

THE MARTYRDOM OF ISAIAH

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE BOOK.

THE Martyrdom of Isaiah has not survived independently, but as one of the three constituents of the Ascension of Isaiah. In its present form we cannot be sure that the Ascension of Isaiah existed earlier than the latter half of the second century of our era. The three constituents of which it consists are the Martyrdom of Isaiah, the Vision of Isaiah, and the Testament of Hezekiah. The first of these with which we are here mainly concerned was of Jewish origin, and is of less interest than the other two, which were the work of Christian writers.

The Vision of Isaiah—vi—xi. 40 of the Ascension of Isaiah—is important for the knowledge it affords us of first-century beliefs in certain circles as to the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Seven Heavens, &c.

The long-lost Testament of Hezekiah—ii. 13 *b*—iv. 18 of the same work—is of very great value for the insight it gives us into the history of the Christian Church at the close of the first century. Its descriptions of the worldliness and lawlessness which prevailed among clergy, of the covetousness and vainglory and growing heresies among Christians generally, agree with similar accounts in 2 Timothy, 2 Peter, and Clement of Rome (*ad Cor.* iii, xxiii).

The Martyrdom of Isaiah—i. 1-2 *a*, 6 *b*-13 *a*, ii. 1-8, 10—iii. 12, v. 1 *c*-14—is fragmentary. It opens with Hezekiah's summons of Manasseh his son and of Isaiah into his presence in order that the former should receive his dying commands relative to his duty in the coming days (i. 1-2 *a*). But Isaiah assures Hezekiah that all his words will be of none effect inasmuch as Manasseh would become the servant of Beliar and he Isaiah would be sawn asunder by Manasseh, and that no action of Hezekiah's could prevent his martyrdom (i. 6 *b*-13 *a*). On the death of Hezekiah Manasseh turned to evil ways and became the servant of Beliar and caused Israel to sin in every form of witchcraft, and fornication and lawlessness (ii. 1-7). And Isaiah withdrew first to Bethlehem and then to the mountains beyond it, where he and the prophets with him spent two years mourning and fasting because of the apostasy of Israel (ii. 10-16). The false prophet Belchira discovers his retreat and accuses him before Manasseh on three grounds: that he had prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, that he had claimed to see God, though Moses had said that no man could see God and live, and that he had called Jerusalem Sodom, and its princes and people Gomorrah (iii. 1-12). On account of these things Manasseh caused Isaiah to be sawn asunder with a wood saw, Belchira and the false prophets standing by and deriding him (v. 1 *c*-14).

§ 2 TITLE.

The Martyrdom of Isaiah has, as we have seen, been preserved to us only in a fragmentary form as part of the Ascension of Isaiah. The whole book was known under several names. (a) Ἀπόκρυφον Ἰσαίου is the designation given to it early in the third century by Origen in his commentary on Matthew xiii. 57 (Lommatzsch, iii. 49) καὶ Ἰσαίας δὲ πεπερίσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ λαοῦ ἱστορηται. εἰ δὲ τις οὐ προσέεται τὴν ἱστορίαν διὰ τὸ ἐν τῷ ἀποκρύφῳ Ἰσαίῳ αὐτὴν φέρεσθαι πιστευσάτω τοῖς ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ἑβραίους οὕτω γεγραμμένοις (Heb. xi. 37). See also *Ep. ad Afric.* 9, and the *Constitutiones Apostolicae* vi. 26. (b) It was known in the fourth century as τὸ Ἀναβατικὸν Ἰσαίου according to Epiphanius, *Haer.* xl. 2, who says that it was used by his Archontici and his Hieracites. Cf. also lxvii. 3. In like manner Jerome (*Comm. in Isaiam* lxiv. 4) calls it his *Ascensio Isaiae*. (c) Again it went by the name Ὁρασις Ἰσαίου as may be inferred from the texts of E^s and L² of vi. 1. This designation appears in Montfaucon's and Pitra's list of Canonical and Apocryphal books, and was used by Euthymius Zigabenus in the eleventh century when anathematizing his Massaliani (*Victoria de Massal.* Anath. iv). This title belongs specifically and probably originally only to vi.—xi. 40. (d) Finally, it is named the Διαθήκη Ἐζεκιῶν by Cedrenus I. 120-1. That such a work was incorporated in the *Ascension* might also be inferred from i. 2 *b*-5 *a*, which describe the contents of Hezekiah's vision. This description is applicable to the Christian Apocalypse iii. 13 *b*-iv. 18 and to it alone. The fact, too, that Cedrenus quotes partially iv. 12, 14 and refers to iv. 15-18 of this very section points to the conclusion that such a book existed independently.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ISAIAH

§ 3. THE VERSIONS.

Since the Martyrdom of Isaiah was originally an independent work, we shall deal here only with the Versions of this work and not with those that reproduce the rest of the Ascension of Isaiah.

(a) *The Greek Version.* This version existed in two forms, G¹ and G², as early as the third century. The former is lost, but its characteristics are reproduced by the Ethiopic (= E) and the first Latin Version (= L¹). Phrases and sentences of G¹ from every chapter of the Ascension of Isaiah, except iv, have been preserved by the 'Greek Legend'. This work was found by von Gebhardt in a Greek MS. of the twelfth century, no. 1534 in the National Library at Paris, and published by him in the *ZfWT* 330-53. In my edition of the *Ascension of Isaiah* it is reprinted from Gebhardt's text with one or two necessary emendations, and all the phrases taken directly from G¹ are printed in thick type, and the chapter and verse placed in the margin. Of G² an actual fragment was discovered by Grenfell and Hunt in a papyrus of the fifth or sixth century. On this fragment see my edition, pp. xxviii-xxxI, and for the fragment itself, pp. 84-95. G¹ and G² are in turn derived from a lost archetype G, which was known in its original form to the writer of the *Opus Imperfectum*: see pp. xl-xlii of my edition.

