

TRANSLATIONS OF EARLY DOCUMENTS  
SERIES I  
PALESTINIAN JEWISH TEXTS  
(PRE-RABBINIC)

THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES

# THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES

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WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

### THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOOK

THE book before us provides a problem for scholars. It is called "The Assumption of Moses," but the portion remaining, which ends in the middle of a sentence, does not contain an account of the Assumption, nor the incidents quoted in St. Jude and elsewhere. The book from which these were taken, containing the dispute about the body of Moses, seems to have been concerned only with Moses himself, whereas our "Assumption" is mainly his prophecy of the vicissitudes of the chosen people. Canon Charles holds that we have the remaining portion of a composite work, which combined the "Testament of Moses" with the "Assumption" proper. Our book is a "Testament" like the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*; a prophetic utterance rather than an historical account of what happened to an individual. Prof. F. C. Burkitt, in his article in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, continues to regard our book as the "Assumption,"

and supposes that there was once an appendix which contained the actual "Assumption," and the dispute between Satan and Michael and the other incidents of the legend. This Appendix, save for the quotations referred to, is lost. Prof. Burkitt leaves it an open question whether this Appendix was ever translated with the body of the book into Latin, and suggests a possible parallel in the transmission of the Epistle of Barnabas, where the Greek MSS. give chapters xviii.-xxi. probably from the "Two Ways," which are not found in the Latin. Schürer regards the "Testament" and the "Assumption," as mentioned in the Apocryphal lists, as "two separate divisions of one and the same work," not as writings originally independent, combined, as Canon Charles thinks, by a later editor.

Canon Charles argues: (i) That an examination of the quotations in Jude, Clement of Alexandria, and elsewhere, suggests the true "order of action" in the actual "Assumption"; it was wholly connected with Moses as an individual, and not with the future of the Jewish people. (ii) That in the "Testament," as we have it, Moses is contemplated as about to die the common death of all men, not that of an Elijah: *e. g.* i. 15,

“ I am passing away to sleep with my forefathers even in the presence of all the people ” (cf. x. 14; iii. 13). There is one passage, x. 12, where we have “ receptione,” but it stands in apposition with “ morte,” and may easily, as Canon Charles argues, have been introduced by a later editor as one of the links connecting the two writings.

#### HISTORY OF TRANSMISSION

There is only one MS. of our text. It was discovered in the Ambrosian Library at Milan by Ceriani, and published by him in 1864 (*Monumenta sacra et profana*, vol. i. fasc. i. pp. 55-64); it appears to date from the sixth century. The text is imperfect and corrupt, owing probably to the carelessness and ignorance of transcribers. It shows to the satisfaction of all scholars that it is a translation of a Greek original, as is also proved by the fragments in Greek quoted from the lost parts of the book. Hilgenfeld supposed that the Greek was the original, but it is now considered certain that it was first written either in Hebrew or in Aramaic, and translated into Greek. Prof. Charles argues for a Hebrew original from which the Greek was translated, and satisfactorily explains some evident corrup-

tions in the text, by showing that they arose from a misconception of the meaning of the Hebrew, or a misreading of it (*e. g.* iv. 9), where the supposition of an Aramaic original would not help.

It is therefore concluded that the whole work, of which we have a part in Latin, was originally written in Hebrew, translated into Greek, and retranslated into Latin.

The text of the "Assumption" is very imperfect; there are many *lacunæ*. The Latin shows the peculiarities of first-century Latin and the ignorance and carelessness of transcribers. Thus (i) we have WRONG CASE-ENDINGS; *e. g.* *profetis* for *profetiis*, *patruum* for *patrum*, *voluntatem* for *voluntate*. (ii) Wrong TENSE-ENDINGS, especially present for future; *e. g.* *discedis*, *recipit* for *discedes* and *recipiet*. (iii) Anomalous use of prepositions; *e. g.* *de*, and *sine* with *Accusative*, and *secus* with *Acc.*, meaning "according to." (iv) Here and there the construction breaks down; and there is an obvious "doublet" in chap. v. 6. (v) Traces of the Greek translation remain in *thlipsis*, *acrosisam*, *scene*, and occasionally the Greek is not understood; *e. g.* chap. ii. 7 *adcedent ad testamentum Domini et finem polluent*. Canon Charles also detects important misapprehensions

by the Greek translator of the meaning of the original Hebrew; e. g. chap. xi. 12 *potero*, vii. 4 *iram*, v. 5 *qui enim magistri*. (vi) There are many mistakes in transcription such as *donarent* for *dominarent*, *sub nullo* for *sub annulo*, etc.

#### DATE AND NATURE OF BOOK

Internal evidence enables Canon Charles to date the book between A.D. 7 and A.D. 30. The allusions to the Temple sacrifices, and the religious outlook generally make it certain that it was written long before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Then we have (vi. 6) Herod the Great dead, and the War of Varus past (vi. 9), which took place in 3 B.C. In vi. 7 we read "And he (Herod) shall beget sons that shall succeed him and reign for shorter periods." Now these children were Archelaus, Philip and Antipas. The two latter ruled longer than Herod, and had exceeded the length of his reign by A.D. 30. So we have that date as the extreme limit. But Archelaus was deposed in A.D. 6, and it seems reasonable to think that this fact was fresh in the writer's mind when he wrote of "shorter periods." So that we incline very much to a date near A.D. 7 rather than A.D. 30.

