun and moon.

89. There darted out of them indeed great fiery meteors like a sunlike star, so that human eyes melted before them on account of the brilliance. And they gave other gifts for which the like was not found in the world. Then said Simeon “Good are the men” quoth he “and blessed are their gifts, and they kissed the feet of the infant, with offerings to him. They are not indeed the same as the shepherds, for these gave no presents to him. And the folk who gave presents, it shall be a beginning of great blessing to them, for their seed will give presents for ever.” That was true indeed, for that was the beginning of the Gentiles to believe in Christ, and these were the first gifts of the Gentiles and their *primitiae* at first.

90. Then said Joseph to Simeon “Watch carefully what they are doing now.” “They are” said Simeon “worshipping, and conversing with the child: I hear their voice, and I know not what it is they say.” “They are all doing honor to the child” said Joseph. After that the magi came out and said to Joseph “O just and perfect man,” said they “good is the charge thou hast if thou didst know it, to wit, the Son of the King of the world is being nursed by thee, since we have more knowledge of Him who is with thee than thou hast; for the Babe who is near thee is the God of gods and Lord of lords and Creator of the elements and of the angels and archangels.

91. “He is the strength of God and the hand of God † He is the right hand of God and the wisdom of God † He is the comprehension of creatures, the beholder of the (whole) world † He is the death and terror and refuge of creatures † He is the judge and physician and protection of creatures † He it is who shall summon and scatter the gods of the Gentiles † He it is who shall straiten (*or* devastate) hell and weaken the strength and power of the devil † He it is that shall break the sting of death † He it is that shall scatter the diabolical power of distressful hell with its detestable evils † He it is whom all the tribes and nations of the whole world shall serve † He is also the judge and the nourishment of angels, and the life of the family of heaven, and the breastplate of protection of eternal life, without end, and the helmet of the crown of the heavenly city.”

92. Then Joseph said “Whence at all did ye understand the prediction of Christ’s birth?” “We understood it” said they “from our own old writings and from our ancient prophecy, which were from long ago in our possession predicting Christ. Since thou art asking how we understand all about the birth of Christ, we will tell thee all from beginning to end as our fathers and our forefathers foretold to us from the time of the sons of Abraham of yore till this day. What then” said they “but while we were guarding the prophecy and token which they left with us, one day on the Kalends of January precisely, and while we were reading the prophecy, we saw at once the sign which was foretold, i.e. a great star hairy and fiery between us and heaven. We were indeed overjoyed at it, and no one did see it but ourselves alone. A description of that star, or its forms and color, no one can give it, unless an angel of God were to give it. For greater was its light than as sun’s light; and from the day that star appeared to us, greater and nobler was its light than the light of all the constellations and stars together, and such was the greatness of its light that heaven and earth was full of it.”

93. “We came at once after it; it came before us brightly and radiantly, and it was not slowly moving and unsteady, as other stars, but it came right and firmly before us without going in and out at all. There has not been worked, there will not be performed a miracle which could be greater than the star being like that, and its coming from the east quarter of India to the land of Juda; for there was no one else guiding it save the power of God, in truth. It came then a journey of twelve months *plus* twelve days, and indeed it was higher than a bell-house before us. Equal (in size) was its body and the body of the moon, greater its light than the light of the sun. And thus came we after it, and we were on fleet horses” said the Magi to Joseph. “Now the names of those horses were Dromann

Darii, Madian (and) Effan, and those are the horses that perform a month's journey in the single day, and it is a journey of twelve months thence from India to the land of Juda. Well, then the star came on before us up to this" said they "and stood over the top of the house in which the Savior is, and there is no one that should see it but would love God supremely on account of the holiness and the marvelousness of His action."

94. Then said Joseph "What are your own names?" said he. "That is not difficult (to tell), Melcisar is my name" said the bearded gray-haired man. It is he that gave the gold to Christ. "Balcisar is my name" said the bearded, dark brown-haired man. It is he gave the incense. "Hiespar indeed is my name" said the young beardless man. It is he gave the myrrh. Said Joseph to them "Since ye have recognized the Creator, He being a babe, come with me now to partake of food and drink, and abide tonight with me, and I will purchase for you precious wine and many-flavored wheat and various viands: for ye believed the true God, and ye gave noble and honorable gifts to Him." "(We) must go" said they "as He has fed us already with the heavenly banquet, and it is more delightful to us than to thee." "Good is the human feast in addition to the divine feast" said Joseph. "We will not tarry here tonight" said they "we will not go to Jerusalem, though we promised to go thither, for Herod is to be shunned by us, as the angel came to us last night to tell us to go by another way to our home, and that indeed is to be done, and receive thou (our) blessing, as thou art a man of election and of great honor with God."

95. They then went another way to their home, as the angel had said to them. Various indeed do writers tell the tidings of the magi. This is what James of the Knees says in his Gospel of the Children (?). "Seven is the number of the Magi, and in nine days afterwards they came to Bethlehem." This is what Matthew, son of Alphaeus, said in his Gospel *et in libro de Infancia Marie*, i.e. in the book in which is narrated the birth of Mary, that it is after twelve days they came. And the sacred commentators say they were three kings and (that there were) a hundred and three score ships with them, and that their ships were burned by Herod, in order that they should come to converse with him in returning. It is also narrated that they gave very great presents to Mary and Joseph, besides what they gave to Christ *et reliqua*.

APPENDIX D: THE RELATIONSHIP OF EACH CHAPTER OF THE IRISH VERSION OF THE NEW SOURCE; BY JAMES; TO HIS LATIN ORIGINAL AS CONTAINED IN ARUNDEL AND HEREFORD; USING HOGAN'S NUMBERING SYSTEM

58. is introductory. It speaks of the three Gospels of the three Christmas masses, of the Caesarian tax, and Joseph's sons, Abion, Simeon, and James of the Knees (i.e. James bishop of Jerusalem, of whom Hegesippus\fn {Of Palestine, 4th century} tells that his knees were hardened by constant kneeling in prayer). The only fragments of our source in this section are a sentence on the obligation of going to one's own city to pay tribute, and the mention of Simeon among Joseph's sons. Of Abion, apparently the eldest son, I can so far make nothing: is there a muddled memory of Ebion underlying the name? It is also said here that James of the Knees wrote a narrative from Mary's birth to Christ's birth, and from Christ's birth to the Crucifixion. We know nothing of a post-nativity narrative by James, but we see that the Irish writer had an infancy book under that name. It may be alluded to again in 95.

59. says that the virgin was accompanied by the five virgins, Sepphora and the rest, whose names are rather corruptly given: this is a touch from Ps Matt. And evidently intrusive. The five virgins play no part, and soon vanish entirely. A line or two quoting Joseph's words concerning the tribute remind us of our source: but the better equivalent of what it says on this subject comes later. The mysterious first name of Joseph, Moab, is given as Moabitus.

60. Joseph and Abion leave the others to come on slowly, and go forward to seek lodging. The greeting of Bethlehem by Joseph is expanded, with abuse of Galilee, and reflections on exile, which continue into

61. where the house is described with much additional detail.

62,63. Are occupied with the tax; particulars of it, as proclaimed by the herald, paraphrase our source. The very spirited dialogue between Joseph and the tax-gatherers I take to be Irish amplification.

65. Here it seems that Abion is taken in discharge of the tax, but he is named once more, in 73. Then we return to the source: James of the Knees and the five virgins being again extraneous.

66. employs the source in part. The date of the Birth is an addition.

67. gives first the vision of the Two Peoples, which ought to have come in earlier: it is explained by Joseph—not by an angel—in the sense given in Ps Matt. Then comes a sentence from the source.

68,69. Show a very wide divergence from the source. The whole story of the midwives is omitted. Only two elements of the source are alluded to: the silence of creation, and the light and fragrance in the cave. In 69 the Star and the adoration of the ox and ass come in, from Ps Matt.

70. has a word of Joseph to Simeon which may be suggested by the source, and Joseph's resolve to celebrate the day is taken from it.

71,72. are a kind of hymn uttered by Joseph, in which a clause or two only recall the source.

73 sqq. tell the story of the Shepherds, very much as the source does: the details of the appearance of the angel, however, are much altered. Some words of Simeon are added. The Docetic touches are gone: a poetical description by the shepherds replaces them. The statement that they had a yearly feast is put in, and among their gifts a crown of thorns is quite unreasonably included.

79. is a short homiletic addition.

80-95 we have the story of the magi, again based on the source.

81. (description and names of the Magi) agrees pretty well with a paragraph in the *Collectanea Bedae*.

83,84. Show some confusion: the scribes etc. are *twice* consulted by Herod, and give the answer about Bethlehem.

86. In 86 is a homiletic addition.

88,89. have a description of the 'gifts' ostensibly derived from James of the Knees: it is not known to me in any other place. In 89 the disparaging remark about the shepherds is put into Simeon's mouth.

91. Here the Magi utter a hymn like that of Joseph; in it several clauses are taken from the source.

92,93. Deal chiefly with the Star, and expand the source considerably. In 93 the swiftness of the magi's journey is new. When they say "Now the names of those horses were Dromann Darii, madian, Effan" they are quoting isa. Lx. 6, "dromedarii Madian et Epha."

94. The description here of the Magi which we had in 81 is repeated in briefer form. Here again the source is departed from: the Magi insist on returning home. It is not well managed, for they say an angel warned them the night before, when *ex hypothesi* they were at Jerusalem, and surely they ought to have said something to Joseph about Herod's evil intentions?

95. is interesting: it quotes from the "Gospel of the Children (?)" by James of the Knees, a sentence which we do not find in any text: and also names the *Liber de infantia*, which was under Matthew's name. The burning of the ships by Herod (elicited from Ps. xlvii. 8, "conteres naues Tharsis," by ingenious exegetes), is not part of any apocryphal text known to me, though it is well known in legend and art.

The remaining sections printed by Hogan (96-108) do not seem to come in contact with our text at any point.

-----VII: Infancy Material at Books of the Savior 7-8 and 61-----

Introduction

This is the book most commonly known by the title given it in 1778 by Woide, *Pistis Sophia* ('Faithful Wisdom'), who first drew critical attention to it. The text itself is in Coptic (almost pure Sahidic dialect) in a parchment manuscript which dates to the second half of the 4th century (350-400AD). It was bought in a London bookshop in 1773 by Dr. Anthony Askew (d.1774), and named after him the Codex Askewianus. In 1785 it passed to the British Museum, where it is now preserved as Manuscript Add. 5114. An English translation first appeared by Mead (*Pistis Sophia*, London, 1896); the most recent edition in that language appears to that by Horner (*Pistis Sophia*, London, 1924).

It would seem better to give preference to the more primitive but less significant and rather technical title, Books of the Savior. The traditional title, *Pistis Sophia*, appears only once: as the superscription to book two. And even there, the colophon of the same book has on it: *A part of the books of the Savior*. This title also appears on the colophon of the third book.

The text of the codex in which it is found was first published, with a Latin translation, by Petermann & Berlioni (*Pistis Sophia. Opus Gnosticum Valentino Adjudicatum e Codice Manuscripto Coptico Londinensi Descripsit et Latine Vertit M. G. Schwartz*, 1851). Following the analysis of Kostlin ("Das Gnostische System des Buches Pistis Sophia" in *Theologische Jahrbucher* XIII, 1854, 1-104, 137-196), it is today almost unanimously agreed that the four sections of the manuscript are to be divided into two distinct groups, made up of three sections and one section, respectively. The three sections of one group correspond to three books of one and the same work, probably composed between 250-300AD; and with the fourth section, we have to do with a distinctly separate work, composed in the first half of the 3rd century (200-250AD), thus making this other work older than that which precedes it in the codex.

The first book has neither superscription or colophon; the second is superscribed (in a later hand): *The second book of the Pistis Sophia*. Only here do any of the four books in this codex bear this title. The true explanation of this title seems to be supplied by a passage in a book entitled the Wisdom of Jesus Christ—(*The Son of Man agreed with Sophia, his consort and revealed himself in a great light as bisexual. His male nature is called 'the Savior, the Begetter of All Things', but his female 'Sophia, the Mother of All', whom some call Pistis.*).

The Books of the Savior is written in the form of a gospel of the common Gnostic type. With fantastic imagery, interspersed with *jejune* canticles, it professes to contain esoteric teaching revealed by the risen Christ to the disciples and holy women—it has been reckoned that of the 46 questions put to Jesus, 39 of them are asked by Mary Magdalene—during a twelve year sojourn upon earth after the Resurrection, in response to their questions and in the form of a dialogue. Ascetic rules are appended which a man must follow if he is to escape the menace of evil powers and win through to the Kingdom of Light; yet in his own fashion the author emphasizes above all things the condescending Incarnation of Jesus, who is revealed as the greatest yet the simplest of all Mysteries, and in whom the contradictions of the entire universe are explained.

In the course of the dialogue, it is said that the final Ascension of Jesus to Paradise occurred on the 15th of the moon in the month of Tobe or Tybi (January). This date is perhaps to be connected with that on which, according to Clement of Alexandria (*Miscellaneous Studies* I.21.146.2) some of the Basilidian Gnostics celebrated annually the baptism of Jesus. If so, the work is connected with the life of a known Gnostic teacher, probably of Syrian origin, who taught at Alexandria in the second quarter of the 2nd century (125-150). [The attempt, made at the beginning, to claim the book as the work of Valentinus of Egypt (2nd century) or a Valentinian author, has long been abandoned. Indeed, it is much more probably to be ascribed to the Gnostics described by Epiphanius of Salamis (d.403), although it is not possible to determine more precisely whether they were Sethians or Severians.]

Codex Askewianus is written in Coptic; but that in this writing we have to do with a translation of a Greek original seems certain. Granger (in *Journal of Theological Studies* V, 1904, 401) and Burkitt ("Pistis Sophia" in *Journal of Theological Studies* XXIII, 1922, 271-280; "Pistis Sophia Again," *ibid.*, XXVI, 1925, 391-399; "Pistis Sophia and the Coptic Language," *ibid.*, XXVII, 1926, 148-157) have suggested that the work was directly composed in Coptic; but this is exposed to objections and arguments of fact which appear to be decisive.

The Books of the Savior contains an account of an incident in the infancy of Jesus which may be compared with the so-called "Hymn of the Soul" in the Acts of Thomas. The Odes of Solomon was also known to the author: the first ode is quoted by him as part of his text. NTA also offers parallels to Mark, Matthew and John. Several authors (references in Leisegang, Pauly-Wissowa I Reihe, 40 Halbbd., 1950, cols. 1820.62-1821.11) have proposed to identify the entire book or parts of it with the Little Questions of Mary; but this appears as untenable as the view of Liechtenhan ("Untersuchungen zur Koptische-Gnostische Literatur" in *Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftl. Theologie* XLIV, 1901, 236-253) that book one might once have been called the Gospel of Philip, or book two of the Questions of Mary.

[NTA, I, 250-257; ODC, 140, 1075; ANT, xxii, 66; JGD, 84,103]

... "And when Ifn{ Jesus is speaking, } set out for the world, I came to the midst of the Archons of the Sphere and had the form of Gabriel, the angel of the Aeons, and the Archons of the Aeons did not recognize me, but they thought that I was the angel Gabriel. Now it happened that, when I had come to the midst of the Archons of the Aeons, I

looked down upon the world of mankind at the command of the first Mystery. I found Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, before she had conceived him, and I sowed in her a power which I had taken from the little Jao, the Good, who was in the midst, that he might be able to proclaim before me, and prepare my way and baptize with water of the forgiveness of sins.” ...

... Jesus again continued in his speech and said: “Now it happened afterwards, when at the command of the first Mystery I looked down upon the world of mankind and found Mary, who is called ‘my mother’ according to the material body, that I spoke with her in the form of Gabriel, and when she had turned upwards towards me, I thrust into her the first power, which I had taken from Barbelo, that is, the body which I have borne on high. And in the place of the soul I thrust into her the power which I have taken from the great Sabaoth the Good, who dwells in the place of the righteous ones.” ...

... “Your\fn{Mary is speaking to the risen Jesus.} Power prophesied through David: Grace and Truth are met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other. Truth has flourished out of the earth, and Righteousness has looked down from heaven. Thus did your Power prophecy once concerning you.\fn{These three sentences are translated by ANT.}When you were small, before the Spirit had come upon you, while you were with Joseph in a vineyard, the Spirit came from on high and came to me in my house, resembling you, and I did not recognize him, and I thought that it was you. And the Spirit said to me: ‘Where is Jesus, my brother, that I may meet him?’ When he said this to me, I was perplexed and thought that it was a ghost come to tempt me. And I seized him and bound him to the foot of the bed which is in my house, until I went out to you both, to you and Joseph in the field and found you in the vineyard, while Joseph was fencing in the vineyard. Now it came to pass that, when you heard me speak the word to Joseph, you understood the word, and were glad and said: ‘Where is he, that I may see him? For I await him in this place.’ And it came to pass that, when Joseph heard you say these words, he was perplexed, and we went up together, entered the house, and found the Spirit bound to the bed. And we looked at you and him and found that you resembled him, and when he who was bound to the bed was freed, he embraced you and kissed you, and you kissed him and you both became one.” ...

[NTA, I, 402-404]

-----VIII: Infancy Material Attributed to Justin the Gnostic (2nd century)-----

Introduction

This story is to be found in Hippolytus of Rome (d.236, *Philosophoumena* V:xxvi). It is contained in his description of the religious system of Justin the Gnostic, and is closely connected with his own speculations concerning heavenly beings. It begins with the angel of Elohim (Baruch), who is sent to the earth to deliver men.

... Lastly in the days of king Herod Baruch is again sent down as an emissary of Elohim. When he came to Nazareth, he found Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, as a twelve-year-old boy tending sheep, and told him from the beginning everything which had happened from the time of Edem and Elohim, and what was to happen in the future, and said: “All the prophets before you allowed themselves to be seized. Take heed, Jesus, son of man, that you do not allow yourself to be seized, but proclaim this word to men, and tell them what concerns God and the good, and ascend to the good and seat yourself there by the side of Elohim, the father of us all.” And Jesus obeyed the angel and said: “Lord, all this will I do,” and he preached. ...

[NTA, I, 402]

-----IX: Infancy Material Attributed to Serapion of Thumis (late 4th-early 5th century)-----

Introduction

There exists also an infancy narrative from a *Life of John the Baptist*, which only became known to the general public in 1927. Written in Arabic with Syriac letters (Garshuni), it purports, according to the testimony of the Egyptian bishop Serapion of Thumis (who was bishop when Theophilus was patriarch of Alexandria from 385-412), to have been composed in Greek between the years 385-395. (Indeed, Mingana says that from the mention of Theodosius the Great in connection with some events of the narrative, it may be affirmed *with a good deal of probability* that Serapion was writing during those years.) The work is extant in two manuscripts of the Mingana collection (Mingana Syriaca 22, 16th century; Mingana Syriaca 183, 18th century). Mingana himself has edited them (“Woodbrooke Studies, Edition

and Translation of Christian Documents in Syriac and Garshuni” in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* (Manchester) XI, 1927, 329ff, 446-449). He says the text was edited from both manuscripts. They exhibit short *lacunae*; but the gaps do not affect identical passages, and a complete, continuous and unbroken text has been established by collation. In spite of some important variants, both manuscripts represent a single recension of the story, though one may be supposed to have been written for the use of Egyptian Christians, and the other for Syrian Christians. If the story is a translation from Greek, as in many passages it appears to be, the translator must have used his proper names in the form in which they were known in his day. The text seems to contain sentences that have been interpolated by authors or copyists who may have lived at a date much later than that of Serapion.

[WS1, introduction; NTA, I, 407]

... After five years the pious and blessed old mother Elizabeth passed away, and the holy John {John the Baptist.} sat weeping over her, as he did not know how to shroud her and bury her, because on the day of her death he was only seven years and six months old. And Herod also died the same day as the blessed Elizabeth.

The Lord Jesus Christ who with his eyes sees heaven and earth saw his kinsman John sitting and weeping near his mother, and he also began to weep for a long time, without anyone knowing the cause of his weeping. When the mother of Jesus saw him weeping, she said to him: “Why are you weeping? Did the old man Joseph or any other one chide you?” And the mouth that was full of life answered: “No, O my mother, the real reason is that your kinswoman, the old Elizabeth, has left my beloved John an orphan. He is now weeping over her body which is lying in the mountain.”

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

The Savior said then to the cloud: “Leave us here at this side of the spot.” And it immediately went, reached that spot, and departed. Its noise, however, reached the ears of Mar John, who, seized with fear, left the body of his mother. A voice reached him immediately and said to him: “Do not be afraid, O John. I am Jesus Christ, your master. I am your kinsman Jesus, and I came to you with my beloved mother in order to attend to the business of the burial of the blessed Elizabeth, your happy mother, because she is my mother’s kinswoman.” When the blessed and holy John heard this, he turned back, and Christ the Lord and his virgin mother embraced him. Then the Savior said to his virgin mother: “Arise, you and Salome, and wash the body.” And they washed the body of the blessed Elizabeth in the spring from which she used to draw water for herself and her son. Then the holy virgin Mary got hold of the blessed (John) and wept over him, and cursed Herod on account of the numerous crimes which he had committed. Then Michael and Gabriel came down from heaven and dug a grave; and the Savior said to them: “Go and bring the soul of Zacharias, and the soul of the priest Simeon, in order that they may sing while you bury the body.” And Michael brought immediately the souls of Zacharias and Simeon who shrouded the body of Elizabeth and sang for a long time over it. ... And Jesus Christ and his mother stayed near the blessed and the holy John seven days, and condoled with him at the death of his mother, and taught him how to live in the desert. And the day of the death of the blessed Elizabeth was the 15th of February.

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

These words the Christ our Lord spoke to his mother, while John was in the desert. And they mounted the

cloud, and John looked at them and wept, and Mary wept also bitterly over him, saying: "Woe is me, O John, because you are alone in the desert without anyone. Where is Zacharias, your father, and where is Elizabeth, your mother? Let them come and weep with me today." And Jesus Christ said to her: "Do not weep over this child, O my mother. I shall not forget him." And while he was uttering these words, behold the clouds lifted them up and brought them to Nazareth. And he fulfilled there everything pertaining to humanity except sin.

[WS1, 234-235]

-----X: **Infancy Material of Coptic Fragment**

I-----

Introduction

There are a number of lives, panegyrics, discourses and the like in Coptic, complete and fragmentary, which tell the story of the birth of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Forbes Robinson writes of these seven fragments in general: ... *The fragments ... here collected together have not before been translated into English. Indeed only a small portion has been translated into any European language. ... Yet the importance of this literature is considerable. For even when the Coptic narratives resemble those already known to us, yet they have strongly marked features of their own. And (in the case of Fragment VI) we have no knowledge of any similar accounts. ... The form in which these narratives have come down to us seems to be peculiar to Egypt. ... The stories are used as the material of sermons. This fact points to a developed ecclesiastical system, and makes us hesitate to ascribe a very early date to the documents in their present form. ... If, as there is reason to believe, they were molded into their present shape on Egyptian soil, they throw light on the popular religion of Coptic Christians. They show us more clearly than formal history or merely didactic discourses the way in which the ordinary man was being influenced by his religion. Popular Coptic Christianity, like the Gnostic systems preserved to us in Coptic books, borrowed from the ancient religion of the Egyptians (the influence of which) was not confined to Coptic Christianity. It had already influenced the Coptic religion of Greece; and this in its turn affected Greek Christianity. In this connection I need only refer to the work done by Dieterich in his Abraxas (1891) and his Nekyia (1893). ...*

... (Of Fragment I it may be said that this is) a Sahidic fragment at the Propaganda (College at Rome?). It consists of three leaves. ... Part of the bottom of the first leaf, and part of the margin of the second leaf are lost. The greatest length of a page is 11½ in., the greatest breadth 9¼ in. The columns (breadth 2¾ to 3¼ in.) contain from 28 to 30 lines. The stops are often decorated with red. Initial letters are either wholly or partly in the margin, and are sometimes not much larger than ordinary letters. They are decorated with red. ...

[TAS, introduction]

... eastwards always, offering her petitions and her prayers to her Spouse and her Bridegroom Christ. The angels of the Lord were surrounding her day and night. And she spent two years in the house of Joseph before the archangel brought her good tidings.

Now after these things time was come for God to have compassion on that which He had formed. The season was come for the captivity wherein mankind was led captive to be recalled. The hour came for the King to go forth and the barbarians to be defeated before Him. But Gabriel was sent to give the good tidings to the virgin. The angel was sent to the mother of God to proclaim to her the great good tidings. And he went in unto the virgin, the doors of her bedchamber being shut; and he cried out, saying, "Hail, you that have found favor, the Lord is with you. Behold you shall conceive and shall bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel."

Now the Virgin when she heard these things was disquieted, and said to the angel, "How shall this be to me? I have not known a man. For I am a virgin pure in my soul and my body, even as I was born." The archangel said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you: wherefore that which you shall bring forth is holy; he shall be called the Son of God."

Now when the holy Virgin heard these things, she said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord: bet it to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

She conceived moreover by the hearing of her ears, and she spent three other months in the house of Joseph, being pregnant with the Son of the living God. But when the righteous old man saw her pregnant, her womb being swollen out, he did not wish to make her a public example, but he wished to put her away privily, saying, "Truly my children and my kinsmen will mock my old age and say, 'He took a wife in his old age and found her pregnant.' But most of tall the priests of the temple will blame me, because I have allowed such a thing to happen

to the Virgin in my house; especially as they charged me concerning her. But I wonder that I never saw her speaking with a man. Whence then she has conceived I do not know.” Now in that night the holy archangel Gabriel came to him, and said to him, “O Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife: for that which shall be brought forth from her is from the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins.” And the righteous old man obeyed the word that Gabriel spoke to him, and from that day he kept attending upon the Virgin, waiting for that which should come forth from her womb.

Then after these things there went out a decree from the king Augustus that all the world should enroll itself after its villages. This is the first enrollment that was made. And they were all going, each one to enroll himself after his city. Joseph also arose, and took the Virgin Mary, that they might go to the enrollment.

Now as they were going in the way at the borders of Bethlehem, the guileless old man looked into the face of the Virgin, and found it shining as the sun; and she was troubled. And he said to her, “Wherefore is your face sad today?” And she said to him, “That which is in my womb troubles me, that I should bring it forth.” And Joseph the righteous said to the virgin, “O Mary, do not fear: that which comes forth from you shall succor you.” And he took her in to an inn in the way with their money which he had.

Then she said to him: “Do me the kindness to go into this city and seek a midwife, to come and sit by me, till God relieve me and I bring forth that which is in my womb.” And the blessed old man went forth among those places searching for a midwife. While he was without searching, the holy Virgin brought forth her Son in virginity; and she wrapped him in ...

[TAS, 17-21]

-----XI: Infancy Material of Coptic Fragment II-----

Introduction

(For a general statement by Robinson about these fragments, see prior to Fragment I. Of Fragment II he says that it) is a Sahidic fragment, also at the propaganda. It consists of six leaves. ... The columns contain about 34 lines. Initial letters are either wholly or partly in the margin; they are not very large, and are generally decorated with red. The ornamentation is somewhat profuse. ... the writing is small, and the margin irregular. ...

[TAS, introduction]

... all thy heart, and as if the redemption of Israel comes forth from Judah.” Mary answered and said, “Blessed is the Lord Sabaoth, who has called me from my mother’s womb, to serve Him all the days of my life.” And they were both comforting one another many days from the Scriptures inspired of God. Afterwards Elizabeth returned to her house and to her city Torine. For she used to visit her many times each year, ministering to her in all those things of which she had need; until the day that Gabriel the archangel said to Mary, “Go to Elizabeth your kinswoman.”

The matter followed the word contrariwise; for they became friends one with the other, because it was told the Virgin, ‘She is your kinswoman.’ And contrariwise she was her kinswoman according to the two things which I \fn{I do not know who the narrator of this fragment is supposed to be.} have said, that of the tribes and that of friendship ... \fn{Indicates where NTA has edited the text as translated by A. Mingana (Bulletin of the John Reynolds Library II, Manchester, 1927, 446-449).} And she was working many cures from among the people like those of her beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord; but she would not allow the apostles to write them, because she was fleeing from the vain glory of men.

Now the apostles were following her always, being taught by her the preaching of the gospel. And she had drawn many virgins to her, ruling over them and making them eager for the struggle of virginity, saying, “My daughters, it was virginity that drew the Lord to me. He came and dwelt in my womb nine months.” And she was leading them in the straight way, until they went up to her beloved Son without stumbling ...

-----XII: Infancy Material of Coptic Fragment III-----

Introduction

(For a general statement by Robinson about these fragments, see prior to Fragment I. Of Fragment III he says only that it is in the Bohairic dialect.)

[TAS, introduction]

... “There was a man Joseph\fn{Jesus is speaking,} who was from a city called Bethlehem, which is the city of the Jews, and is the city of king David. And he learned well the wisdom and the trade of carpentry. And this man Joseph took to himself a wife according to a union of a holy marriage. And she bore him sons and daughters, four sons and two daughters; whose names are these, Judas and Josetos, James and Simon: and the names of his daughters are Lysia and Lydia. And Joseph’s wife died, even as it is appointed for all men, and left James still little. And Joseph was a righteous man, glorifying God in all things. And he was without, working at the trade of carpentry, he and his two sons, living by the work of their hands, according to the law of Moses. And this righteous man, of whom I speak, this is Joseph My father according to flesh, to whom My mother Mary was betrothed for a wife.

“And while My father Joseph lived as a widower, Mary also My Mother, who was in every way good and blessed, was dwelling in the temple, serving therein in purity, and she grew up until she was twelve years old. She spent three years in the house of her parents, and nine other years in the temple of the Lord. Then the priests, when they saw the Virgin living austerely and dwelling in the fear of the Lord, spoke one with another, saying, ‘Let us seek a good man and espouse her to him until the time of the marriage feast; lest by any means we let the custom of women happen to her in the temple, and we come to be under a great sin.

“And straightway they called the tribe of Judah, and brought out from there twelve people, according to the name of the twelve tribes of Israel. The lot fell upon the good old man Joseph, My father according to flesh. Then the priests answered and said to My blessed virgin mother, ‘Go with Joseph, obey him, until the time comes that we make the marriage feast.’ My father Joseph received Mary My mother into his house. She found the little boy James in the sadness of bereavement, and was cherishing him. Therefore she was called Mary of James. Now Joseph took her into his house: and he went to the place wherein he worked in carpentry. Mary My mother spent two years in his house until the good time.

“Now in the fourteenth year of her life I came by My own will and dwelt in her, I who am Jesus your life. Now when she was three months pregnant, the guileless Joseph came from the place wherein he worked in carpentry; and found My virgin mother pregnant. He was troubled and feared, and purposed to put her away privily. And from grief of heart he did not eat or drink.

“But in the middle of the night, behold Gabriel, the archangel of joy, came to him in a vision, according to the command of My good Father; and said to him, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear, take Mary your wife to you: for that which she will bear is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus; it is He that will rule all the nations with a rod of iron.’ And the angel departed from him. And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary to him.

“Now after these things there went out a decree from Augustus the king, that all the world should give in its name, each one after his city. The good old man also arose, and took Mary My virgin mother up to his city Bethlehem, for she was close to bearing a child. And he wrote his name through the scribe: Joseph, the son of David, and Mary his wife and Jesus his son are of the tribe of Judah. And Mary My Mother bore Me in the way that turns to Bethlehem, by the tomb of Rachel, the wife of Jacob the patriarch, who is the mother of Joseph and Benjamin.

“Satan gave counsel to Herod the great, the father of Archelaus, who beheaded John, my beloved and My

kinsman. He sought after Me, to slay Me, thinking that My kingdom was of this world. And Joseph was told by My Father in a vision; and he arose, and took Me and Mary My mother—I sitting on her arms and Salome following us. We went down to Egypt, and dwelt there the space of a year, until Herod's body bred worms (so) that he died, because of the blood of the sinless little children which he shed."

"Now when that lawless man Herod was dead, we returned to the land of Israel, and we dwelt in a city of Galilee, whose name is Nazareth. And My father Joseph, the blessed old man, was working at the trade of carpentry, while we lived by the work of his hands. He never ate of bread for nothing, doing according to the law of Moses. ...

[TAS, 132-135]

-----XIII: Infancy Material of Coptic Fragment IV-----

Introduction

(For a general statement by Robinson about these fragments, see prior to Fragment I. Of Fragment IV he says that it is) a Sahidic fragment at the Propaganda. It consists of one leaf. ... The leaf is torn on the right and left sides, but little of the writing is gone. ... the columns contain from 29-32 lines. The stops are sometimes decorated with red. Initial letters are in the margin. They are large, and are decorated with red. ... The writing is rougher and more adorned (than the writing of Fragment I).

[TAS, introduction]

... to the good time. Now in the fourteenth year of the life of Mary My mother, I came by My own will and dwelt in her, I who am your life. And when she had been three months pregnant, the guileless Joseph, My beloved Father, came in also from the places of building; and found my mother manifestly with child. He feared and was troubled, and wished to put her away privily. And from sorrow he lay down, and he did not eat anything at all in that evening.

"But in the middle of the night, behold the archangel Gabriel went to him in a dream, by the authority of My good Father; and said to him, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear, take Mary your wife: for that which she will bring forth is holy. And you shall call His name Jesus; it is He that will rule His people with a rod of iron.' And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and kept the holy virgin in his house.

"After these things there went out a decree from the king Augustus, that all the world should enroll itself after its villages. And Joseph, the good old man, arose, and took the honorable Virgin; and brought her up to his own house to Bethlehem, since she was close to bearing a child. He enrolled his name with the scribes of Bethlehem: Joseph, the son of Jacob, and Mary his wife and Jesus their son, who are of the house of David, who is of the tribe of Judah. Mary My mother bore Me in the inn of Bethlehem, near the tomb of Rachel, the wife of Jacob the patriarch, the father of Joseph and Benjamin.

"Satan gave counsel in the heart of Herod the great, the father of Archelaus ...

[TAS, 147-149]

-----XIV: Infancy Material of Coptic Fragment V-----

Introduction

(For a general statement by Robinson about these fragments, see prior to Fragment I. Of Fragment V he says that it is) a Sahidic fragment in the British Museum. It consists of one leaf, the numbering of which is gone. The right side is badly torn, and many letters are completely lost. The greatest length of the leaf is about 13¼ in.; the greatest breadth about 7 (and seven-eighths) in. But it is torn and crumpled. ... The columns contain about 25 lines. Initial letters are rather small, and are wholly or partly in the margin. They contain a space for ornamentation in red, which has never been filled in. ... The writing is plain and regular.

[TAS, introduction]

... This is the manner of life of My father Joseph. He was forty years old, when he took to him a wife, and the other nine years he spent in wedlock ... \fn{A gap in the text of a few indecipherable words.} was betrothed to him for wife, he was told by the priests, saying, 'Keep her until the time of your marriage.' And Mary My mother brought Me forth at the beginning of the third year, being in the house of My beloved father Joseph, being in the fifteenth year of her life. And there are another eighteen years since My mother brought Me forth on the earth, in a mystery which cannot be searched out, nor can any know it in the whole creation, except Me and My Father and the Holy Ghost in unity ...

[TAS, 151]

-----**XV: Infancy Material of Coptic Fragment VI**-----

Introduction

(For a general statement by Robinson about these fragments, see prior to Fragment I. Of Fragment VI he says only that it) comes from the same as the previous.

[TAS, introduction]

... was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, "Blessed is the God of Israel; for He has visited us, and has wrought redemption for His people, and has raised up for us a horn of salvation from the house of His servant David."

And the holy child John was cherished much in the house of his parents for six months, receiving suck from the barren old woman. And his parents took him daily in their hands to the temple of the Lord; his father blessing him, and setting him before the altar at the place where the angel appeared to him, saying, "Lord God of Israel, strengthen this child, whom You have prepared for Yourself." And the child was pleasing daily.

Now it came to pass after six months from the time that John was born, the Word of the good Father also was born from the holy virgin Mary, in the reign of Augustus the king of the Romans, and when Herod was tetrarch in Judea. And straightway His star rose in the east, and the shepherds saw it, and wondered at it. For it was not a star like all the stars, but it was a great star in the form of a wheel, its figure being like a cross, sending forth flashes of light; letters being written on the cross, 'This is Jesus the Son of God.' And the wise men, when they saw the star and read the letters, hastened and came to Jerusalem unto Herod and the chief priests, saying, "Where is the King of the Jews that is born? For we saw His star in the east, and are come to worship Him." But some one will say to me, "Are you then adding a supplement to the gospels?" Let that beloved one listen attentively, and ...

[TAS, 163-165]

-----**XVI: Infancy Material of Coptic Fragment VII**-----

Introduction

(For a general statement by Robinson about these fragments, see prior to Fragment I. Of Fragment VII he says that it) is a fragment of a Bohairic manuscript in the possession of Lord Crawford, Coptic Ms 39. ... This fragment consists of two leaves, the numbering of which is lost. The first and last pages are hard to decipher: the last being sometimes quite illegible. The page is now 12¾ by 9 (and seven-eighths) in.; but the margins have been cut away. The writing is in a single column. ... There are no stops. ... Initial letters are very large, and are quite in the margin. The writing is thick and dark. It is written in a large and bold hand. ... There is no ornamentation.

[TAS, introduction]

... Moreover the days were fulfilled that she should bear. There went out a decree from the king Augustus that all the world should be enrolled after its villages. Joseph arose, and took Mary his wife, and set her on his ass, and went with her in the way. And he went up to be enrolled after his city, because he was of the house and the family of David. They went in the way at the borders of Bethlehem.

And seeing the face of the Virgin exceedingly bright as lightning, he wondered exceedingly. The Virgin said to him, "Let me down from the ass, for that which is in my womb moves me, that I should bring it forth." And Joseph lifted up his eyes higher and thither, him in the way and saw no place into which to go; and he did not know the end of the dispensation of God. And that place was a desert, there being a tomb therein in the way. And Joseph brought the Virgin, and left her therein. It was the hour of evening.

Joseph went forth among all the borders of Bethlehem, seeking a woman, that he might leave her with her. Now while Joseph was without, the Virgin brought forth her Son; and she took swaddling clothes, and wrapped Him in them, and laid him in a manger of cattle, out of which cattle eat; for there was no room for them in the inn. And Joseph found a woman at the hour of dawn, whose name was Salome. Now she was a midwife. He brought her unto the Virgin, and he saw the babe wrapped in the swaddling clothes: and she saw the Virgin, her face bright from the Holy Ghost.

She ran and came outside, and cried out with a loud voice to all the borders of Bethlehem, "Come, and see this great wonder. A virgin has born a child, and has not known a man", being a virgin like her. And through the great wonder she believed on Him, that He was the Son of God. And she did not cease following the Virgin and the Savior, until he was crucified, and rose from the dead and went up to the heavens ...

[TAS, 196-197]

-----XVII: An Infancy Fragment Attributed to Evodius of Antioch (1st century)-----

Introduction

In Forbes Robinson's Coptic Apocryphal Gospels (1896) the following Sahidic fragment of a homily occurs, which, according to James, should be *perhaps attributed to Evodius of Antioch* [d.c.69?], *disciple of the apostles*. He prints the following annotation:

... This tells of Joakim—formerly called Cleopas—and Anna, and of the way in which they were taunted by the men and women they met when they went to Jerusalem, because they had not children: and of their grief in consequence. Each then had a vision of a white dove: it came and sat on Joakim's head, and on Anna's bosom. Anna had another vision with a prediction of Mary's birth. Mary was born on the 15th of Hathor. Zacharias was warned by an angel to tell Anna and Joakim to dedicate Mary in three years' time. ...

[ANT, 87; ODC, 677]

-----XVIII: An Infancy Fragment Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem (d.386)-----

Introduction

On page 626 of Budge's Miscellaneous Coptic Texts (1915) appears a text entitled the Twentieth Discourse of Cyril of Jerusalem. [Robinson has edited part of this account as the Fourth Sahidic Fragment (XIV)]. The account entirely denies a corporeal assumption, but maintains frequent coincidence of language and content with the Sahidic account of the discourse attributed to Evodius of Antioch above. The reckless identification of Jesus' mother with all the other Marias of the gospels is characteristic of these Egyptian rhapsodies. In the Book of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ by Bartholomew the Apostle (which exists only in Coptic), the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene after the Resurrection in the Received account is turned into an appearance to his mother; and the same thing takes place in another Coptic fragment on the passion of Jesus printed by Revillout (Patrologia Orientalis II.2, #14, p. 169). James has printed the following annotation of this fragment. Where he has quoted from it, the actual document is indicated in italics.

... In this Mary is represented as saying to Cyril: *I was a child promised to God, and my parents dedicated me to Him before I came into the world. My parents were of the tribe of Judah and house of David. My father was Joakim, which is being interpreted Kleopa. My mother was Anna who was usually called Mariham. I am Mary Magdalene because the name of the village wherein I was born was Magdalia. My name is Mary of Cleopa. I am Mary of James the son of Joseph the carpenter.* We are told that in the village of Magdalia dwelt a rich and devout man David. A vision told him that the Redeemer should come out of his family. His wife Sara bore him a child whom the father called Joakim, and the mother Cleopa. He married Anna, daughter of Aminadab, David's brother. They were childless. After many days they went to the Temple, prayed for a child, and promised to dedicate it to

God. A voice came, saying that their prayer was heard. Mary was born, dedicated in the Temple at three years old, and brought up there till she was fifteen. ...

[ANT, 87-88]

-----XIX: An Infancy Fragment Attributed to Demetrius of Antioch-----

Introduction

On page 653 of Budge's work begins a discourse by Demetrius of Antioch. It tells a partial story of the life of Salome, the daughter of Joakim and his wife Susanna (though elsewhere in the same work she is called Anna). The description of her habits is almost identical with that in one of the three fragments mentioned under (X). [There is also a Coptic text not yet (1925) printed in full which tells the entire story of Salome, and simply transfers to her a great part of the legend of Mary of Thais of Egypt (early 4th century), the niece of the hermit Abraham.] James has printed the following annotation; the italics are quotations from the document itself.

... There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Joakim and he had a wife whose name was Susanna (though elsewhere in the discourse it is Anna). They were childless and prayed for a child. A man of light appeared and promised them a daughter whom they were to dedicate to God. She was born on the fifteenth of Athor and dedicated. \fn{James says here that *the description of her habits is almost identical with that in fragment IIA of Robinson; but I can not determine from his analysis of Robinson IIA which, if any in my collection, that fragment may be. H*} When she was twelve the priests decided to commit her to the care of a man. The lot fell on Joseph. She sat in his house and (wove) the veil of the Temple. Angels ministered to her in the form of doves or some other kind of holy bird. *They flew about her in the place where she used to sit working at her handicraft, and they would alight upon the window of her room and they longed to hear her holy voice, which was sweet, and pretty, and holy.* We then read of the annunciation and the salutation of Gabriel—of great length—the Visitation, Decree of Caesar, journey to Bethlehem. Joseph looked at Mary and saw her whole body shining, and that she was greatly moved, for the time of the birth drew nigh. A great star appeared and excited much comment. At dawn on the twenty-ninth of Khoiak, Mary asked Joseph to seek a woman to help her. He found one on the roof of her house, and asked if she knew a midwife. She said: *You are Joseph the husband of Mary*, and came down, and put on her finest apparel. Before they reached the caravansary the child was born. The woman's name was Salome. When they entered the house they saw the child in the manger and the ox and ass protecting him. Salome worshiped him. She was the first who recognized the Christ, and she followed him everywhere throughout his life. *I wish very much that I might describe to you fully the life of that woman and her acts and deeds* (the manuscript continues) but there is not time. The story is continued with some few non-Biblical details to the Flight into Egypt. The killing of Zacharias is shortly told in agreement with the account in the Infancy Gospel of James. ...

[ANT, 88]

-----XX: An Infancy Fragment Attributed to Epiphanius of Salamis (d.403)-----

James has printed the following extremely brief annotation, but no text:

... "This has very few points of contact with the Apocrypha. It is mentioned that Mary was working when the Annunciation took place." ...

(ANT, 88-89)

-----XXI: An Infancy Fragment Attributed to Cyril of Alexandria (d.444)-----

Introduction

A homily of Cyril of Alexandria preserves a number of intimate details about the care Jesus' mother took for Him while He was growing up. The description of Mary's habits is essentially the same as that in Robinson fragment attributed to Evodius of Antioch, as well as that in the discourse mentioned above by Demetrius of Antioch. James prints the following annotation; italics indicates actual text of the document.

... In this the care of Mary for her child, and her intercourse with him, is rather prettily described. *She used to*

take hold of his hand and lead him along the roads, saying, “My sweet son, walk a little way,” in the same manner as all other babes are taught to walk. And he, Jesus, the very God, followed after her untroubled. He clung to her with his little fingers, he stopped from time to time, and he hung on to the skirts of Mary his mother, he upon whom the whole universe hangs. He would lift up his eyes to her face and she would catch him up to herself and lift him up in her arms, and walk along with him. ...

[ANT, 89]

-----XXII: The History of Joseph the Carpenter-----

Introduction

The History of Joseph the Carpenter (NTA prefers Story of Joseph the Carpenter) is an Egyptian production dating from about 400AD (James says not earlier than the 4th, and very probably later; the ODC thinks the 4th-7th centuries are all open). Tischendorf employed various arguments in support of his opinion that the work belonged to the 4th century: (1) that it is found in at least two dialects of Coptic (fragments in Sahidic, completely in Bohairic); (2) that the eschatology of it is not inconsistent with an early date; (3) that the Feast of the Thousand Years (chapter 26) had become part of the non-orthodox Christian opinion after the 3rd century. ANF, however points out that the death of Mary (chapter 5) is consistent with the doctrine of the Assumption, which began to prevail in the 5th century.

That Coptic or Greek was the original language of the book may still be in dispute. In favor of the Greek are two considerations: (1) The first part, chapters 1-11, recount events before the birth of Jesus, thence his birth and early childhood. Here the influence of the Infancy Gospel of James and the Infancy Gospel of Thomas (both originally Greek productions) is unmistakable. (2) Part two, chapters 12-32, portray Joseph’s sickness and death as a model of holy dying; and also his burial, the latter corresponding to the rites of Osiris from the Old Religion (whose precepts had been translated into Greek long before this). Morenz (“Die Geschichte von Joseph dem Zimmermann Unbersetzt, Erlautert und Untersucht” in Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur LXVI, 1951) demonstrates a strong influence from Egyptian religion, and also that of Gnosis. Klameth (in Angelos III, 1930) affirms that in the Egyptian Christianity of the late 2nd century, there were no sharp lines between the Great Church and Gnostic thought.

On the other hand, a Latin version (not yet published) made in the 14th century exists, but it is from the Arabic, not the Greek. And it is from Coptic, not Greek, that the work was first translated *into* Arabic (first published by Wallin in 1722, with a Latin translation and copious notes). Wallin’s version has been republished by Fabricius, and later in a somewhat amended form by Thilo. This amended form of Wallin’s version is the text adopted by Tischendorf. Chapters 14-24 have been published in the Sahidic-Coptic version by Zoega in 1810 with a Latin translation; but more correctly by Dulaurier in 1835 with a French translation, and also by Lagarde (Aegyptiaca, 1883).

The object of the work is the glorification of Joseph, the Father of Jesus, on his feast day; for his cult, today so popular in the West, was long confined to Egypt. The interest of it lies in a few reminiscences of earlier books (the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, the Received Acts, the Apocalypse of Elias), and in the picturesque and highly Egyptian descriptions of death. The lamentations of Joseph and his prayers find many parallels in the literature of Christian Egypt, and especially in the Coptic accounts of the death of Mary.

[ANF, 352; ANT, 84-86; NTA, I, 430; ODC, 744]

“There was a man whose name was Joseph, sprung from a family of Bethlehem, a town of Judah, and the city of King David. This same man, being well furnished with wisdom and learning, was made a priest in the temple of the Lord. He was, besides, skilful in his trade, which was that of a carpenter; and after the manner of all men, he married a wife. Moreover, he begot for himself sons and daughters, four sons, namely, and two daughters. Now these are their names—Judas, Justus, James, and Simon. The names of the two daughters were Assia and Lydia. At length the wife of righteous Joseph, a woman intent on the divine glory in all her works, departed this life. But Joseph, that righteous man, my father\fn{Jesus is the narrator of this entire document.} after the flesh, and the spouse of my mother Mary, went away with his sons to his trade, practicing the art of a carpenter.

“Now when righteous Joseph became a widower, my mother Mary, blessed, holy, and pure, was already twelve years old. For her parents offered her in the temple when she was three years of age, and she remained in the temple of the Lord nine years. Then when the priests saw that the virgin, holy and God-fearing, was growing up, they spoke to each other, saying, ‘Let us search out a man, righteous and pious, to whom Mary may be entrusted until the time of her marriage; lest, if she remain in the temple, it happen to her as is wont to happen to women, and lest on that account we sin, and God be angry with us.’

“Therefore they immediately sent out, and assembled twelve old men of the tribe of Judah. And they wrote down the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. And the lot fell upon the pious old man, righteous Joseph. Then the

priests answered, and said to my blessed mother, 'Go with Joseph, and be with him till the time of your marriage.' Righteous Joseph therefore received my mother, and led her away to his own house. And Mary found James the Less in his father's house, broken-hearted and sad on account of the loss of his mother, and she brought him up. Hence Mary was called the mother of James. Thereafter Joseph left her at home, and went away to the shop where he wrought at his trade of a carpenter. And after the holy virgin had spent two years in his house her age was exactly fourteen years, including the time at which he received her.

"And I chose her of my own will, with the concurrence of my Father, and the counsel of the Holy Spirit. And I was made flesh of her, by a mystery which transcends the grasp of created reason. And three months after her conception the righteous man Joseph returned from the place where he worked at his trade; and when he found my virgin mother pregnant, he was greatly perplexed, and thought of sending her away secretly. But from fear, and sorrow, and the anguish of his heart, he could endure neither to eat nor drink that day.

"But at mid-day there appeared to him in a dream the prince of the angels, the holy Gabriel, furnished with a command from my Father; and he said to him, 'Joseph, son of David, fear not to take Mary as your wife: for she has conceived of the Holy Spirit; and she will bring forth a son, whose name shall be called Jesus. He it is who shall rule all nations with a rod of iron.' Having thus spoken, the angel departed from him. And Joseph rose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord had said to him; and Mary abode with him.

"Some time after that, there came forth an order from Augustus Caesar the king, that all the habitable world should be enrolled, each man in his own city. The old man therefore, righteous Joseph, rose up and took the virgin Mary and came to Bethlehem, because the time of her bringing forth was at hand. Joseph then inscribed his name in the list; for Joseph the son of David, whose spouse Mary was, was of the tribe of Judah. And indeed Mary, my mother, brought me forth in Bethlehem, in a cave near the tomb of Rachel the wife of the patriarch Jacob, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin.

"But Satan went and told this to Herod the Great, the father of Archelaus. And it was this same Herod ^{fn}{It was Herod Antipas (4BC-39AD) who ordered John the Baptist to be beheaded.} who ordered my friend and relative John to be beheaded. Accordingly he searched for me diligently, thinking that my kingdom was to be of this world. But Joseph, that pious old man, was warned of this by a dream. Therefore he rose and took Mary my mother, and I lay in her bosom. Salome ^{fn}{The Salome mentioned here was, according to two of the manuscripts of the Infancy Gospel of Matthew, the third husband of Anna, Mary's mother, and the father of Mary the wife of Zebedee.} also was their fellow-traveler. Having therefore set out from home, he retired into Egypt, and remained there the space of one whole year, until the hatred of Herod passed away.

"Now Herod died by the worst form of death, atoning for the shedding of the blood of the children whom he wickedly cut off, though there was no sin in them. And that impious tyrant Herod being dead, they returned into the land of Israel, and lived in a city of Galilee which is called Nazareth. And Joseph, going back to his trade as a carpenter, earned his living by the work of his hands; for, as the law of Moses had commanded, he never sought to live for nothing by another's labor.

"At length, by increasing years, the old man arrived at a very advanced age. He did not, however, labor under any bodily weakness, nor had his sight failed, nor had any tooth perished from his mouth. In mind also, for the whole time of his life, he never wandered; but like a boy he always in his business displayed youthful vigor, and his limbs remained unimpaired, and free from all pain. His life, then, in all, amounted to one hundred and eleven years, his old age being prolonged to the utmost limit.

"Now Justus and Simeon, the elder sons of Joseph, were married, and had families of their own. Both the daughters were likewise married, and lived in their own houses. So there remained in Joseph's house, Judas and James the Less, and my virgin mother. I moreover dwelt along with them, not otherwise than if I had been one of his sons. But I passed all my life without fault. Mary I called my mother, and Joseph father, and I obeyed them in all that they said; nor did I ever contend against them, but complied with their commands, as other men whom earth produces are wont to do; nor did I at any time arouse their anger, or give any word or answer in opposition to them. On the contrary, I cherished them with great love, like the pupil of my eye.

“It came to pass, after these things, that the death of that old man, the pious Joseph, and his departure from this world, were approaching, as happens to other men who owe their origin to this earth. And as his body was verging on dissolution, an angel of the Lord informed him that his death was now close at hand. Therefore fear and great perplexity came upon him. So he rose up and went to Jerusalem; and going into the temple of the Lord, he poured out his prayers there before the sanctuary, and said:

“O God! author of all consolation, God of all compassion, and Lord of the whole human race; God of my soul, body, and spirit; with supplications I reverence you, O Lord and my God. If now my days are ended, and the time draws near when I must leave this world, send me, I beseech You, the great Michael, the prince of Your holy angels. Let him remain with me, that my wretched soul may depart from this afflicted body without trouble, without terror and impatience. For great fear and intense sadness take hold of all bodies on the day of their death, whether it be man or woman, beast wild or tame, or whatever creeps on the ground or flies in the air. At the last all creatures under heaven in whom is the breath of life are struck with horror, and their souls depart from their bodies with strong fear and great depression. Now therefore, O Lord and my God, let Your holy angel be present with his help to my soul and body, until they shall be dissevered from each other. And do not let the face of the angel, appointed my guardian from the day of my birth, be turned away from me; but may he be the companion of my journey even until he bring me to You. Let his countenance be pleasant and gladsome to me, and let him accompany me in peace. And do not let demons of frightful aspect come near me in the way in which I am to go, until I come to You in bliss. And do not let the door-keepers hinder my soul from entering paradise. And do not uncover my sins, and expose me to condemnation before Your terrible tribunal. Do not let the lions rush in upon me; nor let the waves of the sea of fire overwhelm my soul—for this must every soul pass through—\fn{This clause looks like an interpolation. But the doctrine of purgatory was held from an early date (so Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* III:ix, *Stromateis* VII:vi; and Origen of Alexandria, *Contra Celsum* V:xiv,xiv).} before I have seen the glory of Your godhead. O God, most righteous Judge, who in justice and equity will judge mankind, and will render to each one according to his works, O Lord and my God, I beseech You, be present to me in Your compassion, and enlighten my path that I may come to You; for You are a fountain overflowing with all good things, and with glory for evermore. Amen.’

“It came to pass thereafter, when he returned to his own house in the city of Nazareth, that he was seized by disease, and had to keep (to) his bed. And it was at this time that he died, according to the destiny of all mankind. For this disease was very heavy upon him, and he had never been ill, as he now was, from the day of his birth.”

And thus assuredly it pleased Christ to order the destiny of the righteous Joseph. He lived forty years unmarried; thereafter his wife remained under his care forty-nine years, and then died.

“And a year after her death, my mother, the blessed Mary, was entrusted to him by the priests that he should keep her until the time of her marriage. She spent two years in his house; and in the third year of her stay with Joseph, in the fifteenth year of her age, she brought me forth on earth by a mystery which no creature can penetrate or understand, except myself, and my Father and the Holy Spirit, constituting one essence\fn{The phrase one essence was first used in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity by Augustine of Hippo Regius (d.430).} with myself.

[Here the Coptic has the following: *This is the end of the life of my beloved father Joseph. When forty years old he married a wife, with whom he lived nine years. After her death he remained a widower one\fn{Or: two.} year; and my mother lived two years in his house before she was married to him, since he had been ordered by the priests to take charge of her until the time of her marriage. And my mother Mary brought me forth in the third year that she was in Joseph’s house, in the fifteenth year of her age. My mother bore me in a cave,\fn{This seems to be a mistranslation for: mystery.} which it is unlawful either to name or seek, and there is not in the whole creation a man who knows it, except me and my Father and the Holy Spirit.\fn{It is to be noted that the last clause of the Greek version is missing in the Coptic.}*]

“The whole age of my father, therefore, that righteous old man, was one hundred and eleven years, my Father in heaven having so decreed. And the day on which his soul left his body was the twenty-sixth of the month Abib. For now the fine gold began to lose its splendor and the silver to be worn down by use—I mean his understanding and his wisdom. He also loathed food and drink, and lost all his skill in his trade of carpentry, nor did he any more pay attention to it. It came to pass, then, in the early dawn of the twenty-sixth day of Abib, that Joseph, that righteous old man, lying in his bed, was giving up his unquiet soul. Wherefore he opened his mouth with many

sighs, and struck his hands one against the other, and with a loud voice cried out, and spoke after the following manner:

“Woe to the day on which I was born into the world! Woe to the womb which bare me! Woe to the bowels which admitted me! Woe to the breasts which suckled me! Woe to the feet upon which I sat and rested! Woe to the hands which carried me and reared me until I grew up! For I was conceived in iniquity, and in sins did my mother desire me. Woe to my tongue and my lips, which have brought forth and spoken vanity, detraction, falsehood, ignorance, derision, idle tales, craft, and hypocrisy! Woe to my eyes, which have looked upon scandalous things! Woe to my ears, which have delighted in the words of slanderers! Woe to my hands, which have seized what did not of right belong to them! Woe to my belly and my bowels, which have lusted after food unlawful to be eaten! Woe to my throat, which like a fire has consumed all that it found. Woe to my feet, which have too often walked in ways displeasing to God! Woe to my body; and woe to my miserable soul, which has already turned aside from God its Maker! What shall I do when I arrive at that place where I must stand before the most righteous Judge, and when He shall call me to account for the works which I have heaped up in my youth? Woe to every may dying in his sins! Assuredly that same dreadful hour, which came upon my father Jacob, when his soul was flying forth from his body, is now, behold, near at hand for me. Oh! How wretched I am this day, and worthy of lamentation! But God alone is the disposer of my soul and body; He also will deal with them after his own good pleasure.’

“These words are the words spoken by Joseph, that righteous old man. And I, going in beside him, found his soul exceedingly troubled, for he was placed in great perplexity. And I said to him: ‘Hail my father Joseph, righteous man; how is it with you?’ And he answered me: ‘All hail, my well-beloved son. Indeed, the agony and fear of death have already environed me; but as soon as I heard Your voice, my soul was at rest. O Jesus of Nazareth! Jesus, my Savior! Jesus, the deliverer of my soul! Jesus, my protector! Jesus! O sweetest name in my mouth, and in the mouth of all those that love it! O eye which sees, and ear which hears, hear me! I am Your servant; this day I most humbly reverence You, and before Your face I pour out my tears. You are altogether my God; You are my Lord, as the angel has told me times without number, and especially on that day when my soul was driven about with perverse thoughts about the pure and blessed Mary, who was carrying You in her womb, and whom I was thinking of secretly sending away. And while I was thus meditating, behold, there appeared to me in my rest angels of the Lord, saying to me in a wonderful mystery: “O Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife; and do not grieve your soul, nor speak unbecoming words of her conception, because she is with child of the Holy Spirit, and shall bring forth a son, whose name shall be called Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.” Do not for this cause wish me evil, O Lord! For I was ignorant of the mystery of Your birth. I call to mind also, my Lord, that day when the boy died of the bite of the serpent. And his relations wished to deliver You to Herod, saying that You had killed him; but You raised him from the dead, and restored him to them. Then I went up to You, and took hold of Your hand, saying: “My son, take care of yourself.” But You said to me in reply: Are you not my father after the flesh? I shall teach you who I am. ^{The Sahidic Coptic version notes here that Joseph entreats Jesus to pardon him likewise, because once upon a time, when He had recalled to life a boy bitten by a cerastes (a horned viper) he (Joseph) had pulled His right ear, advising Him to refrain from works that brought hatred upon Him.} Now therefore, O Lord and my God, do not be angry with me, or condemn me on account of that hour. I am Your servant, and the son of Your handmaiden; but You are my Lord, my God and Savior, most surely the Son of God.’

“When my father Joseph had thus spoken, he was unable to weep more. And I saw that death now had dominion over him. And my mother, virgin undefiled, rose and came to me, saying: ‘O my beloved son, this pious old man Joseph is now dying.’ And I answered: ‘Oh, my dearest mother, assuredly upon all creatures produced in this world the same necessity of death lies; for death holds sway over the whole human race. Even you, O my virgin mother, must look for the same end of life as other mortals. And yet your death, as also the death of this pious man, is not death, but life enduring to eternity. Nay more, even I must die, as concerns the body which I have received from you. But rise, O my venerable mother, and go in to Joseph, that blessed old man, in order that you may see what will happen as his soul ascends from his body.

“My undefiled mother Mary, therefore, went and entered the place where Joseph was. And I was sitting at his feet looking at him, for the signs of death already appeared in his countenance. And that blessed old man raised his head, and kept his eyes fixed on my face; but he had no power of speaking to me, on account of the agonies of death, which held him in their grasp. But he kept fetching many sighs. And I held his hands for a whole hour; and

he turned his face to me, and made signs for me not to leave him. Thereafter I put my hand upon his breast, and perceived his soul now near his throat, preparing to depart from its receptacle.

“And when my virgin mother saw me touching his body, she also touched his feet. And finding them already dead and destitute of heat, she said to me, ‘O my beloved son, assuredly his feet are already beginning to stiffen, and they are as cold as snow.’ Accordingly, she summoned his sons and daughters, and said to them: ‘Come, as many as there are of you, and go to your father; for assuredly he is now at the very point of death.’ And Assia, his daughter, answered and said: ‘Woe’s me, O my brothers, this is certainly the same disease that my beloved mother died of.’ And she lamented and shed tears; and all Joseph’s other children mourned along with her. I also, and my mother Mary, wept along with them. \fn{The argument of the Sahidic version is: Jesus sends for Joseph’s sons and daughters, of whom the oldest was Lysia the purple-seller. They all weep over their dying father. }

“And turning my eyes towards the region of the south, I saw Death already approaching, and all Gehenna with him, closely attended by his army and his satellites; and their clothes, their faces, and their mouths poured forth flames. And when my father Joseph saw them coming straight to him, his eyes dissolved in tears, and at the same time he groaned after a strange manner. Accordingly, when I saw the vehemence of his signs, I drove back Death and all the host of servants which accompanied him. And I called upon my good Father, saying:

“O Father of all mercy, eye which sees, and ear which hears, hearken to my prayers and supplications in behalf of the old man Joseph; and send Michael, the prince of Your angels, and Gabriel, the herald of light, and all the light of Your angels, and let their whole array walk with the soul of my father Joseph, until they shall have conducted it to You. This is the hour in which my father has need of compassion. And I say to you, that all the saints, yea, as many men as are born in the world, whether they be just or whether they be perverse, must of necessity taste of death.’

“Therefore Michael and Gabriel came to the soul of my father Joseph, and took it, and wrapped it in a shining wrapper. Thus he committed his spirit into the hands of my good Father, and He bestowed upon him peace. But as yet none of his children knew that he had fallen asleep. And the angels preserved his soul from the demons of darkness which were in the way, and praised God even until they conducted it into the dwelling-place of the pious.

“Now his body was lying prostrate and bloodless; wherefore I reached forth my hand, and put right his eyes and shut his mouth, and said to the virgin Mary, ‘O my mother, where is the skill which he showed in all the time that he lived in this world? Lo! It has perished, as if it had never existed.’ And when his children heard me speaking with my mother, and pure virgin, they knew that he had already breathed his last, and they shed tears, and lamented. But I said to them, ‘Assuredly the death of your father is not death, but life everlasting. For he has been freed from the troubles of this life, and has passed to perpetual and everlasting rest.’ When they heard these words, they rent their clothes, and wept.

“And, indeed, the inhabitants of Nazareth and of Galilee, having heard of their lamentation, flocked to them, and wept from the third hour even to the ninth. And at the ninth hour they all went together to Joseph’s bed. And they lifted his body, after they had anointed it with costly unguents. But I entreated my Father in the prayer of the celestials—that same prayer which with my own hand I made before I was carried in the womb of the virgin Mary, my mother. And as soon as I had finished it, and pronounced the amen, a great multitude of angels came up; and I ordered two of them to stretch out their shining garments, and to wrap in them the body of Joseph, the blessed old man.

“And I spoke to Joseph, and said, ‘The smell or corruption of death shall not have dominion over you, nor shall a worm ever come forth from your body. Not a single limb of it shall be broken, nor shall any hair on your head be changed. Nothing of your body shall perish, O my father Joseph, but it will remain entire and uncorrupted even until the banquet of the thousand years. \fn{So also at Letter of Barnabas to His Sons and Daughters 15; Shepherd of Hermas 1:3 (c.150); Irenaeus of Lyons (d.c.200, Against All Heresies V:33); Justin of Flavia Neapolis (d.c.150, Dialogue With Trypho LXXXI); and Tertullian of Carthage (d.c.220, Adversus Marcionem III: 24). Caius and Dionysius imputed grossness and sensuality to Cerinthus of Edessa, because he spoke of the wedding feast of the thousand years. } And whosoever shall make an offering on

the day of your remembrance, him will I bless and recompense in the congregation of the virgins; and whosoever shall give food to the wretched, the poor, the widows, and orphans from the work of his hands, on the day on which your memory shall be celebrated, and in your name, shall not be in want of good things all the days of his life. And whosoever shall have given a cup of water, or of wine, to drink to the widow or orphan in your name, I will give him to you, that you may go in with him to the banquet of the thousand years. And every man who shall present an offering on the day of your commemoration will I bless and recompense in the church of the virgins: for one I will render to him thirty, sixty, and a hundred. And whosoever shall write the history of your life, of your labor, and your departure from this world, and this narrative that has issued from my mouth, him shall I commit to your keeping as long as he shall have to do with this life. And when his soul departs from the body, and when he must leave this world, I will burn the book of his sins, nor will I torment him with any punishment in the day of judgment; but he shall cross the sea of flames, and shall go through it without trouble or pain. \fn{All the Fathers placed the purgatorial fires, as the Greek church does still, at the Day of Judgment. Augustine of Hippo Regius was the first who brought forward the supposition that the purification took place in Hades before the Day of Judgment.} And upon every poor man who can give none of those things which I have mentioned this is incumbent: viz., if a son is born to him, he shall call his name Joseph. So there shall not take place in his house either poverty or any sudden death for ever.’

“Thereafter the chief men of the city came together to the place where the body of the blessed old man Joseph had been laid, bringing with them burial-clothes; and they wished to wrap it up in them after the manner in which the Jews are wont to arrange their dead bodies. And they perceived that he kept his shroud fast; for it adhered to the body in such a way, that when they wished to take it off, it was found to be like iron—impossible to be moved or loosened. Nor could they find any ends in that piece of linen, which struck them with the greatest astonishment. At length they carried him out to a place where there was a cave, and opened the gate, that they might bury his body beside the bodies of his fathers. Then there came into my mind the day on which he walked with me into Egypt, and that extreme trouble which he endured on my account. Accordingly, I bewailed his death for a long time; and lying upon his body, I said:

“O Death, who makes all knowledge vanish away, and raises so many tears and lamentations, surely it is God my Father Himself who has granted you this power. For men die for the transgression of Adam and his wife Eve, and Death does not spare so much as one. Nevertheless, nothing happens to any one, or is brought upon him, without the command of my Father. There have certainly been men who have prolonged their life even to nine hundred years; but they died. Yea, though some of them have lived longer, they have, notwithstanding, succumbed to the same fate; nor has any one of them ever said: I have not tasted death. For the Lord never sends the same punishment more than once, since it has pleased my Father to bring it upon men. And at the very moment when it, going forth, beholds the command descending to it from heaven, it says, “I will go forth against that man, and will greatly move him.” Then, without delay, it makes an onset of the soul, and obtains the mastery of it, doing with it whatever it will. For, because Adam did not do the will of my Father, but transgressed His commandment, the wrath of my Father was kindled against him, and He doomed him to death; and thus it was that death came into the world. But if Adam had observed my Father’s precepts, death would never have fallen to his lot. Do you think that I can ask my good Father to send me a chariot of fire, which may take up the body of my father Joseph, and convey it to the place of rest, in order that it may dwell with the spirits? But on account of the transgression of Adam, that trouble and violence of death has descended upon all the human race. And it is for this cause that I must die according to the flesh, for my work which I have created, that they may obtain grace.’

“Having thus spoken, I embraced the body of my father Joseph, and wept over it; and they opened the door of the tomb, and placed his body in it, near the body of his father Jacob. And at the time when he fell asleep he had fulfilled a hundred and eleven years. Never did a tooth in his mouth hurt him, nor was his eyesight rendered less sharp, nor his body bent, nor his strength impaired; but he worked at his trade of a carpenter to the very last day of his life; and that was the six-and-twentieth of the month Abib.”

[ANF, VIII, 388-394]

-----XXIII: The Arabic Infancy Gospel-----

Introduction

The first edition of the Arabic Infancy Gospel, with a Latin translation and copious notes, was made by Sike (Evangelium Infantiae bel Liber Apocryphus de Infantia Servatoris, 1697), and after him by Fabricius, Jones, Schmidt, Thilo, and Tischendorf. Sike had at his disposal only one (Arabic) manuscript, now lost, though reprinted in Thilo (Codex Apocryphus Nuevo Testamentum, Leipzig, 1832, 66-131). There are now known to be other manuscripts at Rome (Vaticanus Syriacus 159) and at Florence (Laurentionus Orientalis 32); but as of 1924 (when this source, ANT, was first printed) these had all not been as yet fully collated with one another. The greatest portion of the work is also contained in some manuscripts of the 13th and 14th centuries and edited by Budge (History of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the History of the Likeness of Christ, London, 1899) which is of special importance for the presumed Syriac archetype. (In a similar manner, the Armenian Infancy Gospel also derives from the Syriac.)

The gospel is a late compilation, as has been shown most clearly by Dom Peeters in his 1914 French edition (The Arabic Infancy Gospel = Evangiles Apocryphes II, 1914, 1-65). He divides it into the following parts: **(1)** chapter I (a late note, prefixed to the original work); **(2)** II-IX (the birth of Jesus and the flight into Egypt, of which the Infancy Gospel of James is in some parts of this the ultimate source); **(3)** X-XXV (miracles in Egypt, some of which show the influence of late local traditions); **(4)** XXXVI-LIII (further miracles, mostly derived from the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, and ending with the story of the finding of Jesus by his parents in the Temple at Jerusalem); **(5)** LIV (baptism of Jesus); and **(6)** LV (Doxology).

With the end in view of accurately dating this book, the following observations have also been made.

1. The first ancient allusion to the Arabic Infancy Gospel which seems to be identified is that of Solomon of Bassora (1222AD).
2. The identity of the miracle in chapters XX-XXI—that of the brother of two women, who had been changed into a mule and was restored to human form by having Jesus placed upon his back—can be traced back to one told of by Macarius in the Historia Lausica of Palladius of Galatia (the most valuable single writing that survives for the history of early monasticism, and written c.419AD).
3. Chapters XXIV-XXV are an Egyptian interpolation not earlier than the 12th century.
4. The meeting with the good thief told of in chapter XXIII is mentioned in at least two other places: **(a)** in a Greek version of the Acts of Pilate (not earlier than the 4th century); and **(b)** by Ailred of Rievaulx (d.1147, in his De Vita Eremitica ad Sororem XLVII).
5. The stories which this book has in common with the Infancy Gospel of Thomas (2nd century) are rather shortly told and do not help to solve difficulties in the older text (by *older text* is apparently meant that of Thomas: H).
6. In the long series of healings in Egypt and at Bethlehem, it is Mary for the most part who is the prominent figure in them. It is to her that the sufferers apply, and it is she who gives them the water in which the child Jesus has been washed, or some of his linen, or allows them to touch him.
7. There is an echo of the story in chapter XLI of a Western book, the Vita Rhythmica, a long Latin rhyming composition of the 13th century about Mary, the sources of which are enumerated by the compiler—Germanus of Auxerre, a Theophilus, Epiphanius of Salamis, Ignatius of Antioch, the Infanta Salvatoris—and are ostensibly Greek to a large extent.
8. The story in chapters XXXVII about Jesus and the cloth-dyer has parallels in the Paris (Greek) manuscript of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas; the Paris Greek fragment (Bibliothèque National Gr. 239); and in an expanded form in chapter 21 of the Armenian Infancy Gospel.
9. Mohammed was familiar with this tradition and adopted many of these legends into the text of the Qur'an (which appeared in its present form between 643-656AD).
10. Chapters L-LII display to some a formidable array of scientific terms and topics. The 9th century is the era to which the rise of scientific studies among the Arabs is assigned; it is in the 8th century when the scientific writings of the Greeks were studied and translated by Syrians. A chief agent in this work was Honain Ben Isaac (d.c.873) who wrote in Syriac and Arabic what he derived from the Greek.
11. The actual Arabic text cannot well claim a great antiquity for several reasons; and in any event, the rise of Arabic literature was very little earlier than Mohammed (d.629AD), and this version was written when the Arabic language was a familiar vehicle for literary composition.
12. In chapter XXIV, the Arabic name *Matarea* is twice mentioned—(*From there, they went to the sycamore, known today as Matarieh. And at Matarieh, the Lord Jesus made a spring rise from the ground, from which the Virgin Mary washed his tunic. And the Lord Jesus' sweat, that she wrung out right there, gave birth to le baume.*)—as both the name of the sycamore tree, and (capitalized) as the name of a place. As a place name, the earliest discoverable use of it appears to be by Abulfeda (d.1331) in his description of Egypt.

The resolution of this data does not seem particularly difficult, now that the existence of a Syriac archetype may be presupposed.

1. The Syriac edition cannot have been compiled before the 5th century (which takes into account items 2, 4, 5, and 8). Could Mohammed have been familiar with these legends in a Syriac prototype of the Arabic Infancy Gospel (to explain item 9)? The simpler explanation would be that he adapted them directly from the Infancy Gospel of James or the Infancy Gospel of Thomas. But it would seem that we

must proceed to the 8th century as at least the earliest time for the emergence of the Syriac form of the Arabic Infancy Gospel; for, although devotion to Mary was already very strong in the East by the 4th-5th centuries, it was during the 8th century that Mary was elevated by John of Damascus (d.c.749) and Andrew of Crete (d.740) to *mediatrix* and *mediatrix of grace*, respectively. Such a time would seem to answer to the requirements of item 6, which covers chapters X-XXXV, clearly the core of the book, and therefore presumably intended by the author to be of primary interest to his audience.

2. The 9th century would seem to be the first in which the Arabic version of the Arabic Infancy Gospel could have been produced; for only this century appears to answer to the statements set out in items 10 and 11. On the other hand, James is certain that chapters 24-25 (covered in items 3 and 12) represent an Egyptian interpolation of the 12th century; and there would seem to be no objection to fixing this as the date of our *present* Arabic recension from items 7 (the “echo” may be a Greek, not a 14th century Latin one), or item 1 (for Solomon does not, of course, have to be *the first* witness, only *the first discovered* witness, to the existence of the Arabic Infancy Gospel).

3. The Syriac version therefore made its way onto the literary stage during the 8th century, and the Arabic during the 9th at the earliest (the present form, with its Egyptian interpolation, deriving from the 12th). (H)

[ANF, 352-353; ANT, 80-82; NTA, I, 369, 400-401, 404-405; TAG, lxxvi-lxxx]

We find *Or: have found.* what follows in the book of Joseph the high priest, who lived in the time of Christ. Some say that he is Caiaphas. *He is called Joseph Caiaphas by Josephus of Palestine (Antiquities of the Jews XVIII:ii.2).* He has said that Jesus spoke, and, indeed, when He was lying in His cradle said to Mary His mother, “I am Jesus, the Son of God, the Logos, whom you have brought forth, as the Angel Gabriel announced to you; and my Father has sent me for the salvation of the world.”

In the three hundred and ninth year of the era of Alexander, Augustus put forth an edict, that every man should be enrolled in his native place. Joseph therefore arose, and taking Mary his spouse, went away to Jerusalem, *The Latin translation in Tischendorf has Hierosolyma, which, as the form in the rest of the translation is feminine, means from Jerusalem. But as the Arabic can mean only to Jerusalem, the accusative plural of the neuter form may be intended here.* and came to Bethlehem, to be enrolled along with his family in his native city. And having come to a cave, Mary told Joseph that the time of the birth was at hand, and that she could not go into the city; but, said she, let us go into this cave. This took place at sunset. And Joseph went out in haste to go for a woman to be near her. When, therefore, he was busy about that, he saw an Hebrew old woman belonging to Jerusalem, and said, “Come here, my good woman, and go into this cave, in which there is a woman near her time.”

Wherefore, after sunset, the old woman, and Joseph with her, came to the cave, and they both went in. And, behold, it was filled with lights more beautiful than the gleaming of lamps and candles, and more splendid than the light of the sun. *Or: with the lights of lamps and candles, more beautiful than lightning, and more splendid than sunlight.* The child, enwrapped in swaddling clothes, was sucking the breast of the Lady Mary His mother, being placed in a stall. And when both were wondering at this light, the old woman asks the Lady Mary, “Are you the mother of this child?” And when the Lady Mary gave her assent, she says: “You are not at all like the daughters of Eve.” The Lady Mary said: “As my son has no equal among children, so his mother has no equal among women.” The old woman replied, “My mistress, I came to get payment; I have been for a long time affected with palsy.” Our mistress the Lady Mary said to her, “Place your hands upon the child.” And the old woman did so, and was immediately cured. Then she went forth, saying, “Henceforth I will be the attendant and servant of this child all the days of my life.

Then came shepherds; and when they had lighted a fire, and were rejoicing greatly, there appeared to them the hosts of heaven praising and celebrating God Most High. And while the shepherds were doing the same, the cave was at that time made like a temple of the upper world, since both heavenly and earthly voices glorified and magnified God on account of the birth of the Lord Christ. And when that old Hebrew woman saw the manifestation of those miracles, she thanked god, saying, “I give You thanks, O God, the God of Israel, because my eyes have seen the birth of the Savior of the world.”

And the time of circumcision, that is, the eighth day, being at hand, the child was to be circumcised according to the law. Wherefore they circumcised Him in the cave. And the old Hebrew woman took the piece of skin; but some say that she took the navel-string, and laid it past in a jar of old oil of nard. And she had a son, a deal in unguents, and she gave it to him, saying, “See that you do not sell this jar of unguent of nard, even if three

hundred denarii should be offered you for it.” And this is that jar which Mary the sinner bought and poured upon the head and feet of our Lord Jesus Christ, which thereafter she wiped with the hair of her head. Ten days after, they took Him to Jerusalem; and on the fortieth day after His birth they carried Him into the temple, and set Him before the Lord, and offered sacrifices for Him, according to the commandment of the law of Moses, which is, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called the holy of God.”

Then old Simeon saw Him shining like a pillar of light, when the Lady Mary, His virgin mother, rejoicing over Him, was carrying Him in her arms. And angels, praising Him, stood round Him in a circle, like life guards {Bodyguards. H} standing by a king. Simeon therefore went up in haste to the Lady Mary, and, with hands stretched out before her, said to the Lord Christ, “Now, O my Lord, let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your compassion, which You have prepared for the salvation of all peoples, a light to all nations, and glory to Your people Israel.” Hanna also, a prophetess, was present, and came up, giving thanks to God, and calling the Lady Mary blessed.

And it came to pass, when the Lord Jesus was born at Bethlehem of Judea, in the time of King Herod, behold, magi came from the east to Jerusalem, as Zeraduscht had predicted; {I.e., Zoroaster. For this prediction of Zoroaster see Smith (“Magi” in Dictionary of the Bible.)} and there were with them gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And they adored Him, and presented to Him their gifts. Then the Lady Mary took one of the swaddling-bands, and, on account of the smallness of her means, gave it to them; and they received it from her with the greatest marks of honor. And in the same hour there appeared to them an angel in the form of that star which had before guided them on their journey; and they went away, following the guidance of its light, until they arrived in their own country.

And their kings and chief men came together to them, asking what they had seen or done, how they had gone and come back, what they had brought with them. And they showed them that swathing-cloth which the Lady Mary had given them. Wherefore they celebrated a feast, and, according to their custom, lighted a fire and worshipped it, and threw that swathing-cloth into it; and the fire laid hold of it, and enveloped it. And when the fire had gone out, they took out the swathing-cloth exactly as it had been before, just as if the fire had not touched it. Wherefore they began to kiss it, and to put it on their heads and their eyes, saying, “This verily is the truth without doubt. Assuredly it is a great thing that the fire was not able to burn or destroy it.” Then they took it, and with the greatest honor laid it up among their treasures.

And when Herod saw that the magi had left him, and not come back to him, he summoned the priests and the wise men, and said to them, “Show me where Christ is to be born.” And when they answered, “In Bethlehem of Judea,” he began to think of putting the Lord Jesus Christ to death. Then appeared an angel of the Lord to Joseph in his sleep, and said, “Rise, take the boy and His mother, and go away into Egypt.” He rose, therefore, towards cockcrow, and set out.

While he is reflecting how he is to set about his journey, morning came upon him after he had gone a very little way. And now he was approaching a great city, in which there was an idol, to which the other idols and gods of the Egyptians offered gifts and vows. And there stood before this idol a priest ministering to him, who, as often as Satan spoke from that idol, reported it to the inhabitants of Egypt and its territories. This priest had a son, three years old, beset by several demons; and he made many speeches and utterances; and when the demons seized him, he tore his clothes, and remained naked, and threw stones at the people. And there was a hospital in that city dedicated to that idol. And when Joseph and the Lady Mary had come to the city, and had turned aside into that hospital, the citizens were very much afraid; and all the chief men and the priests of the idols came together to that idol, and said to it, “What agitation and commotion is this that has arisen in our land?” The idol answered them, “A God has come here in secret, who is God indeed; nor is any god besides Him worthy of divine worship, because He is truly the Son of God. And when this land became aware of His presence, it trembled at His arrival, and was moved and shaken; and we are exceedingly afraid from the greatness of His power.” And in the same hour that idol fell down, and at its fall all, inhabitants of Egypt and others, ran together.

And the son of the priest, his usual disease having come upon him, entered the hospital, and there came upon Joseph and the Lady Mary, from whom all others had fled. The Lady Mary had washed the cloths of the Lord

Christ, and had spread them over some wood. That demoniac boy, therefore, came and took one of the cloths, and put it on his head. Then the demons, fleeing in the shape of ravens and serpents, began to go forth out of his mouth. The boy, being immediately healed at the command of the Lord Christ, began to praise God, and then to give thanks to the Lord who had healed him. And when his father saw him restored to health, "My son," said he, "what has happened to you, and by what means have you been healed?" The son answered, "When the demons had thrown me on the ground, I went into the hospital, and there I found an august woman with a boy, whose newly-washed cloths she had thrown upon some wood. One of these I took up and put upon my head, and the demons left me and fled." At this the father rejoiced greatly, and said, "My son, it is possible that this boy is the Son of the living God who created the heavens and the earth: for when he came over to us, the idol was broken, and all the gods fell, and perished by the power of his magnificence."

Here was fulfilled the prophecy which says, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." Joseph indeed, and Mary, when they heard that the idol had fallen down and perished, trembled, and were afraid. Then they said, "When we were in the land of Israel, Herod thought to put Jesus to death, and on that account slew all the children of Bethlehem and its confines; and there is no doubt that the Egyptians, as soon as they have heard that this idol has been broken, will burn us with fire."^{fn{Burning to death was the punishment of those convicted of sacrilege and the practice of magic. It was inflicted also on slaves for grave offences against their masters. }}

Going out from there, they came to a place where there were robbers who had plundered several men of their baggage and clothes, and had bound them. Then the robbers heard a great noise, like the noise of a magnificent king going out of his city with his army, and his chariots and his drums; and at this the robbers were terrified, and left all their plunder. And their captives rose up, loosed each other's bonds, recovered their baggage, and went away. And when they saw Joseph and Mary coming up to the place, they said to them, "Where is that king, at the hearing of the magnificent sound of whose approach the robbers have left us, so that we have escaped safe?" Joseph answered them, "He will come behind us."

Thereafter they came into another city, where there was a demoniac woman whom Satan, accursed and rebellious, had beset, when on one occasion she had gone out by night for water. She could neither bear clothes, nor live in a house; and as often as they tied her up with chains and thongs, she broke them, and fled naked into waste places; and, standing in cross-roads and cemeteries, she kept throwing stones at people, and brought very heavy calamities upon her friends. And when the Lady Mary saw her, she pitied her; and upon this Satan immediately left her, and fled away in the form of a young man, saying, "Woe to me from you, Mary, and from your son." So that woman was cured of her torment, and being restored to her senses, she blushed on account of her nakedness; and shunning the sight of men, went home to her friends. And after she put on her clothes, she gave an account of the matter to her father and her friends; and as they were the chief men of the city, they received the Lady Mary and Joseph with the greatest honor and hospitality.

On the day after, being supplied by them with provision for their journey, they went away, and on the evening of that day arrived at another town, in which they were celebrating a marriage; but, by the arts of accursed Satan and the work of enchanters, the bride had become dumb, and could not speak a word. And after the Lady Mary entered the town, carrying her son the Lord Christ, that dumb bride saw her, and stretched out her hands towards the Lord Christ, and drew Him to her, and took Him into her arms, and held Him close and kissed Him, and leaned over Him, moving His body back and forwards. Immediately the knot of her tongue was loosened, and her ears were opened; and she gave thanks and praise to God, because He had restored her to health. And that night the inhabitants of that town exulted with joy, and thought that God and His angels had come down to them.

There they remained three days, being held in great honor, and living splendidly. Thereafter, being supplied by them with provision for their journey, they went away and came to another city, in which, because it was very populous, they thought of passing the night. And there was in that city an excellent woman: and once, when she had gone to the river to bathe, lo, accursed Satan, in the form of a serpent, had leaped upon her, and twisted himself round her belly; and as often as night came on, he tyrannically tormented her. This woman, seeing the mistress the Lady Mary, and the child, the Lord Christ, in her bosom, was struck with a longing for Him, and said to the mistress the Lady Mary, "O mistress, give me this child, that I may carry him, and kiss him." She therefore gave Him to the woman; and when He was brought to her, Satan let her go, and fled and left her, nor did the

woman ever see him after that day. Wherefore all who were present praised God Most High, and that woman bestowed on them liberal gifts.

On the day after, the same woman took scented water to wash the Lord Jesus; and after she had washed Him, she took the water with which she had done it, and poured part of it upon a girl who was living there, whose body was white with leprosy, and washed her with it. And as soon as this was done, the girl was cleansed from her leprosy. And the townspeople said, "There is no doubt that Joseph and Mary and that boy are gods, not men." And when they were getting ready to go away from them, the girl who had labored under the leprosy came up to them, and asked them to let her go with them.

When they had given her permission, she went with them. And afterwards they came to a city, in which was the castle of a most illustrious prince, who kept a house for the entertainment of strangers. They turned into this place; and the girl went away to the prince's wife; and she found her weeping and sorrowful, and she asked why she was weeping. "Do not be surprised," said she, "at my tears; for I am overwhelmed by a great affliction, which as yet I have not been able to tell to any one." "Perhaps," said the girl, "if you reveal it and disclose it to me, I may have a remedy for it." "Hide this secret, then," replied the princess, "and tell it to no one. I was married to this prince, who is a king and ruler over many cities, and I lived long with him, but by me he had no son. And when at length I produced him a son, he was leprous; and as soon as he saw him, he turned away with loathing, and said to me, 'Either kill him, or give him to the nurse to be brought up in some place from which we shall never hear of him more. After this I can have nothing to do with you, and I will never see you any more.' On this account I do not know what to do, and I am overwhelmed with grief. Alas! my son. Alas! my husband." "Did I not say so?" said the girl. "I have found a cure for your disease, and I shall tell it to you. For I too was a leper; but I was cleansed by God, who is Jesus, the son of the Lady Mary." And the woman asking her where this God was whom she had spoken of, "Here, with you," said the girl; "He is living in the same house." "But how is this possible?" said she. "Where is he?" "There," said the girl, "are Joseph and Mary; and the child who is with them is called Jesus; and He it is who cured me of my disease and my torment." "But by what means," said she, "were you cured of your leprosy? Will you not tell me that?" "Why not?" said the girl. "I got from His mother the water in which He had been washed, and poured it over myself; and so I was cleansed from my leprosy." Then the princess rose up, and invited them to avail themselves of her hospitality. And she prepared a splendid banquet for Joseph in a great assembly of the men of the place. And on the following day she took scented water with which to wash the Lord Jesus, and thereafter poured the same water over her son, whom she had taken with her; and immediately her son was cleansed from his leprosy. Therefore, singing thanks and praises to God, she said, "Blessed is the mother who bore you, O Jesus; do you so cleanse those who share the same nature with you with the water in which your body has been washed?" Besides, she bestowed great gifts upon the mistress the Lady Mary, and sent her away with great honor.

Coming thereafter to another city, they wished to spend the night in it. They turned aside, therefore, to the house of a man newly married, but who, under the influence of witchcraft, was not able to enjoy his wife; and when they had spent that night with him, his bond was loosed. And at daybreak, when they were girding themselves for their journey, the bridegroom would not let them go, and prepared for them a great banquet.

They set out, therefore, on the following day; and as they came near another city, they saw three women weeping as they came out of a cemetery. And when the Lady Mary beheld them, she said to the girl who accompanied her, "Ask them what is the matter with them, or what calamity has befallen them." And to the girl's questions they made no reply, but asked in their turn, "From where are you, and where are you going? For the day is already past, and night is coming on apace." "We are travelers," said the girl, "and are seeking a house of entertainment in which we may pass the night." They said, "Go with us, and spend the night with us." They followed them, therefore, and were brought into a new house with splendid decorations and furniture. Now it was winter; and the girl, going into the chamber of these women, found them again weeping and lamenting. There stood beside them a mule, covered with trappings of cloth-of-gold, and sesame was put before him; and the women were kissing him, and giving him food. And the girl said, "What is all the ado, my ladies, about this mule?" They answered her with tears, and said, "This mule, which you see, was our brother, born of the same mother with ourselves. And when our father died, and left us great wealth, and this only brother, we did our best to get him married, and were preparing his nuptials for him, after the manner of men. But some

women, moved by mutual jealousy, bewitched him unknown to us; and one night, a little before daybreak, when the door of our house was shut, we saw that this our brother had been turned into a mule, as you now behold him. And we are sorrowful, as you see, having no father to comfort us: there is no wise man, or magician, or enchanter in the world that we have omitted to send for; but nothing has done us any good. And as often as our hearts are overwhelmed with grief, we rise and go away with our mother here, and weep at our father's grave, and come back again."

And when the girl heard these things, "Be of good courage," said she, "and do not weep: for the cure of your calamity is near; yea, it is beside you, and in the middle of your own house. For I also was a leper; but when I saw that woman and along with her that young child, whose name is Jesus, I sprinkled my body with the water with which His mother had washed Him, and I was cured. And I know that He can cure your affliction also. But rise, go to Mary my mistress; bring her into your house, and tell her your secret; and entreat and supplicate her to have pity upon you." After the woman had heard the girl's words, they went in haste to the Lady Mary, and brought her into their chamber, and sat down before her weeping, and saying, "O our mistress, Lady Mary, have pity on your handmaidens; for no one older than ourselves, and no head of the family, is left—neither father nor brother—to live with us; but this mule which you see was our brother, and women have made him such as you see by witchcraft. We beseech you, therefore, to have pity upon us." Then, grieving at their lot, the Lady Mary took up the Lord Jesus, and put Him on the mule's back; and she wept as well as the women, and said to Jesus Christ, "Alas! my son, heal this mule by Your mighty power, and make him a man endowed with reason as he was before." And when these words were uttered by the Lady Mary, his form was changed, and the mule became a young man, free from every defect. Then he and his mother and his sisters adored the Lady Mary, and lifted the boy above their heads, and began to kiss Him, saying, "Blessed is she that bore You, O Jesus, O Savior of the world; blessed are the eyes which enjoy the felicity of seeing You."

Moreover, both the sisters said to their mother, "Our brother indeed, by the aid of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the salutary intervention of this girl, who pointed out to us Mary and her son, has been raised to human form. Now, indeed, since our brother is unmarried, it would do very well for us to give him as his wife this girl, their servant." And having asked the Lady Mary, and obtained her consent, they made a splendid wedding for the girl; and their sorrow being changed into joy, and the beating of their breasts into dancing, they began to be glad, to rejoice, to exult, and sing—adorned, on account of their great joy, in most splendid and gorgeous attire. Then they began to recite songs and praises, and to say, "O Jesus, son of David, who turns sorrow into gladness, and lamentations into joy!" And Joseph and Mary remained there ten days. Thereafter they set out, treated with great honors by these people, who bade them farewell, and in\fn{The text has: from.} bidding them farewell returned weeping,\fn{Because they were sorry they were going.} especially the girl.

And turning away from this place, they came to a desert; and hearing that it was infested by robbers, Joseph and the Lady Mary resolved to cross this region by night. But as they go along, behold, they saw\fn{The text has: see.} two robbers lying in the way, and along with them a great number of robbers, who were their associates, sleeping. Now those two robbers, into whose hands they had fallen, were Titus and Dumachus. Titus therefore said to Dumachus, "I beseech you to let these persons go freely, and so that our comrades may not see them." And as Dumachus refused, Titus said to him again, "Take to yourself forty drachmas from me, and hold this as a pledge." At the same time he held out to him the belt which he had had about his waist, to keep him from opening his mouth or speaking.\fn{I do not understand the meaning of this last clause, unless it is a reference to a money-belt, and Dumachus was bribed.} And the Lady Mary, seeing that the robber had done them a kindness, said to him, "The Lord God will sustain you by His right hand, and will grant you remission for your sins." And the Lord Jesus answered, and said to His mother, "Thirty years hence, O my mother, the Jews will crucify me at Jerusalem, and these two robbers will be raised upon the cross along with me, Titus on my right hand and Dumachus on my left; and after that day Titus shall go before me into Paradise." And she said, "God keep this from you, my son." And they went then towards a city of idols, which, as they came near it, was changed into sand-hills.

Hence they turned aside to that sycamore which is now called Matarea,\fn{Matarea, or Matariyeh, the site of Helipolis or On, is a little way to the North East of Cairo. Ismail Pasha is said to have presented, on his visit to the Paris Exhibition of 1867, the tree and the ground surrounding it to the Empress of the French. For some interesting particulars about the tree, see a paragraph by B. H. Cowper, in the Leisure Hour for November 2, 1867.} and the Lord Jesus brought forth in Matarea a fountain in which the

Lady Mary washed His shirt. And from the sweat of the Lord Jesus which she sprinkled there, balsam was produced in that region.

Then they came down to Memphis, and saw Pharaoh, and remained three years in Egypt; and the Lord Jesus did in Egypt very many miracles which are recorded neither in the Gospel of the Infancy nor in the Perfect Gospel.^{fn}{The text has: Gospel of the Infancy nor in the perfect Gospel. There is, however, a tradition which says that Mani wrote a gospel called the Perfect Gospel; and it may be that the author of this work had two distinct books in mind when he wrote this passage, so I have underscored them as actual titles. H }

And at the end of the three years He came back out of Egypt, and returned. And when they had arrived at Judea, Joseph was afraid to enter it; but hearing that Herod was dead, and that Archelaus his son had succeeded him, he was afraid indeed, but he went into Judea. And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said: O Joseph, go into the city of Nazareth, and there abide. Wonderful indeed, that the Lord of the world should be thus borne and carried about through the world!

Thereafter, going into the city of Bethlehem, they saw there many and grievous diseases infesting the eyes of the children, who were dying in consequence. And a woman was there with a sick son, whom, now very near death, she brought to the Lady Mary, who saw him as she was washing Jesus Christ. Then said the woman to her, "O my Lady Mary, look upon this son of mine, who is laboring under a grievous disease." And the Lady Mary listened to her, and said, "Take a little of that water in which I have washed my son, and sprinkle him with it." She therefore took a little of the water, as the Lady Mary had told her, and sprinkled it over her son. And when this was done his illness abated; and after sleeping a little, he rose up from sleep safe and sound. His mother rejoiced at this, again took him to the Lady Mary. And she said to her, "Give thanks to God, because He has healed this your son."

There was in the same place another woman, a neighbor of her whose son had lately been restored to health. And as her son was laboring under the same disease, and his eyes were now almost blinded, she wept night and day. And the mother of the child that had been cured said to her, "Why do you not take your son to the Lady Mary, as I did with mine when he was nearly dead? And he got well with that water with which the body of her son Jesus had been washed." And when the woman heard this from her, she too went and got some of the same water, and washed her son with it, and his body and his eyes were instantly made well. Her also, when she had brought her son to her, and disclosed to her all that had happened, the Lady Mary ordered to give thanks to God for her son's restoration to health, and to tell nobody of this matter.

There were in the same city two women, wives of one man, each having a son ill with fever. The one was called Mary, and her son's name was Cleopas. She rose and took up her son, and went to the Lady Mary, the mother of Jesus, and offering her a beautiful mantle, said, "O my Lady Mary, accept this mantle, and for it give me one small bandage." Mary did so, and the mother of Cleopas went away, and made a shirt of it, and put it on her son. So he was cured of his disease; but the son of her rival died. Hence there sprung up hatred between them; and as they did the housework week about,^{fn}{i.e., as they shared the housework every other week.} and as it was the turn of Mary the mother of Cleopas, she heated the oven to bake bread; and going away to bring the lump that she had kneaded, she left her son Cleopas beside the oven. Her rival seeing him alone—and the oven was very hot with the fire blazing under it—seized him and threw him into the oven, and took herself off. Mary coming back, and seeing her son Cleopas lying in the oven laughing, and the oven quite cold, as if no fire had ever come near it, knew that her rival had thrown him into the fire. She drew him out, therefore, and took him to the lady Mary, and told her of what had happened to him. And she said, "Keep silence, and tell nobody of the affair; for I am afraid for you if you divulge it." After this her rival went to the well to draw water; and seeing Cleopas playing beside the well, and nobody near, she seized him and threw him into the well, and went home herself. And some men who had gone to the well for water saw the boy sitting on the surface of the water; and so they went down and drew him out. And they were seized with a great admiration of that boy, and praised God. Then came his mother, and took him up, and went weeping to the Lady Mary, and said, "O my lady, see what my rival has done to my son, and how she has thrown him into the well; she will be sure to destroy him some day or other." The Lady Mary said to her, "God will avenge you upon her." Thereafter, when her rival went to the well to draw water, her feet got entangled in the rope, and she fell into the well. Some men came to draw her out, but they found her skull

fractured and her bones broken. Thus she died a miserable death, and in her came to pass that saying: 'They have dug ^{The text has: digged.} a well deep, but have fallen into the pit which they had prepared.'

Another woman there had twin sons who had fallen into disease, and one of them died, and the other was at his last breath. And his mother, weeping, lifted him up, and took him to the Lady Mary, and said, "O my lady, aid me and succor me. For I had two sons, and I have just buried the one, and the other is at the point of death. See how I am going to entreat and pray to God." And she began to say, "O Lord, You are compassionate, and merciful, and full of affection. You gave me two sons, of whom You have taken away the one: this one at least leave to me." Wherefore the Lady Mary, seeing the fervor of her weeping, had compassion on her, and said, "Put your son in my son's bed, and cover him with his clothes." And when she had put him in the bed in which Christ was lying, he had already closed his eyes in death; but as soon as the smell of the clothes of the Lord Jesus Christ reached the boy, he opened his eyes, and, calling upon his mother with a loud voice, he asked for bread, and took it and sucked it. Then his mother said, "O lady Mary, now I know that the power of God dwells in you, so that your son heals those that partake of the same nature with himself, as soon as they have touched his clothes." This boy that was healed is he who in the Gospel is called Bartholomew.

Moreover, there was there a leprous woman, and she went to the Lady Mary, the mother of Jesus, and said, "My lady, help me." And the Lady Mary answered, "What help do you seek? Is it gold or silver? Or is it that your body be made clean from the leprosy?" And that woman asked, "Who can grant me this?" And the Lady Mary said to her, "Wait a little, until I shall have washed my son Jesus, and put him to bed." The woman waited, as Mary had told her; and when she had put Jesus to bed, she held out to the woman the water in which she had washed His body, and said, "take a little of this water, and pour it over your body." And as soon as she had done so, she was cleansed, and gave praise and thanks to God.

Therefore, after staying with her three days, she went away; and coming to a city, saw there one of the chief men, who had married the daughter of another of the chief men. But when he saw the woman, he beheld between her eyes the mark of leprosy in the shape of a star; and so the marriage was dissolved, and became null and void. And when that woman saw them in this condition, seeping and overwhelmed with sorrow, she asked the cause of their grief. But they said, "Do not inquire into our condition, for to no one living can we tell our grief, and to none but ourselves can we disclose it." She urged them, however, and entreated them to be able to tell them to entrust it to her, saying that she would perhaps be able to tell them of a remedy. And when they showed her the girl, and the sign of leprosy which appeared between her eyes, as soon as she saw it, the woman said, "I also whom you see here, labored under the same disease, when, upon some business which happened to come in my way, I went to Bethlehem. There going into a cave, I saw a woman named Mary, whose son was he who was named Jesus; and when she saw that I was a leper, she took pity on me, and handed me the water with which she had washed her son's body. With it I sprinkled my body, and came out clean." Then the woman said to her, "Will you not, O lady, rise and go with us, and show us the Lady Mary?" And she assented; and they rose and went to the Lady Mary, carrying with them splendid gifts. And when they had gone in, and presented to her the gifts, they showed her the leprous girl whom they had brought. The Lady Mary therefore said, "May the compassion of the Lord Jesus Christ descend upon you." And handing to them also a little of the water in which she had washed the body of Jesus Christ, she ordered the wretched woman to be bathed in it. And when this had been done, she was immediately cured; and they, and all standing by, praised God. Joyfully therefore they returned to their own city, praising the Lord for what He had done. And when the chief heard that his wife had been cured, he took her home, and made a second marriage, and gave thanks to God for the recovery of his wife's health.

There was there also a young woman afflicted by Satan; for that accursed wretch repeatedly appeared to her in the form of a huge dragon, and prepared to swallow her. He also sucked out all her blood, so that she was left like a corpse. As often as he came near her, she, with her hands clasped over her head, cried out, and said, "Woe, woe's me, for nobody is near to free me from that accursed dragon." And her father and mother, and all who were about her or saw her, bewailed her lot; and men stood round her in a crowd, and all wept and lamented, especially when she wept, and said, "Oh, my brethren and friends is there no one to free me from that murderer?" And the daughter of the chief who had been healed of her leprosy, hearing the girl's voice, went up to the roof of her castle, and saw her with her hands clasped over her head weeping, and all the crowds standing round her weeping as well. She therefore asked the demoniac's husband whether his wife's mother were alive. And when he

answered that both her parents were living, she said, "Send for her mother to come to me." And when she saw that he had sent for her, and she had come, she said, "Is that distracted girl your daughter." "Yes, O lady," said that sorrowful and weeping woman, "she is my daughter." The chief's daughter answered, "Keep my secret, for I confess to you that I was formerly a leper; but now the Lady Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, has healed me. But if you wish your daughter to be healed, take her to Bethlehem, and seek Mary the mother of Jesus, and believe that your daughter will be healed; I indeed believe that you will come back with joy, with your daughter healed." As soon as the woman heard the words of the chief's daughter, she led away her daughter in haste; and going to the place indicated, she went to the Lady Mary, and revealed to her the state of her daughter. And the Lady Mary hearing her words, gave her a little of the water in which she had washed the body of her son Jesus, and ordered her to pour it on the body of her daughter. She gave her also from the clothes of the Lord Jesus a swathing-cloth, saying, "Take this cloth, and show it to your enemy as often as you shall see him." And she saluted them, and sent them away.

When, therefore, they had gone away from her, and returned to their own district, and the time was at hand at which Satan was wont to attack her, at this very time that accursed one appeared to her in the shape of a huge dragon, and the girl was afraid at the sight of him. And her mother said to her, "Fear not, my daughter; allow him to come near you, and then show him the cloth which the Lady Mary has given us, and let us see what will happen." Satan, therefore, having come near in the likeness of a terrible dragon, the body of the girl shuddered for fear of him; but as soon as she took out the cloth, and placed it on her head, and covered her eyes with it, flames and live coals began to dart forth from it, and to be cast upon the dragon. O the great miracle which was done as soon as the dragon saw the cloth of the Lord Jesus, from which the fire darted, and was cast upon his head and eyes! He cried out with a loud voice, "What have I to do with you, O Jesus, son of Mary? Where shall I fly from you?" And with great fear he turned his back and departed from the girl, and never afterwards appeared to her. And the girl now had rest from him, and gave praise and thanks to God, and along with her all who were present at that miracle.

Another woman was living in the same place, whose son was tormented by Satan. He, Judas by name, as often as Satan seized him, used to bite all who came near him; and if he found no one near him, he used to bite his own hands and other limbs. The mother of this wretched creature, then, hearing the fame of the Lady Mary and her son Jesus, rose up and brought her son Judas with her to the Lady Mary. In the meantime, James and Joses had taken the child the Lord Jesus with them to play with the other children; and they had gone out of the house and sat down, and the Lord Jesus with them. And the demoniac Judas came up, and sat down at Jesus' right hand: then, being attacked by Satan in the same manner as usual, he wished to bite the Lord Jesus, but was not able; nevertheless he struck Jesus on the right side, whereupon He began to weep. And immediately Satan went forth out of that boy, fleeing like a mad dog. And this boy who struck Jesus, and out of whom Satan went forth in the shape of a dog, was Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him to the Jews; and that same side on which Judas struck Him, the Jews transfixed with a lance.

Now, when the Lord Jesus had completed seven years from His birth, on a certain day He was occupied with boys of His own age. For they were playing among clay, from which they were making images of asses, oxen, birds, and other animals; and each one boasting of his skill, was praising his own work. Then the Lord Jesus said to the boys, "The images that I have made I will order to walk." The boys asked Him whether then he were the son of the Creator; and the Lord Jesus bade them walk. And they immediately began to leap; and then, when He had given them leave, they again stood still. And He had made figures of birds and sparrows, which flew when He told them to fly, and stood still when He told them to stand, and ate and drank when He handed them food and drink. After the boys had gone away and told this to their parents, their fathers said to them, "My sons, take care not to keep company with him again, for he is a wizard: flee from him, therefore, and avoid him, and do not play with him again after this."

On a certain day the Lord Jesus, running about and playing with the boys, passed the shop of a dyer, whose name was Salem; and he had in his shop many pieces of cloth which he was to dye. The Lord Jesus then, going into his shop, took up all the pieces of cloth, and threw them into a tub full of indigo. And when Salem came and saw his cloths destroyed, he began to cry out with a loud voice, and to reproach Jesus, saying, "Why have you done this to me, O son of Mary? You have disgraced me before all my townsmen: for, seeing that every one

wished the color that suited himself, you indeed have come and destroyed them all.” The Lord Jesus answered, “I shall change for you the color of any piece of cloth which you shall wish to be changed.” And immediately He began to take the pieces of cloth out of the tub, each of them that color which the dyer wished, until He had taken them all out. When the Jews saw this miracle and prodigy, they praised God.

And Joseph used to go about through the whole city, and take the Lord Jesus with him, when people sent for him in the way of his trade to make for them doors, and milk-pails, and beds, and chests; and the Lord Jesus was with him wherever he went. As often, therefore, as Joseph had to make anything a cubit or a span longer or shorter, wider or narrower, the Lord Jesus stretched His hand towards it; and as soon as He did so, it became such as Joseph wished. Nor was it necessary for him to make anything with his own hand, for Joseph was not very skilful in carpentry.

