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## THE SONG OF SONGS.

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### III. LOVERS THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

The poem begins abruptly. The woman, her keepers, had just feasted her at the family table of the King's household. Wine had constituted a conspicuous part of the bill of fare, and the woman had praised the luxuries which the King's family enjoyed, contrasting it with the simple fare of a vine-dresser among the hills of Issachar; assuring her that all this was at the service of a wife of the King. The purpose for which she had been enticed from her country home and from the shepherd youth whom she loved, was now for the first time broached to her. It was not to be a domestic in the King's palace, but to become one of his wives, already numbering sixty. At this she promptly rebelled. She would never consent to the lustful embraces of one whom she could not love, though he be a king, and informing the woman she had a lover among the shepherds of Shulam she breaks out:

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth."

Then turning to the lover himself who in the dialogue is made to be opportunely present she says:

"For thy love is better than wine.  
Thine ointments have a goodly fragrance,  
Thy name is as ointment poured forth,  
Therefore do maidens love thee.  
Draw me after thee, let us run!  
The King hath brought me into his harem,  
We will greatly rejoice in thee,  
We will esteem thy caress more than wine,  
Rightly do the maidens love thee."

Addressing the woman she continues:

"I am black but I am comely,  
O, ye daughters of Jerusalem;  
Like the tents of Kedar,  
Like the pavilions of Solomon.  
Despise me not because I am swarthy,  
Because the sun hath scorched me,  
My half-brothers were incensed against me,  
They made me keeper of the vineyards,  
Mine own vineyard I have not kept."

Again addressing the lover, she says:

"Tell me, thou whom my soul loveth,  
Where thou feedest thy flock, where thou makest it to rest at noon,

For why should I be as a woman veiled,  
Beside the flocks of thy companions?"

The answer of the woman to this frantic outburst of love and fidelity is a compliment to the woman-heart that had survived all the blandishments of the royal household. It at once awakened recollections of earlier days when the voice and society of some rustic lover was all the world to them, but from whom they had been allured by the displays of ease and luxury in the King's palace, and whose love they had bartered away for the dubious honors and the unsatisfying pleasures of the King's court and the King's chamber. Moved to sympathy by her appeals to them and to her lover; and in their woman-hearts wishing she might escape the fate that had befallen themselves, they reply:

"If thou knowest not, O thou fairest among women!  
Get thee again to the footsteps of thy flock,  
And feed thy kids beside the shepherd's tent."

The shepherd now addresses his lover, returning the personal compliment she had so handsomely paid him:

"I have compared thee, O, my love!  
To a steed in Pharaoh's chariots.  
Thy cheeks are comely with plaits of hair,  
Thy neck with strings of jewels."

The woman, to neutralise the effect of this compliment to her beauty interpose, saying,

"We will make thee plaits of gold,  
With studs of silver, if thou become a queen."

The shepherdess, addressing the woman, pays her lover this beautiful compliment:

"While the King sat at his table,  
My spikenard sent forth its fragrance.  
But my beloved is unto me as a bundle of myrrh,  
That lieth between my breasts;  
My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire,  
From the vineyards of Engedi."

The following playful interchange of compliments between the two lovers cannot be excelled in any love story, nor often in real life. It is both delicate and extravagant. He begins:

"Behold thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair,  
Thine eyes are as doves' eyes."

To this she replies:

"Behold thou art fair, my beloved, yea, very pleasant,  
Also our couch is green."

In answer to this allusion to the place of their outdoor courtships he refers to the cedars and firs under which they sat :

"The beams of our house are cedars,  
And our rafters are firs."

There is a spice of humor in her self-praise :

"I am a rose of Sharon,  
A lily of the valley."

But he is equal to the occasion and turns her self-compliment to good account by accepting it with emphasis :

"As a lily among the thorns,  
So is my beloved among the daughters."

