The theme of the Apocalypse of Abraham seems to be Israel's election and its covenant with God. The document can be divided into two parts, chapters 1–8 and chapters 9–32. Chapters 1–8 constitute a story of Abraham's youth and his perception of idolatry. Abraham concludes that his father's idols are not gods, because some stone idols are crushed and a wooden idol is accidentally consumed by fire. Abraham consequently beseeches God to reveal himself, whereupon he hears God's voice, which instructs Abraham to leave his father's house.

Abraham is commanded to offer a sacrifice so that God will reveal "'great things which you have not seen . . . '" (9:6). God sends his angel Iaoel to lead Abraham up to heaven (15:4), where he sees seven visions: the light and fiery angels (15:5–7), the fire (17:1–3), the throne (18:1–14), the firmaments (19:4–9), the world (21:2–7), the seven sins of the world (24:3–25:2), and the destruction of the Temple (27:1–3). Finally God announces the punishment of the gentiles through ten plagues (chs. 29f.) and the victory of the just (chs. 31f.).

Texts

The Apocalypse of Abraham is known only in an Old Slavonic translation, which has come down to us in several Russian redactions. The combined witness of six manuscripts that contain essentially the full text allows us to discern fairly clearly the original form of the Slavonic text, although many details remain obscure. Four manuscripts provide confirmatory evidence only for the first eight chapters. Other fragments, summaries, and reworkings are obviously derived from the older long form; they will not concern us here.

The apocalypse appears as a completely independent unit only in one manuscript, but basically the same text is found in a second manuscript with a slightly different beginning and a radically truncated ending. A slightly different redaction is reflected in the text that has been incorporated into the Explanatory Palaiia (Tolkovaja Paleja), a broad account of Old Testament history interspersed with exegesis, much of it anti-Jewish polemic. These are the manuscripts:


D- A miscellany, Lenin Library, Moscow, Tikhonravov 704, fols. 70–79. 16th cent. Unpublished.


B- The Synodal Paleja Tolkovaja, Moscow, Gosudarstvennyj Istoriceskij Muzej, 869 (Sin. 211) fols. 76–90. 16th cent. Unpublished.
Abraham, "did not know of MSS C and D, which we found during our work toward the introduction and to H. G. Lunt for improving the English translation.

The Slavonic text of the Apocalypse of Abraham, these witnesses permit us to suggest that the Apocalypse of Abraham was known by the second century.

The Apocalypse of Abraham is a pseudepigraphon written after A.D. 70, because the author describes the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. ch. 27). Hence, the apocalypse—that is the early Jewish stratum—was composed sometime after A.D. 70 and before the middle of the second century. It is unwise to speculate further regarding the date of the apocalypse in the present context of documents.

Provenance

If the original language of the Apocalypse of Abraham is Hebrew, then it was most likely composed in Palestine. It is necessary to be conservative regarding the probable provenance of the apocalypse for two main reasons: First, it is preserved in Slavonic manuscripts that are far removed from the conjectured time and place of the original composition. Second, as stated herein by H. G. Lunt and F. I. Andersen respectively in the presentations of the Ladder of Jacob and 2 Enoch, pseudepigrapha preserved only in Slavonic may have been considerably altered by the Bogomils (a medieval dualist sect), who were influenced by passages in the pseudepigrapha and composed new ones.

Date

It is commonly held that our pseudepigraphon was composed at the end of the first century A.D. No decisive argument, however, has been given in support of this date. In the following paragraphs the issue will be discussed first in terms of the external and then in terms of the internal data.

The testimonies of Nicephorus, patriarch of Constantinople (806–15), of Pseudo-Athanasius (6th cent.), and of the Apostolic Constitutions (4/5th cent.) are very vague and arresting. They can be deduced from them in regard to our apocalypse. Epiphanius (4th cent.) speaks about some "Apocalypse of Abraham" used by the Sethians. The same apocalypse was utilized by the Audians and we know its content, thanks to Theodore bar Konai (8th cent.) and Origen. There can be no doubt, however, that the writing used by the Sethians and our pseudepigraphon are two different works.

The text of Recognitions (2nd cent.) gives us at least two traditions. The first one presents the apocalypse as an astrologer (Rec. 32:3f.), the second one (33:1f.) may be an allusion to the Apocalypse of Abraham. These witnesses permit us to suggest that the Apocalypse of Abraham was known by the second century.

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Provenance
The Christian interpolations and gnostic glosses

Chapter 7 appears to be inserted from the legend of Abraham found in the Pahlavi. The interpolator of 29:3-13 was probably a Christian editor who had nothing to do with gnostic circles. However, the gloss in 22:5, the censure in 20:5, and the gloss in 20:7 reveal that their author wanted to indicate that the God of Abraham is a god of evil. This point of view is usually associated with the gnostics. The gloss in 22:5 and the censured text of 20:5, however, show that they could be made only in the Slavic world. The only Slavs who claimed that the God of the Old Testament was the god of evil were the Bogomils. Their founder was Pope Bogomil (10th cent. a.d.). According to the Bogomils, God had two sons: Satanael and Jesus. Satanael rebelled against God and created the visible world; everything described in the book of Genesis is the work of the devil. If then this world is created by Satanael (= god of the OT), one has to abstain from every contact with the material world. The Bogomils, therefore, condemned marriage, abstained from meat and wine, and did not believe in the resurrection of the body. 18

The glosses in 20:5, 7 and 22:5 perfectly suit their doctrine. We can say the same about the interpolator of 29:3-13; he shows that Jesus came forth from the heathens and not from the Jews (= the people with Azazel). Perhaps also inserted by a Bogomil were 9:7, an injunction against meat and wine, and 23:4-10, which claims that the sin of Adam and Eve consisted in the conjugal relation. Maybe the same Bogomil editor interpolated 10:6-12 and 17:8b-19. The general content of the account of the sin of Adam and Eve reveals that it comes from Jewish sources. It fits the Bogomil doctrine, however, and therefore was inserted into our apocalypse.