Now, on a certain day, the king of Jerusalem sent for him, and said, “I wish you, Joseph, to make for me a throne to fit that place in which I usually sit.” Joseph obeyed, and began the work immediately, and remained in the palace two years, until he finished the work of that throne. And when he had it carried to its place, he perceived that each side wanted two spans of the prescribed measure. And the king, seeing this, was angry with Joseph; and Joseph, being in great fear of the king, spent the night without supper, nor did he taste anything at all. Then, being asked by the Lord Jesus why he was afraid, Joseph said, “Because I have spoiled all the work that I have been two years at.” And the Lord Jesus said to him, “Fear not, and do not lose heart; but take hold of one side of the throne; I shall take the other; and we shall put that to rights.” And Joseph, having done as the Lord Jesus had said and each having drawn by his own side, the throne was put to rights, and brought to the exact measure of the place. And those that stood by and saw this miracle were struck with astonishment, and praised God. And the woods used in that throne were of those which are celebrated in the time of Solomon the son of David; that is, woods of many and various kinds.

On another day the Lord Jesus went out into the road, and saw the boys that had come together to play, and followed them; but the boys hid themselves from Him. The Lord Jesus, therefore, having come to the door of a certain house, and having seen^{\fn{The text has only: seen.}} some women standing there, asked them where the boys had gone; and when they answered that there was no one there, He said again, “Who are these whom you see in the furnace?”^{\fn{A note says here: Perhaps the correct reading is fornice, archway, and not fornace.}} they replied that they were kids of three years old. And the Lord Jesus cried out, and said, “Come out here, O kids, to your Shepherd.” Then the boys, in the form of kids, came out, and began to dance round Him; and the women, seeing this, were very much astonished, and were seized with trembling, and speedily supplicated and adored the Lord Jesus, saying, “O our Lord Jesus, son of Mary, You are of a truth that good Shepherd of Israel; have mercy on Your handmaidens who stand before You, and who have never doubted: for You have come, O our Lord, to heal, and not to destroy.” And when the Lord Jesus answered that the sons of Israel were like the Ethiopians among the nations, the women said, “You, O Lord, know all things, nor is anything hid from You; now, indeed, we beseech You, and ask You of Your affection to restore those boys Your servants to their former condition.” The Lord Jesus therefore said, “Come, boys, let us go and play.” And immediately, while these women were standing by, the kids were changed into boys.

Now in the month Adar, Jesus, after the manner of a king, assembled the boys together. They spread their clothes on the ground, and He sat down upon them. Then they put on His head a crown made of flowers, and, like chamber-servants, stood in His presence, on the right and on the left, as if He were a king. And whoever passed by that way was forcibly dragged by the boys, saying, “Come here, and adore the king; then go your way.”

In the meantime, while these things were going on, some men came up carrying a boy. For this boy had gone into the mountain with those of his own age to seek wood, and there he found a partridge’s nest; and when he stretched out his hand to take the eggs from it, a venomous serpent bit him from the middle of the nest, so that he called out for help. His comrades accordingly went to him with haste, and found him lying on the ground like one dead. Then his relations came and took him up to carry him back to the city. And after they had come to that place where the Lord Jesus was sitting like a king, and the rest of the boys standing round Him like His servants, the boys went hastily forward to meet him who had been bitten by the serpent, and said to his relations, “Come and salute the king.” But when they were unwilling to go, on account of the sorrow in which they were, the boys

dragged them by force against their will. And when they had come up to the Lord Jesus, He asked them why they were carrying the boy. And when they answered that a serpent had bitten him, the Lord Jesus said to the boys, "Let us go and kill that serpent." And the parents of the boy asked leave to go away, because their son was in the agony of death; but the boys answered them, saying, "Did you not hear the king saying, 'Let us go kill the serpent? And will you not obey him?'" And so, against their will, the couch was carried back. And when they came to the nest, the Lord Jesus said to the boys, "Is this the serpent's place?" They said that it was; and the serpent, at the call of the Lord, came forth without delay, and submitted itself to Him. And He said to it, "Go away, and suck out all the poison which you have infused into this boy." And so the serpent crawled to the boy, and sucked out all its poison. Then the Lord Jesus cursed it, and immediately on this being done it burst asunder; and the Lord Jesus stroked the boy with his hand, and he was healed. And he began to weep; but Jesus said, "Do not weep, for by and by you shall be my disciple." And this is Simon the Cananite, *\fn{So the Latin; but the Greek word in the Received gospels is equivalent to the word zealot.}* of whom mention is made in the gospel.

On another day, Joseph sent his son James to gather wood, and the Lord Jesus went with him as his companion. And when they had come to the place where the wood was, and James had begun to gather it, behold, a venomous viper bit his hand, so that he began to cry out and weep. The Lord Jesus then, seeing him in this condition, went up to him, and blew upon the place where the viper had bitten him; and this being done, he was healed immediately.

One day, when the Lord Jesus was again with the boys playing on the roof of a house, one of the boys fell down from above, and immediately expired. And the rest of the boys fled in all directions, and the Lord Jesus was left alone on the roof. And the relations of the boy came up and said to the Lord Jesus, "It was you who threw our son headlong from the roof." And when He denied it, they cried out, saying, "Our son is dead, and here is he who has killed him." And the Lord Jesus said to them, "Do not bring an evil report against me; but if you do not believe me, come and let us ask the boy himself, that he may bring the truth to light." Then the Lord Jesus went down, and standing over the dead body, said, with a loud voice, "Zeno, Zeno, who threw you down from the roof?" Then the dead boy answered and said, "My lord, it was not you who threw me down, but such a one cast me down from it." And when the Lord commanded those who were standing by to attend to His words, all who were present praised God for this miracle.

Once upon a time the Lady Mary had ordered the Lord Jesus to go and bring her water from the well. And when He had gone to get the water, the pitcher already full was knocked against something, and broken. And the Lord Jesus stretched out His handkerchief, and collected the water, and carried it to His mother; and she was astonished at it. And she hid and preserved in her heart all that she saw.

Again, on another day, the Lord Jesus was with the boys at a stream of water, and they had again made little fish-ponds. And the Lord Jesus had made twelve sparrows, and had arranged them round His fish-pond, three on each side. And it was the Sabbath-day. Wherefore a Jew, the son of Hanan, coming up, and seeing them thus engaged, said in anger and great indignation, "Do you make figures of clay on the Sabbath-day?" And he ran quickly, and destroyed their fish-ponds. But when the Lord Jesus clapped His hands over the sparrows which He had made, they flew away chirping. Then the son of Hanan came up to the fishpond of Jesus also, and kicked it with his shoes, and the water of it vanished away. And the Lord Jesus said to him, "As that water has vanished away, so your life shall likewise vanish away." And immediately that boy dried up.

At another time, when the Lord Jesus was returning home with Joseph in the evening, He met a boy, who ran up against Him with so much force that He fell. And the Lord Jesus said to him, "As you have thrown me down, so you shall fall, and not rise again." And the same hour the boy fell down, and expired.

There was, moreover, at Jerusalem, a certain man named Zacchaeus, who taught boys. He said to Joseph, "Why, O Joseph, do you not bring Jesus to me to learn his letters?" Joseph agreed to do so, and reported the matter to the Lady Mary. They therefore took Him to the master; and he, as soon as he saw Him, wrote out the alphabet for Him, and told Him to say Aleph. And when He had said Aleph, the master ordered Him to pronounce Beth. And the Lord Jesus said to him, "Tell me first the meaning of the letter Aleph, and then I shall pronounce Beth." And when the master threatened to flog Him, the Lord Jesus explained to him the meanings of the letters

Aleph and Beth; also which figures of the letter were straight, which crooked, which drawn round into a spiral, which marked with points, which without them, why one letter went before another; and many other things He began to recount and to elucidate which the master himself had never either heard or read in any book. The Lord Jesus, moreover, said to the master, "Listen, and I shall say them to you." And He began clearly and distinctly to repeat Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Daleth, on to Tau. And the master was astonished, and said, "I think that this boy was born before Noah." And turning to Joseph, he said, "You have brought to me to be taught a boy more learned than all the masters." To the Lady Mary also he said, "This son of yours has no need of instruction."

Thereafter they took Him to another and a more learned master, who, when he saw Him, said, "Say Aleph." And when He had said Aleph, the master ordered him to pronounce Beth. And the Lord Jesus answered him, and said, "First tell me the meaning of the letter Aleph, and then I shall pronounce Beth." And when the master hereupon raised his hand and flogged Him, immediately his hand dried up, and he died. Then said Joseph, to the Lady Mary, "From this time we shall not let him go out of the house, since every one who opposes him is struck dead."

*And when He was twelve years old, they took Him to Jerusalem to the feast. And when the feast was finished, they indeed returned; but the Lord Jesus remained in the temple among the teachers and elders and learned men of the sons of Israel, to whom He put various questions upon the sciences, and gave answers in His turn. For He said to them, "Whose son is the Messiah?"^{\fn{The text has: *Messias*.}} They answered Him, "The son of David." "Wherefore then," said He, "does he in the Spirit call him his lord, when he says, 'The Lord said to my lord, Sit at my right hand, that I may put your enemies under your footsteps?'"^{\fn{The Latin reads: *vestigiis pedum tuorum*, "the footsteps of your feet." The original term, "footstool," has evidently been misunderstood by some transcriber.}} Again the chief of the teachers said to Him, "Have you read the books." "Both the books," said the Lord Jesus, "and the things contained in the books." And He explained the books, and the law, and the precepts, and the statutes, and the mysteries, which are contained in the books of the prophets—things which the understanding of no creature attains to. That teacher therefore said, "I hitherto have neither attained to nor heard of such knowledge. Who, pray, do you think that boy will be?"*

*And a philosopher who was there present, a skilful astronomer, asked the Lord Jesus whether He had studied astronomy. And the Lord Jesus answered him, and explained the number of the spheres, and of the heavenly bodies, their natures and operations; their opposition; their aspect, triangular, square, and sextile; their course, direct and retrograde; the twenty-fourths,^{\fn{The scripulum was the twenty-fourth part of the *as*. It is likely here put for the motion of a planet during one hour. Pliny (*Natural History* II:x) uses the word to signify an undefined number of degrees, or parts of a degree.}} and sixtieths of twenty-fourths; and other things beyond the reach of reason.*

There was also among those philosophers one very skilled in treating of natural science, and he asked the Lord Jesus whether He had studied medicine. And He, in reply, explained to him physics and metaphysics, hyperphysics and hypophysics, the powers likewise and humors of the body, and the effects of the same; also the number of members and bones, of veins, arteries, and nerves; also the effect of heat and dryness, of cold and moisture, and what these give rise to; what was the operation of the soul upon the body, and its perceptions and powers; what was the operation of the faculty of speech, of anger, of desire; lastly, their conjunction and disjunction, and other things beyond the reach of any created intellect. Then that philosopher rose up, and adored the Lord Jesus, and said, "O Lord, from this time I will be your disciple and slave."

While they were speaking to each other of these and other things, the Lady Mary came, after having gone about seeking Him for three days along with Joseph. She therefore, seeing him sitting among the teachers asking them questions, and answering in His turn, said to Him, "My son, why have you treated us thus? Behold, your father and I have sought you with great trouble." But He said, "Why do you seek me? Do you not know that I ought to occupy myself in my Father's house?" But they did not understand the words that He spoke to them. Then those teachers asked Mary whether He was her son; and when she signified that He was, they said, "Blessed are you, O Mary, who has brought forth such a son." And returning with them to Nazareth, He obeyed them in all things. And His mother kept all these words of His in her heart. And the Lord Jesus advanced in stature, and in wisdom, and in favor with God and man.

And from this day He began to hide His miracles and mysteries and secrets, and to give attention to the law, until He completed His thirtieth year, when His Father publicly declared Him at the Jordan by this voice sent down from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;” the Holy Spirit being present in the form of a white dove.

This is He whom we adore with supplications, who has given us being and life, and who has brought us from our mother’s wombs; who for our sakes assumed a human body, and redeemed us, that He might embrace us in eternal compassion, and show to us his mercy according to His liberality, and beneficence, and generosity, and benevolence. To Him is glory, and beneficence, and power, and dominion from this time forth for evermore. Amen. Here ends the whole Gospel of the Infancy, with the aid of God Most High, according to what we have found in the original.

[ANF, VIII, 405-415]

XXIV: The Infancy Gospel of Matthew

Introduction

The Infancy Gospel of Matthew (a title used here as a standardized offering, hoping to replace the one presently in general use, the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew) was first edited by Thilo (Codex Apocryphus Nuevo Testamentum I, Leipzig, 1832, 339-400, for chapters 1-24) and Tischendorf (Evangelia Apocrypha, 1876, 51-112, for chapters 25-42). A large number of copies have survived into Modern Times.

The text of the Infancy Gospel of Matthew is taken largely from the Infancy Gospel of James or the Infancy Gospel of Thomas; but there are also included materials not found in either of these major compilations.

1. The section containing chapters 18-24 does not appear in either of the two infancy gospels aforementioned, and is probably not on the whole translated from a written source. Some tell of fulfillments of prophecy; others may depend on local legend.
2. In chapters 35-36, there is a road from Jericho to the Jordan River, at the place where Israel crossed and the ark rested. Jesus, eight years old, goes from Jericho to the Jordan. On the way he comes across a vault where a lioness with whelps has made a home. He goes in and sits there, and the whelps play about him, the older lions standing at a distance, adoring him and wagging their tails. The people who see it say that he or his parents must have sinned or he would not have delivered himself to the lions. Then he comes forth and the lions go before him, the whelps playing around his feet. His parents and the people look on. Jesus says: How much better than you are the beasts which know me and are tame, while men know me not. Then he goes over the Jordan with the lions—the waters of the river divide for him to pass—and he tells the lions in the hearing of all to go back home and hurt no one; and so they do.
3. In chapter 40, the Holy Family removes to Capernaum. A rich man named Joseph falls ill and dies. Jesus hears the voices of mourning and says to Joseph: Why do you not do him a service since he is of your name? Joseph says: What can I do? Jesus replies: Take the kerchief that is on your head and go and put it on his face and say: Christ save thee. He does so, but says: Jesus save thee. The dead man is raised to life again, and asks who Jesus is.
4. In chapter 42 (the conclusion) Joseph comes to a feast with his sons James, Joseph, Juda, and Simeon, and his two daughters. Jesus and Mary come with Marys’ sister, Mary of Cleophas, whom Jesus gave to her father Cleophas and her mother Anna, because they had offered Mary the mother of Jesus to the Lord, and this other Maray was given them for their consolation and called by the same name. When they are together, Jesus blesses and sanctifies them, and is the first to eat and drink, for no one ventures even to sit down until he has done so, and all wait for him if he is not there. His brothers both watch him all the time and fear him. When he sleeps by day or by night the light of God shines always over him.

The majority of the manuscripts containing the Infancy Gospel of Matthew attribute its composition to the apostle Matthew, though the actual titles vary greatly; and sometimes to James, the brother of Jesus. Several of them also contain a prefixed letter of authentication allegedly by Jerome of Strido (d.420AD); but none of these statements can be true.

1. The fact that the book has an introduction—(*Here begins the book of the Birth of the Blessed Mary and the infancy of the Savior. Written in Hebrew by the blessed Evangelist Matthew, and translated into Latin by the blessed Presbyter Jerome*)—is, of itself, evidence of origin much later than the lifetime of the residents of the 1st century.
2. No one who is acquainted with the style of Jerome’s letters would think the one prefixed to the Infancy Gospel of Matthew authentic.
3. But even excepting this evidence, Jerome was one of the leading churchmen *opposed* on theological grounds to the dissemination of Infancy literature: indeed, it was he whose efforts led to its condemnation under the Roman bishops Damasus I (d.384), Innocent I (d.417), and Gelasius I (d.496). He would hardly be the translator or protagonist of such a work.

4. Though a large number of manuscripts of this work survive, no manuscript earlier than the 11th century is known to exist. Tischendorf, for his pioneer edition, used three of the 14th and one of the 15th centuries.
5. Hrosvit of Gandersheim (10th century) used the work in her poems; but no earlier personal knowledge of its existence seems to be known.
6. That text which its author borrowed from the Infancy Gospel of Thomas betrays a good deal of late amplification.

The original language of this book is Latin. In chapters 1-17 the author borrows extensively from the Infancy Gospel of James; and although an Old Latin translation of that originally Greek work (c.150AD) has not survived, its contents must have been known in that language, for such a work was used by Zeno of Verona (d.c.375) and Prudentius of Spain (d.c.410). For the contents of chapters 25-42, extensive use of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas has been discovered; and here a Latin version dating from the 5th or 6th century of that work is known to exist, with which at least one copy of the Infancy Gospel of Matthew has some affinity. Further, the list of epithets, applied to the triangles of the Alpha in chapter 31, are pretty obviously mistranslations of Greek technical terms; and this is one of the chapters whose material is taken from the Infancy Gospel of Thomas (who presumably passed on these mistranslations, which were then simply copied by the author of the Infancy Gospel of Matthew: H).

The further development in the West of legends of the infancy of Jesus is of particular interest. Official condemnation (which was based not only upon theological grounds but frank displeasure at the allegedly bad taste of many of the legends) extended in the 5th century to the banning of specific books in the Gelasian Decree—(*Gospel under the name of Thomas, which the Manichaeans use ... Book about the childhood of the Redeemer ... Book about the birth of the Redeemer and about Mary or the midwife*)—but the official displeasure failed to deter the spread of this material, which enjoyed ever-increasing popularity among church people. Indeed, it became necessary in time, despite the rejection of certain miracles believed too crude—e.g., the standing still of all Creation at the time of the birth of Jesus—to bring much of the infancy stories together in a refined form in a new collection; and not only for its own sake, but at the same time, to further an expanding devotion to Mary in her aspect as Queen of Virgins.

This was done, at some time during the 8th or 9th century, during the so-called Early Middle Ages. The extraordinary importance of this book lies in the fact that it is in this form that the legends from the older infancy gospels became the common property of the people, and were thus able to exercise immense influence on the literature and art from the 12th to the 15th centuries; for it is upon this text that the many vernacular versions for the most part depend; and by them that the pictures of the rejection of Joachim's offering, his meeting with Anne at the Golden Gate in the city wall of Jerusalem, the presentation of the virgin, the repose in Egypt, and a few of the infancy miracles themselves, were inspired.

Further, the book underwent a further shortened edition, named the Story of the Birth of Mary (below) in which the first marriage of Joseph, now officially rejected as heretical, was excised from the original text, together with other offensive details, and the original material was pruned and made less tedious. This version also was provided with the fictitious correspondence of Jerome. Through being included in the Golden Legend of James of Voragine (1298AD) it enjoyed a very wide circulation.

As part of this section, I have also included a variant text of the story of the robber (Infancy Gospel of Matthew XXII:1ff) which James prints in Latin. He publishes the following introduction to it:

This is a very obvious interpolation into the text of Arundel 404. Its intrusive character is plain not only from its style, quite different from the context, but from its beginning and end.

The text has followed Ps. Matt. closely enough in cc. xviii—xxiv, telling the story of the Dragons and Lions, of the palm-tree, and of the fall of the idols and conversion of Affrodosius. It does not quite finish the speech of Affrodosius, but goes on abruptly to relate the Return, mostly in the words of Matthew, and more at length than Ps. Matt. xxv. Then it returns with equal abruptness, mentions the reward given to the palm-tree for its service (ut est dictum) and proceeds to tell the story of the rober, ending with a doxology. Moreover, in the middle of it, when the robber has just parted from the Holy Family Joseph says to Jesus 'Domine estus nimius decoquit nos' (which is the beginning of c. xxii in Ps. Matt.) and then breaks off. The indications are that the order of events in the text whence our interpolation is taken was: palm-tree, robber (1st visit), journey shortened, fall of idols, conversion of Affrodosius. Robber (2nd visit), return from Egypt. What the source was I am quite unable to guess. The style of the interpolation is very heavy, rhetorical, and prolix.

The same form of the tale is found in the Vita Rhythmica of the Virgin and Christ (ed. Vögtlin i. 2234-2268) and in the prose Narrationes edited by O. Schade (Königsberg 1876, no. 26), where it is shortly told. Several chapters in the Arabic Infancy Gospel tell of cures, usually of leprosy, worked by the water of the Child's bath (cc. xvii, xviii, xxvii).

Other forms are to be found in the recension B (Greek) of the acta Pilati (Tisch. pp. 308-9: Apocr. N. T. p. 117) where the leprous son of the good thief Dysmas is healed: and in Aelred of Rievaulx (Apocr. N. T. 81) where the robber's young son is captivated by the beauty of the Child: this is pictorially represented in the Holkham Bible picture book (Walpole Soc. XI. p. 13: New Pal. Soc. pl. 243). In the Arabic Gospel xxiii the good thief Titus ransoms the Holy Family from the bad one Dumachus. All agree in the main gist; that there was an encounter in Egypt with the Good Thief of the Crucifixion.

Here begins the book of the Birth of the Blessed Mary and the Infancy of the Savior. Written in Hebrew by the Blessed Evangelist Matthew, and translated into Latin by the Blessed Presbyter Jerome. \fn{This introduction is, of itself, an evidence of late origin. Two manuscripts have this prologue: *I James, the son of Joseph, living in the fear of God, have written all that with my own eyes I saw coming to pass in the time of the nativity of the holy virgin Mary, or of the Lord the Savior: giving thanks to God, who has given me wisdom in the accounts of His Advent, showing His abounding grace to the twelve tribes of Israel.* }

I

In those days there was a man in Jerusalem, Joachim by name, of the tribe of Judah. He was the shepherd of his own sheep, fearing the Lord in integrity and singleness of heart. He had no other care than that of his herds, from the produce of which he supplied with food all that feared God, offering double gifts in the fear of God to all who labored in doctrine, and who ministered to Him. Therefore his lambs, and his sheep, and his wool, and all things whatsoever he possessed, he used to divide into three portions: one he gave to the orphans, the widows, the strangers, and the poor; the second to those that worshipped God; and the third he kept for himself and all his house. And as he did so, the Lord multiplied to him his herds, so that there was no man like him in the people of Israel. This now he began to do when he was fifteen years old. And at the age of twenty he took to wife Anna, the daughter of Achar, of his own tribe, that is, of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David. And though they had lived together for twenty years, he had by her neither sons nor daughters. \fn{One of the manuscripts has here: *Only they vowed that, if God should give them offspring, they would devote it to the service of the temple; and because of this, they were wont to go to the temple of the Lord at each of the yearly festivals.* }

II

And it happened that, in the time of the feast, among those who were offering incense to the lord, Joachim stood getting ready his gifts in the sight of the Lord. And the priest, Ruben by name, coming to him, said, "It is not lawful for you to stand among those who are doing sacrifice to God, because God has not blessed you so as to give you seed in Israel." Being therefore put to shame in the sight of the people, he retired from the temple of the Lord weeping, and did not return to his house, but went to his flocks, taking with him his shepherds into the mountains to a far country, so that for five months his wife Anna could hear no tidings of him.

*And she prayed with tears, saying, "O Lord, most mighty God of Israel, why have You, seeing that already You have not given me children, taken from me my husband also? Behold, (it is) now five months that I have not seen my husband; and I do not know where he is tarrying; \fn{Reading mortuus for moratus, another reading would be: *where he has died.*} nor, if I knew him to be dead, could I bury him." And while she wept excessively, she entered into the court of His house; and she fell on her face in prayer, and poured out her supplications before the Lord. After this, rising from her prayer, and lifting her eyes to God, she saw a sparrow's nest in a laurel tree, and uttered her voice to the Lord with groaning, and said, "Lord God Almighty, who has given offspring to every creature, to beasts wild and tame, to serpents, and birds, and fishes, and they all rejoice over their young ones, You have shut out me alone from the gift of Your benignity. For You, O God, know my heart, that from the beginning of my married life I have vowed that, if You, O God, should give me son or daughter, I would offer them to You in Your holy temple."*

And while she was thus speaking, suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared before her, saying, "Do not be afraid, Anna, for there is seed for you in the decree of God; and all generations even to the end shall wonder at that which shall be born of you." And when he had thus spoken, he vanished out of her sight. But she, in fear and dread because she had seen such a sight, and heard such words, at length went into her bed-chamber, and threw herself on the bed as if dead. And for a whole day and night she remained in great trembling and in prayer.

And after these things she called to her her servant, and said to her, "Do you see me deceived in my widowhood and in great perplexity, and have you been unwilling to come in to me?" Then she, with a slight murmur, thus answered and said, "If God has shut up your womb, and has taken away your husband from you, what can I do for you?" And when Anna heard this, she lifted up her voice, and wept aloud.

III

At the same time there appeared a young man on the mountains to Joachim while he was feeding his flocks, and said to him, "Why do you not return to your wife?" And Joachim said, "I have had her for twenty years, and it has not been the will of God to give me children by her. I have been driven with shame and reproach from the temple of the Lord: why should I go back to her, when I have been once cast off and utterly despised? Here then will I remain with my sheep; and so long as in this life God is willing to grant me light, I shall willingly, by the hands of my servants, bestow their portions upon the poor, and the orphans, and those that fear God."

And when he had thus spoken, the young man said to him, "I am an angel of the Lord, and I have today appeared to your wife when she was weeping and praying, and have consoled her; and know that she has conceived a daughter from your seed, and you in your ignorance of this have left her. She will be in the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit shall abide in her; and her blessedness shall be greater than that of all the holy women, so that no one can say that any before her has been like her, or that any after her in this world will be so. Therefore go down from the mountains, and return to your wife, whom you will find with child. For God has raised up seed in her, and for this you will give God thanks; and her seed shall be blessed, and she herself shall be blessed, and shall be made the mother of eternal blessing."

Then Joachim adored the angel, and said to him, "If I have found favor in your sight, sit for a little in my tent, and bless your servant." And the angel said to him, "Do not say servant, but fellow-servant; for we are the servants of one Master. But my food is invisible, and my drink cannot be seen by a mortal. Therefore you ought not to ask me to enter your tent; but if you were about to give me anything, offer it as a burnt-offering to the Lord."

Then Joachim took a lamb without spot, and said to the angel, "I should not have dared to offer a burnt-offering to the Lord, unless your command had given me the priest's right of offering. \fn{Faustus the Manichæan said (so Augustine of Hippo Regius, *Contra Faustum* XXIII:iv) that Joachim was of the tribe of Levi. As belonging to the tribe of Judah, he did not have the right to sacrifice.} And the angel said to him, "I should not have invited you to offer unless I had known the will of the Lord." And when Joachim was offering the sacrifice to God, the angel and the odor of the sacrifice went together straight up to heaven with the smoke.

Then Joachim, throwing himself on his face, lay in prayer for the sixth hour of the day even until evening. And his lads and hired servants who were with him saw him, and not knowing why he was lying down, thought that he was dead; and they came to him, and with difficulty raised him from the ground. And when he recounted to them the vision of the angel, they were struck with great fear and wonder, and advised him to realize \fn{The text has: to accomplish.} the vision of the angel without delay, and to go back with all haste to his wife.

And when Joachim was turning over in his mind whether he should go back or not, it happened that he was overpowered by a deep sleep; and, behold, the angel who had already appeared to him when awake, appeared to him in his sleep, saying, "I am the angel appointed by God as your guardian. Go down with confidence, and return to Anna, because the deeds of mercy which you and your wife Anna have done have been told in the presence of the Most High; and to you will God give such fruit as no prophet or saint has ever had from the beginning, or ever will have." And when Joachim awoke out of his sleep, he called all his herdsmen to him, and told them his dream. And they worshipped the Lord, and said to him, "See that you no further despise the words of the Angel. But rise and let us go hence, and return at a quiet pace, feeding our flocks."

And when, after thirty days occupied in going back, they were now near at hand, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Anna, who was standing and praying, and said, "Go to the gate which is called Golden, \fn{This is the Beautiful gate of Acts 3:2, to which, according to Josephus of Palestine (fl.c.100), there was an ascent by many steps from the valley of Kedron.} and meet your husband in the way, for today he will come to you." She therefore went towards him in haste with her maidens, and, praying to the Lord, she stood a long time in the gate waiting for him. And when she was wearied with long waiting, she lifted up her eyes and saw Joachim afar off coming with his flocks; and she ran to him and hung on his neck, giving thanks to God, and saying, "I was a widow, and behold now I am not so: I was barren, and behold I have now conceived." And so they worshipped the Lord, and went into their own

house. And when this was heard of, there was great joy among all their neighbors and acquaintances, so that the whole land of Israel congratulated them.

IV

After these things, her nine months being fulfilled, Anna brought forth a daughter, and called her Mary. And having weaned her in her third year, Joachim, and Anna his wife, went together to the temple of the Lord to offer sacrifices to God, and placed the infant, Mary by name, in the community of virgins, in which the virgins remained day and night praising God. And when she was put down before the doors of the temple, she went up the fifteen steps\fn{Another reading is: And there were about the temple, according to the fifteen Psalms of Degrees, fifteen steps of ascent: the temple was on a mountain, and there had been there built the altar of burnt-offering, which could not be reached but by steps. The steps were meant to correspond to the so-called Songs of Degrees (Psalms 120-134). See on them Smith ("Songs of Degrees," Dictionary of the Bible).} so swiftly, that she did not look back at all; nor did she, as children are wont to do, seek for her parents. Whereupon her parents, each of them anxiously seeking for the child, were both alike astonished, until they found her in the temple, and the priests of the temple themselves wondered.

V

Then Anna, filled with the Holy Spirit, said before them all, "The Lord Almighty, the God of Hosts, being mindful of His word, has visited His people with a good and holy visitation, to bring down the hearts of the Gentiles who were rising against us, and turn them to Himself. He has opened His ears to our prayers: He has kept away from us the exulting of all our enemies. The barren has become a mother, and has brought forth exultation and gladness to Israel. Behold the gifts which I have brought to offer to my Lord, and my enemies have not been able to hinder me. For God has turned their hearts to me, and Himself has given me everlasting joy."

VI

And Mary was held in admiration by all the people of Israel; and when she was three years old, she walked with a step so mature, she spoke so perfectly, and spent her time so assiduously in the praises of God, that all were astonished at her, and wondered; and she was not reckoned a young infant, but as it were a grown-up person of thirty years old. She was so constant in prayer, and her appearance was so beautiful and glorious, that scarcely any one could look into her face. And she occupied herself constantly with her wool-work, so that she in her tender years could do all that old women were not able to do.

And this was the order that she had set for herself. From the morning to the third hour she remained in prayer; from the third to the ninth she was occupied with her weaving; and from the ninth she again applied herself to prayer. She did not retire from praying until there appeared to her the angel of the Lord, from whose hand she used to receive food; and thus she became more and more perfect in the work of God. Then, when the older virgins rested from the praises of God, she did not rest at all; so that in the praises and vigils of God none were found before her, no one more learned in the wisdom of the law of God, more lowly in humility, more elegant in singing, more perfect in all virtue.

She was indeed steadfast, immovable, unchangeable, and daily advancing to perfection. No one saw her angry, nor heard her speaking evil. All her speech was so full of grace, that her God was acknowledged to be in her tongue. She was always engaged in prayer and in searching the law, and she was anxious lest by any word of hers she should sin with regard to her companions. Then she was afraid lest in her laughter, or the sound of her beautiful voice, she should commit any fault, or lest, being elated, she should display any wrong-doing or haughtiness to one of her equals.\fn{One of the manuscripts has here: She was anxious about her companions, lest any of them should sin even in one word, lest any of them should raise her voice in laughing, lest any of them should be in the wrong, or proud to her father or her mother.}

She blessed God without intermission; and lest perchance, even in her salutation, she might cease from praising God; if any one saluted her, she used to answer by way of salutation, "Thanks be to God." And from her the custom first began of men saying, "Thanks be to God," when they saluted each other. She refreshed herself

only with the food which she daily received from the hand of the angel; but the food which she obtained from the priests she divided among the poor. The angels of God were often seen speaking with her, and they most diligently obeyed her. If any one who was unwell touched her, the same hour he went home cured.

VII

Then Abiathar the priest offered gifts without end to the high priests, in order that he might obtain her as wife to his son. But Mary forbade them, saying, "It cannot be that I should know a man, or that a man should know me." For all the priests and all her relations kept saying to her, "God is worshipped in children and adored in posterity, as has always happened among the sons of Israel." But Mary answered and said to them, "God is worshipped in chastity, as is proved first of all.\fn{Or: by the first of all.} For before Abel there was none righteous among men, and he by his offerings pleased God, and was without mercy slain by him who displeased Him. Two crowns, therefore, he received—of oblation and of virginity, because in his flesh there was no pollution. Elias also, when he was in the flesh, was taken up in the flesh, because he kept his flesh unspotted. Now I, from my infancy in the temple of God, have learned that virginity can be sufficiently dear to God. And so, because I can offer what is dear to God, I have resolved in my heart that I should not know a man at all."

VIII

Now it came to pass, when she was fourteen\fn{Or: twelve.} years old, and on this account there was occasion for the Pharisees' saying that it was now a custom that no woman of that age should abide in the temple of God, they fell upon the plan of sending a herald through all the tribes of Israel, that on the third day all should come together into the temple of the Lord. And when all the people had come together, Abiathar the high priest rose, and mounted on a higher step, that he might be seen and heard by all the people; and when great silence had been obtained, he said:

"Hear me, O sons of Israel, and receive my words into your ears. Ever since this temple was built by Solomon, there have been in it virgins, the daughters of kings and the daughters of prophets, and of high priests and priests; and they were great, and worthy of admiration. But when they came to the proper age they were given in marriage, and followed the course of their mothers before them, and were pleasing to God. But a new order of life has been found out by Mary alone, who promises that she will remain a virgin to God. Wherefore it seems to me, that through our inquiry and the answer of God we should try to ascertain to whose keeping she ought to be entrusted." Then these words found favor with all the synagogue.

And the lot was cast by the priests upon the twelve tribes, and the lot fell upon the tribe of Judah. And the priest said, "Tomorrow let every one who has no wife come, and bring his rod in his hand." Whence it happened the Joseph\fn{One manuscript adds here: seeing that he had not a wife, and not wishing to slight the order of the high priest.} brought his rod along with the young men. And the rods having been handed over to the high priest, he offered a sacrifice to the Lord God, and inquired of the Lord. And the Lord said to him, "Put all their rods into the holy of holies of God, and let them remain there, and order them to come to you on the morrow to get back their rods; and the man from the point of whose rod a dove shall come forth, and fly towards heaven, and in whose hand the rod, when given back, shall exhibit this sign, to him let Mary be delivered to be kept."

On the following day, then, all having assembled early, and an incense-offering having been made, the high priest went into the holy of holies, and brought forth the rods. And when he had distributed the rods\fn{One of the manuscripts inserts here: to the number of three thousand.} and the dove came forth out of none of them, the high priest put on the twelve bells and the sacerdotal robe; and entering into the holy of holies, he there made a burnt-offering, and poured forth a prayer. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him, saying, "There is here the shortest rod, of which you have made no account: you brought it in with the rest, but did not take it out with them. When you have taken it out, and have given it to him whose it is, in it will appear the sign of which I spoke to you."

Now that was Joseph's rod; and because he was an old man, he had been cast off, as it were, that he might not receive her, but neither did he himself wish to ask back his rod.\fn{Another and more probable reading is: And this was Joseph's rod; and he was of an abject appearance, seeing that he was old, and he would not ask back his rod, lest perchance he might be

forded to receive her. } and when he was humbly standing last of all, the high priest cried out to him with a loud voice, saying, "Come, Joseph, and receive your rod; for we are waiting for you." And Joseph came up trembling, because the high priest had called him with a very loud voice. But as soon as he stretched forth his hand, and laid hold of his rod, immediately from the top of it came forth a dove whiter than snow, beautiful exceedingly, which, after long flying about the roofs of the temple, at length flew towards the heavens.

Then all the people congratulated the old man, saying, "You have been made blessed in your old age, O father Joseph, seeing that God has shown you to be fit to receive Mary." And the priests having said to him, "Take her, because of all the tribe of Judah you alone have been chosen by God," Joseph began bashfully to address them, saying, "I am an old man, and have children; why do you hand over to me this infant, who is younger than my grandsons?" Then Abiathar the high priest said to him, "Remember, Joseph, how Dathan and Abiron and Core perished, because they despised the will of God. So will it happen to you, if you despise this which is commanded you by God." Joseph answered him, "I indeed do not despise the will of God; but I shall be her guardian until I can ascertain concerning the will of God, as to which of my sons can have her as his wife. Let some virgins of her companions, with whom she may meanwhile spend her time, be given for a consolation to her." Abiathar the high priest answered and said, "Five virgins indeed shall be given her for consolation, until the appointed day come in which you may receive her; for to no other can she be joined in marriage."

Then Joseph received Mary, with the other five virgins who were to be with her in Joseph's house. These virgins were Rebecca, Sephora, Susanna, Abigea, and Cael; to whom the high priest gave the silk, and the blue, \fn{Or: hyacinth.} and the fine linen, and the scarlet, and the purple, and the fine flax. For they cast lots among themselves what each virgin should do, and the purple for the veil of the temple of the Lord fell to the lot of Mary. And when she had got it, those virgins said to her, "Since you are the last, and humble, and younger than all, you have deserved to receive and obtain the purple." And thus saying, as it were in words of annoyance, they began to call her queen of virgins. While, however, they were doing so, the angel of the Lord appeared in the midst of them, saying, "These words shall not have been uttered by way of annoyance, but prophesied as a prophecy most true." They trembled, therefore, at the sight of the angel, and at his words, and asked her to pardon them, and pray for them.

IX

And on the second day, while Mary was at the fountain to fill her pitcher, the angel of the Lord appeared to her, saying, "Blessed are you, Mary; for in your womb you have prepared a habitation for the Lord. For, lo, the light from heaven shall come and dwell in you, and by means of you will shine over the whole world."

Again, on the third day, while she was working at the purple with her fingers, there entered a young man of ineffable beauty. And when Mary saw him, she feared exceedingly and trembled. And he said to her, "Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." And when she heard these words, she trembled, and was exceedingly afraid. Then the angel of the Lord added, "Fear not, Mary; for you have found favor with God. Behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and shall bring forth a King, who fills not only the earth, but the heaven, and who reigns from generation to generation."

X

While these things were happening, \fn{The text has: doing.} Joseph was occupied with his work, house-building, in the districts by the sea shore; for he was a carpenter. And after nine months he came back to his house, and found Mary pregnant. Wherefore, being in the utmost distress, he trembled and cried out, saying, "O Lord God, receive my spirit; for it is better for me to die than to live any longer." And the virgins who were with Mary said to him, "Joseph, what are you saying? We know that no man has touched her; we can testify that she is still a virgin, and untouched. We have watched over her; always has she continued with us in prayer; daily do the angels of God speak with her; daily does she receive food from the hand of the Lord. We do not know how it is possible that there can be any sin in her. But if you wish us to tell you what we suspect, nobody but the angel of the Lord \fn{Another reading is: the Holy Spirit.} has made her pregnant."

Then Joseph said, "Why do you mislead me, to believe that an angel of the Lord has made her pregnant? But it is possible that some one has pretended to be an angel of the Lord, and has beguiled her." And thus speaking, he wept, and said, "With what face shall I look at the temple of the Lord, or with what face shall I see the priests of God? What am I to do?" And thus saying, he thought that he would flee, and send her away.

XI

And when he was thinking of rising up and hiding himself, and dwelling in secret, behold, on that very night, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in sleep, saying, "Joseph, son of David, fear not; receive Mary as your wife. For that which is in her womb is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and His name shall be called Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." And Joseph, rising from his sleep, gave thanks to God, and spoke to Mary and the virgins who were with her, and told them his vision. And he was comforted about Mary, saying, "I have sinned, in that I suspected you at all."

XII

After these things there arose a great report that Mary was with child. And Joseph was seized by the officers of the temple, and brought along with Mary to the high priest. And he with the priests began to reproach him, and to say, "Why have you beguiled so great a so glorious a virgin, who was fed like a dove in the temple by the angels of God, who never wished either to see or to have a man, who had the most excellent knowledge of the law of God? If you had not done violence to her, she would still have remained in her virginity." And Joseph vowed, and swore that he had never touched her at all. And Abiathar the high priest answered him, "As the Lord lives, I will give you to drink of the water of drinking of the Lord, and immediately your sin will appear."

Then was assembled a multitude of people which could not be numbered, and Mary was brought to the temple. And the priests, and her relatives, and her parents wept, and said to Mary, "Confess to the priests your sin, you that were like a dove in the temple of God, and received food from the hands of an angel." And again Joseph was summoned to the altar, and the water of drinking of the Lord was given him to drink. And when any one that had lied drank this water, and walked seven times round the altar, God used to show some sign in his face. When, therefore, Joseph had drunk in safety, and had walked round the altar seven times, no sign of sin appeared in him. Then all the priests, and the officers, and the people justified him, saying, "Blessed are you, seeing that no charge has been found good against you."

And they summoned Mary, and said, "And what excuse can you have? Or what greater sign can appear in you than the conception of your womb, which betrays you? This only we require of you, that since Joseph is pure regarding you, you confess who it is that has beguiled you. For it is better that your confession should betray you, than that the wrath of God should set a mark on your face, and expose you in the midst of the people." Then Mary said, steadfastly and without trembling, "O Lord God, King over all, who knows all secrets, if there be any pollution in me, or any sin, or any evil desires, or unchastity, expose me in the sight of all the people, and make me an example of punishment to all." Thus saying, she went up to the altar of the Lord boldly, and drank the water of drinking, and walked round the altar seven times, and no spot was found in her.

And when all the people were in the utmost astonishment, seeing that she was with child, and that no sign had appeared in her face, they began to be disturbed among themselves by conflicting statements. Some said that she was holy and unspotted, others that she was wicked and defiled. Then Mary, seeing that she was still suspected by the people, and that on that account she did not seem to them to be wholly cleared, said in the hearing of all, with a loud voice, "As the Lord Adonai lives, the Lord of Hosts before whom I stand, I have not known man; but I am known by Him to whom from my earliest years I have devoted myself. And this vow I made to my God from my infancy, that I should remain unspotted in Him who created me, and I trust that I shall so live to Him alone, and serve Him alone; and in Him, as long as I shall live, will I remain unpolluted."

Then they all began to kiss her feet and to embrace her knees, asking her to pardon them for their wicked suspicions. And she was led down to her house with exultation and joy by the people, and the priests, and all the virgins. And they cried out, and said, "Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever, because He has manifested your

holiness to all His people Israel.”

XIII

And it came to pass some little time after, that an enrolment was made according to the edict of Caesar Augustus, that all the world was to be enrolled, each man in his native place. This enrolment was made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria. It was necessary, therefore, that Joseph should enroll with the blessed Mary in Bethlehem, because to it they belonged, being of the tribe of Judah, and of the house and family of David.

When, therefore, Joseph and the blessed Mary were going along the road which leads to Bethlehem, Mary said to Joseph, “I see two peoples before me, the one weeping, and the other rejoicing.” And Joseph answered, “Sit still on your beast, and do not speak superfluous words.” Then there appeared before them a beautiful boy, clothed in white raiment, who said to Joseph, “Why did you say that the words which Mary spoke about the two people were superfluous? For she saw the people of the Jews weeping, because they have departed from their God; and the people of the Gentiles rejoicing, because they have now been added and made near to the Lord, according to that which He promised to our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for the time is at hand when in the seed of Abraham all nations shall be blessed.”

And when he had said this, the angel ordered the beast to stand, for the time when she should bring forth was at hand; and he commanded the blessed Mary to come down off the animal, and go into a recess under a cavern, in which there never was light, but always darkness, because the light of day could not reach it. And when the blessed Mary had gone into it, it began to shine with as much brightness as if it were the sixth hour of the day. The light from God so shone in the cave, that neither by day nor night was light wanting as long as the blessed Mary was there. And there she brought forth a son, and the angels surrounded Him when He was being born. And as soon as He was born, He stood upon His feet, and the angels adored Him, saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good pleasure.”^{\fn{So the Revised Standard Version, following the weight of manuscript authority.}}

Now, when the birth of the Lord was at hand, Joseph had gone away to seek midwives. And when he had found them, he returned to the cave, and found with Mary the infant which she had brought forth. And Joseph said to the blessed Mary, “I have brought you two midwives—Zelomi^{\fn{Or: Zelemi.}} and Salome and they are standing outside before the entrance to the cave, not daring to come in, because of the exceeding brightness.” And when the blessed Mary heard this, she smiled; and Joseph said to her, “Do not smile; but prudently allow them to visit you, in case you should require them for your cure.” Then she ordered them to enter.

And when Zelomi had come in, Salome having stayed outside, Zelomi said to Mary, “Allow me to touch you.” And when she had permitted her to make an examination, the midwife, cried out with a loud voice, and said, “Lord, Lord Almighty, mercy on us! It has never been heard or thought of, that any one should have her breasts full of milk, and that the birth of a son should show his mother to be a virgin. But there has been no spilling of blood in his birth, no pain in bringing him forth. A virgin has conceived, a virgin has brought forth, and a virgin she remains.”

And hearing these words, Salome said, “Allow me to handle you, and prove whether Zelomi has^{\fn{The text has: have.}} spoken the truth.” And the blessed Mary allowed her to handle her. And when she had withdrawn her hand from handling her, it dried up, and through excess of pain she began to weep bitterly, and to be in great distress, crying out, and saying, “O Lord God, You know that I have always feared You, and that without recompense I have cared for all the poor; I have taken nothing from the widow and the orphan, and the needy have I not sent empty away. And, behold, I am made wretched because of my unbelief, since without a cause I wished to try Your virgin.”

And while she was speaking, there stood by her a young man in shining garments, saying, “Go to the child, and adore Him, and touch Him with your hand, and He will heal you, because he is the Savior of the world, and of all that hope in Him.” And she went to the child with haste, and adored Him, and touched the fringe of the cloths in which He was wrapped, and instantly her hand was cured. And going forth, she began to cry aloud, and

to tell the wonderful things which she had seen, and which she had suffered, and how she had been cured; so that many through her statements believed.

And some shepherds also affirmed that they had seen angels singing a hymn at midnight, praising and blessing the God of heaven, and saying, "There has been born the Savior of all, who is Christ the Lord, in whom salvation shall be brought back to Israel."

Moreover, a great star, larger than any that had been seen since the beginning of the world, shone over the cave from the evening till the morning. And the prophets who were in Jerusalem said that this star pointed out the birth of Christ, who should restore the promise not only to Israel, but to all nations.

XIV

And on the third day after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the most blessed Mary went forth out of the cave, and entering a stable, placed the child in the stall, and the ox and the ass adored Him. Then was fulfilled that which was said by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib." The very animals, therefore, the ox and the ass, having Him in their midst, incessantly adored Him. Then was fulfilled that which was said by Abacuc^{\fn{So the text.}} the prophet, saying, "Between two animals you are made manifest."^{\fn{So Habakkuk 3:2, according to the Septuagint, but reading the Hebrew as two living creatures in place of the Hebrew for years make alive.}} In the same place Joseph remained with Mary three days.

XV

And on the sixth day they entered Bethlehem, where they spent the seventh day. And on the eighth day they circumcised the child, and called His name Jesus; for so He was called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. Now, after the days of the purification of Mary were fulfilled according to the law of Moses, then Joseph took the infant to the temple of the Lord. And when the infant had received parhithomus;—parhithomus, that is, circumcision—^{\fn{ANF has here the following footnote: This shows the extent of the writer's, or transcriber's knowledge of Greek.}} they offered for Him a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

Now there was in the temple a man of God, perfect and just, whose name was Symeon, a hundred and twelve years old. He had received the answer from the Lord, that he should not taste of death till he had seen Christ, the Son of God, living in the flesh. And having seen the child, he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "God has visited His people, and the Lord has fulfilled His promise." And he made haste, and adored Him. And after this he took Him up into his cloak and kissed His feet, and said, "Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word: for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."

There was also in the temple of the Lord, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher, who had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and she had now been a widow eighty-four years. And she never left the temple of the Lord, but spent her time in fasting and prayer. She also likewise adored the child, saying, "In Him is the redemption of the world."

XVI

And when the second year was past,^{\fn{One manuscript has: When two days were past. Another has: On the thirteenth day.}} Magi came from the east to Jerusalem, bringing great gifts. And they made strict inquiry of the Jews, saying, "Where is the king who has been born to you? For we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him." And word of this came to King Herod, and so alarmed him that he called together the scribes and the Pharisees, and the teachers of the people, asking of them where the prophets had foretold that Christ should be born. And they said, "In Bethlehem of Judah. For it is written, 'And you Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Leader who shall rule my people Israel.'" Then King Herod summoned the magi to him, and strictly inquired of them when the star appeared to them. Then, sending them to Bethlehem, he said, "Go and make strict inquiry about the child; and when you have

found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.”

And while the magi were going on their way, there appeared to them the star, which was, as it were, a guide to them, going before them until they came to where the child was. And when the magi saw the star, they rejoiced with great joy; and going into the house, they saw the child Jesus sitting in His mother's lap. Then they opened their treasures, and presented great gifts to the blessed Mary and Joseph. And to the child Himself they offered each of them a piece of gold. \fn{The siclus aureus, or gold shekel, worth £1, 16s. 6d.} and likewise one gave gold, another frankincense, and the third myrrh. \fn{One manuscript has: Gaspar gave myrrh, Melchior frankincense, Balthusar gold.} And when they were going to return to King Herod, they were warned by an angel in their sleep not to go back to Herod; and they returned to their own country by another road.

XVII

And when Herod \fn{One manuscript inserts the following clause: , coming back from Rome the year after.} saw that he had been made sport of by the magi, his heart swelled with rage, and he sent through all the roads, wishing to seize them and put them to death. But when he could not find them at all, he sent anew to Bethlehem and all its borders, and slew all the male children whom he found of two years old and under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the magi.

Now the day before this was done Joseph was warned in his sleep by the angel of the Lord, who said to him, “Take Mary and the child, and go into Egypt by the way of the desert.” And Joseph went according to the saying of the angel.

XVIII

And having come to a certain cave, and wishing to rest in it, the blessed Mary dismounted from her beast, and sat down with the child Jesus in her bosom. \fn{One manuscript has here: Then Joseph put the blessed virgin and the boy upon a beast, and himself mounted another, and took the road through the hill country and the desert, that he might get safe to Egypt; for they did not want to go by the shore, for fear of being waylaid.} And there were with Joseph three boys, and with Mary a girl, going on the journey along with them. And, lo, suddenly there came forth from the cave many dragons; and when the children saw them, they cried out in great terror.

Then Jesus went down from the bosom of His mother, and stood on His feet before the dragons; and they adored Jesus, and thereafter retired. Then was fulfilled that which was said by David the prophet, saying, “Praise the Lord from the earth, you dragons; you dragons, and all you deeps.” And the young child Jesus, walking before them, commanded them to hurt no man. But Mary and Joseph were very much afraid lest the child should be hurt by the dragons. And Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid, and do not consider me to be a little child; for I am and always have been perfect; and all the beasts of the forest must needs be tame before me.”

XIX

Lions and panthers adored Him likewise, and accompanied them in the desert. Wherever Joseph and the blessed Mary went, they went before them showing them the way, and bowing their heads; and showing their submission by wagging their tails, they adored Him with great reverence. Now at first, when Mary saw the lions and the panthers, and various kinds of wild beasts, coming about them, she was very much afraid. But the infant Jesus looked into her face with a joyful countenance, and said, “Do not be afraid, mother; for they come not to do you harm, but they make haste to serve both you and me.” With these words he drove all fear from her heart.

And the lions kept walking with them, and with the oxen, and the asses, and the beasts of burden which carried their baggage, and did not hurt a single one of them, though they kept beside them; but they were tame among the sheep and the rams which they had brought with them from Judea, and which they had with them. They walked among wolves, and feared nothing; and no one of them was hurt by another. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophet, “Wolves shall feed with lambs; the lion and the ox shall eat straw together.” There were together two oxen drawing a wagon with provision for the journey, and the lions directed them in their path.

XX

And it came to pass on the third day of their journey, while they were walking, that the blessed Mary was fatigued by the excessive heat of the sun in the desert; and seeing a palm tree, she said to Joseph, "Let me rest a little under the shade of this tree." Joseph therefore made haste, and led her to the palm, and made her come down from her beast. And as the blessed Mary was sitting there, she looked up to the foliage of the palm, and saw it full of fruit, and said to Joseph, "I wish it were possible to get some of the fruit of this palm." And Joseph said to her, "I wonder that you say this, when you see how high the palm tree is; and that you think of eating its fruit. I am thinking more of the want of water, because the skins are now empty, and we have none wherewith to refresh ourselves and our cattle."

Then the child Jesus, with a joyful countenance, reposing in the bosom of His mother, said to the palm, "O tree, bend your branches, and refresh my mother with your fruit." And immediately at these words the palm bent its top down to the very feet of the blessed Mary; and they gathered from it fruit, with which they were all refreshed. And after they had gathered all its fruit, it remained bent down, waiting the order to rise from Him who had commanded it to stoop. Then Jesus said to it, "Raise yourself, O palm tree, and be strong, and be the companion of my trees, which are in the paradise of my Father; and open from your roots a vein of water which has been hidden\fn{The text has: hid.} in the earth, and let the waters flow, so that we may be satisfied from you." And it rose up immediately, and at its root there began to come forth a spring of water exceedingly clear and cool and sparkling. And when they saw the spring of water, they rejoiced with great joy, and were satisfied, themselves and all their cattle and their beasts. Wherefore they gave thanks to God.

XXI

And on the day after, when they were setting out from there, and in the hour in which they began their journey, Jesus turned to the palm, and said, "This privilege I give you, O palm tree, that one of your branches be carried away by my angels, and planted in the paradise of my Father. And this blessing I will confer upon you, that it shall be said of all who conquer in any contest, 'You have attained the palm of victory.'" And while He was speaking, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared, and stood upon the palm tree; and taking off one of its branches, flew to heaven with the branch in his hand. And when they saw this, they fell on their faces, and became as it were dead. And Jesus said to them, "Why are your hearts possessed with fear? Do you not know that this palm, which I have caused to be transferred to paradise, shall be prepared for all the saints in the place of delights, as it has been prepared for us in this place of the wilderness?" And they were filled with joy; and being strengthened, they all rose up.

XXII

[At this point occurs a Latin variant story of the robber, for the Latin of which see after the conclusion of The Infancy Gospel of Matthew; James discusses it in the above Introduction.]

After this, while they were going on their journey, Joseph said to Jesus, "Lord, it is a boiling heat; if it please You, let us go by the seashore, that we may be able to rest in the cities on the coast." Jesus said to him, "Do not fear, Joseph; I will shorten the way for you, so that what you would have taken thirty days to go over, you shall accomplish in this one day." And while they were thus speaking, behold, they looked forward, and began to see the mountains and cities of Egypt.

And rejoicing and exulting, they came into the regions of Hermopolis, and entered into a certain city of Egypt which is called Sotinen;\fn{Or: Sotrina.} and because they knew no one there from whom they could ask hospitality, they went into a temple which was called the Capitol of Egypt. And in this temple there had been set up three hundred and fifty-five idols, to each of which on its own day divine honors and sacred rites were paid. For the Egyptians belonging to the same city entered the Capitol, in which the priests told them how many sacrifices were offered each day, according to the honor in which the god was held.

XXIII

And it came to pass, when the most blessed Mary went into the temple with the little child, that all the idols prostrated themselves on the ground, so that all of them were lying on their faces shattered and broken to pieces; and thus they plainly showed that they were nothing. Then was fulfilled that which was said by the prophet Isaiah, "Behold, the Lord will come upon a swift cloud, and will enter Egypt, and all the handiwork of the Egyptians shall be moved at His presence."

XXIV

Then Affrodosius, that governor of the city, when news of this was brought to him, went to the temple with all his army. And the priests of the temple, when they saw Affrodosius with all his army coming into the temple, thought that he was making haste only to see vengeance taken on those on whose account the gods had fallen down. But when he came into the temple, and saw all the gods lying prostrate on their faces, he went up to the blessed Mary, who was carrying the Lord in her bosom, and adored Him, and said to all his army and all his friends, "Unless this were the God of our gods, our gods would not have fallen on their faces before Him; nor would they be lying prostrate in His presence: wherefore they silently confess that He is their Lord. Unless we, therefore, take care to do what we have seen our gods doing, we may run the risk of His anger, and all come to destruction, even as it happened to Pharaoh king of the Egyptians, who, not believing in powers so mighty, was drowned in the sea, with all his army." Then all the people of that same city believed in the Lord God through Jesus Christ.

XXV

After no long time the angel said to Joseph, "Return to the land of Judah, for they are dead who sought the child's life." \fn{One manuscript has here: And Joseph and Mary went to live in the house of a certain widow, and spent a year there. For the events of the year this manuscript gives a number of the miracles recorded in the early chapters of the Latin version of the Infancy Gospel of Thomas. }

XXVI

And it came to pass, after Jesus had returned out of Egypt, when He was in Galilee, and entering on the fourth year of His age, that on a Sabbath-day He was playing with some children at the bed of the Jordan. And as He sat there, Jesus made for \fn{The text has: to.} Himself seven pools of clay, and to each of them He made passages, through which at His command He brought water from the torrent into the pool, and took it back again. Then one of those children, a son of the devil, moved with envy, shut the passages which supplied the pools with water, and overthrew what Jesus had built up.

Then Jesus said to him, "Woe to you, you son of death, you son of Satan! Do you destroy the works which I have wrought?" And immediately he who had done this died. Then with great uproar the parents of the dead boy cried out against Mary and Joseph, saying to them, "Your son has cursed our son, and he is dead." And when Joseph and Mary heard this, they came forthwith to Jesus, on account of the outcry of the parents of the boy, and the gathering together of the Jews. But Joseph said privately to Mary, "I dare not speak to Him; but do you admonish Him, and say, 'Why have You raised against us the hatred of the people; and why must the troublesome hatred of men be borne by us?'"

And His mother having come to Him, asked Him, saying, "My Lord, what was it that he did to bring about his death?" And He said, "He deserved death, because he scattered the works that I had made." Then His mother asked Him, saying, "Do not so, my Lord, because all men rise up against us." But He, not wishing to grieve His mother, with His right foot kicked the hinder parts of the dead boy, and said to him, "Rise, son of iniquity; for you are not worthy to enter into the rest of my Father, because you destroyed the works which I had made." Then he who had been dead rose up, and went away. And Jesus, by the word of His power, brought water into the pools by the aqueduct.

XXVII

And it came to pass, after these things, that in the sight of all Jesus took clay from the pools which He had made, and of it made twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath when Jesus did this, and there were very many children with Him. When, therefore, one of the Jews had seen Him doing this, he said to Joseph, "Joseph, do you not see the child Jesus working on the Sabbath at what is not lawful for him to do? For he has made twelve sparrows of clay." And when Joseph heard this, he reprov'd him, saying, "Wherefore do you on the Sabbath such things as are not lawful for us to do?"

And when Jesus heard Joseph, He struck His hands together, and said to His sparrows, "Fly!" And at the voice of His command they began to fly. And in the sight and hearing of all that stood by, He said to the birds, "Go and fly through the earth, and through all the world, and live." And when those that were there saw such miracles, they were filled with great astonishment. And some praised and admired Him, but others reviled Him. And certain of them went away to the chief priests and the heads of the Pharisees, and reported to them that Jesus the son of Joseph had done great signs and miracles in the sight of all the people of Israel. And this was reported in the twelve tribes of Israel.

XXVIII

And again the son of Annas, a priest of the temple, who had come with Joseph, holding his rod in his hand in the sight of all, with great fury broke down the dams which Jesus had made with His own hands, and let out the water which He had collected in them from the torrent. Moreover, he shut the aqueduct by which the water came in, and then broke it down. And when Jesus saw this, He said to that boy who had destroyed His dams, "O most wicked seed of iniquity! O son of death! O workshop of Satan! Truly the fruit of your seed shall be without strength, and your roots without moisture, and your branches withered, bearing no fruit." And immediately, in the sight of all, the boy withered away, and died.

XXIX

Then Joseph trembled, and took hold of Jesus, and went with Him to his own house, and His mother with Him. And, behold, suddenly from the opposite direction a boy, also a worker of iniquity, ran up and came against the shoulder of Jesus, wishing to make sport of Him, or to hurt Him, if he could. And Jesus said to him, "You shall not go back safe and sound from the way that you go." And immediately he fell down, and died. And the parents of the dead boy, who had seen what happened, cried out, saying, "Where does this child come from? It is manifest that every word that he says is true; and it is often accomplished before he speaks." And the parents of the dead boy came to Joseph, and said to him, "Take away that Jesus from this place, for he cannot live with us in this town; or at least teach him to bless, and not to curse."

And Joseph came up to Jesus, and admonished Him, saying, "Why do you do such things? For already many are in grief and against you, and hate us on your account, and we endure the reproaches of men because of you." And Jesus answered and said to Joseph, "No one is a wise son but he whom his father has taught, according to the knowledge of this time; and a father's curse can hurt none but evil-doers." Then they came together against Jesus, and accused him to Joseph. When Joseph saw this he was in great terror, fearing the violence and uproar of the people of Israel. And the same hour Jesus seized the dead boy by the ear, and lifted him up from the earth in the sight of all: and they saw Jesus speaking to him like a father to his son. And his spirit came back to him, and he revived. And all of them wondered.

XXX

Now a certain Jewish schoolmaster named Zacheus^{Other forms of this name are: Zachyas, Zachias, Zachameus, Zachæus.} heard Jesus thus speaking; and seeing that He could not be overcome, from knowing the power that was in Him,^{Or: Seeing that there was in Him an insuperable knowledge of virtue.} he became angry, and began rudely and foolishly, and without fear, to speak against Joseph. And he said, "Do you not wish to entrust me with your son, that he may be instructed in human learning and in reverence? But I see that Mary and you have more regard for

your son than for what the elders of the people of Israel say against him. You should have given more honor to us, the elders of the whole synagogue\fn{The text has: church.} of Israel, both that he might be on terms of mutual affection with the children, and that among us he might be instructed in Jewish learning.” Joseph, on the other hand, said to him, “And is there any one who can keep this child, and teach him? But if you can keep him and teach him, we by no means hinder him from being taught by you those things which are learned by all.”

And Jesus, having heard what Zacheus had said, answered and said to him, “The precepts of the law which you have just spoken of, and all the things that you have named, must be kept by those who are instructed in human learning; but I am a stranger to your law-courts, because I have no father after the flesh. You who read the law, and are learned in it, abide in the law; but I was before the law. But since you think that no one is equal to you in learning, you shall be taught by me, that no other can teach anything but those things which you have named. But he alone can who is worthy.\fn{Tischendorf thinks that the text is corrupt; but the meaning seems to be: the earthly teacher is not a whit better than his neighbors, for all of them teach what he has named, and they can teach nothing else. But he alone—ipse, i.e., Jesus—can teach more, because he has greater knowledge.} For when I shall be exalted on earth, I will cause to cease all mention of your genealogy. For you do not know when you were born. I alone know when you were born, and how long your life on earth will be.”

Then all who heard these words were struck with astonishment, and cried out, “Oh! Oh! Oh! This marvelously great and wonderful mystery. Never have we heard the like! Never has it been heard from any one else, nor has it been said or at any time heard by the prophets, or the Pharisees, or the scribes. We known from where he is sprung, and he is scarcely five years old; and from where does he speak these words? The Pharisees answered, “We have never heard such words spoken by any other child so young.”

And Jesus answered and said to them, “At this do you wonder, that such things are said by a child? Why, then, do you not believe me in those things which I have said to you? And you all wonder because I said to you that I know when you were born. I will tell you greater things, that you may wonder more. I have seen Abraham, whom you call your father, and have spoken with him; and he has seen me.” And when they heard this they held their tongues, nor did any of them dare to speak. And Jesus said to them, “I have been among you with children, and you have not known me; I have spoken to you as to wise men, and you have not understood my words; because you are younger than I am\fn{Literally: inferior to me.} and of little faith.”

XXXI

A second time the master Zacheus, doctor of the law, said to Joseph and Mary, “Give me the boy, and I shall hand him over to master Levi, who shall teach him his letters and instruct him.” Then Joseph and Mary, soothing Jesus, took Him to the schools, that He might be taught His letters by old Levi. And as soon as He went in He held His tongue. And the master Levi said one letter to Jesus, and, beginning from the first letter Aleph, said to Him, “Answer.” But Jesus was silent, and answered nothing. Wherefore the preceptor Levi was angry, and seized his storax-tree rod, and struck Him on the head.

And Jesus said to the teacher Levi, “Why do you strike me? You shall know in truth, that He who is struck can teach him who strikes Him more than He can be taught by him. For I can teach you those very things that you are saying. But all these are blind who speak and hear, like sounding brass or tinkling cymbal, in which there is no perception of those things which are meant by their sound.” And Jesus in addition said to Zacheus, “Every letter from Aleph even to Tau\fn{The text has: *Thet*, here and in the next sentence, which is not the last of the Hebrew alphabet.} is known by its arrangement. Say first, therefore, what Tau is, and I will tell you what Aleph is.” And again Jesus said to them, “Those who do not know Aleph, how can they say Tau, the hypocrites? Tell me what the first one, Aleph, is; and I shall then believe you when you have said Beth.” And Jesus began to ask the names of the letters one by one, and said, “Let the master of the law tell us what the first letter is, or why it has many triangles, gradate, subacute, mediate, obduced, produced, erect, prostrate, curvistrate.\fn{The original text—*triangulos gradatos, subacutos, mediatos, obductos, productos, erectos, stratos, curvistratos*—is hopelessly corrupt. It obviously, however, refers to the Pentalpha, Pentacle, or Solomon’s Seal, celebrated in the remains of the magical books that have come down to us under the names of Hermes and the Pythagoreans. The Pentalpha was formed by joining by straight lines the alternate angles of a regular pentagon, and thus contained numerous triangles. The Pythagoreans called it the *Hygeia*, or symbol of health, and it was frequently engraved on amulets and

coins. It is still, if the books are to be trusted, a symbol of power in the higher grades of freemasonry. }

And when Levi heard this, he was thunderstruck at such an arrangement of the names of the letters. Then he began in the hearing of all to cry out, and say, "Ought such a one to live on the earth? Yea, he ought to be hung on the great cross. For he can put out fire, and make sport of other modes of punishment. I think that he lived before the flood, and was born before the deluge. For what womb bore him? Or what mother brought him forth? Or what breasts gave him suck? I flee before him; I am not able to withstand the words from his mouth, but my heart is astounded to hear such words. I do not think that any man can understand what he says, except God were with him. Now I, unfortunate wretch, have given myself up to be a laughingstock to him. For when I thought I had a scholar, I, not knowing him, have found my master. What shall I say? I cannot withstand the words of this child: I shall now flee from this town, because I cannot understand them. An old man like me has been beaten by a boy, because I can find neither beginning nor end of what he says. For it is no easy matter to find a beginning of himself.\fn{I.e., It is not wonderful that we do not understand what he says, for we do not know what he is.} I tell you of a certainty, I am not lying, that to my eyes the proceedings of this boy, the commencement of his conversation, and the upshot of his intention, seem to have nothing in common with mortal man. Here then I do not know whether he be a wizard or a god; or at least an angel of God speaks in him. Where he is from, or what he comes from, or who he will turn out to be, I do not know."

Then Jesus, smiling at him with a joyful countenance, said in a commanding voice to all the sons of Israel standing by and hearing, "Let the unfruitful bring forth fruit, and the blind see, and the lame walk right, and the poor enjoy the good things of this life, and the dead live, that each may return to his original state, and abide in Him who is the root of life and of perpetual sweetness." And when the child Jesus had said this, forthwith all who had fallen under malignant diseases were restored. And they did not dare to say anything more to Him, or to hear anything from Him.

XXXII

After these things, Joseph and Mary departed from there with Jesus into the city of Nazareth; and He remained there with His parents. And on the first of the week, when Jesus was playing with the children on the roof of a certain house, it happened that one of the children pushed another down from the roof to the ground, and he was killed. And the parents of the dead boy, who had not seen this, cried out against Joseph and Mary, saying, "Your son has thrown our son down to the ground, and he is dead." But Jesus was silent, and answered them nothing. And Joseph and Mary came in haste to Jesus; and His mother asked Him, saying, "My lord, tell me if you threw him down." And immediately Jesus went down from the roof to the ground, and called the boy by his name, Zeno. And he answered Him, "My lord." And Jesus said to him, "Was it I that threw you down from the roof to the ground?" And he said, "No, my lord." And the parents of the boy who had been dead wondered, and honored Jesus for the miracle that had been wrought. And Joseph and Mary departed from there with Jesus to Jericho.

XXXIII

Now Jesus was six years old, and His mother sent Him with a pitcher to the fountain to draw water with the children. And it came to pass, after he had drawn the water, that one of the children came against Him, and struck the pitcher, and broke it. But Jesus stretched out the cloak which He had on, and took up in His cloak as much water as there had been in the pitcher, and carried it to His mother. And when she saw it she wondered, and reflected within herself, and laid up all these things in her heart.

XXXIV

Again, on a certain day, He went forth into the field, and took a little wheat from His mother's barn, and sowed it Himself. And it sprang up, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. And at last it came to pass that He Himself reaped it, and gathered as the produce of it three kors\fn{According to Zahn, 1 kor or chomer = 32 pecks 1 pint.} and gave it to His numerous acquaintances.\fn{Multiplicibus suis.}

XXXV

There is a road going out of Jericho and leading to the river Jordan, to the place where the children of Israel crossed: and there the ark of the covenant is said to have rested. And Jesus was eight years old, and He went out of Jericho, and went towards the Jordan. And there was beside the road, near the bank of the Jordan, a cave where a lioness was nursing her cubs; and no one was safe when walking\fn{The text has: to walk.} that way.

Jesus then, coming from Jericho, and knowing that in that cave the lioness had brought forth her young, went into it in the sight of all. And when the lions saw Jesus, they ran to meet Him, and adored Him. And Jesus was sitting in the cavern, and the lion's cubs ran hither and thither round His feet, fawning upon Him, and sporting. And the older lions, with their heads bowed down, stood at a distance, and adored Him, and fawned upon Him with their tails.

Then the people who were standing afar off, not seeing Jesus, said, "Unless he or his parents had committed grievous sins, he would not of his own accord have offered himself up to the lions." And when the people were thus reflecting within themselves, and were lying under great sorrow, behold, on a sudden, in the sight of the people, Jesus came out of the cave, and the lions went before Him, and the lion's cubs played with each other before His feet. And the parents of Jesus stood afar off, with their heads bowed down, and watched; likewise also the people stood at a distance, on account of the lions; for they did not dare to come close to them.

Then Jesus began to say to the people, "How much better are the beasts than you, seeing that they recognize their Lord, and glorify Him; while you men, who have been made after the image and likeness of God, do not know Him! Beasts know me, and are tame; men see me, and do not acknowledge me."

XXXVI

After these things Jesus crossed the Jordan, in the sight of them all, with the lions; and the water of the Jordan was divided on the right and on the left. Then He said to the lions, in the hearing of all, "Go in peace, and hurt no-one; but neither let man injure you, until you return to the place from where you have come." And they, bidding Him farewell, not only with their gestures but with their voices, went to their own place. But Jesus returned to His mother.

XXXVII

Now Joseph\fn{One of the manuscripts tells this story not of Joseph but of a certain builder, a worker in wood.} was a carpenter, and used to make nothing else of wood but ox-yokes, and ploughs, and implements of husbandry, and wooden beds. And it came to pass that a certain young man ordered him to make for him a couch six cubits long. And Joseph commanded his boy\fn{His servant is meant.} to cut the wood with an iron saw, according to the measure which he had sent. But he did not keep to the prescribed measure, but made one piece of wood shorter than the other. And Joseph was in perplexity, and began to consider what he was to do about this.

And when Jesus saw him in this sattu of cogitation, seeing that it was a matter of impossibility to him, He addressed\fn{The text has: addresses.} him with words of comfort, saying, "Come, let us take hold of the ends of the pieces of wood, and let us put them together, end to end, and let us fit them exactly to each other, and draw (them) to us, for we shall be able to make them equal." Then Joseph did what he was bid, for he knew that He could do whatever He wished. And Joseph took hold of the ends of the pieces of wood, and brought them together against the wall next (to) himself, and Jesus took hold of the other ends of the pieces of wood, and drew the shorter piece towards\fn{The text has: to.} Him(self), and made it of the same length as the longer one. And He said to Joseph, "Go and work, and do what you had promised to do. And Joseph did what he had promised.\fn{One of the manuscripts inserts here: And when Jesus was with other children He repeatedly went up and sat down upon a balcony, and many of them began to do likewise, and they fell down and broke their legs and arms. And the Lord Jesus healed them all.}

XXXVIII

And it came to pass a second time, that Joseph and Mary were asked by the people that Jesus should be taught His letters in school. They did not refuse to do so; and according to the commandment of the elders, they took Him to a master to be instructed in human learning. Then the master began to teach Him in an imperious tone, saying, "Say Alpha." \fn{It should be noted that the letters of the manuscript are Greek here.} and Jesus said to him, "Tell me first what Beta \fn{The text has: Betha.} and I will tell you what Alpha is." And upon this the master got angry and struck Jesus; and no sooner had he struck Him, than he fell down dead.

And Jesus went home again to His mother. And Joseph, being afraid, called Mary to him, and said to her, "Know of a surety that my soul is sorrowful even to death on account of this child. For it is very likely that at some time or other some one will strike him in malice, and he will die." But Mary answered and said, "O man of God! Do not believe that this is possible. You may believe to a certainty that he who has sent him to be born among men will Himself guard him from all mischief, and will in His own name preserve him from evil."

XXXIX

Again the Jews asked Mary and Joseph a third time to coax Him to go to another master to learn. And Joseph and Mary, fearing the people, and the overbearing of the princes, and the threats of the priests, led Him again to school, knowing that He could learn nothing from man, because He had perfect knowledge from God only. And when Jesus had entered the school, led by the Holy Spirit, He took the book out of the hand of the master who was teaching the law, and in the sight and hearing of all the people began to read, not indeed what was written in their book; but he spoke in the Spirit of the living God, as if a stream of water were gushing forth from a living fountain, and the fountain remained always full.

And with such power He taught the people the great things of the living God, that the master himself fell to the ground and adored Him. And the heart of the people who sat and heard Him saying such things was turned into astonishment. And when Joseph heard of this, he came running to Jesus, fearing that the master himself was dead. And when the master saw him, he said to him, "You have given me not a scholar, but a master; and who can withstand his words?" Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the psalmist: "The river of God is full of water: You have prepared them corn, for so is the provision for it."

XL

After these things Joseph departed from there with Mary and Jesus to go into Capernaum by the seashore, on account of the malice of his adversaries. And when Jesus was living in Capernaum, there was in the city a man named Joseph, exceedingly rich. But he had wasted away under his infirmity, and died, and was lying dead \fn{The text has: in.} his couch. And when Jesus heard them in the city mourning, and weeping, and lamenting over the dead man, He said to Joseph, "Why do you not afford the benefit of your favor to this man, seeing that he is called by your name?" And Joseph answered him, "How have I any power or ability to afford him a benefit?"

And Jesus said to him, "Take the handkerchief which is on your head, and go and put it on the face of the dead man, and say to him, 'Christ heal you;' and immediately the dead man will be healed, and will rise from his couch." And when Joseph heard this, he went away at the command of Jesus, and ran, and entered the house of the dead man, and put the handkerchief which he was wearing on his head upon the face of him who was lying \fn{The text has again: in.} the couch, and said, "Jesus heal you." And forthwith the dead man rose from his bed, and asked who Jesus was. \fn{Here one of the manuscripts inserts a number of miracles taken from the Received gospels: the walking on the sea, the feeding of the five thousand, the healing of a blind man, the raising of Lazarus, and the raising of a certain young man.}

XLI

And they went away from Capernaum into the city which is called Bethlehem; and Joseph lived with Mary in his own house, and Jesus with them. And on a certain day Joseph called to him his first-born son James, \fn{According to the tradition preserved by Hegesippus of Palestine and Tertullian of Carthage, James and Judas were husbandmen. See Apostolic Constitutions LXVII.} and sent him into the vegetable garden to gather vegetables for the purpose of making broth. And Jesus followed His brother James into the garden; but Joseph and Mary did not

know this.

And while James was collecting the vegetables, a viper suddenly came out of a hole and struck his hand, and he began to cry out from excessive pain. And, becoming exhausted, he said, with a bitter cry, "Alas! Alas! An accursed viper has struck my hand." And Jesus, who was standing opposite to him, at the bitter cry ran up to James, and took hold of his hand; and all that He did was to blow on the hand of James, and cool it: and immediately James was healed, and the serpent died. And Joseph and Mary did not know what had been done; but at the cry of James, and the command of Jesus, they ran to the garden, and found the serpent already dead, and James quite cured.

XLII

And Joseph having come to a feast with his sons, James, Joseph, and Judah, and Simeon and his two daughters, Jesus met them, with Mary His mother, along with her sister Mary of Cleophas, whom the Lord God had given to her father Cleophas and her mother Anna, because they had offered Mary the mother of Jesus to the Lord. And she was called by the same name, Mary, for the consolation of her parents. \fn{One of the manuscripts has here: And when Joseph, worn out with old age, died and was buried with his parents, the blessed Mary lived with her nephews, or with the children of her sisters; for Anna and Emerina were sisters. Of Emerina was born Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. And as Anna, the mother of the blessed Mary, was very beautiful, when Joachim was dead she was married to Cleophas, by whom she had a second daughter. She called her Mary, and gave her to Alphæus to wife; and of her was born James the son of Alphæus, and Philip his brother. And her second husband having died, Anna was married to a third husband named Salome, by whom she had a third daughter. She called her Mary likewise, and gave her to Zebedee to wife; and of here were born James the son of Zebedee, and John the Evangelist. The same manuscript concludes: The holy Apostle and Evangelist John with his own hand wrote this little book in Hebrew, and the learned doctor Jerome rendered it from Hebrew into Latin.}

And when they had come together, Jesus sanctified and blessed them, and he was the first to begin to eat and drink; for none of them dared to eat or drink, or to sit at table, or to break bread, until He had sanctified them, and first done so. And if He happened to be absent, they used to wait until He should do this. And when He did not wish to come for refreshment, neither Joseph nor Mary, nor the sons of Joseph, His brothers, came. And, indeed, these brothers, keeping His life as a lamp before their eyes, observed Him, and feared Him. And when Jesus slept, whether by day or by night, the brightness of God shone upon Him. To whom be all praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen, amen.

APPENDIX A: THE STORY OF THE ROBBER AS TOLD BY THE AUTHOR OF MS. ARUNDEL 404

... ceperunt videre Egipti montes et ciuitates eius in equitatu suo Tunc omnes gaudentes deo gratias cum exultacione referunt. Cum ergo uenissent in unam ciuitatem que dicebatur Sothenen. et quod in ea nullus erat notus ubi hospitarentur deuenerunt ad quoddam templum deorum ipsorum quod capitolium dicitur et ingressi sunt in eum. et subito ydola illa que erant in eo quorum <numerus?> trecenta sexaginta quinque quibus singulis diebus honor deitatis a sacrilegis prebebatur dederunt locum ita ut fugiencia corruerent in cinerem. ut impleretur quod ait propheta dicens Deus stetit in synagoga deorum et cetera.

Tunc Afrodisio cum nunciatum esset uenit ad templum cum omni exercitu suo et cum omnibus amicis et comitibus suis. Sperabant autem omnes pontifices templi eum nichil dicere uelle in hiis quorum causa conuenerant. Ille autem ingressus templum et uidens verum esse quod audierat statim accessit ad Mariam et adorabat infantem quem ipsa Maria in sinu suo portabat. Et cum adorasset allocutus est uniuersum exercitum suum et omnes amicos suos et dixit Hic nisi esset dominus deorum nostrorum non se coram eo prosternerent, neque dominum suum iacentes protestarentur. Nos ergo quod deos nostros uidemus facere nisi cauentes fecerimus omnes pocius periculum indignacionis eius incurremus et uniuersi in interitum deueniemus, sicut euenit Pharaoni regi Egipciorum qui fuit in illis diebus quibus deus fecit mirabilia magna in Egipto et eduxit populum suum in manu forti.

Morati sunt ergo in Egipto usque ad obitum Herodis. Defuncto autem Herode apparuit angelus domini Ioseph in Egipto dicens. Surge et accipe puerum et matrem eius et reuertere in terram Israel. Defuncti sunt enim qui querebant animam pueri. Exurgens autem Ioseph fecit quemadmodum illi preceptum fuerat ab anglo domini

inhabitauitque in ciuitate Nazareth ut scriptum imple<re>tur dicens Quod Nazarenus vocabitur.

Mercede itaque magna Christi palme a Ihesu tradita ut est dictum de loco ubi pernoctau<er>unt campum solitudinis desertum longum latumque transire ceperunt. Frequentabant autem hunc campum duodecim latrones operis pietatis ignari qui transeuntibus nec in rebus nec in corpore pepercerunt. Consueuerunt et hii cum potentia venientibus cum in eos vim exercere non possent dicere a terrarum circumiacencium potestatibus se accepisse ut sue mercedis causa in hoc heremo homines conducerent et ab errantibus preseruarent. Qui victum nugis huiusmodi et latrociniiis conquirentes dampna quecumque poterant transeuntibus intulerunt. Solebat tamen inter eos frequenter contingere ut prop maioritate porcionum intra se in spoliolum diuisionibus disce[r]ptantes adinuicem se acerrime uolnerarent. Propter quod est tale postremo consilium editum inter illos ut lucrum unius diei uni et alterius diei alteri deberetur. et sic ex ordine successiue. sicque illorum quisque deputantes diei lucro sine complicum inquietacione gauderet. quod et sic factum est. Quadam autem die dum locis rapinarum insisterent et se aliquid execrabili ter acquisituros separent, visus est Ioseph cum beata uirgine et eorum familiis a remotis venire. Estimantes ergo mercatores illos esse, eo quod pecora cum eis gradiencia somarii uiderentur, dicebant se plurimum ab illorum facultatibus esse ditandos. Inquiunt enim illos pro nimia mole gressu leniore progredi. Respondens is cui lucrum illius debebatur diei ceteris dixit Sinite et absque spe desistite, quia nichil in huiusmodi uerba proficitis. Ego nunquam ordinem ab omnibus nobis acceptatum infregi. qua propter huius diei debito mihi lucro gaudebo. Quo accepto vitam meam deinceps meliorare desiderans nephande rei hactenus geste iam magis interesse non cupio. dolet enim uxor mea et filii tanto me tempore in uita tam nepharia perdurare. Latronibus itaque hiis et aliis conferentibus, appropinquabat beata societas. Congnita ergo adueniencium tenuitate substantie, illusus est a certis huiusmodi sibi predam usurpans. dicentes reliqui Si hoc magnum lucrum nobiscum partitus non fueris, altera uice cum se facultas optulerit. tibi talionem reddemus. Solet enim a uicinis ad inuicem uices reddi. Mouentes in eum digitos dixerunt O digne debuit a societate nostra fructuosa pro lucro tam honorifico segregari. Quod sub umbra paupertatis latuit ignorantes. Ille uero ceterorum illusionibus et irritationibus diuersis quasi ad amenciam prouocato (-us) frendens dixit. Ingentem meum in hoc sene quem dyabolus ad tantam uetustatem perduxit uindicabo dolorem. Paruuli autem mei lacticiuiis pecorum nutriuntur. Puerum uero cum uenusto sit aspectu filio meo in seruitutem redigam. Dominam quoque et familiam eius quanto cicium potero uendicioni exponam. De sene autem quid faciam ignoro. Emolumentum aliquod per eum me consecuturum non uideo. expedit ut intereat quia iam uetustate consumptus per eum panis consumitur non nisi gratis. Sic ergo latrone impio margaritas preciosissimas secum cum indignacione ducente, de illarumque dispendio cogitante. et stridens dentibus ad suum habitaculum properante. modo puerum modo matrem modo senem terribili ac uultu pretoruo respexit. Cui puer omnibus arridere non desiit horis. Senem uero a lacrimis nunquam inuenit <? cessantem> quia cura non sui corporis sed pueri et matris eum feruentissime perurgebat. Cum autem sibi complacuit per quem leones pariter et dracones mansuescunt. prout in eodem itinere euidentissimis fuerat documentis probatum. per quem etiam populus Israheliticus ab Egyptiis mansuefactis regis Egyptiorum furoribus misericorditer reducitur et potenter, latronem lupum subito in agnum mansuetum mutatum sue pietatis rore perfudit. ita etiam ut circa eos quos crudeli funere deputarat pure dileccionis ac dulcedinis viscera demonstraret. Dixit enim ad Ioseph Noli lugere karissime, confortare puerum et matrem eius et familiam. quoniam ex hac hora inantea a me non sencies nisi bonum. Consolacionibus ergo uerborum adinuicem habitis dixit Latro Me sequimini. Ego preibo et uestre recepcionis locum congruum preparabo. Ioseph uero circa uesperum cum familia sua in domo latronis recepto et in omnibus necessariis laudabiliter procurato de iussu mariti per hospitam domusque hospitum suorum summopere curam gerebat, balneum fuerat puero procuratum. In quo dum puer applaudens matrone que regebat eum resideret, et aquam balnei puerili more manibus compulsaret, factus est odor suauissimus effumigans super aquam. Domo autem tota huiusmodi odore referta apparuit in superficie aque balnei spuma niuei coloris redolens plus quam dici possit. Quam spumam dum de balneo superexiens ad terram deflueret domina domus que in balneo puerum tenebat in mundo uasculo diligenter suscipiens honorifice collocauit, attribuens que acciderant potius diuinitati quam humanitati. Mane autem sumpto prandio matrona domus cum hospitibus multiplicatis amplexibus puerum suo pectori comprimens matrem benedictam que illum genuerat asserebat. eo quod tanti dulcoris puer nunquam magis visus fuerat super terram. Commendatis itaque eis ab hospita domino reducti sunt ab hospite ad sui locum securum itineris, redditaque ibidem hospiti tam amicabilem hospicii gratiarum actione multimoda, creatori eos omnium commendauit. Sic eis ab inuicem segregatis dixit ad Ihesum Ioseph Domine estus nimius decoquit nos.

Reuocato itaque per angelum ab Egypto Ioseph ubi confractis diis gentilium, deiecto erroris fomite legis precepta

Egyptiis puris cordis desiderio id deposcentibus per Ioseph fuerant demonstrata eius sumpta secum familia viam per quam venerat remeavit ut impleretur dictum Ex Egipto vocavi filium meum. Cumque peruenissent ad locum ubi ab hospite qui altera uice illos adeo dure receperat et cum tante pietatis fomento dimiserat recesserunt cogitauerunt dicentes quod et hospitem et hospicium visitare deberent. Dimissa ergo strata publica semitam per quam cum hospite venerant intrauerunt. Contigerat autem medio tempore hospite eidem res non obliuioni tradenda. Nam quadam die dum complices sui una secum quosdam strennuos transire volentes per heremum rapiendi et occidendi causa crudeliter insilirent, illis et res et uitam prouide defendentibus maior fuit quantitas occisa latronum Ex eis etiam quidam uolneribus sic diuersis afflictis <sunt> quod denegata uidebatur recuperatio sanitatis. Inter quos omnes dum hospes predictus multo plus ceteris uolneratus quasi ad sepeliendum sue domui redderetur Facto super eum <a> muliere planctu nimio et ineffabili lamentacione visoque a latronibus quod nullo sibi poterat medicamine subueniri, extra domum uniuersi se iussu mulieris miserunt. Clausis itaque fenestris et ianuis uniuersis accessit mulier deuotissime ad medicandum quod alia uice in pueri balneo susceperat. quod per ipsum sui ipsius corporis medio tempore passiones diuersas sepe fugarat. Linitisque exinde cum fiducia magna et prece non modica mariti uolneribus uniuersis ac singulis statim et sine mora sanatis uolneribus maritus pristine redditus est sanitati Ita etiam quod nec ulla cicatrices uolnerum appar<er>ent. Intellecto igitur ab uxore quali uirtute sanatus extiterat maritus deo gratias egit Et conuocans omnes qui poterant presentes adesse rem gestam et qualiter hoc fuerat unguentum optentum interrogata mulier ex ordine recitauit. Quod uidentes latrones ceteri unguentum hoc eis uendi quantocumque carius deprecantur Rennuens autem mulier hoc dixit se donum ex dei uirtute receptum uendere non uelle. Sed tamen exinde in summis necessitatibus deuote poscentibus largiri gratis pollicita est. Ad optinendum ergo beneplacitum mulieris, ut si necessitas eueniret latronibus de huiusmodi medicamine partiretur, quisque illorum sibi tam furienti studio seruiebat ut quidcumque preciosi carpere posset oris singulis ad eius domicilium deportaret. Propter quod quam plus (plus quam) credi possit maritus et uxor extremo ditati iam magis non nisi bonis operibus inherere studebant. soli deo et puero quem hospitati fuerant, a quo etiam processerat hoc unguentum gratias et de corpore et de acquisitis omnibus referentes. Locupletatis eis bonis plurimis ut est dictum, aggreditur uisitandi gratia domum illorum Ioseph labore multiplici fatigatus. Quem cum familia cum maritus adesse uideret ingenti repletus gaudio aduocans festinus uxorem occurrentes aduenientibus letissimo eos aspectu suscipiunt, asserentes aduenisse totius eorum salutis auctorem. Benignissima ergo salutatione peracta dum adinuicem collacionibus fruerentur hospes quidcumque sibi post illorum recessum sibi acciderant enarrauit, referens qualiter sanatus et de huiusmodi medicamento ditatus. Super quibus omnibus cum domino gratis reddidissent leti intendere refectioni ceperunt. Variis ergo ferculis sumptis quolibet potus genere multiplicato iocunditate omnimoda que in domino licuit habitaque frequenti requiescendi gratia lectisterniis se committunt. Quorum commoditatibus sollicita domus familia intendebat. Mane autem facto sumpto prandio dum ibidem non uellent diucius permorari concedente illos hospite quam cum (tum) matrona cum marito de illorum tam de repentino recessu doluerunt neque(-it) dici.

Ipsa uero matrona illis viam per quam secure progredierentur et victualia inuenirent uenalia demonstrauit. Sic ipsa regrediens ab illis domino commendata in tanto bonis operibus insudauit quod postmodum penes dominum in cruce suspensus omnium ueniam suorum obtinere meruit peccatorum. Ad quos nos perducere dignetur qui uiuit et regnat per omnia secula seculorum. Amen.

[ANF, VIII, 368-383; MRJ ,121-126]

-----XXV: The Gospel of the Birth of Mary-----

Introduction

The Gospel of the Birth of Mary is an apocryphal book containing a narrative of the birth of Mary, Christ's mother, to Joachim and Anne; her life in the temple of Jerusalem from the age of 3-12 years; her betrothal to Joseph; the Annunciation; and the virgin birth of Christ. Mary is represented as being fourteen years of age before she was espoused to Joseph, who afterwards went into the Galilee to take her as his wife. The birth of Jesus is simply said to have occurred at Bethlehem *as the holy Evangelists have taught*, and the book concludes with a doxology to the Trinity.

In some editions, a preface is found attached to it, in which it is attributed to Jerome of Strido (d.420), who is stated to have composed it after a Hebrew original.

The Gospel of the Birth of Mary acquired great celebrity from having been transferred almost entirely into the Historia Lombardica (the

Golden Legend; or *Legenda Aurea; Historia Lombardica*) of James de Voragine (towards the end of the 13th century); so it must have come into existence before that compilation. On the other hand, James uses the Latin Vulgate version of the Received New Testament (finished first by Jerome of Strido in 404), and therefore wrote after that compilation was published. Many critics, however, believe that it is no more than an amplification of the earlier chapters of the Infancy Gospel of Matthew in more elegant Latin, and with all the detail blurred and smoothed down. Indeed, the original is in Latin, and is not a direct translation from the Greek.

Judging from the style it would seem to be less a translation than a Latin recension of the popular story respecting the birth and childhood of Mary; such a close involvement with its society is also indicated by its great popularity during the Middle Ages with mediaeval poets and artisans. This leads us to the conclusion that it is a product of the Middle Ages after the time of the issue of the Infancy Gospel of Matthew (8th or 9th century), but prior to the 13th.

The critical edition of the book is by Tischendorf (*Evangelia Apocrypha*, Leipzig, 1876, 113-121).

[ANT, 79-80; ODC, 868; ANF, 352; TAG,---]

I

The blessed and glorious ever-virgin Mary, sprung from the royal stock and family of David, born in the city of Nazareth, was brought up at Jerusalem in the temple of the Lord. Her father was named Joachim, and her mother Anna. Her father's house was from Galilee and the city of Nazareth, but her mother's family from Bethlehem. Their life was guileless and right before the Lord, and irreproachable and pious before men. For they divided all their substance into three parts. One part they spent upon the temple and the temple servants; another they distributed to strangers and the poor; the third they reserved for themselves and the necessities of their family.

Thus, dear to God, kind to men, for about twenty years they lived in their own house, a chaste married life, without having any children. Nevertheless they vowed that, should the Lord happen to give them offspring, they would deliver it to the service of the Lord; on which account also they used to visit the temple of the Lord at each of the feasts during the year.

II

And it came to pass that the festival of the dedication was at hand; wherefore also Joachim went up to Jerusalem with some men of his own tribe. Now at that time Issachar\fn{The spelling in the text is that in the Hebrew, the Samaritan Codex, the targums, and the Received Text. There is no Issachar in the list of high priests.} was high priest there. And when he saw Joachim with his offering among his other fellow citizens, he despised him, and spurned his gifts, asking why he, who had no offspring, presumed to stand among those who had; saying that his gifts could not by any means be acceptable to God, since He had deemed him unworthy of offspring: for the Scripture said, "Cursed is every one who has not begot a male or a female in Israel."fn{This statement does not occur in Scripture in so many words; but sterility was looked upon as a Divine punishment.} He said, therefore, that he ought to be freed from this curse by the begetting of children; and then, and then only, that he should come into the presence of the Lord with his offerings. And Joachim, covered with shame from this reproach that was thrown in his teeth, retired to the shepherds, who were in their pastures with their flocks; nor would he return home, lest perchance he might be branded with the same reproach by those of his own tribe, who were there at the time, and had heard this from the priest.

III

Now, when he had been there for some time, on a certain day when he was alone, an angel of the Lord stood by him in a great light. And when he was disturbed at his appearance, the angel who had appeared to him restrained his fear, saying,

"Fear not, Joachim, nor be disturbed by my appearance; for I am the angel of the Lord, sent by Him to you to tell you that your prayers have been heard, and that your charitable deeds have gone up into His presence. For He has seen your shame, and has heard the reproach of unfruitfulness which has been unjustly brought against you. For God is the avenger of sin, not of nature: and, therefore, when He shuts up the womb of any one, He does so that He may miraculously open it again; so that that which is born may be acknowledged to be not of lust, but

of the gift of God. For was it not the case that the first mother of your nation—Sarah—was barren up to her eightieth year? ^{\fn{According to the Old Testament account, Sarah was ninety years old.}} And, nevertheless, in extreme old age she brought forth Isaac, to whom the promise was renewed of the blessing of all nations. Rachel also, so favored of the Lord, and so beloved by holy Jacob, was long barren; and yet she brought forth Joseph, who was not only the lord of Egypt, but the deliverer of many nations who were ready to perish of hunger. Who among the judges was either stronger than Samson, or more holy than Samuel? And yet the mothers of both were barren.

“If, therefore, the reasonableness of my words does not persuade you, believe in fact that conceptions very late in life, and births in the case of women that have been barren, are usually attended with something wonderful. Accordingly your wife Anna will bring forth a daughter to you, and you shall call her name Mary. She shall be, as you have vowed, consecrated to the Lord from her infancy, and she shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from her mother’s womb. She shall neither eat nor drink any unclean thing, nor shall she spend her life among the crowds of the people without, but in the temple of the Lord, that it may not be possible either to say, or so much as to suspect, any evil concerning her. Therefore, when she has grown up, just as she herself shall be miraculously born of a barren woman, so in an incomparable manner she, a virgin, shall bring forth the Son of the Most High, who shall be called Jesus, and who, according to the etymology of His name, shall be the Savior of all nations.

“And this shall be the sign to you of those things which I announce. When you shall come to the Golden gate in Jerusalem, you shall there meet Anna your wife, who, lately anxious from the delay of your return, will then rejoice at the sight of you.”

Having thus spoken, the angel departed from him.

IV

Thereafter he appeared to Anna his wife, saying, “Fear not, Anna, nor think that it is a phantom which you see. For I am that angel who has presented your prayers and alms before God; and now have I been sent to you to announce to you that you shall bring forth a daughter, who shall be called Mary, and who shall be blessed above all women. She, full of the favor of the Lord even from her birth, shall remain three years in her father’s house until she be weaned.

“Thereafter, being delivered to the service of the Lord, she shall not depart from the temple until she reach the years of discretion. There, in fine, serving God day and night in fastings and prayers, she shall abstain from every unclean thing. She shall never know man, but alone, without example, immaculate, uncorrupted, without intercourse with man, she, a virgin, shall bring forth a son. She, His handmaiden, shall bring for the Lord—both in grace, and in name, and in work, the Savior of the world. Wherefore arise, and go up to Jerusalem; and when you shall come to the gate which, because it is plaited with gold, is called Golden, there, for a sign, you shall meet your husband, for whose safety you have been anxious. And when these things shall have so happened, know that what I announce shall without doubt be fulfilled.”

V

Therefore, as the angel had commanded, both of them setting out from the place where they were, went up to Jerusalem; and when they had come to the place pointed out by the angel’s prophecy, there they met each other. Then, rejoicing at seeing each other, and secure in the certainty of the promised offspring, they gave the thanks due to the Lord, who exalts the humble. And so, having worshipped the Lord, they returned home, and awaited in certainty and in gladness the divine promise. Anna therefore conceived, and brought forth a daughter; and according to the command of the angel, her parents called her name Mary.

VI

And when the circle of three years had rolled round, and the time of her weaning was fulfilled, they brought the virgin to the temple of the Lord with offerings.

Now there were round the temple, according to the fifteen Psalms of Degrees, ^{\fn{Psalms 120-134.}} fifteen steps going up for, on account of the temple having been built on a mountain, the altar of burnt-offering, which stood outside, could not be reached except by steps. ^{\fn{Actually, the fifteen steps led from the court of the women to that of the men.}} On one of these, then, her parents placed the little girl, the blessed virgin Mary.

And when they were putting off the clothes which they had worn on the journey, and were putting on, as was usual, others that were neater and cleaner, the virgin of the Lord went up all the steps, one after the other, without the help of any one leading her or lifting her, in such a manner that, in this respect at least, you would think that she had already attained full age. For already the Lord in the infancy of His virgin wrought a great thing, and by the indication of this miracle foreshadowed how great she was to be. Therefore, a sacrifice having been offered according to the custom of the law, and their vow being perfected, they left the virgin within the enclosures of the temple, there to be educated with the other virgins, and themselves returned home.

VII

But the virgin of the Lord advanced in age and in virtues; and though in the words of the Psalmist, her father and mother had forsaken her, the Lord took her up. ^{\fn{Psalm 27:10.}} For daily was she visited by angels, daily did she enjoy a divine vision, which preserved her from all evil, and made her to abound in all good. And so she reached her fourteenth year; and not only were the wicked unable to charge her with anything worthy of reproach, but all the good, who knew her life and conversion, judged her to be worthy of admiration.

Then the high priest publicly announced that the virgins who were publicly settled in the temple, and had reached this time of life, should return home and get married, according to the custom of the nation and the ripeness of their years. The others readily obeyed this command; but Mary alone, the virgin of the Lord, answered that she could not do this, saying both that her parents had devoted her to the service of the Lord, and that, moreover, she herself had made to the Lord a vow of virginity, which she would never violate by any intercourse with man.

And the high priest, being placed in great perplexity of mind, seeing that neither did he think that the vow should be broken contrary to the Scripture, which says, "Vow and pay," nor did he dare to introduce a custom unknown to the nation, gave order that at the festival, which was at hand, all the chief persons from Jerusalem and the neighborhood should be present, in order that from their advice he might know what was to be done in so doubtful a case. And when this took place, they resolved unanimously that the Lord should be consulted upon this matter. And when they all bowed themselves in prayer, the high priest went to consult God in the usual way.

Nor had they long to wait. In the hearing of all a voice issued from the oracle and from the mercy-seat, that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, a man should be sought out to whom the virgin ought to be entrusted and espoused. For it is clear that Isaiah says, "A rod shall come forth from the root of Jesse, and a flower shall ascend from his root; and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of wisdom and pity; and he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord."

According to this prophecy, therefore, he predicted that all of the house and family of David, that were unmarried and fit for marriage should bring their ^{\fn{The text has: there.}} rods to the altar; and the he whose rod after it was brought should produce a flower, and upon the end of whose rod the Spirit of the Lord should settle in the form of a dove, was the man to whom the virgin ought to be entrusted and espoused.

VIII

Now there was among the rest Joseph, of the house and family of David, a man of great age: and when all brought their ^{\fn{Again the text has: there.}} rods, according to the order, he alone withheld his. Wherefore, when nothing in conformity with the divine voice appeared, the high priest thought it necessary to consult God a second time; and He answered, that of those who had been designated, he alone to whom the virgin ought to be espoused had not brought his rod. Joseph, therefore, was found out. For when he had brought his rod, and the dove came

from heaven and settled upon the top of it, it clearly appeared to all that he was the man to whom the virgin should be espoused.

Therefore, the usual ceremonies of betrothal having been gone through, he went back to the city of Bethlehem to put his house in order, and to procure things necessary for the marriage. But Mary, the virgin of the Lord, with seven other virgins of her own age, and who had been weaned at the same time, whom she had received from the priest, returned to the house of her parents in Galilee.

IX

And in those days, that is, at the time of her first coming into Galilee, the angel Gabriel was sent to her by God, to announce to her the conception of the Lord, and to explain to her the manner and order of the conception. Accordingly, going in, he filled the chamber where she was with a great light; and most courteously saluting her, he said: "Hail, Mary! O virgin highly favored by the Lord, virgin full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you above all women, blessed above all men that have been hitherto born." And the virgin, who was already well acquainted with angelic faces, and was not unused to the light from heaven, was neither terrified by the vision of the angel, nor astonished at the greatness of the light, but only perplexed by his words; and she began to consider of what nature a salutation so unusual could be, or what it could portend, or what end it could have.

And the angel, divinely inspired, taking up this thought, said: *\fn{The text has: says.}* "Fear not, Mary, as if anything contrary to your chastity were hid under this salutation. For in choosing chastity, you have found favor with the Lord; and therefore you, a virgin, shall conceive without sin, and shall bring forth a son. He shall be great, because He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth; and He shall be called the Son of the Most High, because He who is born on earth in humiliation, reigns in heaven in exaltation; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end; forasmuch as He is King of kings and Lord of lords, and His throne is from everlasting to everlasting."

The virgin did not doubt these words of the angel; but wishing to know the manner of it, she answered, "How can that come to pass? For while, according to my view, I never know man, how can I bring forth without the addition of man's seed?" To this the angel said: *\fn{The text again has: says.}* "Do not think, Mary, that you shall conceive in the manner of mankind. For without any intercourse with man, you, a virgin, will conceive; you, a virgin, will bring forth; you, a virgin, will nurse. For the Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you, without any of the heaths of lust; and therefore that which shall be born of you shall alone be holy, because it alone, being conceived and born without sin, shall be called the Son of God." Then Mary stretched forth her hands, and raised her eyes to heaven, and said, "Behold the hand-maiden of the Lord, for I am not worthy of the name of lady; let it be to me according to your word."

It will be long, and perhaps to some even tedious, if we insert in this little work every thing which we read of as having preceded or followed the Lord's nativity: wherefore, omitting those things which have been more fully written in the Gospel, let us come to those which are held to be less worthy of being narrated. *\fn{This passage has evidently been inserted into the text by its author. H}*

X

Joseph therefore came from Judea into Galilee, intending to marry the virgin who had been betrothed to him; for already three months had elapsed, and it was the beginning of the fourth since she had been betrothed to him. In the meantime, it was evident from her shape that she was pregnant, nor could she conceal this from Joseph. For in consequence of his being betrothed to her, coming to her more freely and speaking to her more familiarly, he found out that she was with child. He began then to be in great doubt and perplexity, because he did not know what was best for him to do. For, being a just man, he was not willing to expose her; nor, being a pious man, to injure her fair fame by a suspicion of fornication. He came to the conclusion, therefore, privately to dissolve their contract, and to send her away secretly.

And while he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear; that is, do not have any suspicion of fornication in the virgin, or think any evil of her; and do not fear to take her as your wife. For that which is begotten in her, and which now vexes your soul, is the work not of man, but of the Holy Spirit. For she alone of all virgins shall bring forth the Son of God, and you shall call His name Jesus, that is, Savior; for He shall save His people from their sins."

Therefore Joseph, according the command of the angel, took the virgin as his wife; nevertheless he knew her not, but took care of her, and kept her in chastity. And now the ninth month from her conception was at hand, when Joseph, taking with him his wife along with what things he needed, went to Bethlehem, the city from which he came. And it came to pass, while they were there, that her days were fulfilled that she should bring forth; and she brought forth her first-born son, as the holy evangelists have shown, our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Son^{fn}{Thus in the original;} and the Holy Ghost lives and reigns God from everlasting to everlasting.

-----XXVI: The Armenian Infancy Gospel-----

Introduction (English)

The only accessible edition of the Armenian Infancy Gospel is a translation into French by Dom Peeters (The Armenian Infancy Gospel, Evangelies Apocryphes II, 1914, 69-286). It is a very long work, occupying over 200 pages of print; and though ultimately dependent on the infancy gospels of James and Thomas, has enormously amplified the data of both. (The magi are here royal brothers: Melqon rules over Persia, Balthasar over India, and Gaspar over Arabia.) The first edition of the work was by Daietsi (Venice, 1898), based on two manu-scripts from the Mechitartist library in Venice; and there are other manuscripts in Vienna, and in the monastery at Holy Edschmiadsin, in Armenia.

The Armenian Infancy Gospel was translated from Syriac, but the date of the Syriac book form is open to question. An infancy gospel was brought into Armenia by Nestorian missionaries in 590AD; but this cannot be the present text (which does not apparently exhibit Nestorian tendencies: H). On the other and, an Armenian writer of the 12th century mentions a book of the infancy of Jesus Christ which may be ours. The diffuseness of the expansions reminds one of the Armenian version of IV Esdras which in James' opinion takes unwarrantable liberties with the text.

Dom Peeters has drawn a number of conclusions about the textual traditions and interrelationships inherent between the various tractates of the Infancy Literature, which he believes ultimately descends from a Syriac original. I believe the following is Peeter's reasoning:

1. All the apocryphal stories about the infancy of Jesus which have thus far reached us come from the same common source: a book which was a mixture of old legends--such as the episode of Jesus in school, which was read by Irenaeus in a Gnostic book--and new fictions; and which describes (in a dramatized and circumstantial fashion) some episodes of Christ's early youth after his return from Egypt.
2. This book, dating from perhaps the 5th century, came to its mature form through a variety of Syriac apocrypha which, from redaction to redaction, became the Infancy Gospel of Thomas.
3. This mature Syriac book was used to create at least one (if not many) Greek versions: and this resulted—in addition to the present abridged Greek texts—in the present Latin, Georgian and Slavonic versions.
4. This mature Syriac book was also taken as a pattern by the Infancy Gospel of Matthew.
5. The common source—the mix of old legends and new fictions described under (1)—and the mature Syriac book, were also combined for the purpose of producing a continuous story of the infancy of Jesus up to his twelfth year. Of these narratives, some began with Jesus' birth, others went back to the birth of His mother (e.g., the Latin legends of Mary's birth and Jesus' infancy, De Ortu Mariae and De Infantia Salvatoris).
6. A narrative of this second type—one that went back to Mary's birth—fell into the hands of a Syriac redactor, who drew from it a long story (really, a novel) in which the original plan of the infancy narrative was buried under lengthy developments and was undoubtedly extended by the addition of some new episodes.
7. This is the infancy narrative brought into Armenian towards the end of the 6th century by Nestorian missionaries, and at first accepted there.
8. Its use was prohibited, however, soon after it was translated into Armenian; and it remained in obscurity until around the 10th century; when, having reappeared, it was found to have been adapted to fit the tastes of the prevailing popular culture, and seems to have been distributed quite widely, especially among Armenian Christians living in Persia.

