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The Second Book of Ezra

Introduction

The Second Book of Ezra, also known as *2 Esdras*, presents prayers, conversations, and visions in the name of Ezra. The central account places him in Bavel (Babylon), grieving over the destruction of Yerushalem (Jerusalem). He asks why God's people suffer, why nations that do worse things seem to prosper, and why so many human lives end in failure and judgement.

The messenger Uriel responds with questions and comparisons that expose the limits of Ezra's understanding. Their conversations consider human wrongdoing, God's timing, life after death, and the world to come. Ezra continues to plead for his people and for humanity, while the answers call him to trust God's justice and recognise that the present world isn't the whole of God's purpose.

The later visions include a grieving woman who becomes a city, an eagle confronted by a lion, and a man who rises from the sea. The explanations within the account connect these images with Yerushalem, oppressive kingdoms, and God's promised rescue. Ezra is then commissioned to restore the sacred writings. The opening and closing chapters add messages of warning, hope, and encouragement to remain faithful. As with Daniyel's visions and *Yohan's Revelation*, the imagery needs to be read alongside the explanations the document itself provides.

The Second Book of Ezra is included in the Slavonic Bible as *3 Ezra*, but is not found in the Greek Septuagint. It is included in the Appendix to the Latin Vulgate Bible as *4 Ezra*. It is considered to be Apocrypha by most church traditions. It is preserved here for its supplementary historical value.

Main components of this document

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Ezra's first conversation with Uriel about suffering and evil *3:1–5:19*
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Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Ezra is sent to confront Yisrael's disobedience

1:1 The second book of the prophet Ezra, the son of Serayah, the son of Azaryah, the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Shalum, the son of Tsadok, the son of Ahituv, 2 the son of Ahiyah, the son of Pinhas, the son of Eli, the son of Amaryah, the son of Uzi, the son of Merayot, the son of Arna, the son of Ozias, the son of Buki, the son of Avishua, the son of Pinhas, the son of Eleazar, 3 the son of Aharon (Aaron), of the tribe of Levi, who was captive in the land of the Madim (Medes), in the reign of Artahshashta (Artaxerxes) king of the Persians.

4 The master's word came to me, saying, 5 "Go your way and show my people their sinful actions, and their children their wickedness which they've done against me, that they may tell their children's children, 6 because the sins of their fathers have increased in them, for they've forgotten me, and have offered sacrifices to foreign gods. 7 Didn't I bring them out of the land of Mitsrayim (Egypt), out of the house of bondage? But they've provoked me to anger and have despised my counsels. 8 So pull out the hair of your head and throw all evils on them, for they haven't been obedient to my law, but they're a rebellious people. 9 How long must I put up with them, to whom I've done so much good? 10 I have overthrown many kings for their sakes. I've struck down Par'oh (Pharaoh) with his servants and all his army. 11 I've destroyed all the nations before them. In the east, I've scattered the people of two provinces, even of Tsor (Tyre) and Tsidon (Sidon), and have slain all their adversaries. 12 Speak therefore to them, saying:

13 "The master says, truly I brought you through the sea, and where there was no path I made highways for you. I gave you Mosheh (Moses) for a leader and Aharon (Aaron) for a priest. 14 I gave you light in a pillar of fire. I've done great wonders among you, yet you've forgotten me, says the master.

15 "The master Almighty says: The quails were for a token to you. I gave you a camp for your protection, but you complained there. 16 You didn't celebrate in my name for the destruction of your enemies, but even to this day you still complain. 17 Where are the benefits that I've given you? When you were hungry and thirsty in the wilderness, didn't you cry to me, 18 saying, 'Why have you brought us into this wilderness to kill us? It'd have been better for us to have served the Mitsrim (Egyptians) than to die in this wilderness.' 19 I had pity on your mourning and gave you manna for food. You ate angels' bread. 20 When you were thirsty, didn't I split the rock, and water flowed out in abundance? Because of the heat, I covered you with the leaves of the trees. 21 I divided fruitful lands among you. I drove out the Kena'anim (Canaanites), the Perizi, and the Pelishtim before you. What more can I do for you?" says the master.

22 The master Almighty says, "When you were in the wilderness, at the bitter stream, being thirsty and blaspheming my name, 23 I gave you not fire for your blasphemies, but threw a tree in the water, and made the river sweet. 24 What should I do to you, Oh Ya'akov (Jacob)? You, Yehudah (Judah), wouldn't obey me. I'll turn myself to other nations, and I'll give my name to them, that they may keep my statutes. 25 Since you've forsaken me, I also will forsake you. When you ask me to be merciful to you, I'll have no mercy on you. 26 Whenever you call on me, I won't hear you, for you've defiled your hands with blood, and your feet are swift to commit murder. 27 It isn't as though you've forsaken me, but your own selves," says the master.

God turns to people who will listen

28 The master Almighty says, "Haven't I asked you as a father his sons, as a mother her daughters, and a nurse her young babies, 29 that you'd be my people, and I'd be your god, that you'd be my children, and I'd be your father? 30 I gathered you together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But now, what should I do to you? I'll throw you out from my presence. 31 When you offer burnt sacrifices to me, I'll turn my face from you, for I've rejected your solemn feast days, your new moons, and your

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circumcisions of the flesh. 32 I sent to you my servants the prophets, whom you've taken and slain, and torn their bodies in pieces, whose blood I'll require from you," says the master.

33 The master Almighty says, "Your house is desolate. I'll throw you out as the wind blows stubble. 34 Your children won't be fruitful, for they've neglected my commandment to you, and done that which is evil before me. 35 I'll give your houses to a people that'll come, which not having heard of me yet believe me. Those to whom I've shown no signs will do what I've commanded. 36 They've seen no prophets, yet they'll remember their former condition. 37 I call to witness the gratitude of the people who'll come, whose little ones rejoice with gladness. Although they see me not with bodily eyes, yet in spirit they'll believe what I say."

38 And now, father, look in glory and see the people that come from the east: 39 to whom I'll give for leaders, Avraham, Yitshak (Isaac), and Ya'akov (Jacob), Hoshea (Hosea), Amos, and Mikah, Yoel (Joel), Ovadyah (Obadiah), and Yonah (Jonah), 40 Nahum, and Havakuk (Habakkuk), Tsefanyah (Zephaniah), Hagay, Zekaryah (Zechariah), and Malaki (Malachi), who's also called the master's messenger.

Judgement on those who rejected God

2:1 The master says, "I brought this people out of bondage. I gave them my commandments by my servants the prophets, whom they wouldn't listen to, but made my counsels void. 2 The mother who bore them says to them, 'Go your way, my children, for I'm a widow and forsaken. 3 I brought you up with gladness, and I've lost you with sorrow and heaviness, for you've sinned before the master God, and done that which is evil before me. 4 But now what can I do for you? Because I'm a widow and forsaken. Go your way, my children, and ask for mercy from the master.' 5 As for me, Oh father, I call on you for a witness in addition to the mother of these children, because they wouldn't keep my covenant, 6 that you may bring them to confusion, and their mother to ruin, that they may have no offspring. 7 Let them be scattered abroad among the heathen. Let their names be blotted out of the earth, for they've despised my covenant. 8 Woe to you, Ashur (Assyria), you who hide the unrighteous with you! You wicked nation, remember what I did to Sedom and Amorah (Gomorrah), 9 whose land lies in lumps of pitch and heaps of ashes. That's what I'll also do to those who haven't listened to me," says the master Almighty.

God promises to gather and care for his people

10 The master says to Ezra, "Tell my people that I'll give them Yerushalem's (Jerusalem's) kingdom, which I'd have given to Yisrael (Israel). 11 I'll also take their glory back to myself, and give these the eternal tabernacles which I'd prepared for them. 12 They'll have the tree of life for fragrant perfume. They'll neither labour nor be weary. 13 Ask, and you'll receive. Pray that your days may be few, that they may be shortened. The kingdom is already prepared for you. Watch! 14 Call heaven and earth to witness. Call them to witness, for I've left out evil, and created the good, for I live, says the master.

15 "Mother, embrace your children. I'll bring them out with gladness like a dove does. Establish their feet, for I've chosen you, says the master. 16 I'll raise those who are dead up again from their places, and bring them out from their tombs, for I recognise my name in them. 17 Don't be afraid, you mother of children, for I've chosen you, says the master. 18 Because your help, I'll send my servants Yeshayah (Isaiah) and Yirmiyah (Jeremiah), after whose counsel I've sanctified and prepared for you twelve trees laden with various fruits, 19 and as many springs flowing with milk and honey, and seven mighty mountains, on which roses and lilies grow, with which I'll fill your children with joy. 20 Do right to the widow. Secure justice for the fatherless. Give to the poor. Defend the orphan. Clothe the naked. 21 Heal the broken and the weak. Don't laugh a lame man to scorn. Defend the maimed. Let the blind man have a vision of my glory. 22 Protect the old and young within your walls. 23 Wherever you find the dead, set a sign on them and commit them

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to the grave, and I'll give you the first place in my resurrection. 24 Stay still, my people, and take your rest, for your rest will come. 25 Nourish your children, good nurse, and establish their feet. 26 As for the servants whom I've given you, not one of them will perish, for I'll require them from among your number. 27 Don't be anxious, for when the day of suffering and anguish comes, others will weep and be sorrowful, but you'll rejoice and have abundance. 28 The nations will envy you, but they'll be able to do nothing against you, says the master. 29 My hands will cover you, so that your children don't see geenna.[1] 30 Be joyful, mother, with your children, for I'll deliver you, says the master. 31 Remember your children who sleep, for I'll bring them out of the secret places of the earth and show mercy to them, for I'm merciful, says the master Almighty. 32 Embrace your children until I come, and proclaim mercy to them, for my wells run over, and my grace won't fail."

A call to receive God's promised peace

33 I, Ezra, received a command from the master on Mt. Horev to go to Yisrael (Israel), but when I came to them, they rejected me and rejected the master's commandment. 34 Therefore I say to you, Oh nations that hear and understand, "Look for your shepherd. He'll give you eternal peace and security, for he's near at hand who'll come at the end of the age. 35 Be ready for the rewards of the kingdom, for the eternal light will shine on you forevermore. 36 Flee the shadow of this world, receive the joy of your glory. I call to witness my saviour openly. 37 Receive that which is given to you by the master, and be joyful, giving thanks to him who's called you to heavenly kingdoms. 38 Arise and stand up, and see the number of those who've been sealed at the master's feast. 39 Those who withdrew themselves from the shadow of the world have received glorious clothes from the master. 40 Take again your full number, Oh Tsiyon (Zion), and make up the reckoning of those of yours who are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the master's law. 41 The number of your children, whom you long for, is fulfilled. Ask the master's power, that your people, which have been called from the beginning, may be made holy."

Ezra sees God's people being crowned

42 I, Ezra, saw on Mt. Tsiyon a great multitude, whom I couldn't number, and they all praised the master with songs. 43 Among them, there was a young man of a high stature, taller than all the rest, and on every one of their heads he set crowns, and he was more exalted than they were. I marvelled greatly at this. 44 So I asked the angel, and said, "What are these, my master?"

45 He replied to me, "These are those who've put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed God's name. Now are they crowned, and receive palms."

46 Then I said to the angel, "Who's the young man who sets crowns on them, and gives them palms in their hands?"

47 So he replied to me, "He's the Son of God, whom they've confessed in the world."

Then I began to praise those who stood so valiantly for the master's name.

48 Then the angel said to me, "Go your way, and tell my people what kind of things, and how great wonders of the master God you've seen."

Ezra asks why Yisrael suffers

3:1 In the thirtieth year after the ruin of the city, I Salathiail, also called Ezra, was in Bavel (Babylon), and lay troubled on my bed, and my thoughts came up over my heart, 2 for I saw the desolation of Tsiyon (Zion) and the wealth of those who lived at Bavel. 3 My spirit was very agitated, so that I began to speak words full of fear to the Most High, and said, 4 "O sovereign master, didn't you speak at the beginning when you formed the earth—and that yourself alone—and commanded the dust 5 and it gave you Adam, a body without a soul? Yet it was the workmanship of your hands, and you breathed

1 **RV 2:29 · Note** or, Hell.

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into him the breath of life, and he was made alive in your presence. 6 You led him into the garden which your right hand planted before the earth appeared. 7 You gave him your one commandment, which he transgressed, and immediately you appointed death for him and his descendants. From him were born nations, tribes, peoples, and kindred without number. 8 Every nation walked after their own will, did ungodly things in your sight, and despised your commandments, and you didn't hinder them. 9 Nevertheless, again in process of time, you brought the flood on those who lived in the world and destroyed them. 10 It happened that the same thing happened to them. Just as death came to Adam, so was the flood to these. 11 Nevertheless, you left one of them, Noah with his household, and all the righteous men who descended from him.