Theological importance

God. The God of eternity (9:3) is the God who protects Abraham and his descendants (9:4). He created the world (9:4), chose Israel, called this nation “my people” (22:5; 31:1), and will give it victory over its enemies (31:1f.).  

Angelology. Angelology plays a large role in our apocalypse. The most important figure is the Angel of God, Jael. His fundamental role is to protect and strengthen Abraham (10:3).

Demonology. The chief of the fallen angels is Azazel (13:6). His power is over the earth, because he has chosen it for his dwelling place (13:7f.; 14:6). However, his power is limited (13:10) since God does not permit him to tempt all the righteous (13:11). For example, he cannot seduce Abraham (13:14), and he has no power over the body of the righteous (13:10).

Cosmology. God shows Abraham the firmaments in order that he may know that “on no single expanse is there any other but the one whom” Abraham has searched for or who has loved him (19:3). God says to Abraham: “Look now beneath your feet at the firmament and understand the creation that was depicted of old on this expanse” (21:1). Abraham sees then the earth with the wicked men, and the garden of Eden with the just, he sees the sea with Leviathan, and the waters over the firmaments; at last, he watches the men on the right and on the left side of the “picture of creation” (chs. 21f.). Abraham is told that as the world is divided into two parts: earth and Eden, the waters of the sea and the waters over the firmaments, so mankind is divided into the people of God and the heathens (21:3-7).

The enumeration of the firmaments is due to editorial expansions, probably by a Slavic editor. The descriptions of the three heavens is similar to that in the Testament of Levi 3:1-4.

Dualism. In the Apocalypse of Abraham there is no ontological dualism. The created world is good before the eyes of God (22:2). There is no other God in the universe than “the one whom” Abraham has “searched for” and “who has loved” him (19:3). There is evil in the world, but it is not inevitable. God has full control over the world and he does not permit the body of the just to remain in the hand of Azazel (13:10). Azazel is wrong if he thinks he can scorn justice and disperse the secret of heaven (14:4). He will be banished in the desert forever (14:5).

Eschatology. The age of ungodliness endures “twelve periods” (29:2). After the last


The Apocalypse of Abraham period comes the final judgment, which precedes the redemption of the just. God announces ten plagues (29:15; 30:2-8); when they pass, he will send his “chosen one” (31:1) who will gather the dispersed people. Together with him God will punish the heathens (31:2). The punishments will be burned through the fire of Azazel (31:6); the Temple and the sacrifices will be restored (31:17f.).

The doctrine of resurrection is noticeably absent, although it may be reflected in the symbol of the devil (19:4). The Apocalypse of Abraham, however, passed through the hands of the Bogomils, who did not believe in the resurrection of the body. It is possible that phrases mentioning the resurrection were omitted. It is clear, regardless of that possibility, that our author believed in life after death (cf. 21:6).

Relation to the canonical books

The books of Genesis and Ezekiel play a fundamental role in the Apocalypse of Abraham. The author begins with the text of Genesis 20:13 (ApAb 1:1), which is quoted according to the exegesis of the Targums; he ends his work with the citation of Genesis 15:13-16 (= ApAb 32:1-3), but he changes the biblical “fourth generation” into “seventh,” i.e. a perfect one.


Chapters 1 and 10 of Ezekiel are behind chapters 18f. Abraham sees four living creatures (ApAb 18.5-11; Ezek 1:10; 10:14), the wheels full of eyes (ApAb 18.3, 12), the throne (ApAb 18:3; Ezek 1:23), and the divine chariot (ApAb 18:12; Ezek 10:6).

There is no direct relationship between the Apocalypse of Abraham and the New Testament. There are some parallel expressions, however, which may indicate that both drew from a shared tradition.

Relation to the apocryphal books

The author of the Apocalypse of Abraham follows the tradition of 1 Enoch 1-36. The chief of the fallen angels is Azazel, who rules the stars and most men. It is not difficult to find here the traditions of Genesis 6:1-4 developed according to the tradition of 1 Enoch. Azazel is the head of the angels who plotted against the Lord and who impregnated the daughters of men.21 The angels are compared to the stars.22 Azazel revealed the secrets of heaven to the exiles of the Babylonian captivity.23 Abraham, as Enoch, receives the power to drive away Satan.23 All these connections show that the author of the Apocalypse of Abraham drew upon the tradition of 1 Enoch.

Cultural importance

The Apocalypse of Abraham is one of the most important works written after the destruction of the nation in A.D. 70. The importance of the apocalypse may be compared to that of 2 Baruch or 4 Ezra, but our author analyzes the causes of the destruction of Jerusalem from a different perspective: The defeat was caused by the infidelity of Israel toward the covenant with God and the opportunistic politics of some leaders.

