

2 Esdras

Contents

THE SECOND BOOK OF
ESDRAS

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

1The second book of the prophet Esdras, the son of Saraïas, the son of Azaraias, the son of Helkias, the son of Salemas, the son of Sadoc, the son of Ahitob, ² the son of Achias, the son of Phinees, the son of Heli, the son of Amarias, the son of Aziei, the son of Marimoth, the son of Arna, the son of Ozias, the son of Borith, the son of Abissei, the son of Phinees, the son of Eleazar, ³ the son of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi, who was captive in the land of the Medes, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of the Persians.

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

13"The Lord says, truly I brought you through the sea, and where there was no path I made highways for you. I gave you Moses for a leader and Aaron for a priest. ¹⁴ I gave you light in a pillar of fire. I have done great wonders amongst you, yet you have forgotten me, says the Lord.

15"The Lord 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 have 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 would have been better for us to have served the 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 amongst you. I drove out the Canaanites, the

Pherezites, and the Philistines before you. What more shall I do for you?" says the Lord.

22The Lord 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 shall I do to you, O Jacob? You, Judah, would not obey me. I will turn myself to other nations, and I will give my name to them, that they may keep my statutes. ²⁵ Since you have forsaken me, I also will forsake you. When you ask me to be merciful to you, I will have no mercy upon you. ²⁶ Whenever you call upon me, I will not hear you, for you have defiled your hands with blood, and your feet are swift to commit murder. ²⁷ It is not as though you have forsaken me, but your own selves," says the Lord.

28The Lord 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 would be my people, and I would be your God, that you would be my children, and I would 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 will cast you out from my presence. ³¹ When you offer burnt sacrifices to me, I will turn my face from you, for I have rejected your solemn feast days, your new moons, and your circumcisions of the flesh. ³² I sent to you my servants the prophets, whom you have taken and slain, and torn their bodies in pieces, whose blood I will require from you," says the Lord.

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

38And now, father, behold with glory, and see the people that come from the east: ³⁹ to whom I will give for leaders, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Oseas, Amos, and Micheas, Joel, Abdias, and Jonas, ⁴⁰ Nahum, and Abacuc, Sophonias, Aggaeus, Zachary, and Malachy, who is also called the Lord's messenger.

2The Lord says, "I brought this people out of bondage. I gave them my commandments by my servants the prophets, whom they would not listen to, but made my counsels void. ² The mother who bore them says to them, 'Go your way, my children, for I am a widow and forsaken. ³ I brought you up

with gladness, and I have lost you with sorrow and heaviness, for you have sinned before the Lord God, and done that which is evil before me. ⁴ But now what can I do for you? For I am a widow and forsaken. Go your way, my children, and ask for mercy from the Lord.’ ⁵ As for me, O father, I call upon you for a witness in addition to the mother of these children, because they would not 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 amongst the heathen. Let their names be blotted out of the earth, for they have despised my covenant. ⁸ Woe to you, Assur, you who hide the unrighteous with you! You wicked nation, remember what I did to Sodom and Gomorrah, ⁹ whose land lies in lumps of pitch and heaps of ashes. That is what I will also do to those who have not listened to me,” says the Lord Almighty.

¹⁰The Lord says to Esdras, “Tell my people that I will give them the kingdom of Jerusalem, which I would have given to Israel. ¹¹ I will also take their glory back to myself, and give these the everlasting tabernacles which I had prepared for them. ¹² They will have the tree of life for fragrant perfume. They will neither labour nor be weary. ¹³ Ask, and you will 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 have left out evil, and created the good, for I live, says the Lord.

¹⁵“Mother, embrace your children. I will bring them out with gladness like a dove does. Establish their feet, for I have chosen you, says the Lord. ¹⁶ I will 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 have chosen you, says the Lord. ¹⁸ For your help, I will send my servants Esaias and Jeremy, after whose counsel I have 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 will 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 upon them and commit them to the grave, and I will 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 have given you, not one of them will perish, for I will require them from amongst your number. ²⁷ Don’t be anxious, for when the day of suffering and anguish comes, others will weep and be sorrowful, but you will rejoice and have abundance. ²⁸ The nations will envy you, but they will be able to do nothing against you, says the Lord. ²⁹ My hands will cover you, so that your children don’t see Gehenna.

¹ ³⁰ Be joyful, mother, with your children, for I will deliver you, says the Lord. ³¹ Remember your children who sleep, for I will bring them out of the secret places of the earth and show mercy to them, for I am merciful, says the Lord Almighty. ³² Embrace your children until I come, and proclaim mercy to them, for my wells run over, and my grace won't fail."