If this be so, it was actually written in our Lord's childhood, and presents a picture of one side of the world of thought into which He was born. At the later limit its date would coincide with His ministry, and would represent what many of those whom He addressed were thinking, the range of ideas with which they consciously or unconsciously connected His teaching, His claims and His Personality. This book is extraordinarily representative, therefore, of a whole range of Jewish writings, which give the background, fill up the foreground, and adjust the perspective of what we learn from the Gospel story. It was of the age of the men who brushed against the disciples in the streets of Jerusalem. Its attitude to the Jewish past, its vision of the future, its quietism, its idealism, its veiled allusions and fierce attacks were, no doubt, discussed in the Temple Courts, and not inconceivably formed the subject of the questions of the Divine Child, when He tarried behind at Jerusalem with the Doctors. In it we have a photograph, not a mere literary reproduction, of the way in which the minds of a whole circle of pious men were moving in those central years of all history in the very nest whence the new and redeeming Forces were emerging. We can by its



aid envisage something of the world which Jesus knew, whose Messiah He knew Himself to be.

### THE WRITER

The writer is styled by Canon Charles "a Pharisaic Quietist," and Prof. Burkitt agrees to this description of his mental and political attitude. That is to say, he is a descendant of the ancient "righteous," who were content to rest upon God, to do His will, and not to attempt to work national deliverance by force. We should hardly have realized the strength of the party represented by the writer, but for the recovery of his book. And when we remember how much his point of view agrees with that of our Lord Himself in the presentation of God's purposes, and generally with His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, it must be felt that what he says must be of exceptional importance.

Of course he has been claimed for other Jewish sects. But (i) he is certainly not a Sadducee, for he dissents from their whole point of view with regard to the hereafter, expecting as he does the direct and catastrophic intervention of God, the triumphant vindication of the righteous, and their exaltation to heaven (x. 9, 10). He bitterly attacks their policy, and the way they

had used, and were using, their political and ecclesiastical pre-eminence. He is doctrinally, morally, and politically opposed to them. (ii) Nor is he attached to the Zealots. It is strange to find in a prophetic review of the national history his view of the Maccabees, and only disparaging allusions to the greatest figures of Jewish patriotism in post-exilic times. He can actually pass over the great national hero Judas in severe silence. The silence is eloquent enough to refute Dillmann and Schürer, who would rank him with the Zealots. (iii) Nor does he belong to the Essenes, to whom his quietistic character might seem to affiliate him. His devotion to the Temple, and his enthusiasm for its sacrifices is sufficient to dispose of the suggestion, for the Essenes severed themselves almost completely from the Temple worship and the sacrificial system.<sup>1</sup>

We have, then, the work of a Pharisee, devoted to the Temple and the Law, seeing in his country's history a series of punishments and trials, but assured of a triumphant coming vindication of the righteous by God Himself. This vindication is not to be carried through by the agency of a Messiah. It is suggested by Charles that this is

<sup>1</sup> They did not offer sacrifice, but sent offerings to the temple (Oesterley, *Books of the Apocrypha*, p. 44).

because the figure of Messiah had become associated with warlike nationalist ideas, and therefore was disliked by the quietist mind.

We have a Pharisee whose doctrine of grace and good works seems more in harmony with that of St. Paul than with that of the Pharisaic opponents of St. Paul in the missionary world. The Jew has no merit for his works, all comes to him from the favour of God. The Jewish nation is elected not for its merit, but because it was God's pleasure to elect it (xii. 7, 8). Though, as Charles notes, the proudly self-satisfied utterance, "Ye see and know, that neither your parents nor their forefathers ever tempted God, in transgressing His commands. And ye know how that this is our strength" (ix. 4, 5), seems to introduce a note of discord into a coherent theology. Charles regards the object of the book to be a direct protest against the change that had come over the Pharisaic spirit of his time. It was secularized, "fused with political ideals and popular Messianic beliefs." The writer wished to call it back to its early purity, and to the trust that God would Himself bring about a national and complete restoration—even of the ten tribes. Therefore he exalted Eleazar the patient martyr rather than the

militant Judas Maccabæus. "He but played afresh the part of a Cassandra. The leavening of Pharisaism with earthly political ideals went on apace, and the movement thus initiated culminated finally in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70" (Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the O. T.*, II. p. 407).

The writer, again, holds an exclusive particularistic view of the relation of God to the chosen people. The world was created to be the scene of God's Covenant with Israel. Moses was prepared before the Creation to be the Mediator of God's Covenant; in his life he acted as their intercessor with God, and after his death his intercession was continued. In spite of appearances the Will of God must triumph, and God would Himself crown a united Israel by exalting the faithful to heaven, whence they would look down in disdain upon their enemies. Such is the continued and typically Jewish note of faith in God's promises to Israel carried on from the Prophets of the Old Testament, and by no means abolished in the prophetic outlook of the converted Saul of Tarsus in the Epistle to the Romans, where it blends as a necessary element in God's whole purpose for the world.

THE "ASSUMPTION" AND THE NEW  
TESTAMENT

Charles considers that the *Testament* and the *Assumption* were made one book early enough in the first century to enable the writer of Jude 9 to quote a verse from the latter, for he also quotes from the Greek version of the former, *i. e.* the *Testament*, in verse 16 :

γογγυσταί, μεμψίμοροι  
κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας αὐτῶν πορευόμενοι  
καὶ τὸ στόμα αὐτῶν λαλεῖ ὑπέρογκα  
θαυμάζοντες πρόσωπα, ὠφελείας χάριν

which seems without any doubt to be reproduced from *Assumption* vii. 7, querulosi ;

vii. 9, et manus eorum, et mentes eorum immunda tractantes, et os eorum loquetur ingentia ;

and v. 5, mirantes personas cupiditatum et acceptiones munerum.

Also the ἀσεβεῖς of Jude 4 are the *imprii* of *Ass. Moys.* viii. 3 and 7 ; cf. Jude 18 and *Ass.* vii. 1.