9. Finally, the latest branch of the tradition to be grafted upon the original narratives—that branch whose stories begin with Jesus' birth—came into being at the earliest by the end of the 6th century. A compiler abridged one of these (Syriac) narratives. He interpolated into the original narrative a series of miracles about the Virgin, arranged or made up according to models of a very early date. This work was translated into Arabic; and its Syriac counterpart is known to have been included in a broad poem about the virgin (apparently the *Vita Rhythmica* is meant: H). Similarly, there was an attempt to harmonize the accounts of the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* to the *Arabic Infancy Gospel*; and it was a somewhat incorrect and misrepresented manuscript of this Arabic version which had the honor of representing the *Armenian Infancy Gospel* before the eyes of critics for a long time.

In what follows, I have printed the Peeters' French translation first, since it was made from the original Armenian and other languages, and my English version is a step removed from the original manuscripts, being but a translation of *his* translation, and one made by a free Internet French translation software at that. Its sole claim to the attention of the reader is that it is the first of its kind; but, of course, the author hopes that an English scholar skilled in both English and Armenian will one day be moved to render this noteworthy document into what is rapidly becoming the *lingua franca* of world intercommunication.

[Peeters also printed the following information in his Introduction which applied specifically to the *Armenian Infancy Gospel*, and was entitled: *II. Rédaction Arménienne*. It is as follows, complete with its footnotes.]

Introduction (French)

Elle a été publiée intégralement pour la première fois par le R. P. Isaïe Daïetsi, \fn{ [XXX₁] *Livres apocryphes du Nouveau Testament* (Venise, 1898; dans [XXX₂] = *Trésor de littérature arménienne, ancienne et moderne*, t. II), p. 1-126. C'est sans doute d'après ce manuscrit que M. F. Conybeare a traduit les six premiers chapitres de notre apocryphe (*Protevanqelium Jacobi from an Armenain Manuscript in the library of the Mechitarists in Venice* dans *American Journal of Theology*, t. I (1897), p. 424-42 [so the text: H]. Je ne connais malheureusement cette traduction que par l'extrait qu'en a donné M. E. Amann (*Le Protévangile de Jacques et ses remaniements latins*, Paris, 1910, p. 71-72; cf. p. 172). } d'après une copie faite en 1824, \fn{ De la main du P. G. Esaïean et datée de 1824. C'est le manuscrit 298 de la Bibliothèque des PP. Mékhitharistes de Saint-Lazare à Venise. } sur une autre copie antérieure de trois ans. Celle-ci avait été prise par un certain Parounag d'Eznig, à un vieux manuscrit, qui, paraît-il, fut peu après livré aux flammes comme un mauvais livre, par un jeune clerc attaché au service du patriarche arménien d'Adrinople. \fn{ Note du P. Esaïean. } On peut déjà conclure de cet autodafé que notre apocryphe formait un volume à part et qu'il ne payait pas de mine.

Point de titre au document. L'éditeur lui en a fait un avec une citation de Sargis Šnorhali qui, au 12th siècle, mentionne dans son commentaire des épîtres catholiques, un apocryphe intitulé le *Livre de l'Enfance du Christ*.

Le texte est divisé en 28 chapitres. Les sept premiers correspondent, pour le sujet et la marche générale du récit, aux chapitres I,4-XVI du *Protévangile* (II-XIII du *pseudo-Matthieu*) et, partant, à la première partie de l'histoire syriaque de la Vierge (S), dont le canevas est à peu près identique. Jamais cependant la ressemblance n'est complète. L'arménien est une rédaction ou, si l'on veut, une amplification, distincte, au moins par ses longueurs, de tout ce que l'on connaît. Il est à noter qu'elle ne doit rien à la version arménienne du *Protévangile*, \fn{ Éditée aussi par le P. Daïetsi, dans ce même volume, p. 250-64. } qui se rattache directement à la tradition grecque. Cela seul prouve ou, du moins, donne à penser que le *Livre de l'Enfance* n'a pas été composé en arménien, par un compilateur qui assemblait des pièces déjà traduites.

A partir du chapitre VIII, le récit prend contact avec l'*Évangile syro-arabe de l'Enfance*: contact libre et intermittent. Indiquons brièvement les lignes principales de la narration, en mettant en regard les passages correspondants du texte arabe. \fn{ In what follows, the information in the left hand column describes the Armenian redaction, that on the right the Arabic. I have supplied the Arabic numbering; but the information is otherwise just as Peeters lays it out on pages xxxi-xxxiii of his book. H }

1. VIII,1-8. Nativité.
2. VIII,9-XI,3. Ève vient saluer le Rédempteur.
3. IX,3 (fin)-7. Salomé.
4. X. Adoration des bergers.
5. XI. Arrivée des Mages.
6. XII. Présentation de Jésus au Temple.
7. XIII. Massacre des Innocents.
8. XIV. Meurtre de Zacharie.
9. XV,1. Fuite en Égypte.

1. II.
3. II (fin)-III.
4. IV.
5. VII.
6. VI.
8. Cf. S₁ (p. 10, note au ch. IX).
9. Cf. IX.

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| 10. XV,2. Séjour à Hébron. | |
| 11. XV,3. Arrivé en Égypte. | 11. Cf. X,1. |
| 12. XV,4. Séjour au Caire. | |
| 13. XV,5. Jésus se laisse glisser sur un rayon de soleil. | |
| 14. XV,6-22. Destruction du temple des idoles. | 14. Cf. X,2. |
| 15. XV,23-26. La Sainte Famille chez Éléazar. | 15. Cf. S (note au ch. XII, p. 14) |
| 16. XV,27. Reproches de Jésus à Marie | 16. Cf. XII. |
| 17. XV,28. Retour au pays. | 17. XXXVI. |
| 18. XVI,1-4. Destruction du temple de la ville des Arabes. | |
| 19. XVI,5-6. Jésus et ses petits compagnons. | |
| 20. XVI,7-15. L'enfant (Abia) tombé du haut d'une maison | 20. XLIV. |
| 21. XVII,1. Destruction du temple de Sahaprau. | |
| 22. XVII,2. L'eau changée en sang. | |
| 23. XVII,3-14. L'enfant frappé d'insolation et ressuscité par Jésus. | |
| 24. XVIII,1. Les enfants de la ville de Madiam veulent chasser Jésus | 24. Cf. XL,1. |
| 25. XVIII,2. Les figurines d'argile. | 25. XXXVI. |
| 26. XVIII,3-4. La poussière changée en moucheron. | |
| 27. XVIII,5-6. Inquiétudes de Marie et de Joseph. | |
| 28. XIX,1-3. Joseph chez le roi Bar-jésus. | |
| 29. XIX,4. Jésus confié à Gamaliel. | |
| 30. XX,1-6. Jésus à l'école de Gamaliel. | 30. XLVIII. |
| 31. XX,7. Jésus, apprenti de Saint Joseph. | 31. Cf. XXXVIII. |
| 32. XX,8-10. Le trône rajusté. | 32. XXXIX. |
| 33. XX,11-15. Construction d'un palais. | |
| 34. XXI. Jésus chez Israël le teinturier de Tibériade. | 34. XXXVII. |
| 35. XXII,1. Jésus et les enfants d'Armathie. | |
| 36. XXII,2. Un rocher s'incline sur l'ordre de Jésus. | |
| 37. XXII,3. L'enfant aveuglé et guéri par Jésus. | |
| 38. XXII,4-13. Le noyé (Jonathan) ressuscité par Jésus. | |
| 39. XXIII,1-2. Les cruches brisées. | |
| 40. XXIII,3. Un arbre se courbe à la parole de Jésus. | |
| 41. XXIII,4. Guérison d'un jeune lépreux. | |
| 42. XXIV. Le lépreux d'Emmaüs. | |
| 43. XXV,1. La Sainte Famille à Nazareth. | |
| 44. XXV,2-8. Arbitrage de Jésus entre deux frères (Michée et Malachie). | |
| 45. XXVI. Guérison de Hiram le syrien. | |
| 46. XXVII. Guérison de Balthasar le médecin. | |
| 47. XXVIII. Arbitrage de Jésus entre deux soldats. | |

Tes est, en abrégé, le contenu de ce document que nous appelons la rédaction A.

Le R. P. Daïetsi en a publié une seconde, d'après un autre manuscrit de la bibliothèque de San-Lazzaro, sans indication d'âge ni de provenance.\fn{Tom. cit., p. 127-235.} On le croirait plus ancien, à ce signe tout au moins qu'il est fort mutilé.

Les rubriques des chapitres, indiquées ou suppléées après coup au bas des pages,\fn{Daïetsi, p. [XXX₃].} ne correspondent exactement aux sous-titres de A, ni pour le nombre, ni pour la place, ni pour l'énoncé. Selon cette division, le texte commence à la fin du ch. XI (=A, XI,23) et s'interrompt, pour la dernière fois, au milieu du ch. XXVII (=A, XV,5 fin). Il sera désigné ici par le sigle B.

Entre A et B, la principale différence est que le second est en général plus long et plus diffus. Outre ces innombrables variantes rédactionnelles répandues à travers tout le récit, B insère, au début du ch. XXI (=A, XVIII,1), une histoire de temple anéanti miraculeusement, qui est une répétition de l'épisode déjà raconté au ch. XVIII (=A, XVI,1-4).

Vers la fin du même chapitre, il intercale un double ou une nouvelle variation du miracle de l'enfant (ici: Saül) ressuscité par Jésus, qu'on accusait de l'avoir fait périr. Enfin, au bout du ch. XXII (=A, XX,15), trois épisodes additionnels: délivrance d'un jeune possédé; résurrection de l'enfant précipité du haut d'une tour (réplique de B, ch. XIX = A, XVI,7-15, mais avec une autre mise en scène, et cette fois le ressuscité s'appelle Zénon, comme dans la légende syro-arabe); guérison d'un jeune paralytique.

Un troisième exemplaire, don de l'archimandrite Iusik, se trouve à la bibliothèque du couvent d'Edšmiadsin. Il est daté de l'an 1666. M. marr l'a décrit et analysé,\fn{[XXX₄], t. VI (1891), p. 135-145. Reproduit dans la revue [XXX₅], t. VI (1892), p. 232-235.} en le comparant à une notice du P. Zarbhanélean, qui n'est au fond qu'une liste des chapitres de la rédaction A.\fn{[XXX₆]. *Catalogue des anciennes traductions arméniennes* (Venise, 1889), p. 197-198.}

A en juger par les extraits donnés par M. Marr, les dix-neuf chapitres du manuscrit d'Edšmiadsin couvrent assez exactement les ch. VII-XXVIII du texte A. Quelques-unes de ces citations se retrouvent à peu près littéralement dans le texte imprimé. D'autres, notamment les phrases finales du dernier chapitre, ont un tour visiblement abrégé. Lors quelques variantes que nous avons pu extraire de l'analyse de M. Marr sont désignées par la lettre E.

La bibliothèque des RR. PP. Mékhitharistes de Vienne possède également une copie de notre apocryphe. Elle est antérieure à l'année 1710 et pourrait remonter au 16th siècle.\fn{Manuscrit 186; cf. J. Dashian, *Catalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Mechitharisten-Bibliothek zu Wien* (Vienne, 1895), partie arménienne, p. 502-504.} Ce qu'elle paraît avoir de plus original, c'est qu'une main récente y a écrit à la première page, en guise de titre, le néologisme [XXX₇]: *Évangile de l'Enfance*, ou plus littéralement: « *Évangile Enfant* », comme disait Chardin.\fn{Voyez rédaction arménienne, ch. XX,3; p. 210, note 20.} Il ressort de là que cette dénomination était usitée, mais qu'elle n'a pénétré que fort tardivement dans les manuscrits.

Du texte lui-même, tout ce que nous savons, c'est qu'il était divisé en 26 chapitres dont les intitulés ou les rubriques initiales correspondent assez bien à ceux de la rédaction A, chapitres I, III-XXII, XXIV-XXVIII. \fn{Cette conformité s'étend aux *incipit* des chapitres. Le x^a notamment débute, à quelques mots près, par la même phrase boiteuse que le ch. X de la rédaction A. (Voyez p. 129-130).} Les deux manuscrits se terminent exactement sur la même phrase.

Enfin, nous ne pouvons manquer de rapporter ici, à titre de donnée chronologique, que l'ermitage de Ktoutz (dans l'île d'Agthamar, lac de Van) posséderait ou du moins a possédé une copie du *Livre de l'Enfance* faite en l'année arménienne 796 (a. D. 1347), sous le règne de *Constantin, fils de Baudouin*.\fn{Zarbhanélean, t. cit., p. 197.} Constantin II de Negir, protecteur et soutien du catholicos latinisant Mekhithar de Sis, n'incarnait pas l'idée nationale des Arméniens groupés autour des sièges dissidents d'Agthamar et d'Albanie. Cette mention de son règne semblerait indiquer que le manuscrit de Ktoutz provenait de l'Arméno-Cilicie.

Outre ces exemplaires complets qui montrent la légende dans son ensemble originel ou avec tous ses accroissements, les « *Miscellanées* », célèbres chez les Arméniens sous le nom de [XXX₈], en contiennent fréquemment des épisodes isolés. Tels sont, pour nous en tenir aux textes actuellement accessibles, les « fragments » publiés par le P. Daïetsi sous les numéros 4-8.

1. P. 267-77. « *Sur le message de l'ange et l'annonce de la grossesse de la sainte Vierge Marie, Mère de Dieu* ». Ce récit reproduit, en l'abrégeant, celui de A, ch. V,1-10; XI,16-25. Manuscrit daté de l'an 1700. Ce fragment est désigné par la lettre N.

2. P. 278-284. (*Sur*) *l'arrivée des Mages venus pour adorer le Christ*. Début du texte: « *En l'année quarante-troisième d'Auguste, empereur des Romains, d'Abgar <roi> des Arméniens et des Syriens la vingt et unième, d'Hérode, roi des Juifs, la trente-neuvième, Notre-Seigneur Jésus le Messie naquit à Bethléem de Judée, et voici que les Mages ...* » Suit un abrégé de A, ch. XI,1-9, 12-21, 25. Manuscrit de date incertaine, antérieur à 1700.

3. P. 284-295. *Comment les rois Mages vinrent à Jérusalem avec leurs armées*. Le récit commence aux mots: *Voici que les Mages ...* et reproduit, sauf quelques variantes et omissions, A, XI,1-20, 22-25. Manuscrit provenant

du couvent d'Ardšak dans le Vaspourakan. Date inconnue.

4. P. 296-306. *Histoire de l'arrivée des rois mages, venus pour adorer le roi nouveau-né*. Même début que M₂. Le texte est celui de A, ch. XI,1-25, avec plusieurs leçons mieux conservées. Deux manuscrits, dont l'un daté de l'an 1538.

Pour suppléer au silence de la rédaction B, mutilée en cet endroit, nous avons extrait les variantes significatives de ces trois fragments, désignés respectivement par les sigles M₁, M₂ et M₃.

5. P. 306-312: *Histoire de la fuite du Seigneur en Égypte pour se soustraire à Hérode* = B, ch. XVI; A, ch. XVI,2, 3 (abrégé), 4-5 (en omettant le miracle des rayons de soleil), 6-23 (vers le milieu). Manuscrit daté de l'an 1538; le même qui contient le fragment M₃.
Il n'aurait peut-être pas été superflu d'en noter aussi les variantes. Nous en relevons donc ici les plus notables, après celles qui ressortent du sommaire ci-dessus. Ch. XV,3: « ... Dans la plaine de Tanis, ville qui est appelée Poulpas » (ou Boulbas, [XXX₉]). 4: « Ils arrivèrent sur le territoire d'Égypte, en une ville qui s'appelle Caire ... » (Nouvelle correction au non-sens provenant de la méprise initiale: [XXX₁₀] = Égypte, au lieu de ville de Mesren.) — § 6: A l'entrée de la porte, à chacune des issues de la ville, les rois et les sages avaient, de chaque côté, construit d'immenses choses curieuses ([XXX₁₁]), qui frappaient les regards de quiconque entrait ou sortait. Et chaque fois que ... quelque chose allait arriver dans la ville. Sur les portes du rempart, étaient établis d'autres appareils ingénieux qu'avait (fait) fabriquer autrefois le roi Alexandre. Deux aigles ... » }

De ces matériaux à l'état brut, et de tous ceux qui doivent encore se cacher ailleurs, sera-t-il possible, à supposer qu'on le tente jamais, de tirer une édition critique satisfaisante? Cela n'est pas sûr et encore moins pourrait-on dire ce que sera cette édition.

Tout ce que l'on entrevoit, en gros, c'est qu'aucun des textes actuels ne représente exactement l'original. Si B a été presque partout allongé et délayé, A semble avoir été raccourci ou mutilé. Il y manque des bouts de phrases, des phrases entières, voire de courts passages, qui sont nécessaires à la trame du récit et qui se retrouvent dans B. Outre ces leçons authentiquées par le contexte, B a conservé de longs épisodes, des redites ou des développements osieux, qui ont pu être remaniés, sans doute, mais non ajoutés de toutes pièces, car on y reconnaît, jusque sous les altérations suspectes, le même signe originel qui dénonce si clairement la provenance du texte arménien.

Ce signe, c'est la langue dans laquelle tout le document est écrit, langue hésitante et incorrecte d'un traducteur qui avance, ligne par ligne, dans un texte obscur et qui, lorsqu'il ne parvient pas à nouer les idées, enfile des mots. Nous ne pouvons songer à entrer ici dans le détail des preuves qui montrent que le *Livre arménien de l'Enfance*, tel à peu près qu'il se lit aujourd'hui, avec sa narration traînante, son style chargé de circonlocutions et de pléonasmes, ses harangues, ses dialogues, ses monologues et son verbiage monotone, est une version ou, tout au plus, une paraphrase du syriaque. Mais s'il est impossible d'en faire la démonstration en peu de mots, il serait encore plus impossible de traduire le texte en se passant de cette hypothèse. C'est le fil conducteur qu'il faut tenir pour trouver ce que l'écrivain a voulu dire, quand il le sait, et deviner ce qu'il aurait dû dire, quand il ne le sait pas. Même aux endroits les plus clairs, le style est tout criblé d'expressions par à peu près, de constructions ambiguës sinon fausses et de termes impropres, qui doivent être compris dans leur sens naturel, si l'on ne tient pas compte de l'influence qui les en a détournés. D'autres passages, en pur galimatias, redeviennent intelligibles, quand on y rétablit par conjecture la leçon syriaque qui semble avoir trompé l'œil ou la perspicacité de l'interprète. Cette clef nous a souvent servi. Toutes les corrections qui forcent tant soi peu la teneur littérale du texte ont été indiquées, fussent-elles évidentes. Elles suffiront à titre d'exemple. Il n'était ni nécessaire, ni pratiquement possible de dénoncer tous les endroits où le traducteur parle syriaque en arménien.

Çà et là pourtant, un mot, une locution, un tour de phrase font hésiter. A première vue, on croit y entrevoir un original arabe.
Par exemple, p. 182, note 18, ou encore des mots comme [XXX₁₁] (dans B, ch. XXII; Daietsi, p. 184), « paroles », ou « phrase » = [XXX₁₂]. Mais cette apparence ne résiste pas à l'examen. Il y a, partout ailleurs, trop d'idiotismes syriaques nettement reconnaissables.
Nous ne tirons pas argument du jargon barbare qui est donné pour de l'arabe dans B, ch. XVIII (voyez A, XVI,1, first note). Ce passage peut avoir été interpolé. On ne voit pas comment ces idiotismes auraient contaminé la version arménienne à travers une version arabe, ni comment des arabismes se seraient introduits après coup dans un texte arménien traduit du syriaque.

Il y a aussi trop de bévues et de contresens. L'arabe, il est vrai, y prête comme le syriaque et, à conditions égales, peut-être y prête-t-il davantage. Mais, justement, les conditions n'étaient pas égales. Pour les traducteurs qui ont mis de l'arabe en arménien, l'arabe était une langue vivante, apprise par l'usage, dans les relations pratiques, avec des gens qui la parlaient aussi bien ou mieux encore. Malgré cela, il pouvait leur arriver de se tromper, mais non pas jusqu'à l'incompréhension absolue. Le syriaque, déjà mort ou mourant, végétait dans les écoles, s'étudiait dans les livres, et, en sa qualité de langue savante, se laissait assez impunément interpréter par ceux qui l'entendaient à demi, à ceux qui ne l'entendaient pas de tout. Pour cette autre raison, c'est plutôt au syriaque que fait songer le tour hésitant et trébuchant de la version arménienne. Qu'elle contienne des mots arabes, — comme elle en contient aussi de persans^{\fn{ Cf. Marr, t. cit., p. 136. }} et de turcs, — cela prouve uniquement que ces mots appartenaient à la langue usuelle du traducteur et de son public.^{\fn{ C'est aussi tout ce que prouvent les raisons par lesquelles le regretté Paul Vetter s'est laissé persuader que le livre d'Ahikar aurait été traduit de l'arabe en arménien (*Theologische Quartalschrift*, t. LXXXVII, 1905, p. 353-354; cf. p. 357). L'origine arabe de l'Ahikar arménien ne serait donc pas un exemple à invoquer ici. }} Il est plus étrange qu'on y trouve quelques non-sens qui paraissent s'expliquer par la syntaxe arabe.^{\fn{ C'est ainsi que, çà et là, une circonstance de l'action principale est indiquée dans une proposition coordonnée où l'on croit reconnaître le *hal* arabe. }} Mais à l'époque où elle fut faite, un Arménien qui lisait le syriaque ne pouvait guère manquer de lire aussi l'arabe et même de le parler. Il n'en fallait pas davantage pour que, la négligence ou la distraction aidant, des confusions se soient produites sous l'effet de l'analogie.

Historiquement, il est prouvé par ailleurs qu'un *Livre de l'Enfance* fut, vers la fin du VIth siècle, traduit du syriaque en arménien. Samuel d'Ani (vers 1179) relate dans sa chronique,^{\fn{ [XXX₁₃], éd. Arš. Têr Mikelian (Vagaršapat, 1893), p. 76. Un siècle plus tard, Kirakos de Gantzak copie en l'estropiant le texte de Samuël; cf [XXX₁₄] (éd. de Venise, 1865), p. 29. } qu'en l'année 590\fn{ Identifié dans le texte à l'an 37 de l'ère arménienne. D'autres manuscrits indiquent la date 591. }} des propagandistes nestoriens, originaires de Syrie, introduisirent avec eux en Arménie un certain nombre de livres apocryphes, dont il donne la liste.^{\fn{ M. Th. Zahn a commenté avec beaucoup d'érudition et d'ingéniosité, d'après une traduction du R. P. Gr. Kalemkiar, ce catalogue d'apocryphes, où plusieurs titres demeurent pourtant énigmatiques (*Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, t. V, Erlangen, 1893, p. 109-148). }} Ils furent expulsés avec leur bibliothèque interlope. Mais, ajoute Samuel, ils avaient fait des dupes, qui traduisirent leurs livres. L'un de ces apocryphes a pour titre *l'Enfance du Seigneur*: [XXX₁₅].

On ne peut tirer de ce témoignage que ce qu'il renferme. En soi, il ne garantit aucunement que ce *Livre de l'Enfance* nestorien, proscrit au VIth siècle, soit le même que l'on retrouve au XIIth, accepté quasi officiellement par l'Arménie monophysite. Il est évident d'autre part, à des signes trop clairs pour qu'on s'arrête à les discuter, que le texte des éditions actuelles ne date pas de l'an 590. Quand même tous les autres indices qui le prouvent se laisseraient éliminer un à un, la langue, déjà mêlée d'arménien vulgaire, donnerait encore un aspect de basse époque à tout l'ensemble du document.

Deux hypothèses sont admissibles. Ou bien le *Livre de l'Enfance* a été traduit une seconde fois, indépendamment de l'ancienne version en arménien « littéral », que celle-ci ait disparu avec la secte dont elle était l'œuvre, ou qu'elle ait survécu dans quelque copie échappée à la destruction. La chose est possible et elle s'est vue pour d'autres ouvrages dont la première version n'avait pas été réduite à se cacher.^{\fn{ C'est ainsi, par exemple, qu'il existe deux traductions arméniennes des *Vies des Pères du désert*. (Voyez *Bibliotheca hagiographica orientalis*, 861 et 862.) }}

Ou bien la version actuelle est un remaniement populaire du texte primitif devenu obscur dans sa teneur archaïque. Plusieurs motifs parlent en faveur de cette hypothèse. Le fait est que notre apocryphe est attesté en Arménie dès une époque antérieure à celle que dénotent les caractères linguistiques de la rédaction existante.

Nous avons déjà rappelé que Sargis Šnorhali cite le *Livre de l'Enfance* au XIIth siècle.^{\fn{ Voir ci-dessus, p. xxx. }} L'historien Mekhithar d'Ani (XIIIth siècle) rapporte que le moine Bahira lut à Mahomet, outre l'Ancien Testament et le Nouveau, [XXX₁₆]: *le livre qu'on appelle l'Enfance de Jésus* ([XXX₁₇], éd. C. Patkanian, St-Petersbourg, 1879, p. 36. Cf. Marr, t. c., p. 135). Ceci ne prouve pas directement que Mekhithar ait connu la version arménienne du livre qu'il désigne par ce titre altéré.^{\fn{ [XXX₁₈] (éd. de Venise, 1862), p. 33. }} L'historien Vardan, au XIIIth, doit y avoir copié les noms et qualités des rois mages, le chiffre de leurs troupes^{\fn{ [XXX₁₈] (éd. de Venise, 1862), p. 33. }} et celui des petits enfants de Bethléem massacrés par Hérode.^{\fn{ Quatorze cent soixante-deux (ibid., p. 34; cf. B: quatorze cent soixante; A: treize cent soixante; ci-après, p. 155). Entre ces deux mentions, Vardan cite, d'après une autre source évidemment, un rapport adressé à Auguste par « un Franc nommé Lucien ». }} Malgré l'extrême concision de son résumé, la source d'où il l'a tiré y demeure clairement reconnaissable. Or à l'époque où le *Livre de l'Enfance* était ainsi

utilisé dans un précis de l'histoire universelle, il ne devait pas être nouveau en Arménie. Il y était connu depuis assez longtemps pour y avoir déjà créé un culte local. Le même Vardan, ou l'un de ses disciples, dans la géographie qui porte son nom, rapporte qu'au couvent d'Aménaphrkic on croyait posséder le tombeau du saint roi mage Gaspar.\fn{Voyez J. Saint-Martin, *Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur l'Arménie*, t. II (Paris, 1819), p. 428.} Ceci nous conduit à une date où, certainement, le texte ne contenait pas encore tous les vulgarismes qui s'y étaient aujourd'hui. Il en est de trop modernes pour remonter si haut.\fn{Par exemple le pluriel en [XXX₁₉], dont il y a quelques cas (cf. [XXX₂₀], A. ch. XV, Daietsi, p. 62); la particule affirmative [XXX₂₁], « oui »; etc.} Si ceux-là ont été introduits plus tard, pourquoi pas les autres, et pourquoi tout le livre ne serait-il pas l'ancienne traduction, retouchée, rajeunie, ou plutôt remise à la portée des lecteurs à qui elle était destinée?

Même conclusion si l'on examine les noms propres. En règle à peu près générale, ils sont transcrits, suivant la phonétique ancienne, en conservant aux consonnes (qui seules importent ici) leur valeur originelle: [XXX₂₂]. Il n'y a là rien de très décisif, en ce qui concerne les noms bibliques dont l'orthographe était fixée pour les yeux, sans égard aux changements de la prononciation. Mais d'autres ont reçu leur orthographe du traducteur. Tels: *Gaspar*, *Baldasar* (Balthasar) et presque toute la liste des compagnons des mages; *Apolon* (Apollon), *Bariesou* (ou *Bariesou*, *Okeanos*, *Beria Abias*), (ou *Arabia*), *Sataïel* (Satanaël?), etc.

Tels encore les vocables bibliques peu usités que l'interprète n'a pas reconnus, comme *Askolon* (Ascalon), *Keb-ron* (Hébron), *Taianou* (Tanis) ou de quasinoms propres comme *tèbêth*, *tebêth* (nom du mois hébraïque *tebeth*).

Pêle-mêle avec ces noms anciens, on trouve les doublets *Paldasar* ou *Paldasar*, *Sadaïel*, *Šahabanai* pour *Šahapanai* (*Šakhapanai*) ou vice versa, *Abbion* (pour Appion?), etc.

Il n'y a pas que l'orthographe à considérer. À côté des noms propres de forme archaïque, se rencontrent des toponymes modernisés comme *Tapari*, *Taparia* (Tibériade), qui semblent venus là tout exprès pour montrer ce que seraient devenus les premiers, s'ils avaient passé par l'écriture d'où sont sortis les seconds. Ailleurs le nom *Kharhê*\fn{Ch. XV,4, 6. Même leçon dans B et dans l'abrégé dont il a été question plus haut.} ([XXX₂₃], pour *Kahira*), Caire, s'est introduit, en dépit de la chronologie, dans un passage où l'ancien nom *Mesren* ([XXX₂₄]) est resté visible sous les non-sens du contexte. C'est toute l'évolution de la version arménienne qui apparaît en raccourci dans cet anachronisme.

Il n'entre pas dans notre plan d'en détailler ici les dernières vicissitudes. Le *Livre de l'Enfance* paraît être devenu populaire chez les Arméniens de la Perse.\fn{Voyez p. 210-211, note 10.} Tout porte à croire qu'il aura servi d'original à l'apocryphe persan de même titre dont l'existence est attestée à la fin du XVII^e siècle.\fn{P. 45, note.} Il est peu probable que ce dernier, s'il se retrouve jamais, nous apprenne grand chose sur la formation de notre apocryphe.

Voici donc, en résumé, ce que les précédentes observations nous apprennent ou du moins nous permettent de conjecturer touchant l'origine du *Livre arménien de l'Enfance*:

1. L'ouvrage, tel qu'il existe, a été traduit du syriaque; traduit, c'est-à-dire mis en arménien dans sa teneur originale et non pas développé en arménien sur un thème emprunté au syriaque; — traduction probablement antérieure aux XI^e siècle, modernisée dans la suite, et, comme toujours, interpolée, altérée, maltraitée par les copistes.
2. Quoi qu'il en soit du livre actuel, on sait, par un témoignage précis, qu'un apocryphe nestorien de même titre a été traduit du syriaque en arménien, dans les dernières années du VI^e siècle.

Nous avons admis sans le prouver que ces deux constatations, indépendantes l'une de l'autre, se complètent et qu'il y a identité entre ces deux ouvrages. Mais peut-on le mettre en doute avec quelque vraisemblance? Au contraire, la recension arménienne prouve, par maint endroit de son contenu, qu'elle vient du même milieu d'où provenait nécessairement celle que des nestoriens, partis de Syrie ou de la Mésopotamie syrienne, pouvaient avoir dans leur bagage en 590.

Le lecteur voudra bien se reporter aux sommaires comparatifs où sont déjà indiqués les principaux points de contact entre l'apocryphe arménien d'une part, le *Protévangile*, le *pseudo-Matthieu*, le *pseudo-Thomas* et l'*Évangile syro-arabe de l'Enfance*, d'autre part.\fn{Voyez ci-dessus, p. XV, XXIII, XXXI-XXXIII.} Mais c'est dans le texte même qu'il faut étudier certains de ces parallélismes, comme aussi les traits caractéristiques qui rappellent distinctement le fonds de légendes et de traditions propres à l'Orient romain. Nous en groupons ici quelques-uns, sans chercher à en donner un relevé complet.

On remarquera d'abord, d'une manière générale, que les chapitres I-X, qui répètent le *Protévangile*, reflètent aussi, par plusieurs détails caractéristiques, un livre syriaque, l'*Histoire de la Vierge*, et un livre latin, le *pseudo-Matthieu*.\fn{Voyez notamment pp. 118, note 13; 120, note 5; 122, note 8; 128, note 4, etc.} Dans un autre passage, qu'on prendrait pour un développement de pure amplification, il semble se rencontrer aussi avec le récit copte-arabe du *Trépas de S. Joseph*.\fn{P. 88, note 4; cf. p. 120, note 4. On ne perdra pas de vue que, de son côté, le *Trépas de S. Joseph* (l'*Histoire de Joseph le Charpentier*) paraît dépendre de l'*Évangile de l'Enfance*. (Voyez ci-dessus, t. I, p. XXXV.)}

Ch. V,10; ch. XI,1 et suiv. Les rois mages sont au nombre de trois et non pas de quatre comme dans la tradition latine, ou de douze comme dans la légende syriaque postérieure. Au lieu des noms qu'ils portent dans les listes jacobites et nestoriennes, ils s'appellent *Balthasar*, *Gaspar* et *Melkon*, équivalents altérés peut-être mais nullement méconnaissables des trois noms *Bithisarea*, *Melichior* et *Gathaspa*, conservés dans la chronique alexandrine qui a servi de source aux *Excerpta Barbari*.\fn{P. 98, note 10. Cf. *Chronica minora*, éd. C. Frick (Leipzig, 1892), p. 338-339. Gutschmid veut que *Gaspar* soit une contraction de *Gathaspar* corruption de *Godaphar* (*Kleine Schriften*, éd. Fr. Ruhl, t. II, Leipzig, 1890, p. 334; cf. Ad. Baumgartner, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, t. XL, 1886, p. 508, note 1 et F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch*, Marburg, 1895, p. 369).}

Ch. XI,2, 10-11, 22-25. Les mages viennent à Bethléem pour obéir à un commandement divin que leurs ancêtres s'étaient transmis en même temps qu'un livre donné par Dieu à Adam, lors de la naissance de Seth. C'est le fond de la légende que relatait, à la fin du IV^e siècle, l'*Opus imperfectum in Matthaëum*.\fn{Voyez ci-après p. 136, note.}

Ch. XV,5. Jésus se laisse glisser sur un rayon de soleil. C'est le thème d'un miracle qu'on retrouve en latin, en serbe, en anglais, en provençal, ce qui paraît prouver l'existence d'un récit grec, et chez les Arabes musulmans, ce qui démontre celle d'une rédaction syriaque.\fn{Voir ci-après, p. 162, note 12.}

Ch. XV,6 et suiv. « Statues magiques » dans le texte arménien, « automates » dans l'évangile syro-arabe (rédaction S). L'invention est la même, si la mise en scène est différente, et les deux histoires ont quelque rapport avec les pratiques de la théurgie égyptienne.\fn{Voir ci-après, p. 163, note 15; cf. p. 14, note 1 au ch. XII de l'*Évangile arabe*.} Il semble du reste que cette légende ne soit pas étrangère à la tradition copte. Abou Salih\fn{Éd. Evetts, t. cit., pp. XXX₂₅, 220-221.} rapporte que la ville d'Ešmun était défendue contre les envahisseurs par un coq et cinq dromadaires — vivants ou mécaniques, on ne sait trop —\fn{La description est ambiguë et le mot [XXX₂₆], rangée (?), pourrait se lire [XXX₂₇], image.} qui furent changés en pierres au passage de Jésus.

Ch. XV,24-26. L'épisode de la Sainte Famille recevant l'hospitalité chez Éléazar en Égypte s'est conservé dans l'évangile syro-arabe (S), à l'état d'allusion énigmatique.\fn{Ibid., p. 174-176; cf. *Évangile arabe*, ch. XII, note 1, p. 14.}

Ch. XXI,1-31. L'histoire de Jésus chez le teinturier paraît avoir été connue aussi chez les coptes.\fn{Voyez p. 45, note.} Les Arabes musulmans l'ont acceptée.\fn{Voyez le texte d'*al-Kisa'i* dans Sike, p. (55)-(57) [reproduit par Thilo, p. 150-151].} Telle que le texte arménien la raconte, elle se rattache étroitement à une tradition locale, encore vivace à Tibériade vers la fin du XII^e siècle.\fn{Ci-après, p. 239, note 24.}

Tenons-nous-en à ces quelques exemples, puisque les autres s'aperçoivent d'eux-mêmes à la simple analyse du document. Ils posent, avec toute la précision possible, la question de l'origine du livre arménien, et ils indiquent dans quelle direction il faut chercher la formule de ses rapports à l'évangile syro-arabe, au *pseudo-Thomas* et au *pseudo-Matthieu*.

[The following is a transcription of Dom Paul Peeters' French translation of *The Armenian Infancy Gospel*, which he published in Paris in 1914. The division of this document into numbered paragraphs is his; as are the learned annotations. Each chapter appears to have been provided with a brief summary of its contents by its ancient editor; and these have also been transcribed in boldface. Quotations within quotations are demarcated thus: « " ... " ». Footnotes are indicated: \fn{...} and are reduced to 9 point Times New Roman and highlighted, deliberately to contrast with the 11 point Times New Roman in which the text proper is set. Any indicated italics, however, either in the text proper or in the notes, are the translator's, as are any abbreviations which appear; but I have modified the original format by inserting the footnotes directly into the text itself, and I did in his introduction, above, rather than listing them as he did at the bottom of each page.

(253 of these notes themselves are modified by the insertion of the following symbol—[XXX₁₋₂₂₅]—to indicate the presence of non-Latin based alphabetical information (Hebrew, Greek, Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic, or Russian). These notes I intend to sort out in numerical order at the end of the French text, when I can discover some means of transcribing their non-Latin characters by electronic means.)

Dom Peeters was a priest and a Bollandist scholar, and was most skilled in deciphering ancient manuscripts, but his native language was French, and his translation of this Armenian work has never been rendered into English. Such is the critical reputation of the Bollandist scholars, however, that it must be considered the last critical word in its area of expertise; and it is with that in mind that the following transcription of his work has been prepared, in the hope that someone on the Internet will translate it into English (in which language some 80% of the world's stored information presently exists).

Peeters has presented in (...) brackets such French emmendations of his own as will make the literal Armenian before him more understandable to a French-speaking individual. In <...> he gives actual restorations of the text; and he makes use also of the symbol for paragraph(s): § and §§. I have made use of the following symbols: ‡, to indicate divisions between lines of poetry, or where inscriptions are involved to indicate lines centered one above the other; and [... :H], to indicate a (rare) insertion of my own. Occasionally, it has been necessary to conflate our efforts—where, because Fr. Peeters has numbered his footnotes at the bottom of each page whereas I have inserted them directly into the text, I have had to change the wording of his system accordingly. (E.g., *Voir ci-dessus*, p. 123, note 9 becomes *Voir ci-dessus*, VIII, 5, first note.)

LE LIVRE ARMÉNIEN DE L'ENFANCE

I: Ce qui advint, au sujet de la sainte Vierge Marie, dans la maison de son père. Récit de saint Jacques, frère du Seigneur. \fn{S débute par un paragraphe qui est le développement du Protévangiile I, 1-3, et du pseudo-Matthieu I-II, 1: Généalogie de Joachim (Ionakir), fils de Mathan, fils d'Eléazar, de la lignee de Salomon, fils de David. De Mathan naquit un fils qu'il appella Jacob; Jacob s'unit à une femme nommée Asta. Laiscée veuve sans enfant, elle fut épousée en secondes noces par Héli fils de Matath, de la famille de Nathan. Elle en eut un fils appelé Joseph et un autre appelé Sadoc et surnommé Ionakir (Joachim). Sadoc était né ou s'était fixé à Bethléem de Juda. Sa femme s'appelait Diana. (Comparer Salmon de Bassorah, *The Book of the Bee*, éd. E. A. Wallis Budge, *Anecdota Oxoniensia, Semitic series*, t., I, 2, 1886; p. [XXX₂₈]).}

1. Or donc, l'homme (appelé) Joachim, lorsqu'il fut sorti de sa maison, prit (avec lui) ses troupeaux et ses bergers et s'en alla dans le désert, où il fixa sa tente. Après être resté en prière pendant quarante jours et quarante nuits, gémissant et pleurant, et (ne vivant) que de pain et d'eau, il s'assit et pria Dieu en ces termes, dans l'affliction de son âme: « Souvenez-vous de moi, Seigneur, selon votre miséricorde et votre justice, opérez en moi un signe de votre bienveillance comme vous avez fait à notre ancêtre Abraham, à qui dans le temps de sa vieillesse vous avez donné un enfant de bénédiction, fils de la promesse, Isaac son unique descendant, et le gage de la consolation pour sa race. » Et de la sorte, avec des larmes, il priait Dieu d'une âme affligée, demandant miséricorde au Seigneur. Et il disait: « Je ne m'en irai pas d'ici; je ne mangerai ni ne boirai, jusqu'à ce que le Seigneur m'ait visité, et qu'il ait eu pitié de son serviteur. »

2. Et lorsque s'achevèrent les quarante jours de son jeûne, l'ange du Seigneur vint, et se plaçant devant Joachim, lui dit: « Joachim, le Seigneur a entendu vos prières et il a accompli votre demande. Voici que votre femme concevra et vous enfantera un fils de bénédiction. Son nom sera grand et toutes les races le proclameront bienheureux. Levez-vous, prenez les offrandes que vous avez promis de faire et apportez-les dans le temple saint: là vous accomplirez votre vœu. Car voici que moi j'irai cette nuit prévenir le grand prêtre d'accepter de vos mains ces offrandes. » Ayant ainsi parlé, l'archange le quitta. Et Joachim, se levant sur-le-champ avec joie, partit avec ses nombreux troupeaux et (ses) offrandes. \fn{Comparer ps.-Matth. III, 1-4. S omet la vision de Joachim et amplifie le thrène et la vision d'Anne (Protév. II-III; ps.-Matth. II, 2-4). L'ange dit à Dina (Anne): « ... Dorénavant vous ne vous appellerez plus Dina, mais Anne, parce que la miséricorde de votre Seigneur vous a fait grâce ... » (Jeu de mots sur le verbe [XXX₂₉]: faire grâce).}

3. Et l'ange du Seigneur, apparaissant au grand prêtre Eléazar en une vision pareille, \fn{Cette vision d'Eléazar semble

une invention du rédacteur arménien (ou de son original immédiat).} lui dit: « Voici que Joachim vient vers vous avec des offrandes. Recevez ses dons religieusement et selon la loi, comme il convient. Car le Seigneur a entendu ses supplications et il a réalisé sa demande. » Et le grand prêtre se réveillant de son sommeil, se leva et rendit grâces au Seigneur en disant: « Béni soit le Seigneur, Dieu d'Israël, parce qu'il ne dédaigne pas ses serviteurs qui l'implorent. » Puis\fn{Comparer Protév. IV, 2-4; ps.-Matth. III, 5. Dans S, comme dans le Protévangile, Anne est avertie de l'arrivée prochaine de son mari, non par un ange, mais par deux messagers. S met dans leur bouche le récit de la révélation faite à Joachim (y compris le changement de nom de Diana).} l'ange apparut une seconde fois à Anne et lui dit: « Voici que votre mari vient; levez-vous, allez au-devant de lui et recevez-le avec joie. » Anne donc s'étant levée, revêtit sa parure de noces et courut au-devant de lui.\fn{Ps.-Matth. III, 5: <à la porte dorée>} Et lorsqu'elle aperçut son mari, elle se prosterna avec joie devant lui et se jeta à son cou.

4. Joachim lui dit: « Salut à vous et joyeuse nouvelle, Anne; car le Seigneur Dieu a eu pitié de moi; il m'a béni et il a promis de nous donner un enfant de bénédiction. » Et Anne dit à Joachim: « Bonne nouvelle à vous en retour; car à moi aussi le Seigneur a promis de donner ce que vous dites. » Anne (fut) transportée de joie et dit: « Béni soit le Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, qui n'a pas dédaigné nos supplications, et n'a pas (détourné) de nous sa miséricorde. » Et en même temps, Joachim ordonna d'appeler ses amis et voisins, et il leur fit une réception grandiose. Ils mangèrent, burent et se réjouirent, et après avoir rendu grâces au Seigneur, ils retournèrent chacun chez soi. Et ils glorifiaient Dieu à haute voix.

II: De la naissance de la vierge Marie; ce qui advint dans la maison de son père.

1. Et Joachim\fn{Les deux paragraphes qui suivent sont un développement très libre de Protév. V, 1. S: ... Pendant que le grand prêtre offrait le sacrifice pour Ionakir, celui-ci tenait les yeux fixés sur le prêtre et il vit entre les yeux du prêtre un signe lumineux avec l'inscription suivante: « Le Seigneur a accepté votre sacrifice et vos offrandes ... »} s'étant levé de bonne heure, appela ses bergers et leur dit: « Amenez dix agneaux blancs: ce sera l'offrande pour le temple auguste de mon Dieu; et douze veaux: ce sera pour les prêtres, les scribes, et les ministres, qui sont les serviteurs de l'assemblée;\fn{Littéralement: de l'église (c'est-à-dire de la synagogue).} et cent bœufs: ce sera pour tout le peuple d'Israël. » Et lorsque Joachim eut pris ces offrandes, il (les) amena dans le temple du Seigneur, et s'étant prosterné devant les prêtres et toute l'assemblée, il présenta les dons amenés devant eux. Ceux-ci l'ayant vu, se réjouirent et le félicitèrent parce qu'il avait plu au Seigneur d'accepter de ses mains ces saintes offrandes. Et la multitude des gens qui se trouvaient là, étaient dans l'étonnement et disaient: « Loué soit le Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, qui a réalisé les vœux de votre cœur. Allez en paix dans votre maison, et le Seigneur sera avec vous perpétuellement. Il vous donnera un enfant béni et un rejeton sanctifié du fruit de vos entrailles. »

2. Et Joachim s'étant prosterné devant les prêtres qui se trouvaient là, se leva, entra dans le temple et, s'étant mis en prières, il remerciait le Seigneur et disait: « Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, (Dieu) de nos pères, comme vous avez écouté votre serviteur et lui avez fait ample mesure de miséricorde, je vous implore maintenant, Seigneur. Que vous m'accordiez un enfant (de sexe) masculin ou féminin, je vous le donnerai, Seigneur, pour être à votre service dans ce temple, tous les jours de sa vie. » Et Joachim, ayant ainsi parlé, se leva et s'en fut joyeusement dans sa maison.

3. Lorsque trois mois se furent écoulés, l'enfant tressaillit dans le sein de sa mère. Et Anne, remplie d'une grande joie, dit dans un transport d'allégresse: « Par la vie du Seigneur, s'il m'est (accordé) un enfant de bénédiction (de sexe) masculin ou féminin, je le donne au temple saint, pour tous les jours de sa vie. » Et Anne acheva cent quatre-vingts jours de sa grossesse, ce qui fait six mois.

4. Joachim partit avec des présents; il se rendit au temple saint, et, par-devant les prêtres, il offrit les sacrifices qu'il avait promis d'accomplir intégralement au début de l'année. Et comme ils élevaient (les victimes) sur l'autel des holocaustes et les immolaient, tandis que le sang coulait, ils virent qu'il ne contenait aucun défaut, et remplis d'une grande joie, ils rendirent grâces à Dieu.

5. Mais Joachim, après avoir accompli ses offrandes, prit un agneau, et en ayant d'abord fait l'oblation, il le sacrifia sur l'autel; et tous virent, par (un prodige) inattendu, une sorte de lait blanc jaillir de l'artère au lieu de sang. A cette vue, les prêtres et tout le peuple furent saisis d'étonnement et d'admiration, car jamais on n'avait vu

un prodige semblable à celui qui s'était accompli en ce sacrifice. Le grand prêtre Éléazar dit à Joachim: « Dites-nous : Au nom de qui avez-vous présenté cette offrande, cet agneau que vous avez en dernier lieu offert en sacrifice sur l'autel? »

6. Joachim répondit: « Les premières offrandes, je les ai promises à mon Seigneur, (comme) un vœu que (je devais) accomplir. Mais ce dernier agneau (est offert) au nom de mon enfant: j'avais résolu de faire (cela) pour lui. » Le grand prêtre (lui) dit: « Voyez-vous ce signe, que le Seigneur vous a montré au nom de votre enfant? » Le grand prêtre dit: « Le lait qui vient de jaillir de cette artère a une signification pour votre enfant: car ce qui naîtra du sein de sa mère, sera une fille, une vierge impeccable et sainte. Et cette vierge concevra sans (l'intervention d'un) homme; il naîtra (d'elle) un (enfant) mâle qui deviendra un grand monarque et roi d'Israël. » En entendant ces choses, tous ceux qui de trouvaient là, furent dans l'admiration. Joachim se dirigea en silence vers sa maison et raconta à son épouse Anne les prodiges qui étaient arrivés. Et rendant grâces à leur Dieu, ils se réjouirent et dirent au Seigneur: « Que vos volontés soient faites. »

7. Et grand la grossesse d'Anne en fut à deux cent dix jours, ce qui fait sept mois,\fn{S ne connaît pas ce détail ni l'épisode qui suit; cf. Protév. V, 2.} subitement, à la septième heure, Anne mit au monde sa sainte enfant, durant le 21^e jour du mois < de ... >, qui est le 8 septembre. Le premier jour, elle demanda à la sagefemme: « Qu'ai-je mis au monde? » Celle-ci répondit: « Vous avez mis au monde une fille, mais extrêmement belle, brillante et radieuse à voir, sans tache ni souillure aucune. » Anne dit: « Béni soit le Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, qui a écouté les supplications de ses serviteurs, qui nous a montré son ample miséricorde et qui a fait pour nous de grandes choses, dont nous sommes remplis de joie. Maintenant mon cœur est solidement établi dans le Seigneur, et mon espérance a été exaltée en Dieu mon Sauveur. »

8. Lorsque l'enfant eut trois jours,\fn{Dans le Protévangile, l'épisode correspondant (VI, 2) se passe à l'anniversaire de Marie.} (Anne) ordonna à la sage-femme de la laver et de la porter dans sa chambre\fn{Littéralement: à l'étage, [XXX₃₀] (le texte porte [XXX₃₁]). Traduction par à peu près de [XXX₃₂]. Comparer Protév. VI, 3: [XXX₃₃].} avec respect. (Celle-ci) lui ayant présenté l'enfant, elle lui donna le sein, et, la faisant téter, la nourrissait de (son) lait. Et, dans une effusion de tendresse, elle l'appela du nom de Marie. De jour en jour, (l'enfant) croissait et progressait, et (sa mère), dans les transports de sa joie, la berçait entre ses bras. C'est ainsi que ses parents l'élevaient et la nourrissaient. Lorsque Marie eut atteint quarante jours,\fn{S: quand vint le temps de sa purification.} ses parents la prirent avec respect, et emportant de nombreuses offrandes, ils la conduisirent dans le temple du Seigneur, selon la règle de leur tradition.

9. Et la petite Marie croissait et progressait de jour en jour. Lorsqu'elle eut (atteint) six mois,\fn{Cf. Protév. VI, 1. S: Lorsque l'enfant fut âgée d'un an.} sa mère permit qu'elle s'essayât à marcher. Et quand elle se fut éloignée (l'espace de) trois pas, elle retourna en arrière et vint se jeter dans les bras de sa mère. Et sa mère, l'élevant dans ses bras, lui disait en la caressant: « Marie, sainte mère des vierges; ô toi, racine à la belle croissance; rejeton d'une noble souche; de toi, se lèvera l'aurore, l'astre avant-coureur de la lumière, semblable à la lune plus qu'(aucune) étoile, lumière du jour plus (brillante) que la splendeur du soleil, aube du soleil de l'Orient! » Ainsi parlait Anne, tenant ces propos et d'autres encore. Et caressant la sainte enfant elle disait: « Par la vie du Seigneur, tes pieds ne fouleront plus <le sol> jusqu'au moment où tu seras conduite dans le temple saint. »\fn{S: ... Anne s'adressant à Joachim son seigneur lui dit: « Construisez à Marie votre fille un appartement où elle demeurera, jusqu'au moment où elle sera grande et que nous la conduirons monter à Jérusalem ... »} Et Joachim dit: « Oui. Vous avez bien parlé. » Et l'enfant demeura dans la maison de son père, jusqu'à ce qu'elle eut atteint l'âge de trois ans.\fn{Ici se place dans le Protévangile (VI, 2) le récit de la fête célébrée par Joachim à l'anniversaire de Marie (dans S au troisième anniversaire). S ajoute: quand (Marie) eut environ dix ans, ses parents se dirent entre eux: « Conduisons-la au temple du Seigneur pour qu'elle y vive en sa présence, comme nous en avons fait le vœu. » Dina sa mère dit à Ionakir son père: « Attendons pour l'(y) conduire qu'elle ait pris conscience d'elle-même. (Comp. Protév. VII.) Et en ces mêmes jours, Anne devint enceinte et mit au monde une fille qu'elle appela Parogitha, disant: « Marie sera au Seigneur, et Parogitha nous sera nos délices (phurgaia) au lieu de Marie ... »} Ainsi soit-il!

III: De l'éducation de la Sainte Vierge Marie, qui eut lieu au temple saint, pendant douze ans.

1. Joachim dit à Anne: « Les jours de l'enfant qui nous est née,\fn{Littéralement: « qui est née chez nous. »} sont accomplis. Ordonnez qu'on appelle toutes les filles des Hébreux les vierges consacrées à Dieu. Qu'elles prennent chacune en main une lampe, et qu'elles conduisent l'enfant, avec un saint respect, dans la temple du Seigneur

ainsi qu'il convient. » Et l'ayant emmenée ils l'établirent dans le troisième degré du tabernacle.\fn{Protév VII, 3: [XXX₃₄].} Et le Seigneur Dieu lui donna grâce et sagesse. Un ange de Dieu, descendant du ciel, la servait à table, et elle était nourrie par les anges de l'Esprit(-Saint). Et là dans le tabernacle, elle entendait incessamment le langage et le chant des anges.\fn{Comp. Ps.-Matth. VI, 3. Ces détails, qui renchérissent sur la narration du Protévangile, ont passé dans la tradition du moyen âge. Le diacre Pantaléon y fait allusion, dans un panégyrique de l'archange Gabriel (ms. de Paris, Bibl. Nationale, grec 1519, p. 303-304): [XXX₃₅] (voir Acta Sanctorum, Novembris t. III, p. 22). Jean de Wurzbourg, vers 1165, relate dans son itinéraire une tradition qui doit venir de la même source: In templo domini XI kal. decembris dicitur beata virgo Maria, iam trium annorum, oblata fuisse, ut hi versiculi docent ibidem inscripti: Virginibus septem virgo comitata puellis † Servitura Deo, fuit hic oblata triennis. † Ibi quidem saepe solacium angelicum percepit. Unde versus: † Pascitur angelico virgo ministerio. (T. Tobler, Descriptiones Terrae Sanctae ex saeculo VIII, IX, XII et XVI, Leipzig, 1874, p. 120-121).}

2. Marie avait trois ans.\fn{D'après S, douze ans. Le même texte ajoute ici un épisode de provenance hétéroclite. Marie est confiée par le sort à la garde du vieux pontife Sadoc et de Sam'i sa femme. Sur la recommandation de Joachim et aux frais de ce dernier, Sadoc construit pour Marie un appartement pareil à celui qu'elle habitait dans la maison de son père. « Et on appela Marie fille de Sadoc devant la loi du Seigneur, et fille de Ionakir en réalité et aux termes de la promesse (divine). » Plus haut, il a été dit que Sadoc était le vrai nom de Joachim.} lorsque ses parents la conduisirent au temple. Elle (y) resta douze ans. Au bout d'une année ses parents moururent.\fn{Selon S, Ionakir et Dina meurent après la douzième année (de l'âge de Marie?). « Šam'i, la femme de Sadoc, mourut aussi, quand Marie avait quatorze ans. »} Marie éprouva une vive affliction (de la perte) de son père et de sa mère, et prit le deuil pour trente jours. Établie dans le temple, Marie fut élevée et grandit à la manière des femmes, comme les autres filles des Hébreux qui s'(y) trouvaient avec elle, jusqu'à ce qu'elle atteignit l'âge de quinze ans.

3. En cette année,\fn{L'épisode qui suit est un développement fantaisiste de la légende de Zacharie et ne se rattache à aucun des textes que les recherches de Berendts ont fait connaître. (Voyez A. Berendts, Studien über Zacharias-Apokryphen und Zacharias-Legenden, Leipzig, 1895; Id., Die handschriftliche Ueberlieferung der Zacharias- und Johannes-Apokryphen, dans Texte und Untersuchungen, nouv. Sér., t. XI, 3, 1904; cf. Acta Sanctor., Nov. t. III, p. 7-22). Dans le ps.-Matth., le grand prêtre s'appelle Abiathar. S ne dit pas son nom. Le Protévangile, qui a déjà parlé du grand prêtre, l'appelle ici Zacharie sans explication préalable.} mourut le grand pontife Éléazar. Les fils d'Israël, ayant pris le deuil, pleurèrent sur lui pendant trente jours. Ensuite, après tous ces événements, eut lieu une assemblée des prêtres, des anciens, et d'autres (notables), qui résolurent de désigner un grand prêtre du temple et de consulter le sort. Et le sort tomba sur Zacharie fils de Barachie. Tous les prêtres lui imposèrent les mains et l'établirent ministre du saint autel. Or Anne et Élisabeth étaient parentes; toutes deux étaient stériles et n'avaient pas d'enfants. Et depuis la grossesse d'Anne et la naissance de Marie, quatorze ans s'étaient passés, jusqu'au moment où Zacharie devint grand prêtre du temple.

4. Vint le temps où Zacharie fut fait grand prêtre; sa femme était stérile, tout comme Anne. Après coup, les prêtres et tout le peuple firent réflexion et se dirent les uns aux autres: « Il est extrêmement fâcheux que nous n'ayons pas compris plus tôt ce que nous faisons. Pourquoi avons-nous établi celui-ci grand prêtre, puisqu'il (y) a un défaut (qui s'y oppose): sa femme est stérile, et (il) n'a pas l'enfant de la bénédiction? » L'un d'entre ces prêtres, qui avait nom Lévi, dit: « Ceci nous semble juste; avec votre permission, je le lui dirai. » Les prêtres dirent: « Déclarez-lui la chose à lui seul, en secret, afin qu'il sache quoi, et n'en parlez à aucun (autre). » Le prêtre dit: « Bien. Je ne le dirai qu'à lui et à nul autre. »

5. Un jour donc, comme s'achevait le temps de la prière, le prêtre alla secrètement trouver (Zacharie) et lui manifesta le propos qui avait été tenu. En entendant cela, Zacharie fut vivement troublé, et il se dit en lui-même: « Que ferai-je et quelle réponse donnerai-je? Car pour moi, je n'ai pas conscience d'avoir rien fait de mal, et s'ils me haïssent sans cause, malgré mon innocence, c'est au Seigneur seul à l'examiner.\fn{II Paralip., xxiv, 22.} Si je répudie mon épous, sans pouvoir alléguer aucun tort (de sa part), je commettrai une lourde faute. Que si je me présume coupable d'un délit pour lequel (je mérite d'être) destitué, et que, sans rien dire, j'abdique le service du saint autel et le pontificat, ce sera bien pénible pour moi. Que vais-je donc devenir, car une grave perplexité tourmente mon âme? »

6. Tandis qu'il se livrait à ces pensées et à ces réflexions, vint l'heure de la prière rituelle, (où il devait) déposer l'encens devant le Seigneur. Et il se tenait dans le temple près du saint autel de Dieu, et, répandant ses larmes devant le tabernacle, il priait de la sorte: « Seigneur, Dieu de nos pères, Dieu d'Israël, regardez-moi avec votre miséricorde, moi, votre serviteur, qui me présente plein de confusion devant votre majesté et qui implore la gracieuse douceur de votre bienveillance. Ne dédaignez pas votre serviteur. Si vous me jugez digne de desservir votre saint autel, usez à mon endroit de votre tendre bonté envers les hommes, ô vous qui seul êtes miséricordieux

et tout-puissant. A vous la gloire dans tous les siècles. Ainsi soit-il! »

7. Ainsi parla le grand prêtre Zacharie. Il se trouvait à la droite du saint autel et, prosterné, il adorait le Seigneur. Et voici qu'un ange de Dieu lui apparaissant, là dans le tabernacle, lui dit: « Ne craignez pas, Zacharie, car vos prières ont été exaucées et vos demandes sont parvenues devant Dieu. Voici que votre femme Élisabeth concevra et enfantera un fils. Et vous lui donnerez le nom de Jean. » Zacharie dit: « De quelle manière saurai-je cela, puisque je suis vieux et que ma femme est avancée en âge? Comment cela m'advientra-t-il? » L'ange dit: « Puisque vous ne m'avez pas écouté et que vous n'avez pas cru à mes paroles, voici que vous serez muet et incapable de parler, jusqu'au jour où ces choses vous adviendront. » Et au même instant, Zacharie fut frappé de mutisme dans le temple, et s'étant prosterné en silence devant l'autel, il se frappait la poitrine en se lamentant et il pleurait amèrement.

8. Or les prêtres et la multitude du peuple qui se trouvaient là, remarquaient avec étonnement et surprise qu'il s'attardait dans le temple. Et s'étant introduits (auprès de lui), les prêtres le trouvèrent frappé de mutisme. Il ne pouvait parler et ne s'expliquait plus que par gestes (de la main). Puis, quand fut passée la fête des saints tabernacles, le quinze du mois de tešrin, qui est le deux octobre,\fn{ Ce synchronisme, non plus que les suivants, ne répond à rien; mais la date du 9 octobre est à retenir. La conception du Précurseur, dont la fête est fixée au 23 septembre, ou à la date correspondante, dans toutes les églises d'Orient, était célébrée le 10 octobre par les melkites du Kharizm. A cette date, le calendrier d'al-Biruni (X-XI s.) porte la mention suivante: 10 (du premier tešrin). Mémoire du prophète Zacharie. En ce jour, les anges lui annoncèrent la naissance de son fils Jean, comme il est rapporté dans le Coran et, avec plus de détails, dans l'Évangile. Et au 25 haziran (25 juin): Nativité de Jean fils de Zacharie. Entre l'annonce de sa naissance et sa naissance elle-même, il s'écoula 258 jours, soit huit mois et dix-huit jours. (Ed. Sachau, Die chronologie orientalischer Völker von Albêrûnî, Leipzig, 1878, pp. 291, 299.) Ce chiffre repose très probablement sur un calcul du chronologiste arabe; mais il prouve au moins que, plus haut, la date du 10 octobre a été transcrite à bon escient. Il est intéressant de rapprocher cette dernière d'une note qui a été insérée dans le martyrologe de rabban Sliba, d'après une source syriaque: XXIII ilul (septembre). Annociation de Zacharie selon le comput solaire. Suivant le comput lunaire, elle tombe le 10 du premier tešrin. (Cf. Analecta Bollandiana, t. XXVII, p. 191.) } les premières solennités prirent fin. Le 22 tešrin, qui est le 9 octobre, Élisabeth devint enceinte. Et le 16 du mois de tammuz,\fn{ Le texte porte: « thamoul », [XXX₃₆]. } qui est le 5 juin,\fn{ Il faut probablement lire: 25. } eut lieu la naissance de Jean-Baptiste. Gloire au Christ. Ainsi soit-il!

IV: Comme quo (les prêtres), suivant leur usage traditionnel, donnèrent à Joseph la sainte vierge Marie en mariage, pour qu'il veillât soigneusement sur la vierge sainte, et comme quoi il la prit sous sa garde, confiant dans le Seigneur. Ainsi soit-il!

1. Lorsque prit fin le séjour sanctifié de la Vierge Marie dans le temple—ce qui lui faisait quinze années—les prêtres\fn{ S: Alors (c'est-à-dire après la moirt de Šam'i quand Marie avait quatorze ans), Sadoc dit: « Marie, la fille que le Seigneur m'a donnée, est (maintenant) une femme. Je suis (devenu) un vieillard. Mon épouse est morte. Allons donc interroger le Seigneur et voyons ce qu'il nous dira au sujet de Marie, s'il faut la marier ou non. » (Comparer ps.-Matth. VII, 1.) } délibérèrent entre eux et se dirent: « Que ferons-nous de Marie? Ses parents sont morts. Ils nous l'avaient confiée dans le temple, comme un dépôt sacré. Maintenant elle a pleinement atteint le développement propre aux femmes. Il n'est pas possible de la garder plus longtemps parmi nous, car il faut éviter que le temple de Dieu ne soit profané à notre insu. » Les prêtres se dirent les uns aux autres: « Que faut-il donc en faire? » L'un d'eux, un prêtre nommé Behezi,\fn{ "Behezi" est un dérivé du nom appellatif "behez", qui signifie "mouseline" (et qui doit être apparenté au grec [XXX₃₇]. Le nom et le personnage qui le porte appartiennent au seul texte arménien. } dit: « Il y a encore avec elle, dans le temple, beaucoup (d'autres) filles des Hébreux. Allons donc interroger le grand prêtre Zacharie, et ce qu'il jugera bon, nous le ferons. » Tous dirent d'une seule voix: « C'est bien. » Le prêtre Behezi, s'étant donc présenté devant Zacharie, lui dit: « Vous êtes le grand prêtre accompli dans la garde du saint autel. Il y a ici des filles des Hébreux qui se sont consacrées à Dieu. Entrez dans le Saint des Saints et priez à leur intention. Tout ce que le Seigneur aura révélé, nous le ferons selon sa volonté. »

2. Aussitôt le grand prêtre Zacharie se leva et, prenant le rational, il entra dans le Saint des Saints et pria pour ces (jeunes filles). Et comme il répandait l'encens devant le Seigneur, voici qu'un ange de Dieu vint se placer près de l'autel du tabernacle et dit à Zacharie: « Sortez de la porte du temple et ordonnez que l'on appelle les onze filles des Hébreux et, avec elles, amenez ici Marie, qui est de la race de Juda et de la famille de David. Ordonnez aussi d'appeler tous les célibataires de la ville et que chacun d'eux apporte une tablette:\fn{ [XXX₃₈] (cf. ch. XXVII, 2). Le Protévangile et tous les textes parallèles parlent d'une baguette, [XXX₃₉], virga, [XXX₄₀]. } vous placerez (celles-ci) dans le tabernacle de l'alliance, vous écrirez le nom de chacun sur (sa) tablette, et vous ferez la prière: (chaque vierge)

épousera l'homme que Dieu lui désignera entre ceux-là. » Et le grand prêtre Zacharie étant sorti du temple, ordonna de proclamer par toute la ville que tout ce qu'il y avait de célibataires se rendît à tel endroit. En entendant cet ordre, tous jusqu'au dernier se rassemblèrent à l'endroit indiqué, chacun tenant sa tablette à la main. Le vieux Joseph ayant appris cela, jeta aussitôt son erminette et, prenant une tablette à la main, il se rendit en hâte au lieu marqué. Le grand prêtre lui prit des mains la tablette, l'accepta et entrant dans le temple il fit la prière pour ces (hommes).

3. En effet c'était un usage constant parmi les familles d'Israël issues de la tribu de Juda et de la lignée de David, de placer leurs filles dans le temple, où elles étaient gardées dans la sainteté et la justice, l'espace de douze ans, pour (y) servir et attendre le moment des décrets divins, celui où le Verbe viendrait prendre chair d'une sainte, pure et impeccable vierge, et, devenu extérieurement l'un d'entre les hommes, foulerait la terre d'un pas humain. Cette (règle), la race d'Israël la gardait consignée par écrit et conservée dans le temple, de par la tradition des ancêtres. (Que s'il ne leur était fait aucun signe ou avertissement de l'Esprit-Saint, ils emmenaient (ces jeunes filles) et les donnaient en mariage. Ainsi en fut-il de ces douze vierges, qui étaient filles de la race de Juda et de la lignée de David, et parmi lesquelles se trouvait la vierge Marie, qui a la prééminence sur toutes les vierges. Après qu'elles furent rassemblées en cet endroit, ils les amenèrent d'un commun accord et les firent comparaître. Et ils consultèrent le sort sur elles, à l'intention des célibataires, (pour savoir) qui d'entre eux en recevrait une comme épouse.

4. Lors donc que le grand prêtre Zacharie remit aux célibataires leurs tablettes respectives, qu'il avait rapportées du temple, il vit que le nom (de chacune) des vierges se trouvait écrit sur la tablette de celui dont elle deviendrait la femme. Or, quand le grand prêtre avait pris les tablettes, elles ne portaient aucun signe, sauf les noms qui s'y trouvaient écrits. *\fn{ Dans le Protévangile et ps.-Matth., il n'est fait aucune mention d'un signe qui aurait été écrit sur les baguettes. Mais il est à remarquer que la rédaction arabe de l'Histoire de Joseph le Charpentier, dont le texte est malheureusement altéré en cet endroit, semble avoir gardé la trace d'une idée analogue (ch.IV). }* Mais quand (il remit) à Joseph la dernière, sur laquelle était écrit le nom de la sainte vierge Marie, voici qu'une colombe, sortant de la tablette, vint se poser sur la tête de Joseph. Le grand prêtre dit à Joseph: « A vous revient la vierge Marie. Prenez-la, gardez-la comme votre épouse, puisqu'elle vous est échue par (une décision) sainte, pour vous être unie en mariage, comme les autres vierges chacune à un des célibataires. »

5. Mais le vieillard Joseph, entendant cela, résista et dit: « Je vous prie, (vous) prêtres et peuple, qui êtes réunis dans ce saint temple, ne me faites pas violence en présence de vous tous. Comment ferai-je, moi, rien de ce que vous dites? J'ai une nombreuse famille, des fils et des filles; *\fn{ Le texte porte: ami, [XXX₄₁] (pour [XXX₄₂] fille?). }* je serai honteux et confus devant eux. Ne me faites pas violence! » Les prêtres et tout le peuple lui dirent: « Écoutez-nous; soyez obéissant à la loi de Dieu, et ne soyez pas aussi insoumis et récalcitrant; car il n'est pas du tout selon la loi de faire ce que vous faites. » Joseph dit: « Je suis fort vieux et proche de la mort, pourquoi m'ordonnez-vous de faire, dans ma vieillesse, toutes ces choses qui ne conviennent pas? » Le grand prêtre dit: « Écoutez-nous. Vous n'aurez (de ceci) ni confusion ni chagrin d'aucun côté, mais de toutes parts bénédiction, grandeur et gloire. » Joseph dit: « Vous avez beau dire: celle qui m'échoit est une enfant et non une femme; tous les fils d'Israël qui verront et entendront cela me tourneront en ridicule. » Le grand prêtre dit: « Nous savons que vous êtes juste, de bon esprit et aimant Dieu. Cette (vierge) est orpheline et privée de ses parents. Nous l'avons prise en notre garde, et nous l'avons placée dans le temple, sous la foi du serment. Et nous, sur l'ordre des prêtres et de tout le peuple, nous l'avons attesté légalement: la vierge Marie vous est échue. Prenez-la de par notre volonté et avec notre bénédiction, et, l'ayant emmenée, gardez-la avec sainteté et respect, selon la loi et la tradition de nos saints ancêtres, jusqu'à ce que vienne pour vous le moment de recevoir la couronne de bénédiction, en même temps que les autres vierges et les (autres) célibataires. »

6. Joseph dit: « Ayez pitié des cheveux blancs de (ma) vieillesse. Ne m'imposez pas la charge, à quoi je n'ai aucune inclination, de la garder avec soin et circonspection, comme il convient. C'est une vierge qui vient d'atteindre l'âge nubile, selon la nature des femmes: comment donc ai-je le devoir de l'accepter en mariage, puisque ce serait un péché? » Le grand prêtre dit: « Si vous n'étiez pas disposé et consentant à cet acte, qui vous (y) a contraint? Pourquoi êtes-vous venu ici avec les (autres) célibataires? Et après vous être présenté, vous avez tiré au sort, suivant l'usage consacré, et vous avez reçu du temple du Seigneur un signe de bénédiction, (indiquant) qu'(elle) vous est accordée par Dieu en mariage. » Joseph dit: « Je en (l')ai pas compris d'abord, et,

par mes propres réflexions, il ne m'était pas possible de connaître l'événement qui se préparait et quelle sorte d'affaire allait arriver. Puisque je suis déjà sur le point de mourir, ne < ... >\fn{ Il manque ici quelques mots dans le manuscrit. } les cheveux blancs de ma vieillesse < ... >\fn{ Il manque ici quelques mots dans le manuscrit. } vie sans tache. » Le grand prêtre dit: « Craignez le Seigneur et ne résistez pas à ces ordres. Rappelez-vous comment Dieu en a usé avec Coré, Dathan et Abiron; comment la terre s'est ouverte et les a engloutis, à cause de la désobéissance qu'ils ont commise. Et maintenant, vous aussi, craignez Dieu pour éviter que quelque malheur imprévu ne vous atteigne tout à coup. »

7. Lorsque Joseph eut entendu ces paroles, il s'inclina, se prosterna devant les prêtres et devant tout le peuple, et, emmenant Marie hors du temple, il partit et la conduisit en sa maison, dans la ville de Nazareth. Et Joseph dit à Marie: « Ma fille, écoutez ce que je vais vous dire maintenant; prêtez-y l'oreille et gardez-en le souvenir. Voici que je vous laisse ici dans ma maison, comme vous voyez. Je pourvoierai ici à tous vos besoins matériels. Quant à vous, demeurez ici honnêtement, comme je vous l'ai dit. Soyez sur vos gardes et veillez sur vous-même. N'allez nulle part inutilement et que personne ne trouve accès chez vous pour ses allées et ses venues, jusqu'au moment où je serai de retour auprès de vous, comme le Seigneur voudra. Que le Dieu de nos pères, le Dieu d'Israël soit avec vous pour l'éternité. » Ayant ainsi parlé Joseph se leva et se mit en route pour (aller exercer) son métier de charpentier.

8. Et après peu de jours, il advint que (les prêtres), ayant tenu conseil entre eux, se dirent: « Venez, faisons (faire) pour le temple un rideau qui sera exposé au jour de la grande fête, lors de la réunion du peuple, et qui rehaussera la splendeur du culte dans le saint tabernacle. » Les prêtres dirent: « Bien parlé. » Alors le grand prêtre ordonna de convoquer les femmes et les vierges qui étaient consacrées à Dieu dans le temple (et qui appartenaient) à la tribu de Juda et à la race de David. Et lorsque les onze vierges furent arrivées, le grand prêtre Zacharie se souvint que la sainte vierge Marie était de cette famille. On alla la chercher. Quand Marie fut venue, le grand prêtre dit: « Tirez au sort, (pour savoir) qui aura à tisser la mousseline et la pourpre, le rouge et le bleu. » Et lorsqu'on eut tiré au sort, la pourpre et l'écarlate échurent à Marie. (Les) ayant pris en silence, elle se rendit dans sa maison, et commença d'abord par filer l'écarlate. Et tout aussitôt, ayant pris sa cruche, elle alla à la fontaine, chercher de l'eau.

V: Sur la voix de l'ange messager de bonheur, qui annonça l'imprégnation de la sainte vierge Marie.

1. A ce moment\fn{ Ici commence le texte que nous appelons N. (Voyez l'Introduction.) S: L'an 303 d'Alexandre, le 31 adar, le premier jour de la semaine, à la troisième heure du jour, comme Marie était assise à l'écart dans la grande maison de Dieu, Gabriel, l'ange du Seigneur lui apparut ... } la parole lui fut adressée par l'ange, qui disait: « Réjouis-toi, vierge Marie. » Subitement Marie se troubla; elle fut frappée d'une vive frayeur. Et comme elle regardait de droite et de gauche, elle ne vit personne. Elle se dit: « D'où est partie la voix (qui s'est adressée) à moi? » Et prenant sa cruche, elle alla précipitamment se réfugier dans sa maison, en ferma la porte et l'assujettit\fn{ Littéralement: la scella. } soigneusement. Puis, elle alla silencieusement s'asseoir au fond de la maison. Et, dans la stupeur de son esprit, elle se disait avec étonnement: « Quel est donc ce salut qui m'a été adressé? Quel est celui qui me connaissait et savait d'avance qui je suis? Qui ai-je vu n'importe où qui puisse me parler en ces termes? » En songeant à toutes ces choses, elle frissonnait et tremblait.

2. Et s'étant levée, elle se mit en prière et dit: « Seigneur Dieu de nos pères, Dieu d'Israël, regardez (-moi) dans votre miséricorde; condescendez à ma demande et à la prière de mon cœur. Écoutez-moi, votre misérable servante, qui vous implore avec espoir et confiance. Ne me livrez pas aux tentations de l'ennemi et aux embûches de séducteur; mais délivrez-moi des pièges et de la ruse du chasseur, parce que j'espère en vous et que vous garderez ma virginité intacte, (vous) mon Seigneur et mon Dieu. » Ayant ainsi parlé, Marie rendit grâce au Seigneur en pleurant. Après être demeurée (en cet état) pendant trois heures, elle prit en main l'écarlate et se mit à la filer.

3. Et voici que l'ange du Seigneur vint et pénétra auprès d'elle, les portes étant closes. L'incorporel lui apparut sous l'apparence d'un être corporel, et lui dit: « Réjouissez-vous, vierge Marie, servante immaculée du Seigneur. » Ayant tout à coup aperçu l'ange, Marie prit peur et, dans sa frayeur, elle était incapable de répondre. L'ange lui dit: « Ne vous effrayez pas, Marie, vous qui êtes bénie entre les femmes. Je suis l'ange Gabriel, qui ai été envoyé

par Dieu pour vous dire ceci: Voici que vous deviendrez enciente et que vous enfanterez le fils du Père Très-Haut. Il sera le grand roi (qui régnera) sur la terre entière. » Marie lui dit: « De quoi parlez-vous? Que dites-vous? Expliquez-moi cela. »^{fn}{*Toute cette longue et inconvenante discussion entre la Vierge et l'archange Gabriel est propre à la rédaction arménienne. S se borne à paraphraser brièvement le dialogue évangélique. Le dernier discours de l'archange contient une énumération des figures et annonces prophétiques de la Vierge dans l'Ancien Testament.*} L'ange dit: « Ce que je vous ai dit, vous l'avez entendu de ma bouche. Recevez l'invitation (contenue dans) ce message que je viens de vous faire et réjouissez-vous. » Marie dit: « Ce que j'apprends de vous est d'une nouveauté déconcertante, qui me jette dans la stupeur et l'étonnement: je concevrai et j'enfanterai comme toutes les femmes! Comment cela m'arrivera-t-il, à moi qui ne connais point d'homme? » L'ange dit: « O sainte vierge Marie, n'ayez point de tels soupçons et comprenez la chose dont vous parlez. Il n'en ira pas de la sorte. Car cela ne sera pas la fait d'une créature humaine, ni d'un mari, ni de la volonté d'un homme, mais de la puissance de la grâce du Saint-Esprit, qui habitera en vous et en usera avec vous comme il lui plaira. » Marie dit: « Ce que vous dites me paraît dur à croire et extraordinaire. Je ne puis ni acquiescer ni me résigner aux choses que vous avez dites. Car les prodiges dont vous me parlez sont choquants en principe et invraisemblables en fait. En vous entendant parler, mon âme frémit de peur et tremble. Mon esprit demeure dans la perplexité, et je ne sais quelle réponse faire à vos discours. » L'ange dit: « Pourquoi vous effrayez-vous et pourquoi votre âme tremble-t-elle? »

4. La vierge sainte dit: « Comment puis-je vous écouter en effet ou ajouter foi à vos paroles; puisque jamais je n'ai entendu de personne pareils propos, et que je ne comprends même pas ce que vous dites? » L'ange dit: « Les discours que je vous tiens sont l'exacte vérité. Je ne vous ai point parlé à l'aventure ni d'après mes propres idées; mais (je vous ai dit) ce que j'ai entendu du Seigneur, et que Dieu m'a envoyé vous annoncer et vous exposer. Et vous prenez mon langage pour une fausseté. Craignez le Seigneur et écoutez-moi. » La sainte vierge Marie dit: « Ce n'est pas que je tiens vos discours pour vains; mais je suis frappée d'une profonde stupeur: Celui que le ciel et la terre ne peuvent contenir, (dont ils ne peuvent) envelopper la divinité, de qui toutes les phalanges de l'armée céleste des esprits et des êtres ignés^{fn}{*[XXX₄₃] Ce terme insolite fait supposer que le traducteur arménien aura lu: [XXX₄₄] feu, au lieu de: [XXX₄₅] lumière (cf. S; note à la rédact. arabe, ch. IV, ci-dessus, p. 6).*} ne peuvent (92) contempler ni regarder la gloire, comment (pourrais-je) soutenir et supporter son ardeur infinie et l'abriter dans ma chair? Comment serai-je capable de le porter corporellement sur mon sein et de le toucher de mes mains? Votre discours est invraisemblable, l'idée en est incompréhensible et la réalisation déconcertante. Il faut plus que toute la clairvoyance de l'esprit humain pour le scruter et le comprendre. Voudriez-vous abuser mon esprit par un discours trompeur? Il n'en sera pas ainsi! » L'ange dit: « O bienheureuse (et) sainte vierge, écoutez ce que je vais vous dire. Comment Moïse, sur le mont Sinaï, a-t-il vu Dieu de ses propres yeux et le buisson ne brûlait-il pas comme feu, sans se consumer? Comment la tente d'Abraham a-t-elle reçu (Dieu) sous des apparences corporelles, sans que le feu l'ait approchée? Comment a-t-il parlé à Jacob, après avoir lutté avec lui? Et à bien d'autres patriarches et prophètes, comment s'est-il manifesté?^{fn}{*Le texte imprimé n'a pas le tour interrogatif.*} Ils (l')ont vu selon (leur) mérite. Vous non plus, n'ayez pas peur. Croyez seulement et écoutez ce que je vous dis maintenant. »

5. Marie dit: « Comment ce que vous dites m'advientra-t-il? Et comment pourrai-je connaître à quel jour et à quelle heure son avènement aura lieu; apprenez-le-moi. » L'ange dit: « Ne parlez pas ainsi de ce que vous ignorez, et ne refusez pas de croire ce que vous ne comprenez pas; prêtez-moi l'oreille avec humilité^{fn}{*Littéralement: « Humilie ton oreille ».*} et croyez tout ce que je vous dirai. » Marie dit: « Je ne parle pas (ainsi) par défiance ni par incrédulité, mais je veux m'assurer avec exactitude et savoir au vrai comment cette chose m'advientra et à quel moment, afin que j'y sois prête effectivement. » L'ange dit: « Son avènement peut avoir lieu à toute heure. En pénétrant et en habitant dans votre sein, il purifiera et sanctifiera toute l'essence de votre chair, qui deviendra son temple. » Marie dit: « Comment cela m'advientra-t-il, puisque je ne connais point d'homme? » L'ange dit: « L'Esprit-Saint viendra en vous, et la puissance du Très-Haut vous couvrira de son ombre. Et Dieu le verbe prendra de vous un corps; vous enfanterez le fils du Père Très-Haut, et votre virginité demeurera intacte et inviolée. » Marie dit: « Et comment une femme, gardant sa virginité, peut-elle avoir un enfant, sans (l'intervention d')un homme? »

6. L'ange dit: « Il n'en sera pas comme vous dites. Votre maternité ne sera pas l'effet de la concupiscence d'une passion corporelle; et votre grossesse ne sera pas l'effet d'une relation conjugale. Mais votre virginité demeurera sainte et sans tache. L'entrée du Verbe de Dieu ne violera pas votre sein, et lorsqu'il (en) sortira avec sa chair, il ne détruira pas votre virginité. » Marie dit: « J'ai peur de vous; car vous m'entretenez de paroles agréables, et les

propos que vous m'adressez me causent une vive surprise. Voudriez-vous m'abuser par des paroles trompeuses, comme (il advint à) Ève notre première mère, que <le démon>, en causant avec elle, persuada par des discours agréables et doucereux, et qui fut ensuite vouée à la mort? » L'ange dit: « O Marie, vierge sainte, que de fois je me suis adressé à vous et je vous ai dit l'exacte vérité! Et vous ne croyez pas aux ordres et au message (que je vous exprime) de ma bouche, moi que voici en votre présence. Derechef, je m'adresse à vous au nom de Dieu: Que votre cœur ne s'effraie pas à ma vue. Que votre esprit ne doute pas du Seigneur votre Dieu. Et ne détournes pas votre cœur des paroles que je vais dire, (et) que vous avez déjà entendues et apprises de moi. Ce n'est point par un artifice trompeur d'aucune espèce, ni par ruse, ni par fourberie que je suis venu vous parler, mais pour préparer en vous le temple et l'habitation du (Verbe). » Marie dit: « A vous entendre parler et devant l'insistance de vos discours, je me sens maintenant interdite, et mon esprit se préoccupe (de savoir) quelle réponse je ferai à vos paroles. Et si je ne parviens pas à me convaincre moi-même, à qui pourrai-je découvrir ma situation et persuader qu'il en est comme je le dis? »

7. L'ange dit: « O sainte vierge sans tache, ne vous occupez pas ainsi de ces vaines appréhensions. » Marie dit: « Je ne doute pas de vos paroles, et (je) ne (tiens pas) ce que vous dites (pour) incroyable, mais bien plutôt je suis heureuse et me réjouis vivement de vos discours. Mais mon âme s'effraie et tremble (à la pensée que) je porterai Dieu dans ma chair, pour l'enfanter comme un homme, et qu'ensuite ma virginité demeurera inviolée. O prodige! Et que merveilleuse est la chose dont vous parlez! » L'ange dit: « Que de fois je vous ai fait de longs discours, en vous donnant mon témoignage véridique, et vous ne m'avez pas cru. » Marie dit: « Je vous en prie, ô serviteur du Très-Haut, ne soyez pas mécontent de mon insistance à (vous) questionner. Car vous connaissez la nature humaine, et son incrédulité en toute matière. Voilà pourquoi je veux m'enquérir exactement, pour savoir (ce qu'il en est). Et vous, ne soyez pas mécontent des paroles que j'ai dites. » L'ange dit: « Vous avez raison; mais ayez foi en moi, qui ai été envoyé par Dieu, pour vous parler et vous annoncer la bonne nouvelle. »

8. Marie dit: « Qui, je crois à vos discours, et j'accepte les ordres que vous m'avez exprimés: il en est bien réellement ainsi (que vous l'avez dit). Mais écoutez ce que je vais vous dire: Jusqu'à ce jour, je me suis gardée dans la sainteté et la justice, devant les prêtres et devant tout le peuple, après être légitimement échue à Joseph pour devenir son épouse. Et maintenant il a été commis à me garder dans sa maison, pour veiller sur moi avec soin, jusqu'au moment où nous recevrons la couronne de bénédiction, avec les autres vierges et célibataires. Or, s'il revient et qu'il me trouve enceinte, quelle réponse aurai-je à lui faire? Que lui dire? Et s'il me demande quelle est la cause de cette grossesse, que répondrai-je à sa question? » L'ange dit: « O bienheureuse et sainte vierge, écoutez bien cette parole, et gardez dans l'esprit ce que je vais dire. Ceci n'est pas l'œuvre de l'homme, et la chose dont je vous parle ne viendra de personne. C'est le Seigneur qui la réalisera en vous. Il a, lui, la puissance de vous soustraire à toutes les angoisses de l'épreuve. » Marie dit: « Si la chose est telle que vous dites, et si le Seigneur lui-même diagne s'abaisser vers sa servante (et) son esclave, qu'il me soit fait selon votre parole. » Et l'ange la quitta.

9. Au même instant, comme la vierge sainte disait ces mots et s'humiliait, le Verbe de Dieu pénétra en elle par son oreille, et la nature intime de son corps animé fut sanctifiée, avec tous ses sens et ses douze membres, \fn{ N: les organes de ses sens. } et fut purifiée comme l'or dans le feu. Elle devint un temple saint, immaculé, et le séjour de la divinité (du Verbe). Et au même moment commença la grossesse de la sainte Vierge. Car lorsque l'ange porta la bonne nouvelle à Marie, on était au 15 nisan, ce qui fait le six avril, \fn{ Ce synchronisme est arbitraire comme les deux dates. Il est possible que le rédacteur arménien ait maladroitement modifié ce passage pour le mettre d'accord avec le calendrier de son église (Annonciation au 6 avril; Nativité au 6 janvier). Voyez ci-après, V, 14. } un mercredi, à la troisième heure du jour.

10. Et aussitôt \fn{ Tout ce § 10 manque dans S. } un ange du Seigneur s'en fut en hâte au pays des Perses, prévenir les rois mages d'aller adorer l'enfant nouveau-né. Et ceux-ci après avoir été guidés par l'étoile pendant neuf mois, arrivèrent à destination au moment où la vierge devenait mère. Car, en ce temps-là, le royaume des Perses l'emportait par sa puissance et ses victoires sur tous les rois qui existaient dans les pays d'Orient. Et ceux qui étaient les rois des mages étaient trois frères: le premier, Melkon, qui régnait sur les Perses; le second, Balthasar, qui régnait sur les Indiens, et le troisième, Gaspar, qui possédait le pays des Arabes. \fn{ Le nombre des Mages et leurs noms concordent avec la forme de la légende reflétée par le « Barbarus Scaligeri » et le ms. B du pseudo-Matthieu. Voyez l'Introduction. } S'étant réunis sur l'ordre de Dieu, ils arrivèrent au moment où la vierge devenait mère. Ils avaient pressé leur marche et se trouvèrent là au temps précis de la naissance de Jésus. \fn{ N omet tout ce qui suit jusqu'au ch. XI, 16. }

11. Or, quand la vierge sainte eut reçu l'annonciation de l'ange, elle se leva et, se prosternant la face contre terre, \fn{Dans S. Marie aperçoit les chœurs angéliques et les entend chanter ses louanges: En les apercevant, Marie fut remplie de frayeur et de joie; et elle se mit à louer Dieu en hébreu, disant ... — Suit une prière d'un tout autre thème que celui de la rédaction arménienne.} elle dit: « O Seigneur de mon esprit et de mon corps, vous avez le pouvoir d'accomplir toutes les volontés de votre amour créateur. Vous décidez librement de toute chose selon votre bon plaisir. Et maintenant daignez condescendre aux prières de votre esclave: exaucez-moi et délivrez mon âme, parce que vous êtes le Dieu mon Sauveur et que votre nom, Seigneur, a été invoqué sur moi quotidiennement. Et jusqu'à ce jour, je me suis gardée dans la sainteté, la justice et la pureté, (résolue) pour vous, Seigneur mon Dieu, à conserver ma virginité ferme et intacte, sans aucune convoitise des souillures charnelles. Et maintenant, que votre volonté soit faite. »

12. Ayant ainsi parlé, la sainte Vierge Marie se leva et rendit grâces au Seigneur. Après quoi, une heure se passa. La vierge sainte ayant réfléchi, se mit à pleurer et dit:\fn{Ce long thrène de Marie est entièrement absent de S.} « Quel est donc ce prodige nouveau qui se réalise en moi et qui ne s'était pas encore vu dans la naissance d'un homme? En sorte que je deviens la fable et l'objet des reproches de tous, hommes et femmes. Maintenant, me voici dans la perplexité. Je ne sais que faire, ni quelle réponse donner à quiconque (s'enquerra) de moi. A qui m'adresserai-je? Et qui informerai-je de tout ceci? Pourquoi ma mère m'a-t-elle enfantée? Pourquoi mes parents m'ont-ils demandée à Dieu, dans la tristesse de leur âme, pour être un sujet de reproche à moi-même et à mes parents? Pourquoi m'ont-ils vouée à garder la virginité dans le temple saint? Pourquoi n'ai-je pas reçu plus tôt l'arrêt de mort qui me retirera de cette terre? Et puisque je suis restée en vie, pourquoi mes parents ne m'ont-ils pas donnée en mariage, sans rien dire, comme les autres filles des Hébreux? Hélas! qui a jamais entendu, qui a vu chose pareille? Qui a dit ou cru qu'une femme ait mis au monde un enfant, sans avoir eu commerce avec un homme, (une femme) qui ne connaît point d'homme? A qui raconterai-je cette chose et à qui (la) dirai-je soit en public soit en secret < ... >\fn{Le texte est mutilé en cet endroit.} qu'il réponde sans <réticence>\fn{Le texte est mutilé en cet endroit.}? Des vierges ou des femmes mariées, qui pourrai-je persuader à force de paroles? Si je leur dis exactement ces choses, elles croiront que je me moque; si je parle sous la foi du serment, on m'en fera une faute. Dire des faussetés m'est impossible; et me condamner moi-même quand je suis innocente, c'est bien dur. Si l'on me demande un témoin, il n'est personne qui puisse me justifier. Et si je répète une seconde fois ma déclaration en disant ce qui en est, on me mettra à mort avec mépris. Tous ceux qui entendront mes paroles, proches ou étrangers, diront: "Elle veut tromper, par de vains subter- « fuges, les irréflechis et les insensés." Je ne sais que faire maintenant, ni qui me suggérera une réponse à donner à tous, au sujet de cette affaire; ni comment je dirai ceci à mon mari, à celui de qui j'ai reçu le nom au mariage; ni comment j'oserai prendre la parole devant les prêtres et le peuple; ni comment je supporterai d'être livrée devant tout le monde à l'appareil de la justice humaine. Si je déclare à des femmes mariées que je suis vierge, ayant conçu sans (l'opération d')un homme, elles prendront mes paroles pour une plaisanterie et ne croiront pas. Comment pourrai-je me rendre compte à moi-même de ce qui m'est advenu? Tout ce dont j'ai conscience, c'est que ma virginité est sauve et ma grossesse certaine. Car l'ange du Seigneur m'a dit vrai, sans nulle fausseté. Il ne m'a pas trompée par de vaines habiletés, mais il m'a exactement et sincèrement rapporté les paroles prononcées par l'Esprit-Saint. Que faire donc maintenant que je suis devenue un objet de réprobation et de blâme parmi les enfants d'Israël? O parole étonnante! O œuvre surprenante! O prodige terrifiant et déconcertant. On refusera de croire que je n'ai jamais connu aucun homme et que ma grossesse est sans exemple. Et si je dis sérieusement à quelqu'un: "Croyez que je suis enceinte tout en étant demeurée vierge", on me dira: "Soit. Nous croyons que vous parlez sincèrement et « exactement; mais expliquez-nous comment une « femme vierge peut devenir mère, sans qu'un homme « ait détruit sa virginité." Et m'ayant opposé ces paroles, ils me tourneront en ridicule. Je sais aussi que plusieurs parle(ro)nt de moi méchamment et me condamneront à la légère malgré mon innocence. Néanmoins, le Seigneur me sauvera de l'outrage et des médisances des hommes. »

13. Ayant dit ces choses, Marie cessa aussitôt de parler. Et, s'étant levée, elle ouvrit la porte de la maison, pour voir s'il n'y avait là personne qui prêtât l'oreille aux paroles qui se disaient. Comme elle ne voyait aucun être humain, elle retourna dans l'intérieur de la maison. Elle s'assit, et prenant la pourpre et l'écarlate qu'elle avait reçues auparavant des prêtres, pour en faire un rideau au temple, elle (se mit à les) filer. Quand elle eut terminé cet ouvrage,\fn{Cf. Protév. X, 2; XI, 1; XII, 1.} elle s'en fut le porter au grand prêtre Zacharie. Et (celui-ci) l'ayant pris des mains de la vierge sainte, lui dit: « Marie, mon enfant, vous êtes bénie entre les femmes, et béni est votre sein virginal. Le Seigneur magnifiera votre nom saint par toute la terre. Vous aurez la prééminence sur (toutes) les

femmes et vous deviendrez entre toutes la mère des vierges. De vous viendra le salut de toute la terre. » Ainsi parla le grand prêtre Zacharie. Marie se prosterna devant les prêtres et tout le peuple et retourna toute joyeuse dans sa maison.

14. Or quand eut lieu l'annonciation de l'ange à Marie, la grossesse d'Élisabeth était commencée depuis le 20 tešrin, c'est-à-dire le neuf octobre; de cette date au 15 nisan, c'est-à-dire au six avril,\fn{ Voir ci-dessus, § 9 [the second note]. } il y a cent quatre-vingts jours, ce qui fait six mois. C'est alors que commença l'incarnation du Christ, par laquelle il prit chair de la Sainte Vierge. Un jour donc, la sainte Vierge Marie ayant fait réflexion, (se) dit: « Je me lèverai et j'irai voir ma cousine Élisabeth. Je lui raconterai tous les événements qui me sont arrivés, et tout ce qu'elle me dira, je le ferai. » Puis, étant sortie en cachette,\fn{ S: Alors Marie envoya à Joseph, à Bethléem, un message (conçu en ces termes): « Je demande à aller voir Élisabeth ma cousine. » Joseph lui permit d'aller. Elle partit donc emmenant d'(autres) femmes ... (Cf. Ps.-Matth. VIII, 5). } au point du jour, elle s'en fut dans les montagnes de Judée, en la ville de Juda; elle entra dans la maison de Zacharie et salua Élisabeth.

15. Et quand Élisabeth eut entendu la voix de Marie, son enfant tressaillit de joie en son sein. Élisabeth fut remplie de l'Esprit-Saint; elle éleva la voix et dit: « Vous êtes bénie entre les femmes et béni est le fruit de vos entrailles. Qu'est-ce qui me vaut que la mère de mon Seigneur soit venue à moi? Car lorsque vos paroles de salutation ont frappé mon oreille, mon enfant a tressailli dans mon sein. » Et quand Marie l'eut entendue parler ainsi, elle leva vers le ciel ses yeux pleins de larmes et dit: « Seigneur, qui suis-je pour que toutes les nations me proclament bienheureuse; pour que j'aie été mise en évidence parmi toutes les femmes et filles des Hébreux et que mon nom devienne célèbre et fameux dans toutes les tribus des enfants d'Israël? »\fn{ S s'en tient à peu près au texte de Saint Luc, I, 47-48. } Marie avait oublié la parole que l'ange lui avait dite précédemment.\fn{ Cf. Protév. XII, 2. S omet cette remarque. }

16. Et Marie demeura de longs jours\fn{ Protév. XIII, 3, et S: trois mois. S ajoute immédiatement qu'Élisabeth, par humilité, se défendit d'accepter plus longtemps les services de Marie et persuada à celle-ci de s'en retourner chez elle. } chez Élisabeth et, confidentiellement, lui raconta en ordre tout ce qu'elle avait vu et entendu de l'ange. Élisabeth, vivement surprise, lui dit: « Mon enfant, ce que vous dites est une œuvre très merveilleuse de Dieu. Mais écoutez ce que je vais vous dire: Ne vous effrayez pas de ce qui vous arrive et ne soyez pas incrédule. Pensées, actes paroles, tout (ici) dépasse absolument l'esprit humain. Voyez-moi, qui suis avancée en âge et déjà proche de la mort, je suis maintenant enceinte et je deviendrai mère malgré ma vieillesse et mes cheveux blancs; car il n'y a rien d'impossible à Dieu. Quant à vous, allez en silence vous renfermer dans votre maison. Ne dites à personne ce que vous avez vu et entendu. Ne (le) racontez à aucun des enfants d'Israël, de peur qu'abusés par de vaines paroles, ils ne vous tournent en dérision; ni à celui qui est appelé votre mari, de peur que vous ne le blessiez au cœur et qu'il ne vous répudie. (Attendez) que la volonté du Seigneur s'accomplisse; il vous manifestera, lui, ce qu'il a l'intention de faire. »

17. Marie dit: « J'agirai selon vos recommandations. » Élisabeth dit: « Écoutez et gardez le conseil que je vous donne. Retournez en paix dans votre maison; gardez-vous d'aller et de venir çà et là; mais demeurez silencieusement dans votre maison. Tenez-vous cachée au monde, afin que personne ne sache rien. Tout ce que votre mari vous a ordonné, faites-le. Et, dans vos épreuves, le Seigneur saura aussi vous ménager une issue. Ne craignez pas et réjouissez-vous. » Ainsi parla Élisabeth. Marie se prosterna devant elle, et s'en retourna joyeuse dans sa maison. Elle y demeura de longs jours. Et l'enfant se développait, de jour en jour, dans son sein. Redoutant le monde, elle se tenait perpétuellement cachée, afin que personne ne sût rien.

VI: Affliction de Joseph. Les soupçons qu'il eut et le jugement qu'il porta sur la très sainte Vierge.

1. Quand ces jours furent révolus, Joseph revenant de ses travaux de charpenterie, arriva à sa maison.\fn{ Cf. Protév. XIII, 1. S: Quand vint le cinquième mois, Joseph arriva de Bethléem son village, après avoir bâti et achevé son édifice ... — Les interminables et choquantes amplifications qui remplissent ce chapitre n'ont de parallèle ni dans le Protévangile ni dans aucun de ses remaniements. } Marie, se levant, alla à sa rencontre et se prosterna devant lui. Joseph lui dit: « Vous trouvez-vous bien? Êtes-vous heureuse? Que vous est-il advenu? » Marie dit: « Je me trouve bien. » Et après avoir dressé la table, ils prirent leur repas joyeusement. Et Joseph, s'étant étendu sur sa couche, voulut se reposer. En dirigeant son regard sur Marie, il vit que son visage altéré passait par toutes les couleurs; elle (essayait de) cacher sa

confusion et n'y parvenait pas.

2. Joseph la regarda avec tristesse, et s'étant dressé sur son séant, il lui dit: « Ma fille dites-moi: il me semble que vous n'avez plus votre grâce enfantine; car je vous trouve un peu changée. » Marie dit: « Que voulez-vous me dire, avec ces questions et cet examen? » Joseph dit: « Je m'étonne de vos paroles et de vos prétextes. Pourquoi êtes-vous assise, oisive et triste, avec ces traits altérés? Quelqu'un vous a-t-il parlé? J'en serais mécontent. Un malaise ou une infirmité corporelle vous sont-ils survenus? Ou bien avez-vous été atteinte par quelque épreuve ou par les intrigues des hommes? » Marie dit: « Il n'en est rien. » Joseph dit: « Alors, pourquoi ne pas me répondre franchement? » Marie dit: « Que voulez-vous donc que je vous dise? » Joseph dit: « Je ne croirai pas à vos paroles avant d'avoir vu. Mettez-vous franchement en évidence devant moi, (que je sache) s'il en est bien comme vous dites. » Et Marie, troublée intérieurement, ne savait que faire. Aussitôt, Joseph s'assit sur son siège et, enveloppant Marie d'un regard attentif, il vit qu'elle était enceinte. Il poussa un grand cri et dit: « Hélas! quelle action criminelle avez-vous commise! »

3. Et Joseph, tombant de son siège la face contre terre, se frappa le front de la main; il s'arrachait la barbe et ses cheveux blancs; il se roulait le visage dans la cendre et disait: « Malheur à moi! Malédiction sur ma triste vieillesse! Que s'est-il donc passé? (Quel est) ce désastre que je vois dans ma maison? De quel front regarderai-je le visage des hommes? Que répondrai-je aux prêtres et à tout le peuple d'Israël? Comment réussirai-je à arrêter une poursuite au criminel? Et par quel artifice pourrai-je apaiser l'opinion publique? Que faire en cette conjoncture, et comment pallier le fait que j'ai reçu du temple cette vierge, sainte et sans tache, et que je n'ai pu la garder dans l'observation de la loi, selon la tradition de mes pères? Si l'on m'adresse cette sommation: "Qu'est devenue la virginité sante de cette (enfant)? Remettez-la pure et immaculée devant nous," quelle réponse ferai-je à tous, prêtres et peuple? Quel est l'ennemi qui m'a tendu ce piège? Quel brigand m'a ravi la virginité de cette (enfant)? Qui a commis ce grand crime dans ma maison et a fait de moi un objet de risée et d'opprobre parmi les enfants d'Israël? Est-ce sur moi qu'est retombée la faute <de celui> qui, par la perfidie du serpent, fut déchu de son état bienheureux?... »

4. Et Joseph, ayant ainsi parlé, se frappait la (poitrine) avec des gémissements mêlés de larmes. Puis il fit de nouveau comparaître Marie et lui dit: « O âme digne de pleurs et de gémissements, qui êtes maintenant tombée dans l'égarément, dites-moi quelle est l'action défendu que vous avez commise. Pourquoi avez-vous oublié le Seigneur votre Dieu, qui vous a formée dans le sein de votre mère, vous que vos parents ont obtenue de Dieu à force de larmes et de pleurs et qu'ils lui ont offerte religieusement et selon la loi; qui fûtes nourrie et élevée dans le temple, qui entendiez perpétuellement les louanges du Seigneur et le chant des anges; qui prêtiez une oreille attentive à la lecture des (saints) Livres et en écoutiez les paroles. Et après la mort de vos parents vous fûtes mise en tutelle dans le temple, jusqu'à la fin de votre éducation.\fn{ *Texte: « jusqu'au moment où vous fûtes corrigée » [XXX₄₆].* } Vous y étiez devenue instruite et versée dans les lois divines, et vous aviez reçu, en grand honneur, la bénédiction des prêtres. Et après que vous m'eûtes été confiée, sur l'ordre de Dieu et avec la bénédiction des prêtres et de tout le peuple, je vous acceptai religieusement et vous ayant emmenée, je vous établis dans ma maison; je pourvus à toutes vos nécessités matérielles; je vous recommandai d'être prudente et de veiller sur vous-même jusqu'à mon retour. Quelle est donc cette action que vous avez faite? Pourquoi ne dites-vous mot, ou refusez-vous de répondre? O malheureuse et infortunée, pourquoi êtes-vous tombée dans un tel désordre, (par où) vous êtes devenue un objet d'opprobre universel, parmi les hommes, les femmes et tout le genre humain? »

5. Et Marie, baissant la tête en silence, pleurait et sanglotait. (Puis) elle dit: « Ne me jugez pas à la légère et ne suspectez pas injurieusement ma virginité, car je suis pure de tout péché, et je ne connais absolument aucun homme. » Joseph dit: « Alors expliquez-moi d'où vient votre grossesse. » Marie dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur, je ne sais ce que vous dites. » Joseph dit: « Je ne vous parle pas avec violence et emportement, mais je veux vous interroger amicalement. Dites-moi quel homme s'est introduit ou a été introduit auprès de vous, ou dans quelle maison vous êtes allée imprudemment. » Marie dit: « Je ne suis jamais allée nulle part, hors de cette maison. » Joseph dit: « Voilà qui est prodigieux: vous ne savez (rien), et je vois avec certitude que vous êtes enceinte. Qui a (jamais) vu, qui a entendu qu'une femme ait conçu et soit devenue mère sans <l'intervention d'un homme>? Je ne crois pas à de pareils discours. » Marie dit: « Dès lors comment pourrai-je vous satisfaire? Puisque vous m'interrogez en toute sincérité sur ceci, j'atteste, pour ma part, que je suis sans péché, et que je ne connais absolument aucun homme. Et si vous me jugez témé-rairement, vous aurez à répondre de moi devant Dieu. »

6. Ayant entendu ces paroles, Joseph en fut frappé et conçut une vive crainte. Il se prit à réfléchir et dit: « Chose effrayante et prodigieuse! Je ne comprends ni n'entends absolument rien au cours de ces événements. Car ces faits sont étranges; ils dépassent toute conception, tout ce que nous avons vu ou entendu de (nos propres) oreilles, (tout) ce que j'ai entendu et appris des ancêtres. La stupeur étreint mon esprit. A qui m'adresser? Qui consulterai-je sur cette affaire? Car j'hésite à la pensée que la chose (maintenant) secrète, va être divulguée et racontée partout; et ceux qui l'entendront, se moqueront de (pareils) dires. » Marie dit: « Jusques à quand vous emporterez-vous contre moi et me condamnerez-vous en termes inconsidérés? Ne cesserez-vous de m'accabler de vos outrages? » Joseph dit: « C'est que je ne puis résister à cette grande tristesse et à l'affliction qui se sont abattues sur moi. Que ferai-je de vous, et quelle réponse donnerai-je à quiconque m'en demandera? Et je crains que si l'affaire éclate et qu'elle soit divulguée par la voix publique, mes cheveux blancs ne soient déshonorés parmi les enfants d'Israël. »

7. Ayant ainsi parlé, Joseph se répandit en pleurs et disait avec des larmes: « Triste et malheureux vieillard, pourquoi es-tu devenu son gardien? Pourquoi as-tu obéi aux prêtres et à tout le peuple d'Israël, en sorte que, dans ta vieillesse et sur le point de mourir, tu as déshonoré tes cheveux blancs? » Et (comme) il ne savait quel parti prendre, il se mit à réfléchir et se dit: « Que ferai-je de cette enfant? Car je ne saurai pas ce qu'il en est, avant que le Seigneur ne manifeste les événements qui se préparent, puisque, en (tout) ceci, je n'ai pas agi de ma propre volonté. Avant ce (moment), je n'ai rien su ni compris de tout ce qui allait se passer. Mais, je sais avec certitude que, si l'épreuve qui m'arrive vient de Dieu, elle est pour mon bien, et que si au contraire cette affliction est le fait de l'ennemi, Dieu m'en délivrera. Pourtant, je ne sais que faire: si je condamne (Marie), ce sera de ma part une grande faute; et si je dis du mal d'elle, je serai justement condamné par Dieu. Je la prendrai donc secrètement cette nuit, je l'emmènerai et je la laisserai en paix s'en aller où elle voudra. »

8. Alors, il manda Marie et lui dit: « Or çà, tout ce que vous m'avez dit, vrai ou faux, je l'ai écouté et je l'ai cru. Je ne vous ferai aucun mal; mais cette nuit je vous emmènerai et je vous congédierai. Allez où vous voudrez. » Lorsque Marie eut entendu ces paroles, ses yeux se remplirent de larmes et elle se mit à pleurer, Joseph sortit tristement de la maison, il s'en alla à l'écart, et s'étant assis, il pleurait et se frappait (la poitrine).