(b) *The Ethiopic Version.* This is the only version that preserves in its entirety the Ascension of Isaiah. It is, as I have shown in my edition, derived from G¹. It is a very faithful reproduction of the Greek. So closely does it follow the latter that it can almost always be retranslated without difficulty. Like every version, however, with a long history behind it, it has its defects. As yet only three MSS., *abc*, have been brought to Europe from Abyssinia. The first of these was edited by Laurence, *Ascensio Isaiae Vatis*, Oxoniae, 1819, and the whole three by Dillmann, *Ascensio Isaiae Aethiopice et Latine*, Lipsiae, 1877, and by the present writer, *The Ascension of Isaiah translated from the Ethiopic Version, which, together with the new Greek Fragment, the Latin Versions, and the Latin Translation of the Slavonic, is here published in full*, London, 1900. The last work is based on a fresh and more accurate collation of the MSS.

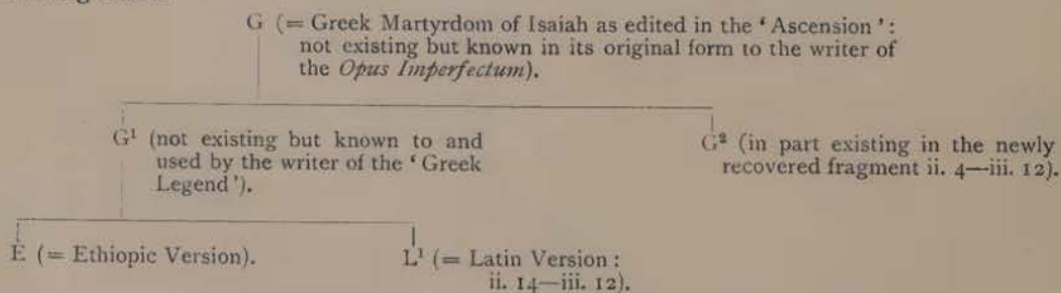
(c) *The Latin Versions.* There were two Latin versions, one of which, L², embraces vi-xi. 1-19, 23-40, the other, L¹, only ii. 14-iii. 13, vii. 1-19. The former was printed by Antonius de Fantis at Venice in 1522 from a MS. now unknown, and reprinted by Gieseler in 1832 and by Dillmann as an appendix to his edition in 1877, and by the present writer with critical notes and corrections in his edition of 1900.

The two smaller fragments, i. e. L¹, which were first edited by Mai in 1828 from a sixth-century Vatican MS., were re-edited by the present writer from a fresh collation of the MS.

A study of E, L¹, L², the 'Greek Legend', and of the Slavonic Version (= S) which exists only for vi-xi proves that E L¹ and the 'Greek Legend' go back to a definite Greek text, which we might name G¹, and that S L² go back similarly to G².

§ 4. RELATIONS OF THE VARIOUS VERSIONS.

Some of these relations have already been briefly indicated in the preceding section. The student will find them dealt with at length in my edition, pp. xviii-xxxiii, xl-xlii. As regards the Martyrdom of Isaiah the textual affinities of all the textual authorities can be shortly summarized in the following table:—



§ 5. THE EXTENT OF THE MARTYRDOM OF ISAIAH.

All writers save Laurence recognize a plurality of authorship in the Ascension of Isaiah, and the independent origin of the Martyrdom of Isaiah. Ewald was the first to distinguish the works of three different authors. Ewald's analysis was remodelled and issued in the following form by Dillmann:—

- i. The Martyrdom of Isaiah, of Jewish origin: ii. 1-iii. 12, v. 2-14.
- ii. The Vision of Isaiah, of Christian origin: vi. 1-xi. 1, 23-40.

INTRODUCTION

iii. The above two constituents were put together by a Christian writer, who prefixed i. 1, 2, 4*b*-13 and appended xi. 42, 43.

iv. Finally a Christian editor incorporated the two sections iii. 13-v. 1 and xi. 2-22, and added also i. 3, 4*a*, v. 15, 16, xi. 41.

Dillmann's analysis has on the whole been accepted by Harnack, Schürer, Deane, and Beer. All these scholars have been influenced by Gebhardt's statement that in his 'Greek Legend' there is not a trace of iii. 13-v. 1, xi. 2-22, and that, accordingly, these sections were absent from the text when the 'Greek Legend' was composed. Thus according to Gebhardt, Dillmann's analysis is confirmed by external evidence.

But Gebhardt's statement is wrong; for as I have shown in my edition the writer of the 'Greek Legend' was acquainted with both these sections, inasmuch as he incorporates phrases from iv. 2, 6, 8, 14, 19, xi. 19, 20. Hence Dillmann's analysis can no longer be maintained. With the full discussion of the questions at issue we are not here concerned. It will be sufficient to state the conclusions at which the present writer has arrived in his edition, and these are: 'The conditions of the problem are sufficiently satisfied by supposing a single editor, who had three works at his disposal, the Martyrdom of Isaiah of Jewish origin, and the two independent works, the Testament of Hezekiah (= iii. 13*b*-iv. 18), and the Vision of Isaiah (= vi-xi. 40), of Christian origin. These he reduced or enlarged as it suited his purpose, and put them together as they stand in our text. Amongst the obvious editorial additions are i. 2*b*-6*a*, 13*a*, ii. 9, iii. 13*a*, iv. 1*a*, 19-v. 1*a*, 15, 16, xi. 41-3.'