The Second Epistle of Peter shows two striking resemblances, *i. e.* :

2 Pet. ii. 13, ἡδονὴν ἠγούμενοι τὴν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ  
τρυφῆν, and ἐντρυφῶντες ἐν ταῖς ἀγάπαις  
αὐτῶν συννεωχούμενοι ὑμῖν,

which seems to reproduce

*Ass. vii. 5, omni hora diei amantes convivia,*  
and

*Ass. vii. 8, habebimus discubitiones et luxuriam.*

*Acts vii. 36, ποιήσας τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα ἐν τῇ  
Ἰαγύπτῳ καὶ ἐν Ἐρυθρῇ θαλάσῃ καὶ ἐν  
τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἔτη τεσσαράκοντα*

seems to be more than an echo of *Ass. iii. 11*:  
“*Moyses . . . qui multa passus est in Ægypto,*  
*et in mari rubro, et in heremo XL annos.*”

The beautiful apocalyptic passage of chap. x., in its enumeration of the signs of the end, seems to provide the very eschatological material which our Lord Himself adopted in His own prophecy of the last things (*Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxi. 25, 26*). The physical phenomena include the earthquake, the fall of mountains and of valleys, the darkening of the sun, the breaking of the horns of the moon, the turning of the moon to blood, the disorder of the heavenly bodies, and the vanishing of the sea into the abyss. This is almost verbally reproduced in *Matt. xxiv. 29*. In *Rev. vi. 12-17*, again, we have the same order of ideas—the sun “black as sackcloth of hair,” the moon blood, the falling

of stars, the moving of mountains and rocks. Dr. W. O. E. Oesterley in his *Doctrine of the Last Things* (Murray, 1908), chap. v., has collected a number of similar apocalyptic passages describing the disturbance of the physical world before the end (*e. g.* Ethiopic Enoch i. 5-7; Apocalypse of Noah lxxx. 4-8; Test. xii. Patr.; Levi iv. 1; Jubilees xxiii. 12), with which he compares Isa. ii. 19; xiii. 10; Ezek. xxxii. 7; and Joel ii. 10; iii. 4; xiii. 10. The similarities of such passages in tone and actual expression seem to show that there was a floating body of apocalyptic matter in existence, well known to the popular mind, which writers made use of, quoting it as we quote Scripture or a poet. It had practically worked itself into the texture of ordinary thought, and its recital by a prophet awaked naturally in his hearers a vague and massive sense of awful disaster. In such a way we must explain our Lord's literal adoption of apocalyptic language of such a stereotyped nature. It is almost impossible not to think that he had actually seen chap. x. of the *Assumption*, so exact is the reproduction in the Gospels. As this poetical passage shines out somewhat like a gem on the prose of the *Assumption*, it occurs to one as probable that it was a current apocalyptic prophecy, very widely circulated, which the writer

incorporated in his book with some share of the design and spirit with which our Lord adopted its language in His prophecy.

There is no doubt that the substantial and even verbal identity of parts of our Lord's apocalyptic prophecy with such extra-canonical writings as the one we are considering, must be most striking and possibly disturbing to the pious mind. The increased knowledge of the ideas current in our Lord's time in the Jewish world have raised the question, which is perhaps the most important one with which theology has had to deal of late, of the real significance, in the light of His earthly environment, of His apocalyptic utterances. In this is involved the evolution of a true Christology. It is not the place here to enter upon this absorbing task. Only it should be pointed out that the passage before us which is typical of many contemporaneous eschatological prophecies has a by no means unimportant place in deciding how our Lord envisaged the last things in relation to Himself and His Mission.

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The following translation is made from Clemen's Latin text published in Lietzmann's *Kleine Texte* (1904).



# THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES

I. 1-18. **Moses, about to die, appoints Joshua as his successor, delivering to him the books to bury safely.**

I. 1. [The book of the prophecy of Moses, which was made in the one hundred and twentieth year of his life,]<sup>1</sup> 2. That is two thousand five hundred years from the Creation of the world; 3. Or, according to Eastern reckoning, two thousand seven hundred years,<sup>2</sup> and four hundred<sup>3</sup> from the exodus from Phœnicia, 4. When the people had gone forth after the exodus that was made by Moses to Amman<sup>4</sup> beyond the Jordan,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The opening words are lost. Above is Clemen's restoration. Charles from analogy of Test. xii. Patr. reads: "Testamentum Moysi, quæ præcepit a[n]no vitæ ejus Cmo et XXmo."

<sup>2</sup> As emended by Clemen and Charles.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xii. 40 (Mass. text), gives 430 years. Gen. xv. 13 can mean either 400 or 430; cf. Acts vii. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Amman—in the tribe of Gad.

<sup>5</sup> Note Gentile adaptations in the passage. Moses could not have spoken thus.

5. The prophecy<sup>1</sup> that was made by Moses in the book Deuteronomy, 6. When he called unto him Joshua the son of Nun, a man approved of the Lord, 7. Who should be the minister of the people<sup>2</sup> and of the tabernacle of the testimony with all its holy things; 8. And should bring the people into the land that was given to their fathers,<sup>3</sup> 9. That it should be given to them by the covenant and the oath which He spake in the tabernacle to give it by Joshua,<sup>4</sup> and he spake to Joshua these words: 10. Promise<sup>5</sup> to perform with all diligence whatsoever thou hast been commanded, that thou mayest so act as to be blameless before God.<sup>6</sup> 11. These things said the Lord of the world. For He created the world on account of His own people, 13. Though He began not to make

<sup>1</sup> "prophetiæ" = "prophetia," as often in late Latin.

<sup>2</sup> "successor plebi": evidently equivalent of *διδάσχος*, chief minister of the king in LXX (1 Chron. xviii. 17; 2 Chron. xxvi. 11). Used of Joshua (Josh. i. 1). See Num. xi. 28 and viii. 26.