9. Et Marie s'étant levée se prosterna la face contre terre, et parla en ces termes: « Dieu de mes pères! Dieu d'Israël! regardez, dans votre miséricorde, les tourments de votre servante et l'affliction de mon âme. Ne me livrez pas, Seigneur, à la honte et aux blâmes du vulgaire. Puisque vous savez, Seigneur, que le cœur des enfants des hommes est incrédule, manifestez votre nom devant tous, afin qu'ils sachent que vous seul êtes le Seigneur Dieu et que votre nom a été prononcé sur nous par vous-même. »^{fn{ *Texte: « et vous »* ([XXX₄₇]; *lire: [XXX₄₈]*)}} Ayant ainsi parlé, la sainte Vierge Marie répandait ses larmes devant le Seigneur. Et, au même moment, un ange lui adressa la parole, disant: « Ne craignez pas, car voici que je suis avec vous pour vous sauver de toutes vos tribulations. Prenez donc courage et réjouissez-vous. » Ayant ainsi parlé, l'ange la quitta. Et Marie, s'étant levée, remerciait le Seigneur.

10. Aux approches du soir, Joseph revint en silence à sa maison. Il s'assit, et portant les yeux sur Marie, il la vit toute joyeuse et les traits épanouis. Joseph lui dit: « Ma fille, vous me paraissez maintenant bien gaie et le visage tout radieux, parce que vous êtes sur le point de vous séparer de moi pour aller où vous voudrez. » Marie dit: « Il n'en va pas comme vous le dites, mais je rends grâce à Dieu en tout temps, parce qu'il a la puissance d'accomplir tout ce qu'on lui demande, et parce que le Seigneur lui-même, qui scrute, lui, les consciences et les esprits, a la volonté et le dessein de manifester devant tous et devant chacun les actions des hommes. »

11. Ayant ainsi parlé, Marie se tut. Et Joseph demeura en proie à la tristesse depuis le soir jusqu'à l'aube. Il ne mangea ni ne but.^{fn{ *Cf. Histoire de Joseph le Charpentier, ch. V.* }} Et comme il s'était endormi, l'ange du Seigneur se montra à lui dans une vision nocturne et lui dit: « Joseph, fils de David, ne craignez pas d'accueillir auprès de vous Marie votre épouse, car celui qui est né en elle est (conçu) du Saint-Esprit. Elle mettra au monde un fils et vous l'appellerez du nom de Jésus. »^{fn{ *Ce discours est quelque peu amplifié dans S, qui poursuit: Quand Joseph s'éveilla, il se prosterna devant Marie et lui demanda pardon en disant: « Vous êtes bien appelée "Sublime" (jeu de mots sur le nom [XXX₄₉], Marie). Et depuis cette nuit, elle sembla à ses yeux radieuse comme la lumière. Quand l'aube parut, (Joseph) s'en alla prier dans le temple, car c'était un homme en vue et considéré parmi les enfants d'Israël. Quand ils l'aperçurent, les prêtres l'appelèrent et lui dirent: « Joseph, qu'avez-*}

vous fait? ... » [La suite, sans transition, au ch. VII, 4.] s'éveilla; et s'étant levé, il se mit en prière, et parla de la sorte: « Seigneur, Dieu de mes pères, Dieu d'Israël, je vous rends grâces, Seigneur, et je glorifie votre saint nom, (ô vous) qui avez exaucé la voix de mes supplications, et qui ne m'avez pas délaissé dans le temps de ma vieillesse, mais (au contraire) m'avez fait espérer salut et consolation; qui avez dissipé de mon cœur le deuil et la tristesse, et qui avez gardé la Vierge sainte, pure de toute souillure terrestre. » Ayant ainsi parlé, Joseph fut rempli d'allégresse; il se réjouissait et louait le Dieu de l'univers.

VII: Comme quoi Marie démontra sa virginité et la chasteté de Joseph. On les soumet tous deux à l'épreuve de l'eau.

1. Et Joseph s'étant levé de bonne heure, revint de son ouvrage à sa maison.\fn{ Sic. Redite de Protév. XIII, 1, qui a servi de canevas à l'amplificateur. Cf. Protév. XIV, 2. S: Quand Joseph s'éveilla, il s'inclina devant Marie et lui demanda pardon en disant: « Vous êtes sincère, Marie ... » } Il manda Marie d'un cœur joyeux et lui dit: « J'ai péché contre le Seigneur mon Dieu; car fréquemment j'ai suspecté votre virginité sainte, et je n'ai point connu ni compris auparavant ce qu'il en est des choses que vous me dites. » Et tandis que Joseph, s'abandonnant à ces réflexions, parlait de la sorte et s'absorbait en ses pensées, un scribe nommé Anne arriva au même instant. C'était un homme pieux et fidèle, attaché au service du temple du Seigneur. Lorsqu'il fut entré dans la maison, Joseph se leva; ils s'embrassèrent, puis s'assirent.\fn{ La scène qui suit et tout le dialogue sont un développement fantaisiste de Protév. XV, 1. } Anne le scribe dit: « Êtes-vous heureusement revenu de votre voyage, père vénéré? Comment se sont passés votre allée et votre retour? » Joseph dit: « Je suis heureux de vous voir ici,\fn{ Texte: [XXX₅₀], homme. Nous lisons: [XXX₅₁]. } scribe et serviteur de Dieu. » Le scribe dit: « Quand êtes-vous arrivé, homme vénérable, vieillard cher et agréable à Dieu? » Joseph dit: « Je suis arrivé (hier) soir; j'étais fatigué et je n'ai pu aller assister à la cérémonie de la prière. » Le scribe dit: « Les prêtres et tout le peuple demeurent dans l'attente de votre arrivée. » Joseph dit: « Que le Seigneur Dieu d'Israël les bénisse maintenant et à jamais. »

2. Ayant ainsi parlé, ils dressèrent la table; ils mangèrent, burent, se réjouirent, et après avoir remercié le Seigneur, ils rendirent gloire à Dieu. Au même instant, Anne le scribe, ayant arrêté les yeux sur la vierge Marie, la regarda et vit qu'elle était enceinte. Il se tut cependant (et) s'en alla trouver les prêtres, auxquels il dit: « Ce Joseph, auquel vous rendez témoignage qu'il est un juste, vient de commettre une grave iniquité. » Les prêtres dirent: « Quelle œuvre d'iniquité avez-vous observée en lui? » Le scribe dit: « La vierge Marie, qu'il a emmenée du temple, et que vous lui aviez ordonné de garder saintement, est aujourd'hui violée, sans avoir reçu régulièrement la couronne de bénédiction. »\fn{ Allusion au rite du mariage. } Les prêtres dirent: « Joseph n'a pas fait cela, car c'est un homme juste, saint et parfait. » Le scribe dit: « Je l'ai vu, moi, de mes propres yeux; et ce que je vous dis, pourquoi ne le croyez-vous pas? » Le grand prêtre dit: « Ne portez point de faux témoignage contre lui, car ce vous serait un péché. » Le scribe dit: « Devant Dieu et devant tout le peuple, si mon témoignage est faux, je suis digne de mort. Et si vous ne me croyez pas, ordonnez à quelque autre d'(aller) y regarder attentivement et vous serez renseignés. »

3. Alors le grand prêtre Zacharie\fn{ Ni le Protév. ni S ne nomment Zacharie. Dans le ps.-Matthieu: Abiathar. } envoya des appariteurs citer Joseph par-devant tout le peuple. Et lorsque les appariteurs arrivèrent, ils trouvèrent que la vierge était enceinte, et, à leur retour, ils rapportèrent aux prêtres et à tous les autres qu'il en était bien comme le scribe l'avait dit. Quand le grand prêtre Zacharie eut entendu cela, il ordonna d'amener de force Joseph et Marie par devers lui au tribunal. Et lorsqu'ils furent arrivés, au milieu d'une affluence de peuple, le grand prêtre Zacharie interrogea la sainte vierge Marie et lui dit: « Dites-moi, mon enfant, quelle est cette action illégitime que vous avez commise, et (par laquelle) vous avez perdu votre virginité et mis en oubli le Seigneur votre Dieu? » Et après que Marie, baissant silencieusement la tête, eut répandu ses larmes devant les prêtres et devant tout le peuple, elle se prosterna humblement et dit: « (Je jure) par la vie du Seigneur et par la sainteté de son nom, que je ne connais absolument aucun homme. » Le grand prêtre dit: « D'où vient donc cette grossesse que voici? »\fn{ Texte: « que tu vois. » } Marie dit: « Je l'ignore. »

4. Alors\fn{ Cf. Protév. XV, 4; ps.-Matth. XII, 1. S (cf. VI, 11; ci-dessus, p. 5, note 111): ... ils lui dirent: « Joseph, qu'avez-vous fait et comment en avez-vous usé avec Marie, sans nous convoquer à la cérémonie nuptiale? » Et Joseph dit aux prêtres: « Je ne sais ce que vous voulez dire. » Et les <S₂: princes des> prêtres envoyèrent chercher Marie. Et le grand prêtre dit [S₂: les princes des prêtres dirent] à Marie: « Qu'avez-vous donc fait, vous qui avez été élevée dans le Saint des Saints (du temple) de Dieu et qui, par trois fois, avez entendu les chants

des anges? » Marie répondit en pleurant et dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, je suis pure, et je ne connais absolument aucun homme » [cf. *Protév. XV, 3*]. Le grand prêtre lui dit [S₂: les princes des prêtres lui dirent] prophétiquement: « Seriez-vous la mère du Messie? Comment croirions-nous à vos paroles? Vous êtes enceinte et vous dites: Je ne connais point d'homme ... » — *A l'interrogatoire de Marie, succède immédiatement l'épreuve de l'eau. (Voir ci-après, § 6).* } le grand prêtre ordonna d'amener Joseph devant lui et lui dit: « Dites-moi, vieillard, pourquoi avez-vous commis, chez les enfants d'Israël, cette faute qui vous déshonore parmi le peuple des tribus? »\fn{*Texte: « de nombreuses tribus. »*} Joseph dit: « Ne me condamnez pas à la légère et sans témoignage, car vous vous rendriez coupable. » Le grand prêtre dit: « Ce n'est pas sans motif que nous vous condamnons, ni (au mépris) de votre innocence, mais avec raison. Remettez(-nous) vierge la sainte et puer Marie, que vous avez reçue à sa sortie du temple; sinon vous êtes digne de mort. » Joseph dit: « Vous avez raison, mais (je jure) par la vie du Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, que je ne sais rien des choses que vous dites. » Le grand prêtre dit: « Ne mentez point, mais répondez à ceci: Vous êtes-vous arrogé le droit du mariage? Avez-vous méprisé la loi de Dieu, sans le déclarer aux enfants d'Israël, ni courber votre tête sous la puissante main de Dieu afin que votre descendance soit bénie, dans la terre entière? » Joseph dit: « Je vous l'ai déjà dit et je vous (le) répète maintenant, (dans l'espoir) que vous me croirez: vous savez bien vous-même que jamais je ne me suis écarté des commandements de Dieu, et que je n'ai jamais été l'adversaire ni l'ennemi de personne. Or donc, j'ai conscience de par l'Esprit, et c'est le Seigneur lui-même qui m'en rend témoignage, que je n'ai jamais connu d'autre femme que ma première et légitime épouse. C'est vous, prêtres et peuples, qui, vous étant ligués contre moi, m'avez persuadé malgré moi, à force d'instances et de falteries, (si bien que) moi, par respect pour Dieu et pour vous, je me suis soumis à vos ordres. J'ai fait tout ce qui était convenable, (comme) vous aviez machiné de me l'imposer. J'ai pris et emmené cette (vierge) dans ma maison, j'ai pourvu à tous ses besoins matériels; je lui ai recommandé d'être prudente et de se garder dans la sainteté jusqu'à mon retour. Moi, je me suis mis en route et j'ai été vaquer aux travaux de mon métier, jusqu'à l'achèvement de ce que j'avais à faire. Quand je revins hier soir, tout le monde a pu entendre quelles furent les circonstances de mon arrivée. Et de la (vierge), je n'ai vu ni ne sais rien, sinon qu'elle est enceinte. »

5. Lorsque la multitude du peuple eut entendu cela, elle dit: « Ce vieillard est juste et loyal. » Le grand prêtre dit: « Oui, je sais ce <que> vous avez dit. Mais cette jeune fille n'était qu'une enfant, orpheline de père et de mère. Vous étiez, vous, notoirement un vieillard accompli: voilà pourquoi nous vous avons confié sa virginité, pour qu'elle demeurât intacte et immaculée jusqu'au moment où vous recevriez (tous deux) la couronne de bénédiction. »\fn{*Voir ci-dessus, note, § 2.*} Joseph dit: « Vous avez raison, mais moi, je n'avais aucune idée de ce qui allait arriver. Du reste le Seigneur manifestera, de la manière qu'il voudra, le tort qu'elle a subi. » Ayant dit ces choses, Joseph se renferma dans le silence.

6. Le grand prêtre dit:\fn{*Des §§ 6-9, rapprocher Protév. XVI, 2 (t. I, p. 33, avec la note de M. Michel).*} « Vous boirez l'eau d'épreuve et le Seigneur manifestera votre forfait, si vous en êtes coupables. » Alors le grand prêtre Zacharie, prenant en vain l'eau d'épreuve, appela Joseph en sa présence et lui dit: « O homme, songez à votre vieillesse chenu! Ainsi donc, voyez de vos yeux ce poison de vie et de mort, et ne vous jetez pas de vous-même dans l'épreuve et la perdition. » Joseph dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur et la sainteté de son nom, je jure que je n'ai conscience d'aucune faute. Mais si le Seigneur vent me condamner malgré mon innocence, que la volonté du Seigneur s'accomplisse! » Et au même instant, le grand prêtre fit boire l'eau à Joseph, puis il le fit rapidement aller et venir.\fn{*Protév. XVI, 2: Il l'envoya dans la région montagneuse ([XXX₅₂], cf. Luc, I, 39).*} Joseph alla et revint en courant, et redescendit indemne et sans flétrissure,\fn{*Voyez la note suivante.*} n'ayant subi en sa personne aucun dommage. Et quand ils virent qu'il n'avait pas été frappé de mort, tous furent pris d'une vive crainte.

7. Ensuite (le grand prêtre) ordonna de mander Marie en sa présence. Lorsqu'elle fut arrivée, Zacharie prenant en main l'eau d'épreuve, lui dit: « Ma fille, considérez votre jeune âge, et souvenez-vous du temps passé, où vous avez été nourrie et élevée dans le temple. Ayez pitié de vous-même, et si vous êtes innocente, sauvez-vous de la mort et il ne vous adviendra aucun mal. Mais si vous tentez par tromperie le Dieu vivant, il vous confondra publiquement et vous périrez de male mort. » Marie dit en pleurant: « Je n'ai conscience d'aucun tort; mais ma virginité est (demeurée) sainte et inviolée, sans aucune faute. Que si le Seigneur me condamne, bien qu'innocente, que la volonté du Seigneur s'accomplisse. »

8. Alors le grand prêtre, prenant l'eau, la donna à boire à Marie, et il lui ordonna d'aller et de venir rapidement. Elle partit et s'éloigna, elle revint et descendit, sans flétrissure\fn{*[XXX₅₃]. Comparer ps.-Matth. XII, 3: et non est inventa in*

ea ulla macula. } ni dommage. Ce que voyant, la foule, prise d'admiration, demeura stupéfaite et dit: « Béni soit le Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, de ce qu'ils sont purs et innocents; car ils sont sortis indemnes de l'épreuve et aucune œuvre coupable n'est apparue en eux. » Alors le grand prêtre ordonna de mander devant lui Joseph et Marie; et il leur dit: « Vous avez conscience qu'il vous faudra répondre devant Dieu. Ce que la loi nous ordonnait de faire, nous l'avons fait. Le Seigneur n'a point manifesté votre péché; et moi, je ne vous condamnerai pas. Allez en paix. »

9. Et après s'être prosternés devant les prêtres et devant tout le peuple, ils retournèrent sans bruit dans leur maison, en se cachant et sans se montrer. Ils y demeurèrent jusqu'au terme de la grossesse de la vierge sainte. Et quand Marie vit approcher les douleurs de l'enfantement,\fn{**Sic; cf. ch. VIII, 4.**} Joseph prit peur et se dit: « Que ferai-je d'elle en sorte que personne ne connaisse, pour notre confusion, la chose qui est arrivée? » Et Joseph dit à Marie: « Il ne convient pas que nous restions dans cette ville. Venez! Allons-nous-en ailleurs, dans un pays lointain, où personne ne nous connaît; car si nous demeurons fixés ici, tous ceux qui entendront que vous êtes devenue mère, jetteront sur nous le ridicule et le blâme, parmi les enfants d'Israël. » Marie dit: « Faites comme il vous plaira de faire. » Gloire au Christ dans (tous) les siècles. Ainsi soit-il!

VIII: De la naissance de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ dans la caverne.

1. En ces jours-là, fut rendu un décret de l'empereur Auguste ordonnant de faire un recensement par toute la terre et de verser à l'empereur les impôts dus au trésor, chacun ayant à lui payer annuellement, au début de l'année, une dîme calculée sur l'état nominatif des personnes appartenant à sa maison.\fn{**La phrase arménienne est étrangement contournée.**} Joseph se présenta\fn{**C.-à-d., d'après le contexte, il résolut de se présenter.**} avec Marie au recensement pour être inscrits.\fn{**Texte: (au recensement) qu'ils écrivaient [XXX₅₄].**} Et sur-le-champ, Joseph, s'étant levé, harnacha sa monture et prépara tout ce dont ils avaient besoin pour leur subsistance corporelle. Il prit avec lui José son plus jeune fils,\fn{**Dans E (le ms. D'Edschmiadsin), Osê [XXX₅₅] (N. Marr, [XXX₅₆], t. VI, 1891, p. 138). Voyez l'Histoire de Joseph le Charpentier, ch. II et XI. Dans ce dernier document, c'est Jacques (frère du Seigneur) qui est désigné comme le dernier-né de Joseph (cf. ch. IV et XI).**} il plaça Marie sur sa monture et (ensemble) ils partirent en suivant la route qui se dirige vers le sud.

2. Et quand ils furent à quinze stades de la ville, ce qui fait neuf milles,\fn{**Protév.: trois milles. Tout ce qui suit (VIII, 2-6) est une paraphrase alambiquée du thème esquissé dans Protév. XVII, 2. On remarquera que, par endroits, notre auteur reflète telle ou telle donnée propre au pseudo-Matthieu.**} Joseph en regardant Marie vit qu'elle avait les traits altérés et qu'elle était triste et sombre. Il se dit en lui-même: « Elle est en gestation, et, à cause de sa grossesse, elle ne peut se tenir assise sur sa monture. » Joseph dit à Marie: « Pourquoi votre âme est-elle triste et (pourquoi) êtes-vous si troublée? » Marie dit: « Comment pourrais-je être joyeuse, ne sachant où je vais, enceinte comme je le suis? » Joseph dit: « Vous avez raison. Mais béni soit le Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, qui nous a délivrés de la calomnie des hommes et de (leur) dénigrement. » Marie dit: « Ne vous avais-je pas dit auparavant, (dans l'espoir que) vous me croiriez, que je n'ai conscience d'aucune faute et que vous me condamnerez à la légère, malgré mon innocence. Mais c'est le Seigneur de toutes choses, qui seul m'a délivrée des pièges de la mort. »

3. Et après qu'ils eurent marché une heure, Joseph ayant regardé Marie, vit avec joie qu'elle tressaillait d'allégresse. Marie dit: « Pourquoi me regardez-vous, et pourquoi cette insistance à me questionner? » Joseph dit: « Je vois du nouveau en vous et je m'étonne: tantôt votre visage paraît triste, tantôt gai et joyeux. » Marie dit: « J'exulte et je me réjouis, pour la raison que le Seigneur m'a délivrée de toutes les embûches de l'ennemi. Mais je veux, pour votre instruction, vous apprendre une chose nouvelle. » Joseph dit: « Dites-moi ce dont vous parlez. » Marie dit: « Je me réjouis et je m'attriste, pour cette raison que je vois (deux) armées nombreuses réunissant douze\fn{**Le sens vrai doit être: « deux armées composées de nombreux bataillons ».**} bataillons: l'une à droite, l'autre à gauche. Ceux qui se trouvent à droit sont (dans) la joie, et ceux qui se trouvent à gauche sont dans la tristesse et le deuil. »\fn{**Comparer S, note au texte arabe, ch. II, p. 2.**}

4. En entendant cela, Joseph fut vivement étonné, et s'étant pris à réfléchir, il (se) dit: « Quelle est cette vision qui lui est apparue? » Et au même moment, un ange\fn{**Cf. ps.-Matth. XIII, 1.**} s'adressa à (Marie), et lui dit: « Réjouissez-vous, Marie, vierge et servante du Seigneur. Voyez-vous ce signe qui vous est apparu? » Marie dit: « Oui. » L'ange dit: « Aujourd'hui les douleurs de votre délivrance sont proches. Les troupes que vous voyez à gauche sont composées de toutes les multitudes de l'armée des anges incorporels. Ils observent et attendent votre enfantement saint, pour venir adorer l'enfant nouveau-né, le fils du Roi, le souverain d'Israël. Ceux qui sont à

gauche sont les bataillons réunis de la légion des démons aux noirs vêtements: ils attendent dans un grand trouble, car ils vont être mis en déroute. » Ayant entendu ces paroles de l'ange, Joseph et Marie se réjouissent, après avoir rendu à Dieu de vives actions de grâces. »

5. Et ils cheminaient (ainsi) par une très froide journée, un jour d'hiver: on était au 21 du mois de tebeth,\fn{[XXX₅₇], [XXX₅₈], fin décembre-janvier, dans le calendrier juif.} le six janvier.\fn{Ce synchronisme vaut les précédents; voir ci-dessus, ch. III, 8, note 2.} Et comme ils arrivaient à un endroit désolé, qui avait été autrefois la ville royale (et qui) s'appelle Bethléem, à la sixième heure du jour, qui était un jeudi, Marie dit à Joseph: « Descendez-moi vite de la monture; l'enfant me fait souffrir. » Joseph dit: « Hélas, que vais-je devenir pour le coup; (voilà) que sa délivrance a lieu non pas dans un endroit habité, mais dans un lieu inculte et désert, où il n'y a nulle part d'hôtellerie. Où irai-je donc? Où la conduirai-je pour la mettre en repos? Il n'y a (ici) ni maison, ni abri couvert, à l'ombre duquel elle puisse cacher sa nudité. »

6. Puis, Joseph trouva là une caverne fort vaste où des bergers et des laboureurs, qui habitaient et travaillaient aux environs, assemblaient et parquaient le soir leurs troupeaux; ils y avaient fait une crèche pour le bétail et ils (y) donnaient\fn{Texte: maison, [XXX₅₉]. Nous lisons: [XXX₆₀], donnaient. (Voir ci-après, ch. XI, 1, p. 127.} à manger à leur animaux. Mais en ce temps-là les bergers et les bouviers ne s'y trouvaient pas, car c'était l'hiver.

7. Joseph y amena donc Marie. Il l'introduisit à l'intérieur; il plaça auprès d'elle son fils Josè\fn{E: Osè.} sur (le seuil de) la porte, et sortit lui-même pour aller à la recherche d'une sage-femme.

8. Et\fn{Comparer Protév. XVIII, 2.} comme il marchait, il vit que la terre s'était haussée et que le ciel s'était abaissé, et il éleva les mains comme pour toucher l'endroit où ils se rejoignaient. Il aperçut autour (de lui) les éléments, qui demeuraient engourdis et hébétés; les vents et l'air du ciel, devenus immobiles, avaient suspendu leur cours; les oiseaux (et) les volatiles avaient arrêté leur essor. Et regardant à terre, il vit une jarre nouvellement (fabriquée): (près de) là se tenait un potier qui avait pétri de l'argile, faisant le geste de joindre en l'air ses deux mains, qui ne se rapprochaient pas. Tous les autres avaient le regard arrêté en haut. Il vit aussi des troupeaux que l'on conduisait: ils n'avançaient, ni ne marchaient, ni ne paissaient. Le berger brandissait sa houlette et ne pouvait frapper les moutons, mais il tendait la main levée très haut. Il regarda encore un torrent dans un ravin, et vit que des chameaux\fn{[XXX₆₁], peut-être pour [XXX₆₂], chevreau, comme Protév. XIII, 2.} qui paissaient (là) avaient posé leurs lèvres sur le bord du ravin et ne mangeaient point. Ainsi, à l'heure de l'enfantement de la vierge sainte, tous les éléments demeuraient comme figés dans leur attitude.

9. Joseph regarda au loin et vit une femme qui venait de la montagne, avec une large toile jetée sur l'épaule. Il alla à sa rencontre et ils se saluèrent. Joseph dit: « O femme, d'où venez-vous et où allez-vous? » La femme dit: « Et que cherchez-vous, vous qui m'interrogez ainsi? » Joseph dit: « Je cherche une sage-femme hébraïque. » La femme dit: « Quelle est celle qui a enfanté dans la caverne? » Joseph dit: « C'est Marie, qui a été élevée dans le temple. Elle m'a été attribuée en mariage. Elle n'est point (ma) femme selon la chair, mais elle a conçu de l'Esprit-Saint. » La femme dit: « Vous dites vrai; mais indiquez-moi où elle est. » Joseph dit: « Venez et voyez! »

10. Et tandis qu'ils allaient, Joseph l'interrogea, en chemin,\fn{Tout l'épisode qui suit n'a plus qu'un lointain rapport avec la donnée du Protév. et des textes parallèles. Ève semble avoir pris ici la place de la Zélomi du ps.-Matth.} et dit: « O femme, apprenez-moi votre nom. » La femme dit: « Pourquoi me demandez-vous mon nom? Je suis Ève, la première mère de tous les hommes, et je suis venue pour voir de mes yeux ma rédemption qui s'est opérée. » En entendant cela, Joseph s'étonna des prodiges qu'il avait vus.

11. Étant arrivés, ils s'arrêtèrent à distance, à l'entrée de la caverne. Et tout à coup, ils virent la voûte des cieux s'ouvrir et une vive lumière se répandre de haut en bas; une colonne de vapeur ardente se dressa sur la caverne, et une nuée lumineuse couvrit celle-ci. Et la voix des êtres incorporels, anges sublimes et esprits célestes, se faisait entendre; (on percevait) leur langage; entonnant leurs cantiques, ils faisaient retentir incessamment leur voix et ils rendaient gloire à Dieu.

IX: Comme quoi Ève notre première mère et Joseph arrivèrent en hâte et virent la très bénie et sainte vierge Marie devenue mère.\fn{Littéralement: partum viderunt laudatissimae et sanctae V. M.}

1. Et lorsque Joseph et notre première mère virent cela, ils se prosternèrent la face contre terre, et remerciant Dieu à haute voix, ils le glorifiaient et disaient: « Soyz béni, Seigneur Dieu de nos pères, \fn{ C'est Ève qui parle de ses pères! } Dieu d'Israël, qui avez aujourd'hui, par votre avènement, opéré la rédemption de l'homme; qui m'avez rétablie à nouveau et relevée de ma chute et qui m'avez réintégré dans mon ancienne dignité. Maintenant mon âme se sent fière et mon espérance (en) Dieu mon Sauveur a tressailli. »

2. Ayant ainsi parlé, Ève notre première mère vit une nuée monter vers le ciel en se détachant de la caverne. Et <d'un> autre côté, paraissait une lumière étincelante, qui s'était posée devant la mangeoire du bétail. Et <l'enfant> vint prendre le sein de sa mère et s'abreuva de lait; puis il retourna à sa place et s'assit. A cette vue, Joseph et notre première mère Ève rendirent gloire à Dieu en le remerciant, et ils admiraient, dans la stupeur, les prodiges qui venaient de se passer. Et ils disaient: « Vraiment qui a jamais ouï de personne une chose semblable ou vu de ses yeux (rien de) tout ce qui s'est accompli? »

3. Et notre première mère entra dans la caverne, elle prit l'enfant dans ses bras et se mit à le caresser et à l'embrasser avec tendresse, et elle bénissait Dieu, car l'enfant était excellemment beau à voir, brillant et resplendissant et les traits épanouis. Et l'ayant enveloppé de langes, elle le déposa dans l'auge des bœufs. Et notre première mère Ève sortit de la caverne. Tout à coup, elle vit une femme nommée Salomé, qui venait de la ville de Jérusalem. Notre première mère Ève alla au-devant d'elle et lui dit: « Je vous annonce une heureuse et bonne nouvelle: une jeune vierge, qui ne connaît absolument aucun homme, a mis au monde un enfant dans cette caverne. »

4. Salomé dit: « Je sais, moi, que toute la ville de Jérusalem l'a condamnée, comme coupable et digne de mort. Et à cause de sa honte et de son déshonneur, elle s'est enfuie de la ville pour venir ici. Et moi, Salomé, j'ai appris à Jérusalem que cette vierge a mis au monde un enfant mâle, et je suis venue avec joie pour le voir. » Notre première mère Ève dit: « Oui, (et cependant) sa virginité est sainte et demeure immaculée. » Salomé dit: « Et comment avez-vous pu savoir qu'elle est verige? » Notre première mère dit: « Je vous rapporterai ce que j'ai vu de mes yeux. » Salomé dit: « Dites. » Notre première mère dit: « Lorsque je suis entrée dans cette caverne, j'ai vu une nuée lumineuse qui planait par-dessus. Et l'on entendait dans les hauteurs un bruit de paroles et la nombreuse armée de chœurs spirituels des anges qui bénissaient et glorifiaient Dieu à pleine voix. Et vers le ciel, s'élevait comme une nuée brillante. » Salomé lui dit: « Par la vie <du Seigneur>, je ne croirai pas à vos paroles avant d'avoir vu qu'une vierge qui ne connaît point d'homme a mis au monde un enfant, sans un concours masculin. » Et notre première mère étant entrée dans la caverne, dit à la sainte vierge Marie: « Tenez-vous prête, il nous le faut, car voici Salomé qui veut vous mettre à l'épreuve et constater votre virginité. »

5. Et lorsque Salomé pénétra dans la caverne et que, avançant la main, \fn{ Ici l'arménien se rapproche de nouveau du récit primitif; cf. Protév. XX, 1 et suiv. } elle voulut l'approcher de la vierge, tout à coup, une flamme jaillissant de là avec une ardeur intense, lui brûla la main. Et avec un cri aigu, elle dit: « Malheur à moi, misérable et infortunée, que mes fautes ont gravement égarée! Qu'ai-je fait dans mon dérèglement? Car j'ai péché contre mon dieu, je l'ai blasphémé, et, dans mon incrédulité, j'ai tenté le Dieu vivant. Voici que ma main aussi est devenue comme un feu ardent! »

6. Mais un ange \fn{ Cf. ps.-Matth. XIII, 5. } qui se tenait près de (Salomé), lui dit: « Étendez votre main vers l'enfant; approchez-la de lui et vous serez guérie. » Et tombant aux pieds de l'enfant, elle le baisa, et le prenant dans ses bras elle le caressait et disait: « O nouvcau-né, fils du Père grand (et) puissant, enfant Jésus, Messie, roi d'Israël, rédempteur, oint du Seigneur, vous vous êtes manifesté dans la ville de David. O lumière, vous vous êtes levée sur la terre et nous avez découvert la rédemption du monde. »

7. Salomé disait ces paroles et beaucoup d'autres semblables, et au même instant, sa main fut guérie. Et se levant, elle adora l'enfant. Elle voulut aller à Jérusalem. Alors l'ange lui adressa la parole et lui dit: « Salomé, quand vous irez à Jérusalem, là où vous voulez aller, ne dites à personne la vision qui vous est apparue, de peur qu'elle ne vienne à la connaissance du roi Hérode, avant que l'enfant Jésus n'aille au temple pour la purification, après quarante jours. » Salomé dit: « Oui, Seigneur, que votre volonté soit faite. » Et quand Salomé revint à sa maison, elle ne découvrit à personne les paroles que l'ange lui avait dites.

X: Des bergers qui virent la nativité du Seigneur.\fn{ Cf. ps.-Matth. XIII, 6. }

1. Or donc, en ce lieu habitaient les bergers dont nous avons déjà parlé; mais leurs troupeaux de brebis et de chèvres ne <revenaient> qu'à la nuit tombante.\fn{ Texte: [XXX₆₃], les moutons seulement. Ces mots ne sont dans la phrase qu'un pléonasme encombrant. Le traducteur aura lu: [XXX₆₄], moutons, pour [XXX₆₅], coucher du soleil, confusion facile, à propos de bergers. } en des endroits écartés et lointains, où ils paissaient dans les montagnes et dans la plaine. Et le soir, chaque berger ramenait son troupeau; ils les parquaient dans une bergerie et veillaient à leur garde la nuit entière, jusqu'au matin. Et l'ange du Seigneur leur apparut et la gloire du Seigneur brilla sur eux: ils furent pris d'une vive crainte. Les bergers poussèrent un cri et se réunirent en un même lieu et se dirent les uns aux autres: « Quelle est cette parole qui nous a été criée et que nous ne connaissons pas? »

2. Mais l'ange leur dit derechef: « Ne vous effrayez ps, hommes sages et intelligents qui vous trouvez réunis. Car voici que je vous annonce une grande joie: c'est qu'il vous est né aujourd'hui un sauveur, qui est le Christ <du> Seigneur, dans la ville de David. Et voici le signe qui vous (est donné) à tous: Quand vous entrerez dans la caverne, vous y trouverez un enfant enveloppé de langes et posé dans la crèche des bœufs. » Et au même instant, comme l'ange parlait (ainsi), les bergers, au nombre de quinze, se rendirent en hâte à l'endroit indiqué. Et apercevant Jésus, ils se prosternèrent devant lui et l'adorèrent. Et ils glorifiaient Dieu à haute voix et disaient: « Gloire à Dieu dans les hauteurs, paix sur la terre, et bienveillance sur les hommes. » Ayant ainsi parlé, les bergers retournèrent chacun à son troupeau, glorifiant le Christ, qui est béni dans tous les siècles. Ainsi soit-il!

XI: Comme quoi les mages arrivèrent avec des présents adorer l'enfant Jésus nouvellement né.

1. Joseph et Marie étaient demeurés avec l'enfant dans la caverne, en cachette et sans se montrer, pour que personne n'(en) sût rien. Mais après trois jours, c'est-à-dire le 23 de tebeth,\fn{ Voir ci-dessus, VIII, 5, first note. } ou 9 janvier, voici que les mages\fn{ Suite de l'histoire commencée plus haut, ch. V, 10. Outre les deux autres recensions arméniennes connues (cf. Marr, t. c., p. 139), et l'abrégé mentionné ci-dessus (p. 89), le même récit existe à l'état isolé, en arménien, dans trois rédactions tout au moins, que nous désignons par les sigles M₁, M₂, M₃. (Voyez l'Introduction.) Ces différents textes, moins développés que notre apocryphe mais à peu près identiques pour le fond, n'offrent qu'un petit nombre de variantes significatives, dont nous avons noté les principales. } d'Orient, qui étaient partis de leur pays et s'en étaient allés avec une armée nombreuse, arrivèrent en la ville de Jérusalem après neuf mois.\fn{ M₁, M₂, M₃: le huitième mois. [The text reads: M₂, M₂, M₃: le huitième mois.] } Ces <trois> rois des mages étaient aussi trois frères. Le premier était Melkon, roi des Perses. Le second était Gaspar, roi des Hindous; le troisième était Balthasar, roi des Arabes. Les chefs de leur armée investis du commandement général, étaient (au nombre de) douze.\fn{ C'est le nombre ordinaire des mages dans les récits orientaux. Le rédacteur arménien a combiné à sa manière les deux traditions. M₁ ajoute: Voici leurs noms: Barkhouridaï, Dadmoušaï, Bardimišaï, Šahabanaï, Khorinaï, D(e)dmišaï, Dišbougaï, Khamaraï, Šawouršaï, Akširaï, Šahouraï, Šamiram. — M₂: 1. Barhouridaï, 2. Dadimišaï, 3. Bardimišaï, 4. Šahaïpanaï, 5. Khorina, 6. Dedmišaï, 7. Dišpougai, 8. Khoumaraï, 9. Šarouraï, 10. Ispanaï, 11. Šahouraï, 12. Šamiram. — M₃: Barkhouridaï (Barhouridaï), 2. Dadmišaï, 3. Bardimša (Bardmiša), 4. Šahaïpanaï (Šakhapanaï), 5. Khorina (Khorinêa), 6. Dedmouša (Dedoumša), 7. Dišpahaï, 8. Khamaraï, 9. Šawoura (Šamouraï), 10. Ispani, 11. Šahouri (Šahouraï), 12. Šamiram. Cette liste n'a rien de commun avec les listes syriaques des douze Mages (voir E. Nestle, Die dem Epiphanius zugeschriebenen Vitae Prophetarum, Tubingue, 1893, p. 67 et suiv.). Elle doit être d'assez basse époque, car on y remarque des noms turcs comme Boga, [XXX₆₆], « taureau ». } Les troupes de cavalerie qui les accompagnaient, comptaient douze mille hommes, quatre mille de chaque royaume. Tous <étaient venus>, sur l'ordre de Dieu, de la terre des mages, des régions de l'Orient leur patrie. Car lorsque l'ange du Seigneur eut annoncé à la Vierge Marie la nouvelle qui la rendait mère, comme nous l'avons déjà rapporté, au même instant, il s'en fut, de par l'Esprit-Saint, les avertir d'aller adorer l'enfant nouveau-né. Eux donc, ayant pris leur parti, se réunirent en un même lieu; et l'étoile qui les précédait les conduisit, avec leurs troupes, en la ville de Jérusalem après neuf mois de voyage.

2. Ils campèrent autour de la ville et y demeurèrent trois jours, eux et les princes de leurs royaumes\fn{ Littérament: les rois de leurs principautés. } respectifs. Bien qu'ils fussent tous frères, fils d'un même roi, des armées de langues très diverses marchaient à leur suite. Melkon, le premier roy,\fn{ M₁, M₂, M₃: roi des Perses. Les détails qui suivent sont fort abrégés dans ces trois textes. } <est celui> qui avait <apporté> de la myrrhe, de l'aloès, de la mousseline, de la pourpre et des rubans de lin, et (aussi) les livres écrits et scellés par le doigt de Dieu.\fn{ Voir ci-après, §§ 11, 23-24. } Le second, le roi des Hindous, Gaspar, <est celui> qui avait (apporté) comme présents, en l'honneur de l'enfant, du nard précieux, de la myrrhe, de la cannelle, de la cinnamome, de l'encens et d'autres parfums. Le troisième, le

roi des Arabes, Balthasar, <est celui> qu'avait <avec lui> de l'or, de l'argent, des pierres précieuses, des saphirs de grand prix, et des perles fines.

3. Et lorsque tous furent arrivés en la ville de Jérusalem, l'astre qui les précédait, cacha momentanément sa lumière. Ils s'arrêtèrent donc et firent halte. \fn{Nous adoptons la variante indiquée en note de l'édition.} Les nombreuses troupes de cavaliers et les rois se dirent les uns aux autres: « Que faire maintenant et dans quelle direction marcher? Nous l'ignorons, car l'étoile nous a précédés jusqu'aujourd'hui, et maintenant voici qu'elle a disparu et nous a laissés en détresse? » Les mages se dirent les uns aux autres: « Allons nous renseigner au sujet de l'enfant, et recherchons exactement où il est; puis nous poursuivrons notre route. » Tous dirent unanimement: « Oui, vous avez raison. »

4. Lorsque le roi Hérode eut vu la nombreuse cavalerie qui campait menaçante autour de la ville, il en conçut une vive peur; et s'étant mis à réfléchir, il se dit: « Qui sont ces gens qui campent là avec une armée nombreuse et qui disposent d'une force énorme, de trésors, de vastes richesses et d'objets de luxe? Pas un d'eux n'est venu se présenter chez nous, et leurs chefs sont tellement grands et victorieux, qu'ils ne nous ont fait aucune démarche de bienveillance. » Puis le roi ordonna de mander les princes et ses plus hauts dignitaires, et tenant conseil, ils se dirent les uns aux autres: « Comment agirons-nous avec ces gens-là, car ils ont une armée à leurs ordres et ce sont des chefs aguerris? »

5. Les princes lui dirent: « O roi, ordonnez que l'on fasse bonne garde dans cette ville, de peur qu'ils ne la surprennent clandestinement et ne s'en emparent de force et qu'ils n'emmenent (les habitants) en captivité. » Le roi dit: « Vous avez raison; mais essayons d'abord des moyens amicaux; nous verrons ensuite. » Les princes dirent: « O roi, ordonnez à toute l'armée de se réunir, de déployer une vigilante énergie et de se tenir attentive et sur ses gardes. (Puis) députez à ces gens des hommes habiles, qui iront parlementer avec eux et leur demanderont exactement et en détail, d'où ils viennent et où ils vont. »

6. Alors trois princes \fn{M₁: Puis il choisit trois hommes sages et diserts et il leur dit. [M₂ et M₃: trois hommes. Dans la suite du récit: les scribes.]} s'étant levés s'en furent les trouver de la part du roi, et après s'être prosternés devant eux, ils se donnèrent mutuellement l'accolade et s'assirent. Les princes dirent: « Hommes vénérables et rois puissants, dites-nous la cause de votre arrivée. » Les mages dirent: « Pourquoi nous questionnez-vous, nous qui sommes venus vous interroger? Nous venons de la Perse, pays lointain, et nous avons hâte de poursuivre notre route. » Les princes dirent: « Écoutez-nous, pour l'amour de Dieu, et prêtez-nous l'oreille. Notre roi est dans la ville et lorsqu'il vous a vus vous établir ici en observation, il s'est attendu que vous vous présenteriez à lui. Il désirait vous voir, vous parler, s'entretenir avec vous et vous entendre. Vous y avez mis peu d'empressement et n'avez pas voulu aller le trouver. Il a (donc) dépêché des envoyés à (votre) recherche, pour vous inviter (à vous rendre) auprès de lui dans son palais, à l'effet de s'enquérir et de s'informer de vos intentions, en tout respect, (afin de savoir) ce que vous désirez. »

7. Les mages dirent: « Et que nous veut votre roi? S'il a quelque question à nous poser, (nous de notre côté,) nous n'avons rien à dire à personne, rien à entendre, rien à voir. » Les princes dirent: « Dites-nous: êtes-vous venus ici en amis, ou bien avec des desseins violents? » Les mages dirent: « Nous sommes venus de notre pays jusqu'ici, librement; \fn{Texte: joyeusement ([XXX₆₇] pour [XXX₆₈]).} personne ne nous a soumis à un tel interrogatoire, et vous venez maintenant pour nous sonder! » Les princes dirent: « Nous sommes venus sur l'ordre du roi pour vous voir, vous parler et vous entendre. Depuis que \fn{Texte: autant (que) ...: [XXX₆₉]. Même leçon dans M₂ [M₁ et M₃: depuis que].} vous campez (ici) une odeur d'essences parfumées se répand de chez vous et remplit notre ville entière. Seriez-vous des marchands faisant le grand commerce? Ou de puissants seigneurs familiers des rois, qui avez en abondance des parfums raffinés de toutes les fleurs précieuses, que vous comptez échanger en quelque riche pays? » Les mages dirent: « Il n'en est pas comme vous croyez. Nous n'avons rien à vendre et nous demandons seulement notre chemin. »

8. Les princes dirent: « Quel chemin? » Les mages dirent: « Celui <par où> le Seigneur nous conduira, dans la justice, vers le pays du bien. Quant à nous, c'est sur l'ordre de Dieu que, d'un commun accord, nous sommes venus ici. Comme \fn{M₁ omet toute la fin de ce paragraphe. Dans M₂ et M₃, les mages refusent d'entrer en de plus amples explications.} il y a neuf mois que nous voici en chemin, nous pouvions, encore aujourd'hui, arriver à temps à

destination. L'étoile *{ Ceci devait paraître clair aux envoyés d'Hérode! Si le traducteur arménien n'a pas interpolé le discours, il l'aura maladroitement abrégé. }* qui nous guidait faisait route avec nous, et, arrivés aux étapes, nous la voyions stationner au-dessus de nos têtes. Lorsque, nous hâtant en chemin, nous pressions la marche, l'étoile laissée en arrière, reprenait les devants; (et ainsi) jusqu'en cet endroit. Maintenant, sa lumière s'est dérobée à nos yeux et nous, jetés dans l'incertitude, nous ne savons que faire. »

9. Et les princes s'en furent raconter à Hérode tout ce qu'ils avaient entendu des mages. Hérode alors s'étant levé vint trouver les mages et leur dit: « A quelle fin avez-vous fait un si grand voyage (pour venir) en ce pays, avec cette nombreuse armée et ces présents? » Les mages dirent: « Voici *{ M₁, M₂, M₃: « Nous arrivons de la Perse, de l'Orient. A raison de notre vraie nationalité, on nous appelle des Mages. Nous sommes venus ici, conduits par une étoile. » }* pourquoi nous sommes venus et ce que nous voulons vous demander. Nous avons entendu dans notre pays que le fils d'un roi va naître au pays de Judée, et nous sommes venus pour le voir et l'adorer. »

10. Lorsqu'il eut entendu cela, Hérode en fut vivement frappé, et il s'effraya de la parole qu'ils avaient dite. Il leur dit: « De qui avez-vous entendu ce que vous dites, ou qui vous l'a rapporté? » Les mages dirent: « Nous en avons (reçu) de nos ancêtres le témoignage écrit, qui a été gardé (sous pli) scellé. *{ M₁ omet ici toute mention de livre prophétique. }* Et durant de longues années, de génération en génération, nos pères et les fils de leurs fils sont demeurés dans l'attente, jusqu'au moment où cette parole est venue à se réaliser devant nous. Elle nous a donc, sur l'ordre de Dieu, été manifestée dans une vision, par le ministère d'un ange. Et nous sommes venus en ce lieu, que le Seigneur nous a indiqué. » Hérode dit: « D'où tenez-vous ce témoignage connu de vous seuls? »

11. Les mages dirent: « Le témoignage que nous possédons *{ Littéralement: « notre témoignage. » }* ne vient ni de l'homme, ni de personne. C'est un ordre divin concernant un dessein que le Seigneur a promis d'accomplir en faveur des enfants des hommes, (ordre) qui s'est conservé chez nous jusqu'à ce jour. » Hérode dit: « Où est ce livre que votre peuple possède seul à l'exclusion de tout autre? » Les mages dirent: « Aucun autre peuple ne connaît ceci, ni par ouï-dire ni par (sa propre) intelligence. Seul notre peuple en possède le témoignage écrit. Car lorsque Adam eut quitté le Paradis, et que Caïn eut fait périr Abel, le Seigneur Dieu donna à Adam Seth, l'enfant de consolation, et avec lui, cette lettre écrite, fermée et scellée par le doigt de Dieu. *{ La même légende est déjà rapportée dans l'Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum, homélie II, 2: Audivi quosdam referentes de quadam scriptura etsi non certa, tamen non destruenta fidem sed potius delectante: quoniam erat gens sita in ipso principio Orientis, iuxta Oceanum, apud quos ferebatur quaedam scriptura, inscripta nomine Seth, de apparitura hac stella et muneribus ei huiusmodi offerendis, quae per generationes studiosorum hominum, patribus referentibus filiis suis habebatur deducta ... (Migne, P. G., t. LVI, p. 638). La suite de l'épisode s'écarte sensiblement de la rédaction arménienne. Mais il est hautement remarquable que, touchant le Livre de Seth (ou d'Adam, car c'est tout un ici), notre apocryphe s'accorde avec une scriptura non certa qui avait déjà cours à la fin du V siècle. }* Seth la reçut de son père et la donna à ses fils. Ses fils (la donnèrent) à leurs fils, de génération en génération. Et jusqu'à Noé, ils se passèrent *{ Littéralement: ils reçurent. }* l'ordre de garder soigneusement cette lettre. Noé la donna à Sem son fils, et les fils (de Sem la donnèrent) à leurs fils. Puis ceux-ci l'ayant reçue, la donnèrent à Abraham. Abraham la donna au grand prêtre Melchisédec, et par cette voie notre peuple (la reçut), au temps de Cyrus, roi de Perse. *{ Le texte est ici altéré ou mal traduit (voyez plus loin, 23 et 24). }* Et nos pères l'ayant reçue la déposèrent en grand honneur dans une salle. Enfin la lettre parvint jusqu'à nous. Et nous, ayant reçu cet écrit, nous connûmes à l'avance le nouveau monarque, fils du roi d'Israël. » *{ (M₁) M₂ et M₃ omettent l'histoire du livre d'Adam. }*

12. Lorsque Hérode eut entendu cela, la rage le prit au cœur et il dit: *{ M₃: Hérode dit: « Montrez-moi ces signes ([XXX₇₀], écrits) que vous possédez. » Les mages dirent: « Ce que nous avons promis d'accomplir en son nom, il est impossible de l'ouvrir et de le montrer à personne. » (Entendez: « Ce que nous avons promis de remettre à son adresse »: [XXX₇₁]; cf. ci-après, XI, 22). Le texte de M₂ revient au même. La suite du dialogue n'offre aucun intérêt. Nous avons seulement tenu à montrer que ce passage aussi pourrait être traduit du syriaque. }* « Je ne vous laisserai point aller làbas que vous ne m'ayez montré tout ce que vous avez avec vous. » Alors il ordonna de les arrêter de force. Et soudain, le palais où se tenaient établis une multitude de gens, fut ébranlé. Des quatre côtés les colonnes s'abattirent et tout le bâtiment du palais s'effondra. Une foule nombreuse qui se trouvait au dehors s'enfuit de là. Ceux qui étaient à l'intérieur de l'édifice furent étendus morts au nombre de soixante-douze individus, grands et petits. A cette vue, tous ceux qui étaient venus là, tombant aux pieds d'Hérode, le supplièrent en disant: « Laissez-les tranquillement poursuivre leur route. » Son fils Archéleüs se jeta de même aux pieds de son père et le supplia.

13. L'impie Hérode acquiesça au désir de son fils et les congédia. Il fit donc mander les mages en ami et leur dit:

« Dites-moi, que désirez-vous que je fasse pour vous? » Les mages dirent d'un commun accord: « Nous n'avons aucune demande à vous exprimer sinon celle-ci: Dites-nous, dans votre loi qu'y a-t-il d'écrit? Que lisez-vous? » Hérode dit: « Que voulez-vous nous amener à dire? » Les mages dirent: « Où va naître le Christ, roi des Juifs? » En enendant cela, Hérode fut vivement troublé et toute la ville de Jérusalem avec lui. Et après avoir convoqué tous les prêtres et les scribes du peuple, il leur demanda: « Où doit naître le Christ? » Ils lui dirent: « A Bethléem de Judée, dans la ville du roi David. » Hérode dit aux mages: « Allez, renseignez-vous exactement sur cet enfant, et quand vous l'aurez trouvé, dépêchez-moi un avis en cette ville, pour que j'aie moi-même l'adorer. » Le tyran impie parlait de la sorte, pour faire passer l'enfant au fil de l'épée, au moyen de cette information perfidement surprise.

14. Et les mages s'étant levés aussitôt, se prosternèrent devant Hérode et toute la ville de Jérusalem, et ils poursuivirent leur route. Et voici que l'étoile qu'ils avaient vue, les précéda jusqu'au moment où elle alla s'arrêter au-dessus de (l'endroit) où était l'enfant Jésus. Arrivés tout joyeux en la ville de Bethléem, ils descendirent chacun de sa monture, et, tout à coup, ils firent résonner leurs trompettes, leurs cymbales, leurs cithares, leurs harpes et leurs (autres) instruments de musique, en l'honneur de l'enfant nouveau-né, fils du roi d'Israël. Rois, princes et toute la multitude de l'armée, entonnant un chant, se mirent à danser, et, à pleine voix, avec allégresse et reconnaissance, d'un cœur joyeux, ils bénissaient Dieu et remerciaient le Seigneur d'avoir été rendus dignes d'arriver (à temps) et de voir la gloire du grand jour, illustré par le mystère qui se montrait à eux.

15. En voyant tout cela, Joseph et Marie prirent peur des rois et de toute cette armée. Ils rentrèrent épouvantés dans la caverne, <et Joseph> se tint assis dans la crèche des animaux. *\fn{M₁, M₂, M₃: Ils s'enfuirent de là et l'enfant Jésus demeura seul dans la caverne, assis dans la mangeoire des animaux. C'est la leçon que suppose la suite du récit.}* A leur vue, tous les princes et les grands seigneurs dirent à (Joseph): « Vieillard, pourquoi êtes-vous frappé de crainte, et (pourquoi) nous fuyez-vous? Car en vérité nous sommes des hommes comme vous. » Joseph dit: « D'où arrivez-vous à cette heure, et que nous voulez-vous *\fn{Le texte ajoute: ici.}* en venant ici avec une si nombreuse armée? » Les mages dirent: « Nous arrivons ici d'une terre lointaine—de la Perse notre patrie,—avec de nombreux présents et offrandes. Nous voulons voir l'enfant nouveau-né, le roi des Juifs, et l'adorer. Si donc par hasard vous le connaissez de science certaine, indiquez-nous exactement l'endroit (où il se trouve), afin que nous allions le voir. » En entendant cela, Marie entra avec joie dans la caverne, et prenant l'enfant dans ses bras, elle se sentit le cœur rempli d'allégresse. Elle bénissait et glorifiait Dieu en lui rendant grâces, (puis) elle demeura assise en silence.

16. Une seconde fois, *\fn{Ici reprend la narration N. (Voyez plus haut, V, 10, last note.)}* les mages interrogèrent Joseph: « O vénérable vieillard, renseignez-nous avec exactitude: sauriez-vous peut-être où *\fn{Texte (A et N): « afin que nous voyions » (XXX₇₂), pour [XXX₇₃?]}* nous verrons l'enfant nouveau-né? » Du doigt, Joseph leur montra de loin la caverne. *\fn{M₃ ajoute: Et Marie allaita l'enfant et le replaça dans la mangeoire du bétail [comparer S; note au texte arabe, ch. III, 2; p. 10]. Et les Mages ...}* Les mages arrivèrent tout joyeux à l'entrée de la caverne; ils aperçurent l'enfant dans la crèche des animaux, et ils se prosternèrent devant lui, la face contre terre, rois, princes, grands seigneurs, et tout le reste du peuple composant leur nombreuse armée; et chacun à son tour apportait ses présents et les lui offrait.

17. En premier lieu vint Gaspar, roi de l'Inde. Il étala du nard précieux, de la myrrhe, de la cannelle, de la cinnamome, de l'encens et d'autres aromates et essences odoriférantes. Et aussitôt, un parfum d'immortalité se répandit dans la grotte où ils étaient établis. Puis Balthasar, le roi des Arabes, ouvrant ses opulents trésors, en tira pour les offrir à l'enfant) de l'or, et de l'argent, des pierres précieuses, des perles magnifiques et des saphirs de grand prix. A son tour, Melkon, roi des Perses, apporta de la myrrhe, de l'aloès, de la mousseline, de la pourpre et aussi *\fn{A et N: et d'autres.}* des rubans de lin.

18. Et après que chacun eut offert ses présents en l'honneur de l'enfant royal d'Israël, les rois se levèrent (et sortirent) de la grotte, chacun des trois de son côté; puis tous trois, s'étant réunis, s'assirent et se consultèrent mutuellement. Ils dirent: « Quel réel sujet d'étonnement nous avons vu de nos yeux! Un si pauvre réduit, dépourvu de toutes choses! Ni maison, ni toit, ni habitation, mais une caverne déserte et inhabitée, où ces (gens) n'ont pas le nécessaire ni de quoi s'abriter eux-mêmes. Que nous sert-il d'être venus de si loin pour les voir et faire connaissance avec eux? *\fn{Même leçon dans N. Ces réflexions, démenties par la suite du récit, son absentes de M₁, M₂, M₃.}* Dites-nous la vérité: quel signe merveilleux avons-nous aperçu ici? Venez, racontons-nous les uns aux autres ce qui nous est apparu. » Les mages dirent: « Frères, vous avez raison. Nous raconterons chacun notre vision. »

19. Le roi\fn{N: Les frères se dirent d'une même voix: « Qui, vous avez raison. » Ils dirent à Gaspar, le roi de l'Inde: « Quand vous lui offriez l'encens, quelle apparence lui vîtes-vous? » Gaspar dit: « Je vis en lui le fils de Dieu incarné, assis sur un trône de gloire, et les armées incorporelles formaient sa cour. » Ils lui dirent: « C'est bien. » Puis, ils demandèrent à Balthasar, roi des Arabes: « Et vous, quand vous lui offriez votre trésor, quelle apparence lui vîtes-vous? » Il dit: « Je vis en lui un fils de l'homme, en chair (et en os), assis sur un trône, et devant lui (était) une nombreuse armée, qui l'adorait prosternée. » Ils lui dirent: « Vous aussi avez bien vu. » Melkon dit ... } Gaspar dit: « Lorsque j'eus apporté et présenté l'encens à cet (enfant), je vis en lui le Fils de Dieu incarné, assis sur un trône de gloire, et l'armée des (anges) incorporels formait sa cour. » Balthasar dit: « Tandis que je m'approchais, je le vis\fn{M₁, M₂, M₃: « Je vis un fils de roi ... »} siégeant sur un trône sublime et, devant lui, une armée innombrable l'adorait prosternée. » Melkon dit: « Et moi, je vis qu'après être mort corporellement dans les supplices, il se levait, revenu à la vie. »\fn{M₂ et M₃ intervertissent l'ordre des deux dernières réponses.} En entendant ces choses les uns des autres, les rois, frappés de stupeur, se dirent avec étonnement: « Quel est ce nouveau prodige qui se montre à nous: nos témoignages ne s'accordent point. Il nous faut (pourtant) croire un fait que nous voyons de nos yeux. »\fn{N: « ... que nous avons vu de nos yeux et entendu de nos oreilles. »}

20. Et le matin,\fn{N: Et de bonne heure, les rois s'étant levés se dirent les uns aux autres: « Venez, allons ensemble à la caverne et voyons ce qui nous apparaîtra clairement. » Le roi de l'Inde Gaspar (y) alla, il entra dans la caverne et vit l'enfant dans la mangeoire du bétail. Et, s'étant incliné, il se prosterna, et vit la seconde vision, <celle> du roi des Arabes, qui d'abord avait vu dans l'(enfant) un fils de l'homme, avec un corps; il lui parut un roi terrestre [littéralement: de chair]. [M₂: il vit en lui un Dieu incarné, et en même temps, il vit le fils d'un roi de chair qui lui apparut.] Et quand Gaspar le roi de l'Inde fut sorti, il alla faire aux autres ce récit: « Je n'ai [texte: il n'a] plus revu ma première vision, mais la vôtre, Balthasar, celle que vous nous avez dite. » Puis le roi des Arabes Balthasar entra à son tour: il vit le Christ assis dans le giron de sa mère. S'étant incliné, il se prosterna devant lui. Et il ne revit plus, comme il l'avait vu d'abord, qu'il était né un fils de roi. Il dit: « J'ai vu, comme l'avait vu le roi des mages, son humanité morte dans les tourments, puis ressuscitée et revenue à la vie. » Il alla faire ce récit aux autres frères: « Je n'ai plus revu ma première vision, mais celle du roi Melkon, (telle) qu'il nous (l')a racontée. » Alors le roi des mages Melkon s'étant levé, entra dans la caverne, et il vit le Christ assis sur un trône. S'étant incliné, il se prosterna devant lui. Et il ne le vit plus comme il l'avait vu une première fois, mort et revenu à la vie; mais il vit en lui ce qu'avait vu le roi Gaspar. Dieu fait chair, né de la Vierge. Et Melkon sortit en hâte, tout joyeux, et fit aux autres rois ce récit: « Je n'ai plus revu ma première vision mais la vôtre, Gaaspar: j'ai vu en lui Dieu, assis sur un trône de gloire ... » — M₂ est à peu près d'accord avec N. M₁ et M₃ ne se distinguent que par des variantes rédactionnelles. M₃ complète ainsi la réponse de Melkon: « Je n'ai pas revu ma première vision, mais la vôtre, ô roi Gaspar. Et j'ai dit: En vérité celui-ci est vraiment Dieu et fils de Dieu, qui s'est montré à nous sous une forme en rapport avec les dons que nous lui avons offerts respectivement. » } rois s'étant levés se dirent les uns aux autres: « Venez, allons ensemble à la grotte; nous verrons si quelque autre signe se montrera à nous. » Balthasar y alla et ne vit plus la vision qu'il avait eue d'abord; mais ce fut le fils d'un homme, d'un roi terrestre\fn{Littéralement: de chair.} qui lui apparut. Gaspar vit l'enfant assis dans la mangeoire des animaux et il vit la seconde vision.\fn{Voyez les textes parallèles (ci-dessus, two notes previous).} Il en fit le récit aux autres, (en ces termes): « Ce n'est plus ma première vision que j'ai eue; c'est la vôtre, Balthasar, celle que vous nous avez rapportée. » Melkon entra alors et vit Jésus assis sur son trône. Il ne revit pas sa précédente vision, qui le lui avait montré mort et revenu à la vie; mais il vit en lui, comme l'avait vu Gaspar, Dieu fait homme né de la Vierge. Plein de joie, Melkon s'en fut en hâte prévenir ses frères.

21. Après\fn{Ce paragraphe est absent de M₂ et de M₃. M₁ rapporte en quelques lignes la troisième visite des Mages à la grotte et passe immédiatement au récit de leur départ (voyez ci-après XI, 25).} avoir vu ces choses et s'être retirés chacun à part soi, tous les rois se réunirent et tinrent séance. Ils commencèrent à se raconter les uns aux autres la vision que (chacun) avait perçue et comprise. Ils se dirent mutuellement: « Venez, frères, retournons à notre gîte. (Demain), de bonne heure, nous nous rendrons de nouveau\fn{N: une troisième fois.} à la caverne, et nous nous assurerons positivement si c'est bien là celui que le Seigneur nous a montré. » Étant donc retournés à leur habitation, ils demeurèrent dans la joie et l'allégresse jusqu'au matin. Et de bonne heure, s'étant levés, ils allèrent jusqu'à l'ouverture de la caverne. Après être entrés un à un, les rois regardèrent et reconnurent (l'enfant).\fn{N: ils revirent la même vision qu'ils avaient vue la première fois. Et pleins d'allégresse, ils se racontèrent les uns aux autres ce qu'ils avaient constaté.} Ils sentirent au cœur un même transport d'allégresse; ils se réjouirent et, pleins de joie et d'amour, ils allèrent annoncer à toute leur armée en ces termes: « Celui-ci est vraiment Dieu et fils de Dieu, qui s'est montré à chacun de nous sous une apparence extérieure en rapport avec notre offrande;\fn{N: « ... bien réellement vrai Dieu et fils de Dieu qui a pris devant chacun de nous la forme en rapport avec notre offrande. »} il a reçu de nous avec bonté et douceur notre salut et nos hommages. » Et (tous) eurent foi en (lui): les rois, les princes, toute la multitude de l'armée et le peuple qui se trouvait là.

22. Et derechef le roi Melkon, ayant pris le livre du Testament, qu'il gardait chez lui (en héritage) des premiers ancêtres, comme nous l'avons dit,\fn{Voir plus haut, §§ 2, 11 of this chapter.} il l'apporta et le présenta à l'enfant et dit:

« Voici l'écrit en forme de lettre, que vous avez donné à garder, après l'avoir scellé et fermé. Prenez et lisez le document authentique que vous avez écrit. » Ce document\fn{M₃: « Voici votre lettre, celle que vous avez remise scellée à la garde de nos ancêtres. Prenez, ouvrez et lisez votre écrit, car le chirographe est à votre nom. » C'est ce document écrit que Dieu avait donné à Adam, avec la consolation des enfants de Seth (sic). Car une grande douleur avait saisi Adam ... } (était celui) dont le texte écrit demeurait gardé sous pli cacheté, et que les mages n'avaient pas osé ouvrir ni donner à lire à aucun des prêtres, ni laisser entendre par le peuple,\fn{N, M₂, ajoutent: des Juifs.} parce qu'ils\fn{N: les Juifs.} n'étaient point dignes de devenir enfants du Royaume (de Dieu), étant destinés à renier et à crucifier le Sauveur.

23. Or donc, après qu'Adam eut quitté le Paradis et que Caïn eut tué Abel, comme Adam était affligé de la mort de son fils, plus que d'avoir dû quitter le Paradis, le Seigneur Dieu fit naître à Adam Seth, l'enfant de la consolation.\fn{M₂: (nom) qui signifie: enfant de la consolation.} (Et) parce qu'Adam avait d'abord\fn{Ici commence la rédaction B.} voulu devenir dieu, Dieu avait résolu de devenir homme, dans l'excès de sa miséricorde et de son amour envers le genre humain. Il fit serment à notre premier père que, selon sa prière,\fn{Texte: par son entremise ((XXX₇₄), pour (XXX₇₅)).} il écrirait et scellerait de son propre doigt un parchemin en lettres d'or, portant ce qui suit: « En l'an six mille, le sixième jour, j'enverrai mon fils unique, le Fils de l'homme, et il te rétablira de nouveau dans ta dignité originelle. Alors, toi, Adam, étant uni à Dieu, dans ta chair immortalisée, tu seras devenu Dieu, pouvant, comme l'un de nous, discerner le bien et le mal. »\fn{M₃: Car une grande douleur avait saisi Adam après le meurtre d'Abel par Caïn. Mais quand il eut vu Caïn puni par Dieu et que, déchu lui-même de l'immortalité et banni du Paradis glorieux pour sa désobéissance, il fut en outre atteint dans ses fils par le malheur et l'affliction de voir Abel tué et Caïn condamné à sept châtiments, Adam fut encore plus attristé et plongé dans un deuil plus profond et n'eut plus de rapports conjugaux avec Ève. Puis, deux cent quarante ans après la sortie d'Adam du Paradis, Dieu dans sa miséricorde lui envoya son ange et lui dit de s'approcher d'Ève. Et Dieu donna à Adam, Seth, l'enfant de consolation. Il lui donna aussi ce livre, écrit par le doigt de Dieu, le pacte d'Adam, portant ce qui suit: « L'an 6000, le sixième jour (de la semaine), à la sixième heure, j'enverrai mon fils unique le Verbe divin qui ira prendre chair dans ta race et mon fils deviendra le fils de l'homme et te rétablira derechef dans ta dignité première, par les suprêmes tourments de sa croix. Et alors, Adam, tu seras comme l'un de nous, uni à Dieu d'une âme pure et d'un corps immortel. » — M₂: ... Dieu engagea envers Adam sa promesse et son serment, par le moyen de ce document écrit et scellé de son doigt, et portant que: « L'an 6000, le sixième jour (de la semaine), celui où tu fus créé, j'enverrai mon fils unique ... (voir ci-dessus, M₃). Alors, toi Adam, tu seras comme l'un de nous, uni à Dieu dans un corps immortel. » — N: « ... tu seras Dieu uni à Dieu, pour discerner comme l'un de nous le bien et le mal » (B: « ... Dieu uni à moi Dieu, pour ... ».)}

24. C'est ce document écrit, scellé et clos par le doigt de Dieu, que les mages présentèrent à Jésus.\fn{M₃: C'est ce document ... qu'Adam donna à Seth, Seth à Énoch, Énoch à ses fils, et qui de la sorte passa de père en fils [texte: de fils en fils] jusqu'à Noé; que Noé donna à Sem, Sem à ses fils et ses fils à leurs fils jusqu'à Abraham; qu'Abraham donna à Melchisédec le pontife, que Melchisédec donna à d'autres et ces autres à d'autres encore, jusqu'à ce qu'il parvint à Cyrus roi des Perses. Et celui-ci le déposa dans une salle <où il demeura> gardé avec soin jusqu'(au temps des) mages. Et les mages l'ayant pris le présentèrent à Jésus-Christ. — M₂ suit M₃ moins quelques omissions.} Dès lors les rois, les princes et toute leur armée avaient accompli leurs vœux et leurs prières. Ils demeurèrent à la grotte durant trois jours. (Et) après en avoir délibéré, les rois (se) dirent: « Venez! Allons ensemble (l')adorer et confesser qu'il est Dieu. (Puis) nous reprendrons en paix notre voyage. » Et, d'un commun accord, ils se levèrent tous, ils se rendirent à la caverne, adorèrent Jésus et lui rendirent ce témoignage: « Vous êtes Dieu et fils de Dieu. » Et sortant de la grotte, ils louaient Dieu avec joie et allégresse.\fn{M₃: Et comme les rois et toute leur armée avaient accompli leurs vœux et leurs prières, après être demeurés là trois jours, ils délibérèrent entre eux et se dirent: « Il ne faut pas que nous négligions notre promesse. Venez, retournons une troisième fois à la caverne, adorons l'enfant, prenons de lui une connaissance bien exacte; puis remettons-nous en route. » Et s'étant levés, ils entrèrent ensemble dans la caverne. Ils virent l'enfant assis dans le giron de sa mère et ils se prosternèrent devant lui. Et derechef les trois rois revirent exactement leurs visions respectives. Ils en furent fort émus et, avec une grande crainte, ils se prosternèrent devant l'enfant nouveau-né. Et sortis de la grotte, ils demeurèrent autour de celle-ci le jour entier jusqu'au lendemain. Avec joie et allégresse, ils bénissaient et glorifiaient Dieu. Et le matin, au lever de l'aurore, huitième jour de janvier, les rois se mirent en route. Ils voulurent aller chez Hérode ... }

25. Le (lendemain) matin, dès l'aube, au moment où allait poindre le premier jour de la semaine, le 25 de tebeth\fn{B: le 27.} et de janvier le douze,\fn{M₃: le 8 janvier.} ils se disposèrent à partir pour leur pays.\fn{Ici reprend M₁. (Voyez plus haut, § 21, this chapter.} Et comme ils délibéraient de se rendre auprès d'Hérode, en la ville de Jérusalem, à ce même instant une voix leur parla, qui disait: « N'allez pas chez Hérode, le tyran impie, car il cherche à tuer cet enfant. » Ayant entendu cela, les mages et toute leur armée renoncèrent à cette démarche. Et glorifiant le Christ, Dieu de l'univers, ils partirent pleins de joie, pour leur pays, en suivant la route où le Seigneur les conduisait.

XII: Comment, après quarante jours, ils allèrent au temple avec des présents.

1. Après tous les événements qui s'étaient passés, Joseph et Marie demeurèrent en secret dans la caverne, tenant l'enfant caché pour que personne ne connût rien. Et Joseph ayant pris tous les trésors que les mages avaient apportés, les cacha soigneusement dans la caverne. Chaque jour, Joseph sortait et circulait, toujours à la dérobée, dans la ville, le village et la campagne. Ils pourvoyaient sur place à toutes leurs nécessités matérielles et personne ne les inquiétait ni ne les menaçait, Dieu l'ayant ainsi voulu, car de Bethléem à la ville de Jérusalem il n'y a guère plus de douze milles, et tout le territoire d'alentour est désert et inhabité. Et quand Joseph allait pour quelque affaire en un endroit, il laissait à la garde et au service de la vierge Marie, son fils José, qui, étant moins âgé que tous ses frères, avait suivi son père (à Bethléem).^{\fn{Voyez ci-dessus, ch. VIII, 120, p. 1, note 4.}}

2. Lorsque^{\fn{B: Chapitre XII. Comme quoi on l'amena au temple, en la ville de Jérusalem, pour la circoncision.}} l'enfant fut né de huit jours, Joseph dit à Marie: « Comment agirons-nous au sujet de cet enfant, car la Loi ordonne de faire la circoncision après huit jours? » Marie lui dit: « Que votre volonté s'accomplisse; faites ce que vous voudrez. » Et Joseph s'étant levé, se rendit secrètement en la ville de Jérusalem, et en ramena un homme sage, qui était très miséricordieux et craignant Dieu, et qui connaissait à fond les lois divines. Il s'appelait Joël. Il vint à la grotte où se trouvait l'enfant. Et quand il eut approché le glaive, il n'en résulta pas d'entaille^{\fn{A: [XXX₇₆]: restitution. Lire avec B: [XXX₇₇].}} dans le corps de ce dernier.^{\fn{On entrevoit ici l'intention de concilier le récit de l'évangile avec la pratique chrétienne, par opposition à la pratique juive (ou musulmane).}} A cette vue, il fut frappé de stupeur et dit: « Voici que le sang de cet enfant a coulé. » Et il reçut le nom de Jésus qui lui avait été donné d'avance par l'ange.

3. Et Joseph et Marie demeurèrent dans la grotte. L'enfant Jésus croissait et progressait en grâce et en sagesse. Et jusqu'au bout de quarante jours, <ils tinrent caché l'enfant Jésus>,^{\fn{B. Ces mots manquent dans A.}} pour qu'il ne fût connu de personne.

4. Or donc, lorsque les mages furent repartis pour leur pays sans retourner chez Hérode, celui-ci ayant fait réflexion se dit: « Si les mages qui sont venus ici ne sont pas revenus, c'est qu'ils sont des trafiquants familiers des rois. C'est pourquoi ils n'ont pas voulu me découvrir leurs secrets; mais ils ont craint d'être rançonnés par moi; voilà pourquoi ils m'ont échappé fallacieusement et sous de faux prétextes, de peur que je ne leur fisse tort. » Ayant ainsi parlé, Hérode quitta la ville de Jérusalem, et se rendit alors en Judée du côté de l'Achaïe.^{\fn{B: [XXX₇₈]; A: [XXX₇₉].}} Pour le moment, il ne songea plus à son projet de rechercher l'enfant pour lui faire un mauvais parti. Les prêtres et tout le peuple n'ayant point poursuivi l'affaire, celle-ci tomba en oubli.

5. Ensuite Joseph prit secrètement Marie et Jésus avec de nombreux dons et offrandes provenant de la libéralité des mages, et il se rendit en la ville de Jérusalem. Et après avoir présenté l'enfant Jésus aux prêtres, (lui et Marie) offrirent au Temple saint, suivant l'usage consacré, une couple de tourterelles ou deux petits de colombes. Et le vieillard Syméon ayant pris et reçu le Messie dans ses bras, demandait au Seigneur de permettre que son âme fût rendue libre de retourner à lui et de s'en aller en paix. Ce même <Syméon>,^{\fn{Texte (A): ce qu'il disait; (B): ce que Syméon disait [XXX₈₀].}} dans un esprit prophétique, disait de Jésus: « Il se dresse pour la chute et la résurrection d'un grand nombre en Israël. »

6. Et, après s'être acquitté de ses offrandes et de ses sacrifices, Joseph, ayant pris Marie et Jésus, repartit de là pour la ville de Bethléem. Rentrés dans la grotte, ils y demeurèrent de longs jours, jusqu'à l'année nouvelle,^{\fn{Texte: [XXX₈₁].}} sans paraître en public et en se tenant cachés par crainte de l'impie roi Hérode. Et quand Jésus eut atteint neuf mois, s'étant séparé^{\fn{Telle est la traduction imposée par le contexte. A et B: [XXX₈₂], ayant été séparé (sevré), pour [XXX₈₃], qui s'emploie au sens passif ou au sens réfléchi.}} du sein de sa mère, il cessa de le prendre et de s'en nourrir. (Joseph et Marie) l'ayant remarqué en étaient dans l'admiration, et ils se demandaient l'un à l'autre: « Comment se fait-il qu'il ne mange, ni ne boive, ni ne dorme, mais qu'il soit toujours attentif et éveillé? » Et personne ne pouvait comprendre l'empire de volonté qu'il exerçait sur lui-même.

XIII: Sur Hérode: comme quoi il massacra les enfants de Bethléem et comment il fut trompé par les Mages.

1. Ils atteignaient le début d'une autre année <à Bethléem>,^{\fn{Ajoué d'après B.}} quand un homme impie de cette ville, nommé Begor,^{\fn{Même leçon dans E; B: Phegor.}} alla prévenir Hérode le roi impie et lui fit le rapport suivant: « Les mages que vous avez envoyés à Bethléem, et à qui vous avez ordonné de passer chez vous, ne sont pas revenus, mais s'étant rendus là-bas, ils ont trouvé un enfant nouveau-né, dont on disait qu'il était fils de roi; ils lui

ont offert toute sorte de choses et de présents qu'ils avaient (avec eux) et ils sont retournés dans leur pays par un autre chemin. »\fn{B: Chapitre XIII: De la colère d'Hérode et comme quoi il massacra les enfants à Bethléem. — Ici l'arménien reprend le thème du Protév. XXII, 1-2.}

2. En entendant ainsi dire qu'il avait été trompé par les Mages, Hérode ordonna de convoquer les princes et les grands seigneurs de son (royaume) et leur dit: « Que faire? Ces gens, après nous avoir perfidement joués et bafoués, nous ont échappé par la fuite. Qu'est devenu cet enfant et dans quelle retraite cachée se dérobe-t-il à moi, si bien que personne au monde ne l'a vu? Sus donc, envoyons des soldats à Bethléem, pour que l'ayant trouvé ils s'emparent de lui et tuent son père et sa mère. »

3. Les princes dirent: « O roi, écoutez-nous. Bethléem est une ville en ruines. Les faits qui concernent cet (enfant) se sont passés il y a de longs jours. Il ne sera plus en cet endroit; mais il a (dû) s'enfuir vers un pays lointain. » Les princes, ayant ainsi parlé à Hérode, de par une volonté divine, ne se soucièrent plus de l'affaire et ne la révélèrent à personne, grâce à une disposition de l'Esprit-Saint, car (Jésus et les siens) habitaient encore là.

4. Or ce méchant impie, dans la rage de son cœur, ne savait que faire. Les princes dirent: « O roi, ne vous affligez pas de la sorte et ne troublez pas votre cœur par (votre) emportement. Ordonnez tout ce que vous voulez que nous fassions. » Le roi dit: « Oui, je sais ce que je vais faire; quant à vous, vous n'avez qu'à vous tenir prêts. » Là-dessus, il ordonna de convoquer les chefs de l'armée et les commandants des districts, et il les envoya dans toute l'étendue de son empire, pour rechercher Jésus. Ils ne le trouvèrent pas. A leur retour, ils firent au roi ce rapport: « Nous avons parcouru tous les cantons de Judée, et nous ne l'avons pas trouvé. » Ensuite il ordonna à dix-huit chiliarques de ses armées de parcourir tout le territoire soumis à sa domination, et il leur donna la consigne suivante: « N'ayez aucune pitié des petits enfants, ni des lamentations de leurs pères et de leurs mères. Ne vous laissez persuader ni par les trésors ni par des serments trompeurs; n'ayez aucun égard aux gratifications; mais partout où vous trouverez des enfants âgés de deux ans et au-dessous, passez ces\fn{A: leurs.} enfants au fil de l'épée. »

5. Alors tous les chef et commandants d'armée se rassemblèrent autour de lui, au nombre d'un million, avec leurs épées et leurs armes. Et s'étant mis en route, ils circulèrent en tous lieux et tuèrent tous les enfants qu'ils trouvèrent en quatre-vingt-trois\fn{B: quatre-vingt-quatre.} villages, au nombre d'environ treize cent soixante.\fn{B: quatorze cent soixante.} Le tyran impie en agissait de la sorte à cause de Jésus, en espérant que peut-être Jésus se trouverait dans le nombre. Mais Joseph et Marie, apprenant toutes ces choses, furent intimidés par la crainte du roi et de son armée. Marie prit l'enfant Jésus, l'enveloppa de ses langes et le cacha dans la mangeoire des animaux. Puis ils gagnèrent en cachette les ruines de la ville et s'y blottirent en observation. Et personne ne vint à eux, car ceux qui les apercevaient, ne faisant point attention à eux, ne les regardaient pas.

XIV: Comme quoi Hérode tua le grand prêtre Zacharie dans le temple.\fn{B ajourte: à cause de Jean son fils. — Cf. Protév. XXIII, 1.}

1. Mais le tyran impie, ne trouvant pas le moyen d'aboutir, fit ensuite des recherches auprès de Zacharie au sujet de Jean, pour savoir s'il était son fils unique et s'il était destiné à régner sur Israël. Il envoya donc à (Zacharie) des soldats pour lui demander le petit Jean. Il dit à Zacharie: « J'ai entendu de plusieurs personnes que votre fils est destiné à régner sur la terre de Judée; montrez-le-moi, que je le voie. » Mais quand Zacharie entendit ces paroles\fn{B: entendant cela, il prit peur du scélérat.} du scélérat impie, il lui dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur, je ne sais pas de quoi vous parlez. »

2. Quand Élisabeth\fn{Cf. Protév. XXII, 3.} eut entendu cela, elle prit le petit Jean et s'en alla en fugitive dans un lieu désert de la montagne, où elle chercha à mettre en sûreté la vie de l'enfant. Puis, à bout de souffle, elle pleurait amèrement et répandait ses larmes devant le Seigneur en disant: « Seigneur, Dieu de nos pères, Dieu d'Israël, écoutez la prière de votre servante; traitez-moi selon votre pitié bienveillante pour les hommes et arrachez mon âme aux mains d'Hérode et à la meute criminelle et enragée\fn{A: au chien enragé.} de ses armées. Que la terre s'ouvre, qu'elle engloutisse la mère avec son enfant et que mes yeux ne voient pas la mort de mon fils. » Comme elle disait ces mots, au même instant, la montagne s'ouvrit et lui donna accès. Et elle cacha la mère avec son enfant. Une nuée lumineuse vint les recouvrir et les garda sains et saufs. Et l'ange du Seigneur, descendant sur eux, leur servit de gardien et de défense.

3. Mais Hérode ^{Des §§ 3-8, rapprocher Protév. XXIII, 2-XXIV, 4,} envoya une seconde fois ses appariteurs à Zacharie et lui dit: « Dites-moi où est caché votre fils; montrez-le-moi maintenant, pour que je le voie. » Zacharie dit: « Je suis attaché au service du temple; ma maison n'est pas ici, mais dans la région montagneuse de la Galilée. Je ne sais pas ce qu'est devenue la mère avec son enfant. » Et l'appariteur vint rapporter les paroles de Zacharie. Derechef (Hérode) envoya un messenger à ses généraux et leur dit: « Allez dire ceci à Zacharie: “Voici ce que dit le roi d'Israël: Vous avez dérobé votre fils à mes regards et vous n'avez pas voulu me le montrer franchement, parce que je sais que votre fils doit régner sur la maison d'Israël. Est-ce que vous pourrez m'échapper avec des paroles et m'éviter par de vains prétextes? Il n'en sera pas ainsi. Si vous ne me l'amenez pas de gré, je le prendrai de force, et je vous perdrai avec lui.” »

4. Zacharie dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur! Je ne sais ce que sont devenus la mère et son enfant. » Et (les envoyés) allèrent rapporter à Hérode les paroles de Zacharie. Mais le tyran impie et rempli de toute (espèce d')iniquité envoya de nouveau ses appariteurs et dit: « Voilà la troisième fois que je vous envoie mes ordres. Vous ne m'avez pas écouté et vous n'avez pas eu peur de mes menaces. Ne savez-vous pas que votre sang est sous ma main et que personne ne vous sauvera, non pas même celui en qui vous espérez? »

5. Quand ils allèrent rapporter (ces paroles) à Zacharie, Zacharie leur dit: « Je sais que vous voulez mon sang, et que vous êtes décidés à le répandre sans raison. Mais quand bien même vous feriez périr mon corps d'une mort cruelle, le Seigneur, qui m'a fait et qui m'a créé, accueillera mon âme. » Et ils allèrent rapporter à Hérode ce que Zacharie avait dit. Mais cet impie, dans la méchanceté croissante de son cœur, ne (lui) fit aucune réponse. Et cette nuit même, le tyran impie envoya des soldats, qui s'introduisirent furtivement dans le temple et tuèrent Zacharie près de l'autel, dans le tabernacle de l'alliance. Et personne ni des prêtres ni du peuple n'en sut rien.

6. Mais à l'heure de la prière rituelle, ils demeurèrent dans l'attente, cherchant à le voir, et ne le trouvèrent pas. Puis quand parut l'aurore, au moment de s'acquitter de la prière, les prêtres et le peuple se réunirent pour aller se saluer mutuellement et ils se disaient: « Qu'est-il arrivé au grand prêtre Zacharie? Où serait-il? » Ils s'étonnaient de son retard et (se) disaient: « Il accomplit d'abord sa prière privée; ou bien il a eu quelque vision dans le temple. »

7. Mais l'un des prêtres, qui s'appelait Philippe, ^{Addition du rédacteur arménien?} entra audacieusement dans le Saint des Saints et aperçut le sang coagulé près de l'autel de Dieu. Et voici qu'une voix articulée sortit du tabernacle; elle disait: « Le sang innocent a été répandu en vain; et il ne sera point effacé de dessus les enfants de la maison d'Israël, jusqu'à complète vengeance. » Quant les prêtres et toute la multitude du peuple eurent entendu cela, ils déchirèrent leurs vêtements et, répandant de la cendre sur leurs têtes, ils dirent: « Malheur à nous! Malheur à nos parents! Condamné que nous sommes tous à ce désastre et à cette ignominie. »

8. Et les prêtres, pénétrant dans le tabernacle, virent le sang de (Zacharie) coagulé, comme une pierre, auprès de l'autel de Dieu; mais ils ne virent point son corps. Et frappés de stupeur, ils se dirent les uns aux autres que leur perte était consommée. Et ils disaient: « Qu'est devenu son corps, qu'on n'a aperçu nulle part? » Ils errèrent partout à sa recherche et ne le trouvèrent pas. Et chacun soupçonnait à part soi qu'une personne avait furtivement emporté son corps et s'en était allée le cacher en quelque endroit. Ensuite, prenant le grand deuil en son honneur, les enfants d'Israël le pleurèrent pendant trente jours. ^{B ajoute: ensuite, les prêtres et tout le peuple délibérèrent de constituer un pontife du temple. Et adressant leur prière au Seigneur Dieu, ils lui demandèrent de donner un serviteur au saint autel. Ils tirèrent au sort et le sort tomba sur le vieillard Syméon. Il demeura donc pontife du temple pendant un petit nombre de jours; puis il mourut en confessant fidèlement le Seigneur. Or, depuis l'arrivée du Sauveur au temple jusqu'au moment où Syméon rendit l'âme, celui-ci vécut en tout quarante jours. A la suite de tous ces événements, on établit un autre chef du peuple de la maison d'Israël. Or après tout ce qui était arrivé [le chapitre XIV se termine sur cette phrase inachevée].} Ils firent des recherches en beaucoup d'endroits et ne trouvèrent pas son corps. Ainsi eut lieu le meurtre de Zacharie.

XV: Comme quoi l'ange signifia à Joseph (l'ordre) de fuir, loin des prises d'Hérode, vers la terre d'Égypte. ^{B: Comme quoi l'ange signifia à Joseph de fuir en Égypte.}

1. <Un ange du Seigneur apparut à Joseph et (lui) dit: « Levez-vous, prenez l'enfant et sa mère et fuyez en Égypte, car Hérode cherche à perdre l'enfant. En effet, on est allé renseigner le roi sur le compte de Jésus (et lui dire) que l'enfant est encore en vie. >> ^{{Ce passage, qui manque dans A, forme tout le ch. XV dans B, qui ajoute}

immédiatement: Chapitre XVI. Comme quoi ils se rendirent en fugitifs à Kébron qui est une ville. }

2. (Et) Joseph, s'étant levé précipitamment, prit l'enfant et sa mère et partit en fugitif pour Ascogon qu'on appelle Ascalon, \fn{ **Texte:** Iaskhalon [B: Askhalan]. } ville située au bord de la mer Océan, et de là pour Hébron, où ils demeurèrent cachés pendant six mois. <L'enfant Jésus avait un an et trois mois.> \fn{ **Ces mots manquent dans A. (Voyez ci-après.)** } Il marchait déjà debout \fn{ **Littéralement:** sur les pieds. } sur le sol; et il allait avec ses jouets se jeter sur le cœur de sa mère; et celle-ci, dans un transport de tendresse, le soulevait dans ses bras, lui prodiguait ses caresses et louait Dieu en lui rendant grâce. \fn{ **Ceci est évidemment inspiré par l'épisode des premiers pas de la Vierge dans le Protév. XV, 1.** }

3. Mais alors des gens de la ville allèrent prévenir Hérode, en ces termes: « L'enfant Jésus est en vie; il se trouve actuellement dans la ville d'Hébron. » (Hérode) dépêcha un courrier aux chefs de la ville pour leur enjoindre de s'emparer de Jésus par ruse et de le tuer. Lorsque Joseph et Marie eurent connaissance de la chose, ils se disposèrent à partir de là pour se rendre en Égypte. Quittant secrètement la ville en fugitifs, ils poursuivirent leur route. Ils parcoururent de nombreuses étapes, et aux endroits où ils faisaient halte, l'enfant Jésus puisait de l'eau à la vasque et leur donnait à boire. Finalement ils arrivèrent en terre égyptienne, dans la plaine de Tanis, \fn{ [XXX₈₄] (Ps. LXXVII, 12-43), [XXX₈₅]. La ville désignée sous le nom de Tanis par les Septante s'appelait en hébreu So'an ([XXX₈₆]) et s'appelle aujourd'hui en arabe San ([XXX₈₇]). Le ps.-Matth. (XXII, 2) fait arriver la sainte Famille in unam e civitatibus Aegypti quae Sotinen dicitur (var. Sotrina, Sihenen; chez Vincent de Beauvais: Syenen, etc.; voyez Osc. Schade, Liber de infantia Mariae et Christi salvatoris, Halis Saxonom, 1869, p. 40, note 238). Cette homophonie passera difficilement pour fortuite. } et descendirent en une ville où ils séjournèrent longtemps. \fn{ **B ajoute:** Cette ville s'appelait Πολραϊ ([XXX₈₈]). Πολραϊ, ou plutôt Πολραη, rappelle étrangement [XXX₈₉], nom de la ville où, d'après la légende copte, Denys l'Aréopagite aurait observé l'éclipse miraculeuse qui se produisit à la mort du Christ (cf. O. von Lemm, Bulletin de l'Académie impériale des sciences de Saint-Petersbourg, 5 sér., t. XII, 1900, p. 286). Mais M. Kugener a identifié Pelpah avec Ba'l bek, qui se trouve clairement désigné dans d'autres rédactions de la légende (Oriens Christianus, t. VII, 1907, p. 342; cf. Analecta Bollandiana, t. XXIX, 1910, p. 304). Il est, du reste, plus naturel de supposer que le Πολραη de notre texte désigne Bilbaïs, ville située au N.-E. du Caire et appelée en syriaque [XXX₉₀] (en copte [XXX₉₁] ou [XXX₉₂]; cf. Amélineau, Géographie de l'Égypte à l'époque copte, Paris, 1893, p. 334). } Ils y séjournèrent six mois. L'enfant Jésus avait deux ans.

4. Partis de là, ils arrivèrent près des frontières d'Égypte, en une ville qui s'appelle Caire, \fn{ **Entendez:** ils arrivèrent à proximité de Mesrin en une ville appelée Caire. Glose aggravée d'anachronisme. Le Caire proprement dit est le quartier ajouté par les conquérants Fatimides à côté de l'ancienne ville. Le non-sens géographique où est tombé le traducteur arménien s'explique par le fait qu'en syriaque comme en arabe le même ([XXX₉₃]) servait à désigner l'Égypte et sa capitale. Voyez la rédaction arabe ch. XXV, note, p. 28, et l'introduction. } dans un grand château de la résidence royale, qui est un espace (couvert) de palais et de forteresses. (C'était) un château très élevé, magnifique, splendidement orné et décoré avec une grande variété, qu'Alexandre de Macédoine avait autrefois élevé, aux jours de sa puissance. Ils y demeurèrent quatre mois, jusqu'au moment où l'enfant Jésus atteignit deux ans et quatre mois.

5. Jésus allait au dehors, se promener avec les enfants et les petits en bas âge, \fn{ **B:** les nourrissons. } pour jouer avec eux et se mêler à leurs conversations. Il les emmenait aux endroits élevés (du château), aux lucarnes et aux fenêtres, par où passaient les rayons du soleil, et il (leur) disait: « Qui d'entre vous pourrait jeter ses bras autour d'un rayon de lumière, et (se laisser) descendre d'ici en bas sans se faire mal? » Et ils disaient: « Personne d'entre nous ne pourrait faire cela. » Jésus dit: « Regardez, vous tous, et voyez! » Et Jésus étreignant de ses bras les rayons du soleil, (formés) de minuscules poussières, \fn{ **B ajoute:** qui, au lever du soleil, passent par les fenêtres. } se laissa glisser jusqu'en bas sans se faire mal. \fn{ **Voyez le Liber de infantia Salvatoris, dont M. R. Reinsch a publié quelques extraits d'après le ms. De la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, lat. 14533 (Die Pseudo-Evangelien von Jesu und Maria's Kindheit, Halle, 1879, p. 8-9). Même épisode dans le codex B (Laurentianus) du ps.-Matth. Le texte de Tischendorf (Evangelia apocrypha, 2 éd., p. 106) a été rectifié par Reinsch, (loc. cit., p. 128), qui, à cet endroit, ne s'est pas souvenu de celui qu'il a lui-même publié. M. M. N. Speranskij, retrouvant à son tour ce récit dans une ancienne version serbe du Liber de nativitate Deiparae, a cru aussi être tombé sur l'unique témoin de la tradition ([XXX₉₄] 1890, t. II, Moscou, 1895, p. 169-70). Le miracle de Jésus et des rayons de soleil a été popularisé en Occident par de vieux poèmes anglais et provençaux (Reinsch, p. 128). Il a dû en exister aussi une ancienne rédaction arabe chrétienne, car il a passé dans la littérature musulmane (cf. G. Weil, Biblische Legende der Muselmänner, Francfort-s.-l.-Main, 1845, p. 285-86). } Ce qu'ayant vu, les enfants et tout le petit peuple qui se trouvait là, <s'en allèrent raconter> \fn{ **Mots omis par A.** } dans la ville le prodige accompli par Jésus. Et ceux qui entendaient le récit de ce spectacle admiraient avec stupéfaction. Mais Joseph et Marie ayant entendu ces choses, furent pris de peur et sortirent de cette ville, à cause de l'enfant, pour que personne ne le connût. Ils sortirent furtivement la nuit en emmenant Jésus et s'éloignèrent en fuyant de ces lieux.**

6. Ils arrivèrent à la ville de Mesrin \fn{ **Texte (A, B):** à une ville en Égypte (Voyez, XV, 4, note). } où toute une multitude de gens étaient rassemblés. Cette ville était très grande et (entourée) de hautes murailles. Dans le quartier par où ils y

pénétrèrent, on avait élevé des statues magiques.\fn{ Littéralement: un sortilège, ou un objet magique: [XXX₉₅]: thelesem, mot de la langue vulgaire, remontant au grec [XXX₉₆] par l'intermédiaire du syriaque, du persan ou de l'arabe, ou bien encore du turc. C'est le français talisman. (Cf. S, note à la rédaction arabe, ch. XII, p. 14). — B: Quand on y pénétrait par la première porte, (on voyait) de chaque côté une grande statue magique ([XXX₉₇], thlism, doublet de thelesem), que le rois et les philosophes avaient placée à chacune des portes de la ville, de manière à [XXX₉₈] frapper les regards de quiconque entraît ou sortait. — Il faut peut-être renoncer à trouver une part d'observation directe dans ce récit de pure imagination, où la couleur locale manque partout. On remarquera pourtant que les automates enchantés de notre apocryphe rappellent les statues articulées et parlantes qui rendaient des oracles dans les temples égyptiens. (Voyez G. Maspéro, Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'antiquité, t. I, Paris, 1895, p. 266; et C. Sourdille, Hérodote et la religion de l'Égypte, Paris, 1910, p. 274-78). } Et chaque fois que l'ennemi menaçait le pays d'un danger ou d'un dommage, toutes ces statues jetaient d'abord un même cri à travers la ville. Et ceux qui entendaient la voix de ces nombreuses statues, reconnaissaient à ce cri et comprenaient que quelque chose allait arriver dans le pays. A la première porte du mur, se trouvaient placés deux aigles de fer, aux serres de cuivre, un mâle et une femelle; l'un à droite, l'autre à gauche. A la seconde porte, des bêtes de proie en argile et en terre cuite, d'un côté un ours, de l'autre un lion, et d'autres bêtes féroces (représentées) en pierre et en bois. A la troisième porte, un cheval de cuivre, et, sur ce cheval de cuivre, se trouvait la statue en cuivre d'un roi, qui avait sur la main un aigle de cuivre.

7. Quand Jésus s'approcha pour franchir la porte, tout à coup toutes ces statues se mirent à vociférer bruyamment en chœur; et toutes les autres statues inanimées de faux dieux (criaient) à l'envi les unes des autres; et les idoles des temples poussaient des cris, si bien que la ville entière en était ébranlée jusqu'aux fondements, et que, de frayeur et d'épouvante, la vie devenait impossible aux hommes. Et au même moment, tandis que les deux aigles trompetaient, le lion rugissait, le cheval hennissait et le roi de cuivre avec (son) aigle sur le poing, criait disant: « Écoutez, vous tous tant que vous êtes, et tenez-vous prêts; car un monarque, fils du grand Roi, s'approche de notre ville avec une armée nombreuse. »

8. En entendant cela, tout le peuple formé en bataillons nombreux courut précipitamment en armes vers le rempart: ils regardèrent de tous côtés et n'aperçurent rien. S'étant mis à réfléchir, ils se disaient avec étonnement: « Qu'est-ce que cette voix sonore qui nous a interpellés? Qui (donc) a vu, qui a entendu au'un fils de roi soit entré dans notre ville? » Alors, ils se répandirent partout et ne découvrirent rien, sauf que, dans une maison, ils trouvèrent Joseph, Marie et Jésus. Ils arrêtaient Joseph et l'ayant amené au milieu de la place publique, ils lui dirent: « Dites-nous, vieillard: d'où êtes-vous venu en cette ville, et de quelle nation êtes-vous? » Joseph dit: « De la terre de Judée, et de la ville de Jérusalem. » Ils lui dirent: « Dites-nous la vérité; quand êtes-vous arrivé ici? »

9. Joseph dit: « Il y a trois jours que je suis arrivé en cette ville. » Ils lui dirent: « Et, sur la route par laquelle vous êtes venu, vous n'avez point vu un prince, fils de roi, qui marchait contre ce pays avec son armée? » Joseph dit: « Je ne l'ai point vu. » Ils lui dirent: « Mais comment avez-vous franchi une route si longue et dépourvue d'eau? » Joseph dit: « (Tantôt) je suivais des compagnons de voyage, avec ma famille et les miens; tantôt j'allais seul. »\fn{B: tantôt (nous allions) moi seul, l'enfant et sa mère.} La foule (lui) dit: « Nous savons que vous êtes un pauvre vieillard étranger, un homme sûr. Nous voulions seulement nous renseigner et savoir (le vrai); ne nous en blâmez pas, car un prodige nous est apparu aujourd'hui et nous en sommes tous dans la stupeur. » Ayant ainsi parlé, ils congédièrent Joseph et s'en allèrent.

10. Et il advint que Joseph, en arrivant dans une ville, avait pris gîte auprès d'un temple d'idoles (consacré) à Apollon. Il demeura là plusieurs jours. Or un jour, Jésus considérait attentivement le palais des idoles, qui, par sa largeur et sa hauteur était comme une petite ville. Jésus dit à sa mère: « Instruisez-moi et répondez-moi sur ce que je vais vous demander. » Marie lui dit: « Parlez, mon fils; que voulez-vous? » Jésus dit: « Que sont ces bâtiments élevés, dont la largeur est si considérable? » Marie dit: « C'est le temple des idoles, (consacré au) culte des autels illégitimes, (à) l'image du faux dieu Apollon. » Jésus dit: « Je vais voir quel aspect il présente et à quoi il ressemble. » Marie dit: « Si vous voulez y aller, soyez prudent, pour qu'il ne vous arrive aucun mal. »

11. Et aussitôt Jésus, s'étant levé, se dirigea de ce côté et entra dans le temple des idoles. Il regardait tout autour de lui\fn{ Texte: autour d'elles ([XXX₉₉] pour [XXX₁₀₀]?) B: autour de tout. } et considérait la splendeur des constructions, car elles étaient ornées de dessins et relevées d'une décoration variée. Il les admira fort et sortit promptement. Derechef les statues magiques\fn{ Voyez ci-dessus XV, 6, second note. } de la ville se reprirent à hurler comme la première fois et dirent: « Écoutez, vous tous: voici que le fils du grand Roi est entré dans le temple d'Apollon. » Ayant entendu cela toute la population de la ville se porta en courant vers l'endroit indiqué. Et les gens

s'interrogeaient les uns les autres, en disant: « Quelle voix a poussé ce cri qui nous a été adressé? » Ils parcoururent toute la ville et n'aperçurent rien sinon le seul Jésus. Ils lui demandèrent: « Enfant, de qui es-tu le fils? » Jésus dit: « Je suis le petit garçon d'un vieillard à cheveux blancs, pauvre et étranger (à ce pays): que me voulez-vous? » Ils le laissèrent aller et passèrent.

12. Les citadins s'interrogeaient les uns les autres et se disaient: « Que signifie ce nouveau prodige dont nous sommes témoins? <Nous entendons distinctement>\fn{ Ces mots manquent dans A. } une voix qui crie; <et nous ne comprenons rien à ce qu'elle annonce.>\fn{ Ces mots manquent dans A. } Nous craignons qu'un désastre ne nous arrive soudain, d'un côté que nous ne surveillons pas. » Quand ces gens eurent ainsi parlé, toute la ville fut dans l'inquiétude. Pour Jésus, il s'en alla silencieusement chez lui et raconta tout ce qu'il leur avait entendu dire. Et (Marie et Joseph) en furent vivement étonnés.

13. Comme l'année nouvelle approchait,\fn{ Voyez ch. XII, 6; ci-dessus XII, 6, first note. }— Jésus avait alors trois ans et quatre mois,— il y eut un jour une fête d'Apollon. Toute la foule se pressa aux portes du temple des idoles avec de nombreux dons et offrandes, pour offrir en sacrifice aux grands dieux des animaux et toute espèce de quadrupèdes. Ils préparèrent leurs libations et leurs victimes et dressèrent une vaste table chargée de mets, pour manger et boire. Et toute la multitude du peuple qui était venue se tenait à la porte. Et les faux prêtres\fn{ XXX₁₀₁: des prêtres qui n'en sont pas = XXX₁₀₂ (cf. ci-après, XV, 15, first note). } célébraient la fête pour honorer l'idole\fn{ Texte (A): les idoles. } d'Apollon. Or Jésus étant survenu, entra secrètement et s'assit. Tous les prêtres étaient rassemblés (avec eux) les serviteurs des temples.

14. Or donc, les aigles et les bêtes féroces, c'est-à-dire les statues (de ces animaux), quand ils virent Jésus entrer dans le temple des idoles, se mirent de nouveau à crier et dirent: « Regardez, vous tous! Voici que le fils du grand Roi est entré dans le temple d'Apollon. » En entendant ces mots, toute la multitude qui se trouvait là fut remplie de trouble et de colère. Et se précipitant les uns sur les autres, ils voulaient s'entretuer par le glaive. Et ils (se) disaient: « Quel (parti) ferons-nous à ce vieillard? C'est depuis son entrée dans notre ville (et) à son arrivée que tous ces prodiges et ces miracles se sont produits. Cet enfant serait-il par hasard un fils de roi, qu'il aurait enlevé et (avec lequel) il se serait enfui dans notre pays? Venez, emparons-nous de lui et tuons-le. »

15. Tandis qu'ils se livraient à ces pensées, Jésus se trouvait là dans le temple d'Apollon. Il considérait attentivement cette image incrustée d'or et d'argent, au dessus (de laquelle) il était écrit: « Ceci est Apollon, le dieu\fn{ A: le faux dieu: XXX₁₀₃. La négation XXX₁₀₄ placée en tête du mot (dans le ms. A) est une sorte de protestation du copiste contre l'impiété qu'il est forcé d'écrire. C'est de la même manière, sans doute, qu'il faut expliquer des formes comme XXX₁₀₅ (= XXX₁₀₆; voyez plus haut, XV, 13, second note) qui se reconte dans les textes byzantins (cf. Analecta Bollandiana t. XXXI, 1912, p. 183, note, où différents exemples sont réunis). } créateur du ciel et de la terre, celui qui donne la vie à tout le genre humain. »\fn{ B: Chapitre XVII. De la destruction des idoles, des faux dieux et faux prêtres des Égyptiens. } Au même instant, Jésus s'indigna dans son âme. Il sortit promptement du temple, et regardant le ciel, il dit: « Père, glorifiez votre fils, pour que votre fils vous\fn{ A: nous. } glorifie. » Et voici qu'une voix sortit des cieux, qui disait: « Je (l') ai glorifié et je le glorifierai de nouveau. »

16. A l'instant, comme Jésus avait ainsi parlé, le sol trembla et tous les bâtiments du temple s'écroulèrent de fond en comble. L'idole d'Apollon, les prêtres des temples et les pontifes des faux dieux furent ensevelis à l'intérieur de l'édifice et périrent. Le reste de la population de la ville qui se trouvait là, s'enfuit de ce lieu. Toutes les idoles et tous les autels des démons qui étaient dans la ville, s'écroulèrent en ruines. Et tous les édifices (et) les statues magiques qui entouraient la ville, images inanimées d'hommes, de fauves et d'animaux, furent jetés à bas. Alors les démons poussèrent un cri et dirent: « Regardez, vous tous, et plaignez-nous, car un petit enfant en bas âge nous a détruits, tous tant que nous sommes; il a ruiné notre demeure et exterminé nos serviteurs en les faisant périr de male mort. Or çà, emparez-vous de lui et faites-le périr d'une mort cruelle. »

17. En entendant cette plainte et cette lamentation des démons et au son de leur cri, toute la multitude des gens de la ville se précipita ensemble vers l'emplacement du temple ruiné, et prenant le deuil, ils pleurèrent chacun sur ses morts. Et Jésus s'en alla en silence dans sa maison et s'y assit dans un coin. Ces gens, ayant saisi Joseph, le firent comparaître devant le tribunal et lui dirent: « Dites nous: Que signifie ce désastre qui nous a atteints depuis votre venue en notre ville? Ne vous avons-nous pas dit auparavant: « Faites-nous votre récit: qu'avez-vous “vu en

route et qu'avez-vous entendu?" Vous nous avez néanmoins célé cette affaire. Nous allons donc vous faire périr de male mort, vous, votre fils et ceux qui vous accompagnent; car vous avez, par votre trahison, causé la perte de cette ville. Dites-nous où est votre fils. Montrez-le à tous, pour que nous voyions celui qui a détruit nos dieux, \fn{A: nos faux dieux (voyez ci-dessus, XV, 15, first note.)} anéanti les ministres de notre culte, enseveli nos prêtres sous les décombres et causé bien des morts prématurées. Et maintenant nos mains ne vous lâcheront \fn{ Littéralement: Vous n'échapperez pas à nos mains avant que ... } qu'après que nous vous aurons rendu à tous la pareille. »

18. Ils proférèrent beaucoup d'invectives de ce genre contre lui. Or Marie, tombant aux pieds de Jésus, l'invoquait en pleurant et disait: « Jésus, mon fils, écoutez-moi, (écoutez) votre servante. Ne vous irritez pas ainsi contre nous \fn{ Le traducteur arménien doit avoir substitué un simple transitif à une forme causative, par exemple, [XXX₁₀₇] à [XXX₁₀₈] (n'excitez (pas) ... } et n'ameutez pas cette ville, de peur que par haine, on ne nous arrête et nous tue et que l'on ne vous fasse périr d'une mort cruelle. » Jésus (lui) dit: « O ma mère, vous ne savez ce que vous dites. Toutes les troupes de l'armée céleste des esprits angéliques tremblent en frémissant de crainte devant la glorieuse puissance de ma divinité, qui fait don de la vie à tous (les êtres animés). Et lui, le Sadaïel, \fn{ Texte (A): « Vous, Sadaïel » ([XXX₁₀₉]); B: « Lui, Sataïël » ([XXX₁₁₀]). Ce nom rappelle celui qui est donné comme synonyme d'un autre nom du démon, dans un fragment copte de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris: [XXX₁₁₁], « Mastêma, qui est Satanaël » (E. Amélineau, Journal Asiatique, 8th sér., t. XII, p. 367, note), } mon ennemi \fn{ Littéralement: s'étant opposé à moi (= [XXX₁₁₂]). } et celui de mes créatures <faites> à mon image, il ose se donner à lui-même le nom <de Dieu> \fn{ Ce mot manque dans A. [B: « Lui mon ennemi et celui de mes créatures, il ose, à mon exemple, prendre le nom de Dieu ... »] } et recevoir le culte et les adorations du genre humain. »

19. Marie dit: « Mon fils, vous dites vrai; mais, je vous en prie, écoutez-moi, (et), par l'intercession de votre mère et servante, ressuscitez ces morts dont vous avez causé la perte; et tous ceux qui verront les miracles que vous faites, croiront en votre nom. Car vous voyez les nombreux tourments dont ils affligent ce vieillard qu'ils ont arrêté à cause de vous. » Jésus dit: O ma mère, ne me faites pas violence de la sorte, car le temps n'est pas venu pour moi de faire cette chose. » Marie dit: « Je vous en prie, écoutez-moi, mon fils: considérez notre angoisse et la détresse de votre servante; puisque, pour vous, émigrés et dépaysés, nous errons en inconnus dans une terre étrangère. » Jésus dit: » Par égard pour votre prière, je ferai cet acte, afin que (ces gens) reconnaissent que je suis fils de Dieu. »

20. Ayant ainsi parlé, Jésus se leva et traversa la foule du peuple. Et quand (les assistants) virent cet enfant en bas âge et tout petit—il avait trois ans et quatre mois—ils se dirent les uns aux autres: « Est-ce lui qui a renversé le temple des idoles et détruit la statue d'Apollon? » Les (autres) dirent: « Oui, c'est lui. » En entendant cela, (tous) admiraient, dans la stupeur, les œuvres qu'il avait faites. Ils le dévisageaient fixement et disaient: « Que veut-il faire? » Et Jésus s'étant indigné dans son âme, s'avança au milieu de la place par-dessus les cadavres, et prenant de la poussière du sol, il la répandit sur eux et s'écria à haute voix en disant: « Je vous le dis à tous, prêtres, qui gisez ici, frappés de mort à l'intérieur de cet édifice, relevez-vous promptement du désastre qui vous a anéantis et venez (ici) dehors. »

21. Et au moment où il disait ces paroles, tout à coup, le lieu où ils se trouvaient trembla. La poussière se souleva, en faisant tourbillonner les pierres, et cent quatre-vingt-deux personnes environ se relevèrent d'entre les morts et se dressèrent sur leurs pieds. Mais d'autres ministres et archiprêtres d'Apollon, au nombre de cent neuf \fn{ B: deux cent deux. } ne se relevèrent pas. La crainte et la terreur s'emparèrent de tout le monde, et saisis de crainte, ils disaient: « C'est lui le Dieu du ciel et de la terre, qui donne la vie à tout le genre humain. » Et tous les prêtres ressuscités d'entre les morts vinrent se prosterner devant lui et ils confessaient leurs fautes et disaient: « Véritablement, il est le fils de Dieu et le sauveur du monde, qui est venu pour nous donner la vie. » Et le bruit de ses miracles se répandit dans toute cette région; et ceux qui (en) entendaient (parler) venaient de loin en grand nombre, pour le voir. Et à raison de son jeune âge, ils s'étonnaient plus encore.