The pseudograph is written with great talent and with a good understanding of biblical exegesis. The symbolic language is clear, logical, and easy to understand. The Apocalypse of Abraham provides us with an insight into the literary "workshop" of the Palestinian
The Apocalypse of Abraham was practically unknown for ten centuries. Neither the Semitic original nor the supposed Greek version has been found. Perhaps the latter never existed. Translated into Slavonic, our document circulated first in Bulgaria and afterward in Russia. Known only in the Orient, it had no influence on occidental literature.

The transmission of the Apocalypse of Abraham

The Slavonic Apocalypse of Abraham is to be ascribed to the extraordinarily productive burst of cultural activity during the reign of Simeon of Bulgaria (893–927), when a prodigious amount of material was translated from Greek into Old Church Slavonic; part of the effort of the Bulgarian emperor to bring his realm to the level of Byzantium itself. The translation contains Greek words well known from Old Church Slavonic (adá: "hóiôdes, Hades"; sèrë: "ádr, air"); stusaia: "stoicheton, element"). Along with the conventional bizarre rendering of Gehenna as "fiery race" (by a confusion of simea with gened or some other derivative of sime; see also the various liturgical phrases that make better sense in Greek than in Slavonic. There can be no question that this text, like the other cultural works of Bulgaria of the time, was translated from Greek. It is, then, fully realistic to assume that a Greek text of the Apocalypse of Abraham still existed in the Balkans as late as the ninth century, although no trace has yet been found in surviving Slavonic manuscripts.

The style is strongly Semitic but generally within the bounds of the biblical Greek that was presumably used by some hellenistic Jews for original works, e.g. Revelation. It is reasonable to hypothesize that the text was composed in Hebrew or Aramaic and rendered very literally into Greek. While no decisive arguments for a Semitic original have yet been adduced, the sheer number of Semitisms is best explained by this hypothesis. The quotation of the Divine Name El, El, El, El (retained only in copy S) and (glossed "that is, my God"); replaced, except in copy S, by the spelling Ill, in line with the accepted form in Mt 27:46) is suggestive but inconclusive. Final -if for Hebrew el in the names Azazel, Iaoel, Isael, and Michael indicates Greek mediation. Perhaps the strange wording of 9-4 reflects the Hebrew turn of Genesis 15:1 (see n. b to ch. 9). It is not possible that put zemïnù (10:4) reflects drk 'rs (qADD) or some other derivative of Gehenna as "fiery race" (by a confusion of simea with gened or some other derivative of sime; see also the various liturgical phrases that make better sense in Greek than in Slavonic. There can be no question that this text, like the other cultural works of Bulgaria of the time, was translated from Greek. It is, then, fully realistic to assume that a Greek text of the Apocalypse of Abraham still existed in the Balkans as late as the ninth century, although no trace has yet been found in surviving Slavonic manuscripts.

The Slavonic text has come down to us in relatively full form in six manuscripts, the oldest from the early fourteenth century, the second from the fifteenth, and the others from the sixteenth century. The chief distinction among the copies is that four contain the apocalypse more or less integrated into the Explanatory Palaia, while two present the text as an independent (copy S) or nearly independent unit (copy D). The Palaia variants contain long Jewish Old Testament passages, but otherwise the text is so close to S D that only in chapter 7 is a marked reduction indicated. The oldest copy, S, is unfortunately extremely faulty, with numerous omissions of syllables, sentences, and even paragraphs; with frequent distortions even of obvious words; and with unsuccessful efforts to update the archaic language, the forms and vocabulary of which were often not understood by the scribe. Copy D stems ultimately from the same Vorlage as copy S, but unfortunately the scribe, clearly not at home in the style and special sphere of apocalyptic tradition and allusions, gave up work before the end and simply omitted most of the apocalyptic vision (from 26:5 on) reducing all of it to a few phrases. On the other hand, the Palai texts A B C K continue beyond the end of S (in 31:3). Tikhonravov apparently chose to exclude a paragraph (ch. 32) that Parfít ev, probably rightly, assigns to this text rather than to the subsequent episode in the Palai account of Abraham's life.

It is reasonable to assume that all six copies stem originally from a single Old Slavonic manuscript (very likely with some faults) representing the archaic language in South Slavonic literature. All copies contain Northern phonetics at some stage in their history; this shows up in 6:7 (which = "appointed, installed") of A B C K instead of S D's correct uélenen: "valued." S is, overall, the most reliable text, occasionally agreeing with S D against A C K (e.g. in retaining 17:2 pokljace, "knelt," a word not known in Russian, against the replacement ponik, "having bowed his head," of A C K). A and C often go together, but they have independent omissions and distortions. K, the youngest copy, shows many clarifying paraphrases or lexical substitutions that are illuminating even when they only show precisely in what way the whole Slavonic version of that period.

The aim of the present translation is to give readers the clearest possible picture of the complicated Slavonic text we believe to have been available in Russia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The short text of that text back to about A.D. 900 and of its Greek model or models of earlier date remains a matter for speculation. It is quite possible that individual component parts have very diverse origins.

The translation follows the chapter divisions established by Bonwetsch and, with a few exceptions, the verses used by Rubinkiewicz in his Rome dissertation. The song in chapter 17 is treated as verse, but 21:3-7, which might be viewed as poetry, is set as prose. 27 The scribe mistranslates in the same way the other texts in the codex; however, some of these are far less exotic or archaic in language. Thus no editorial purpose is to be discerned for the odd omissions and distortions in S, although of course they must be noted in cases where we must depend on the witness of other MSS.