12 "When those who lived on the earth began to multiply, they also multiplied children, peoples, and many nations, and began again to be more ungodly than their ancestors. 13 When they did wickedly before you, you chose one from among them, whose name was Avraham. 14 You loved, and to him only you showed the end of the times secretly by night, 15 and made an eternal covenant with him, promising him that you'd never forsake his descendants. To him, you gave Yitshak (Isaac), and to Yitshak you gave Ya'akov (Jacob) and Esav (Esau). 16 You set apart Ya'akov for yourself, but rejected Esav. Ya'akov became a great multitude. 17 When you led his descendants out of Mitsrayim (Egypt), you brought them up to Mt. Sinay. 18 You bowed the heavens also, shook the earth, moved the whole world, made the depths tremble, and troubled the age. 19 Your glory went through four gates, of fire, of earthquake, of wind, and of ice, that you might give the law to the descendants of Ya'akov, and the commandment to the descendants of Yisrael (Israel).

20 "Yet you didn't take away from them their wicked heart, that your law might produce fruit in them. 21 Because the first Adam, burdened with a wicked heart transgressed and was overcome, as were all who are descended from him. 22 Thus disease was made permanent. The law was in the people's heart along with the wickedness of the root. So the good departed away and that which was wicked remained. 23 So the times passed away, and the years were brought to an end. Then you raised up a servant, called David, 24 whom you commanded to build a city to your name, and to offer burnt offerings to you in it from what's yours. 25 When this was done many years, then those who inhabited the city did evil, 26 in all things doing as Adam and all his generations had done, for they also had a wicked heart. 27 So you gave your city over into your enemies' hands.

Why does Bavel prosper?

28 "Then I said in my heart, 'Is what those who inhabit Bavel (Babylon) do any better? Is that why it gained dominion over Tsiyon (Zion)?' 29 Because when I came here, I also saw impieties without number, and my soul saw many sinners in this thirtieth year, so that my heart failed me. 30 Because I've seen how you endure them sinning, and have spared those who act ungodly, and have destroyed your people, and have preserved your enemies; 31 and you haven't shown how your way may be comprehended. Are Bavel's actions better than those of Tsiyon? 32 Or is there any other nation that knows you beside Yisrael (Israel)? Or what tribes have so believed your covenants as these tribes of Ya'akov (Jacob)? 33 Yet their reward doesn't appear, and their labour has no fruit, for I've gone here and there through the nations, and I see that they abound in wealth, and don't think about your commandments. 34 Weigh therefore our iniquities now in the balance, and theirs also who live in the world, and so will it be found which way the scale inclines. 35 Or when was it that they who live on the earth haven't sinned in your sight? Or what nation has kept your commandments so well? 36 You'll find some men by name who've kept your precepts, but you won't find nations."

Uriel challenges Ezra's understanding

4:1 The angel who was sent to me, whose name was Uriel, gave me an answer, 2 and said to me, "Your understanding has utterly failed you re-

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garding this world. Do you think you can comprehend the way of the Most High?"

3 Then I said, "Yes, my master."

He answered me, "I've been sent to show you three ways, and to set before you three problems. 4 If you can solve one for me, I also will show you the way that you desire to see, and I'll teach you why the heart is wicked."

5 I said, "Say on, my master."

Then he said to me, "Go, weigh for me the weight of fire, or measure for me blast of wind, or call back for me the day that's past."

6 Then I replied, "Who of the sons of men is able to do this, that you should ask me about such things?"

7 He said to me, "If I'd asked you, 'How many dwellings are there in the heart of the sea? Or how many springs are there at the fountain head of the deep? Or how many streams are above the firmament? Or which are the exits of hell?[2] Or which are the entrances of paradise?' 8 perhaps you'd say to me, 'I never went down into the deep, or as yet into hell, neither did I ever climb up into heaven.' 9 Nevertheless now I've only asked you about the fire, wind, and the day, things which you've experienced, and from which you can't be separated, and yet have you given me no answer about them."

10 He said moreover to me, "You can't understand your own things that you grew up with. 11 How then can your mind comprehend the way of the Most High? How can he who's already worn out with the corrupted world understand incorruption?"

When I heard these things, I fell on my face[3] 12 and said to him, "It'd have been better if we weren't here at all, than that we should come here and live surrounded by ungodliness, and suffer, and not know why."

13 He answered me, and said, "A forest of the trees of the field went out, and took counsel together,[4] 14 and said, 'Come! Let's go and make war against the sea, that it may depart away before us, and that we may make ourselves more forests.' 15 The waves of the sea also in the same way took counsel together, and said, 'Come! Let's go up and subdue the forest of the plain, that there also we may gain more territory.' 16 The counsel of the wood was in vain, for the fire came and consumed it. 17 Likewise also the counsel of the waves of the sea, for the sand stood up and stopped them. 18 If you were judge now between these two, which would you justify, or which would you condemn?"

19 I replied, "It's a foolish counsel that they both have taken, for the ground is given to the wood, and the place of the sea is given to bear its waves."

20 Then he answered me, "You've given a right judgement. Why don't you judge your own case? 21 Because just as the ground is given to the wood, and the sea to its waves, even so those who live on the earth may understand nothing but what's on the earth. Only he who lives above the heavens understands the things that are above the height of the heavens."

When will evil come to an end?

22 Then I replied, "I beg you, Oh master, why has the power of understanding been given to me? 23 Because it wasn't in my mind to be curious of the ways above, but of such things as pass by us daily, because Yisrael (Israel) is given up as a reproach to the heathen. The people whom you've loved have been given over to ungodly nations. The law of our forefathers is made of no effect, and the written covenants are nowhere regarded. 24 We pass away out of the world like locusts. Our life is like a vapour, and we aren't worthy to obtain mercy. 25 What'll he then do for his name by which we're called? I've asked about these things."

26 Then he answered me, and said, "If you're alive you'll see, and if you live long, you'll marvel, for the world hastens quickly to pass away. 27 Because it isn't able to bear the things that are promised to the righteous in the times to

2 **RV 4:7 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin omits of hell? or which are the paths.

3 **RV 4:11 · Note** So the Syriac and Aethiopic. The Latin is corrupt.

4 **RV 4:13 · Note** So the Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt. See Judges 9:8.

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come; for this world is full of sadness and infirmities. 28 Because the evil[5] about which you asked me has been sown, but its harvest hasn't yet come. 29 If therefore that which is sown isn't harvested, and if the place where the evil is sown doesn't pass away, the field where the good is sown won't come. 30 Because a grain of evil seed was sown in Adam's heart from the beginning, and how much wickedness it's produced to this time! How much more it'll yet produce until the time of threshing comes! 31 Ponder now by yourself, how much fruit of wickedness a grain of evil seed has produced. 32 When the grains which are without number are sown, how great a threshing floor they'll fill!"

33 Then I replied, "How long? When will these things happen? Why are our years few and evil?"[6]

34 He answered me, and said, "Don't hurry faster than the Most High; for your haste is[7] for your own self, but he who's above hurries on behalf of many. 35 Didn't the souls of the righteous ask question of these things in their chambers, saying, 'How long will[8] we be here? When does the fruit of the threshing floor come?' 36 To them, Yeremiel the archangel answered, 'When the number is fulfilled of those who are like you. Because he's weighed the world in the balance. 37 By measure, he's measured the times. By number, he's counted the seasons. He won't move[9] or stir them until that measure is fulfilled.' "

38 Then I answered, "O sovereign master, all of us are full of ungodliness. 39 Perhaps it's for our sakes that the threshing time of the righteous is kept back—because of the sins of those who live on the earth."

40 So he answered me, "Go your way to a woman with child, and ask of her when she's fulfilled her nine months, if her womb may keep the baby any longer within her."

41 Then I said, "No, master, it can't."

He said to me, "In Haidais, the chambers of souls are like the womb. 42 Because just like a woman in labour hurries to escape the anguish of the labour pains, even so these places hurry to deliver those things that are committed to them from the beginning. 43 Then you'll be shown those things which you desire to see."

How much time remains?

44 Then I answered, "If I've found favour in your sight, and if it's possible, and if I'm worthy, 45 show me this also, whether there's more to come than is past, or whether the greater part has gone over us. 46 Because what's gone I know, but I don't know what's to come."

47 He said to me, "Stand up on my right side, and I'll explain the parable to you."

48 So I stood, looked, and saw a hot burning oven passed by before me. It happened that when the flame had gone by I looked, and saw that the smoke remained. 49 After this, a watery cloud passed in front of me, and sent down much rain with a storm. When the stormy rain was past, the drops still remained in it."

50 Then he said to me, "Consider with yourself; as the rain is more than the drops, and the fire is greater than the smoke, so the quantity which is past was far greater; but the drops and the smoke still remained."

51 Then I prayed, and said, "Do you think that I'll live until that time? Or who'll be alive in those days?"

52 He answered me, "As for the signs you asked me about, I may tell you of them in part; but I wasn't sent to tell you about your life, for I don't know.

Signs of the coming end

5:1 "Nevertheless, about the signs, look, the days will come when those who live on earth will be

5 **RV 4:28 · Note** so the Syriac and Aethiopic.

6 **RV 4:33 · Note** So the chief oriental versions.

7 **RV 4:34 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin is corrupt.

8 **RV 4:35 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin has shall I hope on this fashion?

9 **RV 4:37 · Note** Syr. rest.

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taken with[10] great amazement, and the way of truth will be hidden, and the land will be barren of faith. 2 Iniquity will be increased above what now you see, and beyond what you've heard long ago. 3 The land that you now see ruling will be a trackless waste, and men will see it desolate. 4 But if the Most High grants you to live, you'll see what's after the third period will be troubled. The sun will suddenly shine in the night, and the moon in the day. 5 Blood will drop out of wood, and the stone will utter its voice. The peoples will be troubled, and the stars will fall. 6 He'll rule whom those who live on the earth don't expect, and the birds will fly away together. 7 The Sodomite sea will throw out fish, and make a noise in the night, which many haven't known; but all will hear its voice. 8 There'll also be chaos in many places. Fires will break out often, and the wild animals will change their places, and women will bring forth monsters. 9 Salt waters will be found in the sweet, and all friends will destroy one another. Then reason will hide itself, and understanding withdraw itself into its chamber. 10 It'll be searched for by many, and won't be found. Unrighteousness and lack of restraint will be multiplied on earth. 11 One country will ask another, 'Has righteousness, or a man that does righteousness, gone through you?' And it'll say, 'No.' 12 It'll happen at that time that men will hope, but won't obtain. They'll labour, but their ways won't prosper. 13 I'm permitted to show you such signs. If you'll pray again, and weep as now, and fast seven days, you'll hear yet greater things than these."

14 Then I woke up, and an extreme trembling went through my body, and my mind was so troubled that it fainted. 15 So the angel who'd come to talk with me held me, comforted me, and set me on my feet.

16 On the second night, Paltiel[11] the people's captain came to me, saying, "Where have you been? Why is your face sad? 17 Or don't you know that Yisrael (Israel) is committed to you in the land of their captivity? 18 Get up then, and eat some bread, and don't forsake us, like a shepherd who leaves the flock in the power of cruel wolves."

19 Then I said to him, "Go away from me and don't come near me for seven days, and then come to me." He heard what I said and left me.

Ezra asks why God has abandoned Yisrael

20 So I fasted seven days, mourning and weeping, like Uriel the angel had commanded me. 21 After seven days, the thoughts of my heart were very grievous to me again, 22 and my soul recovered the spirit of understanding, and I began to speak words before the Most High again. 23 I said, "O sovereign master of all the woods of the earth, and of all their trees, you've chosen one vine for yourself. 24 Of all the lands of the world you've chosen one country[12] for yourself. Of all the flowers of the world, you've chosen one lily for yourself. 25 Of all the depths of the sea, you've filled one river for yourself. Of all built cities, you've consecrated Tsiyon (Zion) for yourself. 26 Of all the birds that are created you've named for yourself one dove. Of all the livestock that have been made, you've provided for yourself one sheep. 27 Among all the multitudes of peoples you have gotten yourself one people. To this people, whom you loved, you gave a law that's approved by all. 28 Now, Oh master, why have you given this one people over to many, and have[13] dishonoured the one root above others, and have scattered your only one among many? 29 Those who opposed your promises have trampled down those who believed your covenants. 30 If you really do hate your people so much, they should be punished with your own hands."

10 **RV 5:1 · Note** So the syriac.

11 **RV 5:16 · Note** The Syriac has Psaltiel.

12 **RV 5:24 · Note** After the Oriental versions. The Latin has pit.

13 **RV 5:28 · Note** After the Oriental versions. The Latin reads have prepared.

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God's plans are beyond Ezra's understanding

31 Now when I'd spoken these words, the angel that came to me the night before was sent to me, 32 and said to me, "Hear me, and I'll instruct you. Listen to me, and I'll tell you more."

33 I said, "Speak on, my master."

Then he said to me, "You're very troubled in mind for Yisrael's (Israel's) sake. Do you love that people more than he who made them?"

34 I said, "No, master; but I've spoken out of grief; for my heart is in agony every hour while I labour to comprehend the way of the Most High, and to seek out part of his judgement."

35 He said to me, "You can't."

And I said, "Why, master? Why was I born? Why wasn't my mother's womb my grave, that I might not have seen the travail of Ya'akov (Jacob), and the wearisome toil of Yisrael's people?"

36 He said to me, "Count for me those who haven't yet come. Gather together for me the drops that are scattered abroad, and make the withered flowers green again for me. 37 Open for me the chambers that are closed, and bring out the winds for me that are shut up in them. Or show me the image of a voice. Then I'll declare to you the travail that you asked to see."