33I, Esdras, received a command from the Lord on Mount Horeb to go to Israel, but when I came to them, they rejected me and rejected the Lord's commandment. ³⁴ Therefore I say to you, O nations that hear and understand, "Look for your shepherd. He will give you everlasting rest, for he is near at hand who will come at the end of the age. ³⁵ Be ready for the rewards of the kingdom, for the everlasting 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 Lord, and be joyful, giving thanks to him who has called you to heavenly kingdoms. ³⁸ Arise and stand up, and see the number of those who have been sealed at the Lord's feast. ³⁹ Those who withdrew themselves from the shadow of the world have received glorious garments from the Lord. ⁴⁰ Take again your full number, O Zion, and make up the reckoning of those of yours who are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the law of the Lord. ⁴¹ The number of your children, whom you long for, is fulfilled. Ask the power of the Lord, that your people, which have been called from the beginning, may be made holy."

42I, Esdras, saw upon Mount Zion a great multitude, whom I could not number, and they all praised the Lord with songs. ⁴³ In the midst of them, there was a young man of a high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon 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 Lord?"

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

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

47So he answered and said to me, "He is the Son of God, whom they have confessed in the world."

T hen I began to praise those who stood so valiently for the name of the Lord.

¹ + 2:29 or, Hell.

48Then the angel said to me, “Go your way, and tell my people what kind of things, and how great wonders of the Lord God you have seen.”

3In the thirtieth year after the ruin of the city, I Salathiel, also called Esdras, was in Babylon, and lay troubled upon my bed, and my thoughts came up over my heart, ² for I saw the desolation of Zion and the wealth of those who lived at Babylon. 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 Lord, 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 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 came to pass 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“It came to pass that when those who lived upon the earth began to multiply, they also multiplied children, peoples, and many nations, and began again to be more ungodly than their ancestors. ¹³ It came to pass, when they did wickedly before you, you chose one from amongst them, whose name was Abraham. ¹⁴ You loved, and to him only you showed the end of the times secretly by night, ¹⁵ and made an everlasting covenant with him, promising him that you would never forsake his descendants. To him, you gave Isaac, and to Isaac you gave Jacob and Esau. ¹⁶ You set apart Jacob for yourself, but rejected Esau. Jacob became a great multitude. ¹⁷ It came to pass that when you led his descendants out of Egypt, you brought them up to Mount Sinai. 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 Jacob, and the commandment to the descendants of Israel.

20“Yet you didn’t take away from them their wicked heart, that your law might produce fruit in them. ²¹ For 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 heart of the people 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 is 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 the hands of your enemies.

²⁸“Then I said in my heart, ‘Are their deeds of those who inhabit Babylon any better? Is that why it gained dominion over Zion?’ ²⁹ For it came to pass when I came here, that I also saw impieties without number, and my soul saw many sinners in this thirtieth year, so that my heart failed me. ³⁰ For I have 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 have not shown how your way may be comprehended. Are the deeds of Babylon better than those of Zion? ³² Or is there any other nation that knows you beside Israel? Or what tribes have so believed your covenants as these tribes of Jacob? ³³ Yet their reward doesn’t appear, and their labour has no fruit, for I have 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 dwell in the world, and so will it be found which way the scale inclines. ³⁵ Or when was it that they who dwell on the earth have not sinned in your sight? Or what nation has kept your commandments so well? ³⁶ You will find some men by name who have kept your precepts, but you won’t find nations.”

⁴The 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 regarding this world. Do you think you can comprehend the way of the Most High?”

³Then I said, “Yes, my Lord.”

He answered me, “I have 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 will teach you why the heart is wicked.”

⁵I said, “Say on, my Lord.”

Then said he 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 is past.”

⁶Then answered I and said, “Who of the sons of men is able to do this, that you should ask me about such things?”

7He said to me, “If I had 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 exits² of hell? Or which are the entrances of paradise?’⁸ perhaps you would 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 have only asked you about the fire, wind, and the day, things which you have experienced, and from which you can’t be separated, and yet have you given me no answer about them.”

10He 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 is already worn out with the corrupted world understand incorruption?”

+ 4:11 So the Syriac and Aethiopic. The Latin is corrupt. When I heard these things, I fell on my face¹² and said to him, “It would have been better if we weren’t here at all, than that we should come here and live in the midst of ungodliness, and suffer, and not know why.”

13He answered me, and said,³ “A forest of the trees of the field went out, and took counsel together,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 like manner 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?”

19I answered and said, “It is 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.”

20Then answered he me, and said, “You have given a right judgement. Why don’t you judge your own case?²¹ For just as the ground is given to the wood, and the sea to its waves, even so those who dwell upon the earth may understand nothing but what is upon the earth. Only he who dwells above the heavens understands the things that are above the height of the heavens.”

²+ 4:7 So the Syriac. The Latin omits of hell? or which are the paths.

³+ 4:13 So the Oriental versions. The Latin is corrupt. See Judges 9:8.

22Then answered I and said, “I beg you, O Lord, why has the power of understanding been given to me? ²³ For it was not in my mind to be curious of the ways above, but of such things as pass by us daily, because Israel is given up as a reproach to the heathen. The people whom you have 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 will he then do for his name by which we are called? I have asked about these things.”