We have herein given the extent of the Testament of Hezekiah, and the Vision of Isaiah, but that of the Martyrdom requires investigation. According to Dillmann the latter consists of ii. 1-iii. 12, v. 1*b*-14. But with this view the present writer cannot agree. Other fragments survive in Chapter i. Thus in ii. 1 the words 'he did not remember the commands of Hezekiah' suggest the questions: What commands are these? and when were they given? Now we find the probable answer to the latter question in i. 1, 2*a*, in which Hezekiah summons Manasseh before him in the presence of Isaiah and Josab. The answer to the former question is still preserved in our text, though obscurely, owing to editorial additions. Thus in i. 6*b* we learn that Isaiah gave certain commands to Manasseh. These are referred to in i. 7, ii. 1. What these commands were is not recorded in our book, but they are found in the Latin fragments preserved in the *Opus Imperfectum*, which go back *not to our text but to the original Martyrdom*. There we find the explanation of many difficulties in our text. Thus in the first place we discover the reason for Isaiah summoning Manasseh in the twenty-sixth year; for the Latin supplies it: 'cum aegrotasset Ezechias in tempore quodam.' In the next place the object with which Hezekiah summoned Manasseh is not, as in our text, to become the depository of certain visions i. 2*b*-6*a*, but to receive directions as to his religious duties and the government of the kingdom: 'Vocavit Ezechias filium suum Manassen et coepit ei mandare, quod debeat Deum timere, quomodo regere regnum et alia multa.' But the final editor of the Ascension of Isaiah, whose interests were centred in the visions, omitted these words, and attributed quite a different object to Hezekiah's summons of Manasseh. Hezekiah, he tells us, in i. 2, 6, summoned Manasseh 'in order to deliver unto him the words of righteousness which the king himself had seen' (i. e. iii. 13*b*-iv. 18), and also those which Isaiah the son of Amoz had given to him (vi-xi. 40). Thus i. 2*b*-6*a* was added by the final editor to introduce the Testament of Hezekiah and the Vision of Isaiah.

We have now seen that i. 1, 2*a*, 6*b* are derived from the original Martyrdom, but still more of this chapter comes from this source—indeed from 6*b* to the close. This follows from the Latin passage in the *Opus Imperfectum* which either quotes or implies a knowledge of i. 7, 10, 12, 13. This passage, wherein I have italicized the words that are drawn from our book, runs as follows: 'Providentia autem Dei sic eum dispensavit vocari, quia (ii. 1) *obliturus fuerat omnem conversationem patris sui sanctam et omnia beneficia Dei pro merito eius collata in ipsum, et (i. 8, ii. 4) stimulatus ab insurgente diabolo. . . . Denique cum aegrotasset Ezechias in tempore quodam, et venisset ad eum Esaias propheta visitandum, (i. 1, 6*b*) vocavit Ezechias filium suum Manassen et coepit ei mandare, quod debeat Deum timere, quomodo regere regnum et alia multa. (i. 7) Et dixit ad eum Esaias: vere quia non descendunt verba tua in cor eius, sed et me ipsum oportet per manum eius interfici: (i. 10, 12) Quod audiens Ezechias volebat filium suum interficere, dicens: Quia melius est me sine filio mori quam talem filium relinquere, qui et Deum exasperet et sanctos eius persequatur. Tenuit autem eum vix Esaias propheta, dicens, (i. 13) irritum faciat Deus consilium tuum hoc.'*

(Printed with Chrysostom's works, vi, pp. xx-xxi.—Ed. Montfaucon.)

§ 6. THE DATE.

The Martyrdom is quoted by the *Opus Imperfectum*, Ambrose, Jerome, Origen, Tertullian, and in all probability by Justin Martyr (*Dial. c. Tryph.* cxx. 14, 15 *περὶ τὸν θάνατον Ἡσαίου ὃν πρόλιον ξυλίνῳ ἐπρίσται*). It was not improbably known to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 37). This

THE MARTYRDOM OF ISAAH

brings us, if the last reference is trustworthy, to the first century A. D. And this appears to be the right date; for it is unlikely that works written by Jews in the second century should attain to circulation in the Christian Church.

§ 7. AUTHORSHIP AND ORIGINAL LANGUAGE.

The author was a Jew. The details as to the death of Isaiah at the hands of Manasseh are found in the Talmud (*Jebamoth* 49*b*) in a form closely related to that in our text. Thus it is told that Rabbi Simeon ben 'Azzai found in Jerusalem an account of the death of Isaiah at the hands of Manasseh. Manasseh condemned Isaiah to death because he had claimed to see God (Isa. vi 1 sqq.), whereas according to the Law it was declared that no man could see God and live (Exod. xxxiii. 20). The same passage tells also of Isaiah taking refuge in a cedar tree, and of the cedar being sawn in sunder and Isaiah within it. Another version of the same legend is given in the Jerusalem Talmud (Sanh. x), and still another in Targum on Isaiah quoted by Jolowicz (*Die Himmelfahrt und Vision des Propheten Jesajas*, p. 9). See *Jewish Encyc.*, viii. 636.

It is very probable that the original was written in Hebrew. The Jewish origin of the legend points in this direction, and particularly its recurrence in the Talmud. The following facts also lend confirmation to this hypothesis. In ii. 1 there is a paronomasia of the words 'Manasseh . . . did not remember' = when retranslated into Hebrew: מנשה נשח. Again in i. 8 Malchira is probably a transliteration of מלכירע or מכירע as S. A. Cook has pointed out. In iii. 2 we have the familiar Hebraism καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἐλθεῖν . . . καὶ. Finally, 'wooden saw', i. e. πρίων ξύλων in v. 11, 14, appears to be a mistranslation of עץ משר, which means a saw for sawing wood. In the Greek Legend iii. 14 it is described as πρίων σίδηρος.