38 And I said, "O sovereign master, who may know these things except he who doesn't have his dwelling with men? 39 As for me, I lack wisdom. How can I then speak of these things you asked me about?"

40 Then he said to me, "Just as you can do none of these things that I've spoken of, even so you can't find out my judgement, or the end of the love that I've promised to my people."

41 I said, "But Oh master, you've made the promise to those who are alive at the end. What should they do who have been before us, or we ourselves, or those who'll come after us?"

42 He said to me, "I'll compare my judgement to a ring. Just as there's no slowness of those who are last, even so there's no swiftness of those who be first."

43 So I answered, "Couldn't you make them all at once that have been made, and that are now, and that are yet to come, that you might show your judgement sooner?"

44 Then he answered me, "The creature may not move faster than the creator, nor can the world hold them at once who'll be created in it."

45 And I said, "How have you said to your servant, that you[14] will surely make alive at once the creature that you've created? If[15] therefore they'll be alive at once, and the creation will sustain them, even so it might now also support them to be present at once."

46 And he said to me, "Ask the womb of a woman, and say to her, 'If you bear ten children, why do you it at different times? Ask her therefore to give birth to ten children at once."

47 I said, "She can't, but must do it each in their own time."

48 Then he said to me, "Even so, I've given the womb of the earth to those who are sown in it in their own times. 49 Because just as a young child may not give birth, neither she who's grown old any more, even so have I organised the world which I created."

50 I asked, "Seeing that you've now shown me the way, I'll speak before you. Is our mother, of whom you've told me, still young? Or does she now draw near to old age?"

51 He answered me, "Ask a woman who bears children, and she'll tell you. 52 Say to her, 'Why aren't they whom you've now brought forth like those who were before, but smaller in stature?' 53 She also will answer you, 'Those who are born in the strength of youth are different from those who are born in the time of old age, when the womb fails.' 54 Consider therefore you also, how you're shorter than those who were before you. 55 So are those who come after you smaller than you, as born of the creature which now begins to be old, and is past the strength of youth."

14 **RV 5:45 · Note** So the Syriac.

15 **RV 5:45 · Note** The Latin omits If...alive at once.

Readers' Version

56 Then I said, "master, I implore you, if I've found favour in your sight, show your servant by whom you visit your creation."

6:1 He said to me, "In the beginning, when the earth was made, before the portals of the world were fixed and before the gatherings of the winds blew, 2 before the voices of the thunder sounded and before the flashes of the lightning shone, before the foundations of paradise were laid, 3 before the fair flowers were seen, before the powers of the earthquake were established, before the innumerable army of angels were gathered together, 4 before the heights of the air were lifted up, before the measures of the firmament were named, before the footstool of Tsiyon (Zion) was[16] established, 5 before the present years were reckoned, before the imaginations of those who now sin were estranged, and before they were sealed who've gathered faith for a treasure— 6 then I considered these things, and they all were made through me alone, and not through another; just as by me also they'll be ended, and not by another."

The end of this age and the beginning of the next

7 Then I answered, "What'll be the dividing of the times? Or when will be the end of the first and the beginning of the age that follows?"

8 He said to me, "From Avraham to Yitshak (Isaac), because Ya'akov (Jacob) and Esav (Esau) were born to him, for Ya'akov's hand held Esav's heel from the beginning. 9 Because Esav is the end of this age, and Ya'akov is the beginning of the one that follows. 10 The[17] beginning of a man is his hand, and the end of a man is his heel. Seek nothing else between the heel and the hand, Ezra!"

11 Then I answered, "O sovereign master, if I've found favour in your sight, 12 I beg you, show your servant the end of your signs which you showed me part on a previous night."

13 So he answered, "Stand up on your feet, and you'll hear a mighty sounding voice. 14 If the place you stand on is greatly moved 15 when it speaks don't be afraid, for the word is of the end, and the foundations of the earth will understand 16 that the speech is about them. They'll tremble and be moved, for they know that their end must be changed."

17 It happened that when I'd heard it, I stood up on my feet, and listened, and there was a voice that spoke, and its sound was like the sound of many waters. 18 It said, "Listen, the days come when I draw near to visit those who live on the earth, 19 and when I investigate those who've caused harm unjustly with their unrighteousness, and when the affliction of Tsiyon (Zion) is complete, 20 and when the seal will be set on the age that's to pass away, then I'll show these signs: the books will be opened before the firmament, and all will see together. 21 The children a year old will speak with their voices. The women with child will deliver premature children at three or four months, and they'll live and dance. 22 Suddenly the sown places will appear unsown. The full storehouses will suddenly be found empty. 23 The trumpet will give a sound which when every man hears, they'll suddenly be afraid. 24 At that time friends will make war against one another like enemies. The earth will stand in fear with those who live in it. The springs of the fountains will stand still, so that for three hours they won't flow.

25 "It'll be that anyone who remains after all these things that I've told you of, he'll be saved and will see my salvation, and the end of my world. 26 They'll see the men who've been taken up, who haven't tasted death from their birth. The heart of the inhabitants will be changed and turned into a different spirit. 27 Because evil will be blotted out and deceit will be quenched. 28 Faith will flourish. Corruption will be overcome, and the truth, which has been so long without fruit, will be declared."

29 When he talked with me, look, little by lit-

16 **RV 6:4 · Note** So the Syriac.

17 **RV 6:10 · Note** So the Syriac, etc. The Latin is defective.

Readers' Version

tle, the place I stood on rocked[18] back and forth. 30 He said to me, "I came to show you these things tonight.[19] 31 If therefore you'll pray yet again, and fast seven more days, I'll again[20] tell you greater things than these. 32 Because your voice has surely been heard before the Most High. Because the Mighty has seen your righteousness. He's also seen your purity, which you've maintained ever since your youth. 33 Therefore he's sent me to show you all these things, and to say to you, 'Believe, and don't be afraid! 34 Don't be hasty to think vain things about the former times, that you may not hasten in the latter times.' "

Ezra recalls creation and pleads for Yisrael

35 After this, I wept again, and fasted seven days in the same way, that I might fulfil the three weeks which he told me. 36 On the eighth night, my heart was troubled within me again, and I began to speak in the presence of the Most High. 37 Because my spirit was greatly aroused, and my soul was in distress. 38 I said, "O master, truly you spoke at the beginning of the creation, on the first day, and said this: 'Let heaven and earth be made,' and your word perfected the work. 39 Then the spirit was hovering, and darkness and silence were on every side. The sound of man's voice wasn't yet there.[21] 40 Then you commanded a ray of light to be brought out of your treasuries, that your works might then appear.

41 "On the second day, again you made the spirit of the firmament and commanded it to divide and to separate the waters, that the one part might go up, and the other remain beneath.

42 "On the third day, you commanded that the waters should be gathered together in the seventh part of the earth. You dried up six parts and kept them, to the intent that of these some being both planted and tilled might serve before you. 43 Because as soon as your word went out, the work was done. 44 Immediately, great and innumerable fruit grew, with many pleasant tastes, and flowers of inimitable colour, and fragrances of most exquisite smell. This was done the third day.

45 "On the fourth day, you commanded that the sun should shine, the moon give its light, and the stars should be in their order; 46 and gave them a command to serve mankind, who was to be made.

47 "On the fifth day, you said to the seventh part, where the water was gathered together, that it should produce living creatures, fowls and fishes; and so it happened 48 that the mute and lifeless water produced living things as it was told, that the nations might therefore praise your wondrous works.

49 "Then you preserved two living creatures. The one you called Behemot, and the other you called Livyatan. 50 You separated the one from the other; for the seventh part, namely, where the water was gathered together, might not hold them both. 51 To Behemot, you gave one part, which was dried up on the third day, that he should live in it, in which are a thousand hills; 52 but to Livyatan you gave the seventh part, namely, the watery part. You've kept them to be devoured by whom you wish, when you wish.

53 "But on the sixth day, you commanded the earth to produce before you cattle, animals, and creeping things. 54 Over these, you ordained Adam as ruler over all the works that you've made. Of him came all of us, the people whom you've chosen.

55 "All this have I spoken before you, Oh master, because you've said that for our sakes you made this[22] world. 56 As for the other nations, which also come from Adam, you've said that

18 **RV 6:29 · Note** After the Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt.

19 **RV 6:30 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin is corrupt.

20 **RV 6:31 · Note** The Latin has tell you by day.

21 **RV 6:39 · Note** The Latin adds from you.

22 **RV 6:55 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin has the firstborn world.

Readers' Version

they're nothing, and are like spittle. You've likened the abundance of them to a drop that falls from a bucket. 57 Now, Oh master, look at these nations, which are reputed as nothing, being rulers over us and devouring us. 58 But we your people, whom you've called your firstborn, your only children, and your fervent lover, are given into their hands. 59 Now if the world is made for our sakes, why don't we possess our world for an inheritance? How long will this endure?"

The difficult path to the world to come

7:1 When I'd finished speaking these words, the angel which had been sent to me the nights before was sent to me. 2 He said to me, "Rise, Ezra, and hear the words that I've come to tell you."

3 I said, "Speak on, my master."

Then he said to me, "There's a sea set in a wide place, that it might be broad[23] and vast, 4 but its entrance is set in a narrow place so as to be like a river. 5 Anyone who desires to go into the sea to look at it, or to rule it, if he didn't go through the narrow entrance, how could he come into the broad part? 6 Another thing also: There's a city built and set in a plain country, and full of all good things, 7 but its entrance is narrow, and is set in a dangerous place to fall, having fire on the right hand, and deep water on the left. 8 There's one only path between them both, even between the fire and the water, so that only one person can go there at once. 9 If this city is now given to a man for an inheritance, if the heir doesn't pass the danger before him, how will he receive his inheritance?"

10 I said, "That's so, master."

Then he said to me, "Even so also is Yisrael's (Israel's) portion. 11 I made the world for their sakes. What's now done was decreed when Adam transgressed my statutes. 12 Then the entrances of this world were made narrow, sorrowful, and toilsome. They're but few and evil, full of perils, and involved in great toils. 13 Because the entrances of the greater world are wide and safe, and produce fruit of immortality. 14 So if those who live don't enter these difficult and vain things, they can never receive those that are reserved for them. 15 Now therefore why are you disturbed, seeing you're but a corruptible man? Why are you moved, since you're mortal? 16 Why haven't you considered in your mind that which is to come, rather than that which is present?"

17 Then I replied, "O sovereign master, look, you've ordained in your law that the righteous will inherit these things, but that the ungodly will perish. 18 The righteous therefore will suffer difficult things, and hope for easier things, but those who've done wickedly have suffered the difficult things, and yet won't see the easier things."

19 He said to me, "You aren't a judge above God, neither do you have more understanding than the Most High. 20 Yes, let many perish who now live, rather than that God's law which is set before them be despised. 21 Because God strictly commanded those who came, even as they came, what they should do to live, and what they should observe to avoid punishment. 22 Nevertheless, they weren't obedient to him, but spoke against him and imagined for themselves vain things. 23 They made cunning plans of wickedness, and said moreover of the Most High that he doesn't exist, and they didn't know his ways. 24 They despised his law and denied his covenants. They haven't been faithful to his statutes, and haven't performed his works. 25 Therefore, Ezra, for the empty are empty things, and for the full are the full things.

The messiah's coming and the final judgement

26 Because listen, the time will come, and it'll be, when these signs of which I told you before will happen, that the bride will appear, even the city coming forth, and she'll be seen who now is withdrawn from the earth. 27 Anyone who's delivered from the foretold evils will see my wonders. 28 Because my son Yeshua (Jesus) will be revealed with

23 **RV 7:3 · Note** So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin MSS. have deep.

Readers' Version

those who are with him, and those who remain will rejoice four hundred years. 29 After these years my son Christ[24] will die, along with all of those who have the breath of life.[25] 30 Then the world will be turned into the old silence seven days, like as in the first beginning, so that no human will remain. 31 After seven days the world that isn't yet awake will be raised up, and what's corruptible will die. 32 The earth will restore those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who live in it in silence, and the secret[26] places will deliver those souls that were committed to them. 33 The Most High will be revealed on the judgement seat,[27] and compassion will pass away, and patience will be withdrawn. 34 Only judgement will remain. Truth will stand. Faith will grow strong. 35 Recompense will follow. The reward will be shown. Good actions will awake, and wicked actions won't sleep.[28] 36 The pit[29] of torment will appear, and near it'll be the place of rest. The furnace of hell[30] will be shown, and near it the paradise of delight. 37 Then the Most High will say to the nations that are raised from the dead, 'Look and understand whom you've denied, whom you haven't served, whose commandments you've despised. 38 Look on this side and on that. Here is delight and rest, and there fire and torments.' Thus he[31] will speak to them in the day of judgement. 39 This is a day that has neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, 40 neither cloud, nor thunder, nor lightning, neither wind, nor water, nor air, neither darkness, nor evening, nor morning, 41 neither summer, nor spring, nor heat, nor[32] winter, neither frost, nor cold, nor hail, nor rain, nor dew, 42 neither noon, nor night, nor dawn, neither shining, nor brightness, nor light, except only the splendour of the Most High's glory, by which all will see the things that are set before them. 43 It'll endure as though it were a week of years. 44 This is my judgement and its prescribed order; but I've only shown these things to you."