<sup>3</sup> "patribus," emended by Charles from "ex tribus."

<sup>4</sup> See Deut. xxxi. 14, 20 and 23. Text "de Josum," for agent.

<sup>5</sup> "Et promitte." Charles emends " (Be strong) and of a good courage."

<sup>6</sup> Charles emends "sis deo" for "est ideo." Clemens puts stop at "est," and reads "is blameless. Thereforth thus saith . . ."

manifest this purpose<sup>1</sup> of creation from the beginning of the world, that the Gentiles might be confounded on the matter, and to their shame might confound one another in arguments. 14. And so He planned and ordained me, who before of old was prepared to be the mediator of His covenant.<sup>2</sup> 15. And now I tell you that the time of the years of my life is finished and I pass to sleep with my fathers in the sight of all the people.<sup>3</sup> . . . 16. And read thou<sup>4</sup> this writing that thou mayest have regard to the safe-keeping of the books,<sup>5</sup> 17. Which I shall deliver thee, which thou shalt arrange and smear with oil of cedar, and lay up in vessels of earthenware in the place which God made from the beginning of the creation of the world, 18. That His Name might be called on (there) even to

<sup>1</sup> "inceptionem." As to the idea Charles says, "the prevalent Jewish view from the first century onwards; cf. 4 Ezra vi. 55, 59; vii. 11; 2 Baruch xiv. 18."

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Gelasius of Cyzicum (Comm. Act. Syn. Nic. ii. 18). Note that Moses is regarded as pre-existent. The title "mediator" is not given to him in the Old Testament. It is implied in Heb. viii. 6; ix. 5; xii. 24, and is common in writings of the first century A.D.

<sup>3</sup> There is no suggestion of an Assumption here.

<sup>4</sup> Charles supplies "tu."

<sup>5</sup> *i. e.* The Pentateuch.

the day of repentance in the visitation,<sup>1</sup> where-with the Lord will visit them in the consummation of the end of the days.

**II. 1-9. Prophecy of the taking of Canaan, the Judges, and the Kings, to the revolt of the ten tribes, and the beginning of idolatry.**

II. 1. . . .<sup>2</sup> they shall go by thee into the land, which He decreed and promised to give to their fathers, 2. In which thou shalt bless them, and shalt give and establish to each one his portion in me,<sup>3</sup> and shalt establish for them a kingdom, and shalt set<sup>4</sup> lawgivers over their districts,<sup>5</sup> according to that which shall please the Lord in righteousness and judgement. 3. . . .<sup>6</sup> And, when they shall have entered into the land [five] years, afterwards chiefs and kings shall have the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Luke i. 79; xix. 44 (the coming of the Kingdom).

<sup>2</sup> Charles supplies "et nunc."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 2 Sam. xx. 1.

<sup>4</sup> "dimittes."

<sup>5</sup> "magisteria locorum." Charles translates "prefectures" and compares Deut. xvi. 18; 1 Chron. xxiii. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Charles supplies "And it shall come to pass" and "five."

dominion for eighteen years,<sup>1</sup> and for nineteen years the ten tribes shall break off from them,<sup>2</sup> 4. For the two<sup>3</sup> tribes shall depart, and transfer the tabernacle of the testimony.<sup>4</sup> Then the God of heaven shall build the wall<sup>5</sup> of His tabernacle, and the tower<sup>6</sup> of His sanctuary, and the two tribes of His holiness shall be placed there; 5. For the ten tribes shall establish their kingdom according to their devices; 6. And they shall bring their victims to the altar for twenty<sup>7</sup> years; 7. And seven<sup>8</sup> shall entrench the walls, and I will protect nine, and four shall transgress the<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A year stands for a period of rule. Thus the fifteen judges, and Saul, David and Solomon are the "eighteen years." And the kings from Rehoboam to Hoshea the "nineteen years."

<sup>2</sup> Text is "abrumpent tib." Charles emends "se abrumpent tribus."

<sup>3</sup> Charles emends to "twelve."

<sup>4</sup> Text "testimony of the tabernacle."

<sup>5</sup> Text has "palam." Charles emends to "aulam." Clemen "palum."

<sup>6</sup> Text "ferrum." Charles emends to "turrem" quoting 1 Enoch lxxxix. 50, 67, 73.

<sup>7</sup> *i. e.* the twenty kings of Judah including Athaliah.

<sup>8</sup> The "seven" are Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah.

The "nine" are Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah; and the "four" Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.

<sup>9</sup> Text "adcedent ad," *i. e.* προσβήσονται, which the Greek translator mistook for παραβήσονται (Charles).

covenant of the Lord, and profane the oath,<sup>1</sup> which the Lord made with them. 8. And they shall sacrifice their children to strange gods, and shall set up idols in the tabernacle<sup>2</sup> to serve them. 9. And they shall work abomination in the house of the Lord, and grave every kind<sup>3</sup> of beast even many idols.

### III. I-14. The Captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, and the united prayer of the divided tribes in their Captivity.

III. I. . . .<sup>4</sup> in those times shall come on them a king from the East,<sup>5</sup> and his horsemen shall cover their land, 2. And shall burn their "colony"<sup>6</sup> with fire with the holy temple of the Lord, and he shall take away all the holy vessels;<sup>7</sup> 3. And he shall drive out all the people, and lead them into his own land, even the two tribes shall

<sup>1</sup> Text is "finem," *i. e.* Greek ἔρον corrupt for ἔρον (Charles).

<sup>2</sup> "idola scenæ," for "scenā." Rönsch emends "idola obscena," with Clemen.

<sup>3</sup> Text "omnem animalium." Charles supplies "similitudinem."

<sup>4</sup> Supply "et." <sup>5</sup> Nebuchadnezzar, 586 B.C.

