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The Book of the Revelation of Abraham, II

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Abstract: "In January there appeared in one of the popular daily journals of San Francisco an account of what was called "A Remarkable New Version of the Apocalypse of Abraham," by Professor G. Nathanael Bonwetsch, of the University of Goettingen, Germany; and then followed a partial translation of the same. In some of its passages the writer observed many things of a character both as to incidents and doctrines that ran parallel with what is recorded in the Book of Abraham, given to the world by Joseph Smith in 1836... The first impulse was to publish so much of the book as the daily paper referred to had produced, and point out the parallel incidents and doctrines in the Book of Abraham; but talking the matter over with Elder E H. Anderson (to whom, let us here say, we have often been indebted for many valuable suggestions in connection with the publication of the ERA), he suggested that we write and ascertain from Professor Bonwetsch himself if he had issued such a work, and if so obtain one from him. This was done, and a translation of the "Revelation of Abraham" is presented to our readers. On account of its length it has been divided and will appear in two numbers of the magazine, and will be followed by a third paper the purpose of which will be to indicate the points of comparison between this translation from the old Slavic manuscript and the Book of Abraham. It will be in the second paper, that the points of comparison will be most striking, and we must ask our readers to suspend their judgment as to the value of this production until the whole of it is before them. It should also be added that how much of this story from the old Slavic manuscript is tinged with fable and how much represents the true visions of the patriarch Abraham, as related by himself, we cannot pretend to say."

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THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION OF ABRAHAM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF PROF. G. NATHANAEL BON-
WETSCH, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GOETTINGEN, GERMANY,
BY E. H. ANDERSON AND R. T. HAAG.

II.

XII.

We two then went together forty days and forty nights. I ate no bread and drank no water, for the sight of the angel who was with me was my bread, and his speech was my drink. We came to the mount of God's majesty, Horeb. I said to the angel: "Singer of the Primeval One! behold we have no offering, yet I perceive a place for an altar upon the mountain; how can I sacrifice?" Then he said: "Look behind you." And I looked back and beheld all the animals commanded for sacrifice: the heifer, the goat, the sheep, the turtle dove and the dove. The angel said unto me: "Abraham," and I answered, "Here I am." And he said unto me: "Slay all these and divide them in half, all but the birds, and give unto the men whom I shall show unto you; and standing by you, behold the altar upon the mountain to offer the sacrifice unto the Eternal One. But the turtle dove and the dove give to me, for I ascend upon bird's wings to show you that which is in heaven, and upon the earth, and in the sea, and in the abysses, in the underworld, and in the Garden of Eden and its rivers, and in the fullness of the circuit of the whole world; for you shall behold all."

XIII.

And I did all as the angel commanded me, and gave unto the men who had come unto us the divided parts of the animals, but the angel took the birds. I waited for the evening sacrifice, but an unclean bird flew down upon the bodies, and I drove it away. But the unclean bird spoke to me and said: "What are you doing here, Abraham, upon the sacred heights where there is neither eating nor drinking? Nor is there any food for man upon them, none but what is consumed with fire, and the heights shall also burn you; leave the man that is with you, for if you go up to the summit, you shall be destroyed."

And when I heard the bird speak, I said to the angel: "What is this my Lord?" And he answered: "This is godlessness, this is Azazel." And he said to him: "Shame Azazel, upon thee; for Abraham's portion is in heaven, but thine is upon earth, because thou hast chosen and loved it as a dwelling place of thy impurity; therefore, the Strong One, the Primeval One, the Ruler made thee an earth-dweller, and through thee every evil spirit of lies; and made also through thee anger, and vexation among the races of godless men; but God, the Primeval, Almighty, has not permitted that the bodies of the righteous should be in thy power, thereby the life of the righteous is secured as well as the destruction of the wicked. Listen, tempter, be ashamed before me, for it is not given thee to tempt all the righteous. Away from this man; thou canst not mislead him, for he is thine enemy and the opponent of those who follow thee and love thy ways. Behold the garb which was formerly thine in heaven is chosen for him, and the corruption which was his is transferred to thee.

XIV.