Why are so few saved?

45 I answered, "I said then, Oh master, and I say now: Blessed are those who are now alive and keep your commandments! 46 But what about those for whom I prayed? Because who's there of those who are alive who hasn't sinned, and who of the children of men hasn't transgressed your covenant? 47 Now I see that the world to come will bring delight to few, but torments to many. 48 Because an evil heart has grown up in us, which has led us astray from these commandments and has brought us into corruption and into the ways of death. It's shown us the paths of perdition and removed us far from life—and that, not a few only, but nearly all who've been created."

49 He answered me, "Listen to me, and I'll instruct you. I'll admonish you yet again. 50 Because this reason, the Most High hasn't made one world, but two. 51 Because you've said that the just aren't many, but few, and the ungodly abound, hear the explanation. 52 If you have just a few precious stones, will you add them to lead and clay?"

53 I said, "master, how could that be?"

54 He said to me, "Not only that, but ask the earth, and she'll tell you. Defer to her, and she'll declare it to you. 55 Say to her, 'You produce

24 RV 7:29 · Note "Christ" means "Anointed One".

25 RV 7:29 · Note Lat. man

26 RV 7:32 · Note Or, chambers See 2 Esdras 4:35.

27 RV 7:33 · Note The Syriac adds and the end will come.

28 RV 7:35 · Note The passage from verse [36] to verse [105], formerly missing, has been restored to the text. See Preface, page ix.

29 RV 7:36 · Note So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin MSS. have place.

30 RV 7:36 · Note Lat. Gehenna.

31 RV 7:38 · Note So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin has will you speak.

32 RV 7:41 · Note Or, storm

Readers' Version

gold, silver, and brass, and also iron, lead, and clay; 56 but silver is more abundant than gold, and brass than silver, and iron than brass, and lead than iron, and clay than lead.' 57 Judge therefore which things are precious and to be desired, what's abundant or what's rare?"

58 I said, "O sovereign master, that which is plentiful is of less worth, for that which is more rare is more precious."

59 He answered me, "Weigh within yourself the things that you've thought, for he who has what's hard to get rejoices over him who has what's plentiful. 60 So also is the judgement which I've promised; for I'll rejoice over the few that'll be saved, because these are those who've made my glory to prevail now, and through them, my name is now honoured. 61 I won't grieve over the multitude of those who perish; for these are those who are now like mist, and have become like flame and smoke; they're set on fire and burn hotly, and are extinguished."

62 I answered, "O earth, why have you produced, if the mind is made out of dust, like all other created things? 63 Because it'd have been better that the dust itself had been unborn, so that the mind might not have been made from it. 64 But now the mind grows with us, and because of this we're tormented, because we perish and we know it. 65 Let the race of men lament and the animals of the field be glad. Let all who are born lament, but let the four-footed animals and the livestock rejoice. 66 Because it's far better with them than with us; for they don't look forward to judgement, neither do they know of torments or of salvation promised to them after death. 67 Because what does it profit us, that we'll be preserved alive, but yet be afflicted with torment? 68 Because all who are born are defiled with iniquities, and are full of sins and laden with transgressions. 69 If after death we weren't to come into judgement, perhaps it'd have been better for us."

70 He answered me, "When the Most High made the world and Adam and all those who came from him, he first prepared the judgement and the things that pertain to the judgement. 71 Now understand from your own words, for you've said that the mind grows with us. 72 They therefore who live on the earth will be tormented for this reason, that having understanding they've committed iniquity, and receiving commandments haven't kept them, and having obtained a law they dealt unfaithfully with that which they received. 73 What then will they have to say in the judgement, or how will they answer in the last times? 74 Because how long a time has the Most High been patient with those who inhabit the world, and not for their sakes, but because of the times which he's foreordained!"

What happens to people after death?

75 I answered, "If I've found grace in your sight, Oh master, show this also to your servant, whether after death, even now when every one of us gives up his soul, we'll be kept in rest until those times come, in which you renew the creation, or whether we'll be tormented immediately."

76 He answered me, "I'll show you this also; but don't join yourself with those who are scorners, nor count yourself with those who are tormented. 77 Because you have a treasure of works laid up with the Most High, but it won't be shown you until the last times. 78 Because about death the teaching is: When the decisive sentence has gone out from the Most High that a man will die, as the spirit leaves the body to return again to him who gave it, it adores the Most High's glory first of all. 79 And if it's one of those who've been scorners and haven't kept the way of the Most High, and that have despised his law, and who hate those who fear God, 80 these spirits won't enter into habitations, but will wander and be in torments immediately, ever grieving and sad, in seven ways. 81 The first way, because they've despised the Most High's law. 82 The second way, because they can't now make a good repentance that they may live. 83 The third way, they'll see the reward laid up for those who've believed the Most High's covenants. 84 The fourth way, they'll consider the torment laid up for themselves in the last days. 85 The fifth way, they'll see the dwelling places of the others guarded

Readers' Version

by angels, with great quietness. 86 The sixth way, they'll see how immediately some of them will pass into torment. 87 The seventh way, which is more grievous than all the aforesaid ways, because they'll pine away in confusion and be consumed with shame, and will be withered up by fears, seeing the Most High's glory before whom they've sinned while living, and before whom they'll be judged in the last times.

88 "Now this is the order of those who've kept the ways of the Most High, when they'll be separated from their mortal body. 89 In the time that they lived in it, they painfully served the Most High, and were in jeopardy every hour, that they might keep the law of the lawgiver perfectly. 90 Therefore this is the teaching about them: 91 First of all they'll see with great joy the glory of him who takes them up, for they'll have rest in seven orders. 92 The first order, because they've laboured with great effort to overcome the evil thought which was fashioned together with them, that it might not lead them astray from life into death. 93 The second order, because they see the perplexity in which the souls of the ungodly wander, and the punishment that awaits them. 94 The third order, they see the testimony which he who fashioned them gives about them, that while they lived they kept the law which was given them in trust. 95 The fourth order, they understand the rest which, being gathered in their chambers, they now enjoy with great quietness, guarded by angels, and the glory that awaits them in the last days. 96 The fifth order, they rejoice that they've now escaped from that which is corruptible, and that they'll inherit that which is to come, while they see in addition the difficulty and the pain from which they've been delivered, and the spacious liberty which they'll receive with joy and immortality. 97 The sixth order, when it's shown to them how their face will shine like the sun, and how they'll be made like the light of the stars, being incorruptible from then on. 98 The seventh order, which is greater than all the previously mentioned orders, because they'll rejoice with confidence, and because they'll be bold without confusion, and will be glad without fear, for they hurry to see the face of him whom in their lifetime they served, and from whom they'll receive their reward in glory. 99 This is the order of the souls of the just, as from now on is announced to them. Previously mentioned are the ways of torture which those who wouldn't give heed will suffer from after this."

100 I answered, "Will time therefore be given to the souls after they're separated from the bodies, that they may see what you've described to me?"

101 He said, "Their freedom will be for seven days, that for seven days they may see the things you've been told, and afterwards they'll be gathered together in their habitations."

Can anyone plead for others at the judgement?

102 I answered, "If I've found favour in your sight, show further to me your servant whether in the day of judgement the just will be able to intercede for the ungodly or to entreat the Most High for them, 103 whether fathers for children, or children for parents, or kindred for kindred, or kinsfolk for their next of kin, or friends for those who are most dear."

104 He answered me, "Since you've found favour in my sight, I'll show you this also. The day of judgement is[33] a day of decision, and displays to all the seal of truth. Even as now a father doesn't send his son, or a son his father, or a master his slave, or a friend him that's most dear, that in his place he may understand, or sleep, or eat, or be healed, 105 so no one will ever pray for another in that day, neither will one lay a burden on another, for then everyone will each bear his own righteousness or unrighteousness."

106 I answered, "How do we now find that first Avraham prayed for Sedom's people, and Mosheh (Moses) for the ancestors who sinned in the wilderness, 107 and Yeshua (Jesus) after

33 **RV 7:104 · Note** The Latin has a bold day

Readers' Version

him for Yisrael (Israel) in the days of Akan,[34] 108 and Shmuel (Samuel) in[35] the days of Sha'ul (Saul), and David for the deadly disease, and Shelomoh (Solomon) for those who'd worship in the sanctuary, 109 and Eliyah (Elijah) for those that received rain, and for the dead, that he might live, 110 and Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) for the people in the days of Sanheriv (Sennacherib), and many others prayed for many? 111 If therefore now, when corruption has grown and unrighteousness increased, the righteous have prayed for the ungodly, why won't it be so then also?"

112 He answered me, "This present world isn't the end. The full glory doesn't remain in it. Therefore those who were able prayed for the weak. 113 But the day of judgement will be the end of this age, and the beginning of the immortality to come, in which corruption has passed away, 114 intemperance is at an end, infidelity is cut off, but righteousness has grown, and truth has sprung up. 115 Then no one will be able to have mercy on him who's condemned in judgement, nor to harm someone who's victorious."

Ezra mourns over humanity's sin

116 I answered then, "This is my first and last saying, that it'd have been better if the earth hadn't produced Adam, or else, when it'd produced him, to have restrained him from sinning. 117 Because what profit is it for all who are in this present time to live in heaviness, and after death to look for punishment? 118 Oh Adam, what have you done? Because though it was you who sinned, the evil hasn't fallen on you alone, but on all of us who come from you. 119 Because what profit is it to us, if an immortal time is promised to us, but we've done things that bring death? 120 And that there's promised us an eternal hope, but we have most miserably failed? 121 And that there are reserved habitations of health and safety, but we've lived wickedly? 122 And that the Most High's glory will defend those who've led a pure life, but we've walked in the most wicked ways of all? 123 And that a paradise will be revealed, whose fruit endures without decay, in which is abundance and healing, but we won't enter into it, 124 for we've lived in perverse ways? 125 And that the faces of those who've practised self-control will shine more than the stars, but our faces will be blacker than darkness? 126 Because while we lived and committed iniquity, we didn't consider what we'd have to suffer after death."

127 Then he answered, "This is the significance of the battle which humans born on the earth will fight: 128 if they're overcome, they'll suffer as you've said, but if they get the victory, they'll receive the thing that I say. 129 Because this is the way that Mosheh (Moses) spoke to the people while he lived, saying, 'Choose life, that you may live!' 130 Nevertheless they didn't believe him or the prophets after him, not even me, who've spoken to them. 131 Therefore there won't be such heaviness in their destruction, as there'll be joy over those who are assured of salvation."

132 Then I answered, "I know, master, that the Most High is now called merciful, in that he has mercy on those who haven't yet come into the world; 133 and compassionate, in that he has compassion on those who turn to his law; 134 and patient, in that he's patient with those who've sinned, since they're his creatures; 135 and bountiful, in that he's ready to give rather than to take away; 136 and very merciful, in that he multiplies more and more mercies to those who are present, and who are past, and also to those who are to come— 137 for if he wasn't merciful, the world wouldn't continue with those who live in it— 138 and one who forgives, for if he didn't forgive out of his goodness, that those who've committed iniquities might be relieved of them, not even one ten thousandth part of mankind would remain living; 139 and a judge, for if he didn't pardon those who were created by his word, and blot

34 **RV 7:107 · Cross-ref.** Josh 7:1.

35 **RV 7:108 · Note** So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin omits in the days of Saul.

Readers' Version

out the multitude of sins, 140 there'd perhaps be very few left of an innumerable multitude."

8:1 He answered me, "The Most High has made this world for many, but the world to come for few. 2 Now I'll tell you a parable, Ezra. Just as when you ask the earth, it'll say to you that it gives very much clay from which earthen vessels are made, but little dust that gold comes from. Even so is the course of the present world. 3 Many have been created, but few will be saved."

Ezra prays for God's mercy

4 I answered, "Drink your fill of understanding then, Oh my soul, and let my heart devour wisdom. 5 Because you have[36] come here apart from your will, and depart against your will, for you've only been given a short time to live. 6 Oh master over us, grant to your servant that we may pray before you, and give us seed for our heart and cultivation for our understanding, that fruit may grow from it, by which everyone who's corrupt, who bears the likeness[37] of a man, may live. 7 Because you alone exist, and we all one workmanship of your hands, just as you've said. 8 Because you give life to the body that's now fashioned in the womb, and give it members, your creature is preserved in fire and water, and your workmanship endures nine months as your creation which is created in it. 9 But that which keeps and that which is kept will both be kept by[38] your keeping. When the womb gives up again what's grown in it, 10 you've commanded that out of the parts of the body, that's to say, out of the breasts, be given milk, which is the fruit of the breasts, 11 that the body that's fashioned may be nourished for a time, and afterwards you guide it in your mercy. 12 Yes, you've brought it up in your righteousness, nurtured it in your law, and corrected it with your judgement. 13 You put it to death as your creation, and make it live as your work. 14 If therefore you lightly[39] and suddenly destroy him which with so great labour was fashioned by your commandment, to what purpose was he made? 15 Now therefore I'll speak. About man in general, you know best, but about your people for whose sake I'm sorry, 16 and for your inheritance, for whose cause I mourn, for Yisrael (Israel), for whom I'm heavy, and for the seed of Ya'akov (Jacob), for whose sake I'm troubled, 17 therefore I'll begin to pray before you for myself and for them; for I see the failings of us who live in the land; 18 but I've heard the swiftness of the judgement which is to come. 19 Therefore hear my voice, and understand my saying, and I'll speak before you."