Turning to the women the shepherdess continues to compliment her lover and avow her fidelity to him :

"As an apple-tree among the trees of the forest,  
So is my beloved among the sons.  
I sat under his shadow with great delight,  
And his fruit was sweet to my taste,  
He brought me to his wine-house,  
And his banner over me was love.  
Stay me with grapes, comfort me with apples,  
For I am sick of love.  
Only his left hand shall sustain my head,  
And only his right hand shall embrace me.  
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
By the roes and by the hinds of the field,  
That you stir not up nor awaken love,  
Until it please."

This appeal to the women to not attempt to force love is both pathetic and philosophic. Love finds its own time and object without the intermeddling of others. The shepherdess continues abstractedly:

"The voice of my beloved ! behold he cometh,  
Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills,  
My beloved is like a roe or a young hart.  
Behold ! he standeth behind our wall,  
He cometh in at the window,  
He peepeth through the lattice.  
My beloved spake and said unto me :  
Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away,  
For lo ! the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone ;  
The flowers appear upon the earth,  
The time of the singing of birds has come  
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.  
The fig-tree ripens her figs  
And the vines are in blossom ;  
They give forth their fragrance."

Turning to the shepherd again, she says :

"Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away,  
O my dove ! thou art in the clefts of the rocks, in the covert of the steep place ;  
Let me see thy face, let me hear thy voice,  
For charming is thy voice and thy features are lovely.  
Take us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards,  
For our vineyards are in blossom."

Turning to address the women, she continues :

"My beloved is mine and I am his,  
He feedeth his flocks among the lilies  
Until the day be cool and the shadows flee away."

Again addressing the shepherd, she says :

"Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart  
Upon the mountains of Bether."

She relates a dream :

"By night, on my bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth,  
I sought him but I found him not,  
I said I will rise now and go about the city,  
In the streets and in the broad ways,  
I will seek him whom my soul loveth :  
I sought him in my dream but I found him not.  
The watchmen that go about the city found me ;  
I said to them, saw ye him whom my soul loveth ?  
I was but a little passed from them  
When I found him whom my soul loveth ;  
I caught him and would not let him go  
Until he had brought me to my mother's house,  
Into the chamber of her that gave me birth."

Again, turning to the women she charges them not to attempt to force love.

"I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
By the roes and the hinds of the field,  
That ye stir not up nor awaken love  
Until it please."

At this point a royal cortège is seen in the distance. It had no necessary connexion with the work of reconciling this pure country girl to the proposed new conditions, but it offered a new argument, as they supposed ; hence they called attention to it and especially to the fact that one of the queens was a partaker with the King of all its magnificence. As it was only one of the frequent parades of the King they sought to excite her womanly love of display by the assurance that a like honor awaited her if she would consent to become a queen also. One of the women calls attention to it by asking :

"Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke ?  
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,  
With all the powders of the merchant ?"

A second woman :

"Behold it is the litter of Solomon ;  
Three-score mighty men are about it,  
Of the mighty men of Israel.  
They all handle the sword and are expert in war,  
Every man hath his sword on his thigh ;  
Because of fear in the night."

The third woman takes it up :

"King Solomon made himself a car of state  
Of the wood of Lebanon.  
He made the posts thereof of silver,  
The bottoms thereof of gold, the seat thereof of purple,  
In the midst thereof sits a sparkling beauty  
From the daughters of Jerusalem."

The shepherdess's answer to all this is one of the finest touches in the whole poem. Reduced to plain prose it is equivalent to saying : if such splendors have

attractions for you, you are welcome to them all, for they do not move me :

"Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon  
With the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of  
his espousals ;  
And in the day of the gladness of his heart."

The following rhapsody of the shepherd lover has no rival in any language for hyperbole. Compared with it Shakespeare's most famous,

"But you, O you,  
So perfect and so peerless are created  
Of every creature's best,"

seems quite tame. It is such touches of nature that preserved this poem through those centuries of war and captivity and which ultimately gave it a place in the sacred literature of the restored Hebrews, and still later, a place among the sacred books of Christians ; and now, after three thousand years many a gray-headed sire will read it and recall the time in his own experience when, as far as he was able, he indited just such a sonnet to a pair of dove's eyes and scarlet lips, and a pretty neck with teeth and temples to match.