The Apocalypse of Abraham was translated into Slavonic at some point in the thirteenth century. The history of that text back to about A.D. 900 remains a matter for speculation. It is quite possible that individual component parts have very diverse origins.

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15. "Abraham's rejection of idolatry"

1. On the day I was guarding the gods of my father Terah and the gods of my brother Nahor, while I was testing (to find out) which god is in truth the strongest, (by the two of us) coming to a place where three roads met, and we entered a valley and called "let us stay a little while." "And it came to pass that when I saw it my heart was perplexed and I thought in my mind that I, Abraham, could not put it back in its place alone, because it was heavy, (being made) of a big stone. But I went and told my father, and he came in with me. And when I both lifted it to put it in its place, its head fell off, even while I was holding it by its head. And it came to pass, when my father saw that the head of his god Marumath had fallen, he said to me, 'Abraham!' And I said, 'Here I am!' And he said to me, 'Bring me the axes and chisels' from the house.' And I brought them to him from the house. And he cut another head from the house, and he smashed the head that had fallen off Marumath and the rest of Marumath.

2. He made five other gods and he gave them to me and ordered me to sell them outside on the town road. I saddled my father's ass and loaded them on it and went out on the highway to sell them. And behold, merchants from Phandana of Syria were coming with camels, on their way to Egypt to buy kokuini from the Nile. I asked them a question and they answered me. And walking along I conversed with them. One of their camels screamed. The ass took fright and ran.
away and threw off the gods. Three of them were crushed and two remained
(intact). *And it came to pass that when the Syrians saw that I had gods, they
said, "What did not tell us that you had gods? We were not aware of
you as we heard the camel's voice and you would have had no loss. Give us
at least the gods that remain and we will give you a suitable price." "I considered
it in my heart. And they paid both for the smashed gods and the gods which
remained. *For I had been grieving in my heart how I would bring payment to my
father. I threw the three broken (gods) into the water of the river Gur, which was
in this place. And they sank into the depths of the river Gur and were no more.

3 As I was still walking on the road, my heart was disturbed and my mind
distracted. "I said in my heart, "What is this inequality of activity which my
father is doing? Is it not he rather who is god for his gods, because they come
into being from his sculpting, his planning, and his skill?" They ought to honor my
father because they are his work. What is this food of my father in his works?
Behold, Marumath fell and could not stand up in his sanctuary, nor could I myself
lift him until my father came and we raised him up. "And even so we were not
able (to do it) and his head fell off of him. And it put him on another stone of
another god, which he had made without a head. *And . . . *the other five gods
which got smashed (in falling) from the ass, who could not save themselves and
injure the ass because they smashed them, nor did their shards come out of the
river." "I said to my heart, "If it is so, how then can my father's god
Marumath, which has the head of another stone and which is made from another
stone, save a man, or hear a man's prayer, or give him any gift?"

4 And thinking thus, I came to my father's house. And I watered the ass and gave
him hay. And I took out the silver and placed it in the hand of my father Terah.
And when he heard my speech he became furiously angry with
me. *I was good for you
through your good sense I brought you the silver for the
food," is probably corrupt; [Gk. "anomalia,
"unevenness."]

5 But having pondered my father's anger, I went out. And afterward when I had
2 gone out, he called me, saying, "Abraham!" And I said, "Here I am!" *And
he said, "Up, gather wood chips, for I was making gods from fire before you came,
and prepare with them food for my midday meal." *And it came to pass, when I
was choosing the wooden chips, I found among them a small god which
fit... in my left hand. *And on its forehead was written: god Barisat. *And
it came to pass when I put the chips on the fire in order to prepare the food for
my father, and going out to inquire about the food, I put Barisat near the enkindling
flame, saying to him threateningly. *"Barisat, watch that the fire does not go out
before it come back! If the fire goes out, blow on it so it flares up." "I went out
and I made my counsel. *When I returned, I found Barisat fallen on his back, his
feet enveloped by fire and burning fiercely. *And it came to pass when I saw it,
I laughed (and) said to myself, "Barisat, truly you know how to light a fire and
cook food!" *And it came to pass while saying this in my laughter, (I saw that)
he burned up slowly from the fire and became ashes. "I carried the food to my
father, I gave him wine and milk, and he drank and he enjoyed himself
and blessed Marumath his god. *And I said to him, "Father Terah, do not bless
Marumath your god, do not praise Barisat, your god, because, as though loving you,
he threw himself into the fire in order to cook your food."

6 When I, Abraham, heard words like this from my father, I laughed in my mind,
and I groaned in the bitterness and anger of my soul. "I said, "How then is a
figment of a body made by him (Terah) an aid for my father? Or can he have
subordinated (his) body to his soul, his soul to a spirit, and the spirit to stupidity
and ignorance?" *And I said, "It is only proper to endure evil that I may throw
my food to the fire and I will expose my thoughts clearly to him." *I answered
and said, "Father Terah, whichever of these gods you extol, you err in your thought.
Behold, the gods of my brother Nahor standing in the holy sanctuary are
venerable and better than yours. *For behold, Zouchaos, my brother Nahor's god is
more venerable than your god Marumath because he is made of gold, valued by man.
And if he grows old with time, he will be remodelled, whereas Marumath, if he
is changed or broken, will not be renewed, because he is stone. *What about
Ioav, the god on the other god, who stands with Zouchaos? For he is also more
venerable than the god Barisat. "I am carved from wood and forged from silver.
Because he too is a term of comparison, being valued by man according to external
experience. *But Barisat, your god, when he was still not carved, he stood in the
earth, being great and wondrous, with branches and flowers; and praise... *But
you made him with an axe, and by your skill he was made a god. *And behold
he is already dried up and his fatness has perished. "He fell from the height
to the earth, he came from greatness to smallness, *and the appearance of his face
wasted away. *And he himself was burned up by the fire... and he became ashes
in no more. *And you say, Let me make another and tomorrow he will make
my food for me. *But in perishing he left himself no strength for (his) own
destruction."
Abraham, having thought this, came to his father and said, “Father Terah, fire is more venerable than your gods, the gold and silver ones, and the stone and wooden ones, because the fire burns your gods. And your gods being burned obey the fire, and the fire mocks them while it is consuming your gods.