The beginning of Ezra's words, before he was taken up. He said, 20 "O master, you who remain forever, whose eyes are exalted, and whose chambers are in the air, 21 whose throne is beyond measure, whose glory is beyond comprehension, before whom the army of angels stand with trembling, 22 at whose bidding they're changed to[40] wind and fire, whose word is sure, and sayings constant, whose ordinance is strong, and commandment fearful, 23 whose look dries up the depths, and whose indignation makes the mountains to melt away, and whose truth bears witness— 24 hear, Oh master, the prayer of your servant, and give ear to the petition of your handiwork. 25 Attend to my words, for as long as I live, I'll speak, and as long as I have understanding, I'll answer. 26 Don't look at the sins of your people, but on those who've served you in truth. 27 Don't regard the doings of those who act wickedly, but of those who've kept your covenants in affliction. 28 Don't think about those who've lived wickedly before you, but remember those

36 **RV 8:5 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin is incorrect.

37 **RV 8:6 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin has place.

38 **RV 8:9 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin is imperfect.

39 **RV 8:14 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin is incorrect.

40 **RV 8:22 · Note** According to the chief Oriental versions. The Latin has, even they whose service takes the form of wind etc.

Readers' Version

who've willingly known your fear. 29 Let it not be your will to destroy those who've lived like cattle, but look at those who have clearly[41] taught your law. 30 Don't be indignant at those who are deemed worse than animals, but love those who've always put their trust in your glory. 31 Because we and our fathers have passed[42] our lives in ways[43] that bring death, but you're called merciful because of us sinners. 32 Because if you have a desire to have mercy on us who have no works of righteousness, then you'll be called merciful. 33 Because the just, which have many good works laid up with you, will be rewarded for their own actions. 34 Because what's man, that you should take displeasure at him? Or what's a corruptible race, that you should be so bitter towards it? 35 Because in truth, there's no man among those who are born who hasn't done wickedly, and among those who've lived, there's none which haven't done wrong. 36 Because in this, Oh master, your righteousness and your goodness will be declared, if you're merciful to those who have no store of good works."

God's answer about judgement and salvation

37 Then he answered me, "Some things you've spoken rightly, and it'll happen according to your words. 38 Because indeed I won't think about the fashioning of those who've sinned, or about their death, their judgement, or their destruction; 39 but I'll rejoice over the creation of the righteous and their pilgrimage, their salvation, and the reward that they'll have. 40 Therefore as I've spoken, so it'll be. 41 Because as the farmer sows many seeds in the ground, and plants many trees, and yet not all that's sown will come[44] up in due season, neither will all that's planted take root, even so those who are sown in the world won't all be saved."

42 Then I answered, "If I've found favour, let me speak before you. 43 If the farmer's seed doesn't come up because it hasn't received your rain in due season, or if it's ruined by too much rain and perishes, 44 likewise man, who's formed with your hands and is called your own image, because he's made like you, for whose sake you've formed all things, even him have you made like the farmer's seed. 45 Don't be angry with us, but spare your people and have mercy on your inheritance, for you have mercy on your own creation."

46 Then he answered me, "Things present are for those who live now, and things to come for those who'll live in the future. 47 Because you come far short of being able to love my creature more than I. But you've compared yourself to the unrighteous. Don't do that! 48 Yet in this will you be admirable to the Most High, 49 in that you've humbled yourself, as it becomes you, and haven't judged yourself among the righteous, so as to be much glorified. 50 Because many grievous miseries will fall on those who live in the world in the last times, because they've walked in great pride. 51 But understand for yourself, and for those who enquire about the glory of those like you, 52 because paradise is opened to you. The tree of life is planted. The time to come is prepared. Plenteousness is made ready. A city is built. Rest is allowed.[45] Goodness is perfected, and wisdom is perfected beforehand. 53 The root of evil is sealed up from you. Weakness is done away from you, and death[46] is hidden. Hell and corruption have fled into forgetfulness. 54 Sorrows have passed away, and in the end, the treasure of immortality is shown. 55 Therefore ask no more questions about the multitude of those who perish. 56 Because when they'd received liberty, they despised the Most High, scorned

41 **RV 8:29 · Note** The Syriac has received the brightness of your law.

42 **RV 8:31 · Note** So the Syriac and Aethiopic versions.

43 **RV 8:31 · Note** Lat. manners.

44 **RV 8:41 · Note** Lat. be saved.

45 **RV 8:52 · Note** The Syriac has established.

46 **RV 8:53 · Note** After the chief Oriental versions.

Readers' Version

his law, and forsook his ways. 57 Moreover they have trodden down his righteous, 58 and said in their heart that there's no god—even knowing that they must die. 59 Because as the things I've said will welcome you, so thirst and pain which are prepared for them. Because the Most High didn't intend that men should be destroyed, 60 but those who are created have themselves defiled the name of him who made them, and were unthankful to him who prepared life for them. 61 Therefore my judgement is now at hand, 62 which I haven't shown to all men, but to you, and a few like you."

Then I answered, 63 "Listen, Oh master, now you've shown me the multitude of the wonders which you'll do in the last times, but you haven't shown me when."

Recognising the signs of the end

9:1 He answered me, "Measure diligently within yourself. When you see that a certain part of the signs are past, which have been told you beforehand, 2 then will you understand that it's the very time in which the Most High will visit the world which was made by him. 3 When earthquakes, tumult of peoples, plans of nations, wavering of leaders, and confusion of princes are seen in the world, 4 then will you understand that the Most High spoke of these things from the days that were of old, from the beginning. 5 Because just as with everything that's made in the world, the beginning is[47] evident and the end manifest, 6 so also are the times of the Most High: the beginnings are manifest in wonders and mighty works, and the end in effects and signs. 7 Everyone who'll be saved, and will be able to escape by his works, or by faith by which they've believed, 8 will be preserved from the said perils, and will see my salvation in my land and within my borders, which I've sanctified for myself from the beginning. 9 Then those who now have abused my ways will be amazed. Those who've thrown them away despitefully will live in torments. 10 Because as many as in their life have received benefits, and yet haven't known me, 11 and as many as have scorned my law, while they still had liberty and when an opportunity to repent was open to them, didn't understand, but despised it,[48] 12 must know it[49] in torment after death. 13 Therefore don't be curious any longer how the ungodly will be punished, but enquire how the righteous will be saved, those[50] who the world belongs to, and for whom the world was created."

14 I answered, 15 "I've said before, and now speak, and will say it again in the future, that there are more of those who perish than of those who'll be saved, 16 like a wave is greater than a drop."

17 He answered me, "Just as the field is, so also the seed. As the flowers are, so are the colours. As the work is, so also is the judgement[51] on it. As is the farmer, so also is his threshing floor. Because there was a time in the world 18 when I was preparing for those who now live, before the world was made for them to live in. Then no one spoke against me, 19 because no[52] one existed. But now those who are created in this world that's prepared, both with[53] a table that doesn't fail and a law which is unsearchable, are corrupted in their ways. 20 So I considered my world, and it was destroyed, and my earth, and it was in peril, because of the plans that'd come into it. 21 I saw and spared them, but not greatly, and saved myself a grape out of a cluster, and a plant out

47 **RV 9:5 · Note** So the Syriac. The Latin is corrupt.

48 **RV 9:11 · Note** Or, me.

49 **RV 9:12 · Note** Or, me

50 **RV 9:13 · Note** So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin has and whose... created, and when.

51 **RV 9:17 · Note** So the Aethiopic and Arabic. The Latin has creation.

52 **RV 9:19 · Note** So the Syriac.

53 **RV 9:19 · Note** So the Syriac.

Readers' Version

of a[54] great forest. 22 Let the multitude perish then, which were born in vain. Let my grape be saved, and my plant, for I've made them perfect with great labour. 23 Nevertheless, if you'll wait seven more days—however don't fast in them, 24 but go into a field of flowers, where no house is built, and eat only of the flowers of the field, and don't eat any meat or drink any wine, but eat only flowers— 25 and pray to the Most High continually, then I'll come and talk with you."

God's law endures despite the people's failure

26 So I went my way, just as he commanded me, into the field which is called Ardat.[55] There I sat among the flowers, and ate of the herbs of the field, and this food satisfied me. 27 After seven days, I lay on the grass, and my heart was troubled again, like before. 28 My mouth was opened, and I began to speak before the master Most High, and said, 29 "O master, you showed yourself among us, to our fathers in the wilderness, when they went out of Mitsrayim (Egypt), and when they came into the wilderness, where no man treads and that bears no fruit. 30 You said, 'Hear me, Oh Yisrael (Israel). Heed my words, Oh seed of Ya'akov (Jacob). 31 Because listen, I sow my law in you, and it'll bring forth fruit in you, and you'll be glorified in it forever.' 32 But our fathers, who received the law, didn't keep it, and didn't observe the statutes. The fruit of the law didn't perish, for it couldn't, because it was yours. 33 Yet those who received it perished, because they didn't keep the thing that was sown in them. 34 Listen, it's a custom that when the ground has received seed, or the sea a ship, or any vessel food or drink, and when it comes to pass that that which is sown, or that which is launched, 35 or the things which have been received, should come to an end, these come to an end, but the receptacles remain. Yet with us, it doesn't happen that way. 36 Because we who've received the law will perish by sin, along with our heart which received it. 37 Notwithstanding the law doesn't perish, but remains in its honour."

Ezra meets a grieving woman

38 When I spoke these things in my heart, I looked around me with my eyes, and on my right side I saw a woman, and she mourned and wept with a loud voice, and was much grieved in mind. Her clothes were torn, and she had ashes on her head. 39 Then let I my thoughts go in which I was occupied, and turned myself to her, 40 and said to her, "Why are you weeping? Why are you grieved in your mind?"

41 She said to me, "Leave me alone, my master, that I may weep for myself and add to my sorrow, for I'm very troubled in my mind, and brought very low."

42 I said to her, "What ails you? Tell me."

43 She said to me, "I, your servant, was barren and had no child, though I had a husband thirty years. 44 Every hour and every day these thirty years I made my prayer to the Most High day and night. 45 After thirty years, God heard me, your handmaid, and saw my low estate, and considered my trouble, and gave me a son. I rejoiced in him greatly, I and my husband, and all my neighbours.[56] We gave great honour to the Mighty One. 46 I nourished him with great care. 47 So when he grew up, and I came to take him a wife, I made him a feast day.

10:1 "So when my son was entered into his wedding chamber, he fell down and died. 2 Then we all put out the lamps, and all my neighbours[57] rose up to comfort me. I remained quiet until the second day at night. 3 When they had all stopped consoling me, encouraging me to be quiet, then I got up at night, and fled, and came here into this field, as you see. 4 Now I don't intend to return into the city, but to stay here, and not eat or drink, but to continually mourn and fast until I die."

54 **RV 9:21 · Note** So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin has great tribes.

55 **RV 9:26 · Note** The Syriac and Aethiopic have Arphad.

56 **RV 9:45 · Note** Lat. townsmen.

57 **RV 10:2 · Note** Lat. townsmen.

Readers' Version

Ezra urges the woman to consider Tsiyon's sorrow

5 Then I left the reflections I was engaged in, and answered her in anger, 6 "You most foolish woman, don't you see our mourning, and what's happened to us? 7 Because Tsiyon (Zion) the mother of us all is full of sorrow, and much humbled. 8 It[58] is right now to mourn deeply, since we all mourn, and to be sorrowful, since we're all in sorrow, but you're mourning for one son. 9 Ask the earth, and she'll tell you that it's she which ought to mourn for so many that grow on her. 10 Because out of her, all had their beginnings, and others will come; and almost all of them walk into destruction, and the multitude of them is utterly doomed. 11 Who then should mourn more, she[59] who's lost so great a multitude, or you, who are grieved but for one? 12 But if you say to me, 'My lamentation isn't like the earth's, for I've lost the fruit of my womb, which I brought forth with pains, and bare with sorrows;' 13 but it's with the earth after the manner of the earth. The multitude present in it's gone as it came. 14 Then say I to you, 'Just as you've brought forth with sorrow, even so the earth also has given her fruit, namely, people, ever since the beginning to him who made her.' 15 Now therefore keep your sorrow to yourself, and bear with a good courage the adversities which have happened to you. 16 Because if you'll acknowledge God's decree to be just, you'll both receive your son in time, and will be praised among women. 17 Go your way then into the city to your husband."

18 She said to me, "I won't do that. I won't go into the city, but I'll die here."

19 So I proceeded to speak further to her, and said, 20 "Don't do so, but allow yourself to be persuaded because of the adversities of Tsiyon (Zion); and be comforted because of the sorrow of Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 21 Because you see that our sanctuary has been laid waste, our altar broken down, our temple destroyed, 22 our lute has been brought low, our song is put to silence, our rejoicing is at an end, the light of our candlestick is put out, the ark of our covenant is plundered, our holy things are defiled, and the name that we're called is profaned. Our free men are despitefully treated, our priests are burnt, our Levites have gone into captivity, our virgins are defiled and our wives ravished, our righteous men carried away, our little ones betrayed, our young men are brought into bondage, and our strong men have become weak. 23 What's more than all, the seal of Tsiyon has now lost the seal of her honour, and is delivered into the hands of those who hate us. 24 Therefore shake off your great heaviness, and put away from yourself the multitude of sorrows, that the Mighty One may be merciful to you again, and the Most High may give you peace and security, even ease from your troubles."