26Then he answered me, and said, “If you are alive you will see, and if you live long, you will marvel, for the world hastens quickly to pass away. ²⁷ For it is not able to bear the things that are promised to the righteous in the times to come; for this world is full of sadness and infirmities. ²⁸ For the evil ⁴ about which you asked me has been sown, but its harvest hasn’t yet come. ²⁹ If therefore that which is sown isn’t reaped, and if the place where the evil is sown doesn’t pass away, the field where the good is sown won’t come. ³⁰ For a grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, and how much wickedness it has produced to this time! How much more it will 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 will fill!”

33Then I answered and said, ⁵ “How long? When will these things come to pass? Why are our years few and evil?”

34He answered me, and said, “Don’t hurry faster than the Most High; for your haste is ⁶ for your own self, but he who is 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 ⁷ will we be here? When does the fruit of the threshing floor come?’ ³⁶ To them, Jeremiel the archangel answered, ‘When the number is fulfilled of those who are like you. For he has weighed the world in the balance. ³⁷ By measure, he has measured the times. By number, he has counted the seasons. He won’t ⁸ move or stir them until that measure is fulfilled.’”

38Then I answered, “O sovereign Lord, all of us are full of ungodiness. ³⁹ Perhaps it is for our sakes that the threshing time of the righteous is kept back—because of the sins of those who dwell on the earth.”

⁴ + 4:28 so the Syriac and Aethiopic.

⁵ + 4:33 So the chief oriental versions.

⁶ + 4:34 So the Syriac. The Latin is corrupt.

⁷ + 4:35 So the Syriac. The Latin has shall I hope on this fashion?

⁸ + 4:37 Syr. rest.

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

41Then I said, “No, Lord, that can it not.”

He said to me, “In Hades, the chambers of souls are like the womb. ⁴² For 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 will be shown those things which you desire to see.”

44Then I answered, “If I have found favour in your sight, and if it is possible, and if I am worthy, ⁴⁵ show me this also, whether there is more to come than is past, or whether the greater part has gone over us. ⁴⁶ For what is gone I know, but I don’t know what is to come.”

47He said to me, “Stand up on my right side, and I will explain the parable to you.”

48So 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.”

50Then said he 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.”

51Then I prayed, and said, “Do you think that I will live until that time? Or who will be alive in those days?”

52He 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.

5“Nevertheless, concerning the signs, behold, the days will come when those who dwell on earth will be taken ⁹ with 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 have heard long ago. ³ The land that you now see ruling will be a trackless waste, and men will see

⁹ + 5:1 So the syriac.

it desolate. ⁴ But if the Most High grants you to live, you will see what is 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 will rule whom those who dwell on the earth don't expect, and the birds will fly away together. ⁷ The Sodomite sea will cast out fish, and make a noise in the night, which many have not known; but all will hear its voice. ⁸ There will 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 will be sought 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 will say, 'No.' ¹² It will come to pass at that time that men will hope, but won't obtain. They will labour, but their ways won't prosper. ¹³ I am permitted to show you such signs. If you will pray again, and weep as now, and fast seven days, you will hear yet greater things than these."

14Then 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 had come to talk with me held me, comforted me, and set me on my feet.

16In the second night, it came to pass that ¹⁰ Phaltiel the captain of the people came to me, saying, "Where have you been? Why is your face sad? ¹⁷ Or don't you know that 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."

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

20So 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 Lord of all the woods of the earth, and of all the trees thereof, you have chosen one vine for yourself. ²⁴ Of all the lands of the world you have chosen one ¹¹ country for yourself. Of all the flowers of the world, you have chosen one lily for yourself. ²⁵ Of all the depths of the sea, you have filled one river for yourself. Of all built cities, you have consecrated Zion for yourself.

¹⁰ + 5:16 The Syriac has Psaltiel.

¹¹ + 5:24 After the Oriental versions. The Latin has pit.

²⁶ Of all the birds that are created you have named for yourself one dove. Of all the livestock that have been made, you have provided for yourself one sheep. ²⁷ Amongst all the multitudes of peoples you have gotten yourself one people. To this people, whom you loved, you gave a law that is approved by all. ²⁸ Now, O Lord, why have you given this one people over to many, and ¹² have dishonoured the one root above others, and have scattered your only one amongst 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.”

31Now when I had 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 will instruct you. Listen to me, and I will tell you more.”

33I said, “Speak on, my Lord.”

Then said he to me, “You are very troubled in mind for Israel’s sake. Do you love that people more than he who made them?”

34I said, “No, Lord; but I have 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.”

35He said to me, “You can’t.”

And I said, “Why, Lord? Why was I born? Why wasn’t my mother’s womb my grave, that I might not have seen the travail of Jacob, and the wearisome toil of the people of Israel?”

36He 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 will declare to you the travail that you asked to see.”

38And I said, “O sovereign Lord, 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?”

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

¹² + 5:28 After the Oriental versions. The Latin reads have prepared.