The angel said unto me: "Abraham," and I answered, "Behold thy servant." And he said: "Know from this time forth that the Primeval One has chosen you, whom he loves; be courageous, and use this authority whenever I command you, against him who despises the truth. Am I not capable

of overpowering him who has disseminated the secrets of heaven upon the earth, and set up counsel against the Mighty One? Say to him: become thou the flame of the furnace of the earth. Go, Azazel, into the inaccessible parts of the earth, for thine inheritance is with men over whom thou hast influence, who have their being through thee, because they are of thee, both in this world and beyond. Thy enmity is righteousness. Therefore, because of thy perdition, vanish before me!" And I spake the words which the angel had taught me. And he said, "Abraham," and I answered, "Behold thy servant." And he said: "Do not reply to him." And the angel spake to me again saying, "Moreover, whatever he may say unto you, answer him not, that you may in no wise be swayed by his will; because the Primeval One and Mighty One has given him influence and power; answer him not." I did as the angel commanded me; and however much Azazel pleaded with me to come down, I answered him not.

XV.

And it came to pass at sunset, behold there was a smoke as from a furnace, and the men who held the portions of the sacrifice appeared upon the top of the smoking furnace. And the angel took me by the right hand, and placed me on the right wing of the dove; he sat on the left wing of the turtle dove which had been neither killed nor cut. And he carried me to the border of the fire flame. And we arose as by many winds to heaven which was fastened upon a level plain. And I saw in the air on the heights to which we arose an indescribably bright light; and behold in this burning light was a host of people,—a great multitude in the form of man,—all changing in appearance and form, running, changing, worshipping, and crying with one voice words which I knew not.

XVI.

And I spoke to the angel: "Why did you bring me hither at this time. Behold I cannot see, since I have become so weak that my spirit faints." And he answered: "Remain

with me; fear not, for that which you see approaching amidst many voices is the glory of the Primeval One who loves you, but himself you do not see. But let not your spirit grow faint at the loud cries, for I am with you to strengthen you."

XVII.

He was still speaking, when behold, fire surrounded us, and a voice was in the fire, as the voice of many waters, and the sound of the raging sea. And the angel bowed with me and prayed. And I was about to fall upon the earth, for the high place upon which we stood reeled and trembled. He said: "Only pray, Abraham, and repeat the song which I taught you." Then I prayed saying the song. Then he said: "Speak without ceasing." Then I spoke and he himself uttered this song with me:

Primeval, Almighty, Holy El, God, Sole Ruler, Self-Created, Incorruptible, Spotless, Eternal, Immortal, Faultless, Self-Perfected, Self-Enlightened, with no father, no mother, Unbegotten, Supreme, Glowing, Upright, Loving Mankind, Benevolent, Kind, Bountiful, Watchful of Me, Long Suffering and Most Gracious El, (That is my God) Everlasting, Mighty, Holy, Sabaoth, Most Lordly, El, El, El, El, Iaoel! Thou art he whom my soul loves, Protector, Eternal, brighter than fire, more full of light, whose voice is like thunder, whose glance is like lightning, Many-eyed, who acceptest the prayers of those who revere thee, and turnest away from the petitions of those who comprehend thee by their passions; thou who resolved the confusions of the world caused by the godless, contesting with the righteous in past ages; thou who renewest the æons of the righteous! Thou, O Light, shinest before the dawn upon thy creatures, so that from thy countenance there is day on earth; and in thy heavenly abode, no other light abideth save the inexpressible glance of the light of thy countenance! Accept my prayer and be glad therein and in my offering prepared for me by thine own self, because I sought thee. Accept me, show me, teach me, and cause thy servant to know as thou hast promised."

XVIII.

As I repeated the song, the flames of fire arose, and I heard a voice like the raging of the sea. And as the fire was lifted, I saw beneath the fire a flaming throne, and around it, many-eyed beings repeating the song, and beneath the throne, four fiery, living beings singing, and all looked alike, each of them had four faces,—one was like a lion, one like a man, one like an ox, and one like an eagle; four heads were upon their bodies, so that the four animals had sixteen faces, and each had six wings, extending from their shoulders, their sides and their thighs. The wings from their shoulders covered their faces, the wings from their thighs covered their feet, but those of their sides were spread out as if for flying. And when they finished singing, they viewed one another menacingly. And when the angel who was with me saw them threaten one another he left me and ran to them and turned the face of each creature away from the one opposite, so that they could not see one another's threatening faces. And he taught to them the primeval song of peace. And as I stood alone and looked, I saw behind the living beings a chariot with fiery wheels; each wheel had many eyes around about it; and above the wheels I saw the throne covered with fire flaming around about it. And behold an indescribable light encompassed a fiery multitude. And I heard their sanctified voices, like unto the voice of one man.