"Behold thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair,  
Thine eyes are as dove's eyes behind thy veil,  
Thy hair is as a flock of goats  
That lie along the side of Gilead ;  
Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep newly shorn,  
Which come up from the washing,  
Whereof every one of them hath twins,  
And not one of them is bereaved.  
Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet  
And thy mouth is comely ;  
Thy cheek is like a side of a pomegranate  
Behind thy veil.  
Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory,  
Wherein there hang a thousand bucklers  
And all the shields of mighty men.  
Thy two breasts are like two twin fawns of a roe  
Which feed among the lilies."

The shepherdess, pretending with true womanly affectation to desire no more of such adulation, seeks to interrupt him by saying :

"Until the day be cool and the shadows lengthen,  
I will get me to the mountain of myrrh  
And to the hill of frankincense."

But he was not to be silenced. The interruption only intensified his speech. Beginning at the same beginning as before he becomes much more violent :

"Thou art fair my love,  
And there is no spot in thee.  
Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse,  
With me from Lebanon.  
Look upon me from the top of Amena,  
From the top of Senir and Hermon,  
From the depths of the lion's den,  
From the mountains of leopards.  
Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse,  
Thou hast ravished my heart with one glance of thine eyes,  
With one of the ringlets that encircle thy neck.  
How pleasant is thy love, my sister, my spouse ;

How much better is thine embrace than wine !  
And the odor of thy perfumes than all manner of spices.  
Thy lips, O my spouse, distil odors as the honey-comb,  
Honey and milk are concealed under thy tongue,  
And the fragrance of thy garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon,  
A garden enclosed, is my sister, my spouse,  
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed ;  
A paradise, where the pomegranate blossoms, together with precious fruits,  
Camphire with spikenard plants,  
Spikenard and saffron,  
Calamus and cinnamon with all manner of sweet-smelling plants,  
Myrrh and aloes with all the chief spices.  
Thou art a fountain of gardens,  
A well of living waters,  
And flowing streams from Lebanon.

Awake, O north wind and come thou south,  
Blow upon my garden that the fragrance thereof may flow out !"

The shepherdess answers :

"Let my beloved come into his garden,  
And eat his precious fruits."

The shepherd :

"I have come into my garden, my sister, my spouse,  
I have gathered my myrrh and my spices,  
I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey  
I have drunk my wine with my milk.

Eat, O friends,  
Drink, yea, drink abundantly."

The shepherdess, that she may the more impress her keepers, the women, that it was cruel to separate her from her devoted lover, relates another recent dream :

"I was asleep, but my heart was awake,  
It was the voice of my beloved. As he knocked,  
He said, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one ;  
For my head is covered with dew,  
My locks with the drops of the night.  
To tease him I said, I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on ?  
I have washed my feet, why should I soil them ?  
At this my beloved withdrew his hand from the latch,  
And my bosom quivered thereat.  
I then rose up to open to my beloved,  
And my hands dropped with myrrh,  
And my fingers with liquid myrrh  
Overflowed upon the handle of the lock.  
When I opened to my beloved,  
Behold my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.  
(When I spake to him I was hereof of reason.)  
I sought him, but I could not find him ;  
I called, but he gave me no answer ;  
I dreamed the watchmen that go about the city found me,  
They smote me, they wounded me,  
And the keepers on the wall took away my veil :

I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved,  
That you tell him I am dying of love."

Again the enthusiasm of the young shepherdess aroused the sympathy of the women, who had not forgotten experiences in their own earlier lives not greatly unlike this, hence, instead of longer persisting in at-

tempts to persuade their ward to consent to become such as they were, they offer assistance to her, or, at least, they wish to know more about the young man she had left behind ; hence they ask :

"What is thy beloved more than another beloved,  
O thou fairest among women ?  
What is thy beloved more than another beloved,  
That thou shouldst so adjure us ?"