But neither will I call it (fire) god, because it is submerged to the waters.

The waters are more venerable than it (fire), because they overcome fire and sweeten the earth with fruits. But I will not call them god either, for the waters subside under the earth and are subject to it. But I will not call it a goddess either, for it is dried by the sun (and) subordinated to man for his work.

More venerable among the gods, I say, is the sun, for with its rays it illuminates the whole universe and the various airs.

Nor will I place among the gods the one who obscures his course by means of the moon and the clouds.

Nor again shall I call the moon or the stars gods, because they too at times during the night dim their light.

Listen, Terah my father, I shall seek before you the God who created all the gods supposed by us (to exist).

For who is it, or which one is it who made the heavens crimson and the sun golden, who has given light to the moon and the stars with it, who has dried the earth in the midst of the many waters, who set you yourself among the gods who has sought me out in the perplexity of my thoughts?

But hear this, Terah my father, let me proclaim to you the God who created all things.

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For who is it, or which one is it who made the heavens crimson and the sun golden, who has given light to the moon and the stars with it, who has dried the earth in the midst of the many waters, who set you yourself among the gods who has sought me out in the perplexity of my thoughts?

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Abraham, having thought this, came to his father and said, “Father Terah, fire is more venerable than your gods, the gold and silver ones, and the stone and wooden ones, because the fire burns your gods. And your gods being burned obey the fire, and the fire mocks them while it is consuming your gods.

But neither will I call it (fire) god, because it is submerged to the waters.

The waters are more venerable than it (fire), because they overcome fire and sweeten the earth with fruits. But I will not call them god either, for the waters subside under the earth and are subject to it. But I will not call it a goddess either, for it is dried by the sun (and) subordinated to man for his work.

More venerable among the gods, I say, is the sun, for with its rays it illuminates the whole universe and the various airs.

Nor will I place among the gods the one who obscures his course by means of the moon and the clouds.

Nor again shall I call the moon or the stars gods, because they too at times during the night dim their light.

Listen, Terah my father, I shall seek before you the God who created all the gods supposed by us (to exist).

For who is it, or which one is it who made the heavens crimson and the sun golden, who has given light to the moon and the stars with it, who has dried the earth in the midst of the many waters, who set you yourself among the gods who has sought me out in the perplexity of my thoughts?

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14.15 for you. «For your sake I have indicated the way of the land.»

"Stand up, Abraham,
And we went, the two of us alone together, forty days and nights. »And I ate

4 glorious Horeb. «And I said to the angel, "Singer of the Eternal One, behold I have

with me, and his discourse with me was my drink. "We came to God's mountain,

3

6 visible until the sacrifice, but after the sacrifice*

1

13 to be burned with him, for he honored the dead. ·Ι am sent to you now to bless

attack and menace of every reptile. ·Ι am ordered' to loosen Hades and to destroy

am appointed to hold the Leviathans, because through me is subjugated the

firmament,

11

13 through the medium of man's night of the seventh hour.

8

The Apocalypse of Abraham

12 and the bird speaking I said this to the angel: 'What is this, my lord?' And he said,

This is disguised, this is Azazel! " ·And be said to him, "Shame on you,

Azazel!"

For Abraham's portion in heaven, and yours is on earth, for you have

selected here, (and) become enamored of the dwelling place of your blemish.

Therefore the Eternal Ruler, the Mighty One, has given you a dwelling* on earth.

Through you the all-evil spirit (is) a liar, and through you (are) wrath and trials

on the generations of men who live impiously. «For the Eternal, Mighty One did

not allow the bodies of the righteous to be in your hand, so through them the

ingoing destruction of ungodliness and iniquity, be you who are in the place of

my strength by you! You have no permission to tempt all the righteous. ·Depart from

this man! "You cannot deceive him, because he is the enemy of you and of those

who follow you and who love what you wish." ·For behold, the garment which

in heaven was formerly set aside for him, and the corruption which

was on him has gone over to you."

14 And the angel said to me, "Abraham! "And I said, "Here I am, your

servant." ·And he said, "Know from this that the Eternal One whom you have

loved has chosen you. ·Be bold and do through your authority whatever I order

you against him who reviles* justice. ·Will not be able to revile* him who has

scattered about the earth the secrets of heaven* and who has taken counsel against

the Mighty One? ·Say to him, 'May you be the firebrand* of the furnace of the

behind me. And behold all the prescribed sacrifices were following us: the calf, Dom 15:96

the she-goat, the ram, the turtledove, and the pigeon. ·And the angel said to me,

'Abraham.' And I said, "Here I am." ·And he said to me, "Slaughter all these

and divide the animals exactly into halves. But do not cut the birds apart. ·And

give them to the men whom I will show you standing beside you, for they are the

altar on the mountain, to offer sacrifice to the Eternal One.* ·The turtledove and

the pigeon you will give to me, for I will ascend on the wings of the birds to show

you (what)* is in the heavens, on the earth and in the sea, in the abyss, and in the

lower depths, in the garden of Eden and in its rivers, in the fullness of the universe.