XIX.

And a voice came to me from the midst of the fire saying: "Abraham, Abraham," and I answered: "Behold, here I am." And it said: "Behold the expanse under the plain upon which you now stand. There is no other in all space, save Him whom you have sought, and who loves you." And as he still spoke, behold the expanse opened itself, and below me the heavens. And I saw upon the seventh firmament upon which I stood, a spreading, fiery light, and dew, and a multitude of angels, and a power of invisible glory over the living beings besides whom I saw no one else there.

And I looked downward from the mountain upon which I stood, upon the sixth heaven, and saw there a multitude of spiritual, bodiless, angels who fulfilled the commands of the fiery angels who dwelt upon the seventh heaven. And behold also upon this firmament was no other power except that of the seventh firmament, nor were there other shapes than the spiritual angels. And the voice commanded that the sixth heaven should disappear, and I saw the powers of the stars of the fifth heaven whom the elements of earth obey.

XX.

Then the Primeval, the Strong One spoke to me: "Abraham, Abraham," and I answered: "Behold, here I am." And he said: "Behold, from above the stars which are beneath you. Count them for me, and tell me their number." And I replied: "How can I? for I am a man, dust and ashes!" And He said to me: "As the number and power of the stars shall I make your seed to a nation; yea to a select and chosen people, separate from the inheritance of Azazel." Then I said: "Primeval One, Almighty. Allow thy servant to speak before thee, and let not thy wrath be kindled against thy chosen one. Behold, before thou didst lead me up, Azazel derided me, why now, since he abideth not before thee, hast thou established him, and given him a place?"

XXI.

He said to me: "Now look beneath your feet upon the plane and recognize the pre-formed creature upon this firmament, and the beings thereon; and the æons prepared before." And I saw below the plane of my feet the fifth firmament and what therein was, and in it the earth and its fruits, and all that moved upon it, and its spirits, and the power of its men, and the wickedness of their souls, and their dispensations of righteousness, and the beginnings of their works, the abyss with its tortures, and the lowest, and the destruction therein. And I saw there the sea, its islands, animals and fishes, the Leviathan and his possessions and his home

and his lurking place and the world which lay upon him and his movements and the disturbances of the world for his sake. And I saw rivers, their sources and their courses; and I saw there the garden of Eden, its fruits and springs, and the river which flows from it, its trees and their blossoms, and those who deal honestly. And I saw in the garden their food and their salvation. And I saw a host of men, women, and children, one-half on the right side, and the other one-half on the left side of the picture.

XXII.

And I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, what is this picture of the creature?" And he said to me: "This is my will in relation to that which has a being in the Council, and it became pleasing before me, and then afterwards I commanded them to be through my word. *And it came to pass that as many as I had authorized to exist, before portraided in this picture, and had stood before me pre-created,—as many as you have seen.*"

And I said: "Ruler, Strong One, Thou Who Wast Before the World, *Who are the multitude in this picture, on the right hand and on the left?*"

And He said to me: "*These upon the left side are the multitude of former generations, and those to come after you. These for judgment and order; those for vengeance and destruction at the end of the world. But those on the right side of the picture are the people chosen for me, separated from the peoples of Azazel. These are those which I have prepared to be born through you and to be called my people.*"

XXIII.

"Behold also in the picture him who led Eve astray; and behold the fruit of the tree; and know that which is to be, and the numbers of your seed among men at the end of the days of the world; and that which surpasses your understanding, I shall make plain to you, for you are pleasing before me, and to you will I make known the secrets of my heart."