This gave the shepherdess occasion to describe him as she viewed him, and, unless love was blind, he was worthy her love :

"My beloved is white and ruddy,  
The fairest among ten thousand,  
His head is as the most fine gold,  
His locks are curling and black as a raven,  
His eyes are as doves' eyes, reflecting in the water-brooks,  
Washing in milk and sitting in full streams,  
His cheeks are as a bed of balsam, as towers of perfumes,  
His lips are as lilies, dropping liquid myrrh,  
His hands are as rings of gold set with beryl,  
His reins are as ivory work overlaid with sapphires,  
His legs are as pillars of marble set on pedestals of gold,  
His appearance is as Lebanon, beautiful as the cedars,  
His mouth is most sweet, yea, his person is altogether lovely

Such is my beloved, such is my friend,  
O daughters of Jerusalem."

This enthusiastic description of the absent lover only increased the interest which the women felt in their ward, and they wish to hear more about him hence they ask ;

"Whither is thy beloved gone,  
O thou fairest among women ?  
Whither is thy beloved turned aside,  
That we may seek him with thee ?"

The shepherdess :

"My beloved has gone down to his garden to the beds of balsam,  
To feed his flocks in the garden and to gather lilies.  
I am my beloved's and he is mine,  
My beloved who feedeth his flocks among the lilies."

The shepherd again praises the beauty of his spouse, repeating, as would be natural, much that he had said before :

"Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah,  
Charming as Jerusalem,  
Terrible as an army in battle,  
Turn away thine eyes from me,  
For they have overcome me.  
Thy hair is like a flock of goats  
Lying along the side of Gilead.  
Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep  
Which have just been washed,  
Whereof every one hath twins,  
And none is bereaved among them,  
Thy cheek is as a slice of pomegranate  
Behind thy veil."

To show the great wrong there would be in pressing one so dear to him into a harem already crowded, he says :

"There are in the household of Solomon already three-score  
queens, and four-score concubines,  
And young maidens without number.  
My dove, my perfect one, is but one ;  
She is the only one of her mother ;  
She is the choice one of her that gave her birth.  
The young saw her and called her blessed,  
The queens and the concubines saw her and they praised her saying :  
Who is she that looketh forth like the morning  
Fair as the moon,  
Clear as the sun,  
Terrible as an army in battle ?"

The shepherdess here narrates a reverie :

"In fancy I went down to the garden of nuts,  
To see the green plants of the valley ;  
To see whether the vine budded,  
And the pomegranates were in flower.  
Before I was aware, my desire set me  
Among the chariots of my people."

The interest of the women in the absent lover was so aroused that they desire to see him, hence they say :

"Return, O Shulammitte shepherd,  
Return, return, that we may see thee."

The shepherdess rebukes their idle curiosity by saying :

"Why wish ye to look upon the Shulammitte,  
As upon the dance of angels at Mahanaim ?"

The scene of the following is in the ladies' toilette. The women, notwithstanding the sympathy they had expressed for the unwilling victim of their scheme, determined to make one more effort to overcome her objections. This time they resort to flattery by praising her personal beauty. She had just come from the bath and had put on only her slippers, when they began, hoping to so arouse her vanity that she would at once discard her country lover :

"How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O prince's daughter !  
Thy round thighs are like ornaments,  
The work of the hand of a cunning workman.  
Thy waist is like a round goblet,  
Wherein aromatic wine is abundant.  
Thy body is like a heap of wheat,  
Encircled with lilies.  
Thy two breasts are like two fawns  
That are twins of a roe.  
Thy neck is like a tower of ivory.  
Thine eyes are like the pools of Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim ;  
Thy nose is like the side of the tower of Lebanon,  
Which looketh towards Damascus ;  
Thine head upon thee is like Carmel,  
And the locks of thine head are like threads of purple ;  
The King will be held captive in the tresses thereof.  
How fair and how charming art thou,  
O love, for delights !  
Thy stature is like a palm-tree,  
And thy breasts are like to clusters of grapes."

The shepherd interposes with his claim to all these charms :

" I said I will climb up into my palm-tree,  
I will take hold of the branches thereof ;  
Thy breasts shall be to me as clusters of grapes,  
And the odor of thy breath like apples ;  
And thy mouth as the best of wine,  
That goeth down sweetly for my beloved,  
Causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak."

The shepherdess answers the appeal of the women,  
and she consents to the proposition of the lover, thus  
settling the question by saying :

" I am my beloved's,  
And his desire is towards me."