<sup>6</sup> If this word is to be taken literally, the Latin translation must have been made after A.D. 135, when Hadrian made Jerusalem a Roman "colony."

<sup>7</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7.

he lead with him. 4. Then the two tribes shall call on the ten tribes and shall be led<sup>1</sup> like a lioness on the dusty plains hungering and thirsting with their little children, 5. And they shall cry: "Righteous and holy is the Lord, inasmuch as ye have sinned, and we likewise are led into captivity with you." 6. Then the ten tribes shall wail when they hear the reproachful words of the two tribes, 7: And shall say: "What have we done unto you, brethren? Hath not this tribulation fallen on the whole house of Israel?" 8. And all the tribes shall wail, crying to heaven and saying: 9. "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, remember Thy covenant which Thou madest with them, and the oath, which Thou swarest unto them by Thyself, that their seed should never fail from the land, which Thou gavest them." 10. Then shall they remember me on that day saying one tribe to another and each man to his neighbour: 11. "Lo! is not this that which Moses did once declare unto us in prophecies, who suffered many things in Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the desert forty years?"<sup>2</sup> 12. Yea, he declared and called

<sup>1</sup> Text is "ducent se." Charles suggests a corruption of ἀχθέσονται (will be angry) into ἀχθήσονται.

<sup>2</sup> Acts vii. 36.

heaven and earth to witness against us, that we should not transgress the commandments of the Lord, of which he was the mediator to us. 13. And these things<sup>1</sup> have come upon us from him according to his words, and according to his assurance, as he bore witness to us in those times, yea, they have been fulfilled even to our being led captive into the East?" 14. And these shall be in captivity about seventy-seven years.<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. 1-9. **The Prayer of Daniel, and the Return of the two tribes.**

IV. 1. Then one<sup>3</sup> shall enter, that shall be over them, and he shall spread forth his hands, and kneel upon his knees and pray for them saying :  
2. " Lord of all, King on Thy lofty seat, That rulest over the world, That didst will that this people should be unto Thee a peculiar people, and Thou didst will to be called their God according to the Covenant, which Thou madest with their fathers. 3. And they went as captives

<sup>1</sup> " Quæ " corrupt for " ecce ea " (Charles).

<sup>2</sup> Charles suggests that this means " an indefinite period," cf. Matt. xviii. 22. It modifies Jer. xxv. 11, which is interpreted by Daniel ix. 24 as seventy weeks of years, *i. e.* 490.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel.



to a strange land with their wives and children, and around<sup>1</sup> the gates of strangers, and where there is great vanity;<sup>2</sup> 4. Have respect unto them and pity them, O Lord of heaven." 5. Then God will remember them because of the covenant, which He made with their fathers and will show forth His mercy also in those times. 6. And He will put it into the mind of a king<sup>3</sup> to have pity on them, and he shall send them back to their own land and country. 7. Then shall some part of the tribes go up and come to the place appointed for them and shall entrench the place anew. 8. And the two tribes shall remain in the faith laid down for them, sad and groaning, because they cannot offer sacrifice to the Lord God of their fathers.<sup>4</sup> 9. And the ten tribes shall increase and spread among<sup>5</sup> the Gentiles in the time of their tribulation.

<sup>1</sup> Text "circa."

<sup>2</sup> Text "majestas," Clemen and Charles *ματαιότης*; through *μεγαλειότης* (Charles).

<sup>3</sup> Cyrus, Ezra i. 1-4.

<sup>4</sup> Charles notes the low value set on the worship of the restored temple; cf. 2 Bar. lxxviii. 5, 6; Hag. ii. 3; Ezra iii. 12; Mal. i. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Text "devenient apud natos in tempore tribuum (tribum)." Clemen corrects "nationes" for "natos," and "tribulationis" for "tribum," and translates "will more and more coalesce with the nations." Charles,

### V. 1-6. Idolatry of the Priests under Antiochus and the Hellenizers.

V. 1. And when the day of reckoning shall draw nigh, and vengeance shall arise at the hand of the kings<sup>1</sup> who are partakers of their evil deeds, and punishers of them, 2. They themselves also shall be divided as to the truth, 3. According as it hath been said:<sup>2</sup> "They shall turn aside from righteousness, and approach to iniquity, and shall defile with pollutions<sup>3</sup> the house of their captivity, and shall lust after strange gods." 4. For they shall forsake the truth of God; but there shall be those who shall pollute the altar . . . even with their gifts,<sup>4</sup> which they offer to the Lord, not being priests, but slaves born of slaves. 5. And those who are their lawgivers,<sup>5</sup> their teachers,

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supposing corruptions from the Hebrew text, translates "devenient" by "will be multiplied," and "tribum" by "captivity," "increase and multiply among the nations in the time of their captivity."

<sup>1</sup> "de reges."

<sup>2</sup> "fatum fuit," for "factum fuit."

<sup>3</sup> "ingenationibus."

<sup>4</sup> Charles supplies "ipsis." He refers this to the Hellenizing High-priests Jason and Menelaus, who preceded the Maccabees; the latter was a Benjamite. Cf. 2 Macc. iv. 13, 19, 20; v. 8, and iii. 4; iv. 23.

<sup>5</sup> "Qui enim magistri sunt," emended by Charles to "the many" or "the Rabbis."

in those days shall have respect unto men's persons for reward and receive gifts and pervert justice by receiving bribes.<sup>1</sup> 6. And it shall come to pass that the whole colony and the bounds of their habitations shall be filled with sins and iniquities . . . their judges<sup>2</sup> shall be those who work unrighteousness against the Lord, and they shall give judgement for money according as each man desireth.<sup>3</sup>

VI. 1-9. **The evil Hasmonæans, and the reign of Herod—Conquest by Varus**  
[B.C. 4].

VI. 1. Then shall arise over them kings<sup>4</sup> to reign and they shall be called priests of the Most

<sup>1</sup> "Erunt mirantes personas cupiditatum et accptiones munerum et pervendent justitias. acciundo poenas." Charles emends "accipientes," translates "personas cupiditatum" "desirable persons," puts "pervertent" for "pervendent," and brackets "acciundo poenas" as a gloss.