And you will see its circles in all.*

12 The men are the altar. The infinitival phrase prionostis terras signifies no subject and its connec-
tion with men remains unclear. Perhaps it should be taken literally, "to carry the sacrifice to the

Eternal One."

- The sentence is incomplete.

c. Obscure, perhaps corrupt. Possibly "is the fullness of the universe and its circles, and you will

see ... all." Seems to look forward to ch. 21.


14 Or "reward": Gk. deóm, dórëa.

d. Or "what business do you have?": Gk. dò oun.

15 S (D unclear), A B C K, with unspecified

margined... they will all consume (you) with fire and..."·

Only in S.

c. Gk. athina, "dishonor," or asebeia, "imp-
pity."

12 a. Texts all have spellings reflecting οτι, "honor," but surely διατ, "part, portion," was

original.

b. Or "tenth."" ·Texts faulty, emend acc. to dat. st and reveal "dwellings-place" rather than ungram-

matical "dweller."

14 a. Text odd. more literally "to be a tempter as far as just men are concerned." or

b. Or "want."
And he spoke to me a second time. *And the angel said, "Now, whatever he
sea in its uproar. »And the angel knelt down" with me and worshiped. «And I
i.i
loved you. You will not look at him himself. -But let your spirit not weaken,
no longer see, because I am weakened and my spirit is departing from me." -And
2
he said to me, "Remain with me. do not fear. *He whom you will see coming
ι 17
its likeness of men.
not be described. «And
e
is the Eternal One who has
directly toward us in a great sound
0
is the Eternal One who has
10
is Eternal, fiery, shining/
13
14
you are he my soul has loved, my protector,
s. Or "continue through the day.
(S
ν
u. ACSDBK plural "lights. ")
7
APOCALYPSE OF ABRAHAM
7:21
a. That is, the surface is undulating up and down.
b. A B C K add "with me." f. Text has a marginal note, incorporated into the text of K. "The first song of Abraham which the holy angel Iaoel taught him when he was travelling with him about the air, crying out like this:"
c. Only S retains "El." d. A B C K add "autoppoleumai,
a. Or "may you have disappeared."
b. That is, a form of the verb "to be" from a root meaning "to depart." c. Or "freemasons," see note to 19:3, below.
d. Slav. _na prvefet_ says the air as a surface. e. S; others "could." f. Possibly Gk. _skialos_, "hated." g. Probably Gk. _skialos_, "just action." or _mikra, pote_. "The sentence is unclear."
h. Lit. "may you have disappeared." i. Or "will affect you." j. Or "to have the compassing." k. Or "before the morning." l. Or "continue through the day." m. The translation of vss. 6-14 are omitted by S, which has only 15 a. S D omit "as if." b. S omits from here to "ascended" in vs. 5. c. Or "permanently," see note to 19:3, below. d. Slav. _na prvefet_ e. S: Others "could." f. Probably Gk. _skialos_, "just action." or _mikra, pote_. "The sentence is unclear." g. Lit. "may you have disappeared." h. Or "may you have disappeared." i. Or "will affect you." j. Or "before the morning." k. Or "continue through the day." l. That is, a form of the verb "to be" from a root meaning "to depart." m. Or "may you have disappeared."
15 And it came to pass when the sun was setting, and beheld a smoke like that of
a furnace, and the angels who had the divided portions of the sacrifice ascended
2 from the top of the furnace of smoke. *And the angel took me with his right hand
and set me on the right wing of the pigeon and he himself sat on the left wing of
the turtledove, (both of) which were as if* neither slaughtered nor divided. *And
he carried me up to the edge of the fiery flames. *And we ascended as if (carried)
by many winds to the heaven that is fixed on the expanses." -And I saw on the air
20 "to whose height we had ascended a strong light which can't not be described. *And
behold, in this light a fiery Gehenna was enkindled,1 and a great crowd in the
1
likeness of men.2 They all were changing in aspect and shape, running and
changing form and prostrating themselves and crying aloud words I did not know.
16 And I said to the angel, "Why is it you now brought me here? For* now I can
2 no longer see, because I am weakened and my spirit is departing from me." -And
he said to me, "Remain with me. do not fear. *He whom you will see coming
directly toward us in a great sound of sanctification" is the Eternal One who has
loved you. You will not look at him himself. *But let your spirit not weaken, for I
17 While he was still speaking, behold the fire coming toward us round
about, and a voice was in the fire like a voice of many waters, like a voice of the
2 sea in its uproar. *And the angel knelt down with me and worshiped. *And I
wanted to fall face down on the earth. And the place of highness on which we
And while I was still speaking, I saw behind me the appearance of a fiery crowd. And when they finished singing, they went running to them. And he turned the face of each living creature from one another and threatened one another. And it came to pass when they finished threatening each other, he left me and went running to them. And he turned the face of each living creature from the face which was opposite it so that they could not see each other's faces threatening each other. And he taught them the song of peace. And the Eternal One has in himself. And while I was still standing and watching, I saw behind the living creatures a chariot with fiery wheels. Each wheel was full of eyes round about. And above the wheels was the throne which I had seen. And it was covered with fire and the fire encircled it round about, and an indescribable light surrounded the fiery crowd. And I heard the voice of their sanctification about a single man.