Thereupon the lover proposes that they leave the  
palace and go forth :

" Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the fields,  
Let us lodge in the villages,  
Let us get up early and go to the vines.  
Let us see whether the vine-stalks have budded,  
And the tender grapes appear.  
Whether the pomegranate be in flower ;  
There will I give thee my caress.  
The mandrakes give forth fragrance,  
And at our gates are all manner of fruits, both new and old,  
Which I have laid up for thee, O beloved !"

The shepherdess, feeling hampered by the conven-  
tionalities of the times, which did not allow her to em-  
brace her lover in public, yet tolerated the osculation  
and caressing of a brother, replies :

" O that thou wert as my brother,  
Who nursed at the breast of my mother,  
So that when I should meet thee without I could embrace thee,  
And none would despise me therefor !  
I would lead thee and bring thee into my mother's house,  
Where thou mightest instruct me,  
And I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine,  
Of the sweet wine of my pomegranates."

Turning to the women, she says :

" Only his left hand shall sustain my head,  
And only his right hand shall embrace me.  
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
That ye stir not up nor awaken love, until it please."

The women at last consent to her leaving the pal-  
ace in company with her shepherd lover, who escorted  
her to the home of her mother. The neighbors seeing  
them returning, ask :

" Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness,  
Leaning upon her beloved ?"

Before reaching the house they stop a moment un-  
der the apple-tree, which had often listened to their  
mutual avowals of love. Once there, seated upon the  
rustic seat they had so often occupied, he recalls other  
meetings at that sacred spot, and says :

" Under this apple-tree I first aroused thy love."

Then, pointing to the house beyond the garden, he  
says :

" In yonder house thy mother conceived thee,  
There she was in travail and there she gave thee birth ;  
Now set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a bracelet upon thine arm,

For love is strong as death ;  
Jealousy is cruel as the grave,  
Its flames are flames of fire,  
Its arrows the fire of Jehovah.  
Great waters cannot quench love,  
And rivers cannot overwhelm it."

Then, delicately alluding to the late experience of  
his faithful lover in resisting the blandishments of the  
King's palace, he adds :

" If a man would offer all his substance for love  
He would only reap confusion."

The two half-brothers now appear. They had lost  
none of their opposition to this love-affair. At first  
they had sought to break it off by taking their sister  
from the care of the sheep, which afforded too many  
opportunities for the lovers to meet each other, and  
putting her to the harder work of dressing the family  
vineyard. This failing, they had connived at, if they  
had not suggested and promoted, the scheme of get-  
ting her into Solomon's harem. For their sister to be  
a wife of the King, though only one of many, was much  
preferable, in their minds, to her being the wife of a  
humble shepherd, even if some personal grudge against  
their young neighbor had not something to do in the  
case. But in this they were again baffled, and they  
find her once more in the family home, more devoted  
than ever to her rustic lover. Their last hope now is  
to belittle their sister, and to postpone, if not to en-  
tirely prevent, the marriage, by alleging that she was  
too young, and by insinuating other and grave impedi-  
ments. They derisively ask what shall be the wedding  
presents in the case of a marriage, as well as insinuate  
unfitness for wifehood. They say :

" We have a little sister,  
And she hath no breasts ;  
What shall we do for our sister  
In the day when she shall be spoken for ?  
If she be a wall,  
We will build upon her a turret of silver ;  
If she be a door,  
We will inclose her with boards of cedar."

Her answer is both womanly and defiant. Recog-  
nising that she is in no sense under obligations to them  
for what she is, and what she hopes to be soon, the  
bride of one who will be to her a wall of defence, she  
says :

" I have been a wall,  
And my breasts have been towers,  
Hence I was in my lover's eyes as a woman that finds peace.

Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon ;  
He let out the vineyard to keepers,  
Every one to bring, as rent, a thousand of silver.  
My vineyard is in front of me.  
Thou, O Solomon, may have the thousand,  
And thy keepers may have two hundred."

The shepherd :

" Thou that dwellest in the gardens,

The companions are listening to thy voice,  
Cause me to hear it."