<sup>2</sup> The "dittography" in the text is obvious. "A deo ut qui facit erunt impii judices" and "a domino qui faciunt erunt impii judices," "the first and inferior version was intended to be deleted" (Charles).

<sup>3</sup> "inerunt in campo judicare." Charles supposes ἐν ἀγρῷ a mistake for ἐν ἀγρόν.

<sup>4</sup> The Maccabees. Jonathan High-priest, 153 B.C. Office hereditary, 141 B.C.

High God, and they shall verily work impiety in the Holy of Holies. 2. And to them shall succeed a self-willed king,<sup>1</sup> who shall not be of the priestly line, a rash and wicked man, and he shall judge them as they deserve. 3. He shall cut off their chief men with the sword and bury<sup>2</sup> them in unknown places, so that no man may know where their bodies rest. 4. He shall slay old men and young men and shall not spare. 5. Then shall there be bitter fear of him among them in their land, 6. And he shall execute judgement upon them, as did the Egyptians, for thirty and four years, and shall punish them. . . . 7. And he shall beget sons that shall succeed him and reign for shorter periods.<sup>3</sup> 8. Into their parts<sup>4</sup> shall come the strong<sup>5</sup> and a mighty Western<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "rex petulans," *i. e.* Herod the Great.

<sup>2</sup> Text "singuli." Clemen emends to "sepeliet." Charles "stinguet."

<sup>3</sup> Text ". . . et . . . roducit natos . . . ecedentes sibi breviora tempora donarent." Clemen "et producet natos qui succedentes sibi breviora tempora dominarent." So Charles. Herod reigned 34 years, Antipas 43, Philip 37. See Introduction, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Text "pares."

<sup>5</sup> Text "mortis," emended "fortes" (Clemen), "cohortes" (Charles).

<sup>6</sup> "occidentes." P. Quinctilius Varus, Governor of Syria, quelled a rebellion in 4 B.C. (Jos. Ant. xvii. 10, 1 *sqq.*).

king, who shall conquer them, 9. And lead them captive and burn part of their temple with fire, and crucify some around their "colony."

### VII. I-10. **The Rulers of the Writer's own time.**

VII. 1. And after this the times shall be finished, in a moment shall follow the second course<sup>1</sup> . . . the four hours shall come. 2. They shall be forced<sup>2</sup>. . . . 3. And in their day shall reign pestilent and impious men claiming to be righteous.<sup>3</sup> 4. And these shall excite the wrath of their own friends,<sup>4</sup> who will be cunning men, deceitful in all their own affairs, and at every hour of the day bent on feasting, 5. Gluttons, gourmands . . . 6. Devourers of poor men's<sup>5</sup> goods and saying that they do these things for mercy's<sup>6</sup> sake . . . 7. So that they may de-

<sup>1</sup> Text "momento . . . etur cursus a . . ." Merx "sequetur." Charles "finietur," "alter" for "a."

<sup>2</sup> This verse "defies translation" (Charles).

<sup>3</sup> Charles refers this attack to the Sadducees, comparing Pss. of Solomon.

<sup>4</sup> Text "animorum" emended by Clemen to "amicorum." Charles retains "animorum," but makes "viam" a mistranslation of the Hebrew (Greek *ιδν*, poison).

<sup>5</sup> "(paup-)erum." A hopeless lacuna precedes.

<sup>6</sup> "misericordiam;" Charles "justice."

stroy them, querulous,<sup>1</sup> false, hiding themselves so as not to be known, impious in sin, and full of iniquity from sunrise to sunset, saying: 8. "Give us banquets and luxury, let us eat and drink: and we will reckon ourselves great men." 9. And their hands and minds shall traffic with the unclean, and their mouth speak great things,<sup>2</sup> and moreover they shall say: 10. "Touch me not, lest thou shouldst pollute me where I stand."<sup>3</sup> . . .

VIII. 1-5. **"The King of the Kings of the Earth" will persecute the faithful.**

VIII. 1.<sup>4</sup> And so great . . . vengeance and wrath shall come on them, such<sup>5</sup> as hath not been

<sup>1</sup> Text "quæru-. . ."

<sup>2</sup> "ingentia." Cf. Dan. vii. 8, 20; Jude 16.

<sup>3</sup> Again the text is quite hopeless.

<sup>4</sup> Charles considers this "second visitation" can only refer to the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, and boldly transfers chaps. viii. and ix. to the gap between chaps. v. and vi., where such an account is not out of place. Burkitt (Hastings, *D.B.*, art. "Assumption of Moses") does not accept this. "The final Theophany (x.) comes in very well after the story of the ideal saint, Taxo (ix.), and very badly after the description of the wicked priests and rulers of chap. vii." He refers it to the stories of the Antiochian martyrs.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Matt. xxiv. 21.

in the land from the beginning even to that time, in which God shall raise against them the king of the kings of the earth and a potentate of mighty power,<sup>1</sup> who will crucify those who acknowledge their circumcision, 2. And torture those who deny<sup>2</sup> it, and deliver them to be led bound to prison, and their wives will be divided among the gentiles.<sup>3</sup> 3. And their sons will be treated by surgeons so as to make circumcision of none effect.<sup>4</sup> 4. And some of them shall be punished by torments and fire and sword, and shall be forced to carry<sup>5</sup> their idols publicly, as defiled as those who possess them. 5. And by their tormentors they shall be forced to enter into the hidden place, and they shall be forced with goads to blaspheme the sacred word<sup>6</sup> insolently, yea, and last of all the laws, and what they have upon their altar.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Antichrist. Charles "Antiochus IV."