§ 8. THE MARTYRDOM OF ISAAH IN JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN LITERATURE AND THE ORIENTAL INFLUENCES APPARENT IN IT.

The legend of the Martyrdom of Isaiah took its origin most probably in 2 Kings xxi. 16. Although Josephus does not mention it, it was certainly a Jewish tradition. In Sanh. 103*b* it is said that Manasseh put Isaiah to death; and in *Jebamoth* 49*b* that Isaiah was put to death by Manasseh because he declared that he had seen God. There, as in our text, Isaiah is charged with contradicting the words of Moses in Exod. xxxiii. 20. His death also by being sawn in sunder is also recounted. This account is probably drawn ultimately from the Semitic original of our text. Another form of the Legend appears in Jerusalem Talmud (Sanh. x).

The legend was known in the Apostolic age, if, as is generally assumed, we have in Heb. xi. 37 (ἐπίσθησαν) a reference to the specific mode of Isaiah's martyrdom. But, even if this is doubtful, there is the evidence of the *Ascension* (i. 1, 2*a*, 6—iii. 12, v. 1*b*—14) which cannot be much later than the middle of the first century A. D. In the next century Justin Martyr most probably quotes from our text (see note on v. 11), while somewhat later frequent references and quotations are found in Origen.

But though the legend is undoubtedly Jewish, it appears to have been derived from Eastern sources. According to the Zamyâd Yast 46 (*S. B. E.* xxiii. 297), Bundahis xxxi. 5, xxxiv. 4 (*op. cit.* v. 131, 150) Yima reigned 616½ years and was then dethroned for his blind pride in accepting divine worship and sawn in two by the serpent of three heads, Azhi Dahâka. In the Persian work 'The History of King Djemchid and the Devas' which Larionoff translated into French from the Persian (*Journal Asiat.* pp. 59—83, 1889) we find a nearly related legend. When Djemchid's throne was seized by Zohak, the man of serpents, he fled into the wilderness. One hundred years later Ahriman and Biver (i. e. Zohak) having come upon him there, God caused a tree to open itself, in order that Djemchid might conceal himself therein. Notwithstanding, through the help of Iblis they discovered his hiding-place and had the tree sawn in twain, and so Djemchid was killed. This legend appears to have directly influenced the Talmudic accounts of the martyrdom of Isaiah exactly in the points wherein they differ from that in our text.

§ 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

For complete bibliography see the present writer's edition of the *Ascension of Isaiah* and Schürer³ iii. 283—5.

(a) The chief editions of the texts of the Ancient Versions will be found under § 3.

(b) *Critical Inquiries* (dealing with the *Ascension of Isaiah* as a whole and with its parts). Laurence, *Ascensio Isaiae Vatis*, 1819, pp. 141—80; Nitzsch, *Stud. und Krit.*, 1830, pp. 209—46; Lücke, *Einleitung in die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 1852, pp. 274—302; Dillmann, *Ascensio Isaiae*, 1877, pp. v—xviii; Stokes, art. 'Ascension of Isaiah' in *Dict. of Christian Biography*, 1882, iii. 298—301; Deane, *Pseudepigrapha*, 1891, pp. 236—75; Harnack, *Gesch. der altchristl. Litteratur*, i. 854—6; ii. 573—9, 714; Clemen, 'Die Himmelfahrt des Jesaja,' *ZfWT*, 1896, pp. 388—415; 1897, pp. 455—65; Robinson, 'Ascension of Isaiah' in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, ii. 499—501; Beer, *Apok. und Pseudep.*, 1900, ii. 119—23; Littmann, *Jewish Encyc.*, 1904, vi. 642—3.

(c) *Editions*. Laurence, *Ascensio Isaiae Vatis*, 1819; Dillmann, *Ascensio Isaiae*, 1877; Charles, *The Ascension of Isaiah translated from the Ethiopic Version, which, together with the New Greek Fragment, the Latin Versions, and the Latin Translation of the Slavonic Version, is here published in full*, 1900.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ISAIAH

1 And it came to pass in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah that he
 2 called Manasseh his son. Now he was his only one. And he called him into the presence of
 3 Isaiah the son of Amoz the prophet; and into the presence of Jôsâb the son of Isaiah.
 6 b, 7 And whilst he (*Hezekiah*) gave commands, Jôsâb the son of Isaiah standing by, Isaiah said to
 8 Hezekiah the king, but not in the presence of Manasseh only did he say unto him: 'As the Lord
 9 liveth, whose name has not been sent into this world, [and as the Beloved of my Lord liveth], and as
 10 the Spirit which speaketh in me liveth, all these commands and these words shall be made of none
 11 effect by Manasseh thy son, and through the agency of his hands I shall depart mid the torture of
 12 my body. And Sammael Malchîrâ shall serve Manasseh, and execute all his desire, and he shall
 13 become a follower of Beliar rather than of me. And many in Jerusalem and in Judaea he shall
 14 cause to abandon the true faith, and Beliar shall dwell in Manasseh, and by his hands I shall be
 15 sawn asunder.' And when Hezekiah heard these words he wept very bitterly, and rent his garments,
 16 and placed earth upon his head, and fell on his face. And Isaiah said unto him: 'The counsel of
 17 Sammael against Manasseh is consummated: nought shall avail thee.' And on that day Hezekiah

1. 1. 'in the twenty-fifth year', according to the *Greek Legend*.