The shepherdess :

" Make haste, my beloved,  
And be thou like to a roe or a young hart  
Upon the mountain of spices."

Ordinary love stories end in the marriage of the chief characters. This does not, but it is easy to see that such constancy on the part of each, under such inducements to unfaithfulness, can end no otherwise after reaching the point where the poem leaves them. Though when read as an allegory, this poem is utterly meaningless ; yet when read as a love story in verse, no pure man or woman can rise from its reading without having been benefited. It touches at many points the experience of true lovers in all the ages, and hence its immortality.

Inevitably, a poem of so great antiquity, abounding in Orientalisms, must contain many historic, geographic, and social allusions, which it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand to-day. All parts of the old Hebrew Scriptures are in the same category. What if we cannot understand what was meant in its time by "the dance of angels at Mahanaim," or why it was interesting to be looked upon from the lion's den or the mountains of leopards? It is sheer folly to seek a meaning for these in allegory or parable. But, given the instinctive drawings of a virtuous youth and a virtuous maiden of congenial tastes, we have the key to this inimitable poem. Though therefore we may not understand all its allusions, when we read it as a poem intended to set forth a victory of faithful love in the form of a dialogue, which may easily be acted by amateurs, we are compelled to concede its right to a place in our sacred collection of the books which constitute our Bible. It can never cease to be of interest to all pure minds. No better lesson is taught in any Bible story, nor ever can be, while the maximum of human happiness is found only in households where true love reigns supreme ; and not the least lesson it teaches is the unchanging elements of love—the same three thousand years ago as now.

#### THE APOCRYPHA OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

There are a number of books written by Jewish authors in the first three centuries before Christ which have not received the same recognition as the canonical books ; yet they are of great interest because they characterise the era of transition to the New Testament. They afford us an insight into the religious aspirations of the age immediately preceding the advent of Jesus.

In the apocryphal books of the Old Testament the conception of Satan grows more mythological and at

the same time more dualistic. He develops into an independent demon of evil, and now the adversary of man becomes the adversary of God himself.

In the story of Tobit (150 B. C.) an evil spirit of unquestionably Persian origin, called Asmodi, plays an important part. He tries to prevent Sarah's marriage, because he is in love with her himself. In the Talmud, Asmodi develops into the demon of lust.

The Book of Wisdom, the product of Alexandrian Judaism, in the second century before Christ, speaks of wisdom nearly as a Buddhist monk would speak of enlightenment. "Wickedness has blinded the eyes of the evil-doer" (ii., 21), and "whereas they lived in the great war of ignorance, those so great plagues called they peace" (xiv., 22). Chastity is recommended, and we read that "it is better to have no children and to have virtue." The material and the spiritual are represented as antagonistic :

"The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things."—ix., 15.

"Wickedness is wearying itself, leading through deserts." "Pride and riches profit nothing," and "the hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind." But "the righteous live forevermore, for the Lord will protect them" :

"He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of an helmet.

"He shall take holiness for an invincible shield.

"His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword, and the world shall fight with him against the unwise.—v., 18-20.

Buddhists call the troubles of the world the stream of Samsâra which must be crossed by him who would reach the shore of Nirvâna. The same allegory is used in the Wisdom of Solomon :

"Again, one preparing himself to sail, and about to pass through the raging waves, calleth upon a piece of wood more rotten than the vessel that carrieth him.

"For verily desire of gain devised that, and the workman built it by his skill.

"But thy providence, O Father, governeth it : for thou hast made a way in the sea, and a safe path in the waves ;

"Shewing that thou canst save from all danger : yea, though a man went to sea without art.

"Nevertheless thou wouldest not that the works of thy wisdom should be idle, and therefore do men commit their lives to a small piece of wood, and passing the rough sea in a weak vessel are saved.

"For in the old time also, when the proud giants perished, the hope of the world governed by thy hand escaped in a weak vessel, and left to all ages a seed of generation.

"For blessed is the wood whereby righteousness cometh."—xiv., 1-7.