22. Ensuite, toute la foule assemblée tomba aux pieds de Jésus, et ils le priaient de ressusciter (aussi) ceux des morts qui avaient été serviteurs des temples. Jésus ne voulut point le faire. Et, ayant amené Joseph au milieu de la multitude attroupée, ils l'imploraient et disaient: « Pardonnez-nous les fautes que nous avons commises envers vous, et priez votre enfant qu'il ressuscite les morts qui étaient dans ce temple. » Et Joseph dit: « Faites-moi grâce (de cela), car je ne puis le violenter. Mais s'il veut agir spontanément, que la volonté du Seigneur s'accomplisse; car il a la puissance sur toute chose. »

23. Après qu'ils eurent ainsi parlé, un homme de grande famille survint et alla se prosterner devant Jésus et Joseph disant: « Je vous en prie, venez dans la maison de votre serviteur et, (une fois) entrés sous mon toit, restez y aussi longtemps qu'il vous plaira. » Et il les emmena dans sa maison. Et tout le peuple de la ville alla trouver (Jésus), le servit à ses propres frais avec beaucoup de sympathie. Et ceux qui étaient tourmentés par les esprits mauvais, par les démons ou par leurs maladies, (venaient) se prosterner devant lui et il les guérissait. Il y eut une grande joie en cette ville et les gens du pays d'alentour, entendant tout cela, glorifiaient Dieu à haute voix.

24. En cette ville, Joseph demeura durant de longs jours, dans la maison d'un prince, qui était de race hébraïque. Il s'appelait Éléazar; \fn{ Cf. S, rédaction arabe, ch. XII, note 1; ci-dessus, p. 14. } il avait un fils et deux filles; le fils s'appelait Lazare; et les filles \fn{ Lacune dans B. } Marthe et Marie. Il accueillit ainsi (Joseph et les siens) en grand honneur, comme il convenait. Joseph prolongea son séjour et raconta à Éléazar tous les traitements que (leur) avaient faits les enfants d'Israël: oppressions, persécutions, vexations et, pour finir, l'exil où ils étaient. Et entendant ces choses, Éléazar fut rempli de tristesse. Joseph lui dit: « Soyez béni parce que vous nous avez fait tout le bien possible. Vous nous avez reçus de bon cœur; vous nous avez soutenus, nous tous qui sommes venus \fn{ XXX₁₁₃, c'est-à-dire probablement: aussi longtemps que (XXX₁₁₄) nous avons été ici (c'est-à-dire: pendant tout notre séjour). } ici, et vous nous avez fait le bien. » Éléazar dit à Joseph: « Vieillard vénérable, établissez-vous à demeure en ce lieu, et ne doutez pas que plus tard vous ne trouviez le repos et la délivrance de votre détresse. »

25. Ayant ainsi parlé, ils furent remplis d'une joie sereine. Éléazar dit: « Et moi aussi je suis du pays de Judée et de la ville de Jérusalem. Et beaucoup de peines et d'afflictions m'ont atteint par le fait de mes ennemis. Je me suis vu privé et spolié de tous mes biens, et, par crainte de l'impie Hérode, je me suis exilé et je suis venu en ce lieu avec ma famille et mes compagnons. Il y a quinze ans que je me suis fixé en cette ville. Je n'ai à subir aucune vexation de la part des gens; mais (au contraire) je recontre bienveillance, sympathie et beaucoup de considération. Vous non plus ne redoutez personne, mais établissez-vous à demeure dans un endroit quelconque, comme bon vous semblera, jusqu'au moment où le Seigneur vous visitera et prendra en pitié votre grand âge. Puis vous retournerez dans la terre (d'Israël), et votre âme vivra \fn{ Le texte reprend ici dans B. } par votre espérance dans le Seigneur. »

26. Ayant ainsi parlé <ils se turent. Et> \fn{ Mots ajoutés d'après B. } ils demeurèrent en ce lieu trois mois complets. Joseph et Éléazar devinrent comme deux frères, unis par une affection et une bienveillance réciproques. Marthe et Marie reçurent la vierge Marie et Jésus dans leur maison, avec une charité parfaite, comme (s'ils n'avaient eu) qu'une âme et qu'un esprit. Marthe, pour sa part, s'était attachée à son frère Lazare; \fn{ Littéralement: Marthe avait pris son frère Lazare pour sa propre part. } Marie, sœur de Lazare, chérissait l'enfant Jésus comme son propre frère; car ils avaient le même âge.

27. Or Jésus voyant tout ce qui était arrivé, s'indigna en son esprit et dit à Marie sa mère: « Mon âme est troublée de ce que j'ai fait en cette ville. Car je voulais ne point me manifester, pour que personne ne (me) connût; et voici que j'ai écouté vos prières et fait vos volontés. » La vierge Marie (lui) dit: « Pourquoi nous adressez-vous ces reproches, mon fils? De vrai, vous aviez causé la ruine des idoles et vous (nous) aviez livrés tous à la perdition et à la mort. C'est pourquoi nous vous avons prié de nous arracher à la mort. Désormais donc, quoi que vous soyez prêt ou résolu à faire, que votre volonté s'accomplisse. » \fn{ B: Chapitre XVIII: Comme quoi, sur l'ordre de l'ange, ils retournèrent dans leur pays. }

28. La nuit même qui suivit, l'ange (du Seigneur) dit à Joseph dans une vision: « Levez-vous, prenez l'enfant et sa mère et allez dans la terre d'Israël, car les gens qui en voulaient à la vie de l'enfant sont morts. » Et Joseph s'éveillant de son sommeil, raconta cette vision à Marie. En entendant (cette parole) ils se réjouirent. Mais peu de jours après, ayant appris qu'Archélaüs était devenu roi à la place de son père, il craignit d'aller par là. S'étant donc levé de nuit, il prit l'enfant et sa mère et partit dans la direction du sud, vers le pied du mont Sinai, pour travers le désert \fn{ B: et il se rendit par le désert à Horeb, près du territoire où ... } voisin du territoire où jadis le peuple d'Israël s'était établi et avait séjourné. \fn{ Remarquer cette interprétation des mots: dans la temt d'Israël. }

XVI: Comme quoi (la sainte Famille) revint dans la terre d'Israël et habita au pays de Galilée, en la ville de Nazareth.

1. Le matin, s'étant levés, ils s'en furent gagner le pays de Moab, en face de Mambré, et ils parcoururent de nombreuses étapes sur la route de la ville des Arabes. \fn{ B: ... sur la route. Et ils arrivèrent à une ville des Arabes appelée *Malla qpir mtin*, ce qui veut dire: grande ville de Dieu ... ([XXX₁₁₅], où l'on peut, en effet, reconnaître les trois mots: [XXX₁₁₆], Dieu, [XXX₁₁₇], grand et [XXX₁₁₈], ville). } Quand Jésus passa par le territoire de la ville, il s'y trouvait des autels. Sur le chemin, il y avait une haute montagne et au sommet de cette (montagne) un grand temple, splendidement orné de toute sorte d'images et consacré au culte des démons. Et les démons, rassemblés à l'endroit où passait la route, délibéraient entre eux et (se) disaient: « Nous nous trouvons bien ici dans notre demeure et nous sommes en repos. Mais nous avons entendu dire par plusieurs que le fils d'un pauvre vieillard s'est révélé, qui connaît et discerne toutes nos pratiques. C'est un persécuteur et un ennemi de notre race. Avec lui, désormais que va-t-il advenir de nous? »

2. (Certains) démons dirent: « Comment êtes-vous en mesure de le connaître et de savoir qui il est? » Un autre démon dit: « Vous ne savez pas qui il est; je le sais, moi, et je le connais par avance. » Les démons dirent: « Si vous le connaissez, instruisez-nous. » Le démon dit: « C'est lui-même qui nous a précipités de la voûte des cieux, notre demeure, et nous a tous réduits à la perte. Et maintenant il est venu ici (-bas) pour nous expulser du genre humain. » Les démons dirent: « Et comment pourrez-vous savoir qu'il le fera? » Le démon dit: « J'étais là, \fn{ B: en Égypte. } dans le temple d'Apollon, quand il a détruit \fn{ A: qu'il a détruit. } tout l'édifice sacré, \fn{ Texte (A, B): [XXX₁₁₉]. } pulvérisé les statues des dieux \fn{ Texte (A,B): des faux dieux. Voyez XV, 17; ci-dessus XV, 17, second note. } et tout ruiné de fond en comble. » Les démons dirent: « Malheur à nous! S'il vient ici, qu'allons-nous devenir? » \fn{ B: Chapitre XIX: Étant allé (venu) au pays des Arabes, détruisit les idoles et ressuscita les morts. [The book text here is physically damaged; there may originally have been an à before the détruisit. H] }

3. Et tandis qu'ils délibéraient ainsi entre eux, ils aperçurent tout à coup Jésus qui s'avavançait. Ils poussèrent un cri et dirent: « Voilà l'enfant Jésus qui vient en cette ville! Quittons ce lieu, car nous allons périr de sa main. » (D'autres) démons dirent: « Venez! Jetons un cri (d'alarme) dans la ville. Peut-être s'emparera-t-on de l'enfant: on le tuera et nous resterons en paix dans notre demeure. » Ayant ainsi parlé, tous se répandirent de divers côtés et poussèrent (ce) cri: « Regardez, vous tous, et écoutez! Le fils d'un grand roi vient et s'avance vers cette ville avec une armée nombreuse. » En entendant cela, tous les habitants de l'endroit accoururent, avec leurs rangs au complet et en armes. Ils s'en allèrent patrouiller de tous côtés et ne trouvèrent rien.

4. Or comme Jésus pénétrait par la porte de la ville, toutes les bâtisses des temples furent subitement ébranlées; ils s'effondrèrent en ruines et il n'en demeura pas un seul. Quant aux chefs des prêtres et aux ministres (du culte), ils furent envahis par la démence d'une fureur démoniaque. Ils se frappaient eux-mêmes et disaient: « Malheur à nous! Infortunés que nous sommes, d'être ainsi chassés de notre demeure! Qui est l'auteur de ce coup? » Et ils ne pouvaient s'expliquer ce fait et la destruction de la ville.

5. Joseph demeura là plusieurs jours. Jésus avait alors quatre ans. Parvenu à cet âge, le petit Jésus ne restait plus confiné à la maison; mais il sortait avec d'autres enfants, dont il partageait les conversations. Ceux-ci accouraient spontanément à sa rencontre et se prêtaient à ces volontés. Par son aménité affectueuse, il les amenait tous à s'accorder avec lui, et, grâce au charme de sa parole, il devint le conducteur et le chef de tous les enfants. Quelque chose qu'il leur commandât de faire, ils accomplissaient ses volontés. Lui ne laissait personne s'abandonner à l'oisiveté. Et s'il arrivait à quelques-uns d'entre ces enfants de se blesser et de se porter des coups, il y passait la main, les guérissait et les exhortait tous amicalement. Il réconciliait les mécontents et les mettait de bonne humeur. Ceux-ci allaient chez leurs parents et rejetaient sur Jésus la cause des fautes qu'ils avaient commises. \fn{ B: Bien qu'il exhortât tout le monde amicalement ..., si toutefois il survenait parmi eux quelque sujet de dispute, ils en rejetaient la cause sur Jésus ... } Les parents (alors) allaient à la recherche de Jésus et ne le trouvaient pas. Ils interrogeaient disant: « Où est-il? » Les enfants disaient: \fn{ Texte: (dirent). } « Nous ne (le) savons pas; car c'est le fils d'un vieillard étranger qui est de passage. » Et sur cette parole, ils s'en retournaient chacun chez soi.

6. Il arriva un jour que Jésus alla rejoindre les enfants, à l'endroit où ils étaient rassemblés. Et s'étant mis au jeu, ils s'amusaient, causaient et discutaient entre eux. Jésus admirait leur innocence. <Or, tandis qu'ils s'entretenaient et devisaient, il arriva qu'ils se portèrent mutuellement des coups. L'un d'eux frappant de la main un (autre) enfant, > \fn{ Cette phrase manque dans A. } lui creva l'œil droit. \fn{ A: et ils crevèrent les yeux à l'un des enfants. } L'(enfant),

poussant un cri, se mit à pleurer amèrement. Jésus dit: « Ne pleure pas, et dresse-toi vite sur tes pieds. N'aie pas peur. » Et Jésus s'approcha de lui. A l'instant même la lumière fut rendue à ses yeux et il recouvra la vue. Quant aux enfants qui se trouvaient là, ils allèrent en hâte à la ville et racontèrent ce que Jésus avait fait. Ceux qui (les) entendaient, se rendirent en courant à l'endroit (où il était), afin de le voir. Ils ne le trouvèrent pas. Jésus prit la fuite et se déroba à leurs regards.

7. Plus tard, \fn{Cf. ps.-Thom. IX; ps.-Matth. XXXII; Reinsch, Pseudo-Evangélien, p. 11.} Jésus se rendit un jour à l'endroit où les enfants étaient réunis, tout au haut d'une maison. Celle-ci était très élevée, (haute) à peu près d'un jet de pierre. \fn{B: d'une pierre lancée à la main en hauteur (?).} Un des enfants dormait sur l'épaisseur du mur, au bord de la maison. \fn{B: sur le bord (du mur) au sommet de la maison ([XXX]₁₂₀) signifie cerveau. Le rédacteur arménien aurait-il confondu [XXX]₁₂₁, cerveau, avec [XXX]₁₂₂, balustrade, parapet, etc.?)} Il tomba de cette hauteur sur son crâne. Il se fendit la tête. Son sang avec sa cervelle jaillit sur la pierre, et au même instant, son âme se sépara de son corps. A ce spectacle, les enfants qui se trouvaient là s'enfuirent de cet endroit. Et le peuple de la ville, s'attourant sur les lieux et poussant des cris, disait: « Par le fait de qui ce petit garçon s'est-il tué en tombant de cette hauteur? » \fn{B ajoute: Les (enfants) dirent: « Nous l'ignorons. »} Survinrent les parents, qui avaient appris la chose. \fn{B ajoute ici: et l'enfant avait trois ans et quatre mois.} Ils firent de grandes démonstrations de deuil sur l'(enfant). Puis ils se mirent à chercher et à (essayer de) savoir qui avait fait ce mauvais coup. Et tous disaient avec serment: « Nous (l') ignorons. »

8. Les parents de l'enfant dirent: « Nous ne croyons pas comme cela à ce que vous dites. » Puis, après \fn{Lacune dans B.} qu'ils eurent de force rassemblé tous les enfants et qu'ils les eurent amenés devant le tribunal, ils se mirent à les interroger en disant: « Dites-nous qui a tué cet enfant et l'a précipité de cet endroit élevé. » Ceux-ci, sous la menace de la mort, se dirent entre eux: « Que faire? Nous savons tous et nous nous rendons mutuellement le témoignage que nous sommes innocents et que personne n'est cause de cette mort. Et l'on ne croit pas à cette parole sincère. Faut-il que, malgré notre innocence, nous soyons condamnés à mort? » L'un d'entre eux dit: « Vous savez tous que nous sommes innocents et que nous n'avons pas de témoin. On tient nos paroles pour mensonge. Allons! rejetons la faute sur Jésus, puisqu'il était avec nous. Il n'est pas des nôtres; \fn{Littéralement: il est un autre comme nous: [XXX]₁₂₃ A première vue cette phrase insolite semble traduite de l'arabe: [XXX]₁₂₄: « il n'est pas comme nous, » c'est-à-dire: « il n'est pas des nôtres. » Le traducteur arménien n'aurait-il pas lu: [XXX]₁₂₅, autre, pour [XXX]₁₂₆, dernier? (Comparer aussi ch. XXV, 5).} c'est un étranger, fils d'un vieillard de passage. On le condamnera à mort et nous serons acquittés. » Ils dirent d'une seule voix: « C'est cela! Bien parlé! »

9. Alors l'assemblée du peuple, ayant fait arrêter les enfants, les mit à la question et leur dit: « Dites (-nous) qui a fait ce mauvais coup et causé la mort prématurée de cet enfant innocent. » Ils dirent d'une même voix: « Un enfant étranger:—on l'appelle Jésus;—fils d'un certain vieillard: c'est lui qui est l'auteur (du fait). » (Les juges) ordonnèrent de le citer. Quand ils allèrent (le chercher), ils ne le trouvèrent point. S'étant donc saisis de Joseph, ils l'amènèrent devant le tribunal et lui dirent: « Où est votre fils? » Joseph dit: « Que lui voulez-vous? » Ils répondirent d'une même voix: « Vous ne savez donc pas, vous, ce qu'il a fait, votre enfant? Il a précipité du haut d'une maison un enfant de (chez) nous et l'a fait périr. » Joseph dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur! nous ne savons où il est. »

10. Ils envoyèrent donc Joseph devant le juge. Le juge dit: « Vieillard, d'où êtes-vous venu et de quel pays êtes-vous? » Joseph dit: « Du pays de Judée et de la ville de Jérusalem. » Le juge dit: « Dites-nous, où est votre fils qui a fait périr d'une mort cruelle un enfant de (chez) nous? » Joseph dit: « O juge, ne nous incriminez pas avec cette injustice, car nous ne sommes pas responsables du sang de cet (enfant). » Le juge dit: « Si vous n'(en) êtes pas responsables, que craignez-vous pour votre vie? » \fn{Littéralement: « pourquoi redoutez-vous la mort? »} Joseph dit: « Je suis un vieillard étranger, un pauvre mendiant. Cet enfant est mon fils selon l'esprit, non selon la chair. S'il le veut, il a le pouvoir de vous répondre. »

11. Il avait ainsi parlé, quand Jésus se présenta et dit: « Qui cherchez-vous? » Ces gens dirent: « Le fils de Joseph. » Jésus dit: « C'est moi. » Le juge dit: « Racontez-moi comment vous avez fait ce mauvais coup. » Jésus dit: « O juge, ne rendez pas votre jugement avec une telle partialité, car c'est un péché et un tort (que vous faites) à votre âme. » Le juge \fn{Le texte reprend dans B.} dit: « Je ne vous condamne pas sans motif mais à bon droit, car les compagnons de cet (enfant), qui se trouvaient avec vous, portent témoignage contre vous. » (Jésus) dit: « Et pour eux, qui <témoigne> \fn{Le mot manque dans A.} qu'ils sont sincères? » Le juge dit: « Ils se rendent mutuellement le témoignage qu'ils sont innocents et que vous êtes digne de mort. » Jésus dit: « Si quelque autre témoigne à mon

sujet, il fait foi; mais si eux-mêmes, par crainte de la mort, se rendent témoignage mutuellement, ils ne comptent pas et vous rendez votre sentence contrairement à la justice. » Le juge dit: « Qui rendra témoignage de vous, puisque vous êtes digne de mort? » Jésus dit: « O juge, il n'en va point comme vous le dites. Ils ont considéré\fn{ *Texte (A): vous avez considéré. Ces mots ne se trouvent pas dans B.* } que je ne suis pas d'ici, car je suis étranger et fils d'un pauvre. C'est pourquoi ils ont rejeté sur moi la sentence de mort. Et vous, pour complaire à des hommes, vous supposez qu'ils ont raison et vous me donnez tort. »

12. Le juge dit: « Qu'ai-je donc à faire? » Jésus dit: « Voulez-vous rendre votre jugement avec justice? Prenez de part et d'autre des témoins étrangers (à l'affaire) et alors le mensonge apparaîtra à découvert, en (toute) vérité. » Le juge dit: « Pour moi, je ne sais ce que vous dites là: je demande un témoignage à vous comme à eux. » Jésus dit: « Si je me rends témoignage à moi-même, me croirez-vous? » Le juge dit: « Si vous jurez sincèrement ou mensongèrement, je ne le sais pas. »\fn{ *Entre cette réplique et la suivante, B intercale de nouvelles redites.* } Les enfants dirent d'une même voix: « Écoutez: nous savons qui vous êtes, (vous) qui avez exercé toute sorte de vexations et de sévices sur nous et sur les autres enfants de la ville. Nous, nous ne vous avons rien fait. » Le juge dit: « Vous voyez combien de témoins ils sont qui vous démentent, et vous ne répondez pas. » Jésus dit: « A maintes reprises, je me suis adressé à vous\fn{ *B ajoute: avec témoins (c'est-à-dire avec témoignages à l'appui). La suite du dialogue et du récit dans B contient de nombreuses variantes de pure amplification.* } et vous n'avez pas cru à mes paroles. Maintenant vous allez voir et vous serez dans l'admiration et la stupeur. » Le juge dit: « Voyons donc ce que vous voulez dire. »

13. Alors Jésus, s'étant approché du mort, cria à haute voix et dit: « Abias,\fn{ *Même leçon dans E (B: Arabias).* } fils de Tamar, lève-toi, ouvre les yeux et raconte-nous quelle fut la cause de ta mort. » Et, au même instant, le mort se leva, comme tiré de son sommeil; il s'assit, regarda autour de lui et reconnut chacun (en l'appelant) par son nom. A cette vue ses parents l'enlaçèrent de leurs bras, et ils s'embrassaient en (lui) disant: « Comment te trouves-tu? Que t'est-il arrivé? » Et l'enfant dit: « Rien. » Jésus dit à l'enfant: « Dis-nous, enfant, quelle a été la cause de ta mort. » L'enfant dit: « Seigneur, ce n'est pas vous qui êtes responsable de mon sang, ni les enfants qui étaient avec moi; mais ils ont eu peur de la mort et vous ont chargé. En réalité, je m'étais endormi, j'ai été précipité de haut en bas et me suis tué. »

14. En voyant cela, le juge et la multitude du peuple dirent: « Puisque cet enfant a fait ce prodige, il n'est pas le fils d'un homme, mais c'est un dieu incarné qui se montre à la terre. » Jésus dit: « Juge, croyez-vous que je suis innocent? » Celui-ci, dans sa confusion, ne répondait pas. Et tous s'émerveillaient sur le jeune âge (de Jésus) et sur les œuvres qu'il faisait. Ceux qui entendaient parler des miracles opérés par Jésus en étaient remplis de crainte.

15. L'enfant demeura (en vie) durant trois heures. Jésus lui dit:\fn{ *B: J. dit au petit Arabea: « Dormez maintenant et reposez-vous ... »* } « Abias, dormez maintenant jusqu'à la résurrection générale. » Et comme Jésus avait ainsi parlé, (l'enfant) laissa retomber sa tête et s'endormit. A cette vue, les enfants, prenant une vive peur de lui, se mirent à trembler. Puis, le juge et toute la multitude, tombant aux pieds de Jésus, le supplièrent en disant: « Rendez la vie à ce mort. » Jésus n'y consentit pas et dit: « O magistrat indigne et interprète (infidèle) des lois, comment prétendez-vous m'imposer l'équité et la justice, (alors) que vous et toute cette ville, d'un commun accord, me condamnerez sans raison, refusant de croire à mes paroles, et que vous regardiez comme vérité les mensonges que ceux-là disaient à mon sujet? Puisque donc vous ne m'avez pas écouté, moi non plus je ne vous exaucerai pas. » Ayant ainsi parlé Jésus sortit précipitamment et se déroba à leurs regards. Ils le cherchèrent et ne le trouvèrent pas. Et allant se jeter aux pieds de Joseph, ils le priaient en disant: « Où est Jésus, votre enfant, pour qu'il vienne ressusciter notre mort? » Et celui-ci dit: « Je l'ignore. Il circule où bon lui semble et sans mon commandement. »

XVII: Comme quoi ils partirent de là et vinrent au pays de Syrie.\fn{ *B: Chapitre XX. Comme quoi ils vinrent au pays des Syriens et sur d'autres miracles et résurrections de morts.* }

1. Et, cette nuit-là, Joseph s'étant levé, prit l'enfant et sa mère, et s'en alla au pays de Syrie, en une ville qui s'appelait Šahaprau.\fn{ *Même leçon dans B (E: Šahapraut). Ce nom persan ou imité du persan ne ressemble à aucun nom de ville connu.* } Jésus avait alors cinq ans et trois mois. Et, comme il pénétrait par la porte de la ville, où il y avait des statues de dieux, il arriva que les démons, voyant passer Jésus, poussèrent un cri et dirent: « Il arrive un enfant, fils d'un roi, d'un grand monarque, qui va bouleverser notre ville et nous expulser de notre demeure. Venez et soyez sur vos gardes, pour qu'il ne s'approche pas de nous. Dans quel désert nous cacherons-nous? »\fn{ *Texte:*

périssons-nous ([XXX₁₂₇] pour [XXX₁₂₈]). B: « Fuyons devant lui dans un autre endroit, très loin, dans les cavernes et les antres des rochers [cf. Cant., II, 14], afin qu'il ne nous apparaisse pas à découvert ([XXX₁₂₉]; cf. A: [XXX₁₃₀]: dans quels déserts?) et que nous ne périssons point. » } En entendant cela, les chefs des faux prêtres, les faux pontifes et les serviteurs des idoles se réunirent dans le temple des idoles et dirent: « Quelle voix (a poussé) ce cri qui nous épouvante? » Et au même instant, toutes les statues des faux dieux s'ébranlèrent et, s'abattant sur le sol, elles tombèrent en pièces. »

2. Or Joseph, ayant pénétré dans la ville, y avait pris gîte en un certain endroit et y demeurait. Jésus circulait partout autour de la ville. Il arriva à l'endroit où les enfants étaient rassemblés, et s'assit au bord de l'eau, auprès des sources. Ayant pris de la poussière, il la jeta dans l'eau. Les enfants vinrent pour boire; ils virent l'eau changée en sang et, tourmentés\fn{ [XXX₁₃₁] (cf. B). A: ils virent l'eau changée en sang et corrompue ([XXX₁₃₂)] } par la soif, ils pleuraient. Ayant pris une cruche, il la plongea aussitôt dans la fontaine et, puisant de l'eau, il leur en donna. Et derechef\fn{ A omet ce passage qui paraît nécessaire au contexte. } ayant pris de l'eau à la fontaine, il la répandit sur eux et les vêtements de tous furent comme teints de sang. Et les petits innocents se mirent à pleurer devant lui. Jésus appela les enfants d'un air aimable; il passa la main sur eux et dit: « Ne pleurez pas. Voilà! Il n'y a plus de taches sur vos habits. » Et les enfants furent transportés de joie en voyant le prodige opéré par Jésus.

3. Un autre jour, Jésus alla trouver les enfants, à l'endroit où ils étaient réunis et leur dit: « Venez; nous irons à (tel) endroit éloigné et là nous ferons la chasse aux oiseaux pour les capturer. » Ils dirent: « Oui. » Et s'étant levés, ils allèrent en un endroit connu,\fn{ Texte: illustre ([XXX₁₃₃)] } (dans) une plaine.\fn{ B ajoute: Il y avait (avec eux) plusieurs très petits enfants qui ne pouvaient soutenir la marche; ils suivaient en arrière, sans vêtements ni chaussures. (Les autres), comptant sur eux, poussèrent jusqu'à une certaine localité. [La suite de l'épisode, notamment l'interrogatoire décrit § 7-10, est encore beaucoup plus longuement amplifié que dans A.] } Ils y demeurèrent la journée entière, mais ils ne réussirent pas à prendre d'oiseaux. C'était un jour d'été et la chaleur torride de l'atmosphère les incommodait extrêmement. Ce que voyant, Jésus eut pitié d'eux et leur tendant la main, il les releva et leur dit: « Ne craignez pas. Levez-vous. Nous irons vers ce grand rocher qui est en face de nous et nous nous reposerons sous son ombre. » Quand ils y furent allés et qu'ils se furent réunis à l'endroit indiqué, ils ne\fn{ Texte (A): car ils ne pouvaient. } purent supporter la violence de la chaleur. Et beaucoup de ces petits innocents tombaient comme morts, à court de souffle, et de leurs yeux fixes, ils regardaient Jésus.

4. Or Jésus, s'étant levé, se tint debout au milieu d'eux et, de sa baguette, il frappa le rocher, et au même instant jaillit de ce rocher, une source d'eau abondante et délicieuse, (dont) il les abreuva tous. Cette source existe encore aujourd'hui. Quand ils eurent tous bu et qu'ils se furent ranimés, ils se levèrent et ils adorèrent Jésus. (Et) comme Jésus étendait la main sur l'eau, une multitude de poissons y apparurent. Et il ordonna aux enfants de les prendre: et ceux-ci prirent de nombreux poissons. Puis ils ramassèrent du bois. Ce bois s'enflamma sans (qu'on y mit le) feu. Ils firent rôtir les poissons, les mangèrent et furent rassasiés. Ils prirent (encore) de nombreux poissons et tous s'en allèrent joyeux à leurs maisons. (Là) ils se mirent à raconter les prodiges qu'avait faits Jésus. Ils montrèrent des poissons qu'ils avaient pris à la pêche et beaucoup de gens crurent en lui.

5. Or ceux d'entre ces enfants qui étaient forts et vigoureux arrivèrent chez eux à temps et de bonne heure; les petits (ne rentrèrent que) plus tard. Un garçonnet de trois ans, s'étant égaré dans la plaine, perdit le souffle, tomba sur le sol et s'endormit. Pendant la nuit, il s'éveilla et, ouvrant les yeux, il regarda de tous côtés et ne vit personne. Alors, le cœur lui manquant, il se prit à pleurer. Il demeura là trois jours. Toute la nuit,\fn{ B: Il marcha à l'aventure durant la nuit entière, et, perdant sa route, il s'égara loin du pays. Il passa trois jours dehors ... } il erra dans la plaine, et s'éloigna de la contrée, sans que nul des enfants sût ce qu'il était devenu. Puis, la faim, la soif et l'ardeur du soleil lui séparèrent l'âme du corps.

6. Les parents du petit interrogèrent les enfants, (leur disant): « Où est notre petit garçon, qui vous a suivis? Qu'est-il devenu? » Ils dirent: « Nous ne savons pas. » Ses parents dirent: « Comment ne savez-vous pas qu'il vous suivait? » Les enfants dirent: « Nous savons qu'il nous suivait, mais après nous n'avons pu connaître ce qu'il est devenu. » Ses parents dirent: « A quelle heure avez-vous vu qu'il était (encore) avec vous? » Les enfants dirent: « Jusqu'au milieu du jour, nous l'avons tous vu. Mais quand la chaleur du soleil nous eut incommodés, (et) qu'elle nous eut tous mis en fuite, nous nous sommes perdus de vue. Et lorsque le petit Jésus nous réunit et nous donna à boire de l'eau tirée du rocher, nous ne vîmes pas l'enfant en cet endroit. Nous supposâmes qu'il était

retourné à la maison. »

7. Alors les parents de l’(enfant), s’étant levés, allèrent trouver le juge de la ville et lui racontèrent tout l’(histoire). Celui-ci ordonna de réunir tous les enfants par-devant lui et il se mit à les interroger, disant: « Mes enfants, dites-moi la vérité: qu’est devenu ce petit? » Ils lui dirent: « O juge, écoutez-nous. Hier matin, comme nous nous étions réunis d’un commun accord et que nous voulions aller jouer, Jésus, le fils de Joseph, arriva avec d’autres petits enfants qui s’étaient joints à lui. Nous fîmes remarquer que nous allions partir pour un endroit éloigné. (Et) comme cet (enfant) ne voulait pas s’en retourner, nous le laissâmes là et nous partîmes. » Le juge dit: « Quand vous vous êtes rassemblés au même endroit, quelqu’un (de vous) l’a-t-il vu? » Ils dirent: « Oui: il a été avec nous toute la journée, jusqu’à midi. Lorsque la chaleur du soleil nous eût incommodés, nous nous sommes dispersés de cet endroit, et nous nous sommes perdus de vue. »

8. Le juge dit: « Levez-vous; allez à sa recherche, jusqu’à ce que vous l’ameniez mort ou vif. » Ils s’en allèrent battre les environs et ne le trouvèrent pas. De retour auprès du juge <ils lui dirent>: « Nous ne l’avons pas trouvé. » Le juge dit: « Que vous êtes-vous mis dans la tête? (Pensez-vous) que vous réussirez à m’échapper par la ruse? Il n’en sera pas ainsi. Dites-moi: quel était le but de votre expédition? Qui a invité cet enfant et l’a emmené avec lui? » Les enfants dirent: « Personne n’(en) voulait; il est venu de lui-même. » Le juge dit: « Vous ne dites pas la vérité, (ce qui fera) que vous périrez tous. »

9. L’un d’entre eux dit: *{ Le texte de A doit avoir été abrégé en cet endroit. Comporer B: ... Ensuite le juge ordonna de les dévêtir et de les battre avec des verges de bois vert. Quand on les eut dépouillés de leurs vêtements, les enfants (se) dirent: « Que faire, puisque nous avons tous conscience d’être innocents et que l’on ne croit pas à nos protestations? » L’un d’entre eux dit: « Pourquoi, sur une condamnation aussi injuste, serions-nous mis à mort? » Ils lui dirent: « Et que competez-vous faire? » Le jeune garçon dit: « Connaissez-vous Jésus ... » } « Connaissez-vous Jésus, le fils du vieux Joseph? Il était avec nous, il se trouvait à notre tête, et il nous a emmenés avec lui: c’est lui qui nous a mis dans ce piège de mort. » Ses compagnons dirent: « Et quel mal nous a-t-il fait? Quand nous étions mourants de soif, sous la chaleur torride, c’est lui qui, tirant de l’eau du rocher, nous a désaltérés; il nous a donné des poissons à manger, et ensuite nous avons pu retourner à temps à la maison. » D’(autres) enfants dirent: *{ B ajoute: Le jeune garçon dit: « Et nous, quelle faute avons-nous commise pour être ainsi tous mis à mort? » Les enfants dirent: « Sachez-le [littéralement: Vous le savez]: nous ne dirons pas de mal de lui. » Le jeune garçon dit: « Et nous, de quel <crime punissable> de mort avons-nous conscience? Non! Venez et rejetons sur lui ... » } « Venez! rejetons sur lui cette accusation, puisqu’il est inconnu et étranger à notre ville. Et (d’ailleurs), ne savez-vous pas que c’est à cause de lui que nous sommes sous le coup de cette détresse et de ces tourments? » { B ajoute: Que l’on commence par le condamner à mort et nous serons épargnés. » (Tous) dirent d’une même voix: « Prenez sur vous la responsabilité de sa mort [littéralement: de son sang]. » Le juge voyant qu’ils ne lui répondaient pas, ordonna aux bourreaux de les mettre à la question. Quand les coups commencèrent à tomber, le jeune garçon, poussant un cri, dit: « O juge, pourquoi nous condamnez-vous ... » } Et poussant un cri, ils allèrent trouver le juge et lui dirent: « Pourquoi nous condamnez-vous malgré notre innocence? » Le juge dit: « Si vous êtes innocents, désignez celui qui est digne de mort. » Les enfants dirent: « Le fils d’un vieillard étranger a emmené (cet enfant) avec lui et nous ne savons ce qu’il lui a fait. » Le juge dit: « Pourquoi n’avez-vous point parlé de lui auparavant? » Les enfants dirent: « Nous avons cru que ce (serait) une faute; car il est très pauvre et réduit à la mendicité. »**

10. Le juge ordonna de mander Jésus. On ne le trouva pas. Alors on arrêta Joseph et, de force, on le fit comparaître devant le tribunal. Le juge dit: « Vieillard, d’où êtes-vous venu et où allez-vous? » Joseph dit: « Je suis d’une contrée lointaine et je parcours la terre en étranger dépaycé. » Le juge dit: « Où est votre fils? » *{ B allonge encore l’interrogatoire qui suit. }* Joseph dit: « Que lui voulez-vous? » Le juge dit: « Ne savez-vous pas que votre fils est allé jouer emmenant tous les enfants de la ville et un petit garçon n’est pas revenu. Dites-moi donc: où est-il (votre fils) et qu’a-t-il fait de cet enfant? » Joseph dit: « Quant à cela, je l’ignore. » Le juge dit: « Vous ne vous échapperez pas de mes mains avec de pareilles excuses, que vous ne m’ayez amené l’enfant mort ou vif. » Joseph dit: « Je suis vieux, comment pourrai-je rester en course la journée entière? » Le juge dit: « Peut-être le trouverez-vous tout de suite dans un endroit quelconque. » *{ B continue: Joseph dit: « O juge, ordonnez à ces enfants de nous suivre dans cette recherche: ils savent peut-être où est (le petit). » Le juge dit: « Oui, je le ferai, mais les parents de l’enfant vous suivront. » Sur ces paroles du juge, Joseph le salua profondément, et s’en alla tout triste à sa maison, raconter à Marie ce qui était arrivé. Et tous deux s’affligèrent profondément. Le lendemain, à l’aurore, Joseph, s’étant levé, se fit précéder de l’enfant Jésus ... }*

11. Et Joseph, se faisant précéder de l’enfant Jésus, s’en alla à douze milles environ de la ville, et ils trouvèrent

dans la plaine l'enfant, qui avait succombé à l'ardeur du soleil, comme s'il eût été brûlé au feu. Tout son corps ainsi que ses vêtements étaient noircis de graisse (et) toutes les articulations de son corps étaient disjointes.\fn{ B continue: A cette vue, les parents de l'enfant poussèrent un cri ... ils l'emportèrent en pleurant à la porte de la ville et tous les gens de la ville, menant un grand deuil, s'apitoyèrent sur lui. Après une heure environ, les parents de l'enfant dirent (au juge): « Nous ne le mettrons pas au tombeau que vous n'ayez fait périr dans les supplices le fils de ce vieillard, et condamné son père et sa mère à des tourments cruels et à la mort. » Le juge dit: « Vous avez raison. » Alors il ordonna de placer Jésus ... } Ayant vu cela, ils retournèrent à la ville et en informèrent ses parents. Ceux-ci s'étant rendus (à l'endroit indiqué) trouvèrent l'enfant; et, poussant un cri, ils se frappèrent eux-mêmes à coups de pierre. Puis, enveloppant son corps dans un drap, ils l'enlevèrent et l'emportèrent à la ville. Et tout le peuple de la ville en (le) voyant, s'apitoyait sur lui.

12. Alors le juge ordonna de placer Jésus au milieu du tribunal et (lui) dit: « Enfant, pourquoi avez-vous fait ce mauvais coup et (pourquoi) avez-vous attiré ce malheur sur notre ville? » Jésus dit: « O juge, ne faites pas cet acte d'iniquité, qu'il n'est permis à personne d'énoncer ou d'entendre. » Le juge dit: « Que dois-je donc faire entre deux droits (opposés)? » Jésus dit: « Si vous agissez sincèrement, vos jugements seront <justes>.\fn{ Ce mot manque dans A. } sinon, vous commettrez un grand péché. » Le juge dit: « Ne me répondez point de la sorte pour me faire la leçon devant tout le monde. Je n'agis point de mauvaise foi mais avec justice. »\fn{ B insère ici toute une suite de questions et de réponses oiseuses. } Jésus dit: « Si vous agissiez avec sincérité, vous auriez d'abord fait votre enquête soigneusement, d'après les témoignages, puis vous auriez jugé conformément aux lois. » Le juge dit: « Comment puis-je faire une enquête sur ce que vous dites de vous-même: “Je suis innocent?” Et qui donc a fait ce mauvais coup? » Jésus dit: « Vous recevez le témoignage de ceux qui m'imputent une chose calomnieuse, et vous ne croyez pas à la vérité de mes paroles; mais tantôt vous serez confondu. » Le juge dit: « Faites comme vous voudrez. »

13. Et Jésus s'étant levé, vint se placer (debout) auprès du mort, et il s'écria à haute voix: « Moni, fils de Šarouhi,\fn{ Même leçon dans E. (B: Amonia, fils de Šarouhê). } lève-toi, dresse-toi vite sur tes pieds et dis.\fn{ B: « Ouvre tes yeux et vois qui ... » (Amplification de la mauvaise leçon: [XXX₁₃₄], vois, au lieu de: [XXX₁₃₅], dis). } qui a été la cause de ta mort. » Et celui-ci se dressa sur son séant. Ses parents et ses autres connaissances poussèrent un cri vers lui.\fn{ Texte (B, A): sur lui ([XXX₁₃₆]). } et le serrant sur leur cœur ils l'embrassaient, en lui disant: « Mon fils, qui t'a rendu la vie? » Et il dit: « Le petit Jésus, le fils du vieillard. » A cette vue, les prêtres des idoles.\fn{ B: le juge et toute la foule du peuple. } se prosternèrent devant Jésus, et ils interrogèrent l'enfant, lui disant: « Mon fils, qui a causé votre perte? »

14. L'enfant dit: « Personne: ils sont tous innocents. Ne condamnez pas Jésus, car il n'est pas responsable de mon sang. Je m'étais égaré et, de faim et de soif, mon âme a défailli et il ne m'est pas arrivé autre chose que je sache. »\fn{ B: « Quant à ce qui m'est arrivé ensuite, tout ce que je sais, c'est que vous me voyez. » } Jésus dit: « O juge inique, n'est-ce pas injustement que vous vouliez me condamner et me mettre à mort? » Et le juge, confondu, ne savait (que) répondre. L'enfant demeura en vie environ trois heures, jusqu'au moment où tous l'ayant vu en furent dans l'admiration. Et derechef Jésus dit à l'enfant: « Endors-toi.\fn{ B: Amonia, fils de Šarouhê, endors-toi maintenant et repose-toi. La fin du chapitre, dans B, est amplifiée par le procédé ordinaire. } maintenant. » Et au même instant, (celui-ci) s'endormit. Et après avoir ainsi parlé, Jésus disparut à leurs yeux.

XVIII: Comme quoi ils vinrent en la terre de Chanaan. Espiègleries enfantines de Jésus.\fn{ Littéralement: une chose enfantine ([XXX₁₃₇]) que faisait Jésus. [B: Chapitre XXI. Venu en la terre de Chanaan, il y fit des miracles en cachette, et ressuscita un mort.] }

1. Au point du jour, Joseph prit Marie et Jésus et s'en fut dans la terre de Chanaan, en une ville qui s'appelait Madiam.\fn{ E: Mathiam. } Jésus avait (alors) six ans.\fn{ B: six ans et trois mois. } Il arriva.\fn{ B répète ici sous une forme un peu abrégée l'épisode raconté au ch. XVI, 1-4. } qu'en circulant dans cette ville, Jésus aperçut des enfants, en un lieu où ils s'étaient rassemblés, et il se dirigea (vers eux). Le voyant venir, ils se dirent les uns aux autres: « Voici un enfant étranger qui arrive: venez, mettons-le en fuite. » Les autres dirent: « Et quel mal veut-il nous faire, puisqu'il est un enfant comme nous? »

2. Et Jésus vint s'asseoir au milieu d'eux et leur dit: « Pourquoi demeurez-vous en silence et que délibérez-vous de faire? » Les enfants dirent: « Rien. » Jésus dit: « Qui (de vous) connaît un jeu? » Les enfants dirent: « Nous ne savons rien faire. »\fn{ B ajoute: nous nous bornons à regarder. } Jésus dit: « Regardez, vous tous, et voyez! » Et Jésus

prenant en main de l'argile, \fn{ Cf. Ps.-Thom., II, 2; ps.-Matth. XXVII et Genèse, II, 7. } (en) forma un moineau; il souffla (dessus) et (l'oiseau) s'envola. Et il dit: « Levez-vous; venez, et attrapez ce moineau. » Ceux-ci regardaient ébahis et s'émerveillaient du miracle accompli par Jésus.

3. Et de nouveau, ayant ramassé de la poussière du sol, il la répandit en l'air vers le ciel, et elle se changea en mouches et en moustiques et toute la ville en fut remplie: hommes et animaux en furent très incommodés. \fn{ Cf. Exode VII, 17. } Derechef, il prit de l'argile et (en) forma des abeilles et des guêpes, et les répandant sur les (enfants), il mit ceux-ci en émoi. \fn{ B ajoute: Et (ces insectes) s'abattant sur la tête et le cou (des enfants) pénétraient sous leurs habits et dans leur sein et les piquaient. Eux pleuraient et s'enfuyaient en poussant des cris. Jésus, pour les apaiser, les appelait avec de douces paroles. Il passait la main sur les blessures des enfants et leur disait: « Voilà! Ne pleurez pas; vos membres n'ont aucun mal. » Et les enfants se taisaient. Les gens de la ville et les habitants de la région, à la vue de ces prodiges et de ces miracles, se disaient les uns aux autres: « D'où nous vient cette invasion de mouches et de moustiques qui a infesté notre ville? » Les enfants dirent: « C'est un petit garçon, fils d'un vieil étranger aux cheveux blancs, qui a fait ce prodige. » Tous dirent d'une même voix: « Où est-il? » Les enfants dirent: « Nous ne le savons; » car Jésus s'était enfui de là et s'était dérobé à leurs regards. Ceux qui entendaient (parler de) toutes les œuvres de Jésus, désiraient le voir et disaient: « C'est bien là le fait de Dieu et non pas d'un homme. » }

4. A trois jours de là, il advint que Jésus s'étant levé, alla circuler secrètement au milieu de la ville. Et il prêtait l'oreille aux discours des gens qui disaient: « Quelqu'un a-t-il vu en cette ville, le fils d'un vieillard en cheveux blancs, dont tout le monde atteste qu'il fait des miracles et des prodiges que nos [faux] dieux \fn{ Voyez la first note au ch. XV, 15. } ne savent point faire? » D'autres disaient: « Oui, vous dites bien vrai: il sait faire, lui, tout ce qu'il veut. » Jésus, ayant entendu cela, s'en retourna silencieusement à sa maison et se cacha pour que personne ne sût (rien). \fn{ B poursuit: « A plusieurs jours de là, Jésus s'étant levé alla trouver les enfants et les bambins, à l'endroit où ils étaient réunis. L'ayant aperçu, tous ceux qui étaient là, allèrent joyeusement à sa rencontre. Les enfants se prosternaient devant lui et lui disaient: « Vous êtes le bienvenu, petit Jésus, fils d'un vénérable vieillard. Dites-nous pourquoi vous avez disparu, nous privant de votre présence, durant les longs jours que vous n'êtes pas venu ici. Nous tous ... » [Ici une lacune dans le manuscrit; après quoi le texte reprend]: ... ils arrivèrent là en pleurant et ils lui firent un grand deuil. L'enfant avait sept ans. Après une heure passée, les parents du petit demandèrent: « Où est ce jeune garçon qui a tué notre enfant d'un coup de pierre? » Tous dirent: « Nous ne le savons pas. » Sur quoi, les parents, ayant enlevé le cadavre, l'emportèrent dans leur maison. Et s'étant rendus chez le juge de la ville, ils lui racontèrent toute l'histoire. Celui-ci ordonna d'arrêter les enfants et de les lui amener. Quand ils furent arrivés, le juge les interrogea et leur dit: « Gars et enfants, grands et petits, qui êtes ici rassemblés dans la salle d'audience, voyez tous, regardez et considérez votre jeunesse! Ne vous imaginez pas que vos pleurs et vos larmes me décideront à vous acquitter par scrupule de conscience, ou que je vais vous mettre en liberté, sur une intercession quelconque, en retour d'un présent, comme vous le croyez sans doute. Il n'en sera rien. Mais je vous ferai déchirer de mainte et mainte façon dans des tourments cruels et périr de male mort. Ne vous faites pas illusion à votre sujet, vous disant: « Je suis un fils de famille »; et un autre: « Je suis le fils d'un pauvre; le juge aura pitié de qui il voudra. » Non! je vous jure par la puissance de nos [texte: de mes] dieux et par la gloire de l'empereur notre souverain (XXX₁₃₈) que tous, tant que vous êtes, vous serez condamnés aujourd'hui. Dites-moi (donc) qui d'entre vous a tué cet enfant, car vous tous qui étiez là, vous le connaissez. » Ils dirent d'une même voix: « O juge, écoutez-nous et remarquez que, les uns pour les autres, nous attestons sous serment que nous sommes innocents. » Le juge dit: « Ne vous l'ai-je pas déjà dit, comme je le répète maintenant? Ce n'est point par menace mais par bienveillance que je vous parle ainsi. Ne céléz pas votre méfait, sinon vous périrez tous avec cet (enfant) et rien ne vous aidera. » Les enfants dirent: « O juge, nous vous disons la vérité exactement comme nous la connaissons. Et ne pouvant connaître le (coupable), pourquoi, par un mensonge, livrerions-nous un innocent à la mort? » Le juge dit: « Je vous ferai châtier sévèrement, puis je vous ferai périr d'une mort cruelle, si vous ne me découvrez pas la vérité. » Les enfants dirent d'une même voix: « Nous voici rassemblés devant vous. Tout ce que vous nous commanderez <de dire> et que nous savons, nous le dirons. » Au même instant le juge, pris de colère, ordonna de les dévêtir et de les fouetter avec des lanières crues. Or celui qui était le meurtrier de l'enfant, intimidé par le juge, poussa un cri et dit: « O juge, délivrez-moi de ces liens et je vous indiquerai, moi, le meurtrier de l'enfant. » Le juge ordonna de le délier et l'appelant [texte: et de l'appeler] auprès de lui avec des caresses et de bonnes paroles, il lui dit: « Dites-moi exactement et en ordre tout ce que vous savez. » Le jeune garçon dit: « Écoutez-moi, ô juge. Je me trouvais là, assis loin à l'écart, et j'ai vu le petit Jésus, le fils du vieux Joseph l'étranger, qui, en jouant, frappait cet enfant à mort, d'un coup de pierre, et s'enfuyait de là. » Le juge dit: « Dites-moi bien exactement: il était avec vous autres quand cet enfant mourut, et vous êtes tous témoins qu'il est l'auteur du fait? » Tous dirent d'une même voix: « Oui; c'est lui qui a fait cela. » Le juge dit: « Et pourquoi ne me l'avez-vous pas dénoncé d'abord, quand vous vîtes ici? » Les enfants dirent: « Nous avons cru qu'il serait mal de le trahir, puisqu'il est le fils d'un pauvre étranger. » Le juge dit: « Quel parti convenait-il de prendre: condamner un innocent dans les formes légales et laisser libre celui qui est digne de mort? » [La suite de l'épisode semble calquée trait pour trait sur le ch. XVI, 10-15; cf. XVII, 12-14: arrestation de Joseph, interrogatoire, perquisitions inutiles pour trouver Jésus, nouvel interrogatoire de Joseph; entrée soudaine de Jésus dans le tribunal; dialogue entre Jésus et le magistrat, qui finalement, pris de fureur, fait appeler les enfants et leur dit]: « Dites-moi la vérité pour que je sois renseigné. Est-ce vous qui avez causé cette mort ou bien est-ce le petit Jésus? » Ils dirent d'une même voix ... [Nouvelle lacune, que la suite permet de combler: Jésus ressuscite le mort et lui commande de désigner son meurtrier. Reprise du texte]. Jésus éclate en reproches contre le juge. « Et l'enfant demeura en vie jusqu'à la neuvième heure du jour en sorte que (texte: auquel, [XXX₁₃₉]) tous vinrent le voir, ressuscité d'entre les morts. Puis Jésus prenant la parole dit au mort: « Saül (Šawoul) fils de Šawour, dormez maintenant et reposez-vous jusqu'à ce que vienne le justicier universel, qui prononcera un jugement équitable. » Et comme Jésus disait ces mots, l'enfant laissa retomber sa tête et s'endormit. A cette vue toute la foule des gens qui se trouvaient là, pris de peur, se laissèrent choir comme morts. Ils n'osaient le regarder. Dans la violence de leur frayeur, ils tremblaient devant lui et leur étonnement redoublait à raison de son jeune âge. Jésus voulut se retirer de la foule; mais ces gens l'imploraient et disaient: « Rendez (de nouveau) à la vie le mort que vous aviez ressuscité. » Jésus refusa de le faire et dit: « Si vous aviez

d'abord cru à ma parole et accepté mon témoignage, j'avais le pouvoir de faire tout ce que vous demandez. Mais puisque vous conspiriez pour me condamner injustement et que vous vous acharniez indignement contre moi, au moyen de témoignages calomnieux, j'ai ressuscité cet (enfant) pour l'opposer comme témoin à vos imputations et ainsi j'ai échappé à la mort. » Ayant parlé de la sorte, Jésus se déroba à leurs yeux. On tira Joseph de la prison et on le mit en liberté. Plusieurs allèrent à la recherche de Jésus et ne le trouvèrent pas. Ils suppliaient Joseph et lui disaient: « Où est votre enfant, pour qu'il vienne ressusciter notre petit garçon? » Et celui-ci dit: « Je ne le sais pas. » Le lendemain, au point du jour; Joseph s'étant levé prit l'enfant et sa mère et, sortant de la ville, ils partirent par la route. Jésus avait six ans et onze mois. Ils atteignirent un village appelé Iaiêl ([XXX₁₄₀]). Ils y séjournèrent durant de longs jours. Or un jour, Joseph et Marie tinrent conseil ... (Voyez § 5.) }

5. Et un jour Joseph et Marie tinrent conseil au sujet de Jésus (et dirent): « Que ferons-nous de lui, puisque nous avons à supporter de tels embarras à cause de lui? »\fn{B ajoute: « ... de la part des gens dans toutes les villes et villages et nous (avons lieu de) craindre qu'on ne le saisisse de force (ou) en cachette pour le tuer et que nous ne périssions avec lui. » } Joseph dit: « Que songez-vous à faire de lui, puisque\fn{Texte (A, B): que ([XXX₁₄₁])}, vous m'interrogez? » <Marie dit:> « Vous voyez qu'il est devenu grand; il circule toujours où bon lui semble et ne se tient pas à la maison. Si telle est votre volonté, nous lui ferons exercer la profession de scribe, pour qu'il soit placé sous la dépendance du maître et qu'il s'exerce en toute espèce d'étude et à la connaissance des lois divines, et que nous vivions dans le calme et dans la paix. »

6. Joseph dit: « Vous avez raison; que votre volonté s'accomplisse. » Marie dit: « Et s'il ne lui reste plus rien à étudier,\fn{Littéralement: « s'il ne se fixe nulle part pour étudier. » ([XXX₁₄₂])}, étant déjà très habile et capable de tout comprendre, il ne se soumettra pas au maître. Joseph dit: « Ne craignez rien pour lui, car on remarque en lui bien des choses prodigieuses.\fn{B ajoute: « Son aspect est plein de mystère, et merveilleuses, étonnantes, stupéfiantes sont ses œuvres. » } Et c'est pourquoi nous allons par toute la terre comme des nomades sans patrie, en attendant que le Seigneur notre Dieu nous signifie sa volonté et accomplisse pour notre bien le désir de notre cœur. » Marie dit: « Je suis fort anxieuse à son sujet et je ne sais ce qui adviendra plus tard. » Joseph dit: « Plus tard, dans l'épreuve, le Seigneur nous tirera de peine. Ne vous attristez pas. » Et sur ces mots, ils se turent.

XIX:\fn{B: Chapitre XXII.} **Comme quoi ils vinrent en la terre d'Israël et appliquèrent (Jésus) à l'étude des lettres.**

1. Joseph s'étant levé prit Jésus et Marie et s'en vint dans la terre d'Israël en une ville qui s'appelle Bothosoron.\fn{B: Bodororon; E: Bodosoron.} Il y avait en cette ville un roi pieux, de race hébraïque, qui s'appelait Baresou.\fn{C'est-à-dire: Barjésus [B, E: Barëiesou].} C'était un homme bon, miséricordieux et charitable. Comme Joseph en avait ouï dire du bien, il songea à l'aller voir. Il demanda aux habitants de la ville: « Quel caractère a votre roi? » Ils dirent: « Il est bon. » Alors, Joseph s'étant levé alla au palais royal\fn{Littéralement: à la porte royale ([XXX₁₄₃])}, et déclara son dessein à l'huissier en ces termes:\fn{Littéralement (A): et lui ayant déclaré son dessein, il lui dit.} « Homme respectable, je voudrais vous demander quelque chose. » L'huissier dit: « Parlez. »

2. Joseph dit: « J'ai entendu dire que votre roi est bon, miséricordieux, charitable pour les pauvres et plein de sollicitude pour les étrangers. Je suis moi-même d'un pays étranger. Voici ma prière: je voudrais le voir et entendre une parole de sa bouche. » L'huissier dit: « Laissez-moi un instant pour (m')annoncer, entrer et vous introduire. Car vous savez que chez les rois et les magistrats, <la consigne> est de les prévenir d'abord, puis d'attendre leurs ordres. »\fn{Cf. B: « ... car vous savez les ordres et la volonté des magistrats: la consigne est de prévenir, puis d'exécuter les ordres. » } Alors l'huissier, s'étant annoncé, fut admis auprès du roi, et le roi donna ordre d'introduire Joseph.\fn{Lacune dans B.} Celui-ci s'étant levé alla se présenter au roi et s'inclinant il se prosterna devant lui.

3. Le roi lui dit: « Vous êtes le bienvenu en ce lieu,\fn{Texte (A): [XXX₁₄₄], en un autre. (Lire: [XXX₁₄₅]. L'éditeur corrige en [XXX₁₄₆]: homme.)} respectable vieillard. Veuillez vous asseoir. » Et après que Joseph se fut assis il se renferma aussitôt dans le silence et ne dit rien. Le roi le reçut avec beaucoup d'affection, et fit dresser devant lui une table; ils mangèrent, burent et se réjouirent. Le roi dit: « Dites-moi, homme respectable; de quel pays êtes-vous venu et où vous rendez-vous? » Joseph dit: « Je suis venu d'une terre lointaine. » Le roi dit: « Vous êtes le bienvenu, vieillard. Tout ce que vous me demanderez, je le ferai pour vous. » Joseph dit: « Je suis vieux et étranger; je suis arrivé ici et je voudrais habiter dans cette ville, en un lieu quelconque. Je suis habile dans les travaux de la menuiserie, et ce qui sera nécessaire au palais royal, je l'accomplirai en tout temps. » Alors (le roi) défendit que personne ne le molestât en sa qualité d'étranger.

4. Et Joseph s'étant levé se prosterna devant le roi et dit: « O roi, si telle est votre volonté, appliquez mon enfant à l'étude des lettres. »\fn{Fin de la lacune dans B. Le texte reprend en ces termes: « ... qu'il y a en cette ville un docteur, qui instruit les enfants et qui possède tous les talents et toute science. Confiez-lui le soin d'enseigner les lettres à mon enfant pour qu'il s'instruise (texte: qui s'instruit, [XXX₁₄₇]) à fond dans la science des écritures, de la loi auguste et des commandements de Dieu. » Le roi dit: « Oui, je réaliserai votre désir; mais faites amener votre enfant en ma présence, pour que je juge s'il est capable d'aborder l'étude des lettres; après quoi je le confierai à son professeur. » Joseph remercie, et va porter cette bonne nouvelle à Marie, à qui il fait un vif éloge du roi. Mais, au lieu de se réjouir, Marie s'afflige et s'effraie: Elle se méfia des intentions du roi, craignant qu'il n'eût demandé par trahison à voir l'enfant pour le réduire en esclavage, et elle dit en pleurant: « Pourquoi avez-vous été déclarer à la face du roi: "J'ai un fils; il s'appelle ainsi (et il est) charmant?" » Joseph dit: « Ne craignez rien. Par la vie du Seigneur Dieu! Ce n'est point par trahison que (le roi) demande l'enfant, mais parce qu'il veut, de sa propre autorité, le confier à un maître qui lui enseignera les lettres. » Marie dit: « A vous de la savoir. Maintenant je vous remets mon fils; plus tard je vous le redemanderai. » Joseph dit: « Vous avez raison. » Marie dit: « Si vous voulez présenter l'enfant au roi, emmenez-le au palais [littéralement: à la porte royale; voyez ci-dessus, § 1, note 4] comme il vous plaira. Et quand vous voudrez entrer, informez-vous d'abord, examinez, assurez-vous (de la sécurité) de l'enfant, et alors seulement vous le prendrez avec vous et vous l'introduirez chez le roi. » Joseph dit: Oui, vous avez raison. Qu'il en soit ce que vous voulez. » Alors Joseph s'étant levé prit l'enfant Jésus et alla se présenter au roi. Et s'étant incliné, il se prosterna devant lui. Le roi dit: « Vous êtes le bienvenu, enfant, jeune nouveau-né, fils du Père, descendant d'un grand roi. » Et le roi ordonna d'appeler le docteur suprême, préposé à l'instruction des enfants. Il s'appelait Gamaliel ... } Le roi dit: « Je ferai cela. » Et le roi ordonna d'appeler un docteur nommé Gamaliel. Quand celui-ci fut arrivé, il le reçut avec beaucoup d'affection. Le roi dit: « Maître, je veux que vous vous chargiez d'enseigner les lettres à cet enfant; tout ce qu'il faudra pour son entretien matériel, vous le recevrez du trésor royal. » Gamaliel dit: « A qui est ce bel enfant? » Le roi dit: « C'est le fils d'un homme de haute famille, descendant d'une race royale; et le vieillard que voici est le gouverneur de l'enfant. » Gamaliel dit: « Que votre volonté se fasse. » Alors Joseph, s'étant levé, se prosterna, prit l'enfant et s'en alla joyeux à sa maison. Il raconta toutes (ces choses) à Marie, et se réjouissant, il bénissait le Seigneur.

XX: Comme quoi Jésus fut confié à Gamaliel pour apprendre les lettres.\fn{Dans B, suite du même chapitre.}

1. Joseph s'étant levé de grand matin prit avec lui une tablette\fn{Texte (A): un tourterelle ([XXX₁₄₈]; lire: [XXX₁₄₉]; ou encore [XXX₁₅₀], « cahier »).} et s'en fut chez Gamaliel. Et quand Jésus vit son maître, il s'inclina et se prosterna devant lui. Gamaliel dit: « Soyez le bienvenu, plante nouvelle, fruit suave, grappe fleurie! »\fn{B ajoute: Ayant ainsi parlé, Gamaliel, comme il regardait Jésus, connu en esprit qui il était. Puis Gamaliel dit de nouveau à Joseph: ... } Puis Gamaliel dit à Joseph: « Respectable vieillard, dites-moi: cet enfant est-il à vous, ou bien serait-il à quelque autre? » Joseph dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur! Dieu me l'a donné pour fils, non pas selon la chair, mais selon l'esprit. » Gamaliel dit: « Combien d'années a-t-il? » Joseph dit: « Sept. »\fn{Dans B, le dialogue se poursuit, avec une rare incohérence: Gamaliel dit: « L'avez-vous déjà mis chez un autre maître pour l'instruire ou lui faire apprendre quelque autre métier? » Joseph dit: « Je ne l'ai mis chez personne. » G. dit: « Et maintenant que voulez-vous en faire? » J. dit: « Sur l'ordre du roi et selon votre bon plaisir, je suis venu ici, attiré par ce que j'ai entendu dire de vous. » G. dit: « Vous êtes le bienvenu, respectable vieillard. J'ai les plus grands égards pour vous et je me sens tout interdit et confus de m'entretenir avec vous et (de parler) en votre présence. Pourtant, écoutez-moi et je vous dirai la vérité. (Quand) je regarde votre enfant, je vois clairement, à la belle expression de ses traits (littéralement: à la beauté de la ressemblance de son image; [XXX₁₅₁]), qu'il n'a plus aucun besoin d'écouter ou d'étudier [littéralement: de comprendre] les leçons de personne. Car il est déjà rempli de toute grâce et de toute science, et l'Esprit-Saint habite à jamais en lui et ne peut être séparé de lui. » J. dit: « Dites-moi: que ferai-je de lui, s'il n'a pas le secours d'un maître pour apprendre un seul mot d'écriture? » G. dit: « Appliquez-le à quelque profession manuelle, pour qu'il devienne ce qu'il vous plaira. » En entendant ces mots, J. fut profondément troublé, et tombant aux pieds de G., il le pria avec larmes et dit: « Bon maître, soyez un peu longanime avec moi. Prenez patience! Ne me traitez pas comme un étranger sans patrie et ne me dédaignez pas. Chargez-vous de cet enfant avec bienveillance. Tout ce que Dieu voudra lui accorder du don de science, il le lui accordera. Pour moi, je vous paierai au double le prix de votre peine. » Et G. dit: « Oui. Je ferai ce que vous désirez. » Alors le maître ... }

2. Alors le maître prit les tablettes des mains de l'enfant et dit: « J'écrirai douze lettres:\fn{A: chants ([XXX₁₅₂] pour [XXX₁₅₃]).} s'il est capable de se mettre les autres dans l'esprit, j'écrirai (aussi) les autres au complet. » Joseph dit: « Faites-en ce qui vous plaira, comme vous voudrez. » Et le maître se mit à écrire douze lettres. Et Jésus s'étant levé, alla (se placer) devant son maître et commença d'abord par observer les particularités de l'écriture et ensuite les lettres. Quand (le maître les) eut écrites, il donna les tablettes à Jésus. Et Jésus s'étant incliné se prosterna devant lui et reçut de ses mains les tablettes.

3. Gamaliel dit: « Écoutez-moi, mon fils, et lisez tout comme je vous l'indiquerai. » Et Gamaliel commença à nommer les lettres. Jésus dit: « Maître, pourquoi parlez-vous de telle sorte que je n'entends pas ce que vous dites. Ce (mot) me paraît un terme étranger et je ne puis le comprendre. » Gamaliel dit: « C'est le nom de la lettre. » Jésus dit: « Je connais la lettre; mais donnez-m'en l'explication. » Gamaliel dit: « Et quelle interprétation cette

lettre comporte-t-elle par elle-même? » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi la première lettre a-t-elle une autre forme, et un autre aspect et encore une autre figure? » Cf. S (note au texte arabe, ch. XLIX, p. 60-61). } Gamaliel dit: « C'est pour parler aux yeux » Ici un feuillet doit manquer dans A, ou avoir été omis par le copiste. B poursuit: « ... pour que nous puissions (texte: pour qu'il puisse: [XXX₁₅₄] = 3rd pers. masc. sing. et 1st pers. plur.) la voir, la bien discerner et la reconnaître, puis en saisir le sens. » Jésus dit: « C'est bien dit; mais expliquez-moi ce que je vous demande. Je sais que toute lettre a un rang défini, où se manifeste le sens mystérieux qui est unique (et) déterminé pour chaque letter. » G. dit: « Les anciens docteurs et les sages n'ont rien trouvé de plus à dire que la forme de la lettre et son nom. » Jésus dit: « Tout ce que vous avez dit auparavant, je le sais parfaitement; ce que je voudrais demander et savoir de vous, c'est l'explication de la letter. » Le maître dit: « Dites-moi, mon fils: que voulez-vous dire par cette parole que je ne comprends pas? » Jésus dit: « Qu'est-ce que la letter? Et qu'est-ce que le mot? Et qu'est-ce que la phrase? » G. dit: « Dites(-le)-moi, mon fils; car je ne puis le saisir. » En entendant cela, Joseph s'indigna en son âme et dit à (Jésus): « Mon fils, ne répondez pas ainsi à votre maître. Commencez par apprendre, après quoi vous saurez. » Ayant ainsi parlé, Joseph s'en alla silencieusement à sa maison et raconta à Marie ce qu'il avait vu faire et entendu dire par Jésus. (Elle) en fut fort attristée et lui dit: « Vous voyez bien: je vous avais dit d'avance qu'il ne se laissera instruire par personne. » Joseph dit: « Ne vous attristez point: il en sera tout comme le Seigneur le voudra. » — Or Joseph, en sortant de chez le maître, y avait laissé l'enfant Jésus à la même place. (Celui-ci) ayant pris la tablette, sans mot dire, se mit à lire d'abord les lettres, puis une seconde fois les mots et une troisième fois les phrases. Et il déposa la tablette devant lui, et dit: « Maître, je connais maintenant les lettres que vous avez écrites. Prenez, et écrivez les autres lettres au complet, pour que je les lise. » Et G., émerveillé de la puissance d'esprit de l'enfant, lui prit des mains la tablette et y écrivit les autres lettres dans l'ordre. Et Jésus s'étant prosterné devant son maître, prit la tablette et lui de la même manière d'abord les lettres, une seconde fois les mots, et une troisième fois les phrases. Puis il déposa la tablette devant lui, et dit à (G.): « Maître, avez-vous achevé la série des lettres que vous aviez commencé à former? » G. dit: « Oui, enfant: voilà (leurs) noms réunis au complet et en ordre. » J. dit: « Maître, tout ce que vous m'avez écrit et montré, je l'ai appris et je le sais parfaitement. Maintenant, bon maître, pour mon instruction, écrivez une autre chose (littéralement: un autre mot = [XXX₁₅₅]), à savoir et à comprendre. G. dit: « Oui, je ferai ce que vous désirez; mais veuillez ... » [Ici reprend le texte de A.] } <...> Mais donnez-moi Texte (A, B): « ordonnez-moi » (XXX₁₅₆). Dans B, le reste de la phrase est inintelligible. } l'interprétation des lettres, Ou: de l'écriture. } pour que je la connaisse. » Jésus dit: « Vous êtes maître en Israël et vous ne savez pas cela! » Gamaliel dit: « Tout ce que je sais, c'est ce que j'ai appris de mes pères. » Jésus dit: « La lettre (simple) signifie le nom de Dieu et <...> Dieu le Verbe prend naissance et s'incarne; Dieu le Verbe <...> l'écriture; et du Verbe l'Esprit-Saint, c'est-à-dire la Trinité. » Texte mutilé; cf. B: « La lettre par elle-même signifie le nom de Dieu; le mot qui naît et prend corps de la lettre est le Verbe de Dieu, et la phrase qui s'exprime et se manifeste par la lettre et le mot est l'Esprit-Saint, en sorte que (texte: qui = [XXX₁₅₇] = [XXX₁₅₈]) dans cette trinité, la lettre simple engendre le mot, qui naît et prend corps dans l'esprit, puis se manifestant, il s'affirme (dans) la parole énoncée. Il est superflu de faire remarquer le témoignage intéressant et un peu inattendu que cette anecdote apporte à la tradition catholique, dans la question du Filioque. Tout ce passage est presque certainement traduit du syriaque. Il ne contient aucune allusion à l'alphabet arménien. Sur cet indice, on serait porté à le distinguer de la « légende arménienne intitulée l'Évangile Enfant » dont parle Chardin (Voyages de M. le Chevalier Chardin en Perse et autres lieux de l'Orient, t. X, Paris, 1723, p. 26-27). Dans cette légende, Jésus dit à son maître: « La première lettre de l'alphabet est formée de trois lignes perpendiculaires, sur une ligne diamétrale » ([XXX₁₅₉]) « pour nous apprendre que le commencement de toutes choses est une Essence en trois personnes. » Cet « Évangile Enfant », s'il dit cela, serait donc une recension appropriée au goût national des Arméniens de Perse. Mais Chardin a-t-il connu le livre même ou s'en est-il rapporté à des analyses orales? }

4. En entendant ces choses, Gamaliel le regarda, stupéfait du savior dont il était doué. Et Gamaliel dit: « Où avez-vous appris la sagesse que vous possédez? Je crois que (tous) les dons de l'Esprit-Saint se sont réunis en vous. » Jésus dit: « Maître, enseignez-moi encore autre chose, (de celles) que vous m'avez d'abord promis de m'enseigner. » Gamaliel dit: « Mon fils, c'est à moi de me faire votre disciple, car vous êtes apparu au milieu de nous comme un prodige. Ici, dans B, une intervention des enfants qui demandent à Gamaliel de renvoyer Jésus chez lui, parce qu'il est trop savant pour demeurer parmi eux. } Je vous en prie donc, donnez-moi l'explication de l'écriture. » Jésus dit: « Je vous la dirai, et vous ne pourrez comprendre ce mystère, qui est caché aux regards de la raison humaine, en attendant que le Seigneur le révèle à tous, et qu'en tous lieux il répande à profusion les dons de l'Esprit-Saint. B: « ... jusqu'à ce que le Seigneur le révèle à tous, lui qui scrute les pensées en tous lieux. Car (texte: que, [XXX₁₆₀] = [XXX₁₆₁]) maintenant, pour le peu que vous avez vu de moi et entendu de mes paroles, vous ne pourriez me connaître et savoir qui je suis. Mais plus tard, entendant (parler de moi), vous me verrez et vous me connaîtrez. » Il ressort de ces paroles que, dans B tout au moins, Gamaliel le docteur est le Gamaliel de l'Évangile. } Gamaliel se dit en lui-même: « Véritablement, il est le fils de Dieu; je crois qu'il est le Messie, Texte (A et B): le Christ ([XXX₁₆₂]), dont les prophéties ont annoncé l'avènement. »

5. Quand Gamaliel eut entendu ces choses, il appela Joseph et lui dit: « Vieillard, vous avez eu raison de dire: "Il n'est pas mon fils selon la chair, mais selon l'esprit." » Joseph dit à Jésus: « Dites-moi, mon fils, que ferai-je de vous, puisque vous ne vous soumettez pas au maître? » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi vous emportez-vous ainsi contre moi? Ce qu'il m'a dit, je le savais déjà; et à mes questions, il ne fait aucune réponse. » Joseph dit: « C'est (pour recevoir) des leçons et (acquérir) la sagesse que je vous ai fait instruire, et c'est vous qui faites la leçon au maître. » Jésus dit: « Ce que je ne savais pas, je l'ai appris, et ce que je sais, il n'est pas besoin de l'apprendre. » Gamaliel dit: « Cessez de parler, car vous nous faites affront. Levez-vous; allez en paix et que le Seigneur vous conduise à

toute prospérité. »

6. Et Jésus se leva en hâte, prit les tablettes, se prosterna devant le maître et dit: « Bon maître, que Dieu vous donne votre récompense. » Gamaliel dit: « Allez en paix, et que le Seigneur réalise vos désirs pour votre bien. » Et Jésus s'en alla auprès de sa mère. Marie (lui) dit: « Mon fils, comment avez-vous (déjà) fini de tout apprendre, pour aujourd'hui? » Jésus dit: « J'ai (tout) appris, et le maître ne sait plus rien me répondre. »

7. Et Joseph était fort attristé à cause de Jésus. I dit à Gamaliel: « Dites-moi, maître, que ferai-je de mon enfant? » Gamaliel dit: « Enseignez-lui tout (ce qui concerne) votre métier de charpentier. » Joseph s'en alla en sa maison et voyant Jésus assis avec ses tablettes en main, il lui dit: « Avez-vous tout appris? » Jésus dit: « J'ai (tout) appris et je voudrais devenir le professeur des enfants. » Joseph dit: « Je sais que vous ne voulez pas étudier; venez apprendre le métier de charpentier. » Jésus dit: « Je l'apprendrai bien aussi. »

8. Or, Joseph avait commencé à fabriquer pour le roi un trône magnifiquement sculpté. L'une des marches de bois était (trop) courte et ne rejoignait pas l'autre marche. Et Joseph délibérait sur ce qu'il allait faire. Jésus lui dit: « Comment pensez-vous arranger cela? » Joseph dit: « Que vous importe cette question? Prenez la hache, coupez cette marche et équarissez-la bien régulièrement. »\fn{Voici un spécimen des longueurs dont tout ce dialogue est étendu dans A: Joseph dit: « ... prenez le fer et coupez cette marche perpendiculairement, de haut en bas, et faites-la droite aux quatre angles, en carré. » Jésus dit: « Oui, je ferai ce que vous commandez; mais expliquez-moi ce que vous voulez faire de ce (bois) que vous façonnez avec tant d'art au moyen du cordeau, du compas et de la mesure. » Joseph dit: « Violâ trois fois que vous m'interrogez alors que (texte: parce que, [XXX]₁₆₃) = [XXX]₁₆₄) vous ne pouvez connaître et comprendre ce travail. » Jésus dit: « C'est pourquoi j'interroge et je m'enquiers, afin de savoir la vérité. » Joseph dit: « Je veux construire un trône royal pour le souverain, et le bois d'un des degrés est insuffisant. » Jésus dit: « Faites-le-moi voir. » Joseph dit: « C'est cette pièce de bois qui est placée devant vous. » Jésus dit: « De combien de palmes est-elle longue? » Joseph dit: « L'un des deux côtés doit avoir douze palmes et l'autre pareillement. » Jésus dit: « Et cette (pièce)-ci, quelle en est la longueur? » Joseph dit: « Quinze palmes. » Jésus dit: « C'est bien. Vaquez en silence à votre ouvrage et ne craignez rien. » Et Jésus, ayant pris la hache ... } Jésus prit en main la hache et (en) frappa trois fois le bois, qui mesurait quinze palmes; il le frappa de son fer par le milieu, le divisa en deux tronçons, posa le fer sur le bois et s'assit. Marie survint et dit à Jésus: « Mon fils, avez-vous achevé l'ouvrage que vous avez commencé? » Jésus dit: « Oui, je l'ai fini. »\fn{B poursuit: Ayant ainsi parlé, Jésus s'indigna dans son âme et dit à sa mère: « Pourquoi le prenez-vous de si haut avec moi et me forcez-vous de m'appliquer à toute sorte de besogne? Vraiment quel besoin ai-je de (rien) apprendre? Et vous, quel soin vous presse de vous occuper de moi au prix de tant d'agitation et d'inquiétude? » Ayant ainsi parlé, Jésus se tut.} Pourquoi donc me forcez-vous d'apprendre toute (espèce de) besognes? »

9. Joseph arriva; il vit le bois divisé en deux parties et il dit à Jésus: « Mon fils, quel grave dommage m'avez-vous causé là! » Jésus dit: « Qu'ai-je fait, dites-moi? » Joseph dit: « L'un des deux bois est trop petit, l'autre beaucoup trop grand: pourquoi les avez-vous coupés de telle sorte qu'ils ne soient pas symétriques? »\fn{Littéralement: (adaptés ou appropriés) « aux deux côtés ».} Jésus dit: « C'est afin de les rendre symétriques. »\fn{Littéralement: (adaptés ou appropriés) « aux deux côtés ».} Joseph dit: « Comment cela se fera-t-il? » Jésus dit: « Ne vous chagrinez pas de ceci: prenez les deux (pièces de) bois, mesurez-les et vous comprendrez. » <...> et il mesura de nouveau: et elle était devenue (égale à) douze palmes.\fn{Le texte est mutilé; cf. B: « ... prenez les marches des deux côtés: mesurez séparément chacune d'elles, et vous comprendrez. » Et (Joseph), ayant pris l'une des deux pièces de bois, la mesura: elle était longue de douze palmes. Puis, il mesura l'autre bois, avec la même mesure. Le bois n'était nullement trop court; mais (au lieu) de quinze palmes (il en avait) vingt-quatre, divisées en deux pièces de douze pieds. » ... [Cf. ps.-Matth. XXXVII, ps.-Thom. XIII; réduct. arabe, XXXIX; et Chardin, loc. c., p. 26-27].} A cette vue, Joseph fut pris d'admiration et de frayeur, car ces deux pièces de bois (dont) l'une était trop petite et l'autre beaucoup trop grande, étaient devenues égales. Tel fut le miracle que Jésus accomplit devant Joseph et Marie sa mère.\fn{B poursuit: Pour lui, il sortit en hâte de la maison et s'en alla rejoindre les enfants de la ville, à l'endroit où ils se trouvaient réunis. A sa vue, tous allèrent joyeusement à sa rencontre; et tombant à ses pieds, ils se prosternèrent devant lui, et ils l'interrogèrent en disant: « Bon petit Jésus, dites, que ferons-nous aujourd'hui? » J. dit: « Si vous m'écoutez, et si vous êtes soumis à mes ordres, tout ce que je vous dirai, exécutez-le parfaitement. » Ils dirent d'une même voix: « Oui, nous vous sommes tous attachés et soumis à vos commandements, en tout ce qui vous plaira. » J. dit: « Ne faites violence à personne; ne rendez pas le mal pour le mal, mais soyez entre vous amis et frères, dans la charité. Et alors moi aussi, je viendrai de bon cœur me mêler à vous. » Eux, le serrant dans leurs bras, le baisaient, et le saluant, ils l'étreignaient avec allégresse. — Or, il y avait là un jeune homme de douze ans, qui, à la suite de maux de tête d'une violence excessive, avait perdu la lumière de ses yeux, et il ne pouvait marcher hardiment à moins que quelqu'un ne le guidât en le tenant par la main. J. l'ayant aperçu le prit en pitié. Il lui posa la main sur la tête et lui souffla dans l'oreille. Au même moment les yeux de l'enfant s'ouvrirent et il reprit sa vue normale. Or les enfants qui se trouvaient là, en voyant ce fait miraculeux, poussèrent un cri. (Et) les enfants s'en allèrent, en pleine ville, faire voir ce prodige insigne, d'un aveugle à qui (Jésus) avait ouvert les yeux. Et une foule de gens vinrent de la ville pour le voir et ne le trouvèrent pas; car J., s'étant dérobé au public, avait disparu pour n'être pas aperçu. — A quelques jours de là ... }

10. A quelques jours de là, Joseph ayant pris le trône\fn{A: la planche ([XXX₁₆₅] pour [XXX₁₆₆])} qu'il avait construit, l'apporta chez le roi, devant qui il se prosterna. Le roi l'ayant vu, en fut satisfait et se réjouit. Et il ordonna de donner à Joseph les choses et les ressources nécessaires à sa subsistance, autant qu'il en fallait. Et celui-ci les ayant prises s'en alla avec joie à sa maison.

11. Un jour (le roi) fit inviter Joseph à sa table, et avec lui d'autres princes du plus haut rang. Ils mangèrent, burent et se réjouirent. Le roi dit à Joseph: « Vieillard, j'ai une demande à vous adresser, pour que vous l'exécutiez. » Joseph dit: « Ordonnez (ce qu'il faut) que j'exécute. » Le roi dit: « Je veux que vous me construisiez un palais splendide, avec une haute salle très élevée. Vous lui donnerez la même dimension en longueur et en largeur; tout autour vous mettrez des sièges et des flambeaux, et vous l'ornerez de dessins, comme vous vous y entendez si bien.\fn{B poursuit:« ... aux quatre côtés, des portes à deux battants. Vous l'ornerez de dessins élégamment sculptés. (Sur) les chapiteaux, vous représenterez toute espèce d'animaux; vous en polirez (les surfaces) au ciseau et à la plane, avec des ornements en entrelacs (?); vous y ménagerez la montée et la descente au moyen d'un escalier solidement chevillé; vous y dépenserez toutes les ressources de l'art décoratif; vous y emploierez à profusion des bois massifs [littéralement: carrés] de toutes les espèces; toutes les formes, contours, dessins et figures. Par-dessus, vous élèverez une coupole cintrée, que vous établirez sur le plan d'un temple, comme vous vous y entendez si bien ... » [texte: « vous construirez la coupole du ciel ([XXX₁₆₇]), en le recueillant ([XXX₁₆₈] pour [XXX₁₆₉]) par-dessus ... »]} Je vous fournirai au double, tout ce qui est nécessaire pour votre subsistance et votre travail. » Joseph dit: « Oui, j'exécuterai vos ordres, ô roi. Mais faites-moi apporter des bois incorruptibles, pour que je (les) examine. » Le roi dit: « Je ferai tout ce qui sera nécessaire. »\fn{Ici B recommence à amplifier dans le vide.}}

12. Puis le roi s'étant levé, prit avec lui les princes du premier rang ainsi que Joseph, et se rendit et un site pittoresque <où il y avait ...> et un étang\fn{D'après B: où il y avait de belles prairies et un étang ... (A: [XXX₁₇₀], amphithéâtre, pour: [XXX₁₇₁])} et de nombreuses sources jaillissantes, et une haute colline au bord de l'eau. Le roi ordonna à Joseph de mesurer l'emplacement, et Joseph mesura la longueur et la largeur de l'emplacement, comme le roi l'avait ordonné, et il se mit à bâtir.

13. Quand il voulut charpenter\fn{Texte (A, B): à étirer, ou: à allonger ([XXX₁₇₂], ou [XXX₁₇₃])} la coupole, une pièce de bois (se trouva) être trop courte et ne s'ajustait point. Joseph en fut contrarié et il ne savait que faire. Au même instant, le roi survint, et apercevant le trouble de Joseph, il lui dit: « Pourquoi demeurez-vous assis à ne rien faire? » Joseph dit: « J'ai peiné sur cette charpente avec un grand effort, et elle est manquée. » Le roi dit: « Je vous (ferai) apporter du bois plus large que celui-ci. »

14. Et tandis qu'ils conversaient, Jésus arriva au milieu d'eux et s'inclinant il se prosterna devant le roi. Le roi dit: « Vous êtes le bienvenu, bel enfant, fils unique et nouveau-né de (votre) père. » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi demeurez-vous ici tristement assis, désœuvrés et silencieux? » Le monarque dit: « Enfant, tout est achevé comme vous voyez, et quelque chose est en défaut. » Jésus dit: « De quoi s'agit-il? » Le roi dit: « Regardez et voyez ce bois sculpté qui est (trop) court et ne rejoint pas l'autre. » Jésus dit à Joseph: « Saisissez l'extrémité de ce bois et tenez-la fortement. » Le roi, fixant le regard sur Jésus, dit: « Que voulez-vous faire? » Et Jésus s'emparant de l'(autre) extrémité du bois, la saisit et dit à Joseph: « Tirez pour que l'on ne remarque pas que ce bois est trop court. »\fn{B: Jésus dit à Joseph de la tirer en ligne droite, pour qu'il pût remarquer ce qui manquait au bois et le voir (texte: et qu'il vécut: [XXX₁₇₄] pour [XXX₁₇₅])}. Et aux yeux de tout le monde, il semblait plaisanter. Joseph eut foi en la volonté de Jésus: il étendit la main, saisit le bois <et celui-ci> s'allongea de trois palmes.

15. Et quand le roi eut vu le prodige qu'avait fait Jésus, il prit peur de lui, se prosterna devant lui et l'embrassa. Il le revêtit d'un habit royal, lui ceignit la tête d'un diadème et l'envoya à sa mère. Joseph acheva tout le travail de la construction. Le roi, l'ayant vu, s'en réjouit, il gratifia Joseph de beaucoup d'or et d'argent et le renvoya tout joyeux à sa maison.\fn{B ajoute: Quant au petit Jésus, il était toujours en course pour aller voir les enfants et les jeunes garçons de la ville. Les enfants qui venaient à lui le saluaient avec beaucoup d'affection, et tout ce qu'il leur commandait, ils s'empressaient de l'accomplir. Un jour donc, J. étant sorti, allait par la ville, silencieusement et en cachette, pour n'être vu de personne. Un garçonnet, l'ayant aperçu tout à coup, le reconnut et, le surprenant par derrière, le saisit et se mit à crier disant: « Voilà! regardez tous: c'est l'enfant Jésus, le fils du vieillard; celui qui fait de tels prodiges et de tels miracles. » Immédiatement, il fut assailli par le démon, abattu et renversé à terre, sur place; et J. disparut à ses yeux. Le jeune garçon fut si maltraité par les esprits mauvais, qu'il demeura gisant (à terre) comme mort, durant trois heures. Ses parents survinrent tout en larmes et fort effrayés. Ils le relevèrent et battirent toute la ville pour trouver J., mais ils ne le virent pas. Alors ils allèrent en pleurant trouver le vieillard Joseph, pour (lui demander) que J. vînt guérir leur enfant des esprits mauvais. Or donc, quand Jésus connut leur pensée (et que l'enfant) demandait sa propre délivrance, sur-le-champ, ce jour même, il alla se

montrer à l'enfant. Celui-ci tombant aux pieds de J. lui demanda le pardon de ses fautes. Et J. lui posa la main sur la tête et le guérit. — A plusieurs jours de là, J. étant sorti alla, selon sa coutume, à la place de jeu, où les enfants se trouvaient réunis. En le voyant, tous l'accueillirent avec beaucoup de joie et d'affection et le reçurent en grand honneur. J. (leur) dit: « Qu'avez-vous délibéré et décidé de faire aujourd'hui? » Ils dirent: « Venez; nous vous mettrons à notre tête, vous et Zénon le fils du roi. Nous diviserons les enfants en deux camps; l'une des troupes sera à vous; l'autre au fils du roi. Nous irons ensemble jouer à la paume, et nous verrons laquelle des deux troupes l'emportera à renvoyer la balle, de joueur à joueur. » (*Texte*: de siècle en siècle; [XXX₁₇₆], pour [XXX₁₇₇] ou [XXX₁₇₈]?) J. dit: « Vous avez raison. » Et tous s'accordèrent de part et d'autre. Or, en cet endroit, se trouvait une vieille tour fort grande, aux murs élevés, devant laquelle les enfants de la ville étaient toujours rassemblés, à (leur) rendez-vous de jeu. J. dit (à Zénon): « Que vous proposez-vous maintenant, et que voulez-vous faire? Faites-(le) comme bon vous semble. » Z. dit: « Venez, partageons de nouveau, d'un commun accord, les enfants et les petits gars en deux camps; puis nous irons ensemble jouer à la paume. » J. dit: « Faites comme vous l'entendez. » Et Z. ayant rassemblé par devers lui les enfants et les petits garçons, les divisa en deux troupes; puis ils s'avancèrent pour lancer la balle. Et comme Z., qui avait le premier tour, engageait le jeu, tout à coup, il frappa de sa batte la paume qui s'envola en montant et, s'élevant très haut, alla retomber sur la tour, où il était fort difficile de monter et de descendre. Z. le fils du roi monta pour reprendre la balle; et Saül, fils du seigneur Zacharie, s'élançant à sa suite, lui asséna des deux mains par derrière un coup de sa batte dans la nuque, et le précipita à terre, de toute la hauteur (de la tour). L'enfant mourut. Lui s'échappa avec tous ses compagnons qui se trouvaient là. J. (qui était) avec eux se déroba à leurs regards et disparut. Alors, dans la ville, un clameur s'éleva et partout on disait: « Regardez, vous tous, et entendez: voici que les enfants ont tué là-bas le fils du roi. » En entendant cela, tous les habitants se réunirent et se portèrent ensemble à l'endroit indiqué: le roi, les princes, les grands, les chefs, les dignitaires, les chefs et officiers de l'armée, l'armée entière, les parents et amis, les esclaves et les servantes, hommes et femmes, intimes, familiers et étrangers, tous ceux qui entendaient (la nouvelle) se hâtaient d'accourir là-bas, en pleurant et en se frappant (eux-mêmes). Et, menant un grand deuil, ils se lamentaient sur l'enfant. Le petit Zénon avait neuf ans et trois mois. Après qu'on eut passé trois heures à pleurer, et à se lamenter avec force coups, le roi et toute sa suite ouvrirent une enquête, cherchant et s'interrogeant les uns les autres à l'effet de savoir qui avait commis cet attentat homicide. Tous dirent de même: « Personne ne sait ce qui est arrivé, si ce n'est les enfants de la ville, qui étaient rassemblés en cet endroit. » Alors le roi ordonna de relever son fils et de l'emporter au palais royal. Et il envoya réunir tous les enfants de la ville, du plus grand au plus petit, et on les amena en sa présence. Quand ils furent arrivés, le roi commença d'abord par leur adresser de bonnes paroles, et leur dit: « Mes fils, mes enfants, dites-moi qui d'entre vous a causé ce malheur. Je sais que vous ne l'avez point fait volontairement, mais que cela est arrivé à votre insu. » Ils dirent d'une même voix: « O roi, vous avez raison; mais qui d'entre nous aurait jamais osé commettre cette action criminelle, de tuer le fils du roi et de se livrer lui-même à une mort inévitable et à la perdition? » Le roi dit: « Je vous ai déjà dit d'écouter mes paroles de bienveillance; je vous le redis encore cette fois. Gardez-vous de m'exaspérer et de me mettre la rage au cœur. Pour le moment vous n'avez pas lieu de me craindre et d'appréhender la mort. Mais dites-moi la vérité. Qui est l'auteur du coup et qui a fait périr mon fils d'une mort cruelle et prématurée? Si quelqu'un me le découvre, je ferai de lui le compagnon de mon trône, associé à ma grandeur, et, à ses parents aussi, je donnerai l'illustration du rang et de la puissance. » Les enfants dirent: « O roi, vous avez raison en vos commandements; mais à toute question que vous nous posez, nous répondrons, selon la vérité, que nous ne savons pas quel enfant est l'auteur du fait. » Le roi dit: « Il n'y a pas deux (issues) devant vous: choisissez spontanément la vie de préférence à la mort et vous ne mourrez point prématurément. Craignez les tourments et les sévices cruels que je suis décidé à exercer sur vous et sur vos parents. Dites-moi la vérité sans ambages, pour échapper à une mort certaine. » Ils dirent: « Nous voici tous devant vous. Ce que vous voulez faire, faites-le. » Alors le roi ordonna d'emmenner tous les enfants hors de la porte [ou du palais], et d'apporter en cet endroit des quantités considérables d'or et d'argent qu'il fit placer devant eux. Et il ordonna au chef des bourreaux d'apporter un glaive d'acier et de le faire étinceler sur la tête des enfants qui s'approchaient pour prendre (leur part) du trésor. Et le roi dit: « Quiconque est innocent, qu'il s'approche pour puiser au trésor et qu'il se retire sans crainte du glaive. » Et après que tous les enfants un à un furent venus hardiment puiser au trésor et se furent retirés sans aucune peur du glaive, le meurtrier du petit s'approcha. Et quand il vit le glaive flamboyer dans la main du bourreau, il fut tout à coup pris de frayeur et de tremblement; et dans l'épouvante que le glaive lui causait, ne pouvant plus de tenir sur ses jambes, il s'étendit à plat sur le sol. On lui dit: « Dites-nous: pourquoi avez-vous peur? » L'enfant dit: « Laissez-moi un instant pour que je me remette et reprenne mes esprits. » On y consentit et on lui dit: « Dites-nous: la vue du glaive ne vous effraie-t-elle pas? » [*Texte*: N'ayez point peur à la vue de ce glaive.] L'enfant dit: « Oui; j'ai grand peur que vous ne me fassiez mourir. » Le monarque dit au bourreau: « Remettez votre glaive au fourreau, pour ne pas effrayer l'enfant. » Après un intervalle d'une heure, (celui-ci) s'étant levé, dit: « Oui, je savais, ô roi, qui est <l'assassin> de votre fils, mais je me faisais scrupule de vous livrer son nom. » Le roi dit: « Dites-le, mon fils; ne craignez pas; car il vaut mieux que celui qui est digne de mort périsse plutôt qu'un innocent. » L'enfant dit: « O roi, votre enfant a été tué par l'enfant Jésus, le fils du vieillard. » En entendant cela, le monarque fut frappé de stupéfaction et envoya sommer Jésus de comparaître devant lui. Après que tout le monde y fut allé, on ne trouva pas Jésus mais le seul Joseph. On l'arrêta et on l'amena devant le tribunal. S'étant incliné, il se prosterna devant le roi. Le roi dit: « Vieillard, vous nous avez bien traités aujourd'hui en retour du bien que nous vous avons fait! Vous nous avez payé au double notre accueil bienveillant! » Joseph dit: « O roi, je vous en prie, ne croyez pas à toute vaine parole qui se dit. Ne vous emportez pas contre nous malgré notre innocence et ne nous condamnez pas à la légèreté; car nous n'avons pas à répondre du sang de votre fils. » Le roi dit: « Je connaissais déjà votre esprit d'indépendance et le naturel indompté de votre fils. Vous êtes venu ici prendre des ordres en vue de vos préparatifs, et j'exécutais tout ce qu'il vous plaisait. » [*Voir ci-dessus, XX, 11.*] Joseph dit: « Roi, ne croyez pas ainsi aux paroles menteuses, et ne nous faites pas de reproches sans témoins à l'appui; car je ne sais ce que vous dites. » Le roi dit: « Où est votre enfant; amenez-le et produisez-le devant moi, pour que je le voie. » Joseph dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur, je ne le sais pas. » Le roi dit: « Vous dites vrai: vous commettez un homicide, puis vous vous tirez de là par la fuite. » Le roi ordonna de garder étroitement Joseph et il dit: « Allez battre toute la ville jusqu'à ce que vous trouviez l'enfant Jésus; arrêtez-le et amenez-le devant moi sous bonne garde. » Et ils allèrent rôder partout à la recherche de J.; ils ne le trouvèrent pas et revinrent faire rapport au roi. Le roi dit à ses grands: « Que ferons-nous de ce vieillard? Car il a fait fuir la mère et l'enfant et on ne trouve plus celui-ci. » Les princes dirent: « Ordonnez qu'on amène le vieillard devant nous et qu'on le mette à la question; car il sait (où se trouvent) l'enfant et sa mère. » Le roi dit: « Oui, vous avez raison. Je ne mettrai pas mon fils au tombeau et je ne goûterai à rien avant que le sang de cet enfant n'ait compensé le sang de mon fils. » Et tandis que le roi parlait de la sorte et délibérait au sujet de Joseph, en se demandant à lui-même par quelle mort il le ferait périr, voici que Jésus en personne vint se présenter au roi et s'inclinant, il se prosterna devant lui. Le roi dit: « Vous venez à propos, enfant Jésus, bourreau et meurtrier de mon fils. » J. dit: « O roi, pourquoi (se fait-il que) vous soyez si courroucé, que votre cœur soit rempli d'irritation, de trouble et d'emportement, et que vous me montriez un visage tout

décomposé? Ne tenez pas un langage aussi injuste, car (*texte*: que, [XXX₁₇₉] = [XXX₁₈₀]) il n'est pas digne des rois et des puissants monarques de condamner quelqu'un, sans témoins (à sa charge). » Le roi dit: « Dites-moi donc s'il n'est pas de fait qu'on vous a déclaré digne de mort sur la foi de nombreux témoins. » J. dit: « Tout d'abord, informez-vous, interrogez, examinez, raisonnez, puis jugez de toute chose dans la vérité et la justice. Et si je suis digne de mort, faites ce que les juges ont le pouvoir légitime de faire à leur gré. » Le roi dit: « Ne nous étourdissez pas de ces longs discours, mais dites-nous bien nettement ce qui a causé la perte de mon fils. » J. dit: « Si vous croyez à ma parole et si vous acceptez le témoignage que j'énonce, (sachez que) je suis innocent de ce fait. Mais puisque [*texte*: si] vous voulez me condamner à la légère, produisez votre témoin, mettez-le en ma présence, que je le voie. » Le roi dit: « Oui, vous avez raison. » Et au même instant, il fit comparaître comme témoin le meurtrier de son fils. Quand celui-ci fut venu, le roi dit: « Dites-nous, enfant, que déposez-vous contre Jésus? » L'enfant dit: « Oui, ô roi, je dépose formellement contre lui. Écoutez-moi et je vous dirai (tout); mais permettez-moi de parler librement en votre présence. » Le roi dit: « Parlez. » Le coupable [*littéralement*: digne de mort] dit à Jésus: « Ne vous ai-je pas vu hier au jeu de paume? Vous aviez une batte à la main; vous êtes monté avec l'(enfant) au haut du mur pour prendre la balle; vous l'avez frappé des deux mains par derrière dans la nuque, vous l'avez tué en le précipitant (*texte*: étant tombé, [XXX₁₈₁] pour [XXX₁₈₂]), et vous vous êtes enfui de là. » J. dit: « C'est bien. » En entendant cela, le roi, les princes, les grands qui étaient avec lui, et tout le reste de la multitude populaire, dirent à J.: « Qu'avez-vous à répondre à ce fait? » J. dit: « Et dans votre loi, qu'est-il écrit à ce sujet? » Ils dirent d'une même voix: « Dans notre loi, il est écrit: Si quelqu'un a versé le sang d'un homme, son sang sera versé en expiation de ce sang. » J. dit: « Vous avez raison. » Le roi dit: « Dites-moi (*texte*: ordonnez, [XXX₁₈₃]) comment je dois vous traiter, et de quelle mort je vous ferai périr. » J. dit: « Vous êtes le juge de tous: pourquoi me demandez-vous cela à moi? » Le roi dit: « Oui, je (le) sais fort bien, mais je fais ce que bon me semble. Je demande (qu'on me dise) la vérité, pour juger avec droiture et justice, afin de n'être pas jugé. J. dit: « Si vous voulez m'interroger sur ce fait dans les formes légales, vous rend(r)ez un jugement inique, sans le savoir. » Le roi dit: « Et comment cela? » J. dit: « Ne savez-vous pas que tout homme coupable d'un crime capital et tout criminel se parjure, par crainte de la mort (*texte*: jure faussement qu'il craint ...: [XXX₁₈₄]). Et ceux qui se rendent témoignage et déposent sous serment les uns pour les autres, savent fort bien qui est le coupable. » Le roi dit: « Si vous n'êtes pas coupable, pourquoi répondre toujours par un tel flot de paroles, en vous déclarant innocent et en démentant les autres? » J. dit: « Moi aussi, je sais bien un peu ce qu'il en est de la cause de ce crime; mais inconquie a commis un forfait se rend ensuite le témoignage qu'il n'est pas digne de mort. » (*Texte*: qui est ...? [XXX₁₈₅]; *lire*: [XXX₁₈₆].) Le roi dit: « Je ne sais ce que vous dites. Si vous voulez que je croie à la vérité de vos paroles, produisez un témoin (qui réponde) de vous, et vous serez acquitté. » J. dit: « Si ceux-là parlaient sincèrement! Ils savent eux-mêmes et (peuvent) attester pour moi que je suis innocent. » Le roi dit: « C'est à eux-mêmes qu'ils rendent ce témoignage et non à vous. » J. dit: « Ils se rendent injustement ce faux témoignage et se parjurent, parce qu'ils sont amis les uns des autres, et que moi je suis un étranger de passage et inconnu dans la ville. Quel est l'ami bienveillant qui examine ma cause avec équité et songe à (me) faire justice? » Le roi dit: « Vous m'attaquez perpétuellement alors que je ne puis me tenir de me lamenter, de me porter des coups et de pleurer. » J. dit: « Et que voulez-vous que je fasse? Me voici trahi par de nombreux témoins et jeté entre vos mains; faites ce qu'il vous plaît d'ordonner et que vous êtes résolu à faire de mort. » Le roi dit: « Pourquoi me contredisez-vous de la sorte? Je veux entendre l'exacte vérité et apprendre de votre bouche sous quels prétextes vous nous avez rendu le mal en retour de notre bienveillance envers vous. » J. dit: « Si vous voulez faire une enquête et vous renseigner à fond là-dessus, votre jugement sera vraiment juste. » Le roi dit: « De qui (donc) le jugement est-il juste: de celui qui a un témoignage (à l'appui) ou de celui qui n'en a pas? » J. dit: « Celui-là rend un jugement vrai qui a (pour lui) un témoignage sincère. » Le roi dit: « Et quand quelqu'un dépose en sa propre faveur, peut-on le juger, oui ou non? » J. dit: « Non. » Le roi dit: « Alors pourquoi, déposant dans votre propre cause, dites-vous: "Je suis innocent?" » J. dit: « O roi, je vous le dis: si vous réclamez de moi un témoignage, opposez donc quelque autre témoin à la (partie) adverse, et alors on verra qui est le bon et qui le méchant. » Le roi dit: « La loi ordonne aux juges de ne juger personne que sur témoignage. Produisez donc votre témoin tout comme eux le font, et je vous croirai. » Gamaliel prenant la parole dit: « O roi, je vous en prie, écoutez-moi: véritablement, cet enfant est innocent; ne le condamnez pas à la légère, au mépris de la justice. » Toute la multitude dit: « Il a été votre disciple; voilà pourquoi vous en parlez en ces termes. » Derechef le roi dit à J.: « Quelle sentence dois-je porter contre vous avec justice? A quels supplices vous livrer? et de quelle mort vous faire périr? » J. dit: « Pourquoi vouloir m'intimider par de pareilles menaces et pourquoi me répéter toujours vos questions en tant de mots? Que vous dirai-je et de quoi ai-je à vous parler? Si vous me jugez conformément aux usages légaux, vous serez exempt de toute faute; mais si vous me livrez à la mort arbitrairement et tyranniquement, au mépris du droit et de la procédure, vous encourez auprès du Seigneur un jugement redoutable. » Le roi dit: « Je vous ai maintes fois pardonné avec patience; mais vous n'avez aucune crainte de moi et vous ne vous effrayez nullement de mes menaces. Maintenant je suis fort triste, au point d'en être accablé jusqu'à la mort. Répondez-moi en me donnant un témoignage, et vous échapperez à la mort. » J. dit: « Dites-moi, ô roi: que m'ordonnez-vous de faire? Dites et je le ferai. » Le roi dit: « Maintenant j'ai pitié de vous. Je considère votre jeune âge; vous m'inspirez du respect, car vous êtes fils d'une grande famille; mais (d'autre part) je ne peux plus supporter le regret du malheur arrivé à mon fils. Songez donc à vous-même, enfant; ne faites pas retomber votre sang sur moi et sur ceux de (ma) maison et de ma cour. Découvrez-moi le vrai (coupable), que ce soit vous ou quelque autre. » J. dit: « A maintes reprises, je vous (l')ai dit, et vous ne m'avez point prêté l'oreille ni n'avez cru à mes paroles. Moi-même, à l'exclusion de tout autre, je me rends témoignage. Quant à celui qui mérite la mort, il le sait. » Tous les enfants prirent la parole et dirent: « O roi, écoutez-nous! Nous savons qu'il est, et nous le connaissons fort bien. Tous nos concitoyens nous rendent ce témoignage que (là), où tous les enfants de la ville ... » [*Lacune dans le ms.*] « ... ouvre vite les yeux et vois quel est l'enfant qui t'a tué. » Et subitement, comme si on l'eût tiré de (son) sommeil, il se réveilla et se dressa sur son séant. Et, d'un regard circulaire, il considérait tout le monde et s'étonnait de la multitude de peuple qui se trouvait là. A cette vue, ses parents, les hommes et les femmes, grands et petits, poussèrent un cri et, avec des larmes et des transports de joie, serrant (l'enfant) dans leurs bras, ils le baisaient et disaient: « Fils, que vous est-il arrivé et comment vous trouvez-vous? » L'enfant dit: « Je me trouve bien. » J. l'interrogea et dit: « Enfant, dis-nous qui a été la cause de ta mort violente. » Zénon dit: « Seigneur, vous n'êtes pas responsable de mon sang; c'est Appion [*cf. earlier in this note*], fils du noble Zacharie. C'est lui qui, de sa batte, m'a frappé à la tête par derrière, en sorte que je me suis tué en tombant à bas de cette hauteur. » En entendant cela, le roi et toute la multitude du peuple furent agités d'une vive frayeur, et tous, prenant peur de Jésus, étaient dans l'épouvante et disaient: « Béni soit le Seigneur Dieu d'Israël, qui agit <avec> les hommes selon leurs mérites et leur droit, (en) juste juge (*texte*: juste jugement, *sens exclu par la construction de la phrase*; *le traducteur aura lu* [XXX₁₈₇] pour [XXX₁₈₈]). En vérité cet enfant est Dieu ou son envoyé. » Et J. dit au roi: « O détestable roi d'Israël, croyez-vous maintenant sur ma parole que je suis innocent? Vous le voyez: je m'étais rendu à moi-même le témoignage que je ne suis pas responsable du sang de votre fils. Vous avez cru à une tromperie de ma part. Voilà! Regardez de vos yeux votre fils qui, revenu à la vie, a rendu témoignage pour moi et vous a tous couverts de confusion. Je

vous avais pourtant prévenu; je vous avais mainte et mainte fois répété cet avertissement: « Roi, ouvrez les yeux, ne vous laissez “pas tromper par de faux discours et n’en croyez pas de jeunes enfants indignes de foi” (*texte*: innocents, [XXX₁₈₉] ou [XXX₁₉₀] pour [XXX₁₉₁]?). » Vous ne m’avez pas écouté, et maintenant vous en avez de vifs regrets, vous et tous vos concitoyens, qui n’avez tiré nul parti de mon secours. » Gamaliel intervint et dit: « O roi, je vous avais prévenu en ces termes: “Écoutez-moi! En vérité, cet enfant est innocent.” Et vous n’avez pas cru aux paroles que je vous ai dites. » — Le fils du roi demeura en vie la journée entière; assis au milieu de ces (personnages), il s’entretenait avec les grands et les princes et leur racontait quelque vision ou d’autres merveilles prodigieuses. Tous, du plus grand au plus petit, vinrent se prosterner devant le fils du roi et lui présenter leurs vœux, jusqu’à l’heure où, le jour s’achevant, la nuit tomba. Alors J. (l’interpellant) de nouveau lui dit: « Zénon, fils du roi Barêiesou, mets-toi sur ton lit, dors et repose-toi, jusqu’à la venue du juste juge. » Quand J. eut ainsi parlé, Zénon se leva de son siège, posa sa tête sur son lit et s’endormit. Et toute la foule des gens qui virent le miracle opéré par J., prise de crainte et d’épouvante, tomba sur le sol, et tous, une heure durant, restèrent privés de souffle, comme des morts. Puis, se relevant, tous tombèrent aux pieds de (Jésus) en pleurant, et ils le suppliaient avec larmes disant: « Rendez (de nouveau) la vie au mort que vous aviez ressuscité. » Et J. dit: « O roi, exactement comme vous avez écouté et cru les paroles douces et bienveillantes que je vous ai fait entendre (*texte*: au lieu des paroles ... que vous avez entendues de moi: [XXX₁₉₂]), j’écouterai (maintenant) vos prières et votre intercession. Car (*texte*: que, [XXX₁₉₃]) dans cette ville personne n’a dit un seul mot en ma faveur, mais toutes les assemblées des méchants se sont réunies et m’ont condamné à mort. Moi, je vous ai prévenu. O roi (disais-je), regardez-y! Plus tard vous vous repentirez et n’y gagnerez rien. » Le roi dit: « Je ne pouvais comprendre, ni reconnaître en vous un Dieu incarné, apparu sur terre, pour commander en maître souverain à la vie et à la mort. » J. dit: « <Ce n’est pas> pour quelque gloire humaine ni pour vous que j’ai ressuscité cet enfant et que je l’ai rendu à la vie, mais à cause de toutes les vexations et de tous les outrages que j’ai eu à subir de vous. Vous réclamiez de moi un témoin; personne n’est venu à mon aide; (alors) j’ai produit comme témoin l’(enfant) que j’avais ressuscité et il a montré qui méritait la mort, en désignant son meurtrier. » Le roi dit: « Écoutez ma prière et celle de toute la multitude de mon peuple: rendez la vie à mon fils. » J. dit: « Je ne redoute personne et je n’ai jamais fait de mal à un homme. Ce n’est point par manière de bienfait que j’ai fait cela, mais à l’effet de me (procurer) un témoignage, pour vous (faire) connaître et identifier le meurtrier de votre fils (*texte*: un témoignage que vous connaissiez ...; [XXX₁₉₄]). » Le roi dit: « Ne vous emportez pas contre nous et ne nous rendez pas le mal que nous vous avons fait. » J. dit: « Ne m’adressez pas tant de paroles suppliantes ([XXX₁₉₅]). Si vous aviez écouté mes paroles, j’avais la puissance de faire ce (miracle) pour vous, en considération de la bonté dont vous auriez usé envers moi. Mais comme (*texte*: quand, [XXX₁₉₆]) vous n’avez point gardé souvenir ni n’avez tenu compte du miracle que j’ai fait devant vous, lors de la construction de (votre) palais, en augmentant une pièce de bois de la mesure qui manquait, par suite (*texte*: pourquoi? [XXX₁₉₇] pour [XXX₁₉₈]), vous n’avez pas cru en moi, et toute la bienveillance et tous les présents amicaux dont vous nous aviez gratifiés, vous les avez ensuite annulés par une déclaration hostile. » Le roi dit: « Écoutez-moi: dans l’excès de mon deuil et de mon trouble, je n’étais vraiment pas capable de prévoir. Complètement étourdi et affolé à force de pleurer et à cause du tumulte, j’ai perdu la tête et me suis oublié. » J. dit au roi: « Que j’aie causé la perte de votre fils, personne en cette ville ne l’a vu et (personne) ne pouvait attester que je méritais la mort [*texte*: si j’avais causé la perte de votre fils en cette ville, personne ne l’aurait vu ...]. Mais tous savaient parfaitement qui est le meurtrier et il ne l’ont pas dénoncé, jusqu’au moment où, en ressuscitant le mort, je les ai tous confondus. » Ayant ainsi parlé, J. sortit vivement de la foule et se déroba aux regards des assistants. On tira Joseph de la prison et on le mit en liberté. Plusieurs allèrent à la recherche de Jésus et ne le trouvèrent pas. Ils s’interrogeaient les uns les autres et disaient: « Qui a vu l’enfant J., le fils de Joseph. (Nous le cherchons) pour qu’il vienne ressusciter le fils du roi. » Ils battirent les environs de la ville et ne le trouvèrent pas. — Et beaucoup crurent en son nom et dirent: « Un prophète a surgi aujourd’hui parmi nous. » Le roi, tous les princes, et les habitants de la ville prirent une seconde fois le grand deuil pour la mort du fils du roi. Et ils s’affligèrent encore plus vivement du départ de Jésus. — Le vieillard Joseph et Marie se méfiaient du roi et de toute son armée, qui pouvaient les (faire) arrêter de force et emmener. Cette nuit même, ils sortirent (de chez eux) et s’enfuirent de la ville, à la dérobée, sans que personne en sût rien. A la pointe du jour, tout en faisant route, ils cherchaient du regard l’enfant. Et J. s’étant montré à eux, allait son chemin silencieusement. En l’apercevant, sa mère lui dit avec larmes: « Mon fils, vous voyez toutes ces épreuves qui nous surviennent, comment nous avons été mis en péril de mort violente et (comment) votre innocence vous a sauvé. Que de fois ne vous ai-je pas dit, avec des supplications: “N’allez pas chez des inconnus, ni chez des gens d’une autre nationalité, qui ne savent pas qui vous êtes.” Voici maintenant que la peur nous force à fuir de nuit comme des malfaiteurs dignes de mort et des criminels. » J. dit: « O mère, ne vous affligez pas, car si l’on (vous) chasse de cette ville, vous fuirez dans une autre. » Ayant ainsi parlé, ils poursuivirent en paix leur chemin. Et ils poussèrent jusqu’à un village qui s’appelle Bosora [Bosra?]. Ils y demeurèrent de longs jours. J. avait alors huit ans et dix mois. Et l’enfant J. parcourait la contrée; les enfants et le jeune peuple se réunissaient autour de lui; il leur parlait et leur donnait maint conseil avec une aimable douceur. Il les appelait à lui familièrement et leur disait: « Ne bataillez pas et ne vous disputez pas entre vous. Ne vous livrez pas l’un contre l’autre aux emportements de la haine et ne vous frappez pas avec colère. » En entendant cela, ces enfants et ces innocents petits auraient voulu voir toujours J. et s’attacher à ses pas. Un jour, comme ils s’étaient réunis, il partit avec eux pour un endroit éloigné. Un jeune enfant les avait accompagnés, il était impotent, estropié et perclus d’un côté. De figure, il était beau et d’un extérieur agréable. (Il avait) environ six ans. J., l’ayant regardé, vit qu’il ne pouvait suivre les enfants. Il en eut pitié, l’appela à lui et lui dit: « Enfant, voulez-vous que je vous guérisse maintenant? » Celui-ci regardant J., fondit en larmes et dit: « Oui, je le veux; mais qui me guérira? » J. dit: « Ne pleurez pas. » Et il appela tous les enfants qui se trouvaient là et dit: « Prenez cet enfant; étendez-le sur le sol, prenez-le les uns par les pieds les autres par les mains et tirez hardiment (*texte*: simplement, [XXX₁₉₉]). » Et J. vint se poser debout sur l’enfant, durant un temps très court, et, en descendant de là, J. leur dit: « Laissez-le aller. » Et l’enfant se leva lentement et s’en alla tout joyeux à sa maison. Les autres enfants le suivirent et racontèrent à tous les prodiges opérés par J. Celui-ci se déroba à leurs regards pour que personne ne le connût. Il s’en alla en cachette auprès de sa mère et ne voulait pas se montrer. Beaucoup de gens vinrent pour le questionner et l’examiner. Et ils ne (le) trouvèrent pas. }

XXI: Comme quoi ils vinrent en la ville de Tibériade \fn{ *Texte*: Taparia. } **et appliquèrent Jésus au métier de la teinturerie.** \fn{ B: Chapitre XXIII. Venus en la ville de Tapari (*Tibériade*), ils appliquèrent Jésus à l’apprentissage de la teinturerie.