2. **Isaiah the son of Amoz the prophet.** Amoz מְאֹז the father of Isaiah seems here to be confused with Amos the prophet עָמוֹס. The LXX uses 'Amós for both, and the Asc. Isa. iv. 22 and Megilla 10^b both regard Isaiah as a prophet's son. According to the latter the father of Isaiah and King Amaziah were brothers.

Jôsâb, i. e. Shear-jashub, Isa. vii. 3.

the son of Isaiah. The editorial addition 2^b-6^a that here follows is omitted as being of Christian origin. See my edition, p. 2.

6. **commands.** Cf. ii. 1.

7. **and as the Beloved . . . liveth.** This is an addition by the Christian editor who thus converts a reference to the transcendence of God into a doctrinal statement about the Trinity.

depart. + 'from life', *Greek Legend*, i. 8.

8. **Sammael** שַׁמַּאֵל. Originally an archangel, he enticed the serpent to tempt Eve in order to make the earth his kingdom, Jalkut Shim Beresh. 25. He became a chief Satan, Debarim rabba, 11; and the angel of death, Targ. Jer. on Gen. iii. 6. See Weber's *Jüd. Theologie*, 169, 218, 219, 253.

Malchîrâ. This appears to be a surname of Sammael, cf. Asc. Isa. xi. 41 'Sammael Satan.' But it also appears as a variant of the name Balchîrâ in v. 8 below. S. A. Cook in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Jan. 1901, p. 168, suggests מַלְכִּירָע or מַלְאֲכִירָע, 'evil king' or 'evil angel'. Beer in Kautzsch's *Pseudepigr. des A. T.* suggests that that Bechira (see ii. 12) = Bevir, the other name of Zohak, the man of serpents, the associate of Ahriman in the persecution of Djemchid.

serve Manasseh. The idea of demons being at the behest of men seems out of place here. On the other hand Belchîrâ's service of Manasseh is equally unsuitable.

Beliar. Cf. i. 9; ii. 4; iii. 11; v. 4 (*ac*). E corruptly reads 'Berial'. He is the chief of the evil spirits, and the opponent of Christ, 2 Cor. vi. 15; cf. Jub. i. 20, xv. 33; Sib. Or. ii. 167 (to come as Antichrist), iii. 63-73, (to proceed from the emperors of Rome, working signs and deceiving the elect, and finally to be burnt up); Test. xii Patr. *passim*. For the etymology see *Encycl. Bibl.* 525-7.

Note Sammael's relation to Beliar. They are alike in taking possession of Manasseh, ii. 1 and i. 9, iii. 11. But Sammael is inferior, as he exerts himself to make Manasseh subject to Beliar i. 8 (ii. 1, 4).

9. **Beliar.** 'Satan,' *Greek Legend* i. 9.

10. Cf. *Gk. Leg.* i. 10.

11. **Sammael.** 'Satan,' *Gk. Leg.* i. 11.

12. **And on that day.** 'on this day and' *b c*, 'on those words' *a*; 'and in that hour' *Gk. Leg.*

I-II. 1. We may compare for the diction as well as the sense of many clauses in I-II. 1 the *Opus Imperfectum in Matthaum Homil. I* (printed with Chrysostom's works, vol. VI, pp. xx-xxi, Montfaucon). 'Providentia autem Dei sic eum dispensavit vocari, quia obliturus fuerat omnem conversationem patris sui (ii. 1) sanctam et . . . stimulatus ab insurgente diabolo (i. 8, ii. 4) . . . Denique cum aegrotasset Ezechias in tempore quodam, et venisset ad eum Esaias propheta visitandum, vocavit Ezechias filium suum Manassen et coepit ei mandare (i. 1, 6^b), quod debeat Deum timere, quomodo regere regnum et alia multa. Et dixit ad eum Esaias: vere quia non descendunt verba tua in cor eius; sed et me ipsum oportet per manum eius interfici (i. 7). Quod audiens Ezechias volebat filium suum interficere (i. 12) dicens: quia melius est me sine filio mori quam talem filium relinquere, qui et Deum exasperet et sanctos eius persequatur. Tenuit autem eum vix Esaias propheta, dicens: irritum faciat Deus consilium tuum (i. 13) hoc, videns Ezechiae religionem, quia plus amabat Deum quam filium suum.'

8-12. For a different account of this interview of Isaiah and Hezekiah see Berachoth, 10 a. 'What is the meaning of the words "Thou shalt die and not live?" "Thou shalt die in this world and not live in the next world." He said: "Wherefore is all this?" He answered him: "Because thou hast not preached fruitfulness and increase." He rejoined: "Because it was revealed to me by the Holy Spirit that unprofitable children would spring from me." He replied: "What concern hast thou in the secrets of the All Merciful? Thou shouldst have done what was commanded thee, and the Holy One, blessed be He, may do what pleases Him." He replied thereto: "Give me thy daughter: perhaps my merits and thine together will bring it about that profitable children may spring from me." Then replied he: "The judgment is already determined regarding thee."'