As Buddhists are saved by enlightenment, so the author of the Wisdom of Solomon seeks salvation in wisdom, saying, "by means of her I shall obtain immortality" (viii., 13). He praises wisdom in terms that anticipate partly the Logos-idea of the New-Pla-

tonists, and partly the Christian doctrine of the Holy Ghost. He says :

"Wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me : for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good,

"Kind to man, stedfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtil, spirits.

"For wisdom is more moving than any motion : she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness.

"For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no defiled thing fall into her.

"For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness.

"And being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets.

"For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom," —vii., 22-28.

Wisdom, the Greek *σοφία*, is feminine, and thus our author speaks of Wisdom as a woman whom he loved and desired to make his spouse. Yea, she is the spouse of God. He says :

"In that she is conversant with God, she magnifieth her nobility: yea, the Lord of all things himself loved her.

"For she is privy to the mysteries of the knowledge of God, and a lover of his works."—viii., 3-4.

As to the origin of evil, the Wisdom of Solomon speaks of the Devil as having through envy introduced evil into the world. We read :

"God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity; nevertheless, through envy of the Devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it."

Another interesting work of an apocryphal author is ascribed to the patriarch Enoch.

God's plan of the world's history is, in the Book of Enoch, explained in allegorical form. The Israelites are compared to a flock of sheep to whom a great sword is given to wage war against the animals of the field. The sealed book of guilt shall be opened, and judgment will be pronounced over the stars and the seventy shepherds (the chiefs of the Gentiles); they are condemned and together with the blind sheep (the apostate Jews) thrown into the fiery pit. But from the midst of the sheep rises a white bull (the Messiah) with great horns, whom the animals of the field will fear; and all the races of the earth will become like the white bull. Then a new heaven will be in the place of the old heaven, and thus the goal of life is reached.

While Enoch's demonology smacks of the religious myths of the Gentiles, his ideas of a Messiah are strongly spiritualised. We read of the Messiah, commonly designated "the son of the woman," sometimes

"the son of man," and once "the son of God," that he existed from the beginning :

"Ere the sun and the signs [in the zodiac] were made, ere the stars of the heavens were created, his name was pronounced before the Lord of the spirits. Before the creation of the world he was chosen and hidden before Him [God], and before Him he will be from eternity to eternity."

It is a pity that we do not possess the original, but only an Ethiopian version of the Book of Enoch, which has been translated into German by Dillmann, for it is of great interest to the historian. It apparently embodies two heterogeneous views: one Judaistic, the other one gnostic; and it is probable that the original Book of Enoch, written by a Jew of the Pharisee party, found an Essene interpolator who superadded the spiritualistic ideas of his sect. The hypotheses of a Christian interpolation is not very probable, because a Christian would naturally have introduced some positive and definite features of Christ's life, such as it was represented in the early Church, the more so as the gnostic interpolations of the book are very pronounced and even in translations easily recognised. We read, e. g. (in xlii., 2):

"Wisdom came to live among men and found no dwelling-place. Then she returned home and took her seat among the angels."

The salvation of mankind is not expected from the death of the Messiah, but through the revelation of the divine gnosis :

Enoch proclaims that—

"All the secrets of wisdom will flow from the thoughts of his mouth, for the Lord of the spirits has given wisdom unto him and has glorified him. In him liveth the spirit of wisdom, and the spirit of Him who giveth comprehension, and the spirit of the doctrine and of the power, and the spirit of all those who are justified and are now sleeping. And He will judge all hidden things, and no one will speak trifling words before Him, for He is chosen before the Lord of the spirits. He is powerful in all secrets of justification, and injustice has no place before Him."