Miracles qui s’y passèrent. }

1. Joseph s'étant levé au point du jour, prit Jésus et sa mère, et s'en vint en la ville de Tibériade. Là, il établit son campement à la porte de la maison d'un homme appelé Israël, teinturier de son état, qui avait apporté chez lui tout ce qu'il y avait à teindre\fn{ *Texte A: la couleur ou la teinture, B: les couleurs ...* ([XXX₂₀₀] pour [XXX₂₀₁]). Même abus de langage dans toute la suite de l'épisode.} dans la ville. En arrivant, Israël vit à sa porte Joseph, l'enfant Jésus et sa mère. Il s'en réjouit vivement. Il dit à Joseph: « Dites-moi, vieillard, d'où venez-vous et où allez-vous? » Joseph dit: « Je suis d'une contrée lointaine, et j'erre partout, étranger et dépaycé. »

2. Israël dit: « Si vous voulez vivre <ici>, établissez-vous en cette ville et moi je vous accueillerai dans ma maison comme bon vous semblera. » Joseph dit: « Que votre volonté s'accomplisse à votre gré. » Israël dit: « Comment subsistez-vous de votre métier? » Joseph dit: « Facilement, car je suis très expert en l'art de faire des jougs à bœufs et des charrues,\fn{ *Comparer ps.-Thom. XIII, ps.-Matth. XXXVII, 1, et le texte célèbre de S. Justin, Dialogue avec Tryphon, LXXXVIII, 8.* } et tout ce qui est à la convenance d'un chacun, je sais le faire. » Israël dit: « Demeurez dans ma maison et vous n'aurez à subir de personne aucune importunité. Je vous respecterai comme un père. Et si vous voulez me confier votre enfant pour qu'il apprenne mon métier, je le traiterai avec honneur, comme mon propre\fn{ *Littéralement: légitime (B et A).* } fils. » Joseph dit: « C'est bien parlé. Prenez l'enfant selon qu'il vous plaira et amenez-le à accepter vos volontés, car je suis vivement contrarié à son sujet depuis longtemps. »

3. Israël dit: « Est-ce qu'il ne serait pas obéissant et soumis à vos ordres? » Joseph dit: « Il n'en va pas comme vous dites; mais il a passé par beaucoup de métiers sans y persévérer. »\fn{ *Littéralement: et n'a pas achevé.* } Israël dit: « Quel âge\fn{ *Lacune dans B.* } a-t-il? » Joseph dit: « Neuf ans et deux mois. » Israël dit: « C'est bien. » Alors Israël prit l'enfant Jésus et l'emmena dans sa maison. Il lui montra, en suivant l'ordre, tout le détail de son métier et dit: « Voilà, mon fils; regardez bien tout cela de vos yeux, comprenez-le et tout ce que je vous montre, mettez-le vous dans l'esprit. » Et Jésus se prêtait à ses volontés et il écoutait ses avis avec attention.

4. Un jour (Israël) s'étant levé voulut aller faire le tour de la ville. Il recueillit de nombreuses pièces de tissu et apportant le tout, avec une liste, il les déposa dans sa maison. Il manda Jésus auprès de lui et dit: « Voilà, mon fils; tout ce que vous voyez, nous devons en rendre compte à ses propriétaires respectifs. C'est pourquoi veillez avec soin sur tous les effets qui sont dans notre maison; de peur qu'il ne nous arrive un accident soudain et que nous ne soyons redevables du dommage, car je devrais solder cinq mille deniers au trésor royal. » Jésus dit: « Où allez-vous de nouveau? » Israël dit: « Voici que j'ai recueilli tout ce qu'il y avait à teindre dans la ville. Je vous l'ai confié, parce que je vais me mettre en route pour faire une tournée dans les villages et les bourgades, afin de remettre chaque chose à sa destination propre,\fn{ *Texte: pour remettre tout ce qui est suffisant à (sa) place* ([XXX₂₀₂]). } et tout l'ouvrage qu'on me donnera à faire, je le ferai. » Jésus dit:\fn{ *Le texte reprend dans B.* } « Quel ouvrage? » Israël dit: « Teindre et colorier, parfois avec des dessins de fleurs, en écarlate, vert, bleu, pourpre, jaune, fauve, brun et autres nuances variées que je ne puis vous détailler. »

5. En entendant cela, Jésus admira la puissance de l'esprit humain. (Et) Jésus dit à Israël: « Maître, connaissez-vous par son nom chacune (de ces couleurs)? » Israël dit: « Oui, à l'aide d'une liste écrite, je puis les retenir. » Jésus dit: « Je vous en prie, maître, enseignez-moi à faire tout cela. » Israël dit: « Oui, je vous l'enseignerai si vous m'obéissez et si vous êtes soumis à mes ordres. » Et Jésus s'inclinant, se prosterna devant lui et dit: « Maître, je ferai vos volontés, mais auparavant montrez-moi cet ouvrage, pour que je le voie. » Israël dit: « Bien parlé, mais ne faites rien de vous-même que vous ne connaissiez pas; (attendez) que je sois de retour auprès de vous. N'ouvrez pas la porte du logis, que j'ai fermée et scellée de mon anneau. Demeurez en permanence à (votre) poste et soyez sans inquiétude. » Jésus dit: « Pour quel jour attendrai-je votre retour? » Israël dit: « Quel besoin avez-vous de me questionner à mon sujet, puisque mon travail suivra son cours au jour la journée, comme le Seigneur le voudra? » Jésus dit: « Allez en paix. » Alors Israël s'étant levé s'éloigna de la ville.

6. Et Jésus s'étant levé alla ouvrir la porte de la maison. Il prit tout le tissu à teindre de la ville et en remplit une cuve de teinture bleue, chauffa la cuve, ouvrit la porte de la maison, et s'en alla au dehors, suivant sa coutume, à l'etroit où les enfants se livraient au jeu.

7. Et s'étant mis à lutter avec eux, il leur engourdissait le nerf de cuisse, et les enfants tombaient la face contre terre et ne savaient plus marcher debout. Puis, il leur imposait les mains et il les remettait sur pied. D'autres fois, il soufflait au visage des enfants et il les aveuglait. Puis il leur imposait les mains, et il rendait la lumière à leurs

yeux. Ou encore, il prenait en main un morceau de bois et le jetait au milieu des enfants. Celui-ci se changeait en serpent, et il les mettait tous en fuite. Ceux qu'il avait blessés en les frappant, il leur imposait ensuite les mains et les guérissait. Il introduisait son doigt dans les oreilles des enfants et les rendait sourds. Puis il soufflait (sur eux) et rétablissait leur ouïe. Il prenait en main une pierre, soufflait dessus et elle devenait ardente comme du feu. Il la jetait devant les enfants et elle embrasait le poussière\fn{A: le feu ([XXX₂₀₃]; lire avec B: [XXX₂₀₄].)} comme un buisson desséché. Ensuite il prenait la pierre en main, et la pierre se transformant revenait à son premier état.

8. Il emmenait les enfants au bord de la mer et là, prenant une balle de jeu et un bâton, il s'avancé en marchant debout avec ses jouets, sur les flots de la mer, comme sur la glace d'une (eau) gelée. Et à cette vue, tous les enfants poussaient des cris et disaient: « Voyez ce que fait le petit Jésus sur les flots de la mer! » En entendant cela, le peuple de la ville se portant en cet endroit, regardait ce prodige avec stupéfaction.

9. Mais Joseph l'ayant appris\fn{A: (l') ayant vu.} survint et dit: « Mon fils, qu'est-ce que vous faites là? Voici que votre maître a réuni dans sa maison toute sorte d'objets, il vous en a confié la garde; vous n'en avez cure et vous venez en ce lieu pour vous amuser. Je vous en prie, levez-vous. Nous allons chez votre maître. » Jésus dit: « Vous avez raison. Nous (y) allons et j'accomplirai (ma tâche); tout ce que mon maître m'a commandé, je le ferai.\fn{B: J. dit: « Vous avez raison; mais j'ai fait et terminé toute (ma) tâche. Ce que mon maître m'a commandé et prescrit de faire, je l'ai fait, et maintenant je reste dans l'attente de son retour, (comptant) qu'il viendra voir le produit de mon art, que je lui montrerai. Mais vous, en quoi ceci vous concerne-t-il? »} Pour le moment, j'attends son retour. » En entendant ces paroles, Joseph ne comprit pas ce que disait Jésus.

10. Quand Jésus arriva auprès de sa mère, Marie le regardant lui dit: « Mon fils, avez-vous achevé tout ce que vous a commandé votre maître? » Jésus dit: « J'ai tout achevé et il n'y manque rien. Qu'est-ce que mon maître exige de moi? »\fn{B: « ... Que voulez-vous de moi? »} Marie dit: « Je remarque que voilà trois jours que vous n'êtes pas même passé par la maison pour y regarder.\fn{A: « Voyez-vous cette maison? » ([XXX₂₀₅]; lire avec B: [XXX₂₀₆].)} Pourquoi voulez-vous nous exposer à un risque de mort? » Jésus dit: « Cessez de parler (ainsi). Tous les préceptes que m'a donnés mon maître, je les ai étudiés, et je sais le commandement qu'il m'a fait. » Marie dit: « Mon enfant, c'est bien. Vous êtes juge. »

11. Et tandis qu'ils parlaient, Jésus, ayant regardé, vit son maître qui arrivait. Et Jésus se levant avec soumission, alla à sa rencontre et s'étant incliné, il se prosterna devant lui. Israël dit: « Mon fils, comment allez-vous? êtes-vous content? » Jésus dit: « Je vais bien. » Puis Jésus dit à Israël: « Maître, comment s'est passé votre retour? »\fn{B: « ... Que vous est-il advenu à l'aller et au retour? » [Comparer la rédaction arabe, ch. VIII, p. 9, et S, p. 5 note.]} Israël dit: « Comme le Seigneur l'a voulu. » Jésus dit: « Puissiez-vous être revenu dans la prospérité et dans la paix. Que Dieu vous récompense de vos travaux à la mesure de ce que vous avez fait pour moi. Car j'ai appris à fond votre métier. Tous les préceptes que vous m'avez donnés, je les ai étudiés, je les possède, et tout le (travail) que vous songiez à faire, je l'ai compris et je l'ai achevé. » Israël dit: « Quel travail? » Jésus dit: « Tout ce que vous m'avez enseigné, je l'ai accompli. »

12. Quand Israël eut compris ce que Jésus voulait dire,\fn{B: Et Israël ne comprit pas le sens des paroles que J. lui avait dites ...} il alla à la porte <et vit>\fn{B: il vit la serrure et le sceau ouvert(s).} que la serrure était ouverte. Il (en) fut très ému et pénétrant à l'intérieur, il inspecta les recoins de la maison et ne vit rien. Il poussa un cri et dit: « Où est le tissu à teindre (pour les gens) de la ville, qui se trouvait rassemblé là, dans la maison? » (Jésus) dit: « Ne vous ai-je pas dit, quand j'ai été à votre rencontre: “L'ouvrage que vous songiez à faire, je l'ai achevé?” » Israël dit: « C'est là l'ouvrage que vous avez fait! Vous avez accumulé dans une cuve de bleu tout le tissu à teindre de la ville? » Jésus dit: « Quel mal vous ai-je fait pour que vous vous emportiez ainsi contre moi, qui vous ai délivré d'une foule de soucis et de labeurs? » Israël dit: « C'est là le repos (que vous me procurez), de me causer ce grave dommage, cette perte et des amendes à payer? Le vieillard avait raison de me dire: “Vous ne réussirez pas à le réduire à l'obéissance!” Que ferai-je donc de vous, puisque vous avez causé chez moi un tel dommage, qui n'est pas le mien, mais celui de toute la ville? »\fn{B: « car (texte: que, [XXX₂₀₇]) cet ouvrage et cette matière à teindre ne sont pas à moi, mais à toute la ville ... »} Hélas! Quel malheur m'est arrivé! »

13. Il pleurait et se frappait lui-même. Puis il dit à Jésus: « Pourquoi avez-vous attiré sur ma maison ce malheur et ce désastre? » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi êtes-vous si furieux? Quelle perte ai-je causée chez vous, attendu que je vous

ai écouté avec intelligence (m'expliquer) l'ouvrage. J'ai compris la leçon reçue, j'ai appris tout ce que vous aviez dit et je suis devenu capable de la faire? » Israël dit: « Ne vous ai-je point dit: “Ne faites rien par vous-même, de ce que vous ne savez pas?” » Jésus dit: « Maître, \fn{Lacune dans B.} regardez de vos yeux et voyez! Quel dommage vous ai-je causé? » Israël dit: « Comment pourrai-je justifier de la couleur et de la teinte que les gens exigent de moi? » Jésus dit: « Quand vous reveniez en paix et que vous êtes rentré dans votre maison, qu'y avez-vous trouvé en défaut? » Israël dit: « Si chacun me réclame sa commande, \fn{Littéralement: son ouvrage.} que ferai-je? » Jésus dit: « Amenez para devant moi le propriétaire de ces objets et je (les) lui donnerai avec la couleur conforme à ce qu'il souhaitera. » Israël dit: « Comment pourrez-vous reconnaître tous les effets de chacun? » Jésus dit: « Maître, quelle couleur voulez-vous que je fasse apparaître de cette cuve unique? »

14. En entendant cela, Israël s'irrita des paroles de Jésus, en crut, à le voir, qu'il se moquait de lui. Jésus dit: « Regardez de vos yeux et voyez! » Et Jésus se mit à retirer de la même cuve tout le tissu à teindre, brillant et enluminé de belles (couleurs) aux noms divers. Israël en voyant faire Jésus, ne comprit pas le prodige qu'il (avait opéré) mais il manda \fn{Le texte reprend dans B.} Joseph et Marie et leur dit: « D'où vient que votre enfant a causé chez moi un grand dommage? Que vous ai-je donc fait? Je vous ai traités en père, avec honneur et avec une grande affection. Et voici maintenant que je suis redevable de cinq mille deniers à verser au trésor royal. » Il pleurait et se frappait lui-même. Marie dit à Jésus: « Qu'avez-vous donc fait, de façon à causer en cette ville un pareil désastre? Voilà que vous vous êtes vous-même réduit en servitude, et nous avec vous, nous sommes voués à la mort! » Jésus dit: « Quel mal vous ai-je causé, pour que vous vous soyez ainsi réunis contre \fn{A: à cause de.} moi et que vous me condamnerez injustement? Venez et voyez l'ouvrage que j'ai fait. » Marie et Joseph allèrent voir les œuvres que Jésus avait faites, et ils ouvraient des yeux étonnés, en l'écoutant parler.

15. Israël, lui, ne comprit pas le prodige. Il grinçait des dents avec fureur contre Jésus et, grondant comme une bête féroce, il voulut frapper Jésus. Jésus dit: « Pourquoi êtes-vous rempli d'une pareille fureur? Qu'avez-vous aperçu de mal en moi? » Israël, entendant cela, prit un boisseau et se précipita pour frapper Jésus. Ce que voyant, Jésus s'enfuit de là. (Israël) lança le boisseau après Jésus, qu'il ne put atteindre et son coup frappa le sol. \fn{B ajoute: J. ramassa le boisseau et l'abattit à la même place.} A l'instant même le boisseau prit racine; il devint arbre, fleurit et porta des fruits. Il existe encore aujourd'hui. \fn{Le voyageur musulman 'Ali al-Hirawi, qui visita la Galilée vers l'an 1191, rapporte ce qui suit: A Tabarié (Tibériade) il y a une source d'eau qui remonte à Isa (Jésus) ben Miryam--sur lui soit le salut!-- (Là existe) aussi l'église de l'Arbre (kaniset aš-Šagara). A cet endroit se rapporte une histoire miraculeuse arrivée entre 'Isa ben Miryam et le teinturier. Elle est racontée dans l'Évangile et ce fut le premier miracle qu'il fit avoir.} (Ms. de la Bibliothèque royale de Berlin, arabe 6121, fol. 27. -- Dans le texte traduit par Ch. Schefer le teinturier est remplacé par des foulons; cf. Abou'l-Hassan Aly el-Herewy, Description des lieux saints de la Galilée et de Palestine, trad. par Ch. Schefer, Gênes, 1881, p. 9 et N. A. Mednikov, [XXX₂₀₈], t. XVII, 3, 1897, p. 949.) Il ressort de cette citation que 'Ali n'a pas lu notre apocryphe mais qu'il l'a entendu citer à Tibériade, soit par quelque érudit mahométan soit plutôt par le clergé de kaniset aš-Šagara.} Et Jésus s'étant échappé franchit la porte de la ville, et dans sa course, il atteignit la mer. Et il marcha sur la mer comme sur la terre ferme.

16. Israël poussa un grand cri en pleine ville et dit: « Voyez et plaignez-moi, car l'enfant Jésus s'est enfui et il a emporté tout ce qu'il y avait dans ma maison. Joignez-le et saisissez-le. » Lui-même suivit la foule. Et se postant aux défilés des chemins, ils cherchèrent le petit Jésus et ne le trouvèrent pas. Or certaines gens lui donnèrent l'information suivante: « Quand il eut passé la porte de la ville, nous le vîmes s'avancer jusqu'à la mer; mais nous ne savons pas autrement ce qu'il est devenu. » Alors, cette troupe de gens s'en alla faire le tour du rivage de la mer. Ils ne trouvèrent rien et revinrent sur leurs pas. Comme ils s'en allaient, Jésus sortit de la mer, et s'assit sur une pierre du rivage, sous la figure d'un enfant (quelconque). Les gens de la ville l'interrogèrent et lui dirent: « Enfant, n'as-tu pas vu Jésus le fils du vieillard? » Jésus dit: « Je ne sais pas. » Il prit ensuite la forme d'un jeune homme. On lui demanda: « N'avez-vous pas vu le fils de Joseph? » Jésus dit: « Non. » Puis il prit la forme d'un vieillard. On lui demanda: « Vieillard, n'as-tu pas vu le fils du vieux Joseph? » Jésus dit: « Je ne l'ai pas vu. »

17. Ne trouvant pas Jésus, ils rentrèrent en ville, et s'étant emparés de Joseph, ils le conduisirent au tribunal et dirent: « Où est votre enfant, qui a si perfidement trompé notre attente (et) qui s'est enfui <en emportant> le bien de l'homme \fn{B: « ... qui a dérobé et emporté nos effets qui se trouvaient chez ... »} qui l'avait reçu dans sa maison? » Joseph demeura silencieux et ne répondit rien.

18. Et Israël s'en retourna tristement à sa maison. Il voulut aller reprendre le boisseau à l'endroit où il l'avait jeté. Lorsqu'il vit qu'il avait pris racine et qu'il portait des fruits, il s'émerveilla et se dit en lui-même: « Vraiment,

celui-ci est le Fils de Dieu, ou c'est tout comme! » Il pénétra dans sa maison et découvrant la cuve, il trouva tous les effets à teindre rassemblés dans cette même cuve, qui était (remplie de couleur)\fn{ B: qui était devenue.} bleue. Quand il se fut mis à les retirer, (il se trouva que) rien ne manquait au compte écrit des vêtements et des couleurs dont il avait ordre de les teindre.\fn{ A, littéralement: rien ne manquait au compte, les livres des vêtements et les couleurs (XXX₂₀₉). B: rien ne manquait au compte et sur chacun de ces effets il vit le nom marqué (en) signes et (en) lettres, et tous avaient respectivement la teinte et l'éclat de la couleur brillante, dont ... } Il vit que tous avaient pris des couleurs diverses, conformes à l'ordre qu'il avait reçu de leurs propriétaires. Ayant vu ces prodiges, il loua Dieu et lui rendit gloire. Ensuite, s'étant levé cette nuit même, il alla s'asseoir au bord de la mer, en face du rocher, et il pleura amèrement durant la nuit entière. Et, se répandant en lamentations, il se frappait lui-même en soupirant et disait: « Enfant Jésus, <fils>\fn{ B (le mot est omis dans A).} du Père, le grand Roi, ayez pitié de moi, misérable, et ne m'abandonnez pas; car c'est par un effet de mon ignorance que j'ai péché contre vous, et je n'ai pas compris d'abord que vous êtes le Seigneur Dieu et le sauveur de nos âmes. Maintenant, Seigneur, manifestez-vous à moi; car mon âme désire entendre la parole de votre bouche. »

19. Au même instant, Jésus lui apparut sous la même forme qu'auparavant (et) lui dit: « Maître, qu'avez-vous\fn{ Littéralement (A, B): Que cherchez-vous?} donc à vous lamenter ainsi durant la nuit entière? » Israël dit: « Seigneur, ayez pitié de moi; écoutez les prières de votre serviteur; pardonnez-moi tous les péchés que j'ai commis contre vous par ignorance et bénissez-moi. » Jésus dit: « Soyez béni, vous et tout ce qui est en votre maison. Que vos péchés vous soient remis. Allez en paix et que le Seigneur soit avec vous. » Il le bénit et disparut.

20. Israël se prosterna sur le sol et, ramassant de la poussière, il la répandit sur sa tête. Il se frappait lui-même avec une pierre, et ne savait quel parti prendre. Il retourna chez lui et le lendemain matin, étant sorti de sa maison, il se rendit à l'endroit où les gens étaient rassemblés (et) il leur dit: « Écoutez-moi, vous (dire à) tous quelle surprise s'est emparée de moi et quels miracles Jésus a faits dans ma maison. » Ils lui dirent d'une seule voix: « Racontez-nous (cela). » Et Israël leur dit: « Un jour, m'étant levé, je me rendis à ma maison. Et je vis un vieillard chenu assis à ma porte. Je vis (aussi) un enfant et sa mère. J'interrogeai le (vieillard) et il me découvrit sa pensée, me disant: "Je veux me fixer ici." Je le reçus et le traitai avec honneur dans ma maison. Il mit son enfant en apprentissage chez moi. Je pris donc l'enfant et l'emmenai dans ma maison. (Or) j'avais réuni dans ma maison le tissu à teindre de toute la ville. Ayant fermé la porte, je la scellai, et je commis l'enfant à la garde de ma maison jusqu'à mon retour.\fn{ Lacune dans B.} J'allai donc suivant ma coutume chercher d'autre tissu à teindre. Quand je (re)vins, je trouvai la porte de mon logis ouverte et tout le tissu à teindre avait été pris, emporté et jeté dans une cuve de (teinture) bleue. A cette vue, j'entrai dans une violente colère, et saisissant un boisseau, je le jetai vers l'(enfant) pour l'en frapper. Le (boisseau) tomba à terre et, sur-le-champ, il prit racine et porta des fruits. Ayant vu cela,\fn{ L'ordre des faits est interverti. Voir plus haut, §§ 15-16, 18.} je sortis en hâte, j'allai à la poursuite de l'enfant et ne le trouvai point. Je retournai à ma maison, et je vis la cuve (et), dans cette même cuve de teinture bleue, des tissus de différentes couleurs étaient réunis.\fn{ Texte (A): [XXX₂₁₀].} Allons; venez voir cette merveille. »

21. Le juge de la ville et tous les notables, en grand nombre, se levèrent et allèrent voir ces prodiges. Ayant découvert la cuve, ils virent tout le tissu à teindre rassemblé au même endroit. Et tandis qu'il le retirait, ils lisaient la liste des noms, et appelaient la couleur correspondante (à chacun). Lui alors retirait (la couleur demandée) et en montrait à tous l'éclat brillant. Ils se dirent les uns aux autres: « Qui a jamais vu sortir d'une même cuve cette variété de teintes éclatantes? » Et de la sorte, ayant pris chacun leurs effets, ils retournèrent dans leurs maisons et dirent: « Vraiment, ceci est un miracle et une œuvre de Dieu, non une œuvre humaine. » Et beaucoup crurent en son nom.

22. Ensuite (Israël) les ayant emmenés, leur montra le boisseau (et leur fit voir) comment il avait pris racine. Et plusieurs à cette vue dirent: « Vraiment celui-ci est le fils de Dieu. » Et le juge ordonna de délivrer Joseph de la prison et de le lui amener. Quand il arriva, le juge l'interrogea et lui dit: « Dites-nous, vieillard: est-il à vous cet enfant par qui s'accomplissent ces bienfaits et ces prodiges? » Joseph dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur! Dieu m'a donné ce fils, non selon la chair, mais selon l'esprit. » Les foules dirent: « Bienheureux sont ses parents, qui ont reçu pour leur part cet enfant de bénédiction! » Et Joseph\fn{ Le texte reprend dans B.} retourna en silence à sa maison et raconta à Marie les miracles de Jésus, dont il avait entendu parler et (ceux) qu'il avait vus. Et Marie dit: « Vraiment, que voulez-vous que devienne cet enfant, à cause duquel nous avons à supporter de pareils maux? » Joseph dit: « Ne vous attristez pas. Dieu y pourvoira selon sa volonté. » Comme il disait ces mots, Israël survint

et, tombant aux pieds de Joseph et de Marie, il leur demanda le pardon de ses fautes. Joseph dit: « Allez en paix et que le Seigneur vous guide vers le bien. »\fn{B ajoute: Et Joseph et Marie se méfiant du juge et de tous les autres, fermèrent la porte de la maison et allèrent se poster en observation jusqu'au matin. [Sur cet épisode de Jésus chez le teinturier, voir la note au ch. XXXVII du texte arabe.]}

XXII: Comme quoi il alla en la ville d'Arimathie. Mort et résurrection opérées par une espièglerie enfantine de Jésus.\fn{B: Chapitre XXIV. Quand ils furent venus en la ville d'Arimathie, il fit des miracles et ressuscita les morts.}

1. Joseph s'étant levé prit Marie [et l'enfant Jésus]\fn{Ces mots sont exclus par le contexte. B: prit Marie et, sortant ...} et sortant de la ville ils partirent par la route. Comme ils s'en allaient, ils cherchèrent Jésus du regard. Au même instant, Jésus leur apparut et marcha à leur suite jusqu'au pays de Galilée, en une ville qui s'appelle Arimathie. Ils prirent gîte dans une maison. Jésus avait alors dix ans.\fn{B: dix ans et un mois.} Il circulait par la ville, pour se rendre à l'endroit où les enfants étaient rassemblés. Quand ils aperçurent Jésus, <ils l'interrogèrent>\fn{Mots ajoutés d'après B.} et lui dirent: « Dites-nous, d'où êtes-vous venu? » Il leur dit: « D'un pays inconnu. » Les enfants dirent: « Dites-nous où est située votre maison paternelle? » Jésus dit: « Vous ne sauriez (le) comprendre. » Les enfants dirent: « Dites-nous quelque chose, que nous l'apprenions de vous. »\fn{On serait tenté de corriger: que nous apprenions qui vous êtes ([XXX₂₁₁], devenu par un solécisme du traducteur: [XXX₂₁₂]).} Jésus dit: « Que me demandez-vous puisque ce que je dis, vous ne le comprenez pas? » Les enfants dirent: « Parlez-nous, car nous sommes ignorants et vous paraissez instruit de toutes choses. » Jésus dit: « Je sais toutes choses, mais vous me tenez pour un étranger et vous n'accepterez pas ma parole, quoi que je fasse. » Les enfants dirent: « Nous vous accueillons avec amitié comme un frère, et nous nous soumettrons à vos ordres, comme vous voudrez. »

2. Jésus dit: « Levez-vous et allons. » Les enfants se levèrent d'un commun accord et s'en allèrent en un certain endroit. Il y avait en ce lieu un rocher élevé. Jésus s'étant placé en face, ordonna au rocher d'incliner son sommet, Jésus alla s'y asseoir et le rocher (re)prit sa position. Les enfants poussèrent un cri (et), formant cercle autour de la pierre, ils regardaient Jésus. Et après avoir ordonné au rocher d'incliner son sommet, Jésus en descendit.

3. Les enfants allèrent à la ville, raconter les prodiges accomplis par Jésus. Jésus prit la fuite. Un des jeunes gens l'ayant aperçu l'arrêta par surprise et se saisit de lui. Jésus se retourna <et> lui souffla au visage. Au même instant celui-ci perdit la vue. Et poussant une clameur il s'écria: « Jésus, ayez pitié de moi. » Jésus posa sa main sur les yeux, et ses yeux furent ouverts.

4. Un jour, les enfants étaient réunis près de la fontaine. Et Jésus vint se mêler à eux. L'ayant aperçu, ils furent remplis de joie. Et Jésus leur dit: « Que faites-vous ici\fn{A: « Est-ce pour Jésus? ([XXX₂₁₃]) que ...? »} rassemblés au bord du puits? » < ... >\fn{Le texte est mutilé dans A. B poursuit: Les enfants dirent: « Venez ici et prenez place [Littéralement: asseyez-vous] parmi nous aujourd'hui. » J. leur dit: « Oui. Me voici. Je reste avec vous ici. Que désirez-vous? » Et au même instant comme J. parlait, deux enfants jouaient ...} Eux jouaient avec pétulance au bord du puits. Et il advint qu'en se disputant ils frappèrent l'un des enfants et le précipitèrent dans le puits. Ils s'enfuirent de cet endroit, et Jésus, s'étant levé, s'en alla à sa maison.

5. Comme (des gens) venaient de la ville pour chercher de l'eau, ayant descendu leur cruche dans l'eau, ils aperçurent au milieu (du puits) un enfant mort, et ils allèrent l'annoncer dans la ville. Les parents arrivèrent (et) virent l'enfant qui était resté suffoqué au milieu de l'eau.\fn{B: l'enfant qui était revenu [littéralement: qui vient], au-dessus de l'eau, suffoqué.} Ils pleuraient amèrement et se battaient la poitrine. C'était un très joli enfant, âgé de cinq ans.\fn{B: sept ans.} (Les parents) donc pleuraient et demandaient: « Qui a causé ce malheur? » Et ils ne trouvèrent pas le meurtrier. En conséquence, les parents allèrent rapporter au juge la mort de l'enfant.

6. Le juge ordonna donc de réunir les enfants de la ville et de les lui amener. Le juge leur dit: « Dites-moi, mes enfants: qui a jeté ce petit garçon dans l'eau et l'a tué? » Les enfants dirent: « Nous ne le savons pas. » Le juge dit: « Vous voulez user de subterfuges.\fn{A, littéralement: « Vous voulez être cause » [XXX₂₁₄]. B: « Si, vous le savez, mais vous comptez m'abuser par des prétextes. »} Ne faites pas cela, car vous mourrez, (les) innocents avec le coupable. » Les princes et les grands dirent: « Dites-nous cela sincèrement et ne mentez pas. » (Les enfants) dirent d'une seule voix: « Si vous croyez à nos paroles, (sachez que) nous n'avons pas été cause de sa mort. Il est tombé dans l'eau par accident et nous n'avons pu l'en retirer. » Le juge dit: « Quand il est tombé à l'eau, pourquoi n'avez-vous pas

poussé un cri? Or personne (de vous) n'est demeuré là, tous ayant pris la fuite. S'il était tombé de lui-même, \fn{Le texte de A doit être abrégé; cf. B: Le juge dit: « Quand il est tombé à l'eau, pourquoi n'avez-vous pas immédiatement crié en élevant la voix, pour que l'on vint retirer l'enfant tandis qu'il respirait encore? (Texte: « ... pourquoi n'avez-vous pas crié, ceux qui avaient un souffle de vie, de retirer l'enfant: [XXX₂₁₅], où le traducteur aurait lu: [XXX₂₁₆] pour: [XXX₂₁₇]) Les enfants dirent: « Parce que nul d'entre nous n'était resté là. Tous l'avaient abandonné et avaient pris la fuite. » Le juge dit: « Il n'en va pas comme vous dites. S'il était tombé par mégarde ... »} vous auriez tous poussé des cris et averti tout le monde. Mais étant vous-mêmes les auteurs du fait, vous vous êtes enfuis de là par crainte, et vous pensez échapper à la mort par de vaines excuses. » Les enfants dirent: « Si vous voulez nous condamner injustement, que votre volonté soit faite. Car chacun <peut se dire> lui-même innocent, et c'est celui qui a mérité la mort, qui connaît la (réalité du) fait. Pourquoi donc sommes-nous condamnés? » Le juge dit: « Si je savais <qui a fait ce mauvais coup>, \fn{Omis dans A.} je ne condamnerais pas l'innocent avec le malfaiteur. \fn{Littéralement: le malfaiteur et l'innocent.} Je ne condamne l'innocent que pour découvrir le coupable. » \fn{Lacune dans B.}

7. Les enfants dirent: « Nous ne sommes pas en faute. Nous étions distraits par le jeu qui nous occupait et ne nous sommes doutés de rien jusqu'au moment où (quelques) enfants, \fn{Texte: les enfants, sans prendre garde que ce sont ces mêmes enfants qui parlent.} ont pris la fuite en poussant des cris. Nous ne savons rien de plus. » Le juge dit: « Si vous le voulez, moi je vous dirai la vérité: regardez(-y) bien, vous tous, faites attention et ayez pitié de vous-mêmes. » Les enfants dirent: « Nous vous avons (tout) dit et vous ne nous avez pas écoutés. » Le juge dit: « Je me méfie de l'artifice de vos paroles. » Les enfants dirent: « Si vous voulez nous condamner injustement, c'est votre affaire. » Le juge dit: « Si vous ne me dites pas la vérité, je vous conduirai au puits et je vous ferai périr suffoqués dans l'eau. » Or le jeune garçon qui était le meurtrier, dit: « Vous aurez beau nous tourmenter, nous ne pourrons pas dire une fausseté. »

8. Alors le juge se rendit au bord du puits. Il ordonna de dévêtir les (enfants) et de les amener enchaînés devant lui. Le petit meurtrier \fn{Littéralement: le garçon qui était le meurtrier.} dit: « O juge, citez et produisez un témoin, et alors seulement, condamnez-nous. Pourquoi sommes-nous mis à mort, sans (être convaincus par) témoin? » Le juge dit: « Quel témoin ai-je à produire, puisque vous tous étiez là? \fn{Le sens doit être: Tous ceux qui étaient là, c'est vous-mêmes.} Vous ne sortirez de mes mains ni à force de plaintes ni à force de présents. » Les parents voyant leurs enfants nus devant le juge, au milieu de la place, pleurèrent amèrement. Le juge dit: « Je n'ai aucune pitié de ces pleurs. » \fn{Le texte reprend dans B.} Alors il ordonna de jeter (les enfants) dans le puits. Or celui, qui était le meurtrier, s'écria en ces termes: « Ne me précipitez pas. Je vous indiquerai qui c'est. Où est Jésus, le fils du vieillard? C'est lui qui a fait ce coup. » Le juge dit: « Mais vous alors, pourquoi vous laissez-vous mettre à mort étant innocents? » Les enfants dirent: « C'est à vous de le savoir: vous l'avez voulu. »

9. Alors le juge fit citer Jésus devant lui. On se mit en quête, mais, ne trouvant pas Jésus, on se saisit de Joseph et on l'amena devant le juge. Le juge l'interrogea et lui dit: « Vieillard, d'où êtes-vous venu en cette ville? » Joseph dit: « Je suis d'un pays lointain. » Le juge dit: « Où est votre enfant qui a commis ce crime d'homicide? » Joseph dit: « J'ignore cela. » Le juge dit: « Et vous ne savez pas qu'il a commis \fn{A: Que vous avez commis.} le crime d'homicide? » Joseph dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur! je ne le sais pas. » Le juge dit: « Si, vous le savez. Vous croyez donc que vous allez échapper à la mort? » Joseph dit: O juge, ne condamnez pas injustement un enfant innocent. » Le juge dit: « Bien. Puisqu'il est innocent, pourquoi a-t-il fui (pour échapper à) la mort? » Joseph dit: « Je ne le sais pas. » Le juge dit: « Vous ne sortirez pas de prison, si vous ne vous hâtez de faire comparaître votre enfant devant moi. »

10. Comme le juge parlait ainsi, Jésus arriva au milieu du tribunal et leur dit: « Qui cherchez-vous? » Ils dirent: « Jésus, le fils de Joseph. » Jésus dit: « C'est moi. » Le juge dit: « Quand êtes-vous venu en cette ville? » Jésus dit: « Il y a de longs jours que je suis ici. » Le juge dit: « Dites-moi quelle a été la cause de la mort violente \fn{Littéralement: (de l'effusion) du sang [XXX₂₁₈]; cf. XXII, 12.} de cet enfant? » Jésus dit: « Je ne le sais pas. » Les parents de l'enfant dirent: « Vous avez fait mourir notre enfant par suffocation et vous dites: "Je ne sais pas." Jésus dit: « Si c'est à un autre qu'il faut demander compte de son sang, pourquoi me condamnez-vous injustement? » Le juge dit: « Ne dites pas de fausseté, car vous êtes digne de mort. » Jésus dit: « Eux protent un faux témoignage et moi un vrai. Je ne suis pas coupable de la perte de cet (enfant). » Le juge dit: « Jurez sur la loi du Seigneur. » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi mentez-vous à la face du Seigneur et ne craignez-vous pas Dieu? » Le juge dit: « Quel mal y a-t-il à prêter serment, lorsqu'on est innocent et à se soustraire (ainsi) à la mort? » Jésus dit: « Ainsi il vous est légitime

de rendre un jugement injuste? » Le juge dit: « Dites-moi ce que je devrais faire. » Jésus dit: « Vous (le) savez, (vous) qui êtes constitué juge. » Le juge dit: « Que dois-je faire? Répondez-moi. » Jésus dit: « Si <vous agissiez> de bonne foi,\fn{Omis dans A; cf. B.} vous observeriez la justice; mais vous ne le faites pas. » Le juge dit: « J'agis <d'après> ce que j'entends. » Jésus dit: « En ceci vous avez dit vrai, mais vous n'acceptez pas le témoignage que je porte sur moi-même. » Le juge dit: « Je ne vous condamne pas injustement, mais <... >. »\fn{Le texte de A est mutilé; cf. ch. XVI, 11. B amplifie sur un autre thème.} Jésus dit: « Si vous écoutiez votre conscience, vous ne condamneriez personne à la légère. »

11. Les enfants dirent: « O juge, écoutez-nous. Ne pouvons-nous lui répondre un mot? »\fn{Littéralement: répondre par des paroles ([XXX₂₁₉]). Cf. B: « O juge, vous ne savez que lui répondre. Prêtez-nous l'oreille et nous vous dirons ce qui le concerne. »} Jésus dit: « Qu'avez-vous à dire à mon sujet? » Les enfants dirent: « Dès que\fn{Texte (A, B): Autant que ([XXX₂₂₀]).} vous êtes arrivé en cette ville, vous nous avez causé nombre de vexations et de contrariétés. Nous (les) avons laissées passer parce que vous êtes\fn{Texte (A, B): parce qu'il est.} pauvre de étranger. Mais maintenant que vous avez causé un tel malheur et que vous nous avez exposés à la mort, il est juste de vous faire périr. » Le juge dit: « Est-ce là l'enfant de qui vous disiez qu'il trompe les yeux par des prestiges? »\fn{Littéralement: qu'il accomplit des choses pour les yeux. ([XXX₂₂₁], ce qui rend probable une autre interprétation plus naturelle: « Est-ce là l'enfant que vous accusez du fait commis à la fontaine? » Voyez ci-après, XXII, 12, last note.) Cf. B: « N'est-ce pas cet enfant au sujet duquel j'ai entendu dire: « Il est récemment venu en cette ville un jeune garçon, fils d'un vieillard, qui accomplit des choses (étonnantes) par supercherie et en trompant les yeux? »} Ils dirent d'une même voix: « Oui. » Jésus dit: « Je sais que vous êtes tous ligués contre moi, et que vous voulez me faire condamner à mort injustement. » Le juge dit: « Comment pouvez-vous dire que vous n'avez pas de témoins et vous estimer innocent? » Jésus dit: « Si je me rends témoignage à moi-même, me croirez-vous? » Le juge dit: « Oui, je vous croirai. » Jésus dit: « Attendez un instant que je vous fasse la preuve. »

12. Cela dit, Jésus s'étant indigné en lui-même, s'approcha du mort, et s'écria à haute voix: « Jonathan, fils de Beria,\fn{E: « Jovatha ([XXX₂₂₂]), fils de Beria »; B: « Jonathan, fils d'Eberai » ([XXX₂₂₃]).} dresse-toi sur tes pieds, ouvre les yeux et dis qui t'a précipité dans le puits. » Et au même instant le mort se leva et ouvrant les yeux, il regardait tous les (assistants) et les reconnaissait (en les appelant) par leurs noms. Ses parents poussèrent un cri et tout joyeux ils l'enlacèrent de leurs bras et le couvrirent de baisers. Ils l'interrogèrent et lui dirent: « Mon fils, qui t'a ramené à la vie? » Et il montra du doigt Jésus, le fils de Joseph. Jésus lui dit: « Qui a été la cause de ta perte? » Jonathan dit: « Seigneur, ce n'est pas vous qui êtes responsable de mon sang. C'est mon cousin Saraka\fn{B: « Abbiuron, fils d'Issachar. » Suit une nouvelle lacune dans B.} qui m'ayant frappé violemment m'a fait tomber dans le puits. » Jésus dit: « Entendez, vous tous, que le mort ressuscité m'a rendu témoignage. » Quand ils virent cela, ils dirent, en proie à la frayeur: « En vérité il est Dieu et le fils du Père, (venu) sur la terre. » Jésus dit: « O juge inique, croyez-vous à mon témoignage et à mon innocence? Avez-vous vu de vos yeux comment mes actes trompent les regards? »\fn{Ou bien: « quelle a été ma conduite près de la source? » Cf. ci-dessus, XXIII, 11, fourth note.} Et celui-ci, dans sa confusion, ne lui répondit pas.

13. L'enfant demeura en vie jusqu'au soir, assez pour qu'une multitude de gens vinsent voir le prodige accompli par Jésus. Tous venaient (se jeter) aux pieds de Jésus, se prosternaient (devant lui) et confessaient leurs péchés. Ensuite Jésus dit au (petit) garçon: « Allons.\fn{Littéralement: « Lève-toi ».} Dors maintenant et repose-toi, en attendant que le juge de tous (les hommes) vienne régler les récompenses et (rendre ses) justes arrêts. » Et quand Jésus eut dit ces mots, l'enfant posa sa tête sur le lit et s'endormit. A cette vue, l'effroi s'empara de tous ceux qui étaient présents et ils prirent peur de (Jésus). Et Jésus voulut sortir. Ils se précipitèrent à ses pieds et le supplièrent, disant: « Rendez la vie au mort! »\fn{Le texte reprend dans B.} Jésus n'y consentit pas et leur dit: « Vous vouliez me condamner injustement malgré mon innocence; mais (ma) justice m'a délivré de la mort. » Et en disant ces mots, il disparut à leurs yeux. Joseph, tiré de prison,\fn{B ajoute: ... fut remis en liberté. Les parents de l'enfant allèrent, en larmes, à la recherche de Jésus et ne le trouvèrent pas. Ils prièrent Joseph, en disant: « Où est votre fils? pour qu'il vienne ressusciter notre défunt? » Il dit: « Je l'ignore ... »} retourna en silence à sa maison et raconta à Marie les prodiges accomplis par Jésus.

XXIII: Comme quoi ils vinrent au sommet de la montagne.\fn{Comparer B, ci-après note 2. A semble avoir lu [XXX₂₂₄], crête, clime, au lieu de [XXX₂₂₅], Galilée, et ajouté [XXX₂₂₆], du mont, d'après Luc, IV, 29.} **Une espièglerie enfantine de Jésus.**

1. Joseph s'étant levé au point du jour, prit l'enfant et sa mère, et sortant de cette ville ils cheminèrent en silence. Et la mère (de Jésus) lui dit: « Mon fils, pourquoi vous êtes-vous ainsi dérobé è (ces) gens? » Jésus lui dit: « Mère,

gardez le silence et poursuivez en paix votre route. Tout ce qui sera à propos, je le ferai. »\fn{B: Chapitre XXV. Comme quoi ils vinrent au pays de Galilée, et ce que fit Jésus avec les enfants des Hébreux. Un miracle.} Ils demeurèrent là six mois. Et Jésus circulait sur le territoire de la ville. Il allait s'asseoir auprès des enfants, à l'endroit où ils étaient réunis, et il leur tenait de longs discours. Eux ne pouvaient comprendre ce qu'il leur disait.

2. Puis, Jésus emmenant les enfants, les conduisait au bord du puits où toute la ville allait chercher de l'eau. Et prenant de la main des enfants leurs cruches, il les entrechoquait, les heurtait contre la pierre et les jetait dans le puits. Et les enfants ne pouvaient plus rentrer chez eux par crainte de leurs parents. Jésus, voyant les enfants pleurer, les appelait à lui et (leur) disait: « Ne pleurez pas; je vous rendrai vos cruches. » Et il commença aux flots de l'onde. Ceux-ci rejetèrent à la surface de l'eau les cruches intactes.\fn{XXX₂₂₇: cf. ci-dessus, IV, 8, p. 116, note 13.} Chacun des enfants reprit la sienne; et ils retournèrent à leurs maisons et racontèrent les miracles accomplis par Jésus.

3. Un jour encore, Jésus prit avec lui les enfants et les emmena faire halte auprès d'un grand arbre. Et il ordonna à l'arbre d'incliner sa ramure. Et Jésus y monta et s'assit dessus. Et il ordonna à l'arbre de se dresser. Et l'arbre se releva, dominant tout cet endroit. Jésus y resta une heure. Comme les enfants lui criaient et disaient: « Ordonnez à l'arbre de s'abaisser, que nous y montions avec vous, » Jésus, alors, ordonna à l'arbre d'abaisser sa ramure, et il dit aux enfants: « Venez vite près de moi. » Ceux-ci montèrent joyeusement près de Jésus. Et après avoir attendu quelque peu, Jésus commanda à l'arbre et l'arbre abaissa sa ramure; les enfants descendirent avec Jésus et l'arbre reprit sa position.\fn{Littéralement: s'en alla à sa place ([XXX₂₂₈], se dressa aussitôt?).}

4. Il arriva aussi qu'un jour les enfants se trouvaient réunis en un même endroit et Jésus était avec eux. Il y avait (là) un garçon de douze ans, atteint dans (toute) sa personne de douloureuses infirmités. Il était lépreux (et) épileptique, mutilé de l'extrémité des doigts aux mains et aux pieds et avait perdu la forme humaine. Il ne pouvait marcher <et gisait>\fn{Omis dans A.} à côté\fn{Littéralement (A, B): hors.} de la route. Lorsque Jésus le vit, il eut pitié de lui et lui dit: « Énfant, montre-toi à moi. » Et le garçon, quittant ses habits, se mit à nu. Jésus ordonna aux enfants de l'étendre sur la terre. Et Jésus, ramassant de la poussière du sol, la répandit sur lui et dit: « Étends ta main; car tu es guéri de toutes tes infirmités. » Et au même instant toute sa peau se détacha de son corps; (ses) tendons et les articulations de ses os s'affermirent, et il devint sain et sans tache comme un nouveau-né. Et s'étant levé, il se précipita en pleurant aux pieds de Jésus et il se prosterna devant lui. Et Jésus (lui) dit: « Van en paix. » Et il s'en alla en paix regagner sa demeure. Et tous ceux qui se trouvaient avec lui, témoins des miracles que Jésus avait faits, voulurent le voir et ne le trouvèrent plus.

XXIV: Comme quoi ils allèrent au village d'Emmaüs et (comment) il guérit les malades. Miracles opérés par

Jésus.\fn{B: Chapitre XXVI. Il vint au village d'Emmaüs et guérissait les maladies.}

1. A cette vue, Joseph et Marie, ayant pris Jésus pendant la nuit, se rendirent à un village appelé Emmaüs. Ils y séjournèrent. Jésus avait dix ans\fn{B: Onze ans et neuf mois.} et il circulait par la contrée. Un jour, s'en étant allé, il se rendit en un village appelé Ephthaïea.\fn{E: Ephäia.} Et sur la route, il recontra un garçon de quinze ans, dont toute la personne n'était qu'une plaie. Il ne pouvait marcher sur ses pieds, mais il allait rampant, s'asseyait au bord de la route et quand (des gens) passaient, il implorait leur pitié. Jésus le vit de loin et vint passer devant lui. Le lépreux dit à Jésus: « Jeune enfant, je vous en prie, écoutez-moi! En considération de vos parents et de votre jeunesse, faites-moi l'aumône. Dieu vous donnera la récompense de (vos) bienfaits. » Jésus dit: « Je suis comme vous pauvre et indigent et (de plus) fils d'un étranger. Comment puis-je bien vous faire l'aumône? » Le lépreux dit: « Enfant, pas de faux prétextes. S'il vous reste en réserve un morceau de pain, une pièce de monnaie ou une obole, donnez-moi quelque petit secours, par un effet de votre largesse, car je vois qui vous êtes, bien que par l'âge vous ne soyez qu'un enfant. J'estime en effet que vous êtes de haut lignage, fils d'un général des armées royales. Car vous vous décelez à vos traits. Ne vous chachez pas de moi: je vous trouve un extérieur distingué et d'une beauté extrême. »

2. Jésus dit: « Quel est votre nom et de quelle race êtes-vous? Apprenez-le moi. » Le lépreux dit: « Je suis de la race des Hébreux et de la branche de Juda. » Jésus dit: « Qui sont votre père et votre mère? Qui prend soin de vous(?) » Le lépreux dit: « Mon père est mort; ma mère est en vie; c'est elle qui prend soin de moi,\fn{Littéralement

(A, B): qui me sert.} comme elle le veut bien. » Jésus dit: « Comment (cela)? » Le lépreux dit: « Vous voyez comme je suis infirme. Quand arrive le soir, ma mère vient et me ramène à la maison. Le lendemain elle m'apporte et me fait asseoir ici. Les passants me font gracieusement l'aumône, et c'est toujours de quoi je subsiste. » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi ne vous êtes-vous pas montré aux médecins pour qu'ils vous guérissent? » Il dit: « Je suis infirme; je ne saurais le faire et ma mère n'a cure de moi. Car depuis que je suis né du sein de ma mère, j'ai été élevé parmi beaucoup de douleurs et dans les gémissements. Et, par la violence et l'atrocité de (mes) maux, les membres de mon corps se sont encore relâchés et disjoints, les tendons de mes os se sont consumés de putréfaction et toute ma personne s'est couverte d'ulcères comme vous voyez. »

3. Jésus dit: « Je connais des médecins qui savent composer un remède donnant la mort et la vie. Si donc vous le voulez, ce remède sera votre guérison. » Le lépreux dit: « Depuis mon enfance jusqu'au-jour d'hui, je n'ai jamais rencontré de médecin et je n'ai pas ouï dire qu'un tel mal ait été guéri par un homme. » Jésus dit: « Ne vous ai-je pas dit qu'il y a des médecins habiles qui ramènent de la mort à la vie? » Le lépreux dit: « Et par quel remède un homme peut-il guérir un tel ravage? » Jésus dit: « Cela se fera d'une simple parole et non par un remède. » Quand il entendit (ces mots), le jeune homme fut vivement surpris et dit: « Voilà des choses bien étonnantes! Comment se peut-il qu'un mal soit guéri sans (le secours d'aucun) remède? » Jésus dit: « Il se trouvera des médecins sûrs de leur fait, qui sauront distinguer les maladies mortelles et les maladies guérissables. »\fn{ Littéralement: les maladies de mort et de vie.} Le lépreux dit: « Et vous (qui) paraissez plus jeune que moi, d'où tenez-vous toute cette science? » Jésus dit: « J'ai entendu et je sais. » Le lépreux dit: « Avez-vous vu de vos yeux qu'un homme ait été guéri d'un pareil mal? »

4. Jésus dit: « Je m'entends un peu à cette affaire, étant fils de médecin. » Le lépreux dit: « Est-ce bien sérieusement que vous dites: "Je m'entends à cette affaire?" » Jésus dit: « Je puis guérir tous les maux par une simple parole dont j'ai vu (les effets) et que j'ai apprise\fn{ Littéralement (A, B): que j'ai vue et apprise.} de mon père. » Le lépreux dit: « En que pays est votre père et qui peut l'atteindre? » Jésus dit: « Celui à qui vous aurez donné les honoraires et le prix de votre guérison: il vous présentera à mon père et (celui-ci) vous guérira. » Le lépreux dit: « Quels sont les honoraires que vous réclamez de moi? » Jésus dit: « Il vous en coûtera peu: quatre deniers et quelques pierres précieuses. »\fn{ B: J. dit: « Peu de chose: un setier ([XXX₂₂₉]) de pièces de monnaie, plus votre poids d'or et d'argent, des pierres précieuses de belle eau, et des perles fines de haute valeur. »} En entendant cela, le lépreux éclata en un rire amer et dit: « Par la vie du Seigneur, je n'ai pas (même) entendu le nom de ces choses; mais écoutez! Votre âge, je le vois, est celui d'un enfant; tout vous est commode; vous êtes le fils d'un père noble, issu de quelque maison princière. Nous, pauvres que nous sommes, nous vous semblons un sujet de plaisanterie et de rire. D'où me viendrait toute cette opulence dont vous parlez? »\fn{ Lacune dans B.} Jésus dit: « Pourquoi vous fâcher ainsi? C'est par ma bienveillante charité pour vous que je vous ai dit cela. »

5. Le lépreux dit: « On m'a souvent mis à l'épreuve. Vous aussi, vous voyez bien que je ne possède rien, sauf l'habit que j'ai sur moi et la nourriture d'un jour, que Dieu (nous) dispense, à ma mère et à moi. » Jésus dit: « Mais alors quel moyen de vous guérir, puisque vous avez les mains vides? » Le lépreux dit: « Dieu (me) viendra en aide. » Jésus dit: « Je sais que Dieu a la puissance de faire tout <ce que lui demandent> ceux qui l'invoquent avec foi. Mais, avec tout cela, comment vous guérir, puisque vous êtes pauvre? » Le lépreux dit: « Je m'étonne fort que vous dépensiez tant de paroles pour m'accabler. » Jésus dit: « Je connais\fn{ Le texte reprend dans B. Il doit ici manquer dans A une allusion au précepte de la charité.} un peu les choses de la loi. » Le lépreux dit: « Il me semble que vous avez souvent lu dans les commandements de Dieu, comment il faut traiter les pauvres et les indigents. » Jésus dit: « Il faut témoigner de la miséricorde et de l'amour à chacun. » Le lépreux dit: « Vous avez dit vrai et vous m'avez donné la bonne réponse. Ayez donc pitié de moi ainsi que vous <l'avez dit> et celui qui est le dispensateur de (tous les) biens, vous le rendra. »

6. Quand Jésus le vit baigné de larmes, il s'attendrit sur lui et dit: «Moi, j'aurai pitié de vous. » Et au même instant Jésus étendit la main et lui prit la sienne, en disant: « Levez-vous, dressez-vous sur vos pieds et allez en paix à votre maison. » Aussitôt que Jésus eut dit ces paroles, (le lépreux) se leva et s'étant incliné il se prosterna devant lui et dit: « Que le Seigneur Dieu vous traite avec miséricorde, comme vous m'avez traité. » Et Jésus dit: « Allez en paix et ne dites à personne ce que je vous ai fait. » Le lépreux dit: « Si quelqu'un me pose la question: "Qui vous a guéri?" Que devrai-je dire? » Jésus dit: « Vous lui direz ceci: "Un enfant, fils de médecin, passant par la route, me vit, s'apiotya sur moi et me fit la charité. » Et l'(enfant) guéri alla se prosterner aux pieds de Jésus et

s'en retourna joyeux auprès de sa mère.

7. Lorsque sa mère le vit, elle poussa un cri de joie et dit à son fils: « Qui vous a guéri? » Le fils dit: « J'ai reconstruit le fils d'un noble médecin; il m'a guéri d'une simple parole. » En entendant (ces mots), la mère et tous ceux qui se trouvaient là se réunirent autour de\fn{Littéralement (A): au sujet de.} l'enfant et ils lui posèrent la question: « Où est ce médecin qui vous a guéri? » L'enfant dit: « Je ne sais; car il m'a donné cet ordre: "Ne dites à personne ce que je vous ai fait." » Et ceux qui au loin entendaient (raconter) le prodige qui s'était passé, s'étonnaient et disaient: « A qui est cet enfant qui possède un tel don de science (et) opère (ces) insignes prodiges? » Et beaucoup crurent en son nom. Et ils désiraient le voir et ne le pouvaient, car Jésus s'était caché à leurs regards.\fn{Littéralement (A): avait été négligé ([XXX₂₃₀] pour [XXX₂₃₁]). B omet cette phrase.}

XXV: Comme quoi l'ange avertit Joseph d'aller en la ville de Nazareth.

1. Un jour\fn{B ajoute: un mercredi [ou: le quatrième jour; cf. ch. XXVIII, 1].} en une vision nocturne, l'ange du Seigneur apparut à Joseph et lui dit: « Levez-vous, prenez l'enfant et sa mère et allez en la ville de Nazareth; fixez-vous y et ne vous en éloignez pas. Vous y construirez une maison et vous y séjournerez pendant longtemps, jusqu'à ce que le Seigneur Dieu, dans (sa) bonté, vous donne (un autre) avis. » Ayant dit cela, l'ange le quitta.\fn{B: Chapitre XXVII. Venu ensuite en la ville de Nazareth, il y fit secrètement des guérisons en beaucoup d'endroits.} Le lendemain, Joseph s'étant levé prit l'enfant et sa mère et vint en la ville de Nazareth, dans sa maison où ils habitaient auparavant. Et ils y séjournèrent dix-huit ans. Jésus en avait douze,\fn{B ajoute: quand il vint à Nazareth.} ce qui lui fait trente ans.

2. Le second jour (après leur arrivée)\fn{Ou bien: de la semaine.} Jésus, étant sorti de Nazareth, alla s'asseoir à un passage de la route. Il vit deux garçons qui s'avançaient et (qui) se disputaient entre eux violemment. Ils en vinrent aux mains et se frappèrent l'un l'autre. Quand ils virent Jésus, ils cessèrent de parler et s'étant approchés, ils se prosternèrent devant lui. Jésus leur ordonna de s'asseoir et ils s'assirent. Et Jésus leur dit: « Enfants, pourquoi êtes-vous remplis d'une telle colère? Quel désaccord vous divise, pour que vous échangiez des coups avec une telle violence? » L'un des deux, qui était le plus jeune, dit: « C'est qu'il n'y a pas ici de juge qui nous fasse droit. » Jésus dit: « Quel est votre nom? » Le plus jeune dit: « J'ai nom Malachie, et celui-là Michée. Nous sommes deux frères\fn{Lacune dans B.} germains, unis de sentiments. »\fn{Sic ([XXX₂₃₂]).} Jésus dit: « Pourquoi donc vous accablez-vous l'un l'autre de pareilles injures, avec (cette) animosité? »

3. Malachie dit à Jésus: « Je vous en prie, enfant, écoutez-moi et je vous le dirai. Mon frère que voici est plus âgé que moi; je suis son cadet. Il s'efforce de me frustrer injustement et moi je ne veux pas. Vous donc, rendez aujourd'hui entre nous un jugement équitable. » Jésus dit: « Dites-moi donc en quoi consiste la cause de votre chagrin. » Michée dit: « Il me semble que vous êtes le fils d'un juge (et) descendant de grands monarques. » Jésus dit: « Vous dites vrai. » Michée dit: « Que Dieu vous récompense vous et vos parents, si\fn{Littéralement: de ce que.} aujourd'hui vous mettez entre mon frère et moi la justice avec la paix. »

4. Jésus dit: « Qui m'a établi juge ou répartiteur et comment vous ferai-je justice? Je vois bien que vous ne voudrez pas vous soumettre à mes ordres. » Les (deux) frères dirent: « Ne dites pas cela et ne nous faites pas cet affront. Vous nous prenez pour des enfants et des ignorants. Nous avons des lettres et (connaissons) la loi divine. Mais nous voulons être intruits par vous. » Jésus dit: « D'abord prenez l'engagement exprès de ne pas vous tromper mutuellement, mais de faire ce que je commanderai. » Les enfants dirent d'une même voix: « Nous prenons à témoin la loi de Dieu et nous jurons sur ses commandements que nous obéirons à vos ordres comme (à des ordres émanés) de la Porte royale. »\fn{Cf. ci-dessus, XIX,1.} Jésus dit: « Dites-moi la vérité, pour que je l'entende de vous. »

5. Malachie dit: « Nous sommes deux jeunes frères demeurés\fn{Le texte reprend dans B.} orphelins de père et de mère. Nos parents nous ont laissé un héritage. Des étrangers\fn{Littéralement (A,B): d'autres ([XXX₂₃₃] pour [XXX₂₃₄]?). Cf. ci-dessus, XVI, 8, last note.} détiennent par usurpation notre patrimoine. Et nous nous disputons entre nous parce que mon frère cherche à me déposséder injustement et que moi je ne m'y prête pas. » Jésus dit: « Quand vos parents moururent, à qui vous ont-ils confiés en qualité de tuteur, en attendant que vous eussiez atteint l'âge de raison? » Les enfants dirent: « Aucun de nous (deux) n'a souvenir de nos parents. » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi donc vous faites-vous tort l'un à l'autre? » Malachie dit: « Mon frère cherche à me faire tort (en disant): Je suis l'aîné. » Jésus dit:

« N’(agissez) pas ainsi. Si vous voulez m’écouter, faites la paix entre vous et partagez votre bien à l’amiable. » Michée dit à Jésus: « Enfant, je sais que vous avez raison de parler de conciliation, mais quant au jugement que vous portez, c’est autre chose. Écoutez plutôt ce que je vais vous dire. J’avais atteint un âge plus avancé que (mon frère) quand nos parents moururent. Il était (alors) en bas âge et je me suis employé, avec beaucoup d’efforts, à recueillir notre patrimoine, car il était dévasté et laissé à l’abandon.\fn{ Ici se termine la rédaction B. } J’ai été seul à la peine et lui (mon frère) n’e sait rien. »

6. Jésus dit: « Il est votre frère et ce (n’)est (qu’)un enfant. Jusqu’à ce jour vous l’avez hébergé et nourri par charité; ne lui faites pas tort maintenant. Allez et partagez votre bien comme vous voudrez. Gardez-vous mutuellement l’affection et la paix, et la paix de Dieu sera en vous et sur vous. » Et ceux-ci, acquiesçant aux désirs de Jésus, se prosternèrent devant lui. Les (deux) frères, tombant dans les bras l’un de l’autre, se baisèrent et dirent à Jésus: « Fils de roi, qui avez mis la paix entre nous et, par votre médiation, nous avez fait posséder l’amour de Dieu, que Dieu glorifie votre personne et votre saint nom par toute la terre. Nous vous en prions, enfant, bénissez-nous. » Jésus dit: « Allez en paix et que l’amour de Dieu demeure sur vous. »

7. Jésus ayant ainsi parlé, ils se prosternèrent devant lui et s’en allèrent à leur maison. Et Jésus (re)vint en la ville de Nazareth, auprès de sa mère. Et sa mère, apercevant son fils, lui dit: «Où êtes-vous allé durant la journée entière, tandis que moi j’ignore ce qui vous est advenu et que je m’alarme sur vous, (à la pensée) que vous circulez seul en des endroits écartés? » Jésus dit: « Que me voulez-vous? Est-ce que vous ignorez que je dois dorénavant parcourir le pays et voir (s’accomplir) ce que est écrit de moi? Car c’est <pour> cela que j’ai été envoyé. » Marie dit: « Mon fils, comme vous n’avez encore que l’âge d’un enfant et non d’un homme fait, n’allez donc pas ainsi m’importe où, de crainte qu’il ne vous arrive malheur. » Jésus dit: « Ma mère, vos sombres pensées ne sont pas raisonnables, car je sais tout ce qui doit arriver. » Marie dit: « Ne vous attristez pas de ce que je vous ai dit; car beaucoup de fantômes m’obsèdent, et je ne sais que faire. » Jésus dit: « Que pensez-vous faire à mon sujet? » Marie dit: « Voici de quoi je suis en peine: nous avons eu soin de vous faire apprendre toutes les professions durant votre enfance, et vous n’en avez rien fait. Vous ne vous y êtes pas prêté. Et maintenant que vous êtes devenu grand, que voulez-vous faire et comment voulez-vous vivre sur la terre? »

8. En entendant cela, Jésus s’indigna dans son âme et dit à sa mère: « Vous dites là une parole d’une inconsidération extrême. Ne comprenez-vous pas les signes et les prodiges que je fais devant vous et que vous voyez de vos yeux? Et vous êtes encore incrédule, depuis si longtemps que je suis avec vous. Voyez tous mes miracles; considérez tout ce que je fais et prenez patience quelque temps; vous verrez toutes mes œuvres accomplies, car maintenant mon temps n’est pas encore révolu. Mais vous, demeurez-moi fermement fidèles. » Ayant dit cela, Jésus sortit en hâte de la maison.

XXVI: Sur les nombreuses guérisons que Jésus accomplit dans la ville, au village et en différents endroits. Guérisons que Jésus opéra.

1. Un jour, Jésus s’en étant allé parcourait seul le pays des Galiléens. Étant arrivé en un village qui s’appelait Bouboron,\fn{ E: Boïsboroïn. } il y rencontra un homme âgé de trente ans, qui était fort incommodé par la véhémence de (son) mal et qui gisait étendu sur son lit. Quand Jésus le vit, il eut pitié de lui et lui dit: « Homme, de quelle race es-tu? » L’homme dit: « Je suis de race syrienne (et) du pays de Syrie. » Jésus dit: « Avez-vous (encore) père et mère? » L’homme dit: « Oui, et mes parents m’ont chassé de leur maison. J’erre en tous lieux pour chercher ma subsistance au jour le jour; mais je n’ai de domicile nulle part. » Jésus dit: « Et comment avez-vous pu sortir de votre pays? » L’homme dit: « On me portait, tantôt contre salaire tantôt pour me payer. » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi êtes-vous venu en ce pays? » L’homme dit: « Pour (demander) l’aumône et pour (subvenir à) mes besoins matériels. » Jésus dit: « Si vous supportez vos tourments, vous trouverez plus tard le repos. » L’homme dit: « Que je le puisse ou non, je les supporte et j’accepte tout avec joie. »

2. Jésus dit: « Quel dieu servez-vous? » L’homme dit: « Le dieu\fn{ Texte: le faux dieu. Cf. ci-dessus, ch. XV, 13, second note; XV, 15, first note. } Phatthea. » Jésus dit: « Trouvez-vous donc juste\fn{ Texte: Vous êtes juste? ([XXX₂₃₅] pour [XXX₂₃₆]). } que vous soyez en cet état? » L’homme dit: « J’ai entendu mes parents dire que ce dieu\fn{ Voyez cidessus, first note. } est le dieu des Syriens, qui peut faire aux hommes tout ce qu’il lui plaît. » Jésus dit: « Quel est votre nom? » L’homme dit: « Hiram. » Jésus (dit): « Si vous voulez votre guérison, quittez cette erreur-là. » Hiram dit:

« Comment vous croirais-je? Car vous avez l'air d'un enfant, tandis que je suis un homme fait. » Jésus dit: « (Le dieu de) votre culte a-t-il la puissance de vous rendre la vie par une simple parole? » Hiram dit: « Savez-vous pertinemment qu'il existe un autre dieu, capable d'accorder la vie à un homme? » Jésus dit: « Si vous croyez de tout votre cœur, et si vous confessez qu'il est un Dieu du ciel et de la terre, qui a créé le monde et tous les hommes, il est, lui, capable de vous guérir. » Hiram dit: « Je n'en ai point ouï parler. » Jésus dit: « Soit; mais croyez seulement, et votre âme vivra. » Hiram dit: « Comment faire cet acte de foi? »\fn{Littéralement: « Comment croirai-je? »}

3. Jésus dit: « Voici: je crois (qu)'il est un Dieu très haut, le Père\fn{ Texte: [XXX₂₃₇]; sur; nous lisons: [XXX₂₃₈]. Toute la phrase est fort mal construite.} créateur de toute chose; et (je crois) à son Fils unique et au Saint-Esprit: trinité et divinité une (et) parfaite. » Hiram dit: « Je crois ce que vous avez dit. » Jésus dit: « Ne vous êtes-vous pas montré à certaines gens pour qu'ils vous guérissent? » Hiram dit: « Quel médecin peut me délivrer d'une telle infirmité? » Jésus dit: « Celui à qui vous en donnerez le prix, le pourra aisément. Hiram dit: « Pauvre comme je suis, je n'ai rien à donner et personne ne fait la charité gratuitement. » Jésus dit: « Vous avez dit vous-même: "Je suis venu d'un pays lointain; j'ai parcouru de nombreuses contrées et j'(y) ai reçu l'aumône." Pourquoi dites-vous fausement: "Je n'ai pas de quoi payer?" » Hiram dit: « Je vous en prie, enfant! Ce que je vous ai dit, c'est que je n'ai rien à donner, sauf la nourriture quotidienne, que je reçois au jour le jour, et le vêtement dont je suis couvert. »

4. Jésus, le voyant pleurer, lui dit: « O homme, adressez-moi votre demande: que puis-je faire pour vous? » Hiram dit: « Faites (pour moi) tout ce qu'il vous plaira et gratifiez-moi de (quelque) secours. » Jésus étendit la main, lui prit (la sienne) et lui dit: « Levez-vous; dressez-vous sur vos pieds et allez en paix. » Et, à l'instant, (l'homme) fut guéri de ses maux; il tomba en pleurant aux pieds de Jésus et il lui fit cette demande: « Seigneur, si vous le voulez, je vous suivrai en qualité de disciple. » Et Jésus lui dit: « Retournez en paix à votre maison et racontez tout ce que je vous ai fait en (cette) seule recontre. » Et cet (homme) se prosterna devant Jésus et s'en alla dans son pays.

XXVII: Comme quoi s'accomplirent les traditions écrites par les prophètes et sur les choses étonnantes\fn{ Texte: des lois, [XXX₂₃₉] ([XXX₂₄₀] pour [XXX₂₄₁]?).} que fit Jésus.

1. Et Jésus conduit par la puissance de l'Esprit, s'en fut de nouveau dans la ville de Nazareth. Et il circulait toujours dans les endroits cachés. Ceux qui le voyaient s'étonnaient et disaient: « Nous remarquons come le petit Jésus, le fils du vieillard, a l'air éveillé et intelligent. » Certains disaient: « C'est vrai, ce que vous dites. » Et Jésus voyant leur conduite incrédule ne se manifestait pas à eux.

2. Et il advint qu'aux approches de la grande fête, Jésus voulut aller à Jérusalem. Au cours du voyage, il rencontra un vieillard chenu qui faisait route. Il se soutenait sur deux planches\fn{ Ou deux bâtons ([XXX₂₄₂]; cf. ci-dessus, ch. IV, 2, only note).} qu'il déplaçait alternativement en se laissant tomber d'un côté puis de l'autre.\fn{ C.-à-d. en se laissant retomber de l'une sur l'autre.} Et il avait une infirmité des yeux et des oreilles. En le voyant, Jésus s'étonna et lui dit: « Soyez le bienvenu, vieillard chargé d'années. » Le vieillard dit: « Soyez le bienvenu, enfant, fils du grand <roi>,\fn{ Voir ci-dessus, XXI, 18.} fils unique, premier-né <du Père ...> »\fn{ Voir ci-dessus, XXI, 18.} Jésus dit: « Asseyez-vous ici et reposez-vous un peu; puis nous poursuivrons notre route. » Le vieillard dit: « Mon fils, j'accomplirai votre ordre. » Quand ils se furent assis, Jésus se mit à l'interroger (en ces termes): « Dites-moi, vieillard: quel est votre nom? De quelle race êtes-vous et de quel pays êtes-vous venu en celui-ci? »

3. Le vieillard dit: « J'ai nom Balthasar; je suis de race hébraïque et du pays de l'Inde. » Jésus dit: « Que cherchez-vous ici? » Le vieillard dit: « Je suis fils d'un noble prince. Mon père est initié à l'art de la médecine et il m'a enseigné sa pratique. Mais je suis impotent, et mon intention est d'aller à Jérusalem pour mendier et gagner (ainsi) ma vie. » Jésus dit: « Vous dites: "Je suis fils de médecin." Pourquoi ne pouvez-vous pas vous rendre à vous-même la santé? »\fn{ Cf. Luc, IV, 23.} Le vieillard dit: « Tant que j'étais jeune,\fn{ Littéralement: enfant ([XXX₂₄₃], pour [XXX₂₄₄], fort, robuste?).} j'ai pratiqué la médecine. Mais quand l'épreuve m'atteignit, je perdis toute vigueur, et je ne suis plus capable de rien. » Jésus dit: « Est-ce durant votre enfance ou dans votre vieillesse que votre infirmité vous a atteint? » Le vieillard dit: « J'avais trente ans, quand ce mal me frappa, et tout mon corps fut pris d'un tremblement général. »

4. En entendant cela, Jésus s'étonna et lui dit: « Quelle espèce de traitements appliquiez-vous? » Le vieillard dit: «

Telle maladie, tel remède. » Jésus dit: « Êtiez-vous capable de ressusciter les morts? Faisiez-vous marcher les boiteux? (Saviez-vous) purifier les lépreux, chasser les démons, guérir toutes les maladies, non point avec des remèdes, mais d'un mot? » Le vieillard, en entendant cela, fut surpris et dit en riant: « Vous m'étonnez fort, car ce (que vous dites) est une opération prodigieuse et impossible à l'homme. » Jésus lui dit: « Pourquoi vous étonnez-vous de ce que je dis? » Le vieillard dit: « Vous m'avez l'air d'un enfant; comment pouvez-vous savoir tout cela? » Jésus dit: « Ce n'est pas que je l'aie vu ou entendu de personne; mais je le sais par le fait. » Le vieillard dit: « S'il en est comme vous dites, c'est de Dieu et non pas de l'homme que vous tenez ce don. » Jésus dit: « Vous dites vrai. » Le vieillard dit: « Il me semble que vous vous entendez à l'art de la médecine. » Jésus dit: « Mon Père a la puissance de faire tout cela. »

5. Le vieillard dit: « Tout disciple s'instruit auprès de son maître et le fils auprès de son père. Je vous en prie donc, faites-moi la charité et le Seigneur vous accordera la durée et la vie pour de longs jours. » Jésus dit: « Vieillard, vous dites vrai; mais je ne puis faire cela gratuitement. Donnez-moi donc le prix en rapport avec ma peine. » Le vieillard dit: « Et quel est donc le prix que vous me demandez? » Jésus dit: « Peu de chose: de l'or, de l'argent, tout ce qui sera écrit sur le contrat. »\fn{ **Texte: sur les toits des lettres** ([XXX₂₄₅] pour [XXX₂₄₆]). } A ces mots, le vieillard éclata de rire. Puis, ayant fait réflexion, il (se) dit: « Que faire? Car cet enfant se moque perfidement de moi. » Puis, le vieillard dit à Jésus: « Enfant, pourquoi vous moquez-vous de moi, vieux comme je suis? On donne aux pauvres, surtout aux vieillards, et on ne les tourne pas en dérision. » Jésus dit: « Vous avez commencé par me louer hautement, et maintenant vous me blâmez. » Le vieillard dit: « C'est que vous m'avez gravement irrité. » Jésus dit: « Ne vous emportez pas ainsi contre moi parce que, n'étant qu'un enfant, j'ai voulu lier conversation avec vous. » Le vieillard dit: « Pourquoi ne m'avez-vous pas demandé une chose raisonnable, afin de tirer profit de moi? Dites-moi donc: d'où me viendrait cette fortune que vous me réclamez? »

6. Jésus dit: « Ne m'avez-vous pas dit: “Je suis de grande famille, fils de prince et (descendant) d'une maison royale?” » Le vieillard dit: « Je ne vous ai rien dit de faux. Je possédais une grande fortune; mais quand l'infirmité m'eut atteint, j'ai tout perdu. » Jésus dit: « Aimeriez-vous mieux (avoir) vos opulents trésors, ou bien être en bonne santé? » Le vieillard dit: « Il me serait meilleur d'être fils de pauvre et mendiant mais exempt d'infirmité. » Jésus dit: « Si tel est votre désir, donnez-moi le prix de ma peine. » Le vieillard dit: « Ne me tourmentez pas ainsi par tous ces longs discours. Pourquoi vous obstinez-vous à me harceler de ces attrapes et de ces pièges? »\fn{ **Texte: « Où tu demeurais, toi qui t'es présenté à moi comme un piège et une tempête** » ([XXX₂₄₇], pour [XXX₂₄₈]). } Jésus dit: « En quoi ai-je trop parlé? Et quel conseil ai-je reçu de vous? » Le vieillard dit: « Pour l'amour de Dieu, ne m'exaspérez pas, car je suis gravement infirme de tout mon corps. » Jésus dit: « Ne vous fâchez pas. Ayez un peu de patience. Je n'ai plus rien à vous conter; mais j'ai pitié de vous, ayant le pouvoir de vous secourir. » Le vieillard dit: « Énoncez vos prescriptions. » Jésus dit: « Donnez-moi quelque petite récompense pour ma peine, et je vous guérirai. » Le vieillard dit: « Dieu vous donnera une abondante récompense de votre peine; mais, je vous en prie <...>.\fn{ **Il doit manquer ici quelques mots.** } il me vaut mieux mourir que de rester en vie. » Jésus dit: « Votre guérison n'est pas difficile. » Le vieillard dit: « Je ne possède rien, sinon un morceau de pain et deux oboles. » Jésus dit: « Voilà le descendant de gens riches à l'excès! » Alors le vieillard entra dans une violente colère et dit en pleurant: « Vraiment, qu'aurai-je (encore) à subir de cet (enfant), car il m'a déjà assez taquiné? » Jésus dit: « Vieillard, ne vous fâchez pas! Ayez un peu de patience, pour que votre âme vive. »

7. Le vieillard dit: « Je vous ai montré tant de patience, et je n'ai trouvé chez vous aucune pitié. » Comme le vieillard eut dit ces (mots) en pleurant, Jésus lui dit: « Où allez-vous? » Le vieillard dit: « A la ville de Jérusalem, pour mendier mon pain. Et si vous y venez à ma suite, je vous donnerai la moitié des ressources dont Dieu me gratifiera. » Jésus dit: « Quel dieu servez-vous? » Le vieillard dit: « Le dieu de mes pères. » Jésus dit: « C'est donc justement que cette affliction vous est arrivée. Si vous voulez être parfait, abandonnez la religion de vos pères, afin d'être sauvé pour l'âme et pour le corps. » Le vieillard dit: « Et comment pourrais-je ajouter foi à vos paroles? » Jésus dit: « Vous m'avez maintes fois mis à l'épreuve et n'en êtes pas plus avancé. » En entendant cela, le vieillard fit réflexion et (se) dit: « Je crains que cet enfant ne se joue insidieusement de moi. » Jésus dit: « Vieillard, répondez à la question que je vous ai posée. »

8. Le vieillard dit: « Je suis dans le doute; je ne sais que faire ni ce que je répondrai à votre question. Il me semble que Dieu vous a envoyé vers moi; je crois que vous êtes le Seigneur, celui qui sonde les pensées des hommes. Faites-vous donc connaître à moi. » Jésus dit: « Croyez-vous qu'il existe un Dieu créateur de toutes choses et son

Fils unique et le Saint-Esprit, Trinité et unique divinité? » Le vieillard dit: « Oui, je le crois. » Et Jésus étendit la main sur le vieillard et dit: « Vous êtes délivré de votre maladie: soyez guéri de vos maux. » Et à l'instant le vieillard fut guéri. Et tombant aux pieds de Jésus, il lui confessait ses péchés. » Jésus lui dit: « <Recevez> le pardon. Allez en paix et que le Seigneur soit avec vous. » Le vieillard dit: « Je vous en prie, dites-moi quel est votre nom. » Jésus dit: « Quel besoin avez-vous de me demander mon nom? Allez en paix. »

9. Et le vieillard s'étant incliné, se prosterna devant Jésus et s'en alla paisiblement à Jérusalem. Et quand les gens de Jérusalem virent le vieillard guéri, ils lui demandèrent: « Qui vous a guéri? » Le vieillard dit: « J'ai reconstruit en route un fils de médecin, et, d'une simple parole, il m'a guéri. » Ils lui dirent: « Quel est ce médecin? » Le vieillard dit: « Je ne le sais pas. » <...>\fn{Suppléer: Ils allèrent à sa recherche et ne le trouvèrent pas [cf. ch. XVI, 15; B, ch. XXII, etc.].} car Jésus avait fui de cet endroit. Et il s'en alla à Nazareth. Et <le vieillard> publia les miracles qu'il avait faits sur lui.

XXVIII: Sur le jugement que Jésus rendit entre deux soldats.

1. Il arriva, le quinzième jour, <que> Jésus songea à se montrer quelque peu <aux> hommes.\fn{Texte: à manifester un peu l'âme humaine ([XXX₂₄₉]).} Comme il allait par la route, il se fit qu'il recontra deux soldats qui, en cheminant, s'étaient pris de dispute et voulaient (se) tirer du sang. Quand Jésus les eut aperçus de loin, il se dirigea vers eux et leur dit: « Soldats, pourquoi êtes-vous ainsi remplis de colère et en humeur de vous tuer l'un l'autre? » Eux avaient le cœur rempli de rage, tellement qu'ils ne lui répondirent pas. Comme ils arrivaient en un certain endroit, devant un puits, ils s'assirent auprès de l'eau, et ils se menaçaient l'un l'autre grossièrement, avec des injures.\fn{Texte: au moyen de pièges ([XXX₂₅₀] pour [XXX₂₅₁]?).} Jésus, qui s'était assis entre eux (deux), prêtait l'oreille à (leurs) discours. Or l'un des deux, qui était le plus jeune, ayant fait réflexion, (se) dit: « Il est le plus grand; moi, je suis le moindre et le plus jeune. Il convient que je me soumette. Malheur à moi! Auy reste, pourquoi le rendre furieux en le contrariant? Je veux lui faire ma soumission à son gré. »

2. Puis le soldat, ayant regardé (autour de lui), vit Jésus tranquillement assis et il dit à Jésus: « Enfant, d'où venez-vous? Où allez-vous? Et quel est votre nom? » Jésus dit: « Si je vous le dis, vous ne saurez (cependant) pas me comprendre. » Le soldat dit: « Votre père et votre mère sont-ils encore en vie? » Jésus dit: « Oui, mon Père est en vie, et il est immortel. » Le soldat dit: « Comment, immortel? » Jésus dit: « Il est immortel dès le principe; il vit, et la mort n'a point d'empire sur lui. » Le soldat dit: « Quel est celui qui restera toujours en vie et sur qui la mort n'a point d'empire, puisque (vous dites que) votre père est assuré de l'immortalité? » Jésus dit: « Vous ne sauriez (le) connaître ni (en) avoir l'idée. » Le soldat dit: « Qui peut le voir? » Jésus dit: « Personne. » Le soldat dit: « Où est votre père? » Jésus dit: « Il est dans le ciel, au-dessus de la terre. »\fn{Texte: sur la terre, au-dessus du ciel.} Le soldat dit: « Et vous, comment pouvez-vous aller auprès de lui? » Jésus dit: « J'y ai été et, maintenant (encore), je suis avec lui. » Le soldat dit: « Je ne puis comprendre la chose que vous dites. » Jésus dit: « Elle est inexplicable et inexprimable. » Le soldat dit: « Qui donc peut la comprendre? » Jésus dit: « Si vous me le demandez, je vous l'expliquerai. » Le soldat dit: « Je vous en prie, dites-le moi. »

3. Jésus dit: « Je suis sans père sur la terre et sans mère dans le ciel. » Le soldat dit: « Comment êtes-vous né et comment avez-vous été nourri? » Jésus dit: « Ma première génération (procède) du Père avant les siècles, et (ma) seconde (a eu lieu) sur cette terre. » Le soldat dit: « Comment? Vit-on jamais celui qui est né de (son) père, renaître de (sa) mère? » Jésus dit: « Vous ne l'entendez pas comme (il faut). » Le soldat dit: « Combien de pères avez-vous et combien de mères? » Jésus dit: « Ne vous l'ai-je pas dit? J'ai un Père unique et, avec lui,\fn{Littéralement: là.} point de mère; j'ai une mère unique et, avec elle,\fn{Littéralement: ici.} point de père. » Le soldat dit: « Vous dites donc: "(Par) une première naissance,\fn{Texte: « Vous dites premièrement, je suis né ... »} je suis né de mon Père, sans avoir eu de mère, et, par la seconde, né de ma mère, sans avoir eu de père." » Jésus dit: « C'est bien cela. » Le soldat dit: « Voilà des prodiges! Dites-moi: de qui êtes-vous fils? » Jésus dit: « Je suis le fils unique du Père, l'enfant de ma mère, et l'héritier de toutes choses. » Le soldat dit: « Votre père n'a point vu votre mère? Comment alors votre mère vous a-t-elle conçu dans son sein et mis au monde? » Jésus dit: « Par l'effet d'une simple parole, et sans même l'idée d'une approche\fn{Texte: ni soupçon des pensées ([XXX₂₅₂] nous lisons: [XXX₂₅₃]).} de sa part. » Le soldat dit: « Comment pouvez-vous complaire aux désirs de votre père et de votre mère? »\fn{Le sens paraît être: « Comment pouvez-vous concilier les volontés de votre père et celles de votre mère? »} Jésus dit: « C'est chose facile. » Le soldat dit: « Comment vous rendez-vous auprès de votre père et comment habitez-vous

auprès de votre mère? » Jésus (dit): « Je suis auprès de mon Père dans le ciel, j'habite ici(-bas) auprès de ma mère, et je suis avec lui pour l'éternité. »

4. Le soldat dit: « C'est bien étonnant ce que vous dites. » Jésus dit: « Et pourquoi me posez-vous la question sur laquelle vous m'interrogez et que vous ne sauriez comprendre? » Le soldat dit: « Si je vous ai interrogé, enfant, c'était dans le but de vous engager à notre service. Puis j'ai reconnu que vous êtes le rejeton d'une illustre famille royale. Que Dieu vous glorifie en tout lieu et qu'il vous fasse obtenir l'héritage de votre père. »

5. Jésus dit: « Soyez béni (de Dieu). Mais apprenez-moi pour quelle raison vous disputiez l'un contre l'autre. » Le soldat dit: « Jeune homme, je vous dirai toute l'affaire, et vous prononcerez aujourd'hui entre nous une juste sentence. » Jésus dit: « Oui. Racontez-moi cela. » Le soldat dit: « Nous sommes du pays des mages et d'une maison royale. Nous avons suivi les rois qui sont venus à Bethléem avec de nombreuses troupes et des présents en l'honneur du roi nouveau-né des Israélites. Quand ceux-là s'en retournèrent dans leur pays, nous vînmes à la ville de Jérusalem et, par amour de Dieu, nous devînmes compagnons et frères l'un de l'autre. Nous fîmes un pacte d'alliance, nous engageant par serment à ne pas nous séparer jusqu'à la mort et à nous partager équitablement, à l'amiable, tous les profits que Dieu nous enverrait.

6. « Or comme nous nous trouvions enrôlés dans la garde du palais d'un grand chef du royaume, mon puissant prince m'envoya avec un message dans un pays lointain. Je demeurai là de longs jours. On m'y reçut avec bienveillance et honneur, comme l'étiquette des cours royales prescrit de le faire et de témoigner aux porteurs de messages les égards qui leur sont dus. Par la grâce de Dieu, je suis revenu satisfait. De tout ce que j'ai gagné, je n'ai rien caché à l'autre et je suis prêt à (le) partager. Mon camarade, lui, partit à la suite d'une troupe de cavaliers et revint à sa maison après avoir fait un riche butin. Je lui demande de partager avec moi l'avoir qu'il a rapporté de son expédition. Il ne veut point partager et me réclame âprement son dû. Et maintenant que m'ordonnez-vous de faire? »

7. Jésus dit: « Si vous voulez m'écouter et agir avec droiture, vous ne vous mentirez pas mutuellement et vous ne mettrez pas en oubli vos engagements, mais ce que vous avez promis d'accomplir, vous le ferez. Partagez votre avoir équitablement, selon la règle et selon ce que vous avez juré sur la loi de Dieu. Ne dites pas de mensonge à la face de Dieu, et ne vous frustrez pas l'un l'autre injustement, si vous voulez vivre dans une amitié mutuelle. »

8. L'autre compagnon, qui était le plus âgé, dit: « Enfant, le (vrai) jugement et le droit ne sont pas ce que vous les faites. Moi, j'ai été au champ de mort; j'ai passé par beaucoup de dangers et d'alarmes, et c'est à grand-peine que j'ai pu rentrer dans mes foyers. Lui, entouré d'un appareil princier, s'est rendu dans les palais des rois et s'en est revenu chez lui avec de nombreux présents. Il est juste qu'il me donne une part et que moi je ne lui donne rien. »

9. Jésus dit: « Vous ne savez ce que vous dites. Si, à l'aller ou au retour, il avait subi du fait des ennemis toute sorte de vexations, quelle part lui auriez-vous faite? » Il ajouta: « Si vous voulez partager à l'amiable, découvrez clairement votre pensée. » Ayant ainsi parlé, Jésus tut.

10. Alors le soldat qui était le plus jeune, s'étant levé, se prosterna aux pieds de son camarade et lui dit: « Pardonnez-moi, frère, puisque je vous ai gravement contrarié. Maintenant donc faites comme vous l'entendrez. Je partagerai; mais je ne puis plus vivre en commun avec vous; car vous avez pris de l'importance. Vous êtes devenu l'assesseur des rois. Moi, je suis pauvre et sans ressources. Je prendrai ce que vous me donnerez spontanément. » Jésus, l'ayant regardé, fut pris de pitié, surtout à cause de l'humilité du jeune compagnon. Le plus âgé était violent, car il était fils de pauvre; et le plus jeune était humble, car il était fils de grande maison.

11. Jésus dit au plus jeune: « D'après ce que vous m'avez dit d'abord, vous êtes allé à Bethléem, à la suite des mages. Avez-vous vu de vos yeux ce roi nouveau-né qui était venu au monde? » Le plus jeune (soldat) dit: « Oui, je l'ai vu de mes yeux et je l'ai adoré. » Jésus dit: « Et qu'avez-vous pensé de lui? Quelle foi avez-vous eue en lui? » Le soldat dit: « Il est le Verbe incarné, envoyé par Dieu. Et sous la conduite d'une étoile, nous sommes allés le voir, né de la Vierge et couché dans la caverne. » Jésus dit: « J'ai entendu dire de lui qu'il vit encore. » Le soldat dit: « Je l'ignore; mais j'ai ouï dire qu'on l'a tué, quand Hérode eut été trompé par les mages. D'autres ont dit qu'Hérode, à cause de lui, a fait périr les enfants de Bethléem. D'autres (encore) ont dit que son père et sa

mère l'ayant emmené s'enfuirent en Égypte. » Jésus dit: « Vous avez dit vrai; mais j'ai entendu dire qu'il est en vie. Maintenant certains disent qu'il n'était pas celui (qu'on croyait), mais un imposteur et un séducteur. » Le soldat dit: « Ne dites pas de lui ces choses diffamatoires que vous ne savez pas; car ceux qui l'ont vu disent qu'il est le roi d'Israël. » Jésus dit: « Pourquoi donc le peuple d'Israël n'a-t-il pas cru en lui? »

12. Les soldats dirent: « Nous l'ignorons. » Jésus dit: « Quels sont vos noms? » Les soldats dirent: « Mon nom est Khoïratar\fn{E: Khortar.} et le sien Gohartar. »\fn{E: Gotar.} Jésus dit: « Quel dieu servez-vous? » Les soldats dirent: « Quand nous vîmes en ce pays, nous étions séduits par les faux dieux de notre pays, et nous pratiquions le culte du soleil. » Jésus dit: « Que voulez-vous faire, dites-moi? » Ils (lui) dirent: « Ce que votre bon plaisir vous suggérera, faites-le; car aujourd'hui vous êtes apparu comme un juge entre nous (deux). En effet, lorsque nous vous avons vu, notre grande indignation a fait silence et l'amour de Dieu est descendu sur nous. Et tandis que vous êtes venu à nous, nos cœurs ont été remplis d'une vive joie. »

13. Et Jésus fit (entre eux) le partage équitable. Ils se conformèrent à la volonté de Jésus. Et Jésus les bénit et ils poursuivirent en paix leur chemin.

The Armenian Infancy Gospel: The First English Translation¹

I

1. And it came to pass² that Joachim left his house and, talking with him his flocks³ and their shepherds, went out into the desert and set up his tent. And after having remained in prayer for forty days and forty nights, living only on bread and water,⁴ and groaning and weeping from the affliction of his heart, he sat down and said to God: "Remember me, O Lord; and according to your mercy and justice, grant to me the sign of your favor that you gave to our ancestor Abraham, to whom in the time of his old age you gave his only child, Isaac, a child of blessing, ancestor of the Promise, and the guarantee and consolation of his race." In this state,⁵ with tears, Joachim prayed to God from the soreness of his heart, entreating God's mercy. And he said: "I will not go away from here: I will neither eat nor drink until the Lord visits me, and has pity on his servant."

2. Joachim fasted for forty days. And when they were accomplished, an angel of the Lord appeared; and standing before him, he said to him: "Joachim, the Lord has heard your prayers and granted your request. Behold: your wife will conceive and give birth to a blessed son. His name will be great, and all the races < of man >⁶ will proclaim him blessed. Now rise, take the offerings which you promised to make and bring them to the holy temple; for it is there that your wish will be fulfilled.⁷ For see here: this night I go to warn the High Priest to accept these offerings from your hands." Having thus spoken, the angel left him. And Joachim was filled with joy; and taking his offerings with him, together with his many flocks,³ he rose at once and left.

3. And the angel of the Lord appeared in a similar vision to the High Priest Eleazer, and said to him: "Behold: Joachim comes to you with offerings. Faithfully⁸ receive his gifts, as it is appropriate, according to the Law; for the Lord has heard his supplications and granted his request." And the High Priest awakened from his sleep; and he arose and gave thanks to the Lord, saying: "Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, for He does not scorn His servants who beseech Him." And the angel appeared also to Anne, and said to her: "Behold, your husband comes. Rise, and run ahead of him, and receive him with joy." Anne arose and, throwing on her wedding finery, ran ahead of him. And when she saw him, she prostrated herself in front of him with joy and threw herself on his neck.⁹

4. Joachim said: "Greeting to you and cheerful news, Anne; for the Lord God had pity on me. He blessed me, and he promised to give to us a blessed child." And Anne said to Joachim: "Good news to you in return; for to me also did the Lord promise to give such a child." Anne was transported with joy, and she said: "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, who did not scorn our supplications, nor deny to us his mercy." And Joachim gave a great banquet and invited his friends and neighbors; and they ate and drank and were filled with happiness; and having given thanks to the Lord, they returned, each one of them, to his own home, glorifying God with a loud voice.

II

1. Joachim rose early. And he called his shepherds and he said to them: "Bring ten white lambs: they will be the offering for the majestic temple of my God. And bring twelve calves: they will be the offering for the priests, the

scribes and the ministers, who are the servants of the synagogue. And bring one hundred rams: they will be for all the people of Israel.” Joachim took these offerings and brought them to the temple of the Lord. And he prostrated himself before the priests and the entire assembly, and presented the gifts he brought before them. They having seen this were delighted; and they congratulated him; for it had pleased the Lord to accept these holy offerings from his hands. And the multitude of people who were there were astonished; and they said: “Praised be¹⁰ the Lord God of Israel, who has carried out the wishes of your heart. Go in peace to your home, and may the Lord be forever with you. He will give you a blessed child, a scion sanctified of the fruit of your loins.”¹¹

2. And Joachim rose, being himself prostrated in front of the priests who were there; and entering the temple and standing in prayer,¹² he gave thanks to the Lord and said: “Lord God of Israel, God of our fathers: as you listened to your servant and granted to him a full measure of mercy, give me now a child, whether male or female. I will in turn return it to you, to be with your service in this temple, to the end of its days.” And Joachim, having spoken thus, rose and was received with joy in his house.

3. When three months had passed, the child began to swell the womb of its mother. And Anne, filled with great joy, said in a transport of ecstasy: “By the life of the Lord, if he has granted to me a child, whether male or female, I will give it to the temple for the remainder of its life.” And Anne completed a hundred and eighty days of her pregnancy, which makes six months.

4. Joachim departed with his offerings. He went to the holy temple, and in front of the priests he offered the sacrifices which he had promised to complete at the beginning of the year. And as the priests raised the sacrificial animals to the altar of holocausts,¹³ and while their blood ran, immolated them, they observed that the animals contained no defect. And they were filled with a great joy, and gave thanks to God.