And a voice came to me out of the midst of the fire, saying, "Abraham!" And I said, "Here I am!" And he said, "Look on high at the stars which are beneath you and count them and tell me their number!" And I said, "When can this be? For I am a man." And he said to me, "As the number of the stars and their power so shall I place for your seed the nations and men, set apart for me in my lot with Azazel." And I said, "Eternal and Mighty One. Let your servant speak for himself, and say, 'Eternal and Mighty One, so will I serve you.' " And I looked beneath the earth and its fruit, and its moving things and its things that had souls, and its host prepared after it. And I looked beneath the firmament at my feet and I saw the likeness of heaven and the things that were therein.

And I saw there the earth and its fruits, and its moving things and its things that had souls, and its host of men and the impiety of their souls and their justification, and their pursuit of their works and the abyss and its torments, and its lower depths and (the) perdition in it. And I saw there the sea and its islands, and its cattle and its fish, and Leviathan and his realm and his bed and his lairs, and the world which lay upon him, and his motions and the destruction he caused the world. I saw there the rivers and their upper (reaches) and their circles.

And I saw there the garden of Eden and its fruits, and the source and the river flowing from it, and its trees and their flowering, making fruits, and I saw men doing justice in it, in their food and their rest.

And I saw there a great crowd of men and women and children, half of them
on the right side of the portrayal, and half of them on the left side of the portrayal."

22 And I said, "Eternal, Mighty One! What is this picture of creation?" And he said to me, "This is my will with regard to what is in the light and it was good before your face. And when afterward, I gave them a command by my word and they came into existence. Whatever I had decreed was to exist and already been outlined in this and all the previously created things you have seen before me." And I said, "O sovereign, mighty and eternal! Why are the people in this picture on this side and on that?" And he said to me, "These are the ones who are on the left side are a multitude of tribes who existed previously... and after you some (who have been) prepared for judgment and order, others for revenge and perdition at the end of the age. Those on the right side of the picture are the people set apart for me of the people with Azazel; these are the ones I have prepared to be born of you and to be called people."

23 "Look" again at the picture: Who is the one who seduced Eve, and what is the fruit of the tree? And you will know what will be 'and how much will be for your seed in the last days. And what you cannot understand, I will make known to you because you have been pleasing before my face and I will tell you what I have kept in my heart." And I looked at the picture, and my eyes ran to the side of the garden of Eden. And I saw there a man very great in height and terrible to the man in aspect and size. "And they were standing under a tree to the man in aspect and size. *And they were standing under a tree..." "And they were standing under a tree of Eden, and the fruit of the tree was like the appearance of a bunch of grapes of the vine. *And behind the tree was standing (something) like a dragon in form, but having hands and feet like a man's, on his back six wings on the right and six on the left. And he was holding the grapes of the tree* feeding them to the two I saw entwined with each other. *And I said, "Who are these two entwined with each other, or who is this between them, and what is the fruit which they are eating, Mighty One, Eternal?" *And he said, "This is the world of men, this is their thought on earth, this is Eve. *And he who is between them is the impiety of their behavior untoward, Azazel himself."" *And I said, "Eternal, Mighty One, why then did you adjudge him such dominion that through his works he could ruin humankind on earth?" *And he said to me, "Hear, Abraham! Those who desire evil, and 'all whom I have hated as they commit' them—over them did I give him dominion, and he was to be beloved of them." *And I answered and said, "Eternal, Mighty One! Why did you please you to bring it about that evil should be desired in the heart of man, because you are angered at what was chosen by you... him who does useless things" in your light (?)."

24 And he said to me thus, "Close to the nations... for your sake and for the sake of those set apart after you, the people of your tribe, as you will see in the picture, what is burdened on them. *And I will explain to you what will be, and everything that will be in the last days. Look now at everything in the picture." *And I looked and saw there 'the creatures that had come into being' before me. *And I saw as it were the Adam, and Eve who was with him, and with them the crafty and adversary and Cain, who had been led by the adversary to break the law, and (I saw) the murdered Abel (and) the perdition brought on him and given through the lawless one. *And I saw there fornication* and those who desired it, and its defilement and their zeal; and the fire of their corruption in the lower depths of the earth. *And I saw there theft and those who hasten after it, and the system of their retribution, the judgment of the great court. *I saw there naked men, forehead to forehead, and their shame and the harm (they wrought) against their friends and their retribution. *And I saw there desire, and in her hand (was) the head of every kind of lawlessness; and her torment and her dispersal destined to destruction."

25 I saw there the likeness of the idol of jealousy, like a carpenter's figure such as my father used to make, and its body was of glittering copper, and before it a man, and he was worshiping it. *And there was an altar opposite it and boys being slaughtered on it in the face of the idol. *And I said to him, "What is this idol, or what is the altar, or who am I who am those satisfied, or who is the sacrificer, or what is the handsome temple which I see, the art and beauty of your glory that lies beneath your throne?" *And he said, "Hear, Abraham! This temple which..."
you have seen, the altar and the works of art, this is my idea of the priesthood of the name of my glory, where every petition of man will enter and dwell; the ascent of kings and prophets and whatever sacrifice I decree to be made for me among my coming people, even of your tribe. And the body you saw is my anger, because the people who will come to me out of you will make me angry. And the man you saw slaying is he who angers me, and the sacrifice is a killing of those who are for me a testimony of the judgment of the completion at the beginning of creation.