The woman becomes a glorious city

25 While I was talking with her, her face suddenly began to shine brightly and flashed like lightning, so that I was very afraid of her, and wondered what this meant. 26 Listen, suddenly she made a great and very fearful cry, so that the earth shook at the noise. 27 I looked and saw that the woman appeared to me no more, but there was a city built, and a place shown itself from large foundations. Then I was afraid, and cried with a loud voice, 28 "Where is Uriel the angel, who came to me at the first? Because he's caused me to fall into this great trance, and my end has turned into corruption, and my prayer a reproach!"

29 As I was speaking these words, look, the angel who'd come to me at first came to me, and he looked at me. 30 Listen, I lay as one who'd been dead, and my understanding was taken from me. He took me by the right hand, and comforted me, and set me on my feet, and said to me, 31 "What ails you? Why are you so troubled? Why is your understanding and the thoughts of your heart troubled?"

58 **RV 10:8 · Note** See the Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt.

59 **RV 10:11 · Note** So the Syriac.

Readers' Version

32 I said, "Because you've forsaken me; yet I
did according to your words, and went into the
field, and I've seen, and still see, that which I'm
not able to explain."
33 He said to me, "Stand up like a man, and I'll
instruct you."
34 Then I said, "Speak on, my master; only
don't forsake me, or I might die before my time.
35 Because I've seen what I didn't know, and
hear what I don't know. 36 Or is my sense de-
ceived, or my soul in a dream? 37 Now therefore
I beg you to explain to your servant what this
vision means."

Uriel explains the vision of Tsiyon

38 He answered me,
"Listen to me, and I'll in-
form you, and tell you about the things you're
afraid of, for the Most High has revealed many
secret things to you. 39 He's seen that your way
is righteous, because you're continually sorry
for your people, and make great lamentation
for Tsiyon (Zion). 40 This therefore is the mean-
ing of the vision. 41 The woman who appeared
to you a little while ago, whom you saw mourn-
ing, and began to comfort her, 42 but now you
no longer see the likeness of the woman, but a
city under construction appeared to you, 43 and
she told you of the death of her son, this is the
interpretation: 44 This woman, whom you saw,
is Tsiyon,[60] whom you now see as a city being
built. 45 She told you that she'd been barren for
thirty years because there were three thousand
years in the world in which there was no offer-
ing as yet offered in her. 46 After three thou-
sand years, Shelomoh (Solomon) built the city
and offered offerings. It was then that the bar-
ren bore a son. 47 She told you that she nour-
ished him with great care. That was the
dwelling in Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 48 When
she said to you, 'My son died when he entered
into his marriage chamber, and that misfortune
befell her,' this was the destruction that came
to Yerushalem. 49 Listen, you saw her likeness,
how she mourned for her son, and you began to
comfort her for what's happened to her. These
were the things to be opened to you. 50 Because
now the Most High, seeing that you're sincerely
grieved and suffer from your whole heart for
her, has shown you the brightness of her glory
and the attractiveness of her beauty. 51 There-
fore I asked you to remain in the field where no
house was built, 52 for I knew that the Most
High would show this to you. 53 Therefore I
commanded you to come into the field, where
no foundation of any building was. 54 Because
no human construction could stand in the
place in which the city of the Most High was to
be shown. 55 Therefore don't be afraid nor let
your heart be terrified, but go your way in and
see the beauty and greatness of the building, as
much as your eyes are able to see. 56 Then will
you hear as much as your ears may compre-
hend. 57 Because you're more blessed than
many, and are called by name to be with the
Most High, like only a few. 58 But stay here to-
morrow night, 59 and so the Most High will
show you those visions in dreams of what the
Most High will do to those who live on the
earth in the last days."
So I slept that night and another, as he com-
manded me.

Ezra's vision of the eagle

11:1 On the second
night, I had a dream, and
an eagle which had twelve feathered wings and
three heads came up from the sea. 2 I saw that
she spread her wings over all the earth, and all
the winds of heaven blew on her, and[61] the
clouds were gathered together against her. 3 I
saw, and out of her wings there grew other
wings near them; and they became little, tiny
wings. 4 But her heads were at rest. The head in
the middle was larger than the other heads, yet
rested it with them. 5 Moreover I saw that the
eagle flew with her wings to reign over the
earth and over those who live there. 6 I saw
how all things under heaven were subject to
her, and no one spoke against her—no, not one
creature on earth. 7 I saw that the eagle rose on
her talons, and uttered her voice to her wings,

60 **RV 10:44 · Note** So the Syriac and other versions. The Latin is incorrect.
61 **RV 11:2 · Note** So the chief Oriental versions. The Latin has only and were gathered together.

Readers' Version

saying, 8 "Don't all watch at the same time. Let each one sleep in his own place and watch in turn; 9 but let the heads be preserved for the last."

10 I saw that the voice didn't come out of her heads, but from the middle of her body. 11 I counted her[62] wings that were near the others, and there were eight of them. 12 I saw that on the right side one wing arose and reigned over all the earth. 13 When it reigned, the end of it came, and it disappeared, so that its place appeared no more. The next wing rose up and reigned, and it ruled a long time. 14 It happened that when it reigned, its end came also, so that it disappeared, like the first. 15 Listen, a voice came to it, and said, 16 "Listen, you who've ruled over the earth all this time! I proclaim this to you, before you disappear, 17 none after you'll rule as long as you, not even half as long."

18 Then the third arose, and ruled as the others before, and it also disappeared. 19 So it went with all the wings one after another, as every one ruled, and then disappeared. 20 I saw that in process of time the wings[63] that followed were set up on the right[64] side, that they might rule also. Some of them ruled, but in a while they disappeared. 21 Some of them also were set up, but didn't rule.

22 After this I saw that the twelve wings disappeared, along with two of the little wings. 23 There was no more left on the eagle's body, except the three heads that rested, and six little wings. 24 I saw that two little wings divided themselves from the six and remained under the head that was on the right side; but four remained in their place. 25 I saw that these under[65] wings planned to set themselves up and to rule. 26 I saw that there was one set up, but in a while it disappeared. 27 A second also did so, and it disappeared faster than the first. 28 I saw that the two that remained also planned between themselves to reign. 29 While they thought about it, look, one of the heads that were at rest awakened, the one that was in the middle, for that was greater than the two other heads. 30 I saw how it joined the two other heads with it. 31 Listen, the head turned with those who were with it, and ate the two under[66] wings that planned to reign. 32 But this head held the whole earth in possession, and ruled over those who live in it with much oppression. It had stronger governance over the world than all the wings that'd gone before.

33 After this I saw that the head also that was in the middle suddenly disappeared, like the wings. 34 But the two heads remained, which also reigned the same way over the earth and over those who live in it. 35 I saw that the head on the right side devoured the one that was on the left side.

The lion condemns the eagle

36 Then I heard a voice, which said to me, "Look in front of you, and consider the thing that you see."

37 I saw that something like a lion roused out of the woods roaring. I heard how he sent out a man's voice to the eagle, and spoke, saying, 38 "Listen and I'll talk with you. The Most High will say to you, 39 'Aren't you the one that remains of the four animals whom I made to reign in my world, that the end of my times might come through them? 40 The fourth came and overcame all the animals that were past, and ruled the world with great trembling, and the whole extent of the earth with grievous oppression. He lived on the earth such a long time with deceit. 41 You've judged the earth, but not with truth. 42 Because you've afflicted the meek, you've hurt the peaceful, you've hated those who speak truth, you've loved liars, destroyed the dwellings of those who produced fruit, and thrown down the walls of those who

62 **RV 11:11 · Note** The Syriac has her little wings, and, etc.

63 **RV 11:20 · Note** The Syriac has little wings.

64 **RV 11:20 · Note** The Aethiopic has left.

65 **RV 11:25 · Note** The Syriac has little wings.

66 **RV 11:31 · Note** The Syriac has little wings.

Readers' Version

did you no harm. 43 Your insolence has come up to the Most High, and your pride to the Mighty. 44 The Most High also has looked at his times, and they're ended, and his ages are fulfilled. 45 Therefore appear no more, you eagle, nor your horrible wings, nor your evil little wings, nor your cruel heads, nor your hurtful talons, nor all your worthless body, 46 that all the earth may be refreshed and relieved, being delivered from your violence, and that she may hope for the judgement and mercy of him who made her.' "

12:1 While the lion spoke these words to the eagle, I saw, 2 and the head that remained disappeared, and the[67] two wings which went over to it arose and set themselves up to reign; and their kingdom was brief and full of uproar. 3 I saw that they disappeared, and the whole body of the eagle was burnt, so that the earth was in great fear.

Then I woke up because of great perplexity of mind and great fear, and said to my spirit, 4 "Listen, you've done this to me, because you search out the ways of the Most High. 5 Listen, I'm still weary in my mind, and very weak in my spirit. There isn't even a little strength in me, because of the great fear with which I was frightened tonight. 6 Therefore I'll now ask the Most High that he'd strengthen me to the end."

The meaning of the eagle and the lion

7 Then I said, "O sovereign master, if I've found favour in your sight, and if I'm justified with you more than many others, and if my prayer has indeed come up before your face, 8 strengthen me then, and show me, your servant, the interpretation and plain meaning of this fearful vision, that you may fully comfort my soul. 9 Because you've judged me worthy to show me the end of time and the last events of the times."

10 He said to me, "This is the interpretation of this vision which you saw: 11 The eagle, whom you saw come up from the sea, is the fourth kingdom which appeared in a vision to your brother Daniyel. 12 But it wasn't explained to him, as I now explain it to you or have explained it. 13 Listen, the days come that a kingdom will rise up on earth, and it'll be feared more than all the kingdoms that were before it. 14 Twelve kings will reign in it, one after another. 15 Of those, the second will begin to reign, and will reign a longer time than others of the twelve. 16 This is the interpretation of the twelve wings which you saw. 17 As for when you heard a voice which spoke, not going out from the heads, but from the middle of its body, this is the interpretation: 18 That after[68] the time of that kingdom, there'll arise no small contentions, and it'll stand in peril of falling. Nevertheless, it won't fall then, but will be restored again to its former power. 19 You saw the eight under wings sticking to her wings. This is the interpretation: 20 That in it eight kings will arise, whose times will be short and their years swift. 21 Two of them will perish when the middle time approaches. Four will be kept for a while until the time of the ending of it'll approach; but two will be kept to the end. 22 You saw three heads resting. This is the interpretation: 23 In its last days, the Most High will raise up three kingdoms[69] and renew many things in them. They'll rule over the earth, 24 and over those who live in it, with much oppression, more than all those who were before them. Therefore they're called the heads of the eagle. 25 Because these are those who'll accomplish her wickedness, and who'll finish her last actions. 26 You saw that the great head disappeared. It signifies that one of them will die on his bed, and yet with pain. 27 But for the two that remained, the sword will devour them. 28 Because the sword of the one will devour him that was with him, but he'll also fall by the sword in the last days. 29 You saw two under

67 **RV 12:2 · Note** So the chief Oriental versions.

68 **RV 12:18 · Note** The Oriental versions have in the midst of.

69 **RV 12:23 · Note** The Oriental versions have kings

Readers' Version

wings passing over[70] to the head that's on the right side. 30 This is the interpretation: These are they whom the Most High has kept to his end. This is the brief reign that was full of trouble, as you saw.

31 "The lion, whom you saw rising up out of the forest, roaring, speaking to the eagle, and rebuking her for her unrighteousness, and all her words which you've heard, 32 this is the anointed one, whom the Most High has kept to the end [of days, who'll spring up out of the seed of David, and he'll come and speak][71] to them and reprove them for their wickedness and unrighteousness, and will heap up[72] before them their contemptuous dealings. 33 Because at first he'll set them alive in his judgement, and when he's reproved them, he'll destroy them. 34 Because he'll deliver the rest of my people with mercy, those who've been preserved throughout my borders, and he'll make them joyful until the coming of the end, even the day of judgement, about which I've spoken to you from the beginning. 35 This is the dream that you saw, and this is its interpretation. 36 Only you've been worthy to know the Most High's secret. 37 Therefore write all these things that you've seen in a book, and put it in a secret place. 38 Teach them to the wise of your people, whose hearts you know are able to comprehend and keep these secrets. 39 But wait here yourself seven more days, that you may be shown whatever it pleases the Most High to show you." Then he departed from me.