13 resolved in his heart to slay Manasseh his son. And Isaiah said to Hezekiah: ['The Beloved hath made of none effect thy design, and] the purpose of thy heart shall not be accomplished, for with this calling have I been called [and I shall inherit the heritage of the Beloved].'
 2¹ And it came to pass after that Hezekiah died and Manasseh became king, that he did not remember the commands of Hezekiah his father but forgat them, and Sammael abode in Manasseh and clung fast to him. And Manasseh forsook the service of the God of his father, and he served Satan and his angels and his powers. And he turned aside the house of his father which had been before the face of Hezekiah (from) the words of wisdom and from the service of God. And Manasseh turned aside his heart to serve Beliar; for the angel of lawlessness, who is the ruler of this world, is Beliar, whose name is Matanbûchûs. And he delighted in Jerusalem because of Manasseh, and he made him strong in apostatizing (Israel) and in the lawlessness which was spread abroad in Jerusalem. And witchcraft and magic increased and divination and auguration, and fornication, [and adultery], and the persecution of the righteous by Manasseh and [Belachîrâ, and] Tobia the Canaanite, and John of Anathoth, and by (Zadok) the chief of the works. And the rest of the acts, behold they are written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. And when Isaiah the son of Amoz saw the lawlessness which was being perpetrated in Jerusalem and the worship of Satan and his wantonness, he withdrew from Jerusalem and settled in Bethlehem of Judah. And there also there was much lawlessness, and withdrawing from Bethlehem he settled on a mountain in a desert place. [And Micaiah the prophet, and the aged Ananias, and Joel and Habakkuk, and his son Jôsâb, and many of the faithful who believed in the ascension into heaven, withdrew and settled on the mountain.] They were all clothed with garments of hair, and they were all prophets. And they had nothing with them but were naked, and they all lamented with a great lamentation because of the going astray of Israel. And these eat nothing save wild herbs which they gathered on the mountains, and having cooked them, they lived thereon together with Isaiah the prophet. And they spent two years of days on the mountains and hills. [And after this, whilst they were in the desert, there was a certain man in Samaria named Belchîrâ, of the family of Zedekiah, the son of Chenaan, a false prophet whose dwelling was in Bethlehem. Now †Hezekiah† the son of Chanânî, who was the brother of his father, and in the days of Ahab king of Israel had been the teacher of the 400 prophets of Baal,

13. ['The Beloved hath . . . Beloved']. Editorial additions like 2^b-6^a.

II. 1. **Manasseh . . . forgat.** Cf. for the play on the words Gen. xii. 51; also the *Opus Imperf.*, and *Gk. Leg.* iii. 2. **commands of Hezekiah.** See i. 6. **Sammael.** See i. 8 (note).

2. *Gk. Leg.* iii. 2. A Jewish legend makes Manasseh remove the sacred name from the scriptures.

3. So the Ethiopic text. Cf. *Gk. Leg.* iii. 3 ἐξέκλινε πάντα τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ λατρείας καὶ προσκυνήσεως. Beer not so well renders 'changed in the house . . . all that had been', &c. from, supplied as in *Gk. Leg.* iii. 3.

4. **Beliar the angel of lawlessness.** Cf. Asc. Isa. iv. 2 'lawless king'; 2 Thess. ii. 3 'the man of lawlessness' (= the Antichrist).

Beliar the ruler of this world. Cf. John xii. 31, xvi. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 4; also Eph. vi. 12 κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, also ii. 2.

Matanbûchûs. ac. 'Metanbakas' b. In v. 3 it occurs as Mechêmbêchûs. √ *Soussef* 385 n. 1. in apostatizing. But ἐν ἀποστάσει ἔσθ'. Cf. 2 Kings xxi. 9.

5. See 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6 (LXX) ἐκκληθονίζετο καὶ ἐφάρμακεῖτο καὶ οἰωνίζετο, also 2 Kings xxi. 6. Cf. *Gk. Leg.* iii. 3. **and adultery.** > ἔ and *Gk. Leg.* iii. 3. **persecution.** Cf. 2 Kings xxi. 16.

Belachîrâ and. > ἔ. A premature mention, see ii. 12.

Anathoth. See *Encycl. Bibl.* in loc.

Zadok. ἔ only.

6. 2 Kings xxi. 17, &c.

7. **wantonness** E; πομπήν ἔ; ἀσωτίαν *Gk. Leg.* iii. 8.

9. An editorial addition from Asc. Isa. vi. 7; 'withdrew . . . mountain' is from ver. 8 here; 'his son' and 'many of the faithful . . . heaven' are the editor's own.

11. **herbs.** Cf. 2 Kings iv. 38 ff. This asceticism was a preparation for visions and revelations. Cf. Dan. x. 2, 3; 4 Ezra ix. 26, xii. 51.

12-16. **Belchîrâ and his history.** 12-16 is an insertion and interrupts the narrative of ii. 11-iii. 1.

12. **Belchîrâ,** ii. 5, 12, 16; iii. 1, 6, 12; v. 2, 3, 4, 5, 12. The Greek Papyrus gives four different forms Βελτχειάρ, Βελχειρά, Βεχειρά, and Μελχειρά. The *Gk. Leg.* gives Βεχειράς (iii. 10), the Latin *Bechira*. The Ethiopic varies even more. The most probable original is Melchîrâ or Melchiah. See i. 8 (note). Beer prefers Bechira. But the *Gk. Leg.* often mentions a false prophet Μελχίας. Perhaps there was a confusion between the demon's and the false prophet's names. Or more probably the tempter and tormentor of the prophet is regarded as an impersonation of the devil. See v. 9, 10. Isaiah calls him Διάβολος in *Gk. Leg.* iii. 18. Ambrose on Ps. cxviii. uses diabolus. See v. 4 (note).

Zedekiah, the son of Chenaan. See 1 Kings xxii. 11.

Bethlehem. 'Bethany' ἔ.