26 And I said, "Eternal, Mighty One! Why did you establish it to be so and to call on the testimonies of this one?" And he said to me, "Hear, Abraham, and understand what I will explain to you, and answer whatever I ask you. Why did your father Terah not obey your voice and abandon the demonic worship of idols until he perished, and all his house with him?" And I said, "Eternal, Mighty One, surely because you did not please him to obey me, nor did I follow his works." And he said to me, "Hear, Abraham. As the counsel of your father is in you, as your counsel is in you, so also the counsel of my will is ready. In days to come you will not know them in advance, nor the future (men) you will see with your own eyes that they are of your seed. Look at the picture!"

27 And I looked and I saw, and behold the picture swayed. And from its left side a crowd of heathens ran out and they captured the men, women, and children who were on its right side. And some they slaughtered and others they kept with them. Behold, I saw them (running) by way of four ascents and they burned the Temple with fire, and they plundered the holy things that were in it. And I said, "Eternal One, the people you received from me are being robbed by the hordes of the heathen. They are killing some and holding others as aliens, and they burned the Temple with fire and they are stealing and destroying the beautiful things which are in it. Eternal, Mighty One! If this is so, why have you afflicted my heart and why will it be so?" And he said to me, "Listen, Abraham, all that you have seen will happen on account of your seed who will (continually) provoke me because of the body which you saw and the murder in what was depicted in the Temple of jealousy, and everything you saw will be by so."

28 And I said, "Eternal, Mighty One! Let the evil works (done) in iniquity now pass by; but make commandments in them more than his just works. For you can do this." And he said to me, "Again the time of justice will come upon them, at first through the holiness of kings. And I will judge with justice those whom I created earlier, to run from them in them. And from these same ones will come men who will have regard for them, as I announced to you and you saw.

c. Specifically "make." d. S B C K "kingsdoms." e. By error "temple." f. Or "saints." g. S D A B K have svoti, "light," but B specifies sveti and K the newer spelling svatati, "counsel, counsel." h. B K thus believed that "light" was inapposite here. i. Or "prepared." j. From this point D departs radically from other MSS, changing the work to a dozen times made up of recognizable phrases from later h., but utterly incoherent and therefore useless for our purpose.

29 Or "for, since." d. Or "inasmuch as." e. S podvâdä sveto và nîkâ, probably corrupt. Others are not much better, podvâdâ svetoâvastoâ, "those who have made commandments," but neither acc. nor gen. fits the context. j. Reference unclear. This whole sentence is garbled and probably has lost words or phrases. k. Archiep presubilia. Gk. historically simplified in A B C K to podvâdâ, "semblance." l. Slav. vs. pravâdâ, lit. in justice. m. Or "as for." n. Słav. podvâdâ, probably Gk. podvâdâvetoâ. o. Or "insuchasm as."
cruelty of the age of impiety. Before the age of justice starts to grow, my bondman will come upon the heathen who have acted wickedly, in order to punish the people of your seed who have been set apart for me. In those days I will bring out all the earthly creation ten plagues through evil and disease and the groaning of the bitterness of their souls. **Such will I bring upon the generations of those who are on it,** out of anger and corruption of their creation** with which they provoke me.** And then from your seed will be left the righteous men in their number, protected by me, who strive in the glory of my name toward the place prepared beforehand for them, which you have seen depicted in the picture. And they will live, being affirmed by the sacrifices and the gifts of justice and truth in the age of justice. And they will rejoice forever in me, and they will destroy those who have destroyed them, they will rebuke those who have rebuked them through their mockery, and they will spit in their faces. **Those rebuked** by me when they are to see me rejoicing** with my people for those who rejoice and truly return to me. **See, Abraham,** what you have seen, hear what you have heard, know what you have known.** Go to your inheritance! And behold I am with you forever.**

30 And while he was still speaking, I found myself on the earth, and I said, “Eternal, Mighty One, I am no longer in the glory in which I was above, and all that my soul desired to understand in my heart I do not understand.” **And he said to me,** “I will explain to you the things you desired in your heart, for you have sought to know the ten plagues which I prepared against the heathen, and I prepared them beforehand in the passing of the twelve hours on earth.** Hear what I tell you, it will be thus. **The first: sorrow from much need.** The seventh, misery for the cities. **The third: destruction by pestilence among the cattle.**

31 “And then I will send the trumpet out of the air, and I will send my chosen one having in him one measure of all his power, and he will summon people of heaven and earth.” **In the earlier Palaias which does not contain ApAb this passage is an independent unit, which is introduced by the sentence: “This is written out of the Book of the Sons of Jacob (so ktn 817u su1 òt1 kwnókéth).” The passage has some echoes from earlier parts of ApAb, but is specific reference to 29:11f., 14, 15, 19, 20, but simplified. (Part of this prime this much in his edition of K, p. 129.) These quotations, or rather paraphrases, are then explicated in the anti-Jewish Christian polemic manner usual in the Palaias commentaries.**

32 Therefore, hear, Abraham, and see, behold your seventh generation shall be with you. **And they will go out into an alien land.** And they will enslave them and oppress them as for one hour of the impious age. **But of the nation whom they shall serve I am the judge.** “And the Lord said this too, “Have you heard, Abraham, what I told you, what your tribe will encounter in the last days?”

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