<sup>2</sup> "negantes" for "necantes." "Charles" "celantes."

<sup>3</sup> Text "diisdonabuntur." Clemen "disdon.," *i. e.* distributed. Charles "shall be given to the gods among the Gentiles," quoting 2 Macc. vi. 4, for Cult of Venus.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jos. Ant. XII. v. 1; 1 Macc. i. 15; 1 Cor. vii. 18.

<sup>5</sup> "bajulare," cf. 2 Macc. vi. 7.

<sup>6</sup> "Verbum" = *λογος*—in late Hebrew. "The person of God" (Charles).

<sup>7</sup> "quod haberent supra altarium suum"—with Charles "the sacrifice"; cf. Matt. xxiii. 18.

**IX. 1-7. Taxo (the Ideal Patriot) will protest by dying of starvation with his sons in the wilderness.**

IX. 1. Then while this man ruleth a man of the tribe of Levi whose name will be TAXO,<sup>1</sup> who having seven sons shall speak to them and ask them: 2. "See ye, my sons, how a second cruel and shameless vengeance hath fallen on the people, and a punishment without mercy beyond the measure of the first?"<sup>2</sup> 3. For what nation or what country or what people of those who disobey the Lord, who have wrought much sin, have suffered as much as hath been our portion? 4. Now therefore, my sons, listen to me: for ye see and know, that neither your parents nor their forefathers ever tempted<sup>3</sup> God, in transgressing His commands. 5. And ye know how that this is our strength. Now let us do this: 6. Let us fast three days, and on the fourth day let us enter the cave, which is in the

<sup>1</sup> The name TAXO transliterated into Hebrew as TAXOC by the use of a common cipher becomes Eleazar (2 Macc. vi. 18 *sq.* and 4 Macc. v. 3). With his story is here amalgamated that of the widow's seven sons (2 Macc. vii.); and his "cave" corresponds to that of the Chasids (1 Macc. i. 53; ii. 31).

<sup>2</sup> Text "eminent principatum" read "eminens."

<sup>3</sup> "temptans," corrupt for "temptantes."



field, and there let us die, rather than transgress the commandments of the Lord of Lords, the God of our fathers. 7. For if we do this and die, our blood shall be avenged in the sight of the Lord.

**X. 1-15. The coming of God's Kingdom,  
and the Vindication of the Righteous  
by God Himself.**

X. 1. And then His kingdom shall appear  
through His whole creation.

And then the devil<sup>1</sup> shall have an end,  
And sadness shall be taken away with him.

2. Then the hands of the Angel<sup>2</sup> shall be filled,  
Who is established in the highest,  
Who shall straightway avenge them of  
their adversaries.

3. . . . For the Heavenly One shall arise from  
the throne of His kingdom,  
And shall come out of His holy habitation  
With indignation and wrath for His children.

4. And the earth shall quake: even to its  
bounds shall it be shaken:  
And the lofty mountains shall be brought  
low and shall be shaken,

<sup>1</sup> Zabulus.

<sup>2</sup> Michael as in Dan. xii. 1.

- And the valleys shall fall.<sup>1</sup>
5. The sun shall not give his light, and the horns of the moon shall be turned into darkness,  
And they shall be broken, and the whole of the moon shall be turned into blood.<sup>2</sup>  
And the circuit<sup>3</sup> of the stars shall be disordered;
6. And the sea shall fall even to the abyss;  
The fountains of waters shall fail,  
And the rivers be afraid.<sup>4</sup>
7. Because the Most High God, the Eternal, the Only God shall arise,  
And manifest Himself to punish the nations,  
And to destroy all their idols.
8. Then shalt thou be happy, thou O Israel,  
And shalt mount on the neck and wings of the eagle,

<sup>1</sup> "et concutientur et convalles cadent." Charles reads "et colles concutientur," comparing Isa. xl. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Charles, altering the text translates, "And the horns of the sun shall be broken, and he shall be turned into darkness; and the moon shall not give her light, and be turned wholly into blood." Cf. Joel ii. 10; iii. 15; Isa. xiii. 10; Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxiii. 45; Acts ii. 20; Rev. vi. 12; ix. 2.

<sup>3</sup> "orbis."

<sup>4</sup> "expavescent." Charles "exarescent" = "shall dry up."

And (the Days of thy sorrow) shall be ended.<sup>1</sup>

9. And God shall exalt thee,

And bring thee to the heaven of the stars,  
The place of His habitation.

10. And thou shalt look<sup>2</sup> from on high, and behold thy adversaries on the earth,<sup>3</sup>

And shalt know them and rejoice,

And give thanks, and acknowledge thy Creator.

11. "Now must thou, Joshua son of Nun, keep these words and this book; 12. For there shall be from my death and assumption<sup>4</sup> even to His Coming two hundred and fifty times,<sup>5</sup> which shall pass. 13. And this is the course of the times<sup>6</sup> . . . which they shall finish, until they are consummated. 14. But I go to sleep with my fathers: 15. Wherefore be thou, Joshua, son

<sup>1</sup> Supplying "dies luctus tui" (Cheyne). Charles suggests, altering text:

"Thou shalt go up against the eagle,  
And its necks and wings shall be destroyed."

<sup>2</sup> "conspicies" for "conspiges."

<sup>3</sup> Text "in terram" =  $\gamma\eta$ . Charles very reasonably suggests "the valley," *i. e.* Gehenna; cf. Isa. lxvi. 24; 1 Enoch xxvii. 2, 3.

<sup>4</sup> "receptione": Charles makes this a gloss by the editor.