Ezra reassures the people

40 When all the people saw[73] that the seven days were past, and I hadn't come again into the city, they all gathered together, from the least to the greatest, and came to me, and spoke to me, saying, 41 "How have we offended you? What evil have we done against you, that you've utterly forsaken us, and sit in this place? 42 Because of all the prophets, only you're left to us, like a cluster of the vintage, and like a lamp in a dark place, and like a harbour for a ship saved from the tempest. 43 Aren't the evils which have come to us sufficient? 44 If you'll forsake us, how much better had it been for us if we also had been consumed in the burning of Tsiyon (Zion)! 45 Because we aren't better than those who died there." Then they wept with a loud voice. I answered them, 46 "Take courage, Oh Yisrael (Israel)! Don't be sorrowful, you house of Ya'akov (Jacob); 47 for the Most High remembers you. The Mighty hasn't forgotten you forever.[74] 48 As for me, I haven't forsaken you. I haven't departed from you; but I've come into this place to pray for the desolation of Tsiyon, and that I might seek mercy for the humiliation of your sanctuary. 49 Now go your way, every man to his own house, and after these days I'll come to you."

50 So the people went their way into the city, as I told them to do. 51 But I sat in the field seven days, as the angel commanded me. In those days, I ate only of the flowers of the field, and my food was from plants.

Ezra's vision of the man from the sea

13:1 After seven days, I had a dream at night. 2 Listen, a wind arose from the sea that moved all its waves. 3 I saw [this wind caused to come up from the middle of the sea something like the appearance of a man. I saw][75] that man flew[76] with the clouds of heaven. When he turned his face to look, everything that he saw trembled. 4 Whenever the voice went out of his mouth, all who heard his voice melted, like the

70 RV 12:29 · Note So the Syriac. The Latin has over the head.

71 RV 12:32 · Note The words in brackets are added from the Syriac.

72 RV 12:32 · Note The Syriac has set in order.

73 RV 12:40 · Note So the Syriac. The Latin has heard.

74 RV 12:47 · Note So the Syriac.

75 RV 13:3 · Note The words in brackets are added from the Syriac.

76 RV 13:3 · Note So the Syriac. The Latin has grew strong

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wax[77] melts when it feels the fire.
5 After this I saw that an innumerable multitude of people was gathered together from the four winds of heaven to make war against the man who came out of the sea. 6 I saw that he carved himself a great mountain, and flew up onto it. 7 I tried to see the region or place from which the mountain was carved, and I couldn't.
8 After this I saw that all those who were gathered together to fight against him were very afraid, and yet they dared to fight. 9 Listen, as he saw the assault of the multitude that came, he didn't lift up his hand, or hold a spear or any weapon of war; 10 but I saw only how he sent out of his mouth something like a flood of fire, and out of his lips a flaming breath, and out of his tongue he shot out a storm of sparks.[78] 11 These were all mixed together: the flood of fire, the flaming breath, and the great storm, and fell onto the assault of the multitude which was prepared to fight, and burnt up every one of them, so that all of a sudden an innumerable multitude was seen to be nothing but dust of ashes and smell of smoke. When I saw this, I was amazed.
12 Afterward, I saw the same man come down from the mountain, and call to himself another multitude which was peaceful. 13 Many people came to him. Some of them were glad. Some were sorry. Some of them were bound, and some others brought some of those as offerings. Then through great fear I woke up and prayed to the Most High, and said, 14 "You've shown your servant these wonders from the beginning, and have counted me worthy that you should receive my prayer. 15 Now show me also the interpretation of this dream. 16 Because as I conceive in my understanding, woe to those who'll be left in those days! Much more woe to those who aren't left! 17 Because those who weren't left will be in heaviness, 18 understanding the things that are laid up in the latter days, but not attaining to them. 19 But woe to them also who are left, because they'll see great perils and much distress, like these dreams declare. 20 Yet is it better[79] for one to be in peril and to come into these[80] things, than to pass away as a cloud out of the world, and not to see the things that will[81] happen in the last days."

The meaning of the man from the sea

He answered me, 21 "I'll tell you the interpretation of the vision, and I'll also open to you the things about which you mentioned. 22 You've spoken of those who are left behind. This is the interpretation: 23 He that'll endure[82] the peril in that time will protect those who fall into danger, even those who have works and faith towards the Almighty. 24 Know therefore that those who are left behind are more blessed than those who are dead. 25 These are the interpretations of the vision: Whereas you saw a man coming up from the middle of the sea, 26 this is he whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages, who by his own self will deliver his creation. He'll direct those who are left behind. 27 Whereas you saw that out of his mouth came wind, fire, and storm, 28 and whereas he held neither spear, nor any weapon of war, but destroyed the assault of that multitude which came to fight against him, this is the interpretation: 29 Listen, the days come when the Most High will begin to deliver those who are on the earth. 30 Astonishment of mind will come on those who live on the earth. 31 One will plan to make war against another, city against city, place against place, people against people, and kingdom against kingdom. 32 It'll be, when these things happen, and the signs happen which I showed you before, then

77 **RV 13:4 · Note** So the Syriac and other Oriental versions.
78 **RV 13:10 · Note** So the Syriac and Arabic.
79 **RV 13:20 · Note** Lat. easier.
80 **RV 13:20 · Note** So the Syriac.
81 **RV 13:20 · Note** So the Syriac.
82 **RV 13:23 · Note** So the Syriac.

Readers' Version

my Son will be revealed, whom you saw as a man ascending. 33 It'll be, when all the nations hear his voice, every man will leave his own land and the battle they have against one another. 34 An innumerable multitude will be gathered together, as you saw, desiring to come and to fight against him. 35 But he'll stand on the top of Mt. Tsiyon (Zion). 36 Tsiyon will come, and will be shown to all men, being prepared and built, like you saw the mountain carved without hands. 37 My Son will rebuke the nations which have come for their wickedness, with deadly diseases that are like a storm, 38 and will rebuke them to their face with their evil thoughts, and the torments with which they'll be tormented, which are like a flame. He'll destroy them without labour by the law, which is like fire. 39 Whereas you saw that he gathered to himself another multitude that was peaceful, 40 these are the ten tribes which were led away out of their own land in the time of Hoshea (Hosea) the king, whom Shalmaneser the king of the Assyrians led away captive, and he carried them beyond the River, and they were taken into another land. 41 But they made this plan among themselves, that they'd leave the multitude of the heathen, and go out into a more distant region, where mankind had never lived, 42 that there they might keep their statutes which they hadn't kept in their own land. 43 They entered by the narrow passages of the river Perat (Euphrates). 44 Because the Most High then did signs for them, and stopped the springs of the River until they'd passed over. 45 Because through that country there was a long way to go, namely, of a year and a half. The same region is called Arzareth.[83] 46 Then they lived there until the latter time. Now when they begin to come again, 47 the Most High stops the springs of the River again, that they may go through. Therefore you saw the multitude gathered together with peace. 48 But those who are left behind of your people are those who are found within my holy border. 49 It'll be therefore when he'll destroy the multitude of the nations that are gathered together, he'll defend the people who remain. 50 Then will he show them very many wonders."

51 Then I said, "O sovereign master, explain this to me: Why have I seen the man coming up from the middle of the sea?"

52 He said to me, as no one can explore or know what's in the depths of the sea, even so no man on earth can see my Son, or those who are with him, except in the time of his[84] day. 53 This is the interpretation of the dream which you saw, and for this only you're enlightened about this, 54 for you've forsaken your own ways, and applied your diligence to mine, and have searched out my law. 55 You've ordered your life in wisdom, and have called understanding your mother. 56 Therefore I've shown you this, for there's a reward laid up with the Most High. It'll be, after another three days I'll speak other things to you, and declare to you mighty and wondrous things."

57 Then I went out and passed into the field, giving praise and thanks greatly to the Most High because of his wonders, which he did from time to time, 58 and because he governs the time, and such things as happen in their seasons. So I sat there three days.

God gives Ezra his final instructions

14:1 On the third day, I sat under an oak, and a voice came out of a bush near me, and said, "Ezra, Ezra!"

2 I said, "Here I am, master," and I stood up on my feet.

3 Then he said to me, "I revealed myself in a bush and talked with Mosheh (Moses) when my people were in bondage in Mitsrayim (Egypt). 4 I sent him, and he[85] led my people out of Mitsrayim. I brought him up to Mt. Sinay, where I kept him with me for many days. 5 I told him many wondrous things, and showed him the secrets of the times and the end of the seasons. I

83 RV 13:45 · Note That is, another land. See Deuteronomy 29:28.

84 RV 13:52 · Note So the Oriental versions. The Latin omits his.

85 RV 14:4 · Note Another reading is. I.

Readers' Version

commanded him, saying, 6 'Publish these openly, and keep these secret.' 7 Now I say to you: 8 Lay up in your heart the signs that I've shown, the dreams that you've seen, and the interpretations which you've heard; 9 for you'll be taken away from men, and from now on you'll live with my Son and with those who are like you, until the times have ended. 10 Because the world has lost its youth, and the times begin to grow old. 11 Because[86] the age is divided into twelve parts, and ten parts of it are already gone, even[87] the half of the tenth part. 12 There remain of it two parts after the middle of the tenth part. 13 Now therefore set your house in order, reprove your people, comfort the lowly among them, and instruct those of them who are wise,[88] and now renounce the life that's corruptible, 14 and let go of the mortal thoughts, throw away from you the burdens of man, put off now your weak nature, 15 lay aside the thoughts that are most grievous to you, and hurry to escape from these times. 16 Because worse evils than those which you've seen happen will be done after this. 17 Because look how much the world will be weaker through age, so much that more evils will increase on those who live in it. 18 Because the truth will withdraw itself further off, and falsehood will be near. Because now the[89] eagle which you saw in vision hurries to come."

Ezra asks to restore the scriptures

19 Then I replied, "Let me speak[90] in your presence, Oh master. 20 Listen, I'll go, as you've commanded me, and reprove the people who now live, but who'll warn those who'll be born afterward? Because the world is set in darkness, and those who live in it are without light. 21 Because your law has been burnt, therefore no one knows the things that are done by you, or the works that'll be done. 22 But if I've found favour before you, send the Holy Spirit to me, and I'll write all that's been done in the world since the beginning, even the things that were written in your law, that men may be able to find the path, and that those who'd live in the latter days may live."

23 He answered me and said, "Go your way, gather the people together, and tell them not to seek you for forty days. 24 But prepare for yourself many tablets, and take with you Serayah, Dabria, Shelemyah, Eytan, and Asiyel, these five, which are ready to write swiftly; 25 and come here, and I'll light a lamp of understanding in your heart which won't be put out until the things have ended about which you'll write. 26 When you're done, publish some things openly, and give some things privately to the wise. Tomorrow at this hour you'll begin to write."

Ezra's final appeal to the people

27 Then went I out, as he commanded me, and gathered all the people together, and said, 28 "Hear these words, Oh Yisrael (Israel)! 29 Our fathers at the beginning were foreigners in Mitsrayim (Egypt), and they were delivered from there, 30 and received the law of life, which they didn't keep, which you also have transgressed after them. 31 Then the land of Tsiyon (Zion) was given to you for a possession; but you yourselves and your ancestors have done unrighteousness, and haven't kept the ways which the Most High commanded you. 32 Because he's a righteous judge, in due time, he took from you what he'd given you. 33 Now you're here, and your kindred are among you. 34 Therefore if you'll rule over your own understanding and instruct your hearts, you'll be kept alive, and after death you'll obtain mercy. 35 Because after death the judgement will come, when we'll live again. Then the names of

86 RV 14:11 · Note Verses 11, 12 are omitted in the Syriac. The Aethiopic has Because the age is divided into ten parts, and is come to the tenth: and half of the tenth remains. Now etc.

87 RV 14:11 · Note Lat. and.

88 RV 14:13 · Note The Latin alone omits and...wise.

89 RV 14:18 · Note So the Oriental versions.

90 RV 14:19 · Note The Latin omits Let me speak.

Readers' Version

the righteous will become manifest, and the works of the ungodly will be declared. 36 Let no one therefore come to me now, nor seek me for forty days."

Ezra dictates the sacred books

37 So I took the five men, as he commanded me, and we went out into the field, and remained there. 38 The next day, a voice called me, saying, "Ezra, open your mouth, and drink what I give you to drink."

39 Then I opened my mouth, and a full cup was handed to me. It was full of something like water, but its colour was like fire. 40 I took it, and drank. When I'd drunk it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my chest, for my spirit retained its memory. 41 My mouth was opened, and shut no more. 42 The Most High gave understanding to the five men, and they wrote by course the things that were told them, in characters[91] which they didn't know, and they sat forty days. Now they wrote in the day-time, and at night they ate bread. 43 As for me, I spoke in the day, and by night I didn't hold my tongue. 44 So in forty days, ninety-four books were written.

45 When the forty days were fulfilled, that the Most High spoke to me, saying, "The first books that you've written, publish openly, and let the worthy and unworthy read them; 46 but keep the last seventy, that you may deliver them to those who are wise among your people; 47 for in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge."

48 I did so.

Warnings of war, famine, and destruction

15:1 "Listen, speak in the ears of my people the words of prophecy which I'll put in your mouth," says the master. 2 "Cause them to be written on paper, for they're faithful and true. 3 Don't be afraid of their plots against you. Don't let the unbelief of those who speak against you trouble you. 4 Because all the unbelievers will die in their unbelief.