†**Hezekiah† the son of Chanânî** E. Read 'Zedekiah,' as in *Gk. Frag.* For the variation cf. *Chron. Pasch.* 98 B ἦσαν ψευδοπροφήται Ἐζεκιᾶς . . . καὶ ἄλλοι and 96 C ψευδοπροφήται Ζεδεκίας . . . καὶ ἄλλοι τετρακόσιοι.

the 400 prophets of Baal. Cf. *Chron. Pasch. l. c.* Really the fellow-prophets of Zedekiah in 1 Kings xxii. 6 are nominally prophets of the Lord, and he is not connected with the 400 of Baal in 1 Kings xviii. 22.

13 had himself smitten and reproved Micaiah the son of Amádâ the prophet. And he, Micaiah, had been reproved by Ahab and cast into prison. (And he was) with Zedekiah the prophet: they were
 14 with Ahaziah the son of Ahab, king in Samaria. And Elijah the prophet of Têbôn of Gilead was reproving Ahaziah and Samaria, and prophesied regarding Ahaziah that he should die on his bed of sickness, and that Samaria should be delivered into the hand of Leba Nâsr because he had slain
 15 the prophets of God. And when the false prophets, who were with Ahaziah the son of Ahab and
 16 their teacher Gemarias of Mount †Joel† had heard—now he was brother of Zedekiah—when they had heard, they persuaded Ahaziah the king of †Aguaron† and slew Micaiah.)
 3 1 And Belchîrâ recognized and saw the place of Isaiah and the prophets who were with him; for he dwelt in the region of Bethlehem, and was an adherent of Manasseh. And he prophesied falsely in Jerusalem, and many belonging to Jerusalem were confederate with him, and he was a Samaritan.
 2 And it came to pass when Alagar Zagâr, king of Assyria, had come and captured Samaria and taken the nine (and a half) tribes captive, and led them away to the mountains of the Medes and the
 3 rivers of Tâzôn; this (Belchîrâ) while still a youth, had escaped and come to Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, but he walked not in the ways of his father of Samaria; for he feared
 4 Hezekiah. And he was found in the days of Hezekiah speaking words of lawlessness in Jerusalem.
 5 And the servants of Hezekiah accused him, and he made his escape to the region of Bethlehem.
 6 And they persuaded . . . And Belchîrâ accused Isaiah and the prophets who were with him, saying: 'Isaiah and those who are with him prophesy against Jerusalem and against the cities of Judah that they shall be laid waste and (against the children of Judah and) Benjamin also that they shall go into captivity, and also against thee, O lord the king, that thou shalt go (bound) with hooks
 7, 8 and iron chains': But they prophesy falsely against Israel and Judah. And Isaiah himself hath
 9 said: 'I see more than Moses the prophet.' But Moses said: 'No man can see God and live':
 10 and Isaiah hath said: 'I have seen God and behold I live.' Know, therefore, O king, that he is lying. And Jerusalem also he hath called Sodom, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem he hath

smitten, &c. 1 Kings xxii. 24.

Amádâ = Imlah.

13. And he was. E² supplies.

Ahab, king in Samaria. Alamerem balalâ'aw E; 'Alà(μ) ἐν Σεμμομα E². For 'Alam' = 'Ahab' see E² ii. 15. balalâ'aw = probably basala'aw, i.e. βασιλείως. The '-erem' is explicable from ἐν Σεμμομα E² as 'in Samaria'.

14. Elijah is introduced here unexpectedly.
 of Têbôn of Gilead. Cf. 1 Kings xvii. 1 (LXX) ὁ Θεσβεΐτης ἐκ Θεσβῶν τῆς Γαλααδ, and Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 13. 2 ἐκ πόλεως Θεσβεΐνης τῆς Γαλααδίτιδος χώρας. This Thisbe is mentioned in Tobit i. 2. For the omission of ὁ Θεσβεΐτης cf. MS. A of the LXX. The Massoretic punctuation in 1 Kings xvii. 1 of עֲמֹרָה = 'of the sojourners of'.

prophesied regarding Ahaziah. 2 Kings i. 1-6.

Leba Nâsr. Corrupt for Salmanassar. Cf. 2 Bar. lxii. 6 and 4 Ezra xiii. 40.

15. Gemarias E¹; Jâlerjâs E; Ἰαλλαρίας E²; corruptly Joel E; Ἰσαα E²; Efrem E¹. Here again the Latin version gives the easier reading. S. A. Cook, *Journ. R. Asiatic Soc.*, Jan. 1901, p. 168, suggests that Joel is a corruption of Ebal and Efrem of Gerizim, or that Rephaim (Joshua xv. 8) and Jeruel (2 Chron. xx. 16) are referred to. Probably, however, Joel is corrupt for Israel, for which E¹ boldly substitutes the familiar phrase 'Efrem' after 'mount'.

16. now he E¹; now Îbchîrâ E (a); now Βεχειρά E². E¹ makes Gemarias the brother of Zedekiah, E and E² make Belchîrâ, though in ver. 12 he is said to be his nephew.

†Aguaron† E; Gomorrha E² E¹. Probably עֲמֹרָה was misread עֲמֹרָה (Cooke). If so, restore 'Samaria'.

III. 1. And Belchîrâ recognized. E² E¹.

2. Alagar Zagâr. i.e. Salmanassar. Cf. ii. 14.

and a half. E² E¹. Cf. 2 Bar. lxii. 5; lxxvii. 19; lxxviii. 1; 4 Ezra xiii. 40 (Syr. and Arab.). > and a half E.

mountains E² E¹; 'boundaries (?)' E. Cf. LXX and Mass. in 2 Kings xvii. 6.

Tâzôn = Gozan. 2 Kings xvii. 6.

5. they persuaded E²; 'he persuaded' E. Who the 'they' are is uncertain. Perhaps the false prophets persuaded Belchîrâ.