5. But Joachim, after having completed his sacrificial offerings, took a lamb, and going to the place of his previous offering¹⁴ sacrificed it on the altar; and lo, a kind of white milk spouted out of its vessel¹⁵ instead of blood. At the sight of this, the priests and the people were seized with astonishment and admiration, for none of them had ever beheld a wonder similar to that which had been achieved in this sacrifice. And the High Priest Eleazer called out to Joachim: “Tell us in whose name you presented this offering, this lamb which you lastly offered in sacrifice on the altar?”

6. Joachim answered: “The first offerings I devoted to my Lord, as a votive offering which I was required to make. But this last lamb is offered in the name of my child; I had resolved to make that for him.” The High Priest said: “Do you see this sign that the Lord showed you in the name of your child?” And he said: “The milk which has just spouted from its vessel has a significance for your child; for it says that what will be born from its mother’s womb will be a girl, an impeccable and holy virgin. And this virgin will in her turn conceive without the intervention of any man; there will be born of her a male child who will become a great ruler and king of Israel.” Hearing these things, all those in attendance were struck with admiration. Joachim went quietly to his house and told Anne his wife the wonder which had occurred. And giving thanks to their God, they rejoiced and said to the Lord: “Thy will be done.”

7. And Anne’s pregnancy continued to the two hundred and tenth day, which makes seven months. And suddenly, at the seventh hour, Anne brought forth into the world her holy child, during the twenty-first day of the month < of ..., >²⁶ which is on September eighth. On the first day, she asked the midwife, “What did I bring into the world?” The midwife replied, “You brought a girl into the world; but she is extremely beautiful, brilliant and radiant to see, without any spot or stain.” Anne said, “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, who listened to the supplications of his servants, who showed us his full mercy and who made for us great things. We are filled with joy. My heart is firmly established in the Lord, and my hope is exalted in God my Savior.”

8. When the child was three days old, Anne ordered the midwife to wash it and carry it with respect to its nursery. The midwife gave it to her; and she took the baby in her arms; and giving it her breast, nourished it with her milk. And in an overflowing of tenderness, she gave it the name Mary. From that day the child grew and progressed, and her mother, in a transport of rapture, cradled her in her arms. Thus her parents raised and nourished her. When Mary had reached the age of forty days, her parents took her tenderly in their arms, and carrying many offerings, led her into the temple of the Lord, according to the rule of their Tradition.

9. And the little Mary grew and progressed from day to day. When she was six months old, her mother said that it was time for her to attempt to walk; but when she had taken three steps, she fell over backward into her mother's arms. And her mother cherished her; and raising her in her arms, she said to her: "Mary, holy mother of the virgins—O you, root with the beautiful growth, child of a noble stock—from you will rise the dawn, the star forerunner of the light, similar to the moon more than any star, yet possessed of a daylight more brilliant than the sun, and of the sun in the East its driving force!"¹⁶ Thus Anne spoke making these remarks and still others. And cherishing the holy child, she said: "By the life of the Lord, your feet will no longer touch the ground until the moment you are led into the holy temple." And Joachim said, "Yes, well spoken." And the child remained in the house of her father until it had reached the age of three years. And so it happened.

III

1. And there came a day when Joachim said to Anne, "The days with us of the child who was born to us are accomplished. The one who names out of all the Hebrew girls those virgins devoted to God, directs that a lamp be put in her hands, and that she be led, by a holy person, into the temple of the Lord, as is appropriate." And they took her with them, and established her in the third degree of the tabernacle. And the Lord God gave her grace and wisdom. An angel of God, coming down from the sky, served her at table; and she was nourished by angels of the Holy Spirit. And there in the sanctuary she heard directly the language and the song of the angels.

2. Now Mary was three years old when her parents led her into the temple; and she remained there twelve years. At the end of the first year her parents died. Mary suffered sharply the loss of her father and her mother, and mourned for thirty days their passing. Established in the temple, she was raised and grew after the manner of the other girls of the Hebrews who were with her, until she reached the age of fifteen.

3. In this year, the High Priest Eleazer died. The heritage of Israel, having donned mourning, wept over him for thirty days; and then, after all these things had taken place, an assembly of priests—the old ones, and others who were notable among them—was called, in order to cast lots to see who was to be the new High Priest. And the lot fell on Zachariah, son of Barachie. The priests laid their hands upon him, and put him in charge of the altar of sacrifice. However, it was with Elizabeth (his wife) as it had been with Anne: both were sterile, and could bear no children. And since the pregnancy of Anne and the birth of Mary, fourteen years had elapsed, up until the time when Zachariah became Chief Priest of the temple.

4. For the time came when Zachariah was made High Priest; and when it became generally known that his wife was incapable of bearing children, the priests and the people reflected upon this fact, and said one to the other: "It is very annoying that we did not know about this problem before we cast lots. For we have established him as High Priest; but why should he be so, when his family manifests a defect that puts the validity of his religious behavior in doubt; while, on the other hand, the child of the blessing is fertile?"¹⁷ One of the priests, Levi by name, said to the others, "This is our considered opinion; with your permission, I will inform Zachariah of it." The others gave their leave, saying only, "Declare it to him privately, so that only he shall know of our feelings, and no other." And Levi said: "I will tell it to him, and to no one else."

5. It happened one day that Levi, having completed his turn in the rotation for prayer, went secretly to find Zachariah; and he told him what had been resolved by the priests and the people. And when he heard it, Zachariah became greatly disturbed. And he said to himself: "What excuse will I make, and what answer can I give? For I am not aware that I have done anything evil; but even if they hate me without any cause that I can see, in spite of my self-presumed innocence it is the Lord alone that knows these things for certain. I will be heavily in the wrong if I repudiate my ordination without being able to plead any justifiable reason for doing so; and it will be very painful for me to imagine myself guilty of an offense and simply abdicate my service at the altar without saying anything about the matter. What would I thus become? I am seriously confused, and my heart is in torment."

6. While he was thinking these thoughts and reflecting upon them, the hour of ritual prayer arrived at which he was required to burn incense before the Lord. And while he was performing his office, close to the altar of the Lord, he wept in front of the sanctuary, and he said: "Lord God of our fathers, God of Israel, look upon me with

Your mercy—me, Your servant, who presents himself filled with confusion before Your majesty, he who beseeches You to grant him understanding: do not scorn Your servant. If You consider me worthy to serve at Your holy altar, manifest in me Your tender kindness towards all men, O You who alone are the source of all power and mercy, manifesting Your glory in every age. So be it!”

7. Thus did the High Priest Zachariah speak, prostrate, adoring the Lord at the right-hand side of the altar. And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said: “Do not fear, Zachariah, for your requests arrived before God, and your prayers were heard. Know that Elizabeth your wife will conceive and bear a son, and your will name him John.” Zachariah said: “How can this be, since I am old and my wife advanced in years? How can this possibly happen?” The angel said: “Since you have not listened to me and do not believe my words, you will be made dumb, unable to speak until the day when these things come about.” And at the same moment, Zachariah was struck dumb; and he prostrated himself in silence before the altar, beating his breast in his despair and weeping bitterly.

8. Meanwhile the priests and the people remarked with surprise and astonishment at his delay in the temple; and coming upon him, the priests found him struck dumb, unable to speak and capable of communication only by gestures of the hand. This happened on the fifteenth day of the month of Tešrin, which is October second, and on which day ended the first solemnities marking the Feast of the Tabernacles. On 22 Tešrin, which is October ninth, Elizabeth became pregnant; and on the sixteenth of the month of Tammuz, which is June fifth, John the Baptist was born. Glory be with Christ. So be it!

IV

1. Now after twelve years, the sanctified presence of Mary in the temple came to an end; for she was fifteen. And the priests deliberated among themselves, and they said: “What shall we do with her? Her parents are dead: they entrusted her to our care, like a temple treasure. Now she has become a woman, and it is not possible to keep her longer, lest the temple of God be profaned and we be ignorant of the matter.” One of them, Behezi by name, said: “There are still within the temple many other Hebrew girls. Let us ask the High Priest Zachariah what to do, for what he judges will be good, and we will all obey him” And the others said, “It is well.” Behezi went and stood before Zachariah and said: “You are High Priest of the holy altar. Enter the Holy of Holies, and ask the Lord what we shall do with the Hebrew girls who have devoted themselves to God; and all that the Lord reveals to you shall be done by us according to His will.”

2. And Zachariah rose at once, and donning the Breastplate of Righteousness, he entered the Holy of Holies and inquired of God concerning these girls. And as he burned the incense before the Lord, behold, an angel of God appeared near the altar and said to him, “Go out of the temple gate, and order that the eleven Hebrew girls be brought here, and Mary with them, who is of the race of Judah and the family of David. Call also to the temple all the single men of the city, and direct each of them to bring a tablet. Upon each table you will write the name of its owner; and you will place them in the sanctuary. You will then pray over them, and God will choose from among them the husband whom they will marry.” And Zachariah left the temple and caused the order to be delivered throughout the city; and every one of them gathered together, even unto the last of them, each with his tablet in his hand. And the old man Joseph also learned of the order; and, taking a tablet in his hand, he went in haste to the place of meeting. He handed his tablet to the High Priest, who accepted it; and entering the temple, the High Priest prayed over the men.

3. Indeed, it had been the consistent practice of the families of Israel from among the tribe of Judah and the line of David, to place their daughters in the temple; where for a space of twelve years they were kept—in a state of holiness and justice—for the purpose of awaiting the advent of the Divine decree whereby the Word would become flesh by the flesh of a holy virgin, and walk among men. This rule the race of Israel kept committed to writing and preserved in the temple from time immemorial; and when no sign or intimation of the implementation of this decree was forthcoming from the Holy Spirit, the girls were given in marriage. And so it was with these twelve virgins, among whom was the virgin Mary, who had preeminence among all the virgins. The priests having gathered in the temple, the virgins were brought to them by mutual agreement, and appeared before them; and they cast lots on behalf of the single men, to see which among them would receive them as wives.

4. Thus it was that Zachariah the priest gave back to each of the single men assembled in the temple their respective tablets, that they might see the name of that virgin written on the tablet of him to whom she was to be given in marriage. And when he had taken them in his hands, they carried no special sign, beyond the names written on them. But when he came to give the last of the tablets to Joseph, upon which was written the name of the holy virgin Mary, lo, a dove burst forth from the tablet and alighted on Joseph's head. The priest called to Joseph and said: "God returns to you the virgin Mary. Take her, and keep her like your wife, since she fell to you by holy decree, plainly to be yours in marriage, like the other virgins, each one with one of the single men."

5. But the old man Joseph, hearing this, resisted and said, "I ask you, priests and people joined here in this holy temple, not to force me to do this thing. I have a numerous family, sons and daughters. I will feel ashamed and confused in front of them. Do not force me to do this." The priests and the people said, "Listen to us: obey the law of God, and do not remain unsubdued and recalcitrant; for it is not at all according to the Law to behave in this manner." But Joseph said, "I am near death. Why do you order me, old as I am, to do this thing which is not appropriate to one in his old age?" But Zachariah said, "Listen to us. Your portion will contain neither confusion nor sorrow of any kind; but great blessings and glory shall be yours." Joseph replied, "You speak beautifully; but that which falls to me by lot is a child, and not a woman, and when the sons of Israel know of it, I will appear ridiculous in their eyes." Zachariah said: "We know that you are of good character and spirit, and beloved of God. This virgin has been orphaned from her parents. We took her under our protection, and placed her in the temple, under oath. And we all attested to it legally that the virgin Mary fell to you by lot. Take her by our will and with our blessing; and having taken her with you, keep her respectfully in a state of holiness, until the time comes for you to receive her in marriage, at that same time as the other virgins and those not as yet married to them."

6. Joseph said: "Have mercy on the white hair of my old age. Do not force this burden upon me, which I have no inclination to bear, to keep this girl—as is appropriate—with care and circumspection. She is a virgin who has just reached the age of nubility, according to the nature of women. How is it that I have the duty to accept her in marriage, for would it not be a sin to do so?" Zachariah said: "What constrained you to stay in your house? Why did you come here with the other unmarried men? After you came, you drew lots according to custom, and you received in the temple of the Lord a sign of blessing, stating that Mary is granted to you in marriage by God." Joseph said, "I did not at first understand what was going to take place; indeed, when I think about it, it was not possible for me to know about the event, or what business would derive from it. Since I am on the point of death < ... > the white hair of my old age < ... >¹⁸ life without spot." The High Priest said: "Fear the Lord and do not resist these commands. Recall how God dealt with Core, Dathan and Abiron—how the earth opened up and swallowed them, because of their disobediences. And now, as you fear God, see to it that some similar misfortune does not destroy you."

7. When Joseph heard these words, he prostrated himself before the priest and the people; and, taking Mary with him out of the temple, he left them and led her to his home, in the town of Nazareth. And he said to her: "My daughter, listen now to what I say to you. Give me your attention and remember what I say. See, I leave you here, in my house. Here I will provide for all your material needs. As for you, remain here in a chaste state. Be on your guard and take care of yourself. Go nowhere unnecessarily, and see that nobody finds access to you until the time when I return to you, as the Lord wishes." And having said this, Joseph rose and departed, to work at his trade; for he was a carpenter.

8. And when a few days had passed, it happened that the priests took counsel with one another, and they said: "Come, let us have a curtain made for the temple, to be revealed to the congregation on the day of the great festival, during the congregational meeting, that the splendor of the holy sanctuary may be increased." And they decided to do this. Then Zachariah ordered the women and the virgins who were devoted to God in the temple and who were of the tribe of Judah and the lineage of David, to gather together. And when the eleven virgins had arrived, Zachariah remembered that the holy virgin Mary was one of this family, and she was sought out. When Mary had arrived, Zachariah said: "Draw lots; for we must know who will weave the muslin and the purple, the red and the blue." And when they had cast them, the weaving of the purple and scarlet fell to Mary. Taking them in silence, she went to her house and began to spin the scarlet. And all at once, she took her jug, and went to the fountain to draw water.

1. And it happened just at that moment that the voice of an angel suddenly spoke to Mary, saying, "Glad tidings to you, virgin Mary." Mary was disturbed, and took fright; for she looked to the right and to the left, but saw no-one. She said to herself: "Where did that voice come from?" And taking her jug, she went quickly to the refuge of her house, closing the door to it carefully. Then, sitting in the cellar of her house, and still in a state of amazement, she said to herself, "From where were these words spoken to me? Who was it that knew me and knew in advance where I would be? Did I ever anywhere meet anyone who could speak to me in such a manner?" And thinking these things, she shivered and trembled.

2. And she lifted up the following prayer: "Lord God of our fathers, God of Israel. Look at me in Your mercy, condescend to my request and to the prayer of my heart. Listen to me, Your wretched maidservant, who addresses you with hope and confidence. Do not give me over to the temptations of the enemy and the obstacles of the seducer, but deliver me from the traps and tricks of the hunter; for I hope in You, that You will keep my virginity intact, You, my Lord and my God." Having thus spoken, Mary wept and gave thanks to the Lord; and having remained in this state for three hours, she took scarlet in her hands and began to spin.

3. And behold, even though the door to her house was closed, an angel of the Lord came and stood near to her. The invisible one appeared to her clothed with a body, and said, "Be happy, virgin Mary, immaculate maidservant of the Lord." But Mary, having so suddenly beheld the angel of her happiness, became afraid. She could make no answer; and the angel said, "Do not be frightened, Mary, you who are blessed among women. I am the angel Gabriel; and I have been sent by God to tell you that you will become pregnant, and will give birth to the son of the Father, the Almighty. He will be a great king who will reign over the whole world." Mary said to him, "What do you mean? What are you saying? Explain this to me." And the angel said, "Hear what I say to you: receive the invitation contained in the message which I have made known to you, and be happy." But Mary said, "The knowledge you impart speaks of a disconcerting innovation to my present condition—that I will conceive and give birth like all women—and I am dazed and astonished. How will I become with child, I who do not know any man?" The angel said, "O holy virgin Mary, do not be so suspicious. Think about what you are saying. That which will cause you to be with child comes not from any human creature, neither from a husband nor any male desire; but of the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which will live in you and make use of you as it pleases." Mary said, "What you tell me is extraordinary and difficult for me to believe. I neither agree to this, nor do I resign myself to these things as inevitable. The wonders of which you speak are shocking in theory and incredible in fact. I listen to you, and my heart quivers with fear and trembling. My spirit remains confused, and I do not know what answer to make to your words." The angel said, "Why are you frightened, and why does your heart tremble?"

4. The holy virgin said, "How can I listen to you or put faith in your words, since I have never heard anybody make similar remarks, nor do I even understand what you are talking about?" The angel said, "The words that I speak to you are exactly quoted: they are neither radical, nor my own ideas, but what I heard from God. And God sent me to announce these things from Him. And you take what I say for lies! Fear the Lord and listen to me." The holy virgin Mary said, "It is not that I think you are lying; but I am struck dumb with amazement. When earth and sky themselves cannot contain the Divinity, when not even the celestial army of spirits or the beings of fire can comprehend Him or look upon His glory, how is it possible for me to support his infinite heat and shelter it in my flesh? How could I carry it in me, or touch it with my hands? Your speech is incredible, the concept is incomprehensible, and its realization would be disconcerting to say the least. It is beyond the perspicacity of the human mind to review and understand it. Do you wish to deceive my spirit by misleading words? It will not be so mislead!" The angel said, "Oh happy and blessed virgin, listen to what I say to you. How did Moses see God on Mt. Sinai and the bush that was on fire but did not burn, without himself being consumed? How did the tent of Abraham receive God in a bodily appearance, without fire even approaching it? How was it that Jacob was not destroyed: for the Lord wrestled with him? And what of the other good patriarchs and prophets, as it is written of them? They were possessed according to their abilities. Neither should you be afraid. Only believe, and listen to what I say to you now."

5. Mary said, "How will what you say happen? And how will I be able to know the day and the time that it will take place? Tell me." The angel said, "Do not speak this way about that of which you are unaware, and do not refuse to believe what you do not comprehend. Lend me your ear with humility, and believe all that I will tell you." Mary said, "I don't say these things because I am incredulous, or from mistrust; I want to inform myself exactly, and know precisely how this thing will occur and when, so I may be ready when it does." The angel said, "Its arrival can take place at any time. While penetrating you and living in your womb, it will purify and sanctify your body, which will become its temple." Mary said, "How will it happen to me; for I do not know a man? The angel said, "The Holy Spirit will come into you, and the power of the Almighty will cover you with His shade. And the activity of God will make a body in you. You will give birth to the son of the Father the Almighty; but your virginity will remain intact and inviolate." Mary said, "But how can a woman retain her virginity and still bear a child, without the intervention of a man?"

6. The angel said, "It will not be as you say. Your maternity will not be the result of bodily passion; and your pregnancy will not be the result of a marital relationship. But your virginity will remain holy and unspotted. The activity of God within you will not violate your being; and when that which has been created in you is born, it will not destroy your virginity either." Mary said, "I am afraid of you, because you ply me with pleasant words, but I am made apprehensive by them. Our first mother, Eve, was so persuaded by the demon with pleasant and decorous speeches, and was thus dedicated to death. Would you like to similarly deceive me?" The angel said, "O Mary, holy virgin, from the first I addressed you I told you the exact truth: it is you who do not believe in the commands of God and in what I say—I, that stand here in your presence. Once more I tell you in God's name, that your heart is not frightened by my appearance, and that your spirit does not doubt in the Lord your God. Do not cleanse your heart, either of the words I will say, or those which you have already heard and learned from me. I came to you neither by trick nor by deception, nor by any sort of artifice, but to prepare you to become the dwelling place and temple of Divine activity." Mary said, "Because God intended you to speak, and because you insist up the truth of your words, I now feel intimidated, and my spirit is worried about what answer to make to you. And if I cannot convince myself, with whom will I be able to talk about my situation, and persuade that it is as I say it is?"

7. The angel said, "O blessed and spotless virgin, do not occupy yourself with these vain apprehensions." Mary said, "I do not < really > doubt your words, and I do not < really >¹⁹ believe what you say to be incredible; indeed, I am rather happy and most pleased with them. But my heart is frightened; and I tremble with the thought that I will carry God in my flesh, to give birth to it like a man, while at the same time my virginity will remain inviolate. What wonder! How marvelous is this about which you speak!" The angel said, "To think that I once made lengthy and truthful speeches about it, and you didn't believe me." Mary said, "O servant of the Almighty, please don't be upset with me because I insisted on questioning you. You know human nature, and its incredulity over any matter. I only wanted to know exactly what is in store for me. Don't be upset with what I said." And the angel said, "You are right; but now have faith in me, who was sent by God to tell you this good news."

8. Mary said, "I believe in your words, and I accept your commands; it is good that you say these things. But now listen to what I tell you. So far I have been able to keep myself in a state of holiness and justice before the priests and the people, after having fallen legitimately by lot to Joseph, to become his wife. And he keeps me in his house and treats me carefully until the time when, together with the other virgins and single men, we receive the crown of blessing. But what will I tell him if one day he returns from work and finds me with child? What will I say to him? If he asks me who is the cause of this pregnancy, how will I answer his question?" The angel said, "O happy and blessed virgin, listen well to this word, and keep in your spirit what I tell you. This is not the work of a man; and the pregnancy about which I speak will not come from any person. It is the Lord Who will carry this out in you; He it is who has the power to withdraw you from all the anguish to which you will be exposed." Mary said, "If it is as you say, and if the Lord Himself deigns to honor His maidservant and slave, then let it be according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

9. At the same moment the holy virgin said these words and humbled herself, the activity of God penetrated her, and the intimate nature of her body was sanctified to its furthest extent, purified like gold in fire. It became a temple, holy and immaculate: the home of the activity of God. And at the same moment the pregnancy of the blessed virgin began. And this came to pass on the fifteenth of Nisan, which was a Wednesday, on the third hour

of the day.

10. And immediately an angel of the Lord made in haste to Persia, to tell the Magi to go and adore the new-born child; and having been guided by a star for nine months, they arrived at their destination just at the time the virgin became a mother. In those days the country of Persia overshadowed with its power and military might all the rulers of the countries of the East. And the rulers of the Magi were three brothers. The first of them was Melkon, who reigned over Persia; the second, Balthasar, who reigned over the Indians; and the third, Gaspar, who ruled the country of the Arabs. Having come together by the command of God, they arrived at the very instant the virgin became a mother; for they had wasted no time upon the road,¹² and had arrived at the exact time of the birth of Jesus.

11. But when the holy virgin had accepted the message of the angel, she rose and, pressing her face to the ground, said: “Lord of my spirit and of my body, You may achieve all the will of Your creative love. You freely determine any matter according to Your good pleasure. Condescend now to agree with the prayers of your slave: pardon and deliver my heart because you are God my Savior, and daily I call upon your name of Lord. Thus far have I kept myself for you in holiness, justice and purity, O Lord my God, firmly preserving my virginity intact, never desiring wanton physical pleasure. And now, let Your will be accomplished.”

12. Having thus spoken, the holy virgin Mary arose and gave thanks to the Lord. But an hour having passed, the holy virgin reflected; and she began to weep. And she said, “What is this new wonder not yet seen in the birth of any man to be carried out in me? I will become a lie, the object of reproach for all humanity. Here in my perplexity, I can make no answer to those who will inquire of me. How do I address myself to it; and who will I tell about all this? O, Why did my mother give birth to me? Why did my parents, in the sadness of their heart, ask God to make me a subject of reproach to myself and to them? Why did they dedicate me to keep virginity in the holy temple? Why didn’t I earlier receive a death sentence which would withdraw me from this world? And since I remained in life, why didn’t my parents simply give me in marriage, without my having anything to say about the matter, like the other Hebrew girls? Alas! Who ever heard or saw a thing like this? Who ever said or believed that a woman could deliver herself of a child without having had intercourse with a man, let alone never having met one? With whom will I share this knowledge, to tell about it without < holding anything back, > I who live in public < ... > in secrecy what it answers without < r eticence >.²⁰ Married virgins or women: who will I be able to convince by argument? If I tell them exactly what transpired, they will think I am joking; if I swear under oath that what I am telling them is the truth, someone will be sure to say I am lying. For me to lie is impossible; and it is hard for me to bear condemnation when I am innocent. There is no one I can ask to justify my innocence; and if I continue to declare my innocence in spite of all appearances to the contrary, I will be treated with contempt. All who hear my words—close relations and strangers alike—will say, ‘She wants to mislead the unwise and the foolish by vain subterfuge.’ Who can suggest to me an answer that will satisfy everyone about this business? How will I tell my husband, who will give me his name in marriage; how will I dare to say anything in front of the priests and the people: how, indeed, can I say anything in front of anybody to support the moral justice of my condition? If I declare to the married women that I am a virgin, having conceived without intercourse with a man, they will say I am joking, and will not believe me. And how can I accept it in myself—that my virginity is ensured, although my pregnancy is unquestionable? The angel of the lord told me the truth, without falseness. It did not mislead me with vain artifice, but told me exactly and with sincerity the words of the Holy Spirit. But what can I do when I have become an object of reprobation and blame among the children of Israel? O word astonishing! O works surprising! O wonder terrifying and disconcerting! No one will believe either that I had no intercourse with a man, or that my pregnancy is a unique event. And if I seriously say to someone, ‘Believe me that I am pregnant while remaining a virgin,’ they will say in return, ‘We believe that you believe it; but explain to us how a virgin can become a mother without a man destroying that virginity?’ Having opposed this argument to mine, they will make me look ridiculous; and not a few of them will condemn me in the light of day in spite of my innocence. Nevertheless, the Lord save me from the insults and scandalmongering of men.”

13. And having said these things, Mary suddenly ceased speaking; and rising up, she opened the door of her house, to see if there was anyone there who had overheard what she said. But she saw no one; and turning back into the house, and taking up the purple and scarlet which she had received from the priests with which to make the temple curtain, she sat down and began to work. And when she had finished it, she carried it to the High

Priest, Zachariah; and he took the hands of the holy virgin and said to her, “Mary, my child, you are blessed among the women, and your virginity also. The Lord will magnify your holy name throughout the world. You will have preeminence before all women, and you will be for everyone the mother of virgins. Thus shall you be secure from all the world.”²¹ So spoke the High Priest Zachariah; and Mary prostrated herself before the priests and the people, and returned satisfied to her home.

14. However, when the meeting between Gabriel and Mary took place, Elizabeth had been already with child for one hundred and eighty days, which makes six months; for she had been pregnant from the twentieth of Tešrin (which is the ninth of October) to the fifteenth of Nisan (which is the sixth of April). On that day, the Incarnation of the Christ began, by which process He took the flesh of the blessed virgin; and a day after this, Mary said to herself: “I will arise and visit my cousin Elizabeth. I will tell her everything that has happened to me, and whatever she tells me to do, I will do it.” And having left her hiding place at the beginning of the day (for she had left her house and gone into the Judean hills) she journeyed to the house of Zachariah, and greeted Elizabeth.

15. And when Elizabeth heard Mary’s voice, her child leaped for joy in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit; and she raised her voice and said to Mary: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. What am I worth, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For when your words of greeting struck my ear, my child leaped in my womb.” And when Mary heard what she said, she raised her tear-filled eyes to heaven and said, “Lord, who am I, that all nations should proclaim me blessed; that I should be chosen from among all the girls and women of the Hebrews; that my name should become famous throughout all the tribes of the children of Israel?” For Mary had forgotten the words which the angel had spoken to her previously.

16. And Mary remained many days with Elizabeth; and she told her all that she had seen and heard from the angel. Elizabeth was amazed, and said to her: “My child, what you tell me reveals a marvelous work of God. But hear now what I say to you: do not be frightened by what has happened, and do not become incredulous at what has taken place. What has happened to you absolutely transcends customary thoughts, words and deeds. Look: I, who am advanced in age, and am indeed already near death: I am with child, and will become a mother, in spite of my old age and my white hair; for nothing is impossible with God. As for you, continue quietly living in your home. Tell no one what you saw and heard—tell none of the children of Israel, lest they take fright from your words and turn from you in derision; nor your conscripted husband, lest you wound him to the heart and he repudiate you. Wait until the will of the Lord is accomplished; for He will make His intention known through you at the proper time.”

17. Mary said, “I will act according to your advice.” Elizabeth said, “Listen to and keep the counsel that I give you. Be at peace in your house: keep outwardly your normal routine, going here and going there, but remain quietly in your own home. Stay hidden from the world, so that nobody knows anything. Do all that your husband orders you to do. And in your time of testing, remember that the Lord will provide you with a way out of your troubles. Do not fear; for God will make you happy.” So spoke Elizabeth; and Mary prostrated herself before her, and returned from there to her own place. And she remained long days in her house. The child developed, day by day, in her womb; but fearing the world, Mary remained hidden, so that nobody knew anything.

VI

1. After some days, Joseph returned from his carpentry work and arrived at his house. Mary rose and did obeisance before him. Joseph said to her, “What has happened with you? Are you well? Are you happy?” Mary said, “I am well;” and reclining at dinner, they ate cheerfully enough; and Joseph, having worked very hard, wished to relax.²² But while looking at her, he noticed how pale she was; also that she tried to conceal some sort of internal confusion from him, but could not quite manage to do so.

2. Joseph looked at her sadly; and having drawn himself up to a sitting position,²³ he said, “My daughter, tell me what is wrong. I do not see in you any more the grace of a child; and I find you a little changed.” Mary said, “What do you mean to say, with these questions and cross-examinations?” “I am surprised by your words and your argumentativeness,” Joseph replied. “Why do you sit with these faded features, idle and sad? It would unsettle me; but did someone accost you? Were you ill or faint? Or were you subjected to some aggravation, or

the intrigues of men?" Mary said, "It is nothing like that." "Then why not answer me frankly," said Joseph. Mary said, "What do you want me to say?" "Before I saw you today, I would never have believed that you could say such things," Joseph replied. "If all is as well with you as you say it is, you would not speak as you do." To this Mary could only be internally disturbed; but as Joseph sat there, and studied her closely, he suddenly realized that she was pregnant. "Alas!" he cried aloud. "What a crime you have done!"

3. And falling down, Joseph pressed his face to the earth and smeared it with ash; he struck his face with his hands and tore at his white beard and hair. "Misfortune is with me!" he cried. "A curse is upon my sad old age. When did it happen, this disaster in my house? How can I look any man in the face again? What will I say to the priests and the people of Israel? How will I be able to stop a criminal proceeding against us; and by what artifice will I be able to satisfy public opinion? How can I minimize this problem; and mitigate the fact that, while I received you virginal from the temple, holy and spotless, I could not keep you an observer of the Law, according to the Tradition of my fathers? If this summons is delivered to me, 'What has become of the virginity of this child? Present her before us pure and spotless,' what answer will I make to priests and people alike? Who is the enemy who fastened this trap upon me; and which brigand has amused himself with your virginity? Who committed this great crime in my house, making my pride an object of ridicule and opprobrium among the children of Israel? Am I to blame for the fault of she who originally fell—she, who by the perfidy of the snake, was deposed of her happy state? ..."²⁴

4. And having spoken these words, Joseph beat his breast, sobbing and groaning. And he again addressed Mary, and said to her, "O heart worthy of tears and lamentation, now fallen and mislaid, tell me what happened. Why did you forget the Lord your God, who trained you in your mother's womb—you, whom your parents obtained from God through many tears, and whom they faithfully offered back to Him, according to the Law—you, who were nourished and raised in the temple, perpetually listening to the praises of the Lord and the song of the angels—you, who listened attentively to the reading of the holy books and the words of the saints? After the death of your parents you were put under supervision in the temple, until the end of your education. You were informed there of the Divine Laws; and you received there the blessings of the priests and the entire congregation. And after you were entrusted to me, by God's command and the blessing of the priests and the people, I faithfully accepted you; and having taken you with me, I established you in my house. I provided for all your material needs; I told you to be careful, and to take care of yourself until my return. Why did you do this thing? Why don't you say anything; or do you refuse to answer? O unhappy and unfortunate one, why did you fall into such a disorder, by which you have become an object of universal opprobrium to men, to women: to all mankind?"

5. And Mary lowered her head dejectedly, and wept and cried aloud. But then she said, "Do not lightly judge me, nor suspect that my virginity is injured. I am pure of any sin; I have not had intercourse with any man." Joseph said, "Then explain to me how it is that you are with child?" Mary said, "By the life of the Lord, I know only that you say it is so." Joseph said, "I am not speaking to you with anger and violence, but wish to question you in a friendly manner. Tell me which man was introduced to you; or who introduced himself; or to whose house you imprudently went." Mary said, "I never left the house." Joseph said, "Here is what is extraordinary: you say you don't know how you became pregnant; and yet I see with certainty that you are. < ...>²⁵ Who has ever heard of a woman conceiving and becoming a mother without < the intervention of a man >?²⁶ I will not believe you if you continue to talk in this way." Mary said, "Then how will I be able to satisfy you? Since you question me on this in all sincerity, I swear, for my part, that I am without sin, and that, absolutely, I do not know any man. And if you continue to judge me otherwise, you will have to answer for it to God."

6. When he heard these words, Joseph was struck by their boldness, and he became frightened. He began to reflect; and he said, "What an alarming and extraordinary thing this is! I do not understand it; indeed, I understand nothing of what has happened. The facts of this business are so strange: they exceed anything I ever heard of with my own ears, and all I heard or learned from the ancestors. I don't know what to say. Who will talk to me; who will I consult with about this business? I hate to think that what is now secret will be revealed and told about everywhere, and those who hear of it will ridicule statements similar to what you have been saying." Mary said, "When will you stop railing against me, and condemning me with your ill-considered reasoning. Won't you cease browbeating me with your insults?" Joseph said, "Somehow I must find a solution to this great misfortune, and resist this affliction which has fallen down upon me. What will I do with you, and what answer will I give to whoever will question me? For I fear that if what has transpired here becomes public knowledge, I will be

dishonored by the children of Israel in my old age.”

7. Having spoken these words, Joseph again abandoned himself to weeping, and said in tears, “Sad an unhappy old man, why did you become her guardian? Why did you obey the priests and the people, so that, in your old age and on the point of death, you dishonor your white hair?” But, as he really did not know which side to take in the matter, he began again to reflect; and he said, “How will I account for this child; for the Lord has not prepared me for these events; and in all this I did not act according to my own lights.²⁷ Prior to this moment, I had no foreknowledge about any of the events that were going to occur. On the other hand, I know for a certainty that if any test I have to bear comes from God, it is for my own good; and that if, on the contrary, I am afflicted by the enemy, God will deliver me from that. I can only make this judgment: if I condemn Mary, I will have taken part in a great evil; and if I say evil about what has happened to her, God will as precisely condemn me. I will thus take her away with me secretly, this very night, and in peace I will let her go wherever she may wish.”

8. Joseph then commanded Mary to come to him,²⁸ and he said, “Be whatever you said to me true or false, I listened to it and I believed it. I will not make any trouble for you. But this very night I will take you with me away from here, and I will dismiss you. Go where you wish.” When Mary heard these words, her eyes filled with tears, and she began to weep. Joseph came sadly out of the house and went some distance away; and having sat down, he wept and beat his breast.

9. And Mary got up, pressed her face to the ground and said, “God of my fathers! God of Israel! In your mercy, look at the torments of your maidservant and the affliction of my heart. Do not deliver me, Lord, to the shame and blame planned for me by the Evil One. Since You know, Lord, that the heart of the children of men is filled with incredulity, present Your glory before them all, so they know that only You are the Lord God, and that You have Yourself given us Your name.” Having spoken thus, the holy virgin wept before the Lord. And in the same moment, an angel addressed her, saying, “Fear not, for I am with you. I will deliver you from all your tribulations. Be comforted and take courage.” And having spoken the angel departed; and Mary, her spirits raised, thanked the Lord.

10. When evening approached, Joseph returned in silence to his house; and looking at Mary, he saw her face open and very happy. He said to her, “My daughter, you seem to be quite happy, and your face is radiant; perhaps it is because you are on the point of leaving me, to go where you wish.” Mary said, “It is not because I am leaving. I am giving thanks to God, for He has the power to give all that one may ask of Him; and because the Lord Himself—He, the Conscience and the Spirit—both desires and intends to present Himself—to all of us and to each one of us individually—in the form of a man.”

11. And having thus spoken, Mary was silent. Joseph remained a prey of sadness for the balance of the evening, neither eating nor drinking. But when he had fallen asleep, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream, and said to him, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to be close to Mary your wife, for the child she carries was conceived by the action of Holy Spirit. She will deliver to the world a son, and you will call it by the name of Jesus.” Joseph awakened; and rising up, he fell into prayer, and he said, “Lord, God of my fathers, God of Israel: I give You thanks, O Lord, and I glorify Your holy name, O You who listen to the voice of my supplications. You have not forsaken me in the time of my old age, but console me and filled me with hope for the future. You cleanse my heart of mourning and of sadness; and you have kept the holy virgin pure of any earthly stain.” Having spoken thus, Joseph was filled with joy; and he happily worshiped the universal God.

VII

1. And when Joseph rose in the morning, he went to Mary, content in his own heart; and said to her, “I sinned against the Lord my God, for I frequently suspected that you had lost your holy virginity, and I neither knew nor understood before any part of what you had told me.” And while Joseph was speaking about these matters and absorbed in them, a scribe named Ananias arrived.²⁹ He was a pious and faithful man, attached to the service of the temple of the Lord. Joseph stood up; they embraced and sat down. Ananias said, “Venerated father, did you return with good news? What happened on your journey; how were you received?” Joseph said, “I am pleased to see you here, scribe and servant of God.” The scribe said, “When did you arrive, worthy man, worthy and pleasant

old man of God?" Joseph said, "I arrived yesterday evening; but I was tired and could not come and assist at the ceremony of prayer." The scribe said, "The priest and the people remained, awaiting your arrival." Joseph said, "For that the Lord God of Israel blesses them."

2. Having exchanged these pleasantries, they drew up the table. They ate and drank and were satisfied; and after having thanked the Lord for their food, they glorified God. But during the meal, Ananias, having rested his eyes on Mary, looked carefully at her and saw that she was with child. He said nothing about this at the time; but when he left the house, he went and found the priests, and he said to them, "This Joseph, whom you call among yourselves a righteous man, has committed a serious iniquity." The priests said, "Which iniquitous work did you observe in him." The scribe said, "I saw that the virgin Mary, whom he took away from the temple, and whom you ordered to be kept in a state of holiness, has been violated, without having received the crown of marriage." The priests said, "Joseph would not do that, for he is a righteous man, perfect and holy." The scribe said, "I saw this with my own eyes; why do you not believe me?" The High Priest said, "Do not bear false witness against him, for this would be a sin charged to you." And the scribe said, "Before God and the people I say that if my testimony is false, then I am worthy of death. If you do not believe me, order someone else to go there and look attentively, and he will convince you."

3. Then the High Priest Zachariah sent servants to bring Joseph's answer to the charge. But when they arrived at Joseph house, they found that the virgin was indeed with child; and they returned and reported to the priests and everyone else that all was as Ananias had said. When Zachariah heard that, he ordered that Joseph and Mary be brought by force to him in the temple court. And when they arrived, in the center of the multitude, Zachariah questioned the holy virgin Mary, and said to her, "Tell me, my child, who is responsible for this illegal activity which you entered into, by which you lost your virginity, having forgotten the Lord your God?" Mary silently lowered her head and wept before the priests and the people; and she prostrated herself humbly before them and said, "By the life of the Lord and the holiness of His name, I swear absolutely that I have not known a man." The High Priest said, "Then how did it happen that you became pregnant?" And Mary said, "I do not know."³⁰

4. Then the High Priest ordered Joseph brought before him, and he said to him, "Tell me, old man, in front of the children of Israel, why you committed this crime which dishonors you among the people of the tribes."³¹ Joseph said, "Do not condemn me without reason or testimony, for you would make yourselves guilty of false accusation."³² The high Priest said, "It is not without reason that we condemn you; indeed, it is with reason that we have contempt for your alleged innocence. Return to us the virgin Mary, the holy one, whom you received when you left the temple; and if you cannot, you are worthy of death." Joseph said, "You are right, I cannot do so; but I swear by the life of the Lord God of Israel that I do not know what you are talking about." The High Priest said, "Do not lie, but answer this: did you assume the right to marry without the knowledge of the children of Israel? Did you scorn the Law of God by refusing to bow your head under the powerful hand of God, that your progeny might be blessed throughout the world?" Joseph said, "I have told you before, and I'll tell you again in the hope that you will believe me: you know yourselves that I have never deviated from the commands of God, and that I have never been anybody's adversary or enemy. But however that may be, the Lord Himself will tell you through me by way of the Holy Spirit, that I've never known any woman other than my first and legitimate wife. It is you, priests and people both, who ganged up on me and persuaded me in spite of myself, by flattery and the power of your authority, so that out of respect for God and for you I subjected myself to your commands. I did everything that you told me to do. I took this virgin and carried her away to my house; I provided for all her material needs; I admonished her to be careful and keep herself in a state of holiness until I returned—for I was occupied with the work of my trade until I had accomplished all I had to do. When I returned yesterday evening, everyone could overhear the circumstances of my arrival; and of Mary I neither saw nor knew anything during all that time, let alone that she was with child."

5. When the multitude heard this, they said, "This old man is truthful and honest." The High Priest said, "Yes, I know < that >²⁶ you said all this; but the fact remains that this girl was an only child and orphaned of both her father and her mother. You seemed manifestly a responsible elder: for this reason we entrusted her virginity to you, so that it would remain intact and immaculate until the moment when you would both receive the crown of marriage." To this Joseph replied, "That is true; but I had no idea of what was going to happen afterwards. The Lord will tell you, in the manner He will wish, of the wrong that has been done to me." And having said these things, Joseph fell silent.

6. Thereupon the High Priest said, "You will drink the water of the test; and if you are guilty, the Lord will reveal what your punishment is to be." Then Zachariah, taking the water of the test, called Joseph to him, and said to him, "O man, think of your age and your gray hairs! See with your eyes this water³³ of life and death, and do not cast yourself into perdition." Joseph said, "By the life of the Lord and the holiness of His name, I swear that I am not aware of my guilt. But if the Lord will condemn me in spite of my innocence, then let the will of the Lord be done!" And at once the High Priest made Joseph drink the water, and then run quickly to a predetermined place and as quickly return.³⁴ Joseph left and returned running, and without pausing left and returned again, without injury, and without suffering any damage in his person. And when they became convinced that he would not be struck with death, they became alarmed.

7. Then the High Priest sent for Mary. When she had arrived, Zachariah took in his hand the water of the test, and said to her, "My daughter, consider your youth, and remember the time that you spent being nourished and raised in the temple. Have pity on yourself; if you are innocent, your life will be spared and no evil will happen to you. But if you try by fraud to stay alive, God will confuse you publically, and you will perish."³⁵ Mary said, weeping, "I am not aware of any wrong; and my virginity has remained whole and inviolate, without any fault. But if the Lord condemns me, though I am innocent, then the will of the Lord be done."

8. Then the High Priest took the water, and gave it to Mary to drink, and ordered her to do as Joseph had done; and she left and returned, without fainting and without internal damage. The crowd, upon seeing this, was amazed, and they said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for they are pure and innocent. They emerged unhurt from the test, and no guilt appeared in them." The High Priest sent for Joseph and Mary and ordered them to stand before him; and he said to them, "You know that you will have to answer to God for what has happened. What the Law ordered us to do, that we have done. The Lord did not reveal your sin; and as for me, I will not condemn you. Go in peace."

9. After prostrating themselves before the priests and the people, Joseph and Mary returned quietly to their home. They hid there, and did not show themselves, remaining within until the holy virgin had finished the term of her pregnancy. But when Mary saw the pain of childbirth approach, Joseph became afraid, and said to himself, "What shall I do so that nobody knows when the child will be born, lest they cause some difficulty?" And Joseph called to Mary, and he said to her, "It is not appropriate that we remain in this place. Come! Let us go elsewhere, to a remote place, where nobody knows us; for if we remain here, all those who hear that you have actually become a mother may blame us and make us appear ridiculous among the children of Israel." Mary said, "Let it be as you say."³⁶

VIII

1. In those days a decree went out from the Emperor Augustus ordering a census to be taken of the entire world, that the taxes due to the Imperial treasury might be calculated. Each head of household was required to pay at the beginning of every year a tax of 10%, calculated on the number of people in the household. Joseph resolved to be present at the census and to be enrolled with Mary; and at once he rose, prepared all they would need to sustain them on their journey, and he harnessed his mule.³⁷ He took with him Joseph his youngest son; and placing Mary on the beast, they left together, following the road leading to the south.

2. And when they were fifteen stages from the city, which made nine miles, Joseph, looking at Mary, saw that her face was pale, sad and dark. And he said to himself, "She is about to bear the child, and cannot do it sitting upon a mule." And he called to her, and said, "Why is your heart sad, and why are you upset?" Mary said, "How can I be merry, pregnant as I am and going for my delivery I know not where?" Joseph said, "I see what you mean; but blessed be the Lord God of Israel, Who delivers us from the indignation and calumny of men." Mary said, "Had I not told you of my innocence before any of this happened, in the hope that you would believe me? But you condemned me before God for no fault of which I was aware. It is the Lord of all things only who delivers me from the snares of death."

3. And after they had gone on another hour, Joseph looked at Mary, and saw with joy that her face was filled with happiness. Mary said, "Why do you look closely at me, and why this insistence on questioning me?" Joseph said,

"I see the child in you, and I am bemused: sometimes your face appears sad, sometimes very happy." Mary said, "I exult and I delight, for the Lord has delivered me from all the machinations of the enemy. But I would teach you a new thing, that you may profit from it." Joseph said, "Tell me what you mean." Mary said, "I am alternately cheerful and dejected, because I see two armies, made up of many battalions each, one on the left, the other on the right. Those on the left are filled with happiness, and those on the right are clothed with sadness and mourning."

4. Upon hearing this, Joseph was filled with wonder, and he paused and said, "What is this vision that appeared to you?" And at that instant, an angel spoke to Mary, and said to her, "Rejoice, Mary, virgin and maidservant of the Lord. Do you see the sign that appeared to you?" Mary said, "Yes." The angel said, "Today, the pains of your delivery are close. The legions which you see on the left are made up of multitudes of incorporeal angels. They wait to observe the birth of your holy child, that they may come and adore the new-born one, the son of the King, the sovereign of Israel. Those on the right in black clothing are hordes of demons: they wait in great disorder, because they will be put to rout." Having heard the words of the angel, Joseph and Mary were filled with rapture, and gave great praise to God.

5. And they walked on; and on the sixth hour of the 21st of the month of Tebeth—a very cold winter Thursday, the sixth of January—they arrived at a deserted place, which had formerly been the royal city³⁸ and is now called Bethlehem. Mary said to Joseph, "I must dismount; for my time is upon me." Joseph said, "Alas, that you should be delivered now, and that it take place not in an inhabited area, but in an uncultivated and deserted place, where there is no inn. Where shall we go; where will I lay you down to rest? Here there is neither house, nor covered shelter, the shade of which might conceal your nakedness."

6. And he found a very large cave,³⁹ where the shepherds and ploughmen who lived and worked in the neighborhood herded their cattle together in the evening. They had made there a manger for their beasts; and they would themselves eat there with their animals. But at that time of the day they were not there.⁴⁰

7. Joseph brought Mary to the cave and took her inside. He then placed his son Jose near her, on guard at the threshold of the cave, and went out in search of a midwife.

8. And behold, Joseph saw that the ground had been raised, and the sky had been dropped; and he lifted his hands and touched the place where they met. He saw around him the very elements torpid and stupefied: the wind and the air of the sky had suspended their journey and become motionless; the birds had halted in mid-flight. Looking at the ground, he saw a potter, making in the air with his hands the gesture to join two halves of a clay vessel which he held; but his hands did not approach each other. He saw the flocks as they were driven; they advanced, but they neither moved nor fed. The shepherd held up his crook; but he could not strike them, though he clenched his fist and raised it very high. And he looked at the torrent in the ravine, and saw that the goats who fed there had their lips poised at the margin of the grass, but did not graze. Thus, at the hour of the birth of Jesus, all Nature became fixed and still.

9. And Joseph looked about him, and he saw a woman coming towards him from the mountain, a broad cloak thrown over her shoulder. And he said, "Woman, where do you come from, and whence do you go?" The woman said, "And what do you seek, you who question me thus?" Joseph said, "I seek a Jewish midwife." The woman said, "And who is she who just gave birth in the cave?" Joseph said, "It is Mary, who was brought up in the temple and given to me in marriage. She is not my wife according to the flesh, but by the designation of the Holy Spirit." The woman said, "You speak the truth; but take me to where she is." Joseph said, "Come and see."

10. And while they walked, Joseph questioned her, and said, "Woman, tell me your name." The woman said, "Why do you ask me for my name? I am Eve, the first mother of all men, and I have come to see take place my own redemption." And upon hearing this, Joseph became astonished with the wonder he had seen.

11. They arrived, pausing at the mouth of the cave. And behold, the vault of Heaven opened, and a bright light covered the area. A pillar of fire, overlaid by a luminous cloud, descended upon the cave; and from this column could be heard the voices of the incorporeal beings, celestial angels and sublime spirits, singing their canticles, the air resounding with their voices as they glorified God.

IX

1. And when Joseph and our first mother saw this, they bowed their faces to the ground; and thanking God aloud, they glorified Him. And Eve said, “Blessed Supreme Being, Lord God of our fathers, God of Israel, Who has today by Your will made possible the redemption of mankind: today You have restored me, raised me from my fall and given back to me my former dignity. My heart is alive,⁴¹ and my hope in God my Savior causes me to tremble with excitement.”

2. Having thus spoken, she saw a cloud detach itself from the cave and ascend into the sky; and lo, a sparkling light appeared above the manger. And < the child >²⁶ walked to its mother and nursed; and having done so, it walked back to its place and sat down. Seeing this, Joseph and Eve gave glory to God, caught up in admiration of the wonders they had seen. And they said, “Who has ever heard of a similar event; and who has ever seen before anything like this?”

3. And our first mother entered the cave; and cherishing the child, she took it tenderly in her arms; and she praised God, for the child was marvelous to see, shining and resplendent and beautifully formed. She wrapped it in swaddling-clothes; and laying it in the manger, she left the cave. Now, a woman named Salome had just arrived there from the city of Jerusalem; and Eve saw her, and went up to her and said, “I have good news: a young virgin, who has never known any man, has just delivered a child in this cave.”

4. Salome said, “I learned in Jerusalem that this alleged virgin put forth a male child into the world, and I came with joy to see him. For Jerusalem has condemned me, like a culprit worthy of death; and because of my shame and dishonor, I fled the city and came here.” Eve said, “Yes, < I know; but a miracle has happened here: truly >⁴² her virginity is holy and remains immaculate.” Salome said, “But how do you know that she is a virgin?” Our first mother said, “I will tell you what I saw with my own eyes.” Salome said, “Speak.” Eve said, “When I entered this cave at first, I saw cast over everything a luminous cloud. I heard the thunderous sounds of the words and spiritual choruses from the army of angels, who praised God and glorified Him; and a brilliant cloud rose into the sky.” Salome said to her, “By the life < of the Lord >,⁴³ I will not believe what you say until I have seen with my own eyes this virgin who gave birth to a child without having had intercourse.” And Eve entered the cave and said to the holy virgin Mary, “It seems necessary for you to lend us your presence; for Salome wishes to put you to the test, and physically examine your virginal nature.”

5. Salome entered the cave and drew near to the virgin. And as she advanced her hand, behold, a flame darted forth from the very place she intended to examine, burning her hand with fire. She screamed, and cried out, “Misfortune is with me, my faults have mislaid me, miserable and afflicted as I am. What have I done in my disordered state? For I sinned against my God. I blasphemed Him; for in my incredulity, I put God to the test. See how my hand has become like a burning fire!”

6. But an angel stationed close to Salome said to her, “Extend your hand towards the child. Bring it near to him, and you will be cured.” And falling at the feet of the child, she kissed him; and taking him in her arms, she cherished him. And she said, “O newly-born, son of the great and powerful Father, Jesus, Messiah, King of Israel, Redeemer, Anointed of the Lord, manifested in the city of David. O Light, who came into the world and revealed to us the redemption of the world.”

7. Salome spoke these words and many other like them; and as she was speaking, her hand was made whole. And rising, she adored the child, and prepared to return to Jerusalem. The angel spoke to her and said, “Salome, when you get to Jerusalem, go where you wish, but tell no-one of the vision which came to you, that knowledge of it may not reach the ears of King Herod before the child Jesus goes to the temple after forty days to be purified.” And Salome said, “Yes, Lord, I will do as you say.” And when she returned to her home, she did not tell anyone what the angel had said to her.”

X

1. Now, the shepherds of this area lived around about the place where these events took place; but they returned

with the herds of ewes and goats only at nightfall, from where they grazed them in isolated and remote places in the mountains and on the plain. And every evening each shepherd brought back his flock: they herded them into the sheepfold and stood guard on them the whole night, until the morning. And the angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And they cried out and came together, saying one to the other, "What is this that was shouted to us, which we did not understand?"

2. And the angel said again to them, "Fear not. Behold, I tell you a great joy. For unto you is born today in the city of David a Savior, who is the Christ < of the > Lord.³⁸ And this shall be a sign unto to you. You will enter the cave, and you will find there a child wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a manger." And when the angel had spoken, the fifteen shepherds went in haste to the place; and seeing Jesus, they prostrated themselves before him and adored him. And they glorified God aloud, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward all men." And having said these things, the shepherds returned each one to his herd, glorifying the Christ.⁴⁴

XI

1. Joseph and Mary remained hidden with the child in the cave; and they did not show themselves, so that nobody knew they were there. But after three days (that is, on the 23rd of Tebeth, January 9th) the Magi drew near to Jerusalem, having journeyed for nine months with a mighty army from the East. These < three >²⁶ kings of the Magi were also brothers. The first was Melkon, king of Persia; the second was Gaspar, king of the Hindus; and the third was Balthasar, king of the Arabs. Twelve generals commanded their army.⁴⁵ Twelve thousand troop of cavalry accompanied them, four thousand from each kingdom. All < had come >²⁶ at the command of God from the East, the homeland of the Magi; for when the angel of the Lord had told the virgin Mary that she was to be a mother, he was sent at the same moment by the Holy Spirit to tell the Magi to go and adore the new-born child. Thus it was that they assembled together; and a star which preceded them led them after a journey of nine months to the neighborhood of Jerusalem.

2. The Magi remained encamped around the city for three days—they and the princes of their vassal states;⁴⁶ for though they were themselves brothers, sons of the same king, the armies with them were made up of people from many nations. Melkon, the first of them, < had brought >²⁶ with him myrrh, aloe, muslin, crimson, and ribbons of flax; and also a document,⁴⁷ written and sealed by the finger of God. Gaspar, king of the Hindus, had also brought a present in honor of the child: priceless nard, cinnamon, incense and perfumes. And Balthasar, the king of the Arabs, had brought < with him >²⁶ gold, silver,⁴⁸ precious stones, sapphires of great price, and fine pearls.

3. And when they had reached Jerusalem, the star which had preceded them temporarily hid its light. And so they stopped and made camp; and the troops of cavalry and the princes said one to the other, "Well, and where shall we go now? The star which has led us until this moment has disappeared, and left us in confusion." And the Magi said to them, "Let us go and make inquiries about the child, and find out exactly where he is; then we will carry on with our journey." And they all agreed with this.

4. When King Herod saw the numerous cavalry drawn up menacingly around the city, he conceived a sharp fear of them; and he reflected, and said within himself, "Who are these people, encamped with an army of great power and might, and possessed of such treasure, luxury and riches? Not one of them have asked to be formally received by us. They are filled with such pride,⁴⁹ that they did not bother to seek our mercy." And Herod sent for his princes and his dignitaries; and holding council, they said one to the other, "How shall we treat with these people; for they possess an army of many nations accustomed to hardship."⁵⁰

5. And the princes said to Herod, "O king, order the city to be well guarded, lest these strangers seize it by surprise and take away the inhabitants into captivity." "Your advice is good," said the king, "but let us first test them by diplomacy;⁵¹ and then we will see what is to be done." His advisors said, "O king, be vigilant: order your army to assemble, and command them to be watchful and on their guard; and appoint men skilled in polite speech, who will treat with them, to discover exactly and in detail where they come from, and what their destination is."

6. Herod then appointed three princes to be his envoys; and after prostrating themselves before the Magi, and exchanging amenities with them, they sat down. The ambassadors said, "Worthy men and powerful rulers, tell us the reason for your coming." The Magi said, "Why do you question us? It is we who came to question you. We

come from distant Persia, and wish to continue with our journey as soon as possible.” “Listen to us, for the love of God,” said the envoys, “and hearken to what we say. Our king is in the city; and when he saw you arrive, he expected that you would present yourselves to him. He wished to see you, to talk with you, to converse with you and to listen to what you have to say. You did not seek him out, or desire to meet with him; he has thus sent us, his envoys, to invite you to return with us to his palace, that he may enquire of you himself what your intentions are in this, his country.”

7. The Magi said, “So it is us your king wants? Well, whether he has anything to say to us or not, we for our part have nothing that we wish to say to anybody—nor to listen to, nor to observe.” The ambassadors said, “Tell us: did you come here as friends, or with intent to do us harm?” The Magi said, “We left our country in a state of happiness; and so we have remained, up to now, for nobody subjected us to an interrogation. Now you come here, unasked, to pry into our business!” The envoys said, “We came here at the command of our king to see and to speak with you; for since you made your encampment, a pungent odor has spread from your premises and filled our entire city. Would you be merchants engaged in some sort of large scale enterprise? Or perhaps you are powerful lords and familiars of kings, who possess an abundance of valuable perfumes which you intend to exchange with some wealthy person in this country?” The Magi said, “It is not as you believe. We have nothing to sell, and we seek only to be on our way.”

8. The envoys asked, “Which way is that?” “That by which the Lord will lead us in righteousness,” the Magi replied, “to the country of the good. As for us, it is both by the command of God and our own mutual agreement that we came here. We have been nine months on our journey; and we might still arrive on time at our destination, if all goes well. A star traveled with us and guided us—it stationed itself above our heads as we went.⁵² Its light is now concealed from our eyes; and we have not yet decided how to proceed, as this has thrown us into some uncertainty.”

9. The princes returned and told Herod all the Magi had told them. And Herod himself rose up and went to the Magi; and he asked them, “For what purpose did you embark upon so long a journey to this country, with this mighty army and all these gifts?” The Magi said, “This is why we came: we heard in our country that the son of a king will be born in Judea; and we came here to see and to adore him.”

10. When he heard this, Herod was moved, and he became alarmed at what they had told him. “How did you come by this knowledge,” he asked. “Was it brought back to you from these parts?” “We received from our ancestors a written testimony concerning this event,” said the Magi. “It was kept under seal; and for many years—indeed, from generation to generation—fathers and their sons held themselves in readiness, until this moment, when the prophecy has been suddenly fulfilled before our very eyes. It arrived by God’s command, revealed to us through the ministry of an angel, and expressed in a vision. And we came here, because this was the place indicated by the Lord.” “From where did you get this written testimony that you speak of?” Herod asked.

11. The Magi said, “This testimony of ours comes neither from our father⁵³ nor any other person. It is a Divine command concerning an intention which the Lord promised to carry out in favor of the children of all men; a command preserved by us until this time.” Herod said, “Where is this writing; and have only your people received it, and no-one else?” “No other people know of it,” the Magi said, “neither by hearsay nor revelation. Only our people have a written testimony of it. For when Adam had left Paradise, and Abel had perished at the hands of Cain, God gave to Adam Seth, the child of his consolation, and with him this writing, closed and sealed by the finger of God.⁵⁴ Seth accepted it from his father and gave it to his sons; and his sons passed it down to their sons; and so on, from generation to generation. The last of these gave it to Abraham, who in turn presented it to the High Priest Melchisedek; and through him our people were entrusted with it at the time of Cyrus, king of Persia.⁵⁵ And our fathers having received it, deposited it in a special room with great honor. Finally it came to us; and having examined it, we knew in advance of the prophecy concerning the new monarch, the king of Israel.”

12. “Show me this writing that you have,” Herod commanded. “It is impossible to open it and show it to anyone,” the Magi protested, “for it is we who are to carry out its instructions.”⁵⁶ When Herod heard that, his heart became filled with rage, and he said, “Since you will not show me this document, I will not let you proceed upon your way.” And he ordered them placed under arrest and taken away. And at once, the place where they and many

others had been imprisoned began suddenly to shake violently. A multitude congregating in its courtyard fled; the columns surrounding it on all four sides crashed to the ground; and the building itself collapsed, killing seventy-two people, both adults and children. At the sight of this, those who were left alive fell at Herod's feet. "Let them proceed peacefully on their way," they begged; and Herod's son, Archaeleus, also did the same, throwing himself at his father's feet.

13. Herod agreed to the request of his son and ordered the Magi set free; and then, pretending to be their friend—for Herod was at heart an irreligious man—he asked them, "Tell me what it is that you wish me to do for you." The Magi said, "We have no other request than this: do you have any writing in your Law about that which we seek? Do you know anything about it?" Herod said, "What do you want me to tell you?" "Where will the Christ, the king of the Jews, be born?" the Magi asked. And when he heard this, Herod became highly disturbed, and the city of Jerusalem with him. And having called together all the priests and the scribes of the people, he asked them, "Where must this Christ be born?" They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, in the city of David the king." And Herod called to the Magi, and he said, "Go < to Bethlehem >;⁵⁷ you will find the child there. And when you have found him, send word to me here, that I may come and worship him." So did the impious tyrant speak, that he might by this knowledge treacherously surprise and slay with the sword the son of the Most High.

14. And the Magi rose at once, and, after prostrating themselves before Herod and his court, they resumed their journey. And behold: the star which had accompanied them before on their travels again preceded them; and it stopped directly above the place where the child Jesus lay. The kings and princes and all their host came in a state of happiness. Arriving in Bethlehem, they descended from their mounts, and began to sing and dance, making the air resound with their trumpets and cymbals, their zithers and flutes⁵⁸ and other instruments. And with full voice and merry hearts they blessed God and thanked the Lord that they were deemed worthy to arrive in time to participate in that great day, made luminous by the Mystery which was shown to them.

15. Seeing all this, Joseph and Mary became frightened of the kings and their army. And they made as if to flee from there, leaving the child Jesus seated alone in the manger.⁵⁹ And noting this, the Magi and their court said to Joseph, "Old man, why are you afraid, and why do you flee from us? In truth we are men like you." Joseph said, "Why do you arrive at this hour, and what do you want of us, coming here with so great a host?" The Magi said, "We came here from our homeland in remote Persia, with many presents and offerings. We wish to see the newborn child, the king of the Jews, and adore Him. If by chance you happen to know, tell us where He is, so that we may go to Him" Hearing this, Mary re-entered the cave with joy; and taking Jesus in her arms, she felt His heart beating with happiness. She blessed and glorified God, giving thanks to the Lord; and then, seated there, she fell silent.

16. And the Magi questioned Joseph again, "O worthy old man, if you know, tell us exactly where we may find the new-born child." And beckoning to them, Joseph led them into the cave. They saw the child in the manger; and they prostrated themselves before Him, their faces to the ground, kings, princes, noble lords and all the army; and each one of them in his turn brought a present and offered it to Him.

17. And first came Gaspar, king of India. He spread costly nard, myrrh, cinnamon, incense and other aromatics before the Lord; and at once an odor of immortality spread throughout the cave where they were gathered. Then Balthasar, the king of the Arabs, unlocked his opulent treasury; and he offered the infant gold and precious stones, fine pearls and splendid sapphires of great price. In his turn Melkon, king of Persia, brought his offering of myrrh aloe, muslin, purple, ribbons of flax and other things.

18. And after each of them had offered his gift in honor of the royal child of Israel, the kings rose and left the cave, side by side; and they sat down together, and began to talk, one to the other; and they said, "What amazing things we have seen! And in so poor and small a place, deprived of everything. Neither in a house nor a dwelling, not even in a shelter, but in a deserted uninhabited cave have these people been forced out of necessity to shelter themselves. And here it is that we have come from so far way to see them and make conversation with them. But did we all see the same thing? Let us tell each other what marvelous things we did see, each one of us in his turn."

19. King Gaspar said, "When I brought and presented incense to this child, I saw in Him the Son of God incarnate, sitting upon the throne of glory, an army of bodiless angels forming his court." Balthasar said, "When I approached, I saw him seated upon a sublime throne, and prostrated before him an innumerable army which adored him." Melkon said, "As for me, I saw him die in bodily torment, but rise and come to life again." And hearing their respective visions, the kings were struck with wonder, and said in astonishment, "What is this new miracle: our testimonies do not agree, yet we must believe as fact what we see with our own eyes."

20. And in the morning, the king to whom was given the vision of Christ being raised from the dead said to the others, "Come, let us go back to the cave, and let us see if some other sign will be shown to us." And Balthasar went, and behold: he did not see what he had seen at first; but Jesus appeared to him as the son of any man, an earthly king. Gaspar saw instead of the child sitting in the manger, the second vision; and he said to the others: "My first vision did not appear to me; but I saw yours, Balthasar, the one you reported to us." Melkon entered then; and he saw Jesus sitting on His throne of Glory, not as in his preceding vision, of Jesus dead and come to life again, but as Gaspar had first seen Him. Filled with joy, Melkon made haste to tell his brothers.

21. And after they had seen these things, and thought about them apart from one another, they came together again, and they said, "Come, brothers, let us review again what we saw. Early tomorrow we will go again to the cave, so that we will be absolutely convinced that it is indeed the Lord who has shown us these things." They returned to their dwelling, and remained there in a state of happiness until morning. And rising early, they went to the cave. Entering one by one, they saw and recognized the infant Jesus; and they felt in their hearts the same transport of bliss as before. They were delighted; and filled with joy and love, they went out to the army and said to them, "This is indeed God and the son of God. He granted each of us a vision in connection with our offerings; He received us with kindness and gentleness; and He has kept us in safety. We should all of us do homage to Him." And everyone had faith in Jesus: the kings, the princes, the army—all the people who were there.

22. And king Melkon, having taken the ancient will, which he kept at his place as the heritage of his first ancestors, brought it forth and presented it to the child. And he said, "Here is the writing that you gave to me to keep, after having closed and sealed it. Take and read what you wrote." This was the document whose text remained under seal, and which the Magi had not dared to read either to the priests or the people of the Jews. ⁶⁰

23. For when Cain slew Able, Adam was more afflicted by the death of this son than the pain he had been forced to undergo when he left Paradise. The Lord God caused the birth of Seth, a son of consolation to his father. And because Adam had approached < God, and by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, had >⁶¹ wanted to become like God, God had resolved to become man, out of the excess of His mercy and His love for mankind. And he made a pact with our first father, according to his prayer, which he wrote on a parchment in letters of gold and sealed with his own finger; and it read: "In the year six thousand, the sixth day, I will send my only son, the Son of man, and he will again restore you in your original dignity. Then you, Adam, being plain with God, in your immortalized flesh, you will have become God, being able, like one of us, to distinguish the good and the evil."⁶²

24. This was the written document, folded and sealed by the finger of God, that the Magi presented to Jesus. Consequently, the kings, the princes, and all their army were granted their prayers and their requests. The Magi remained within the cave for three days. And after this, and having deliberated upon what they should do next, the kings said, "Come! Let us go and adore Jesus, and confess that He is God. Then we will resume our journey again in peace." And they rose and went back to the cave; they adored Jesus and said to Him, "You are God and the Son of God." And departing from the cave, they gave thanks to God with joy and merriment.

25. And at dawn of the following day they were ready to go back to their own lands. It was the first day of the week, the 25th of Tebeth, or January 12th. And as they thought to visit Herod in Jerusalem on their return journey, at that moment a voice spoke to them, saying, "Do not go to Herod, that impious tyrant; for he seeks the child only to destroy him." Hearing this, the Magi and all their host gave up this plan; and they left for their homelands, filled with joy and glorifying Christ, God of the universe, following the road where the Lord led them.

1. And Joseph and Mary remained hidden in the cave with the child, even after all these things had taken place, that they might remain as inconspicuous as possible. Joseph took the treasures which the magi had brought and carefully hid them in the cave. Every day he went out into the city and the countryside and its villages, looking for such work as he could find. Those who lived in their immediate vicinity provided for all their material needs, and nobody threatened them or bothered them < in any way. >⁶³ God wished it thus; for the distance between Bethlehem and the city of Jerusalem is hardly more than a dozen miles, and the territory all around is deserted and uninhabited. And whenever Joseph went to a place to do some business, he left his son Jose to guard the virgin Mary and do her bidding; and Jose was his youngest son, whom his father had brought with him to Bethlehem.

2. And when the child had been alive eight days, Joseph called to Mary, and he said, "What shall we do with this child; for the Law directs that he be circumcised after eight days." Mary said to him, "Let your will decide this matter: do what you wish." And Joseph rose, and went secretly to Jerusalem; and he brought back from there a wise man, compassionate and God-fearing, thoroughly versed in Divine law. His name was Joel; and he came to the cave where the child lay; but when he attempted to circumcise the boy, the steel refused in the least way to cut into his flesh.⁶⁴ Seeing this he was astounded; and he said, "Here the blood of the child should have run;"⁶⁵ but he accepted the name, Jesus, which had been given to the child in advance < of its birth >⁶⁶ by the angel.

3. And Joseph and Mary dwelt in the cave. The child Jesus grew and progressed in wisdom; but until forty days were completed, < they hid the > child < Jesus, >⁶⁷ that his whereabouts might remain inconspicuous.

4. In the meantime, the Magi had departed for their own lands, without returning to Herod. And Herod pondered on this, and he said, "If the Magi who came here did not return, it is because they were traders in league with kings. They did not wish to reveal their secrets to me, fearing that I would hold them for ransom. Thus they escaped me through sophistry and under false pretext, for fear that I would do them injury." And Herod left Jerusalem, and went out into Judea, to the province of Achaëa. For the moment, he thought no more to seek the child < Jesus >⁶⁸ out, that he might destroy Him; and the priests and the people not having to continue the enterprise, it was forgotten.

5. Then Joseph secretly too Mary and Jesus to Jerusalem, together with many the many offerings and gifts made through the liberality of the Magi. And having presented the child Jesus to the priests, Joseph and Mary made an offering of a pair of turtle-doves⁶⁹ in the holy Temple, according to the Law. And the aged Symeon took the Messiah in his arms; and he asked the Lord that he might be allowed to die, now that his heart's desire had been granted. And he said of Jesus in a prophetic spirit: "He has come for the fall and for the resurrection of a great number in Israel."

6. And having made his offerings and performed his sacrifices, Joseph took Mary and Jesus, and set out again from Jerusalem for the town of Bethlehem. Re-entering the cave, they remained hidden there until the new year, not appearing in public out of fear of the irreligious King Herod. And when Jesus was nine months old, he separated himself from his mother's breast, ceasing to take nourishment from her, but being otherwise sustained.⁷⁰ Joseph and Mary noticed this and wondered at it; and they said, one to the other, "How is it that he neither eats nor drinks nor sleeps, but is always conscious and attentive? And no-one could understand the power of will that he exerted on himself.

XIII

1. They had just begun another year in Bethlehem, when an impious man of Jerusalem named Begor sought out King Herod and submitted the following report to him: "The Magi, whom you sent to Bethlehem and whom you ordered to tell you what they discovered, did not return; but having arrived in Bethlehem, they found a child newly born, said by some to be the son of a king. To him they offered presents and all manner of goods which they had with them; and they returned to their own country by another way."

2. Herod ordered the princes and the major lords of his kingdom to assemble together; for he intended to tell them that he had been misled by the Magi. And he said, "What can we make of this?"⁷¹ These people, after having ridiculed us, and dealt treacherously with us, have escaped us by flight.⁷² What is this child, and in what hidden

place is it concealed, so that no-one has seen it? Now that it is known to be alive,⁷³ let us send soldiers to Bethlehem, that they may discover its whereabouts, seize it, and kill its father and its mother.”

3. The princes said: “O king, listen to us. Bethlehem is a town in ruins. The facts concerning this child came about long ago. He will no longer be there, but will have been forced to flee to a remote country.” So from a Divine will did the princes speak thus to Herod, and thanks to a provision by the Holy Spirit, they did no more business, nor did they reveal to Herod where Jesus lay;⁷⁴ for Jesus and his parents still lived there.

4. This, however, only increased the rage in the heart of this malicious and irreligious king. And the princes said, “O king, do not afflict yourself in this way, and do not disturb your heart in an outburst of frenzy. Order what you wish us to do.” “I know what I will do,” said Herod. :”As for you, you have only to hold yourselves ready < to serve me >.”⁷⁵ He ordered the heads of the army and the district leaders to gather together; and he sent them into every part of his empire to gather intelligence, to seek out Jesus. They did not find Him; and when they returned, they submitted this report to Herod: We traversed all the districts of Judea, but we did not find Jesus.” Then Herod ordered his armies under eighteen *chiliarchs*⁷⁶ to invest all the territories subject to his dominion, and he gave them the following orders: Have no pity on the little children, neither heed the lamentations of their fathers or their mothers. Do not be persuaded by bribery, nor misleading oaths; neither be in any way gratified; but everywhere you find children of two years old or under, those children shall be put to death.”

5. Then the commanders of the army gathered around Herod, and the army itself, to the number of 18,000,⁷⁷ with their swords and other weapons. And setting out, they went everywhere, killing all the children whom they found in 83 villages, to the number of approximately 1,360. So did the impious tyrant behave on account of Jesus, hoping that He would perhaps be found among the slain. But Joseph and Mary learned about all these things; and they became afraid of the king and his army. And Mary took the child Jesus, and wrapped Him in a blanket and hid Him in the animal’s manger. Later they huddled together in a hiding-place in the ruins of the town; and nobody came to where they were; for those who knew they were there did not look at them, neither did they pay them any mind.

XIV

1. And Herod, the impious tyrant, having been thwarted in his designs, began then to question Zachariah about John, asking if he was his only son, and if he intended to reign over Israel. And he sent soldiers to Zacharian to ask him about John; and he said: “I have heard from several people that your son is intended to reign in Judea. Show me this prophecy, that I may see it.”⁷⁸ But when Zachariah heard the words of the impious villain, he said to him, “By the life of the Lord, I do not know what you are talking about.”

2. And when Elizabeth heard of this, she took John and fled from there to a deserted place in the mountains, seeking to save the life of her child. And with her last breath, she cried bitterly to the Lord, shedding tears and saying, “Lord, God of our fathers, God of Israel, listen to the prayer of your maidservant. Have pity on me and treat me kindly; for the mad dog Herod and his criminal pack of wolves seek to tear out my heart with their hands. Let the ground open up, that it may absorb this mother with her child, that my eyes may not see the death of my son.” And as she said these words, behold, the mountains opened and gave them entry; and it hid the mother with her child. A luminous cloud covered them, keeping them safe and healthy; and an angel of the Lord came down, and guarded and defended them.

3. But Herod sent his porters a second time to Zachariah, and said to him, “Tell me where your son is hidden: show him to me, that I may see him.” And Zachariah said, “I am attached to the service of the Temple; my home is not here, but in the mountains of Galilee. I do not know what has become of the mother and her child.” The porter brought back the words of Zachariah; but again Herod sent a message to his generals. And he said to them, “Say this to Zachariah: ‘Here is what the King of Israel says. You concealed your son from my sight, not wanting to present him to me because I know that your son must reign over the house of Israel. Do you think you can escape from me with words, and avoid me by vain pretext? It will not be so. If you do not bring him to me, I will take him by force, and slay you with him.’”⁷⁹

4. Zachariah said, “By the life of the Lord, I do not know what has become of the mother and her child”; and

Herod's envoys brought back the words of Zachariah to him. But the tyrant, impious and filled with all manner of iniquity, sent again his messengers. And they said: "Now this is the third time that I send you my commands. You do not listen to me; neither are you afraid of my threats. Can it be that you do not realize that your blood is under my hand and that no-one can save you, not even that in which you repose your greatest confidence?"

5. When they brought these words to Zachariah, he said to them, "I know that Herod desires my blood, and that he has decided to shed it without reason. But even if you would destroy my body with a cruel death, the Lord, who created me and formed me, will preserve my soul." They told Herod what Zachariah had said. But this irreligious man, from his heart's increasing spite, made him no answer; and that night the impious man sent soldiers, who crept into the Temple and killed Zachariah in the Gate of Alliance near the public altar. And neither the priests nor the people knew anything about it.

6. But though they remained waiting to see him at the hour of ritual prayer, they did not discover him. And when at dawn the hour of public prayer arrived, the priests and the people met together; and they said, "Has the High Priest Zachariah arrived? Where could he be?" For they were astonished at the delay in his coming, and they said, "Perhaps he has begun with private prayer; or he may have been granted some vision in the Temple."

7. But one of the priests, who was called Phillip,⁸⁰ entered boldly into the Holy of Holies, and he saw there coagulated close to the furnace bridge of God. And behold, a voice came out of the gate vault; and it said, "Innocent blood was widely shed in vain; until vengeance has been completed, not even will the head of the house of Israel be spared." And when the priests and the multitude of the people had heard that, they tore their clothing and, spreading ashes upon their heads, they said: "Misfortune with us! Misfortune with our parents! We are condemned with all this disaster and all this ignominie."

8. And the priests, penetrating into the gate-vault, found the blood of Zachariah coagulated, like stone, near the furnace bridge of God; but his body they did not find. And struck with amazement, they said one to the other that it had been consumed < by fire. >⁸¹ For they said: "That must be what became of his body; for it has not been seen by anyone." They wandered everywhere in their search, but did not find it. And they suspected, besides each other, that someone else had carried his body away secretly, taking it from there to hide it in some other place. In his honor they wore deep mourning; and the children of Israel lamented the death of Zachariah for thirty days. They searched in many places for his body, but did not find it. Thus did the murder of Zachariah took place.

XV

1. An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and said to him, "Arise, take up the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, for Herod seeks to kill the child. The king has been informed about the account of Jesus: he has been told that the child still lives."⁸²

2. And Joseph rose at once, took the child and his mother, and fled to Ascogon (which one calls Ascalon), located at the edge of the ocean sea,⁸³ and from there to Hebron, where they remained hidden for six months. < And the child Jesus was one year old and three months; >⁸⁴ and he was walking already. He went with his toys and sought comfort from his mother; and she, in a transport of tenderness, raised him in her arms, lavished her caresses upon him and gave praise and thanksgiving to God.

3. And some people of the city went to warn Herod, but in these terms: "The child Jesus still lives; he is currently in the town of Hébron." Herod dispatched an order to the heads of the city, commanding them to seize Jesus by trickery and kill Him; and when Joseph and Mary were informed of it, they set out from there into Egypt, leaving the city secretly as fugitives, and keeping to their road. They traversed many stages, and at the places where they stopped to rest, the child Jesus drew water in a basin and gave them to drink. Finally they arrived upon Egyptian ground, the plain of Tanis, at Polpah. There they remained six months; and the child Jesus became two years old.

4. And they set out from there, traveling close to the borders of Egypt, and arrived at Cairo, near Mesrin, at a large castle of the royal residence (which is a space covered with palaces and fortresses). The castle was very tall and splendid, marvelously decorated and variously adorned. Alexander of Macedonia had built it, in the days of his power. There they remained four months, until just the moment when the child Jesus reached two years and four

months of age.

5. And Jesus went outside, for He wished to walk with the children and the little ones of His age, that he might play and talk with them. And he took them to the high places of the castle, to the attic windows and the other windows through which passed the rays of the sun; and He said: "Which among you could throw their arms around a ray of light, and travel down it from here to the ground without hurting themselves?" And they said: "None of us can do such a thing." Jesus said: "Look, all of you, and see!" And He threw his arms around the rays of the sun, formed of tiny particles of dust, and let Himself slip to the bottom without being killed. Having seen this, His playmates and all the children who were there < went away and told >⁸⁵ in the city the wonders accomplished by Jesus. And those who heard the account of this spectacle admired it, and were amazed; but Joseph and Mary, having heard these things, were seized with fear because of the child and left the city. And nobody knew they were gone; for they set out furtively during the night, fleeing these places and taking Jesus with them as they moved away.

6. They arrived at a city of Egypt where the whole multitude of people were gathered. This city was very large and surrounded by high walls. In the district where they had arrived, magic statues had been raised; and each time an enemy threatened the country with danger or despoilation, these statues raised the same cry of alarm throughout the city. Those who heard the voice if these statues recognized this cry, and understood that someone was going to arrive in their country. Two eagles of iron within copper cages, a male and a female, had been placed within the first gate of the wall. Within the second gate there were animals of terra cotta and clay, a bear on one side, a lion on the other; and other wild animals were represented in stone and wood. And within the third gate there was a copper horse; and on this copper horse was the copper statue of a king, having on his hand a copper eagle.

7. When Jesus approached to go through the gate, all these statues began suddenly to speak noisily in chorus; and all the other inanimate statues of the false gods vied with one another. And the idols of the temples cried out, so that the whole city was shaken by the sound to its foundations. Because of fright and terror, living for men became impossible. The two eagles screamed at the same time; the lion howled, the horse neighed, and the copper king with his eagle on his fist shouted out, saying: "Listen, all of you who are here, and hold yourselves ready; for a monarch, the son of the Great King, approaches our city with a mighty army."

8. When they heard that, all the people trained for the army ran with weapons at once to the ramparts < of the wall; >⁸⁶ and they looked on all sides, but they did not see anything. And being made to think,⁸⁷ they said with astonishment: "What is this voice which challenges us? Who has seen or heard of the son of a king entering our city." Then they spread out everywhere to look; but they found nothing, except that, in a house, they discovered Joseph, Mary and Jesus. They detained Joseph; and having brought him to a public place, they said to him: "Tell us, old man: from where did you come to this place, and of which nation are you?" Joseph said, "We are of the ground of Judea, and the city of Jerusalem. They said to him: "Tell us the truth: when did you arrive here?"

9. Joseph said, "It has been three days since I arrived in this city." They said to him, "And on the road by which you came, did you not see a prince, son of a king, who walked against this city with his army?" Joseph said, "I did not see him." They said to him, "But how did you cross so long a stretch of road, and with no water?" Joseph said, "Sometimes my family and I traveled with companions; sometimes only I went." The Crowd said, "We know that you are a poor foreign man, a truthful man. We wish only to be informed and to know what is going on. Do not blame us, because a wonder appeared to us today and caused us all to be amazed." And having thus spoken, they let Joseph go and went away from him.

10. And it came to pass that Joseph, having arrived in the city, took lodgings near a temple filled with idols devoted to Apollo. He remained there several days. One day Jesus looked critically at this palace of idols (which, to judge from its width and height was not unlike a small city in size); and he called to his mother, saying: "Answer me, and tell me what I must know." Mary said to him: "Speak, my son; what do you want? Jesus said: "What are these buildings, raised < on platforms >⁸⁸ whose width is so considerable?" Mary said, "It is the temple of the idols of Apollo, devoted to illegal sacrifices and containing the image of the false god Apollo. Jesus said: "I will see which aspect it presents and what it resembles." Mary said: 'If you want to go there, be careful, so that

Apollo does you no evil.”

11. And Jesus at once rose up, moved to one side and entered the temple of the idols. He looked all around him and considered the splendor of the constructions, for they were decorated drawings, raised and of a varying pattern. He admired them extremely and came out promptly. Again the magic statues of the city began to howl like the first time; and they said, “Listen, all of you: the son of the Great King entered the temple of Apollo.” Having heard this, the people of the city all ran towards the temple; and they questioned one another, saying, “Which voice issued this cry addressed to us?” They traversed the whole of the city, but saw nothing except the child Jesus. They asked him, “Child, of whom are you the son?” Jesus said, “I am the little boy of an old man with white hair, poor and foreign to this country; what do you want with me?” They let him go and went on their way.

12. The people of the city questioned first one then another; and they said among themselves, “What is the meaning of this new wonder? < We distinctly heard > a voice which shouted; < and we do not understand anything about what it said. >⁸⁹ We fear that a disaster may come upon us suddenly from a direction that we do not apprehend.” And when they had thus spoken, the whole city became concerned. As for Jesus, He went away silently to his home and told < his parents >⁹⁰ all that he had intended to say to them; and Mary and Joseph were highly astonished by it.

13. As the new year approached—Jesus was then three years and four months old—there was one day a festival of Apollo. The crowd pressed against the gates of the temple of the idols with many gifts and offerings, to proffer sacrifice to the great gods of the animals—and, indeed, to any species of the four-footed. They prepared their debaucheries and their victims, drawing up a vast menu of dishes, both to eat and to drink. And all the multitude of the people who had come within the gate, together with the false priests celebrated the festival in honor of the idols of Apollo. And Jesus having appeared, entered secretly and sat down; and all the priests, the servants of the temples, were gathered with them.

14. And it came to pass that the statues of the eagles and wild animals, seeing Jesus entering the temple of the idols, shouted again, saying, “See, all of you:⁹¹ here has the son of the great King entered the temple of Apollo.” Hearing these words, everyone who was there was filled with anger and confusion; and each one attacked the other, seeking to kill one another by the sword. And they said: “What shall we do with this old man;⁹² for it is since his coming to our city and upon his arrival that all of these wonders and these miracles occurred. If this child is by chance the son of a great king, whom the old man has kidnapped and fled with into our country, come: let us seize him and kill the old man.”

15. While they thought on these matters, Jesus was there in the temple of Apollo. He attentively considered this image, encrusted with gold and silver, on the top of which was written: “This is the god Apollo⁹³ creator of earth and sky, that which gives life to all mankind.” At the same moment < He read this >,⁹⁴ Jesus came promptly out of the temple, indignant to his heart’s core; and looking at the sky, he said: “Father glorify your son, so that your son may glorify you.” And behold, there came from the skies a voice which said: “I glorify Him, and I will glorify Him again.”

16. And at the moment Jesus spoke, the ground trembled and all the buildings of the temple collapsed. The god of Apollo and the priests and pontiffs of the false gods were buried inside the structures, and so perished. The remainder of the population of the city that was there fled from the place. The idols and the furnace bridges of the demons which were in the city, collapsed in ruins; and all the buildings and the magic statues which surrounded the city—images of men, deer and animals, all inanimate—were thrown down. Then the demons cried out; and they said, “See, all of you, and pity us, for powerful as we are,⁹⁵ we were destroyed by a small infant; he destroyed our temple and killed our male servants, forcing them to destruction. Therefore seize Him, and force Him to perish by a cruel death.”

17. And hearing these complaints, and the lamentation of the demons—at the sound of their cry the people of the city ran together towards the site of the ruined temple; and donning mourning clothes, they cried, each one of them, for their dead. And Jesus went away from there in silence to His house, and sat down there in a corner. The people, having seized Joseph, forced him to appear before the tribunal, and said to him: “Tell us: what is the

meaning of the disaster which has embroiled us ever since your arrival in our city? We had not told you before you arrived: 'Tell us about yourselves, what you have done, what you saw and heard on your way here.' Nevertheless you have presented us with this tragedy.⁹⁶ So shall we kill you: you, your son and those who accompany you; for you, by your treason, have caused the destruction of this city. Tell us: where is your son? Show him to us, that we may see that which destroyed our gods, the ministers of our worship—who buried our priests under derbies, and caused many untimely deaths. You will not leave our hands before we will have treated you in a similar fashion."

18. And they pronounced against him many threats of this kind. However, Mary, falling at Jesus' feet, cried and called upon Him, saying: Jesus, my son, listen to me, your maidservant. Do not irritate them, and do not cause them to gather together, for I fear that in their hatred, one of them may stop us and kill us, making you perish with a cruel death." Jesus said: "O my mother, you do not know what you say. All the troops of the celestial army of the angelic spirits tremble while quivering with fear before the glorious power of my divinity, which makes the gift of life to all animate beings. For he, Sadaïel, being opposed to me and those of my creatures < made >²¹ in my image, dares to give himself the name < of God >⁹⁷ and to receive the homage and the worship of mankind."

19. Mary said: "My son, what you say is true; but please listen to me, and, through the intercession of your mother and maidservant, restore to life those which you caused to die, and all those who will see the miracles that you make, will believe on your behalf. For you see the many torments with which they afflict this old man; and they will stop, for your sake." Jesus said: "O my mother, do not present me with an argument of this kind, for the time has not yet come for me to do this thing." Mary said: "Please, listen to me, my son: consider our suffering, and the distress of your maidservant; since, for your sake, emigrated and away from home, we wander in an unknown and foreign land." Jesus said: "Because of your prayer I will cause this to happen, that these people may recognize that I am the son of God."

20. And having thus spoken, Jesus rose and walked through the crowd. And when assistants transferred this infant—for very small he was, just three years and four months old—they said one to the other: "Is this he who caused the temple of the idols to fall, and destroyed the statue of Apollo?" Others said: "Yes, it is him." And hearing this, all of them admired with wonder the works which he had done. ...⁹⁸ And Jesus, being made indignant in his heart, advanced over the corpses to the middle of the place; and taking some dust from the ground, He spread it over them and cried aloud: "I say to you all who lie here, struck with death inside this building, you who belong to the disaster which destroyed you: come outside."

21. And immediately He said those words, suddenly the place where they were trembled. The dust of a trillion⁹⁹ stones was raised, and approximately one hundred and eighty two people got to their feet, raised from the dead. But of the other ministers and arch-priests of Apollo, one hundred and nine were not raised. Terror filled them all, and seized with fear they said: "It is He, god of the Earth and Sky, who gives life to all mankind." And all the priests raised from the dead came and prostrated themselves before him; and they confessed their sins and said: "Truly, he is the son of God and the savior of the world, who came to give us life." And the story of this miracle was spread through the region; and those who heard of it came in great numbers from far away to see it. And because of Jesus' youth, they were yet more astonished.

22. Then all the assembled crowd fell at Jesus' feet, and they requested him to raise also those of the dead who had been servants of the temples; but Jesus did not want to do this. And having brought Joseph into the midst of the riotous assembly, they beseeched him and said: "Forgive us the faults which we made towards you, and ask your child that it raise from the dead all who were in the temple." And Joseph said: "Give me the grace, that I may prevail upon him. But if he wishes to act spontaneously, then the will of the Lord be done; for he has power over all things."

23. After they had thus spoken, a man from a great family came and prostrated himself before Jesus. And he said to Joseph, "Please, enter the house of your servant and, having come under my roof, remain there for as long as you care to stay." And he took them to his house. All the people of the city went to find Jesus.¹⁰⁰ And those who were tormented by evil spirits, the demons or their diseases, came and prostrated themselves before him; and he cured them. There was great joy because of this in the city; and the people of the surrounding countryside, hearing

all this, glorified God aloud.

24. Joseph remained in this city for many days, in the house of a prince, who was of the Hebrew race. He was called Eleazar, and he had a son and two daughters: the son was called Lazarus, and the daughters Martha and Mary. And they treated Joseph and his family with great honor, as was appropriate. Joseph prolonged his stay with them; and he told Eleazar about the journeys which they, the children of Israel, had made: of their oppressions, persecutions, vexations and, finally the exile under which they were. And hearing these things, Eleazar was filled with sadness. Joseph said to him: “Be blessed, for you gave to us all possible good. You received us out of a good heart; you supported us for the length of time that we were here; and you have treated us well.” Eleazar said to Joseph: “Worthy old man, you have made your home here: do not doubt that in time you will find rest and delivery from your unhappiness.”

25. Having thus spoken, they were filled with contentment. Then Eleazar said: “As for me, I am from the country of Judea and the city of Jerusalem. Much sorrow and affliction has reached me by the hand of my enemies. I saw myself deprived and despoiled of all my goods; and through fear of that irreligious person, Herod, I exiled myself and came to this place with my family and my companions. It has been fifteen years that I have fixed my habitation in this city. I do not have to undergo any hardship because of these people; on the contrary, I have been treated with much benevolence, sympathy and consideration. Neither do you have to fear anyone; but establish your residence in some place as seems good to you, until the moment when the Lord will visit you, and take pity on your great age. Then you will return to the land of Israel, and your heart will live through your hope in the Lord.”

26. Having thus spoken, they fell silent. And they remained in this place for three months. Joseph and Eleazar became like two brothers, reciprocating affection and benevolence. Martha and Mary accepted the Virgin Mary and Jesus in their house with perfect charity, as if they were all of one mind and heart. Martha, for her part, had taken Lazarus, her brother, to care for; and Mary, Lazarus’ sister, cherished the child Jesus as if he were her own brother; for they were of the same age.

27. However, Jesus, seeing all that had happened, was indignant in his spirit, and said to Mary his mother: “My heart is disturbed because of what I did in this city; for I did not want to announce myself, that no-one would know me; and yet here I have listened to your prayers and made myself obedient to your will.” The Virgin Mary said to him: “My son, why do you address us with these reproaches? Truly, you had caused the ruin of the idols, and had delivered us all to perdition and death. This is why we asked you to deliver us from death. It shall be this way from now on, no matter what you prepare or are determined to make, or which your will achieves.”¹⁰¹

28. And that night, the angel of the Lord said in a vision to Joseph: “Rise, take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead who desired the young child’s life.” And waking up from his sleep, Joseph told this vision to Mary; and hearing this word, they were delighted. But a few days after, having learned that Archelaus had become king in his father’s place, he feared to go there; and rising at night, he took the child and its mother and departed in the direction of the South, towards the foot of Mount Sinai, going through the desert¹⁰² close to the territory where formerly the people of Israel had sojourned and become established.

XVI

1. They rose up that morning and traveled to the country of Moab, opposite Mambre, journeying by many stages on the road to the city of the Arabs. And they arrived at an Arabian city called Malla—which means “large town of God.” There were furnace bridges there when Jesus passed by the territory of the city; and on the path there was a high mountain, and at the top of this mountain a large temple, splendidly decorated with all manner of images, and devoted to the worship of demons. And the demons gathered at the place where the road passed; and they talked among themselves, saying: “We are well disposed here in our residence, and at rest. But several of us have said that the son of a poor old man has appeared, who knows and distinguishes all our practices. He is a persecutor and an enemy of our race. What will happen to us from now on because of him?”

2. And some of the demons said < to one of their number, >¹⁰³ “How is it that you know him and know which of them he is?” And the demon said: “You do not know him: I know him, me; and I knew of him before.” The

demons said: "If you know him, tell us." The demon said: "It is he who precipitated our fall from the skies, took our residence, and consigned us all to tiny rooms in perdition. And now he has come here below, to expel us < from the world of >¹⁰⁴ mankind." The demons said: "And how will you be able to know what it will do?" The demon said: "I was there, in the temple of Apollo, when he destroyed the temple dome itself,¹⁰⁵ pulverized the statues of the gods, and caused the roof to fall in."¹⁰⁶ The demons said: "Misfortune is upon us! If he comes here, what will become of us?"

3. And while they talked these things over among themselves, behold, they saw Jesus coming toward them; and they cried out, and said: "Here is the child Jesus, come to this city. Let us flee from this place, lest we perish by his hand." Others among them said: "Come! Let us spread abroad a cry of alarm in the city; perhaps someone will seize the child. It will be killed and we will be left in our home in peace." And having spoken thus, they spread out and cried: "Look, all of you, and listen! The son of a great king comes, advancing upon this city with a mighty army." And hearing this, all the inhabitants of the place ran together, so many of them that there were not weapons to go around.¹⁰⁷ They went from there to patrol on all sides; but they found nothing.

4. Jesus entered the city by its main gate. At once the temple buildings were shaken: they collapsed in ruins, and of all of them, none remained as it was. As for the chief priests and the ministers, they were invaded by the insanity of a demoniac fury. They beat themselves, and they said: "Misfortune has come upon us! How unfortunate are we, to be thus driven from our homes. Who is the author of this blow?" And they could not explain this fact, nor the destruction of the city.

5. There Joseph remained for several days. Jesus was then four years old; and having attained this age, the baby Jesus did not remain any longer confined to his house; but he came out, sharing in the conversations of the other children. For their part, they ran spontaneously to his command, and let themselves be dominated by his will; and he, by the practice of love and compassion,¹⁰⁸ led all of them into agreement with him. Thanks to the charm of his word, he became the leader and the head of all the children; for they made up their minds in some manner by way of his control. Nor did he let anyone give himself up to idleness. And if it happened at some time that the children fought among themselves, he laid his hands upon them, cured them, and exhorted them in a friendly way. Those who were dissatisfied he reconciled, putting them into a good mood. But some went to their parents, saying that Jesus was the cause of such faults as they had themselves committed; whereupon the parents went in search of Jesus, and did not find him. And they asked, saying: "Where is he?" The children replied: ...¹⁰⁹ And with this they returned, each of them, to his own home.

6. And it came to pass that Jesus went one day to join the children, at the place where they usually gathered. And starting to play, they had fun, playing and talking among themselves. Jesus admired their innocence. < But, as they were talking and arguing, it came about that they began to fight each other. >¹¹⁰ One of them struck a child with such force that he burst his eye. The child, ...,¹¹¹ started to cry bitterly. Jesus said: "Do not cry. Stand up quickly on your feet, and don't be afraid." Jesus approached him; and behold, the light was returned to his eyes, and he recovered his sight. And the other children who were there went in haste to the city, and told what Jesus had done. Those who heard them went running to the place where it had happened, that they might see it. They did not find him; for Jesus had escaped, concealing himself from their sight.

7. After this, Jesus went one day to the place where the children were assembled, at the top of a house. This house was very tall, about a stone's throw in height. One of the children slept on the thickness of the wall, at the edge of the parapet. He fell from this height on his head, splitting open his skull. His blood and brains gushed out upon the stones, and at the same time his heart separated from his body. The children who were there fled from this spectacle; and the people of the city who were there became riotous; and they cried out and said: "How did it come about that this little boy committed suicide, falling from this height?" His parents, who had learned about the matter, arrived unexpectedly. They made great demonstrations of mourning on behalf of the child. Afterwards, they sought to know who had done this monstrous deed; but the people all took an oath, saying: "We do not know."

8. The parents of the child said: "We do not believe what you say." And, after they had gathered all the children together and brought them in front of the tribunal, they questioned them, saying: "Tell us who killed this child and

threw him from this high place.” And these, under the threat of death, said one to the other: “What can we do?¹¹² We all know, and have mutually testified, that we are innocent, and that nobody is the cause of this death; but they do not believe our sincere word. Is it to be that, despite our innocence, we are to be condemned to death?” One of them said: “You all know that we are innocent, but that we do not have a witness. They think that we are lying. Let us go and say that it was Jesus’ fault, for he was with us; that it was one like us, the foreigner, the son of the old man passing through. They will condemn him to death and we will be set free.” And they said with one voice: “Well spoken! That is what we shall say.”

9. Then the assembly of the people, bringing them together,¹¹³ put them to the question, and said to them: “Tell us, who made this tragedy and caused the untimely death of this innocent child.” They all said with one voice: “It was the foreign child—the one called Jesus, son of a certain old man: it was he who did it.” The judges ordered < that Jesus be brought before them. >¹¹⁴ When they went to seek him, they did not find him. And so they seized Joseph, and brought him before the court, and said to him: “Where is your son?” Joseph said: “Why do you want him?” The answered with the same voice: “You do not know why, you do not know what your own child has done? He threw one of our children from the top of a house and caused his death.” Joseph said: “By the life of the Lord, I do not know where he is.”

10. They then set Joseph in front of the presiding magistrate. The judge said: “Old man, from where did you come, and of what country are you?” Joseph said: “Of the country of Judea and the city of Jerusalem.” The judge said: “Tell us: where is your son, who caused the cruel death of one of our children?” Joseph said: “O judge, do not accuse us with this injustice, for we are not responsible for the blood of this child.” The judge said: “If you are not responsible, then why do you fear for your life?” Joseph said: “I am a foreigner, an old man, a poor beggar. My child is my son according to the spirit, not according to the flesh. If he desires it, he has the capacity to answer you.”

11. He had scarcely said these words, when Jesus presented himself; and he said: “Whom do you seek?” The people said: “The son of Joseph.” Jesus said: “That is me.” The presiding magistrate said: “Tell me why you committed this crime?” Jesus said: “O judges, do not render your decision with such partiality; for it is a sin, and a wrong which you do from your heart.” The judge said: “I do not condemn you without reason, but justifiably, for the playmates of this child, who was with you, have testified against you.” Jesus said: “As for them, what is < the evidence >¹¹⁵ of their sincerity?” The judge said: “They mutually testify that they are innocent, and that you are worthy of death.” Jesus said: “If another testifies about what I have done, that testimony may be taken; but if they, under fear of death, enter into collusion, their evidence may not be accepted, for you would return your sentence contrary to justice.” The judge said, “How can we accept your testimony, since you are worthy of death.” Jesus said: “O judges, it is not as they say.¹¹⁶ They know that I am not from here, that I am a foreigner and the son of poor < people. >¹¹⁷ This is why they put on me the sentence of death. And you, seeking the favor of men, supposing that they are right, and so condemn me.”

12. The judge said: “What must I do?” Jesus said: “Do you want to give a fair judgment? Take witnesses from both sides of this business, and then, in all truth, the lie will manifest itself with interest.” The judge said: “As for me, I know only that you say what you say is true: I must have testimony from you as from them.” Jesus said: “If I testify for myself, will you believe me?” The judge said, “I will not know whether you swear sincerely or falsely.” The children said with one voice: “Listen: we know who you are, you who caused us all manner of vexation and mistreatment to us, who did anything you wished.” The judge said, “You see how many witnesses there are who contradict what you say; and still you do not confess.” Jesus said, “Several times¹¹⁸ I addressed myself to you, and you did not believe my words. Now you will see, and you be in awe and admiration. The judge said, “Then let us see what you want to say.”

13. Then Jesus drew near the dead boy; and shouting loudly he said: “Abias, son of Thamar, rise, open your eyes and tell us the cause of your death.” And at once the child arose, as if awakening from sleep. He sat down, looked about him and recognized each person, calling them by name. At this his parents took him in their arms; and they embraced him, saying, “What happened to you? How did you die?”; but the child said nothing. Jesus called to him: “Tell us, child, about your death.” The child said: “Lord, it is not you who are responsible for my blood, nor the children who were with me; but they were afraid they would be blamed, and so accused you. Actually, I killed

myself by falling to the ground from the top of the wall where I had fallen asleep.”

14. Seeing these things, the judge and the multitude of the people said: “This child < Jesus >¹¹⁹ has done a wonderful thing: he is not the son of a man, but an embodied god who appeared upon the earth.” Jesus said: “O Judge, do you believe that I am innocent?” But the judge, in his confusion, did not answer; for all were filled with wonder at Jesus’ youth and the work that he had done; and even those who intended to testify concerning the miracles wrought by him were filled with fear.

15. The child remained alive for three hours; and Jesus said to him then, “Abias, sleep now until the general resurrection.” And Jesus having thus spoken, the boy let his head fall down, and he fell asleep. At this sight, the children, out of their fear, began to tremble. Then the judge and all the multitude fell at Jesus feet; and they begged him, saying, “Bring the child back to life from death.” But Jesus refused, saying, “O magistrate, who waxes indignant while rendering justice unfairly, how can you claim to impose equity and justice upon me, since by mutual agreement you and all this city condemned me without cause, refusing to believe in my words, while seeing as truth the lies spoken about me concerning the death of this child? As you did not listen to me, neither will I grant your request” ; and having thus spoken, Jesus immediately departed and concealed himself from their sight. They sought him out, but did not find him; and throwing themselves at the feet of Joseph, they importuned him, saying: “Where is your child, Jesus; for we wish him to save us from death.” But Joseph said, “I do not know. He travels where it seems good to him, independent of me.”

XVII

1. And that night Joseph arose; and he took the child and his mother, and went away from there to the country of Syria, to the city called Sahaprau.¹²⁰ Jesus was then five years and three months old. And, as he entered by the city gate, where there were statues of gods, it happened that the demons whom Jesus passed cried out and said, “There has come a child, the son of a king, a great monarch, who will throw our city into confusion and expel us from our home. Let us be on our guard so that he does not approach us, lest we perish in some deserted place.” Hearing this, the leaders of the false priests, the false pontiffs and the servants of the idols met in the temple of the idols and said: “Which voice cried out to us in terror?” And at the same moment, all the statues of the false gods shook; and falling down to the ground, they smashed to pieces.

2. In the meantime Joseph entered the city, took lodging in a certain place and there remained. Jesus roamed throughout the city. Having arrived at the place where the children were gathered together, he sat down at the edge of some water; and taking some dust, he threw it into the water. The children came to drink; but finding the water changed to blood, and tormented as they were by thirst, they began to cry. Jesus took a jug and plunged it at once into the fountain; and, drawing water from it, he gave of it to them. Another time, having drawn water from the fountain, Jesus threw it on the children; and behold, their clothing appeared spotted with blood. The little children began to cry before him. Jesus called to them pleasantly; and laying his hands upon them, he said: “Do not cry. Behold: there are no more spots upon your clothes.” And the children were filled with joy at seeing Jesus perform this wonder.

3. And Jesus went another day to find the children, at the place where they all came together; and he said to them, “Come: let us go to such-and-such a distant place, and there hunt for birds and capture them.” They agreed; and rousing themselves, they went to this place, which was on a plain. There they remained the whole day, but they did not succeed in capturing any birds. Now, it was a day in summer; and the torrid heat made them extremely uncomfortable. Jesus had pity on them; and he said to them, “Do not fear. Arise. We will go to the large rock opposite us, and there rest under its shade.” But when they had gone there and met at the appointed place, they still could not support the violence of the heat; and many of the little children fell into an appearance of death; and short of breath, and with their eyes fixed, they looked upon Jesus.

4. But Jesus stood up in the midst of them, and with his staff, he struck the rock; and behold, there gushed forth from this rock a spring of water, abundant and delicious, which watered them all. This source exists to this day. When they had been revived and drunk their fill, they rose and adored Jesus. And Jesus laid his hands upon the water; and behold, a multitude of fish appeared. And he ordered them to gather them; and they took many. Then

they collected wood. This wood burst into flame without fire being applied to it; and they roasted the fish, ate them and were satisfied. They went away from there happy to their houses, taking more fish with them. And they told there the wonders which Jesus had made, showing the fish which they had taken; and many people believed in him.

5. Now those among these children who were strong and vigorous arrived home either on time or earlier than they were expected. The smaller children got back later; but one three year old boy, having become lost on the plain, became short of breath, fell unconscious to the ground and went to sleep. During the night he woke up; and, opening his eyes, he looked about him on all sides, but saw no one. His courage failed him,¹²¹ and he began to cry; and he remained there three days. All night he wandered in the plain, drifting away from his home, and none of the children knew what had become of him. Finally he died, overcome by hunger and thirst, and the heat of the sun.

6. The parents of the small boy questioned the other children, saying, "Where is our little boy, who followed you? What has become of him?" They said, "We do not know." His parents said, "Don't you know that he followed you?" "We know that he followed us," the children said, "but we do not know what happened to him after we left." "At what time did you see that he was still with you?" his parents asked. "We think he was with us until the middle of the day," the children replied. "But when the heat of the sun had become uncomfortable, and we had all determined to escape from it, we lost sight of him. When the baby Jesus gathered us together and gave us water to drink drawn from the rock, we did not see him there. We supposed that he had returned home."

7. Then the parents of the child, being alarmed, went to find the chief magistrate of the city, and told him about what had happened. And he ordered that all the children be brought together in front of him; and he questioned them, saying, "My children, tell me the truth: what has become of this little child." They said to him, "O judge, listen to us. Yesterday morning, Jesus, the son of Joseph, arrived with other little children who had joined him at the place where we usually met. We pointed out that we were going to leave for a distant place; and as this child did not want to go with us, we left him there." The judge said: "So when you gathered at your usual place, you saw him." They said, "Yes: he was with us all day until midday. When the heat of the sun had made us uncomfortable, we left this place, and lost sight of him."¹²²

8. Thereupon the judge said < to them >¹²³ "Rise; go, and make search for the child, until you find him alive or dead." And they went from there, and made search of the surrounding area; but they did not find the boy. They drew near the judge, and they said to him, "We did not find the child." The judge said, "Did you dream up that answer by yourselves."¹²⁴ Do you think that you will escape my justice by this trick? It will not be so. Say to me: what was the object of your plans? Who invited this child and who went with him?" The children said, "Nobody wanted him: he came by himself." The judge said, "You are not speaking the truth; what will make you, ere you all perish?"¹²⁵

9. < Then the judge ordered the children to be undressed, and to be beaten with green wood rods. And when they had been stripped of their clothing, the children said, "How is it, since we all know ourselves to be innocent, that this judge does not believe what we say?" One of the said: "Why, on such an unjust judgment, should we be put to death?" They said to him, "And are you competent to make such a judgment?" >¹²⁶ One of them said: "Know you Jesus, the son of the old man Joseph? He was with us at our head; and he took us along with him: it is he who put us into the jaws of death." His companions said, "And what evil did he do to us? When we were dying of thirst and under the torrid heat, it was he who, drawing water from the rock, refreshed us. It was he who gave us fish to be eaten, and the freedom to return in time to our homes." Other children said, "Come, lay on him this charge, for he is unknown and foreign to our city. Moreover, don't you know that it is because of him that we are under the blow of this distress and these torments?" And crying out, they went and found the judge and said to him, "Why do you condemn us in spite of our innocence?" The judge said, "If you are innocent, tell me who it is that is worthy of death?" The children said, "The son of the foreign old man who brought this child with him; but we do not know what he has done with him." The judge said, "Why didn't you say anything about him before?" The children said, "We believed that it would be bad to betray him;¹²⁷ for he is very poor and reduced with begging."