5 "Listen," says the master, "I bring evils on the whole earth: sword, famine, death, and destruction. 6 Because wickedness has prevailed over every land, and their hurtful works have reached their limit. 7 Therefore," says the master, 8 "I'll hold my peace no more about their wickedness which they profanely commit, neither will I tolerate them in these things, which they wickedly practise. Listen, the innocent and righteous blood cries to me, and the souls of the righteous cry out continually. 9 I'll surely avenge them," says the master, "and will receive to me all the innocent blood from among them. 10 Listen, my people is led like a flock to the slaughter. I won't allow them now to live in the land of Mitsrayim, 11 but I'll bring them out with a mighty hand and with a high arm, and will strike Mitsrayim with deadly diseases, as before, and will destroy all its land."

12 Let Mitsrayim (Egypt) and its foundations mourn, because of the deadly diseases due to the chastisement and the punishment that God will bring on it. 13 Let the farmers that till the ground mourn, for their seeds will fail and their trees will be ruined through the blight and hail, and a terrible tempest. 14 Woe to the world and those who live in it! 15 Because the sword and their destruction draws near, and nation will rise up against nation to battle with weapons in their hands. 16 Because there'll be sedition among men, and growing strong against one another. In their might, they won't respect their king or the chief of their great ones. 17 Because a man will desire to go into a city, and won't be able. 18 Because of their pride the cities will be troubled, the houses will be destroyed, and men will be afraid. 19 A man will have no pity on his neighbours, but will assault their houses with the sword and plunder their goods, because of the lack of bread, and for great suffering.

20 "Listen," says God, "I call together all the kings of the earth to stir up those who are from the rising of the sun, from the south, from the east, and Levanon, to turn themselves one

91 **RV 14:42 · Note** So the Oriental versions.

Readers' Version

against another, and repay the things that they've done to them. 21 Just as they do yet this day to my chosen, so I'll do also, and repay into their bosom." The master God says: 22 "My right hand won't spare the sinners, and my sword won't cease over those who shed innocent blood on the earth. 23 A fire has gone out from his anger and has consumed the foundations of the earth and the sinners, like burnt straw. 24 Woe to those who sin and don't keep my commandments!" says the master. 25 "I won't spare them. Go your way, you rebellious children! Don't defile my sanctuary!" 26 Because the master knows all those who trespass against him, therefore he'll deliver them to death and destruction. 27 Because now evils have come on the whole earth, and you'll remain in them; for God won't deliver you, because you've sinned against him.

A vision of warring nations

28 Listen, a horrible sight appearing from the east! 29 The nations of the dragons of Arav will come out with many chariots. From the day that they set out, their hissing is carried over the earth, so that all those who'll hear them may also fear and tremble. 30 Also the Carmonians, raging in anger, will go out like the wild boars of the forest. They'll come with great power and join battle with them, and will devastate a portion of the land of the Assyrians with their teeth. 31 Then the dragons will have the upper hand, remembering their nature. If they'll turn themselves, conspiring together in great power to persecute them, 32 then these will be troubled, and keep silence through their power, and will turn and flee. 33 From the land of the Assyrians, an enemy in ambush will attack them and destroy one of them. On their army will be fear and trembling, and indecision on their kings.

34 Listen, clouds from the east, and from the north to the south! They're very horrible to look at, full of anger and storm. 35 They'll clash against one another. They'll pour out a heavy storm on the earth, even their own storm. There'll be blood from the sword to the horse's belly, 36 and to the thigh of man, and to the camel's hock. 37 There'll be fearfulness and great trembling on earth. They who see that anger will be afraid, and trembling will seize them. 38 After this, great storms will be stirred up from the south, from the north, and another part from the west. 39 Strong winds will arise from the east, and will shut it up, even the cloud which he raised up in anger; and the storm that was to cause destruction by the east wind will be violently driven towards the south and west. 40 Great and mighty clouds, full of anger, will be lifted up with the storm, that they may destroy all the earth and those who live in it. They'll pour out over every high and lofty one a terrible storm, 41 fire, hail, flying swords, and many waters, that all plains may be full, and all rivers, with the abundance of those waters. 42 They'll break down the cities and walls, mountains and hills, trees of the forest, and grass of the meadows, and their grain. 43 They'll go on steadily to Bavel and destroy her. 44 They'll come to it and surround it. They'll pour out the storm and all anger on her. Then the dust and smoke will go up to the sky, and all those who are around it'll mourn for it. 45 Those who remain will serve those who've destroyed it.

Judgement against Asia

46 You, Asia, who are partaker in the beauty of Bavel (Babylon), and in the glory of her person— 47 woe to you, you wretch, because you've made yourself like her. You've decked out your daughters for prostitution, that they might please and glory in your lovers, which have always lusted after you! 48 You've followed her who's hateful in all her works and inventions. Therefore God says, 49 "I'll send evils on you: widowhood, poverty, famine, sword, and pestilence, to lay waste your houses and bring you to destruction and death. 50 The glory of your power will be dried up like a flower when the heat rises that's sent over you. 51 You'll be weakened like a poor woman who's beaten and wounded, so that you won't be able to receive your mighty ones and your lovers. 52 Would I have dealt with you with such jealousy," says the master, 53 "if you hadn't always slain my

Readers' Version

chosen, exalting and clapping of your hands, and saying over their dead, when you were drunk?

54 "Beautify your face! 55 The reward of a prostitute will be in your bosom, therefore you'll be repaid. 56 Just as you'll do to my chosen," says the master, "even so God will do to you, and will deliver you to your adversaries. 57 Your children will die of hunger. You'll fall by the sword. Your cities will be broken down, and all your people in the field will perish by the sword. 58 Those who are in the mountains will die of hunger, eat their own flesh, and drink their own blood, because of hunger for bread and thirst for water. 59 You, unhappy above all others, will come and will again receive evils. 60 In the passage, they'll rush on the hateful city and will destroy some portion of your land, and mar part of your glory, and will return again to Bavel that was destroyed. 61 You'll be thrown down by them as stubble, and they'll be to you as fire. 62 They'll devour you, your cities, your land, and your mountains. They'll burn all your forests and your fruitful trees with fire. 63 They'll carry your children away captive, and will plunder your wealth, and mar the glory of your face."

No escape from the coming disasters

16:1 Woe to you, Bavel (Babylon), and Asia! Woe to you, Mitsrayim (Egypt) and Aram (Syria)! 2 Put on sackcloth and clothes of goats' hair, wail for your children and lament; for your destruction is at hand. 3 A sword has been sent on you, and who's there to turn it back? 4 A fire has been sent on you, and who's there to quench it? 5 Calamities are sent on you, and who's there to drive them away? 6 Can one drive away a hungry lion in the forest? Can one quench a fire in stubble, once it's begun to burn? 7 Can one turn back an arrow that's shot by a strong archer? 8 The master God sends the calamities, and who'll drive them away? 9 A fire will go out from his anger, and who may quench it? 10 He'll flash lightning, and who won't fear? He'll thunder, and who wouldn't tremble? 11 The master will threaten, and who won't be utterly broken in pieces at his presence? 12 The earth and its foundations quake. The sea rises up with waves from the deep, and its waves will be troubled, along with the fish in them, at the presence of the master, and before the glory of his power. 13 Because his right hand that uses the bow is strong—his arrows that he shoots are sharp, and won't miss when they begin to be shot into the ends of the world. 14 Listen, the calamities are sent out, and won't return again until they come on the earth. 15 The fire is kindled and won't be put out until it consumes the foundations of the earth. 16 Just as an arrow which is shot by a mighty archer doesn't return backward, even so the calamities that are sent out on earth won't return again. 17 Woe is me! Woe is me! Who'll deliver me in those days?

18 The beginning of sorrows, when there'll be great mourning; the beginning of famine, and many will perish; the beginning of wars, and the powers will stand in fear; the beginning of calamities, and all will tremble! What'll they do when the calamities come? 19 Listen, famine and deadly diseases, suffering and anguish! They're sent as scourges for correction. 20 But for all these things they won't turn them from their wickedness, nor be always mindful of the scourges. 21 Listen, food will be so cheap on earth that they'll think themselves to be in good condition, and even then calamities will grow on earth: sword, famine, and great confusion. 22 Because many of those who live on earth will perish of famine; and others who escape the famine, the sword will destroy. 23 The dead will be thrown out like dung, and there'll be no one to comfort them; for the earth will be left desolate, and its cities will be thrown down. 24 There'll be no farmer left to cultivate the earth or to sow it. 25 The trees will give fruit, but who'll gather it? 26 The grapes will ripen, but who'll tread them? Because in all places there'll be a great solitude; 27 for one man will desire to see another, or to hear his voice. 28 Because of a city there'll be ten left, and two of the field, who've hidden themselves in the thick groves, and in the crevices in the rocks. 29 As in an orchard of olives on every tree there

Readers' Version

may be left three or four olives, 30 or as when a vineyard is gathered, there are some clusters left by those who diligently search through the vineyard, 31 even so in those days, there'll be three or four left by those who search their houses with the sword. 32 The earth will be left desolate, and its fields will be for briers, and its roads and all her paths will grow thorns, because no sheep will pass along them. 33 The virgins will mourn, having no bridegrooms. The women will mourn, having no husbands. Their daughters will mourn, having no helpers. 34 Their bridegrooms will be destroyed in the wars, and their husbands will perish of famine.

God's people must prepare and remain faithful

35 Hear now these things, and understand them, you servants of the master. 36 Listen, the master's word: receive it. Don't doubt the things about which the master speaks. 37 Listen, the calamities draw near, and aren't delayed. 38 Just as a woman with child in the ninth month, when the hour of her delivery draws near, within two or three hours great pains surround her womb, and when the child comes out from the womb, there'll be no waiting for a moment, 39 even so the calamities won't delay coming on the earth. The world will groan, and sorrows will seize it on every side.

40 "O my people, hear my word: prepare for battle, and in those calamities be like strangers on the earth. 41 He who sells, let him be as he who flees away, and he who buys, as one who'll lose. 42 Let he who does business be as he who has no profit by it, and he who builds, as he who won't live in it, 43 and he who sows, as if he wouldn't harvest, so also he who prunes the vines, as he who won't gather the grapes, 44 those who marry, as those who'll have no children, and those who don't marry, as the widowed. 45 Because of this, those who labour, labour in vain; 46 because foreigners will harvest their fruits, plunder their goods, overthrow their houses, and take their children captive, for in captivity and famine they'll conceive their children. 47 Those who conduct business, do so only to be plundered. The more they adorn their cities, their houses, their possessions, and their own persons, 48 the more I'll hate them for their sins," says the master. 49 Just as a respectable and virtuous woman hates a prostitute, 50 so will righteousness hate iniquity, when she adorns herself, and will accuse her to her face, when he comes who'll defend him who diligently searches out every sin on earth.

51 Therefore don't be like her or her works. 52 Because yet a little while, and iniquity will be taken away out of the earth, and righteousness will reign over us.

God knows everyone's actions

53 Don't let the sinner say that he hasn't sinned; for God will burn coals of fire on the head of one who says "I haven't sinned before God and his glory." 54 Listen, the master knows all the works of men, their imaginations, their thoughts, and their hearts. 55 He said, "Let the earth be made," and it was made, "Let the sky be made," and it was made. 56 At his word, the stars were established, and he knows the number of the stars. 57 He searches the deep and its treasures. He's measured the sea and what it contains. 58 He's shut the sea in the middle of the waters, and with his word, he hung the earth over the waters. 59 He has spread out the sky like a vault. He's founded it over the waters. 60 He's made springs of water in the desert and pools on the tops of the mountains to send out rivers from the heights to water the earth. 61 He formed man, and put a heart in the middle of the body, and gave him breath, life, and understanding, 62 yes, God Almighty's spirit. He who made all things and searches out hidden things in hidden places, 63 surely he knows your imagination, and what you think in your hearts. Woe to those who sin, and try to hide their sin! 64 Because the master will exactly investigate all your works, and he'll put you all to shame. 65 When your sins are brought out before men, you'll be ashamed, and your own iniquities will stand as your accusers in that day. 66 What'll you do? Or how will you hide your sins before God and his angels? 67 Listen, God is the judge. Fear him! Stop sinning, and forget

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your iniquities, to never again commit them. So will God lead you out, and deliver you from all suffering.

Encouragement for those facing persecution

68 Because the burning anger of a great multitude is kindled over you, and they'll take away some of you, and feed you with that which is sacrificed to idols. 69 Those who consent to them will be held in derision and in contempt, and be trodden under foot. 70 Because there'll be in various places, and in the next cities, a great insurrection against those who fear the master. 71 They'll be like mad men, sparing none, but spoiling and destroying those who still fear the master. 72 Because they'll destroy and plunder their goods, and throw them out of their houses. 73 Then the trial of my elect will be made known, even as the gold that's tried in the fire. 74 Hear, my elect ones, says the master: "Listen, the days of suffering are at hand, and I'll deliver you from them. 75 Don't be afraid, and don't doubt, for God is your guide. 76 You who keep my commandments and precepts," says the master God, "don't let your sins weigh you down, and don't let your iniquities lift themselves up." 77 Woe to those who are choked with their sins and covered with their iniquities, like a field is choked with bushes, and its path covered with thorns, that no one may travel through! 78 It's shut off and given up to be consumed by fire.

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