While the spiritualistic views in the Book of Enoch, especially the supernatural personality of the Messiah, are not peculiarly Christian, but Essenic or gnostic, standing in contradiction to the idea that the Messiah would become flesh and live among men as a real man, we must recognise the fact that the gnostic interpolations, or at least one passage must have been written in the year 79 A. D., or shortly after, as it appears to refer to the eruption of Vesuvius and the formation of the hot springs at Bajæ, while other passages relating to the enemies of the Jews ignore the Romans so completely that they must have been written at a much earlier date.<sup>1</sup>

Very valuable books among the Apocrypha are the book of Daniel and the two books of Esdras; yet even here the noblest thoughts are mixed with Judaistic

<sup>1</sup>Ewald assigns one part of the book to the year 144 B. C. and the other two to several years later, about 136-106.

chauvinism and bitter hatred of the gentile nations. In these books the idea of a bodily resurrection of the dead from their graves is, for the first time in Jewish literature, pronounced with great vigor. We read in the book of Daniel :

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awaken again, some to eternal life, the others to shame, to an eternal abomination. But the wise will shine like the radiance of heaven, and those who have lead many to righteousness like the stars for ever and aye."—Daniel, xii., 2-3.

And Esdras says :

"In the grave the chambers of souls are like the womb of a woman :

"For like as a woman that travaileth maketh haste to escape the necessity of the travail : even so do these places haste to deliver those things that are committed unto them."—2 Esdras, iv., 41-42.

The expressions, "the son of man" and "the son of God," now become current terms in literature. The enemies of the Jews are at present triumphant, but they are doomed to perish in the near future. The present is characterised as a period of trial, in which many Israelites will abandon the cause of God, but a remnant will remain, for again and again are we assured that the world has been made for the sake of Israel, and the other nations are like unto spittle. (2 Esdras, vi., 56.)

The end of this world draws near. Esdras says :

"The world hath lost his youth, and the times begin to wax old."—2 Esdras, xiv., 10.

Great tribulation prevails and greater still is to come upon the world, but "evil shall be put out and deceit shall be quenched." (2 Esdras, vi., 27.)

Better times will come and the earth shall be given to the people of God for whom the world was created. That which is mortal will be done away with, and the life of the chosen people will be purely spiritual.

Esdras sees in a vision a great people praising God in song upon Mount Zion, and one young man in the midst of them of high stature, taller than the rest, setting crowns upon their heads. Esdras asked the angel that stood by him :

"Sir, what are these ?

"He answered and said unto me, These be they that 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.

"Then said I unto the angel, What young person is it that crowneth them, and giveth them palms in their hands ?

"So he answered and said unto me, It is the Son of God, whom they have confessed in the world."—2 Esdras, ii., 44-47.

Esdras proclaims even the name of the Messiah. He informs us that the Lord said to him (2 Esdras, vii., 28) :

"My son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within four hundred years."

In addition to a definite fixation of the name and personality of the Saviour so eagerly longed for, we find in the Book of Esdras and other apocrypha many most beautiful gems of thought, which partly remind us of Christian ways of thinking and partly directly anticipate their phraseology. Thus we read :

"For the empty are empty things, and for the full are the full things.—2 Esdras, vii., 25.

"The most High hath made this world for many, but the world to come for few.—2 Esdras, viii., 1.

"There be many created, but few shall be saved.—2 Esdras, viii., 3.

"Notwithstanding the law perisheth not, but remaineth in his force.—2 Esdras, ix., 37.

"Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done unto thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest."—Eccl., xxviii., 2.

Esdras mentions two abysmal beings, Enoch and Leviathan, but they do not take any part in the production of evil. He might as well have omitted to mention them. In the name of God, an angel explains to him the origin of evil as follows :

"A city is builded, and set upon a broad field, and is full of all good things :

"The entrance thereof is narrow, and is set in a dangerous place to fall, like as if there were a fire on the right hand, and on the left a deep water :

"And one only path between them both, even between the fire and the water, so small that there could but one man go there at once.

"If this city now were given unto a man for an inheritance, if he never shall pass the danger set before it, how shall he receive this inheritance ?

"And I said, It is so, Lord. Then said he unto me, Even so also is Israel's portion.

"Because for their sakes I made the world : and when Adam transgressed my statutes, then was decreed that now is done.

"Then were the entrances of this world made narrow, full of sorrow and travail : they are but few and evil, full of perils, and very painful.

"For the entrances of the elder world were wide and sure, and brought immortal fruit.

"If then they that live labour not to enter these strait and vain things, they can never receive those that are laid up for them."—2 Esdras, vii., 6-14.

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