6. those E; 'the prophets' E² E¹.

against the children of Judah and. Restored from E¹.

with hooks and iron chains. Cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 (LXX 'bonds' not 'hooks').

7. Judah + 'and Jerusalem' E¹; 'and Benjamin they hate, and their word is evil against Judah and Israel' E².

8-9. Cf. Origen, *In Isaiam Homil.* i. 5 'Aiunt ideo Isaiam esse sectum a populo quasi legem praevaricantem et extra scripturas annuntiantem. Scriptura enim dicit: "Nemo videbit faciem meam et vivet." Iste vero ait: "Vidi Dominum Sabaoth." Moses, aiunt, non vidit et tu vidisti? Et propter hoc eum secuerunt et condemnauerunt ut impium.'

9. No man, &c. Exod. xxxiii. 20.

I have seen God. Isa. vi. 1.

10. he is lying. E² E¹. 'they are lying prophets' E.

Jerusalem . . . Sodom, &c. Cf. Isa. i. 10. Cf. Jerome, *Comm. in Is.* i. 10 'aiunt Hebraei ob duas causas interfectum Isaiam: quod principes Sodomorum et populum Gomorrhæ eos appellaverit, et quod, Domino dicente ad Mosen Non poteris videre faciem meam, iste ausus sit dicere Vidi dominum sedentem super thronum excelsum et elevatum.' Cf. Jebam. 49 b.

declared to be the people of Gomorrah. And he brought many accusations against Isaiah and the
 11 prophets before Manasseh. But Beliar dwelt in the heart of Manasseh and in the heart of the
 12 princes of Judah and Benjamin and of the eunuchs and of the councillors of the king. And the
 words of Belchîrâ pleased him [exceedingly], and he sent and seized Isaiah.
 5 1 b, 2 And he sawed him asunder with a wood-saw. And when Isaiah was being sawn in sunder
 Balchîrâ stood up, accusing him, and all the false prophets stood up, laughing and rejoicing because
 3 of Isaiah. And Balchîrâ, with the aid of Mechêmbêchûs, stood up before Isaiah, [laughing]
 4 deriding; And Belchîrâ said to Isaiah: 'Say: "I have lied in all that I have spoken, and likewise
 5 the ways of Manasseh are good and right. And the ways also of Balchîrâ and of his associates are
 6, 7 good."' And this he said to him when he began to be sawn in sunder. But Isaiah was (absorbed)
 8 in a vision of the Lord, and though his eyes were open, he saw them (not). And Balchîrâ spake
 thus to Isaiah: 'Say what I say unto thee and I will turn their heart, and I will compel Manasseh
 9 and the princes of Judah and the people and all Jerusalem to reverence thee.' And Isaiah answered
 and said: 'So far as I have utterance (I say): Damned and accursed be thou and all thy powers and
 10, 11 all thy house. For thou canst not take (from me) aught save the skin of my body.' And they
 12 seized and sawed in sunder Isaiah, the son of Amoz, with a wood-saw. And Manasseh and
 13 Balchîrâ and the false prophets and the princes and the people [and] all stood looking on. And to
 the prophets who were with him he said before he had been sawn in sunder: 'Go ye to the region
 14 of Tyre and Sidon; for for me only hath God mingled the cup.' And when Isaiah was being
 sawn in sunder, he neither cried aloud nor wept, but his lips spake with the Holy Spirit until he
 was sawn in twain.

11. Beliar. See i. 9 (note).

12. exceedingly. E only.

V. 2. wood-saw. See note on ver. 11.

3. Balchîrâ, with the aid of Mechêmbêchûs. So all MSS. But the verbs following are in the plural. For Mechêmbêchûs see ii. 4.

laughing, a doublet.

4-8. Balchîrâ b (or 'Beliar' ac) tempts Isaiah.

4. Cf. Ambrose, *Comm.* on Ps. cxviii (ed. Bened. vol. i. 1124): 'ferunt quod Esaias, in carcere posito cum mole imminens urgeretur exitii, dixisse diabolum: Dic quia non a Domino locutus es, quae dixisti, et omnium in te mentes affectusque mutabo, ut qui indignantur iniuriam absolutionem in te conferant.'

7. saw . . . not. Negative supplied as in Asc. Isa. vi. 10.

8. Balchîrâ bc. Milchîras' a. See ii. 12 (note).

9. So far . . . accursed b. 'So far as I am concerned, accursed—that is to say—' a. The curse is against the false prophet as man ('house') and as an emissary of Satan ('powers'). Cf. *κατάθεμά σοι, Μελχία ψευδοπροφήτα, διάβολε*, *Gk. Leg.* iii. 18. Cf. also Matt. xvi. 23.

11. a wood-saw. For the sawing asunder of Isaiah cf. Justin Martyr, *Dial. cum Tryph.* cxx. 14, 15; Tert. *De Patientia*, 14 'His patientiae viribus secatur Esaias et de Domino non secatur'; *Scorpiace* 8. A 'wooden saw' E, *Gk. Leg.* iii. 19, Justin, *Dial. c. Tryph.* cxx. 14, 15 *περὶ τὸν θάνατον Ἰσαίου, ὃν πρίον ξυλίνον ἐπίστανε*, &c., is a misunderstanding of *מִשׁוֹר עֵץ*, which is a saw for sawing wood, whether of iron or any other metal. *Gk. Leg.* iii. 14 has *πρίον σιδηρῶ*.

12. and—an intrusion.

13. the cup. Cf. Matt. xx. 22.

14. neither cried aloud nor wept. Cf. 'patientiae viribus,' Tert. *l. c.*