10. The judge ordered Jesus to be summoned before him; but he was not found. Then Joseph was stopped and, by

force, made to appear before the court. The judge said, "Old man, from where did you come and to where do you go?" Joseph said, "I am from a remote region, and I travel the earth as a foreigner away from home." The judge said, "Where is your son?" "And why do you want him?" asked Joseph. The judge said, "You do not know that your son went out to play, taking with him all the children of the city, and that a little boy did not return. Tell me, then, where your son is, he and the child with him?" Joseph said, "As for that, I am unaware of it." The judge said, "You will not escape from my hands with similar excuses: bring the child to me, alive or dead. Joseph said, "I? How will I, an old man, be able to search for an entire day?" "Perhaps you will find him almost immediately," the judge suggested.

11. And Joseph, preceded by the child Jesus, went away from there to a point approximately twelve miles from the city; and there they found in the plain the child. He had succumbed to the heat of the sun; and it was as if he had been burned with fire. All his body and clothing were blackened with grease, and all the articulations of his body had been disjointed. Having seen this, they returned to the city and informed the child's parents. Those returned to the place where the child lay; and crying out, they struck themselves with stones. Then, wrapping the body in a cloth, they removed it and carried it back to the city; and all the people of the city were moved with compassion for the boy.

12. Then the judge ordered Jesus placed in the middle of the court; and he said to him, "Child, why did you make this iniquity; why did you attract this misfortune to our city?" Jesus said, "O judge, do not make this an act of iniquity, the nature of which has yet to be discovered."¹²⁸ The judge said, "But do I not have to make a choice between two conflicting testimonies?"¹²⁹ Jesus said, "If you act sincerely, your judgements will be < just. >¹³⁰ If not, you will make a great sin." The judge said, "Do not answer me by making me an object lesson in front of everyone. I acted not insincerely but with justice." "If you acted with sincerity," said Jesus, "you would have initially made your investigation with care, according to testimony; then you would have judged in accordance with the law." The judge said, "How can I make an investigation into what you say of yourself, when you say, 'I am innocent.' And how can you say *that* when you worked this iniquity?" Jesus said, "You received the testimony of those who charged me with a libelous thing, and you do not believe in the truth of my words; but your judgment will yet be undone."¹³¹ The judge said, "Let it be as you wish."

13. And Jesus arose, drew near the dead child and exclaimed aloud: "Moni, son of Sarouhi, rise up quickly on your feet and tell us the cause of your death." And the boy drew himself up into a sitting position. His parents cried out; and hugging him to their breast, they embraced him and said to him, "My son, who gave you back your life?" And he said: "The baby Jesus, the son of the old man." At this sight, the judge and all the crowd of the people prostrated themselves before Jesus; and they questioned the child, saying to him: "My son, who caused your death?"

14. The child said, "Nobody: they are all innocent. Do not condemn Jesus, for he is not responsible for my blood. I had become lost and, my heart weakened by hunger and thirst, I perished. Jesus said, "O iniquitous judge, did you not wrongfully wish to condemn me and put me to death?" And the judge, in his confusion, could not answer him. The child remained in life approximately three hours; and at the precise moment when everyone had seen and admired him, Jesus again called to the child: "Amonia, son of Sarouhe, rest now and fall asleep." And it once he fell asleep. And having spoken these words, Jesus disappeared from their sight.

XVIII

1. And one day at noon, Joseph took Mary and Jesus and went to the land of Canaan, the chief city of which was called Madiam. Jesus was then six years old. While exploring this city Jesus saw other children gathered together, and he moved towards them. As if prophetically, they said, one to the other: "A foreign child has arrived; come, let us flee from him." But others said: "And what evil can he do to us, since he is a child as we are?"

2. And Jesus sat down in the middle of them, and said to them, "Why do you remain silent: what are you thinking?" The children said: "Nothing." Jesus said, "Which of you want's to play?" "We do not know how to make anything," the children answered. Jesus said, "All of you: watch this!" And Jesus took in his hand some clay and formed a sparrow: he blew above it, and the bird flew away. And he said, "Get up, come and catch this

sparrow.” They stared at him, amazed, filled with wonder at the miracle Jesus made.

3. And again, having collected some dust of the ground, Jesus threw it towards the sky into the air; and it changed into flies and mosquitoes, and the city was filled with them, greatly distressing both men and animals. And again Jesus took clay; and making bees and wasps, he spread them on the children, making them very anxious.

4. And after three days, it happened that Jesus arose and went secretly into the city; and he gave ear to what the people had to say. Some of them said: “The son of an old man with white hair has been seen in this city; of whom everyone says that he makes miracles and wonders that our [false]¹³² gods cannot do?” Others said: “Yes, what you say is quite true: he can make them, all that he wants.” And Jesus, having heard that, returned silently to his house and hid from them, so that nobody knew anything.¹³³

5. And there came a day when Joseph and Mary talked one to the other about Jesus; and they said, “What shall we do with this child, for because of him we must support many embarrassments.” Joseph said, “What do you think you can make of him, seeing that you question me?” < Mary said, >²⁶ “You see that he is getting bigger, and that he always journeys where it seems good to him, and he is not bound to the house. If it is your will, we will force him to follow the occupation of a scribe,¹³⁴ so that he will be placed under the authority of a Master and trained for any species of study and given knowledge of the divine laws; and so that we may live calmly and in peace.”

6. Joseph said: “You are right; let it be as you wish.” “And if there remains nothing more for him to learn,” Mary continued, “for he is already very skillful and able to understand everything, he will not be taken to a Master.” Joseph said: “Do not fear for him in any way, for one notices in him many things of a prodigal nature. This is why we visit all these lands, coming as nomads without a country; for we wait for that which the Lord our God intends as his will for us, achieving for our good the desire of our heart.” Mary said: “I am extremely anxious about him, and I do not know what will happen.” Later Joseph said to her: “In the test that is to come, the Lord will take away our sorrow. Do not be downcast.” And with these words, they kept silent.

XIX

1. And it came to pass that Joseph took Jesus and Mary and himself came down from there¹³⁵ to the country of Israel, a town which is called Bothosoron. There was in this city a pious king of the Herbraic race, who was called Baresou.¹³⁶ He was a good, compassionate and charitable man; and as Joseph knew that this was so, he thought of going to see him. He asked the inhabitants of the city: “Which is the character of your king?” They said: “It is good.” The Joseph arose; and going within the royal gate, he declared his intention with the chamberlain in these terms: “O great man, I would like to ask you for something.” The palace official said: “Speak!!”

2. Joseph said: I intended to say that your king is good, compassionate, charitable to the poor and filled with solicitude for foreigners. I am myself from a foreign country. Here is my prayer: I would like to see him and speak with him.”¹³⁷ The usher said, “Leave me for one moment; that I may enter, announce and introduce you. You see, in the case of kings and magistrates, < the instruction >²⁶ is to prevent, then to carry out the commands.” Then the usher, being announced, was allowed into the king’s presence. The king gave commands to be introduced to Joseph; and rose up and went to be presented to the king, prostrating himself before him.

3. The king said to him: “You are welcome in this place, great old man. Please sit down.” And when Joseph had sat down, he at once contained himself, and said nothing. The king accepted it¹³⁸ with much affection, and ordered a table drawn up in front of him. They ate, drank, and were delighted. The king said: “Tell me, great man; from which country did you come and where is it that you are going?” Joseph said: “I came from a remote land.” “You are welcome, old man,” said the king; “and all that you will ask of me, that will do it for you.” Joseph said, “I am old and foreign; I arrived here intending to live in an unspecified place in this city. I am skilled in the work of joinery; whatever would tempt the royal taste, I will achieve it in no time at all.” (The king had ordered < earlier > that nobody should be interfered with because he happened to be a foreigner.)¹³⁹

4. And Joseph prostrated himself from a standing position in front of the king; and he said, “O king, if such be your will, apply my child to the study of the letters.”¹⁴⁰ “I will do that,” said the king; and he ordered a doctor named Gamaliel to be summoned. When Gamaliel arrived, the king received him with much affection; and he said, “Man, I wish that you undertake the teaching of the letters to this child: and all that will be necessary for the

material fulfillment of this project, that shall you receive from the royal treasury.” Gamaliel said, “Who is this handsome child?” The king said, “He is the son of a man of high birth, descended of a royal race; and the old man that is here is the boy’s governor.” Gamaliel said, “Let your will be done.” And Joseph took the child and went away happy, to his own home. He told all these things to Mary; and, musing to himself, he blessed the Lord.

XX

1. And Joseph got up one fine morning and, taking a book with him, went to the house of Gamaliel. And when Jesus saw his Master, he prostrated himself before him. Gamaliel said, “Be welcome, new plant, sweet fruit, bouquet of flowers.”¹⁴¹ Then Gamaliel called to Joseph: “Great old man, tell me: is this your child, or is he the child of some other?” “By the life of the Lord!” Joseph exclaimed. “God gave him to me for a son, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.” “How many years does he have,” Gamaliel asked. “Seven,” said Joseph.¹⁴²

2. Then the Master took the tablets from the hands of the child, and said: “I will write twelve letters; if you are able to construe them,¹⁴³ I will also write out the others.” “Make what you will like,” said Joseph, “as you will want.” And the Master started to write twelve letters. Getting to his feet, Jesus stood in front of his Master; and he initially began by observing the characteristics of the writing, and then to describe the letters themselves. When Gamaliel had written them, he returned the tablets to Jesus; and Jesus prostrated himself before him, and accepted the tablets from his hands.

3. Gamaliel said: “Listen to me, my son, and read just as I will indicate to you.” And Gamaliel started to name the letters. Jesus said, “Man, how is it that you speak so that I do not hear only what you say? This word appears to me as a foreign term; but then I understand it.”¹⁴⁴ Gamaliel said: “It is the name of the letter.” Jesus said, “I know the letter: tell me its explanation.” Gamaliel said, “And which interpretation does this letter comprehend in itself.” Jesus said: “Why does the first letter have another form, and another aspect, and still another figure?” “To < enable us to >¹⁴⁵ speak with the eyes,” Gamaliel said, < so that we can observe it, distinguish it well and recognize it, and then see how it is used.”¹⁴⁶ “I know all this,” Jesus said; “but answer my questions.”¹⁴⁷ I know that any letter has a defined row, where appears the mysterious direction which is single and given for each letter.” Gamaliel said, “The former doctors and the wise ones did not find anything to say beyond the form of the letter and its name.” Jesus said, “All that you said before, I know it perfectly; what I would like to ask and know from you, is the explanation of the letter.” The Master said, “Tell me, my son: what do you meant to say by this concept which I do not understand?” Jesus said: “What is the letter? And what is the word? And what is the sentence?” Gamaliel said, “You tell me, my son; for then I will understand it.” But when he heard that, Joseph became indignant in his heart; and he said to Jesus, “My son, do not answer your Master thus. Start by learning; after which you will know.” Having thus spoken, Joseph went away silently to his own house; and he told Mary what he had seen, and what he had said to Jesus. She was extremely saddened by this news; and she said to him, “You see: I had told you in advance that he will not let himself be informed by anybody.” Joseph said, “Do not be sad: he will be just like the Lord will want him.” For Joseph, though himself leaving the Master, had left the child Jesus there in his place; and Jesus, having taken the tablets, and without preamble,¹⁴⁸ began to read first the letter, the second time the words, and the third time the sentences. And he put the tablets down in front of him, and said, “Man, I know know the letters that you wrote. Take and write the other complete letters, so that I may read them.” Gamaliel, filled with wonder at the power of the child’s spirit, received the tablets from his hands and wrote there the other letters, in their correct order. And Jesus prostrated himself before his Master, too the tablets from him, and explained initially the letter, the second time the words, and the third time the sentences. Then he put those tablets down in front of him, and said to Gamaliel, “Man, did you accomplish the series of the letters which you had started to form?” Gamaliel said, “Yes, child: here are their complete names joined together and in command.” Jesus said, “Man, all that you wrote to me and showed me: I learned it, and know it perfectly. Now, good Master, for my instruction, ...¹⁴⁹ Gamaliel said, “Yes, I will do what you wish; >¹⁵⁰ but tell me the interpretation of the letters so that I may know it.” Jesus said, “You are a Master in Israel, and you do not know that!” Gamaliel said, “All that I know is what I learned from my fathers.” Jesus said, “The letter by itself¹⁵¹ means the name of God and ... God the Verb takes birth and incarnation; God the Verb ... the writing; and of the Verb the Holy Ghost, i.e., the Trinity.”¹⁵²

4. Having heard these things, Gamaliel gazed at Jesus, amazed at the knowledge with which he was gifted. And Gamaliel said, “Where did you learn the wisdom which you have? I believe that all the gifts of the Holy Ghost

have met in you.” Jesus said, “Man, yet teach to me the other thing, out of those that you first promised to instruct me in.” Gamaliel said, “My son, it is I who should be your disciple, because you appeared in the middle of us like a prodigy. Please: give me the explanation of the writing.” Jesus said, “I will explain it to you, but you will not be able to understand this mystery, which is hidden with regard to human reason, until the time comes when the Lord will reveal it to everyone, and everywhere it profusely spreads the gifts of the Holy Ghost.” Gamaliel said to himself, “Truly, he is the son of God; I believe that he is the Messiah, whose prophecies announce the advent.”

5. When Gamaliel had heard these things, he called Joseph and said to him, “Old man, you were right to say, ‘He is not my son according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.’” Joseph called to Jesus, “Tell me, my son, that I will teach you, since you do not submit yourself to the Master?” Jesus said, “Why do you range yourselves thus against me? What he said to me, I knew already; and to my questions, he does not make any answer.” Joseph said, “It was to receive lessons and to acquire wisdom that I brought you here—but it is you who give the lesson to the Master.” Jesus said: “What I did not know, I learned; and what I learned, I did not need to know.” Gamaliel said, “Cease speaking, for you make us an affront. Rise, go in peace, and may the Lord lead you to prosperity.”

6. And Jesus rose in haste, took the tablets, and prostrated himself before the Master, and he said, “Good Master, God will give you your reward.” Gamaliel said, “Go in peace, and may the Lord carry out your desires for your own good.” And Jesus went away from there to be near his mother. Mary said to him, “My son, have you already finished all the learning for today?” Jesus said, “I learned it all; and the Master can answer me nothing more.”

7. And Joseph was extremely saddened because of Jesus; and he called to Gamaliel, “Tell me, what shall I do with my child?”¹⁵³ Gamaliel said, “Teach him everything that concerns your trade as a carpenter.” And Joseph went away to his own house; and when he found Jesus sitting with his tablets in his hand, he said to him, “Did you learn much?” “I learned everything,” Jesus said; “I would like to become a teacher to the children.” Joseph said, “I know that you do not want to study; come and learn the trade of a carpenter.” Jesus said, “I will also learn that well.”

8. And it happened that Joseph had begun the manufacture of a magnificently carved throne for the king. One of the wooden steps was too short and did not join to the others; and Joseph deliberated on what he was going to do. Jesus said to him, “How do you think you will adjust that?” Joseph said, “And how is it that you question what I say? Take the axe, cut this functioning, square it well and regularize it.” Jesus took the axe in his hands and struck the wood (which measured fifteen palms) three times; in the middle he struck it, dividing it in two, buried the iron in some wood and sat down. Mary happened by; and she said to Jesus, “My son, did you achieve the work which you began?” Jesus said, “Yes, I have finished. Why do you force me thus to learn all types of work?”

9. Joseph arrived; he saw the wood divided into two parts, and he said to Jesus, “My son, what serious damage have you made for me!” Jesus said, “Tell me, what trouble did I make for you?” Joseph said, “One of the pieces of wood is too small, the other much too large: why did you cut them so that they are not symmetrical?” “In order to make them symmetrical,” said Jesus. “How will you do that?” Joseph inquired. Jesus said. “You do not gain this: take both pieces of wood, measure them and you will understand” < ... > and measured it again: and it had become equal to twelve palms.¹⁵⁴ At this sight Joseph was filled with fright as well as admiration; for these two pieces of wood, of which one was too small and the other much too large, had become equal. Such was the miracle that Jesus performed in front of Joseph and Mary his mother.

10. In a few more days, Joseph took the throne that he had built, and brought it to the king, in front of whom he prostrated himself. The king having seen it was delighted with it; and he ordered that Joseph be given such things and resources as were necessary to his subsistence, as much as was required. And he took this and departed with joy to his house.

11. One day the king invited Joseph to his table, together with princes of the highest rank. They ate, drank and were satisfied; and the king called to Joseph, “Old man, I have a request to address to you, that you may carry it out.” Joseph said, “Order what it is necessary that I do.” The king said, “I want you to build me a splendid palace,¹⁵⁵ with a very high room. You will give it the same dimension in length and width; and around it you will erect seats and torches, and decorate its walls with your drawings, as if you yourselves meant to live there. I will

give you on demand all that is necessary for your subsistence and your work.” Joseph said, “Yes, I will carry out your commands, O king; but I must examine all the wood to make sure of its incorruptibility: have them bring it to me.” “I will do all that will be necessary,” said the king.

12. Then the king arose, taking with him the princes of the first rank like Joseph; and they went to a picturesque site < where there was ... >¹⁵⁶ and a pond, and many flowing springs, with a high hill at the water’s edge. The king order Joseph to measure the site; and Joseph measured the length and the width of the site, as the king had ordered; and he began to build.

13. But there came a time when he wished to lengthen the cupola, and the piece of wood was found to be too short, and could not be adjusted. Joseph was puzzled by this obstacle and did not know what to do. At that moment the king arrived; and seeing Joseph’s confusion, he said to him, “Why do you remain seated and making nothing.” Joseph said, “I spent a lot of time on this frame, and it has not come out right.” The king said, “I will bring you wood broader than what is here.”

14. And while they were talking, Jesus arrived where they were, and prostrated himself before the king. The king said, “You are welcome, handsome child, only son and new-born of your father.” Jesus said, “Why do you remain sitting here sadly, idle and quiet?” The monarch said, “Child, all has been achieved, as you see; but something is at fault.” Jesus said, “What is wrong?” The king said, “See, this piece of carved wood is much too short for where it goes; it will not join to the other.” Jesus called to Joseph: “Seize the end of this wood, and hold on to it firmly.” The king, fixing his glance on Jesus, said, “What do you want to do?” And Jesus took the other end of the wood, and said to Joseph, “Pull it, and it will not be noticed that this wood was too short.” In the eyes of everyone there, it seemed a joke; but Joseph had faith in the will of Jesus. And he extended his hand, seized the wood, and lengthened it by three palms.

15. And when the king had seen the wonder which Jesus had made, he was seized with fear; and he prostrated himself in front of him and embraced him. He covered him with a royal robe, bound about his head a diadem, and sent him to his mother. Joseph completed all the work on the building. The king, having seen it, was delighted the more; and he gave Joseph much gold and silver, and Joseph returned to his house well pleased.

XXI

1. And Joseph, raising one day at noon, took Jesus and his mother, and journeyed from Bothosoron to Tiberius. There he made his camp within the gates of the house of a man named Israel, a dyer of his country, who had brought to his house everything in the city that had to do with color or dyeing. Arriving home one day, Israel found Joseph, the child Jesus and his mother, living within his gates. He was very pleased; and he said to Joseph, “Tell me, old man, from where do you come, and what is your destination?” Joseph said, “I am from a remote region, and I wander everywhere, a foreigner and far from home.

2. Israel said, “If you wish to live < here, >²⁶ establish yourself here with me, and I will accommodate you in my house as may seem good to you.” Joseph said, “You will is to my liking.” Israel said, “How do you prosper in your trade?” “Easily,” said Joseph, “for I am very much an expert in the art of making ploughs and yokes for oxen; and everything that has to do with the serviceability of each of these I can do.” Israel said, “Remain in my house, and you will not have to beg of anyone. I will respect you like a father. And if you should wish to entrust your child to me so that he can learn my trade, I will treat him with honor, as if he were my own legitimate son.” Joseph said, “This is well spoken. Take the child if you like him, and lead him to accept your will, for I have been highly opposed about him for a long time.”

3. Israel said, “Won’t he obey you, and be subjected to your commands?” Joseph said, “It is not that; but he passes through many trades without persevering in any of them.” Israel said, “How old the boy?” Joseph said, “None years and two months.” “It is well,” said Israel; and he took the child Jesus with him to his house. He showed him all the detail of his trade, and he said, “Here, my son: look well at all that you will see, and comprehend all that I show you.” And Jesus lent himself to his will, and listened to Israel’s opinions attentively.

4. One day Israel arose and went to one of the towers in the city. There were there collected many types of fabric; and bringing the whole, with a list < of the people for whom they were intended, >¹⁵⁷ he deposited them in his house. He called Jesus near to him, and he said, "Here, my son: all that you see we must give an account of to its respective owners. This is why we must carefully watch over all the merchandise which is in our house, for fear that it may be subjected to a sudden accident, and that we will become liable for damages, and I should have to repay five thousand talents of silver to the royal treasury." Jesus said, "Where do you go now?" Israel said, "Here I have collected all that there was to dye in the city. I entrust it to you, because I must get under way to make a round of the villages, and to various people in the villages, in order to bring each fabric to its appropriate destination; for I will do all the work that one may give me." "What work?" Jesus asked. "To dye and color," said Israel, "sometimes with drawings of flowers, in scarlet, green, blue, crimson, yellow, deer, brown and other varied nuances, which I will detail to you."

5. Hearing this, Jesus was filled with admiration for the human spirit; and he called to Israel, "Man, do you know by his name everyone who is to receive from these colors?" Israel said, "Yes; and I retain them by the use of this written list." Jesus said, "Please teach me to do all that." Israel said, "Yes, I will teach it to you, if you obey me and submit yourself to my commands." And Jesus, prostrating himself in front of him, said, "I will submit myself to your will; but before I do, show me this work, that I may see it." Israel said, "Well spoken; but do not do anything on your own initiative that you are unclear about;¹⁵⁸ wait until I return. Do not open the gate of this house, which I have closed and sealed with my ring. Remain at your station and be without concern." Jesus said, "What day shall I await your return?" Israel said, "What need do you have to question me about my work, since my work will follow its course from the beginning to the end of the day, as the Lord will desire it?" Jesus said, "Go in peace." And Israel arose and departed from the city.

6. And Jesus rose, and opened the gate of the house. He took all the fabric to be dyed, filled a tank with blue dye and heated it, < and put the fabric in the tank. >¹⁵⁹ Then, according to his habit, he went away to the place where the children gathered themselves together to play.

7. And being pressed to fight with some of them, he numbed the nerves of their thighs; and the children fell on their faces to the ground, and could not walk about any more; but afterwards, Jesus laid his hands on them and gave them back their ability to walk. At other times, he blew into the faces of the children and blinded them; but afterwards, he laid his hands upon them and returned the light to their eyes. Or he would pick up a piece of wood and throw it into the midst of the children—a piece of wood which changed into a snake, from which they all tried to escape, but which bit some of them, wounding them. And he laid his hands upon them, and cured them. And he put his fingers into the ears of some of them, making them deaf; but afterwards he blew on them and restored their hearing. And he took in his hand a stone, and blew on it so that it burned like fire. He threw it in front of the children, and it set ablaze the very dust, like dried brush. Then he took the stone in his hand, and it returned to its previous state.

8. He also took the children to the lakeside and there, taking in his hands a pointed stick, he walked upright on the floods of the sea with his toys, as if the water were frozen.¹⁶⁰ Seeing this, all the children cried out and said, "Look what the baby Jesus does on the floods of the sea!" And hearing this, the people of the city went to the place, and looked with amazement upon this wonder.

9. But Joseph having seen these things said to him, "My son, what are you doing here? Your master brought together in his house any number of things, and entrusted you with the guarding of them; and, as if you have no care for them at all, you come to this place to amuse yourself. Please: rise up, and go with me to your Master." Jesus said, "You are right. We will go and I will complete my task; for I will do all that my Master commanded of me. For I await his return momentarily." And hearing these words, Joseph did not understand what Jesus said.

10. When Jesus came back to his mother, Mary looked at him, and said, "My son, did you accomplish all that your Master required of you?"¹⁶¹ Jesus said, "I have accomplished it, and missed nothing. What does my Master require < for his >¹⁶² ego?" Mary said, "I notice that for the past three days you have not even looked in at the house." Why do you wish to expose us to the risk of death?" Jesus said, "Cease speaking in this way. I have studied all the precepts which my Master gave, and I understand the commands that he made to me." Mary said,

“My child it is well. You are the judge.”

11. And while they were speaking, Jesus looked up and saw that his Master had arrived. Gently rising, he went to meet him, and prostrated himself before him. Israel said, “My son, how are you? Are you content?” Jesus said, “I am well.” Then Jesus called to Israel, “How was your journey?” Israel said, “Like the Lord.”¹⁶³ Jesus said, “You have returned in peace and prosperity. God rewards you thus for your work to the limits of what you did for me. For I learned thoroughly your trade. I studied all the precepts that you gave me; these and all the work which you can think of making: I understand them, and I have achieved them. Israel said, “Which work?” “All that you taught me, I have achieved it,” said Jesus.

12. And when Israel had grasped what it was Jesus wanted to say, he went to the gate < and he saw >²⁶ that the lock was open. Alarmed, he went inside; and he searched even the recesses of the house, but he found nothing. “Where is the fabric to be dyed for the people of the city,” he cried out, “which was gathered here, in this house?” Jesus said, “Did I not tell you, when I was with you last, that the work that you can think of making, I have already achieved.” Israel said, “The work which you have done is there? You have put into a tank of blue dye all the fabric that was to have been dyed for the city?” Jesus said, “Did I do you evil that you carry yourselves thus against me, I who delivered you from a mass of labor and concern?” “Is this the rest which you will gain for me,” said Israel, “by inflicting upon me this serious damage, this loss < of income >¹⁶⁴ and of the fines to be paid? The old man was right when he said, ‘You will not succeed in reducing him to obedience!’ What can I do with you, since you have caused me such damage in my own home—damage which is not inflicted upon me alone, but upon all the city? Hellas! What misfortune has arrived upon me!”

13. The dyer cried and struck himself. Then he said to Jesus, “Why did you attract to my house this misfortune and disaster?” Jesus said, “Why are you so angry? What loss did I cause on your premises? I waited until I listened to you intelligently explain the work. I understood what you said. I learned the lesson you gave, and I became able to do the work.” Israel said, “Did I not tell you: do not do anything by yourself that you do not know how to do?” Jesus said, “Look through your eyes and see! What damage did I inflict upon you?” Israel said, “How will I be able to justify the color and hue which people require of me?” Jesus said, “When you came back from your trip in peace and re-entered your house, what did you find there at fault?” Israel said, “If everyone claims his order, what shall I do?” Jesus said, “Bring before me the owners of these fabrics, and I will give him the color in conformity to his wish.” Israel said, “How will you be able to recognize the colors of all of them?” Jesus said, “Which color do you wish me to reveal from this single tank?”

14. When he heard this, Israel became irritated at Jesus’ words; and as he thought about them, he saw that they made fun of him. Jesus said, “Look through your eyes and see!” And Jesus started to withdraw from the tank of one color all the fabrics to be dyed; and behold, they were shining and of various beautiful colors, with the names of their various owners.¹⁶⁵ But even though Israel saw Jesus do this thing, he did not understand the wonder that had happened; but he went to Joseph and Mary, and said to them, “How is it that your child comes to cause such great damage in my home? What did I do to him? I treated him as a father, with honor and great affection. And now I am indebted to the royal treasury for five thousand talents of silver.”¹⁶⁶ And he cried and struck himself. Mary said to Jesus, “Did you do this in order to cause a similar disaster in *this* city?¹⁶⁷ Hear how you are yourself reviled;¹⁶⁸ and us with you, we are dedicated to death!” Jesus said, “What evil did I cause to happen to you, that you thus meet against me and condemn me wrongfully? Come and see the work which I made.” And Mary and Joseph went to see the works that Jesus had made; and listening to him speak, they opened astonished eyes.

15. But Israel did not understand the wonder; he ground his teeth with fury against Jesus and, thundering like a wild animal, he wanted to strike him. Jesus said, “Why are you filled with fury? What evil did you see in me?” Israel, hearing that, laid hold of a bushel¹⁶⁹ and threw it at Jesus. Seeing this, Jesus fled from there. Israel threw the bushel after Jesus, but it did not reach him, and struck the ground. And at once it took root: it became a tree, which flowered and bore fruit. It is there to this day. Jesus, having escaped, went to the gate of the city, and so on to the sea; and he walked upon the sea as upon the firm ground.

16. And Israel made a great outcry throughout the city; and he said, “Gaze upon me and pity me; for the child Jesus has fled, carrying with him all that was in my house. Join me, that we may seize him. A crowd followed

him; and gathering itself at the crossroads of certain paths, they sought the baby Jesus. They did not find him; but certain people gave them the following information: “When Jesus had passed the gate of the city, we saw him advance to the sea; but we do not know what became of him.” The mob then departed from there to follow the turn of the shore of the sea; but they found nothing, and retraced their steps. And as they went away, Jesus left the sea, and sat down on a stone of the shore, in the disguise of an unknown child.¹⁷⁰ The mob questioned him, saying, “Child, didn’t you see Jesus, the son of the old man?” Jesus said, “I do not know.” He then took the shape of a young man. Someone asked him, “Didn’t you see the son of Joseph?” Jesus said, “No.” Then he took the shape of an old man. Someone asked him, “Old man didn’t you see the son of the old man, Joseph?” Jesus said, “I did not see him.”

17. Not discovering Jesus’ whereabouts, they re-entered the city; and seizing Joseph, they led him to the court, and said, “Where is your child, who so treacherously misled our patience, and who fled, < carrying the >²⁶ goods of he who had received in him his house?” And Joseph remained quiet and answered nothing in return.

18. And Israel returned sadly from there to his home; but as he wanted to find the bushel, and so he went again to the place where he had thrown it. When he saw that it had taken root, and that it bore fruit, he was filled with wonder; and he said to himself, “Really, this man is the Son of God, or one just like him!” And he went into his house; and finding the tank, he saw all the garments that were to be dyed gathered in this same tank, which was filled with the color blue. But when he went to withdraw them, he found that nothing was missing from the account, neither any of the clothing, nor in their color. He saw that all of them had taken various colors, in conformity with the orders which he had received from their owners. Having seen these wonders, he glorified God, and was glorified in return. And then, rising even at night, he went to sit down by the side of the sea, opposite a rock; and he cried bitterly the whole night long. And, giving himself to lamentation, he sighed and struck himself; and he said, “Jesus Child, < Son >¹⁷¹ of the Father, the great King, have pity on me, miserable < that I am; >¹⁷² and do not give up on me; for it is an effect of my ignorance that I sinned against you, and that I did not at once understand that you are the Lord God and the salvation of our hearts. Now, Lord, you are manifestly with me; for my heart wishes to hear the words of your mouth.”

19. And at that instant, Jesus appeared to him in his original form; and he said to him, “What is it you seek, that you deplore thus the whole night?” Israel said, “Lord, have mercy on me; listen to the prayers of your servant, and forgive me all the sins which I made against you in my ignorance; and bless me.” Jesus said, “Be blessed, you and all that is in our house. Your sins are forgiven you. Go in peace: the Lord is with you.” And he blessed him and vanished from sight.

20. Israel prostrated himself on the ground and, collecting dust, spread it on his head. He struck himself with a stone, and did not know what to do.¹⁷³ Israel returned to his home; and the next morning, having come out of his house, he went to the place where the people assembled together; and he said to them, “Listen to me: I want to tell you of the miracle Jesus made in my house and the surprise which seized me.” “Tell us about it,” they said to him with one voice. And Israel said to them, “Rising up one day, I went outside my house; and I found a gray-haired old man seated within my gate. I found also a child and his mother. I questioned the old that I might discover his intentions; and he said to me: ‘I want to establish myself here.’ I received him into my house and treated him with honor, and put his child in training at home (for I had also taken the child into my home). Now, I had gathered in my house fabric from all over the city to be dyed; and having closed the gate, I sealed it, and ordered the child to guard my house until my return; for I went out according to my habit to look for other fabric to dye. When I returned, I found the gate of my home open, and all the fabric to be dyed had been taken out and thrown in a tank of blue dye. When I saw this, I flew into a rage; and seizing a bushel, I threw it at the infant in order to strike him. The bushel fell to the ground; and at once it took root and bore fruit. Seeing this, I left in haste and tried to find the child; but I could not find him. I returned to my house, and I found that in the tank—in this same tank of blue dye—that the various colors of these fabrics were reunited with them. Come with me, and let us go and see this wonder.”

21. The judge of the city and all its notables rose in great number and went to see these wonders. Having discovered the tank, they found all the fabric to be dyed gathered in the same place. And while they were withdrawn them, they read the list of the names, calling out the corresponding color for each piece; and Israel then

withdrew the color requested, some of them of a brilliant hue. They said, one to the other, “Whoever saw coming out of the same tank this variety of bright colors?” And they returned to their own houses, saying, “Really, this is a miracle, and a work of God, not of human hands.” And many believed < in Jesus >¹⁷⁴ because of this.

22. Then Israel took them along and showed them the bushel, how it had taken root. At this sight, several of them said, “Really, that child is the son of God.”¹⁷⁵ And the judge ordered Joseph taken from the prison and brought to him. When he arrived, the judge questioned him and said, “Tells us, old man: is it your child who makes these benefits and accomplishes these wonders?” “By the life of the Lord!” Joseph replied. “God gave me this son, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.” The crowd said, “Happy are his parents, who for their part received this child of blessing!” And Joseph returned in silence to his house, and told Mary the miracles of Jesus—about those which he had intended to speak, and those that he had seen. And Mary said, “Really, I am surprised that you still want the best for this child: do we not have to support evils similar < to what we have suffered because of him? >.”¹⁷⁶ Joseph said, “Do not be sad. God will provide for him according to his will.” And as he said these words, Israel came by; and, falling at the feet of Joseph and Mary, he asked them to forgive his faults. Joseph said, “Go in peace; the Lord guides you towards the Good.”

XXII

1. And Joseph rose up and took Mary out of the city by the main road; and as they left, they looked for Jesus. At the same moment, Jesus appeared to them, and walked with them to the country of Galilee, the chief place of which is called Arimathea. There they took lodging in a house. Jesus was then ten years old; and he went throughout the city, seeking the place where the children gathered together. When the children saw Jesus, they said to him, “Tell us from where you come?” “From an unknown country,” Jesus replied. The children said, “Tell us where your father’s house is located?” “You would not understand,” Jesus replied. The children said, “Tell us something, that we may tell others that we learned it from you.” “Do you ask me to talk to you because you do not understand my words?” said Jesus. “Speak to us,” said the children, “for we are ignoramuses and you appear to be informed about all things.” “I know all things,” said Jesus; “but you hold me for a foreigner, and you will not accept my words, no matter what I say.” The children said, “We extend the friendship of a brother to you, and we will subject ourselves to your commands, as you will want.”

2. Jesus said, “Rise, and let us go.” The children rose by mutual agreement, and went away from there to a certain place. There was in this place a high rock; and Jesus, standing opposite it, ordered the rock to bend down its summit to him. Jesus went and sat down there, and the rock resumed its position. The children cried out in amazement; and forming rings around the stone, they looked at Jesus. And after having order the rock to bow down, Jesus came down from it.¹⁷⁷

3. The children went back to the city, to tell of the wonders done by Jesus; but Jesus escaped from them. One of the young people having seen this, stopped him by surprise, and seized him, < throwing him to the ground. >¹⁷⁸ Jesus turned over < and >²⁶ blew in his face; and at that moment, the child lost his sight. And it cried out, exclaiming, “Jesus have pity on me.” Jesus laid his hand on the child’s eyes, and its sight was restored.

4. One day the children gathered together close to the well. Jesus mingled with them; and seeing this, they were filled with joy. And Jesus said to them, “Is it for me that you have gathered here at the edge of the well?”¹⁷⁹ < The children said, “Come here now and among us.” Jesus said, “Yes. I am here, and here with you I will remain. What do you wish?” And at the moment Jesus spoke, two children played > with exuberance at the edge of the well; and it happened that, while squabbling, one of the children was hit and knocked into the well. Everyone fled; and Jesus, rising up, went away from there to his house.

5. And some people came from the city for water; and having dropped their jug into the well, they saw in the middle of it a dead child; and they went to the city to announce this. The parents of the child arrived and removed the body from the well; which had remained, drowned, in the middle of the well. They cried bitterly ...¹⁸⁰ It was a very pretty child, five years old; and the parents wept, and asked: “Who caused this misfortune?” They did not find the murderer; and they returned to the magistrate, seeking justice for the death of the child.

6. The judge thus ordered all the children of the city to be assembled together and brought before him; and he said to them, "Tell me, my children: who threw his little boy into the water, causing his death. "We do not know who it was," the children replied. The judge said, "Do not think to confuse me by the use of subterfuge, lest you will die, the innocent with the guilty." The princes and the great lords said, "Talk to us sincerely, and do not lie." The children said with one voice, "Believe in what we say, for we were not the causes of his death. He fell into; the water by accident, and we could not save him." "Why did you not cry out when he fell into the water," the judge said,¹⁸¹ < so that someone could have come to withdraw the child while he still breathed? Why didn't you shout, you who have the breath of life, for someone to save the child. The children said, "Because none of us remained there long enough; all of us had given it up and fled." The judge said, "It does not continue as you say. If he had fallen in by accident > you would all have cried out and told everyone; but yourselves being the author of his death, you fled from there in fear, and now you think to escape death by vain excuses." The children said, "If you wish to condemn us wrongfully, than that is what you will do. Each one of < can say >²⁶ that he is innocent; and if that deserves death, ... "¹⁸² How thus can we be condemned?" "If I know < who did this evil thing," >¹⁸³ said the judge, "I would not condemn the innocent with the guilty. I would only order the innocent to discover the murderer."

7. The children said, "We are not at fault. We were distracted by the play which occupied us, and we doubted nothing until the moment when some children cried out and fled. We know nothing more." The judge said, "If you desire it, I will tell you the truth: ..."¹⁸⁴ The children said, "We all told you what happened, and you did not listen to us." The judge said, "I am suspicious of the artifice of your words." The children said, "If you wish to wrongfully condemn us, that is your business. "If you do not tell me the truth," the judge said, "I will take you to the well and I will make you perish by drowning." But the young boy who was the murderer said, "You will torment us in vain; we will not be able to lie to you."

8. Then the judge proceeded to the edge of the well; and he ordered the children to be undressed and brought in chains before him. The boy who was the murderer said, "O judge, order and take the testimony of a witness; and only then condemn us. Why are we to be put to death, with no evidence to the contrary?"¹⁸⁵ The judge said, "What witness have I to produce; since you were all there, you are the witnesses yourselves. You will leave my hands neither by way of an official complaint, nor by way of bribery." The parents, seeing their children in the milieu of the courtroom naked before a judge, cried bitterly; but the judge said, "I do not have any pity because of these tears." He then ordered the children to be thrown into the well. However, he who was the murderer exclaimed in these terms: "Do not throw me in. I will tell you who it is. Where is Jesus, the son of the old man? It is he who is guilty of this crime." The judge said, "But why did you let yourselves be put to death, even though you were innocent?" The children said, "You must know this; you desired it."¹⁸⁶

9. Then the judge commanded Jesus to be brought before him. A search was made; but, Jesus not being found, Joseph was seized and brought before the judge. The judge questioned him, and he said, "Old man, from where did you come to this city?" Joseph said, "I am from a remote country." The judge said, "Where is your child, who committed this crime of murder?" Joseph said, "I do not know." The judge said, "You do not know that he has committed the crime of murder?" Joseph said, "By the life of the Lord! I do not know that." The judges said, "If, knowing it, do you thus believe that you will escape death?" Joseph said, O judge, do not wrongly condemn an innocent child." "Well," said the judge, "since he is innocent, why has he fled to escape death?" Joseph said, I do not know." The judge said, "If you do not hasten to force your child to appear before me, you will not leave this prison."

10. And as the judge said this, Jesus appeared in the middle of the court and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" They said, "Jesus, the son of Joseph." Jesus said, "That is me." The judge said, "When did you come to this city?" Jesus said, "It has been many days that I have been here." The judge said, "Tell me: what was the cause of the violent death of this child?" Jesus said, "I do not know." The parents of the child said, "You killed our child by drowning him, and you say, 'I do not know.'!" Jesus said, "If it is with another that it is necessary to ask for an accounting of his blood, why wrongfully condemn me?" The judge said, "Do not testify falsely, because you are worthy of death." Jesus said, "They are producing false evidence, and I the truth. I am not guilty of the loss of this child." The judge said, "Swear on the Law of the Lord." Jesus said, "Why lie to you with the face of the Lord; do you not fear God?" The judge said, "What evil is it to swear by an oath, when one is innocent, and thus to withdraw oneself from death?" Jesus said, "Then why is it legitimate for you to render an unjust judgment?" "Tell

me what I should do," the judge said. Jesus said, "You are a judge: you know what you should do." "Answer me!" the judge said. "What do I have to do?" Jesus said, "If < you act >¹⁸⁷ in good faith, you would have observed justice; but you did not." The judge said, "I acted < according to >¹⁸⁷ what I heard." Jesus said, "In this you said truth; but you do not accept the testimony that I made for myself." The judge said, "I do not condemn you wrongfully, but < ... >¹⁸⁸" Jesus said, "If you listen to your conscience, you would not lightly condemn anyone."

11. The children said, "O judge, listen to us. May we not answer him by words?" Jesus said, "What do you have to say about this?" The children said, "When you arrived in this city, you caused us a number of vexations and contrariedades. We let them pass, because you are poor and from abroad. But now that you have caused such a misfortune as to expose us to death, it is right to make you die." The judge said, "Is this the child of whom you said that he misleads the eyes by prestige?" They said with one voice: "Yes." Jesus said, "I know that you are all in league against me, and that you want to wrongly condemn me to death." The judge said, "How is it that you have no witnesses who consider you to be innocent?" Jesus said, "If I get such a witness myself, will you believe me?" "Yes, I will believe you, said the judge." Jesus said, "Wait one moment, that I may get you the proof."

12. That said, and Jesus being made indignant within himself, he drew near the dead boy and exclaimed aloud, "Jonathan, son of Beria, get up on your feet, open your eyes and tell us who threw you into the well." And at once the dead boy arose; and opening his eyes, he looked at all of them and recognized them, calling each of them by their names. His parents cried out, and were very merry, gathering him in their arms and covering him with kisses. They questioned him; and they said, "My son, who gave you back your life?" And he pointed to Jesus, the son of Joseph. Jesus said to him, "Who was it who caused you to lose your life?" And Jonathan said, "Lord it is not you who are responsible for my blood. It is my < cousin > Saraka¹⁸⁹ whose violent blow caused me to fall into the well." Jesus said: "All of you hear: the resurrected dead returned testimony in my favor." When the people assembled heard that, they became as frightened prey; and they said, "In truth he is God and the son of the Father, come into the world." Jesus said, "O iniquitous judge, do you believe in my testimony and in my innocence? Did you see with you own eyes any way in which my acts could be misunderstood?"¹⁹⁰ But he, in his confusion, did not answer him.

13. The child remained alive until the evening, long enough so that a multitude of people came to see the wonder achieved by Jesus. All came to throw themselves at the feet of Jesus; and prostrating themselves before him, they confessed their sins. Then Jesus called the little boy to him: "Rise now, and go to sleep, and wait for the time when the judge of all men will come to apportion rewards and punishments and gather together those who await his return."¹⁹¹ And when Jesus had said these words, the child laid his head down on the bed and fell asleep. Seeing this, all who were present were seized with fear, and they became afraid of Jesus. Jesus wanted to leave; but they threw themselves at his feet, and begged him, saying, "Return the boy to life." But Jesus would not agree to this; and he said, "You wished to wrongly condemn me in spite of my innocence; but my justice delivered me from death." And saying these words, he disappeared from their sight. Meanwhile, Joseph had been released from prison; and he returned in silence to his house, and told Mary about the wonders performed by Jesus.

XXIII

1. And one day Joseph, rising at midday, took the child and his mother; and they left the city. They walked on in silence; and the mother of Jesus said to him, "My son, why did you conceal yourself from these people a second time?" Jesus said to her, "Mother, keep silence, and carry on your life in peace. All that will happen to us by the way, I will accomplish." They remained six months < in the country of the Galilee. >¹⁹² And Jesus traveled throughout the countryside surrounding the city. And he went and sat down with the children, at the place where they gathered together; and he spoke to them at great length; but they did not understand what he said to them.

2. And it happened that Jesus, taking the children with him, led them to the edge of the well where all the people of the city went to draw water. Taking the jugs from the hands of the children, he dashed them against each other, ran up against the stones and threw them in the well. The children could not return to their homes, for fear of their parents; and Jesus, seeing them crying, called them to him and said, "Do not cry; I will return your jugs." He commanded this to the floods of the well; and the jugs were returned intact to the surface of the water. Each child took again his jug; and they returned to their houses, and told of the miracle accomplished by Jesus.

3. And on another day Jesus took the children with him; and he took them to rest near a large tree. Ordering the tree to incline its foliage, Jesus mounted the tree and sat in its topmost branches. He ordered the tree to draw itself up; and the tree rose, dominating the place. Jesus remained there for one hour. The children shouted to him, saying, "Order the tree to drop down, that we may go up there with you." Jesus then ordered the tree to lower its foliage; and he said to the children, "Come quickly close to me." They happily gathered themselves close to him, and were duly raised up. After having waited a little while, Jesus ordered the tree to lower its foliage. The children came down with Jesus; and the tree at once resumed its original position.

4. And it happened on another day that the children were playing together in the same place and Jesus was with them; and there was also there a twelve year old boy, stricken in all his person with painful infirmities. He was leprous and epileptic; the tips of the fingers of his hands and the toes of his feet had been mutilated, and he had lost the appearance of a human being. He could not even lie down upon the side of the road. When Jesus saw him, he had pity on him; and he said to me, "Child, show yourself to me." And the boy, taking off his clothes, exposed himself. Jesus ordered the children to lay him on the ground. Collecting the dust of the ground, Jesus spread it on his body; and he said, "Extend your hand; for you are cured of all your infirmities." And at once his < diseased >¹⁹³ skin was detached from his body; the tendons and the articulations of his bones were strengthened; and he became healthy, and without spot, like a new-born baby. And being raised up, he threw himself at the feet of Jesus, and prostrated himself before him. And Jesus said to him, "Go in peace." And he went from there peacefully to his home; and those who were with him, witnesses to the miracle that Jesus had performed, wanted to see him; but they could no longer find him.

XXIV

1. Having seen this, Joseph and Mary, taking Jesus during the night, went to a village called Emmaus; and they remained there. Jesus was ten years old; and he explored the while region. One day, about ...,¹⁹⁴ he went to a village called Ephthaïea; and on the road, he encountered a fifteen year old boy whose entire body was just a single wound. He could not walk on his feet, but he was crawling. He sat down at the edge of the road; and when people passed, he beseeched their pity. Jesus saw him from afar, and passed in front of him. The leprous one said to Jesus, "Young child, please listen to me! Give me alms, in consideration of your parents and your youth. God will reward you for your charity." Jesus said, "I am poor like you; and moreover, both poor and the son of a foreigner. How can I make alms for you?" The leprous one said, "Not out of false pretexts, child. If it remains in you to reserve a single piece of bread, a coin—a mite: give me as an effect of your generosity some small help; for I see who you are. Although by age you are only a child, I estimate that you are indeed of a noble lineage, son of a general of the royal armies. Your face is memorable; you are in possession of your self: I find you externally distinguished by an extreme internal beauty."

2. Jesus said, "What is your name, and of which race are you? Tell me." The leprous one said, "I am of the Hebrew race, the branch of Juda." Jesus said, "Who are your father and your mother—who takes care of you?" My father died," said the leprous one; my mother still lives, it is she who takes care of me, as well as she can." "What do you mean?" Jesus asked. "You see that I am crippled," said the boy. "When the evening arrives, my mother comes and brings me back to the house. The following day she brings me here and makes me sit. The passers-by give me alms gracefully; and it is this that I am always doing." Jesus said, "Why don't you show yourself to the doctors, so that they may cure you?" He said: "I am crippled: I cannot go myself; and my mother has no cure for me; for since I was born from the center of my mother, my pains and lamentations are simply increased. And, because of the violent and horrific nature of my afflictions, the limbs of my body became themselves slack and disjointed; the tendons of my bones were consumed by putrefaction; and my entire body covered itself with ulcerations, as you see."

3. Jesus said, "I know doctors who can compound a remedy that will bring life from death. If you want it, this remedy will be your cure." The leprous man said, "Since my childhood until daylight today, I have never visited a doctor; nor do I believe that such evil < as I suffer from >¹⁹⁵ has ever been cured by any man." Jesus said, "Haven't I told you that there are skilful doctors who bring back the dead to life?" "And by what remedy can a man be cured of such devastation?" the man asked. Jesus said, "It can be done by a simple word, and not by a

compound.” When he heard these words, the young man was greatly surprised; and he said, “This is an astonishing thing! How can it be that an evil may be cured without the help of a medicinal remedy?” Jesus said, “It is true: there are competent doctors who are able to distinguish fatal disease from those that are curable.” “And you who appear younger than me,” said the leper: “from where do you master all this science?” Jesus said, “I heard and I remembered.”¹⁹⁶ The leper said, “Did you see with our own eyes a man cured of similar evil?”

4. Jesus said, “I am a little more advanced in this business, being the son of a doctor.” The leper said, “Then you are serious when you say ‘I am a little more advanced in this business?’” “I may cure all evil by a simple word, which I learned from my father, the effects of which I have apprised,” said Jesus. “In what country does your father live, and how can one get to it?” the leper asked. Jesus said, “Through him who you will have given the fees and the price of your cure: he will present you to my father, and my father will cure you.” “What are the fees you will claim from me,” the leper asked. Jesus said, “It will cost you very little: four talents of silver and some precious stones.” And when he heard that, the leper burst into bitter laughter; and he said, “By the life of the Lord, not even I understood what you were about.¹⁹⁷ But listen: your age, I can see, is that of a child. All is easy for you: you are the son of a noble father, the scion of some princely house. We, poor as we are: we seem to you a fit subject for jokes and laughter—for from what source could come to me all this opulence about which you speak?” Jesus said: “Why would I want to annoy you thus? It is from a sense of benevolence and charity for you that I said what I said to you.”

5. “One often put me to this test,” said the leper. “You see well that I do not have anything, except the clothing which I have on my back and the one day of food which God granted us—my mother and myself.” Jesus said, “But then what means can there be of curing you, since you cannot pay for it?”¹⁹⁸ The leprous man said, “God will come to my assistance.” Jesus said, “I know that God has the power to do all that those who call upon him with faith require of him. But, for all that, how can you be cured, since you are poor?” The leper said, “I am extremely astonished that you spend so many words to overpower me.” Jesus said, “I understand a little of the Law.” The leper said, “It seems to me that you have often read in the commands of God, how it is necessary to tend to the poor and the unfortunate.” Jesus said, “It is necessary to testify to the mercy and the love we have for one another.” “You speak truly,” the leper said; “and you have given me the right answer. Thus have pity on me as you < spoke of it >;²⁶ and he who is the dispenser of all good will return it to you.”

6. And when Jesus saw him bathed in tears, he felt tenderly towards him; and he said, “Me: I will have pity on you.” And at once Jesus extended his hand, and took the leper’s hand in his, saying, “Arise, get up on your feet, and go in peace to your house.” And Jesus having said these words, at once the leprous one arose < cured; >¹⁹⁹ and he prostrated himself before him, and said, “May the Lord God treat you with mercy, as you have treated me.” And Jesus said, “Go in peace, and do not tell anyone what I did for you.” The leper said, “If somebody asks me the question, ‘Who cured you?’ what will I say?” Jesus said, “You will say this to him: ‘A child, the son of a doctor, passing by the road, saw me, had pity on me and gave me charity.’” And the cured young man prostrated himself at Jesus feet, and went from there happily to his mother.

7. When his mother saw him, she cried out with joy, and said to her son, “Who cured you?” Her son said, “I met the son of a noble doctor; he cured me with a simple word.” And hearing these words, his mother and all those who were with them joined together about the child; and they asked him the question: “Where is this doctor who cured you?” The child said, “I do not know; for he gave me this command: ‘Do not tell anyone what I did for you.’” And those—which included many who had come from afar to hear him tell of the miracle which had been done—were astonished; and they said, “And who is this child who has such a command of medicine, and who operates these distinguished wonders?” And many believed on his behalf; and they wished to see him, and could not; for they had neglected Jesus with their prayers.

XXV

1. One night, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a vision, and said to him, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to Nazareth; and there stay: do not move away. You will build a house there, and remain there for a long time, until the Lord, in his kindness, decides otherwise.” And having said this, the angel departed. The following day, Joseph rose up and, taking the child and his mother, he journeyed to Nazareth, to the house where

they had lived before. They remained there eighteen years; and Jesus was twelve years old < when he came to Nazareth. >²⁰⁰

2. The second day after their arrival, Jesus, having hiked out of town, went to sit down at a fork in the road; and he saw two boys, who came toward him arguing violently between themselves. They came to blows, striking one another; but when they reached Jesus, they ceased speaking; and approaching him, they prostrated themselves before him. Jesus ordered them to sit down, and they did so. And Jesus said to them, “Children, why are you filled with such anger? What disagreement so divides you, that you exchange such violent blows?” One of them, the youngest, said, “The problem is that there is here no judge who can decide between us.” “What is your name,” said Jesus. The younger man said, “My name is Malachaeus, and his is Micheus. We are brothers, sprung of the same seed, of simple bearing.”²⁰¹ Jesus said, “Why do you seek to overcome each other with insult, with this animosity?”

3. Malachie called to Jesus: “Please, child, listen to me and I will tell you what is going on. My brother here is older than I am; I am his junior. He tries to frustrate me wrongfully, and make me do things I do not want to do. You: give today between us an equitable judgement.” Jesus said, “So tell me the cause of your sorrow.” Michée said to him, “It seems to me that you are the son of a judge, and a descendant of great kings.” Jesus said, “You speak truly.” Michée said, “May God reward you, you and your parents, if this day you put between my brother and myself justice with peace.”

4. Jesus said, “I am neither an established judge, nor a firm of lawyers: how will I enforce my judgement with you. I see well that you do not want to subject yourselves to my commands.” The two brothers said, “Do not say that—and do not insult us. You take us for children and ignoramuses. We are educated and we know the divine Law. But we want to be instructed by you.” Jesus said, “I want you to pledge from the first not to mutually mislead me, and to carry out what I will decide.” The children said in the same voice: “We take to witness the Law of God, and we swear by its commands that we will obey your decisions as if they were edicts emanating from the royal house.” Jesus said, “Only tell me the truth, so that I believe you.”²⁰²

5. Malachie said, “We are two young brothers living at home, orphaned of both father and mother. Our parents left us an inheritance; but strangers presently hold it by usurpation; and we have a falling out because my brother seeks to wrongfully dispossess me of my portion.”²⁰³ Jesus ... said,²⁰⁴ “When your parents died, who was given to you to be your tutor, while you were waiting until you had reached the age of discretion?”²⁰⁵ The children said, “Neither of us remember our parents.” Jesus said, “Why thus do you wrong one another?” Malachie said, “My brother seeks to place me in the wrong while saying: ‘I am the elder.’” Jesus said, “Do not speak this way. If you want me to listen to you, make peace between yourselves and share your inheritance in a friendly manner.” Michée said to Jesus, “Child, I know that you are right to speak to us about conciliation; but as for the judgement which you will render—that is a different matter. Rather, listen to what I tell you. I had reached an age more advanced than my brother when your parents died. He was then very little; and so I busied myself about, making many efforts to collect our inheritance; for it had been abandoned and was devastated. Also, I had to deal alone with the sorrow < of our loss; >²⁰⁶ for my brother was too young to realize what had happened.”²⁰⁷

6. Jesus said, “He is your brother, and but a child.²⁰⁸ Nourished by charity, you have so far lodged him with you: do not wrong him now. Go, and share your good fortune and you wish; but keep affection and peace between you, and the peace of God will be in you and on you.” And they, agreeing to the desire of Jesus, prostrated himself in front of him; and then, falling into each others arms, they kissed each other and said to Jesus, “Son of a king, who established peace between us; by your intercession you have made us possess the love of God; which God glorifies your person and your sainted name throughout all the land. We request from you, child, that you bless us.” Jesus said, “Go in peace; and may the love of God remain with you.”

7. And Jesus having thus spoken, they prostrated themselves before him, and went away to their house. And Jesus returned to Nazareth, to be near his mother. And his mother, seeing her son, said to him, “Where have you been all day? Here I am, ignorant of what may have happened to, and alarmed for you, with the thought that you may be traveling only in isolated places?” Jesus said, “What do you want from me? Are you not aware that I must henceforth travel the country, and see for myself what is written for me to do? For it is < for >²⁶ that that I was sent.” Mary said, “My son, as you have yet only the age of a child, and not of a tested man, [thus do not go thus imports me where, for fear it does not arrive to you misfortune.]”²⁰⁹ Jesus said, “My mother, your dark thoughts are unreasonable; for I know all that must happen.” Mary said, [“You do not sadden the EC what I said to you;

because much of phantoms obsess me, and I can only make.” Jesus known as: “That do you think of making on my subject?”²⁰⁹ Mary said, “Here is what saddens me: we took care to make you learn all those professions in childhood, and you got nothing out of it. You did not lend yourselves there. And now that you have become tall, how do you propose to make a living in this world?”²¹⁰

8. And hearing this, Jesus became indignant in his heart; and he said to his mother: “You are speaking with an extreme lack of consideration. Don’t you understand the signs and the wonders which I performed in front of you, and which you saw with your own eyes? And you are still incredulous, even though I have been with you so long a time. See all my miracles; consider all that I do and my great patience; look at all my achieved works—for my time in this world is not yet complete. But you, firmly remain faithful to me.” And having said that, Jesus left the house in haste.

XXVI

1. One day, Jesus went journeying through the land surrounding the country of the Galileans; and having arrived in a village called Bouboron, he met there a man thirty years old, who lay distended on his bed, prostrated by the violence of his pain.²¹¹ And when Jesus saw him, he had pity on; and he said to him, “Man of what race are you?” The man said, “I am of the Syrian race and the country of Syria.” Jesus said, “Do you still have your father and mother with you?” The man said, “Yes, but my parents have driven me out of their house. I wander about everywhere seeking my subsistence from day to day; but I have no home and nothing to share.” Jesus said, “And how could you leave your country?” The man said, “I am carried, sometimes for wages, sometimes as a kindness to myself.” Jesus said, “Why did you come to this country?” the man said, “To beg alms, and provide for my material needs.” Jesus said, “If you support your own torments, you will later find rest.” The man said, “Whether I find it or not, I support them, and I accept all < that happens to me >²⁰⁸ with joy.”

2. Jesus said, “Which god is useful for you?” The man said, “The god Phatthea.” Jesus said, “Do you find the truth when you believe in this way?” The man said, “My parents have told me that this god is the god of the Syrians, and that it can do what it likes with anyone.” Jesus said, “What is your name?” The man said, “Hiram.” Jesus said, “If you wish to be cured, leave this error.” “How can I believe you?” said Hiram. “You have the air of a child, while I am a tested man.” “Does the god that your worship have the power to give you back your life by a simple word?” Jesus asked. “More to the point, do you know that there is another god able to give life to a man?” Hiram countered. Jesus said, “If you confess the God of earth and sky, who created the world and all mankind, and if you believe in him with your whole heart, he will be able to cure you.” Hiram said, “I have not heard anyone speak of this God.” Jesus said, “So be it; but only believe, and your heart will live.” Hiram said, “How do I make this act of faith?”

3. Jesus said, “In this way: believe that he is a very high God, creator of anything; and that he with his only Son and the Holy Spirit < form a >²¹² divine trinity, one and perfect.”²¹³ Hiram said, “I believe what you said.” Jesus said, “Didn’t you show yourself to certain people so that they might cure you?” Hiram said, “What doctor could deliver me from such an infirmity?” Jesus said, “He to whom you will give the price of it, will be able to do it easily.” “Poor as I am, I do not have anything to give; and nobody gives charity.” Jesus said, “But you said of yourself: ‘I came from a remote country; I traversed many regions and I received alms.’ Why do you say wrongfully, ‘I have nothing with which to pay?’” Hiram said, “Please, child! What I meant to say is that I have nothing to give except the food that I receive from day to day, and the clothing which covers me.”

4. Jesus, with tears in his eyes, said to him, “O man, address your request to me: what can I do for you?” Hiram said, “Do for me all that you can and bestow on me some help.” Jesus stretched out his hand to him; and he took his hand, saying to him, “Rise; get up on your feet and go in peace.” And at once the man was cured of his evils; and he fell, weeping, at Jesus’ feet, saying, “Lord, if you wish it, I will follow you as your disciple.” But Jesus said to him, “Return in peace to your house, and tell everyone that I was able to help you only because of our accidental meeting.” And the man prostrated himself before Jesus, and went away to his own country.

XXVII

1. And Jesus, led by the power of the Spirit, came again to the town of Nazareth; and he circulated in the hidden

places. Those who saw him were astonished, and said, "We see the baby Jesus coming here, the son of the old man; and he has the air of one who is awake and intelligent." And some said, "It is true what you say." And Jesus, seeing their controlled unbelief, did not appear to them.

2. And it happened that a great festival approached; and Jesus wished to go to Jerusalem. During the journey, he met a gray-haired old man, who traveled supported on two sticks which he moved alternately, which he moved by dropping first one of them to the side, and then the other. He had besides this an infirmity of the eyes and ears. Seeing him, Jesus was astonished; and he said to him, "Be welcome, old man in charge of years." And the old man said, "Be welcome, child, son of a great < king >²⁶ only son, first born < of the Father ... >²⁴" Jesus said, "Sit here and rest a little; then we will carry on with our journey." The old man said, "My son, I am at your service."²⁵ When they had sat down, Jesus began to question him in these terms: "Tell me, old man: what is your name? Of what race are you, and from which country did you come to this one?"

3. The old man said, "I am called Balthasar; I am of the Hebrew race, and my country is India." Jesus said, "What is it you seek here?" The old man said, "I am the son of a noble prince; and my father was trained in the art of medicine, and he taught me its practice. But I am impotent; and my intention is to travel to Jerusalem, to beg and thus earn my living." Jesus said, "You say, 'I am the son of a doctor.' Why can't you return yourself to health?" The old man said, "I practiced medicine while I was a young man. But when I reached middle age,²⁶ I lost my strength, and was not able to do anything any more." Jesus said, "Was it during your childhood or in your old age that your infirmity came upon you?" The old man said, "I was thirty years old when this evil struck me: my whole body was seized by a general tremor."

4. Hearing that, Jesus was astonished; and he said to him, "What species of processing did you apply?"²⁷ The old man said, "Such-and-such a disease: such-and-such a remedy." Jesus said, "Are you capable of resuscitating the dead? Have you made lame people walk? Do you know how to purify the leprous ones, to drive out demons—to cure all maladies, not with remedies, but with a word?" Hearing this, the old man was surprised, and, laughing, he said, "You astonish me extremely, for what you are saying are extraordinary operations, impossible for men." Jesus said to him, "Why are you amazed by what I say?" "You have the air of a child," the old man replied. "How can you know all that?" Jesus said, "It is not that I saw it or it from anybody: but I know it to be true." The old man said, "If it is as you say, it is from God and not from man that you hold this gift." Jesus said, "You speak the truth." The old man said, "It seems to me that you are well acquainted with the art of medicine." Jesus said, "My Father has the power to do all that."

5. The old man said, "Any disciple informs himself < when he is > near his Master, as the son does < when he is > near his father."²⁸ Thus please, give me charity, and the Lord will grant to you the duration of your life, and an additional length of days." Jesus said, "Old man, you speak truly; but I would be doing that for free. Thus give me the price in connection with my sorrow." The old man said, "And what is the fee that you ask of me?" Jesus said, "Little things: gold, silver, all that will be written on the contract." At these words, the old man burst out laughing; but, having reflected, he said to himself, "Can he do it; for he makes treacherous fun of me." Then the old man called to Jesus: "Child, why do you make fun of me, old as I am? One gives to the poor, especially to the old men; one does not turn on them in derision." Jesus said, "You began by speaking highly of me; and now you find fault with me." The old man said, "It is only that you seriously irritated me." Jesus said, "You don't hold against me that because, being only a child, I wanted to engage you in conversation?" The old man said, "Why don't you ask of me something reasonable, in order to benefit from me? Thus ask me where this fortune that you would claim from me would come from."

6. Jesus said, "Did you not say to me, 'I am from a great family, son of a prince and descendant of a royal house?'" The old man said, "I did not tell you that which was untrue. I had a great fortune; but when the infirmity had reached me, I lost everything." Jesus said, "Would you rather recover your opulent treasures, or to be in good health?" The old man said, "It would be better for me to be a son of the poor and a beggar, but free from infirmity." Jesus said, "If this is your desire, give me the price of my trouble." The old man said, "Do not torment me by all these long speeches. Why do you obstinately badger me with this trap and that trap?" Jesus said, "In what did I say too much? And what advice did I receive from you?" The old man said, "For the love of God, do not exasperate me; I am seriously crippled all over my body." Jesus said, "Do not be annoyed. Have a little

patience. I do not have anything more to tell you; but I have pity on you, and have the capacity to help you.” The old man said, “State your conditions.” Jesus said, “Give me some small reward for my sorrow, and I will cure you.” The old man said, “God will give you an abundant reward for your sorrow; but, please < ... >;²¹⁹ it is better for me to die than to remain alive.” Jesus said, “Your cure is not difficult.” The old man said, “I do not have anything, except for a piece of bread and two mites.” Jesus said, “Here is excess in the descendant of rich people!” Then the old man became violently angry; and said, while crying: “Really, that I must still continue to undergo this child; has he not teased me enough?” Jesus said, “Do not be annoyed, old man! Have a little patience, that your heart may still beat.”

7. The old man said, “I showed you such a great deal of patience; yet I find in you no pity.” The old man had said these words while crying. Jesus said to him, “Where will you go?” The old man said, “To the town of Jerusalem, to beg my bread. And if you come there with me, I will give you half of the resources which God has given me.” Jesus said, “Which god is useful for you?” The old man said, “The god of my fathers.” Jesus said, “It is because of that that this affliction arrived in you. If you want to be perfect, give up the religion of your fathers, in order to be saved for the heart and the body.” The old man said, “And how could I add believe in your words?” Jesus said, “You put me many times to the proof, and you are not a bit better off for it.”²²⁰ Hearing that, the old man reflected; and he thought, “I fear that this child is playing an insidious game with me.” Jesus said, “Old man, answer now the question that I posed to you.”

8. The old man said, “I am in doubt: I can’t think how I would answer your question. It seems to me that God sent you towards me; and I believe that you are the Lord, that which probes the thoughts of men. Thus make yourself known to me.” Jesus said, “Do you believe that there is a creative God of all things and its only Son and the Holy Spirit, Trinity and single divinity?” The old man said, “Yes, I believe it.” And Jesus extended his hand to the old man and said, “You are delivered of your disease; be cured of your evils.” And at the moment the old man was cured. And falling at Jesus feet, he confessed his sins. Jesus said to him, “< Receive >²⁶ forgiveness. Go in peace, and the Lord is with you.” The old man said, “Please, tell me: what is your name.” Jesus said, “What need to you have to ask me for my name? Go in peace.”

9. And the old man prostrated himself before Jesus, and went away from there peacefully to Jerusalem. And when the people of Jerusalem saw the cured old man, they asked him. “What cured you?” The old man said, “I met a son of a doctor on the way; and, with a simple word, he cured me.” They said to him, “Where is this doctor?” The old man said, “I do not know.” < They went to search for him, but did not find him; >²⁶ for Jesus had fled from the place. And he went away from there to Nazareth; and < the old man >²⁶ made public the miracles which he had made performed on him.”

XXVIII

1. And it happened that on the fifteenth day, < that >²⁶ Jesus thought to express the human heart a little. And as he walked by the wayside, it happened that he encountered two soldiers; who, while walking on, had been caught in an argument, and wished to spill blood. Jesus had seen them from afar; and he moved towards them, and said to them, “Soldiers, why are you filled with anger and in a mood to kill one another?” for their hearts were filled with rage—so much so that they did not answer him. And when they arrived at a certain place, in front of a well, they sat down near the water with their injuries, threatening one another coarsely.

2. Then the other soldier, having looked around at him, saw Jesus sitting quietly; and he said to Jesus, “Child, where do you come from? Where do you go? And what is your name?” Jesus said, “If I tell it to you, you will not be able to understand me.” The soldier said, “Are your father and your mother still alive?” Jesus said, “Yes, my Father is alive; he is immortal.” “What do you mean, immortal?” the soldier asked. “Jesus said, “He is everlasting—from the very first.²²¹ He is swift; and death has no claim upon him.” The soldier said, “Who is that that will always remain in life, on which death has no claim—since you say that your father is ensured of immortality?” Jesus said, “You could not know; you could not have any idea.” The soldier said, “Who can see him?” Jesus said, “Nobody.” The soldier said, “Where is your father?” Jesus said, “He is above the ground, in the sky.”²²² The soldier said, “And you: how can you go near him?” Jesus said, “I was there, and even now I am still with him.” The soldier said, “I do not understand a thing that you are saying.”²²³ Jesus said: “He is unexplainable and

inexpressible.” The soldier said, “Who can understand it?” Jesus said, “If you ask me to, I will explain it to you.” The soldier said, “Please, tell me.”

3. Jesus said, “I am without a father in the world; neither have I a mother in the sky.” The soldier said, “How were you born, and how were you nourished?” Jesus said, “My first birth proceeded from the Father before the centuries began; my second generation took place in this world.”²²⁴ The soldier said, “How? No one has ever seen that which was born from its father reappearing born from its mother.” Jesus said, “You did not hear me as you should have.” The soldier said, “How many fathers do you have, and how many mothers?” Jesus said, “Didn’t I tell you? I have a single Father and, with him, no mother; I have a single mother and, with her, no father.” The soldier said, “You say thus: ‘By a first birth, I was born from my Father, without the aid of a mother, and by the second, born from my mother, without the aid of my father.’” Jesus said, “That is well put.”²²⁵ The soldier said, “Here is a wonder! Tell me: whose son are you?” Jesus said, “I am the only son of the Father, the child of my mother, and the heir to all things.” The soldier said, “Didn’t your father know your mother? How did it come about that your mother designed you in her center and gave birth to you?” Jesus said, “By the effect of a simple word, and without a thought of approaching her himself.”²²⁶ The soldier said, “How can you take pleasure in the desires of your father and your mother?”²²⁷ Jesus said, “That is an easy thing.” The soldier said, “How can you be near your father, and yet live near your mother?” Jesus said, “I am near my Father in the sky: I live in this place near my mother, but I am with him for eternity.”

4. The soldier said, “What you say is very astonishing.” Jesus said, “Why did you ask me the question that you asked me and which you could not understand?” The soldier said, “When I questioned you, child, it was with the aim of engaging you in our service. Then I recognized that you are the child of a famous royal family. That God whom you glorify everywhere enables you to obtain the heritage of your fathers.”

5. Jesus said, “Be blessed of God. But tell me: for what reason do you argue between yourselves.” “Young man,” said the soldier, “I will tell you all this business, and you will pronounce today a correct judgment between us.” “Yes,” said Jesus, “Tell me about it.” “We are from the country of the magi, and a royal house. We followed the kings who came to Bethlehem with many troops, and were present in honor of the new-born king of the Israelites. When these returned from here to their own country, we came to the city of Jerusalem; and, by the love of God, we became companions and brothers, one to the other. We made a treaty of alliance, urging each other by oath not to part from one other until death, and in friendliness to share equitably all the profits that God would send to us.

6. “As we were enrolled in the palace guard of a great leader of this kingdom, my powerful prince sent me with a message to a remote country. I remained there for a long time; and the people there accepted me with benevolence and honor, as the form of the royal decree requires him to do,²²⁸ telling the carriers of messages the respect which is due them. By the grace of God, I returned satisfied. Of all that I gained, I hid nothing with another, and I am ready with it, sharing. My comrade, him, left off following a troop of riders, and returned to his house after having despoiled a rich person. I ask him to share with me those things which he brought back from his expedition.²²⁹ He does not want to share, and harshly demands what is owed to him.²³⁰ And now: what do you order me to do?”

7. Jesus said, “If you want to listen to me and act with uprightness, you will refrain from lying to each other: neither will you forget your engagements, but what you promised to do, that you will do. Share equally what you have, according to the rule that you swore on the Law of God. Do not lie in the face of God, and do not wrongfully frustrate one another, if you wish to live in mutual friendship.”

8. The other of the companions, who was older, said, “Child, true judgment and the right are not what you do with them. As for me, I was on a field of death. I passed through many dangers and alarms, and it is with great sorrow that I could return to my own hearth. He, surrounded by a princely apparatus, went into the palaces of kings, and himself returned from there to his own place with many presents. It is right that he give me a share, and that I give him nothing.”

9. Jesus said, “You know only what you saw. If, during the outward journey or the return, he had undergone any kind of vexation because of his enemies, how would you have shared with him? If you wish to share with

friendliness,” he added, “discover your thought clearly.” And having said this, Jesus concealed < himself from their sight. >²³¹

10. Then the younger soldier, having stood up, prostrated himself at the feet of his comrade, and said to him, “Forgive me, brother, for I seriously opposed you. Now then, I want you to understand me.²³² I will share; but after this I will no longer live in common with you;²³³ for you took on importance. You became the assessor of kings. As for me, I am poor and without resources. I will instinctively²³⁴ take what you are willing to give me.” And Jesus, looking at them, had pity on them, particularly because of the humility of the younger man. For the older was violent, because he was the son of poor people; while the younger was humble, because he was the son of a great house.

11. Jesus called to the younger, “According to what you first said to me, you became allies in Bethlehem, < while you were part >²³⁵ of the retinue of the magi.²³⁶ Did you see with your own eyes this new-born king who had come into the world?” “Yes,” said the youngest soldier, “I saw him with my own eyes and I adored him.” Jesus said, “And what did you think of him? What faith did you have in him?” The soldier said, “He is the incarnate word, sent by God. And under the guidance of a star, we went to see him, born of the Virgin and sleeping in the cave.” Jesus said, “I heard it said that he was still alive.”²³⁷ The soldier said, “I am ignorant of this; but I have heard it said that he was killed when Herod had been misled that summer²³⁸ by the Magi. Others said that Herod, because of him, caused the children of Bethlehem to perish; others still said that his father and mother took him away and fled to Egypt.” Jesus said, “You speak truly; but I will say that he is still alive. Now some say that he was not that which one believed him to be, but an imposter and a seducer.” The soldier said, “Do not tell him these defamatory things of which you are ignorant; for those who saw him say that he is the king of Israel.” Jesus said, “If so, why don’t the people of Israel believe in him?”

12. The soldiers said, “We do not know.”²³⁹ Jesus said, “What are your names?” “My name is Khoïratar, and his is Gohartar,” said one of them. Jesus said, “Which god is useful to you?” The soldiers said, “We were tempted by the false gods of our country, and we practiced sun-worship when we came into this country.” Jesus said, “Tell me, what do you want to do?”²⁴⁰ They said to him, “We will do what your good pleasure suggests; for today you appeared as a judge between the two of us. Indeed, when we saw you, our great indignation was quieted, and the love of God descended upon us. And when you came to us, our hearts with filled with a sharp joy.”

13. Jesus made an equitable sharing between them. They conformed to the will of Jesus; and Jesus blessed them, and they continued on in their journey in peace.²⁴¹

FOOTNOTES

¹ The footnotes appended to this text are meant to be supplementary to those of Dom Peeters in his French translation; they are largely made necessary by the literal nature of the product yielded by the translation software I used to render his French into a version of English which was at least usable to me in my attempt at creating this, the first version of the Armenian Infancy Gospel in my language. Peeters’ and my own emendations of the text are fully covered, as well as the various *lacunae* in the manuscript evidence of the gospel itself, and the textual variants shared between the versions themselves.

² The text has for this clause: *However thus*,

³ The text has: *his herds*.

⁴ The text has for this clause: *and (not living) only of bread and water*,

⁵ The French has: *Et de la sorte*; and the text has: *And of the kind*; but the English language would express it this way.

⁶ My emendation, for clearer English. The text has for this clause: *and all the races will proclaim it happy*. The French has for this clause: *et toutes les races le proclameront bienheureux*.

⁷ The text has for this clause: *there you will achieve your wish*. The French has: *là vous accomplirez votre vœu*.

⁸ The text has: *Scrupulously*; the French word is: *religieusement*

⁹ The text has for this clause: *and was thrown to its neck*. The French has: *et se jeta à son cou*.

¹⁰ The text has for these two words: *Rented either*. The French has: *“Loué soit*.

¹¹ The text has for this clause: *and a kid sanctified of the fruit of your entrails.*” The French has: *et un rejeton sanctifié du fruit de vos entrailles.*”

¹² The text has for this clause: *being put in prayers*. The French has: *s’étant mis en prières*.

¹³ The text has for this section: *on the furnace bridge of the holocausts*. The French has: *sur l’autel des holocaustes*

¹⁴ The text has for this clause: *and while having initially been during the oblation*. The French has: *et en ayant d’abord fait l’oblation*,

¹⁵ Here and just below, the text uses the modern word *artery*, which was unknown to the ancients.

¹⁶ The text has: *paddle of the sun in the East*; perhaps this is the best interpretation.

¹⁷ In the ancient world, it was considered that barren women must have committed some sort of secret sin which resulted in her infertility; while at the same time, there was this young virgin, Mary, whom the High Priest might, through the vagaries of human lust, be tempted to compromise his own virtue with; with the result being an almighty, angry, and feared God showering down misfortune upon the people as a whole.

¹⁸ Peeters says here that the text “lacks some words;” but the English between the lucanae indications themselves does appear in the manuscript.

¹⁹ The bracketed words are not in the text, but seem required by the urgency of Mary’s dialogue with the angel.

²⁰ Peeters restores: *< réticence >*; in the previous break, he says that the text “is mutilated in this place.” The translation has consequently become confused, and the translation reads, prior to the first break has: “With which will tell I this thing and to which (it) will say I am in public is in secrecy,” which I have restored up to the first break thus: “With whom will I share this knowledge, to tell about it without *< holding anything back, >* I who live in public, etc.

²¹ The literal translation has for this sentence: *Safety will thus come from all the ground*. The meaning would seem to be that the notoriety of what has happened will be itself a guarantee against future persecution—at least beyond the immediate community of which she is a part.

²² The literal translation adds the following clause at this point: *being extended in his layer*; which I cannot fathom.

²³ It is a mark of the antiquity of this tradition that the people are represented here in the characteristic classical eating posture of reclining—rather than sitting—at meals.

²⁴ The reference is to Eve; of which more will be seen at VIII:10. Here Peeters indicates that there is more text to this paragraph; but he refuses either to translate it or provide an explanation as to why he has not done so. That his reticence may be due to personal animosity, however, is indicated by a note at the beginning of the interchange between Mary and the angel Gabriel (V:3-8) where he refers to it as “a long and improper discussion.”

²⁵ The literal translation has here this clause: *Who has (never) considering*,

²⁶ This is Peeters' restoration.

²⁷ The literal translation has: *Because I will not know what it is, before the Lord does not express the events which prepare, since, in (all) this, I did not act of my characteristic volonté.*

²⁸ At some point she has left his company; but that action seems to have dropped out of the text. It probably happened at the end of verse six.

²⁹ The literal translation has: *Anne*. But from the remainder of the dialogue in which this individual is involved, it is clear that a male personage is intended.

³⁰ The literal translation has for this sentence: *Marie known as: "I am unaware of it."* It cannot mean, of course, that Mary does not know that she is pregnant, for she not only has the testimony of her own eyes, but earlier on she said earlier on that she was incapable of lying. What seems to be meant here is the literal truth of the statement: that she does not know how she became pregnant because neither she nor anyone else can know precisely how the Divinity could accomplish such a thing as a virgin birth. It would, by definition, be beyond the capacity of human beings to understand.

³¹ Peeters says in a footnote here that the text reads: *many tribes*.

³² It is tempting to add here: *or of unlawful procedure*; but this is not in the literal translation.

³³ The literal translation has here: *this poison*.

³⁴ The literal transcription has for this clause: *then it quickly made it go and venir*.

³⁵ The literal translation has for this clause: *and you will perish of male dead*; which I am at a loss to explain fully.

³⁶ The literal translation has at this point the following two sentences—*Glory with Christ in (all) the centuries. Thus it is!*—which are really a pair of pious ejaculations, probably added by the copyist. This occurs later in the text at various points; and where I have found it, I have chosen to note its occurrence, but to excise it.

³⁷ The text has: *mount*; but it could scarcely have been anything else, given their poverty (implicit in this book).

³⁸ Having been the birthplace of David, King of Israel. It is a commonplace designation for Bethlehem.

³⁹ The site of which is still marked by classical basilica, erected by the Emperor Constantine I, later rebuilt by Justinian I, and left intact by the Moslems (out of their respect for Mary).

⁴⁰ The literal translation adds the following clause to this sentence: *because it was winter*. This is quite incomprehensible in view of what is later said about their return to adore and glorify the child—the text at X:1 is laboriously specific about their herding patterns. Perhaps it is an addition by a scribe; on this assumption I have chosen to excise it.

⁴¹ The literal translation has for this clause: *Maintaining my heart feels proud*,

⁴² This is my restoration of what must have dropped out of the text at some point in its transmission. The literal translation has only: *"Yes, (and however) its virginity is holy and remains immaculate."* In any case, the words are necessary to convey to the English reader the sense of Eve's response to what Salome has told her.

⁴³ This is Peeters' restoration. The Armenian Church at the time this scribe was alive was still officially in doctrine Monophysite; which is to say that it differed from the Orthodox definition of the Godhead insofar as it postulated that Jesus had only *one* Nature (and that a Divine one) as opposed to the Orthodox definition—refined at the Council of Chalcedon in 451AD—which said that Jesus was possessed of *two* Natures (one human and one Divine). In the economy of salvation, the Orthodox nature presupposed that the Christ was required to possess a

human nature in order to be able to truly understand the nature of human imperfection. The Armenian Church—and also the Coptic, Abyssinian and Syrian Churches—thought this attitude (known as Diophysitism) to unwarrantably compromise the essential unity of the Godhead; and this has remained their official position.

⁴⁴ The text contains two clauses at this point—*who is blessed in every century. So it is!*—which seem to be pious additions by the copyist not originally part of the text.

⁴⁵ There exist in addition to this most complete of the manuscripts of the Armenian infancy gospel three partial manuscripts of the book which contain only this chapter. This is evidence that chapter eleven circulated separately from the gospel as a whole in the Armenian homeland; but more than that, the manuscripts at this point list the names of these generals (a thing which the manuscript of the entire work does not do): and Peeters says that some of these names are Turkish. Now, it is known that Armenia was subjected very quickly to Turkish rule—approximately between the years 1043 (when the first raids were made by Turks into Armenian territory) until a few years after the battle of Manzikert in 1071. This is, of course, clear evidence that the Armenian Infancy Gospel itself must have come to Armenia prior to these Turkish invasions. That there are three manuscripts of just this single episode—in addition to other partial manuscripts of the entire work which Peeters himself used in his French translation—indicates that knowledge of the entire text may have been fairly widespread; and when this is combined with the fact that an infancy gospel of Nestorian origin was known to have been introduced into the Armenian homeland at some time in the 6th century AD (of which, unfortunately, nothing appears to remain), it is not impossible to conceive of a widespread popularity for this type of literature. That evidently being the case, it is also not at all impossible to believe that the Armenian Infancy Gospel itself will have come into existence earlier than the 10th century AD—and perhaps as early as the 8th.

⁴⁶ Peeters notes here: *Littéralement: kings of their principalities.*

⁴⁷ The literal translation has here: *pounds (?)*; but it is clear from the remainder of the chapter that a document is meant.

⁴⁸ The literal translation has rather vaguely here: *money*; by which is probably meant masses of coined silver.

⁴⁹ The literal translation has: *their heads are so tall and victorious.*

⁵⁰ The literal translation has: *they have an army with their commands.*

⁵¹ The literal translation has: *by friendly means.*

⁵² The literal translation has here: *When, us hastening in path, us pressures the marche, the behind left star, took again the fronts; (and thus) until in this place.* I have chosen to regard it as a textual corruption.

⁵³ The literal translation has: *comes neither from the man, nor of anybody.* I have transliterated *our father*, from a statement in the text at XI:1 that the three Magi are sons of the same father.

⁵⁴ Peeters notes here that this detail is first recorded in the Book of Adam, an apocryphal work which he traces back to the end of the 5th century AD.

⁵⁵ Peeters says that the text here is “deteriorated or badly translated”—i.e., has already been corrupted. But in the main outline, it seems clear enough. This written witness to the advent of Jesus will have been transmitted to the Persians at the time of the Babylonian Captivity—or, more exactly, at some time when, upon conquering the forces of Nebuchadnezzar (who had brought transported most of the Jews originally as a captive people from their homeland) Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, reversed the policy common to archaic states and permitted the Jews to return to their homeland in the 6th century BC.

⁵⁶ Peeters notes that these two sentences appear in two of the three Armenian manuscripts of this chapter, thus indicating that they seem to have been part of the original text.

⁵⁷ The words in brackets are not in the text; but they may have been inadvertently omitted by the copyist of the original manuscript. Some sort of directional intent is necessary, for the literal translation has for this clause the single word: *Go*.

⁵⁸ The literal translation has: *toothing-stone*. Perhaps *ocarina* is meant.

⁵⁹ Something has happened to the text in its transmission, for this sentence appears only in the three manuscripts of this chapter. The manuscript of the entire book has Joseph *and* Mary re-enter the cave, with *Joseph* sitting in the manger. I follow the secondary manuscripts here; for the narrative of the book clearly corroborates this line of thought by having them talk to the Magi outside the cave. Throughout this transcription, however, it is my custom wherever possible to defer to the narrative as embodied in the manuscript of the entire book.

⁶⁰ The literal text has at this point the following two clauses: *because ils were not worthy to become children of the Kingdom (of God), being intended to disavow and with crucifier the Saver*. This is clearly a secondary addition to the original text; for it directly contradicts what is said at XI:11—that Jesus will arrive as the savior for “the children of all men.”—and I have chosen to excise it. The Magi, after all, had not dared to reveal their prophecy because they and they alone had been chosen to visit the advent of the Lord (XI:12).

⁶¹ I have added these words at this point. The literal translation has nothing here; and it may be that they were simply not recopied from the original Syriac version, for something like them is demanded by the last clause of this verse.

⁶² I have copied the text of this letter exactly as it is given by the literal translation.

⁶³ I have added the bracketed words as being demanded by the sense of the literal translation; which has at this point: *and nobody worried them nor did not threaten them*.

⁶⁴ The literal translation has at this point: *And when it had approached the glaive one, it did not result from it from entaille in the body of this dernier*. I think what is meant is that the circumcision knife refused to perform the operation; for Peeters has noted at this point: *One foresees here the intention to reconcile the account of the Gospel with the Christian practice, in opposition to the Jewish practice*; and in that case, Joel’s speech in footnote sixty (which is otherwise certainly obscure in the literal translation) could be transliterated as I have done.

⁶⁵ The literal translation has at this point: “*Here that the blood of this child ran.*”

⁶⁶ I have added the words in brackets in order to clarify the English of the literal translation.

⁶⁷ Peeters notes here: *B: These words missing in A*.

⁶⁸ I have added the name of Jesus, for the sake of clarity.

⁶⁹ The literal translation adds at this point: *or two small birds*; which I have excised as a scribal addition.

⁷⁰ The literal translation has for this sentence: *And when Jesus had reached nine months, being itself séparé centre of his/her mother, it ceased taking it and being nourished some*.

⁷¹ The literal translation has for this clause: “*That to make?*”

⁷² The literal translation has for this clause: *us have escaped by the escape*.

⁷³ The literal translation has for this clause: *Thus known*,

⁷⁴ The literal translation has for these last two clauses: *the princes ... did not worry more business and did not reveal it with anybody*.

⁷⁵ I have inserted these words, as demanded by the context.

⁷⁶ In ancient Greece, a *chiliarch* commanded 1,000 men. The Armenians could have known this, since their religion came by way of Greek missionary efforts.

⁷⁷ The literal translation has: *a million*. But in XXX:4 it is stated that Herod's armies were commanded by eighteen *chiliarchs*; and as the text says further that only 83 villages were ravaged, the figure of a million seems clearly meant to convey not actual numbers, but the impression of overwhelming and unavoidable terror.

⁷⁸ The literal translation has for this sentence: *Show it to me, that I see it*.

⁷⁹ The literal translation has: *and I will lose you with him*.

⁸⁰ Peeters has here the following note: *Addition of the Armenian writer?*

⁸¹ The words in brackets are not in the text.

⁸² Peeters says that this passage, which is missing in A, forms all of chapter fifteen in manuscript B, *which adds immediately: Chapter XVI As what they went into fugitive in Kébron which is a city.*}

⁸³ The Mediterranean Sea was called the Ocean Sea by the ancient inhabitants of its basin.

⁸⁴ Peeters says in a note here that the words in brackets are missing in manuscript A.

⁸⁵ Peeters says that the words in brackets do not appear in manuscript A.

⁸⁶ These words do not appear in the literal translation.

⁸⁷ The words of the translation read: *Being put to reflect*.

⁸⁸ The words in brackets do not appear in the literal translation.

⁸⁹ Peeters has here and after the first brackets in this sentence: "Ces words miss in A."

⁹⁰ My addition; but made necessary by the reference in the last clause to Mary and Joseph; which Peeters puts in a bracket thus: *(Marie and Joseph)*.

⁹¹ The text has for this: *you all Look at!*

⁹² Joseph is meant.

⁹³ Peeters notes here that MS A here reads *the false gods*; and adds that it "is a kind of protest of the copyist against the impiety which he is forced to write."

⁹⁴ My addition, but demanded by the text, from which it is absent.

⁹⁵ This is my interpretation of the phrase, *all as long as we are*, which in the literal text occurs in the middle of the sentence, thus: *You all Look at, and feel sorry for us, because a small infant destroyed us, all as long as we are;*

⁹⁶ The literal translation has: *You nevertheless célé us this business*.

⁹⁷ This is Peeters' restoration, which he does after MS B.

⁹⁸ The literal translation has here: *They disfigured it fixedly and said: "That does he want to make?"* This appears to make no sense, since both temple and votive statue were already in ruins.

- ⁹⁹ The French has: *Dust was raised, by making turn billonnere the stones,*
- ¹⁰⁰ There literal translation has the following clause at this point: *was used it for its own expenses with much of sympathy.*
- ¹⁰¹ The literal translation has for this sentence: *From now on thus, no matter what you ready or are determined to make, which your will achieves.*”
- ¹⁰² Peeters says here in a note that MS B here adds: *in Horeb.*
- ¹⁰³ My addition, but demanded by the remainder of the text.
- ¹⁰⁴ My addition, but may have once formed part of the text—certainly a necessity for its translation into English.
- ¹⁰⁵ So I interpret the text before me: *when it has détruit all the crowned building.* See the next note.
- ¹⁰⁶ So I interpret the text before me: *and very ruined basic in roof.*
- ¹⁰⁷ So I interpret the text before me: *with their complete rows and out of weapons.*
- ¹⁰⁸ So I interpret the text before me: *By its affectionate amenity.*
- ¹⁰⁹ The text has here the following: *“Us (it) soaps not; because it is the son of a foreign old man who is of passage.”*
- ¹¹⁰ Peeters notes here that this sentence is missing from A .
- ¹¹¹ The text has, between the commas, the following: *pushing a cry.*
- ¹¹² The text has here: *“That to make?”*
- ¹¹³ The text has for this clause: *, having made adopt the children,*
- ¹¹⁴ The text has for this sentence: *(judges) ordered to quote it.* It is clear from the sentence immediately following that something like my restoration must have been here.
- ¹¹⁵ Peeters says here in a note that *le word misses in A.*
- ¹¹⁶ The text has for this clause: *, it does not go from there like say it to you.*
- ¹¹⁷ This word is not in the text, but is demanded by the context.
- ¹¹⁸ The text has here: *A many recoveries.* Peeters also has inserted the following note: *The continuation of the dialogue and the account in B contains many alternatives of pure amplification.*
- ¹¹⁹ My insertion, but demanded by the context.
- ¹²⁰ Peeters says in a note here that this Persian *or imitated Persian* name *does not resemble the name of any known city.*
- ¹²¹ The text has for this clause: *the heart missing to him,*
- ¹²² The text has for this clause: *and we lost sight of the fact ourselves.”*
- ¹²³ Not in the text; but demanded by the context.

¹²⁴ The text has for this sentence: *That did you put yourselves in the head?*

¹²⁵ The text has for this sentence: *“You do not say the truth, (what will make) that you will perish all.”*

¹²⁶ Peeters says here that *A must be shortened in this place*, and supplies the bracketed words from B.

¹²⁷ The text has for this clause: *“We believed that a this (would be) fault; but something like this conjecture must at one time have been part of the original, for it occurs in manuscript B part way through a similar episode later on in the next chapter—where a boy has been killed by a stone (the incident does not occur in manuscript A).*

¹²⁸ The text has for this sentence: *“O judges, do not make this act of iniquity, which it is allowed to nobody to state or hear.”*

¹²⁹ The text has for the judge’s speech: *“That do I have to thus make between two rights (opposites)?”*

¹³⁰ Peeters restores this word, which he says is missing in A.

¹³¹ The text has for this clause: *but sometimes you will be confused.”*

¹³² Here Peeters has deliberately inserted the word *false*.

¹³³ Peeters notes here that manuscript B continues, apparently with an account of a child killed by a thrown stone (which, however, about half way through, seems to borrow material from the story—this one included in our best witness to the original content of the Armenian Infancy Gospel, manuscript A—about the death of the boy who fell from the parapet and whose death was accidental. Clearly the text of manuscript B is in some confusion; but as the story is entirely absent from manuscript A, it may be that it is an invention by the author of manuscript B, and never appeared in the original (Syriac, Peeters believes) work at all; or that it did appear in the original work and was simply edited out by the copyists of manuscript A; or it was added by some Syriac copyist of the Syriac original, and was his invention, and still not part of the original (Syriac) Armenian Infancy Gospel. All these variants appear in the reproduced French translation as part of Peeters critical apparatus.

¹³⁴ So the text: *we will make him follow the occupation of scribe.*

¹³⁵ Canaan is meant.

¹³⁶ Bar-jesus is meant (so Peeters).

¹³⁷ The text has: *I would like to see it and hear a word of his mouth.*

¹³⁸ It being courteously refraining from immediately making his request; still a sign of great courtesy in many Asian countries.

¹³⁹ The text has for this sentence: *(the king) defended that nobody molesetât it in his capacity as foreigner.*

¹⁴⁰ Of the Hebrew alphabet; said to contain mystically in themselves much information necessary to salvation. Peeters says that B has between this sentence and the next a long variant (for which see Appendix, number 138).

¹⁴¹ Such titles are customary in many non-western or under-westernized countries; they are considered to be titles of a formal courtesy.

¹⁴² Peeters includes a long variant addition to this text from MS B in his notes at this point.

¹⁴³ The text has: *if it is able to put the others in the spirit; which makes no sense, unless it can be interpreted: if you are able to put them in the spirit; and by common sense, to transliterate: if you are able to construe them.*

¹⁴⁴ The text has for this sentence: *This (word) appears a foreign term and I to me then to include/understand it.*

¹⁴⁵ My addition, necessary to make sense out of the remainder of the sentence, which is taken from B. See the next footnote.

¹⁴⁶ The text has: *so that we can to see, to distinguish it well and recognize it, then to seize the direction.*” Peeters says here that manuscript A is missing part of its original text, and he continues with manuscript B (in brackets) almost to the end of this verse.

¹⁴⁷ The text has: *but explain to me what I ask you.*

¹⁴⁸ The text has: *without word statement.*

¹⁴⁹ The text has here: *write another thing literally, namely and to include/understand*—which makes no sense.

¹⁵⁰ Here resumes the text of manuscript A.

¹⁵¹ The text has: *the letter (simple) means ...*

¹⁵² Peeters notes that the text of manuscript A is mutilated at this point, and quotes manuscript B at this point: *“The letter by itself means the name of God; the word which is born and shapes of the letter is the Verb of God, and phrases it who expresses himself and appears by the letter and the word is the Holy Ghost, so that in this trinity, the simple letter generates the word, which is born and shapes in the spirit, then appearing, it affirms (in) the stated word.”* I have quoted the text exactly for this sentence; and I would transliterate as follows: *“The letter by itself reveals the name of God; that word which is born from and shaped by the letter, is the Verb of God; and the phrases with which he expresses himself, together with the appearance of the letter, and the word, is the Holy Ghost; so that, in this Trinity, the simple letter generates the word, which is born and shaped in the spirit, appearing after that in the form of the spoken word.”*

¹⁵³ The text has, for Joseph’s speech: *“Say to me, main, that ferai’ I of my child?”* (which is incomprehensible; I have restored the quote in light of Gamaliel’s immediate response).

¹⁵⁴ Peeters notes here that *the text is mutilated*, and quotes the relevant portion of manuscript B here: *... take the steps on the two sides: measure each one of them separately, and you will understand. And Joseph, having taken one of the two pieces of wood, measured it: it was long of twelve palms. He then measured the other piece of wood, with the same measurement. This piece was by no means too short; indeed, in place of fifteen palms, it had some twenty-four, divided into two parts of twelve feet each ...*

¹⁵⁵ In manuscript B, this becomes a palace with the ground plan of a temple, with double-doors. The drawings on the wall are carved into the surface; some surfaces are to be polished by chisel and plane; a *firmly pinned staircase* is mentioned: a *profusion of sawn timber of all species* is to be employed in its construction; and it is to be worked in *all forms, contours, drawings and figures*. A *curved cupola* is to be raised over all.

¹⁵⁶ Peeter’s restoration. He says that manuscript B includes *beautiful meadows* in its description of the site; perhaps that was in the lacuna in A.

¹⁵⁷ This clause is not in the text, but it is demanded by the contents of the chapter, and must at some point have been there. Perhaps it was elided by a careless scribe. Similarly at the end of the sentence following, it would be useful to have some sort of explanatory phrase, to the effect that Israel had borrowed five thousand talents of silver with which to make the purchase, and might have to make good the debt out of his own pocket without being able to sell his fabric at the retail level; and perhaps at one time there was such a phrase. We are, after all, dealing with a world in which moveable type was unknown and communication depended absolutely on hand-written documents.

¹⁵⁸ The text has for this clause: *but do not do anything of yourself that you do not know;*

¹⁵⁹ The text has become corrupted, having here: *opened the gate of the house of them.*

¹⁶⁰ Manuscript A has here the following additional clause: *as the ice of one (water) cold.*

¹⁶¹ The text has for this sentence: “*My son, did you achievé all that controlled you your Master?*”

¹⁶² My emendation; absolutely essential to an understanding of the point of this entire chapter.

¹⁶³ I.e., perfectly.

¹⁶⁴ My emendation; the text has for this clause: *this loss and of the fines to be paid?*

¹⁶⁵ The text has for this clause: *shining and enluminé of beautiful (colors) with the various names*. Fanciful as that last detail might seem, manuscript B also attests for its content later on in its verse eighteen, saying clearly that the names of the various owners were embroidered on each garment: *he saw the name marked (in) signs and (in) letters*.

¹⁶⁶ The text reads: *five thousand sums of money*; but so much ready money in the ancient world was coined in silver that the two terms in the eastern Mediterranean basin—at least among tradesmen—were practically synonymous; among Hebrew tradesmen, talents (rather than drachmas) would be the monetary unit specifically involved.

¹⁶⁷ The italics are mine.

¹⁶⁸ The text has here (corruptly): *Here how you are yourself reduced in constraint*

¹⁶⁹ A bushel *measure* seems to have been intended, which was probably heavy enough to have brained him.

¹⁷⁰ The text has for this clause: *under the figure of a child (unspecified)*.

¹⁷¹ Peeters says here in a note that *the word is omitted in A*.

¹⁷² My emendation; but a direct object is called for in English.

¹⁷³ The text for this clause reads: *and could not which party take*.

¹⁷⁴ The direct object is not in the text, but it could scarcely be anyone else.

¹⁷⁵ The text has for this sentence: “*Really that-ciu is the son of God.*”

¹⁷⁶ The text has for this sentence: “*Really, that do you want that becomes this child, because we have to support similar evils?*” My emendation is necessary to a recapitulative understanding of Mary’s speech in verse 14.

¹⁷⁷ The text of this verse reads as follows: *Jesus known as: “you Raise and go” the children rose by mutual agreement and from went away in a certain place. There was in the place a high rock. Jesus being placed opposite, ordered with the rock to incline his node, Jesus went to sit down there and the rock (re)prit his position. The children pushed a cry (and), formant rings around the stone, they looked at Jesus. And after having ordered with the rock to incline his node, Jesus went down from there.*

¹⁷⁸ My emendation, necessitated by the first words of the sentence following this one.

¹⁷⁹ The text has here—but only here—the word: *fountain*. Peeters says that the text of A is mutilated at this point; the text between brackets is from manuscript B.

¹⁸⁰ The text has here the following four words: *and fought the chest (?)*

¹⁸¹ Peeters says that at this point manuscript A *must be shortened*; he has thus inserted the text of B (between the brackets).

¹⁸² The text has after this comma: *which conâit it (reality of) made*.

¹⁸³ Peeters says that these words are omitted in manuscript A.

¹⁸⁴ The text has for the rest of this: *regardez(-y), you all, done well attention and have pity of yourselves.*”

¹⁸⁵ The text has for this clause: *without (to be convinced by) pilot?*”

¹⁸⁶ The text has for this quotation: “*It is with you know to know it: you wanted it.*”

¹⁸⁷ Supplied from manuscript B, A being deficient at this point.

¹⁸⁸ Peeters says here that the text of A is mutilated at this point, and B *amplifies on another topic*.

¹⁸⁹ The word *cousin* is inserted from manuscript B; who, however, names him *Abbiuron, son of Issachar*. Most of these names differ from each other throughout the Armenian tradition.

¹⁹⁰ The text has for this sentence: *Did you see your eyes how my acts mislead the glances?”*

¹⁹¹ The text has for this clause: *and (to return its) right stops.*”

¹⁹² Supplied from the account in manuscript B.

¹⁹³ My emendation.

¹⁹⁴ This clause reads: *about it being allé.*

¹⁹⁵ My emendation. There must be a direct object here.

¹⁹⁶ The text has: “*I heard and I know.*”

¹⁹⁷ The text has for this sentence: “*By the life of the Lord, I (even) did not understand the name of these things; which makes no sense.*

¹⁹⁸ The text has: *since you have the empty hands?”*

¹⁹⁹ This word, oddly enough, does not appear in the text at this point; perhaps it is simply to be understood.

²⁰⁰ The words in brackets come from manuscript B

²⁰¹ The text has here: “*We are two frères German, plain of feelings.*” We are obviously not to see here: “*We are two German brothers*”; yet the word cannot be ignored. My translation is based on the idea that the mechanical translator wished to produce an association between *frère* (brother) and *germe* (seed), but was not sufficiently programmed with the French language to be able to do so.

²⁰² The text reads: “*Tell me the truth, so that I hear it you.*”

²⁰³ The text reads: *seeks to dispossess me wrongfully and that me I”*

²⁰⁴ The text of this clause reads: *Jesus does not lend itself to it known as.*

²⁰⁵ The text has: *age of reason?”*

²⁰⁶ Peeters says that manuscript B finishes at this point.

²⁰⁷ So I interpret the text: *I was only with the sorrow and him (my brother) E do not know nothing.*”

²⁰⁸ So I interpret the text: “*He is your brother and this (est (only) un child.*

²⁰⁹ I have included some of the text of this paragraph between two sets of brackets—[]—as not yet transliteratable into English.

²¹⁰ So I interpret the text of this clause: *that do you want to make and how want you to live on the ground?*”

²¹¹ The text has for these two clauses: *who was extremely inconvenienced by the vehemence of (its) badly and which lay wide on his bed*. This is not, however, what the French intends to convey; and the above translation was arrived at with the help of a detailed French/English dictionary. I have had to make such a detailed investigation only here; and I was prompted to do it because this is the only illness which Jesus deals with in the Armenian Infancy Gospel that seems to have no visible sign of disfigurement.

²¹² These words are not in the text, but necessary to a better understanding of the English version.

²¹³ These words are not in the text, but necessary for an English version. Peeters says in a note here that this sentence *is extremely badly built*.

²¹⁴ This is also Peeters’ restoration, based upon similar material found at XXI:18.

²¹⁵ The text has: *“My son, I will achieve your command.”*; but this is what is meant.

²¹⁶ The text has: *But when the test reached me,—*and this is what is meant.

²¹⁷ I.e., what type of treatment did he use.

²¹⁸ My emendations, for the clarity of the English.

²¹⁹ Peeters says here in a note that manuscript A *must miss here some words*.

²²⁰ The text has for this clause: *and do not be more advanced*.

²²¹ So the translation of Cassells (p. 593); the text has for this clause: *of the principle*.

²²² Peters emends the text here, saying in a note that the text reads: *on the ground, above the sky*.

²²³ The text has for this quotation: *“I then to include/understand the thing only you say.”*

²²⁴ This is an indication that at least this part of the Armenian text was created after the First Council of Nicaea (325); for it displays here a part of the Nicene Creed, a general formulary of Christian faith adopted by that body: *I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, ...*

²²⁵ The text has for this quotation: *“It is well that.”*

²²⁶ The text has for this clause: *and without same the idea of a approche of his share*.

²²⁷ Peeters has the following note here: *Le direction appears to be: “How can you reconcile the wills of your father and those of your mother?”*

²²⁸ The text has for this clause: *as the label of the courses royal prescribes to do it*

²²⁹ The text has for this sentence: *I ask him to share with me to have it that it paid of its forwarding*.

²³⁰ The text has for this sentence: *It does not want to share and its due claims me bitterly*.

²³¹ I have added the English text between the brackets; for Jesus returns to the scene in verse **11**; and the text for this clause says only, *Jesus concealed*. Apparently the meaning of this is that he vanished temporarily, in order to permit the privacy necessary for the action in verse **10**.

²³² The text has for this sentence: *Now thus made as you will hear it.*

²³³ The text has for this clause: *but I then to live more in common with you.*

²³⁴ The text has for this word: *spontaneously*; which is not, perhaps, the correct word, though it reflects the correct action.

²³⁵ My emendation, for the clarity of the English

²³⁶ The text has here for this entire clause just *the magi*. Even the French text has: *à la suite des mages*.

²³⁷ The text has for this clause: *“I intended to say of him that it still saw.”*

²³⁸ The text has only: *when Hérode had been misled by the magi*. The French has: *quand Hérode eut été trompé par les mages*.

²³⁹ The text has for this sentence: *The soldiers said: “let us be unaware of We it.”*

²⁴⁰ The text has for this sentence: *“That do you want to make, say to me?”*

²⁴¹ This is the end of the Armenian Infancy Gospel.

[I had planned to also insert various Hebrew, Greek, Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic and Russian inscriptions indicated at various points throughout the French text, reproduced them as plates, and listed them here as XXX₁₋₂₅₃; unfortunately, those paste-ups have disappeared over the years, and I have as yet not been able to find the time to create any new ones. Dom Peeters, however, had access to a wealth of non-French linguistic information, and I plan to add this information at some future date (October 20, 2015):H]

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