<sup>5</sup> *i. e.* 250 year-weeks = 1,750 years

<sup>6</sup> Text ". . . horum."

of Nun, strong; God hath chosen thee in my place to be the minister of the same covenant."

**XI. 1-19. Humility of Joshua ; how can he lead so many Israelites ?**

XI. 1. And when Joshua had heard the words of Moses, which were thus written in his writing, even all that he before had said, he rent his clothes and fell at his feet.<sup>1</sup> 2. And Moses exhorted him, and wept with him. 3. And Joshua answered him and said: 4. "Why comfortest<sup>2</sup> thou me, Lord Moses, and how shall I be comforted, for that bitter word thou spakest, which hath gone forth from thy mouth, which is full of tears and groans, in that thou dost depart from this people . . . 5. What place shall receive thee . . . 6. Or what shall be the monument of thy sepulchre, 7. Or who shall dare to bear thy body as that of a man from one place to another? 8. For to all who die there are sepulchres on the earth according to their age; but thy sepulchre shall be from the rising sun to the setting and from the south to the bounds of the north, the whole earth shall be thy sepulchre.<sup>3</sup> 9. O My Lord, thou passest

<sup>1</sup> Text "pedes meos;" Charles "pedes Moysi."

<sup>2</sup> "solares" and "solabor" for "celares" and "celabor."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Thuc. ii,

hence, and who shall feed this people, 10. Or who is there to have pity on them, who to lead them in the way, 11. Or to pray for them, not forbearing<sup>1</sup> even for a single day, that I may bring them into the land of their forefathers? 12. How shall I govern this people, even as a father his only son or a lady her virgin-daughter,<sup>2</sup> prepared to be given<sup>3</sup> to a husband, who feareth lest the sun light on her body, and lest she should run on the ground with unshod feet? . . . 13. How shall I provide them with food and drink according to the pleasure of their will? <sup>4</sup>. . . 14. For of them there are 100,000<sup>5</sup> men, since to so great a number have they increased through thy prayers, my Lord Moses. 15. And what wisdom or understanding have I to give judgement or to give answers by speech in the house (of the Lord)? 16. Yea, and the kings of the Amorites, when they hear that we are attacking them, thinking that there is no longer among them a

<sup>1</sup> Text "nec patiens" = οὐδέ παρῆς—"not omitting" (Charles).

<sup>2</sup> Text "tamquam filiam dominam virginem." Either "dominam" = κυρίαν meaning "his own," or change to "domina," as above translated.

<sup>3</sup> "dari" for "tali" (Charles).

<sup>4</sup> So Charles, changing "voluntatem voluntatis" to "voluptatem voluntatis."

<sup>5</sup> Charles inserts D (600,000) from Exod. xii. 37.

holy spirit manifold and incomprehensible, worthy of the Lord, the master of the Word, faithful in all things, the divine prophet<sup>1</sup> of the earth, and the world's perfect teacher—no longer among them, will say: 'Let us go against them. 17. If their enemies should once now do impious deeds against their Lord, they have no champion now to bear prayers on their behalf to the Lord, as was Moses the great messenger, who every hour by day and night had his knees fixed to the ground praying and beholding Him Who is omnipotent over the world<sup>2</sup> in mercy and justice, reminding Him of the covenant of the fathers and by his oath propitiating the Lord.' 18. For they will say: 'He is no more with them; let us go and confound them from off the face of the earth.' 19. What then shall happen to thy people, my Lord Moses? "

## XII. 1-13. Moses encourages Joshua, and sets him in his own seat.

XII. 1. And when Joshua had finished these words, he fell again at the feet of Moses. 2. And

<sup>1</sup> Text "divinum . . . profetem." Charles "God's chief prophet."

<sup>2</sup> Text "et intuens homini potentem orbem." Charles reads, "potentem omnis orbis." Hilgenfeld suggests as above "omnipotentem orbem."

Moses took his hand, and raised him into the seat before him. And he answered and said to him :  
 3. " Joshua, despise not thyself,<sup>1</sup> but show thyself unmoved, and attend to my words. 4. God created all the nations, which are on the face of the earth, and us as well; He foresaw them and us from the beginning of the creation of the earth even to the end of the world, and nothing is by Him neglected, however small it be, but He foresaw all things and foreknew<sup>2</sup>. . . 5. All things which should be in this world, He foresaw and lo! it is brought forth. . . . 6. And me He formed to pray for them and for their sins . . . and to intercede for them. 7. For not because of any virtue or strength<sup>3</sup> of mine, but of His good pleasure<sup>4</sup> his mercy and patience have been mine. 8. Yea I tell thee, Joshua; not because of the piety of this people wilt thou destroy the nations. 9. All that is in heaven and the foundations of the earth were made and approved<sup>5</sup> by God, and are beneath the signet<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> " te " for " et."

<sup>2</sup> Text is here very corrupt. Charles reads " promovit cuncta " = " caused all to come forth."

<sup>3</sup> Text is " infirmitatem."

<sup>4</sup> Text " temperantius " = *ἐπιεικέστερον*, representing the Hebrew of above.

<sup>5</sup> Text " ut provata."

<sup>6</sup> Text " nullo " emended to " annulo."

of His right hand. 10. They that perform and carry out the commandments of God flourish and tread a good path; 11. But sinners and they who neglect His commandments lack the good things,<sup>1</sup> which are foretold. And they shall be punished by the nations with many torments; 12. Yet it is not possible that He should wholly destroy and forsake<sup>2</sup> them. 13. For God hath gone forth, Who foresaw all things from the beginning, and His covenant is established even by the oath, which . . ."

<sup>1</sup> Text "carere bonam."

<sup>2</sup> "relinquet." Charles emends to "extinguat."



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