And I looked about in the picture, and my eyes rested upon the side of the Paradise, Eden, and I saw there a man, very tall, broad and matchless in appearance, in embrace with a woman who equalled the man in growth and physique. And they stood under A Tree of Eden, and the fruit of this tree was like unto the grape of the vine; and behind the tree stood a being like a serpent in form, having hands and feet similar to a man, and wings on its shoulders, six on its right, and six on its left; and they held the grape of the tree in their hands; and they whom I saw embracing loved each other. And I said: "Who are those who mutually embrace? Who is the one that exists between them? What is the fruit which they eat? O Strong One, Primeval One!" And he said: "This is the council of men, this is Adam, and this is their desire on earth, this is Eve, but that which is between them is the wickedness of their act leading to destruction, that is Azazel himself." And I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, why hast thou to destroy with such effectiveness the generations of mankind? thou imparted to this being, in his works upon the earth, power. And he said to me: "Hear, Abraham, those who desire the Evil, and as many as go against my will, and practice evil, over them have I given him power to be loved by them." And I answered and said: "Primeval One, Strong One, why hast thou so planned that Evil should be desired in the hearts of men, since thou indeed art angry over that which thou intended, and with him who by the decree doeth the useless thing?"

XXIV.

And he spake to me thus: "Being angry with the nations because of you, and because of the chosen people, and the mission of your generations which you behold in the picture, I show unto you what shall come to pass in the last days. Look now upon all things in the picture." And I looked and saw there that which had been before me in creation. I saw like as if it were Adam and with him Eve, and with them the Evil Enemy, and Cain who had through this enemy become a transgressor, and the slain Abel, and the destruction which was

brought upon him and given to him through the transgressor. I saw there also the lewdness and the unchastity which they desired, and her pollution, and their envy, and the fire of their perishableness in the nethermost parts of the earth. And I saw there theft and those who hastened to it, and the order of their reward, the judgment of the great judgment. I saw there nude men, their foreheads against each other; and their shame and their passion which were against their partners, and their reward. I saw their desire, and in their hand the chief of each and every transaction; and their silence, their scattering, and their abandonment to destruction.

XXV.

I saw there the likeness of an idol of wrath, an image made of material like unto that which my father had made, and its body was of shining brass. Before it stood a man, and he worshipped it, and there was an altar opposite, and boys were butchered upon it in full view of the idol. I said: "What is this idol? What is the altar? Who are they that are sacrificed? Who is he that brings the sacrifice? What is the temple which I see, so beautiful in art, and in the majesty of thy glory found under the throne?" And he said: "Hearken, Abraham, that which you see, the temple, the throne (?) and the splendor signifies to me the Priesthood of the name of my glory, in which dwells every prayer of man, and in which is the rise of the kings and the prophets, and as many sacrifices as I have determined shall be made among my people, which shall be brought forth from your generations, but the image which you see is my wrath with which I am angered because of the people which proceed from you. But the man whom you saw butchering, he it is who tears open the victims of murder who are to me a testimony at the final judgment from the beginning of creation.

XXVI.

And I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, wherefore hast thou decreed that it should be so? Give me again testimony

of it." And He said: "Hearken, Abraham, know what I tell you, and answer me whatever I ask you. Why did not your father Terah listen to your voice? Why did he not depart from the demon of the idols, until he perished, and his entire house with him?" And I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, entirely because he did not choose to listen to me; but neither did I follow his works." And he said to me: "Hearken, Abraham: as the decree of your father was within him, and as your will is in you, so also is the will of my decree in me, prepared within me for the coming days, before you know those days, or see with your eyes what shall take place therein.—Behold the destiny of your seed in the picture."

XXVII.

And I looked and saw, and behold the picture reeled, and from its left side went forth the people of the Gentiles, and they scattered and plundered those who were upon the right side, men, women and children; some they butchered, and others they held as prisoners. Behold I saw these running up to those through four gates or entrances, and the temple they burned with fire, and that which was holy within it they plundered; and I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, behold my people which thou hast accepted, are being plundered by the multitudes of the Gentiles, some they kill, but others they hold fast as strangers, thy temple they have burned with fire, and the beautiful things therein, they have robbed and desecrated. Primeval One, Strong One, if this be so, why hast thou broken my heart, why should it be so?" And he answered me: "Hear, Abraham, what you have seen will happen because of your seed which anger me for the sake of the image which you saw, because of the killing which you saw through the passion in the temple." And I said: "Eternal One, Strong One, may now the deeds of evil pass by in wickedness, but show rather the works of the just who keep the commandments, for this thou canst do."—And he said to me: "Rather the dispensation of the just is seen in the image of kings and those who judge with righteousness, whom *I before created to be rulers among them; from these pro-*

ceed men who guide the destinies of all whom you have seen, and which have been made known to you."

XXVIII.

And I answered and said: "Primeval One, Strong One, thou who art made holy through thy power, be merciful to my petition, and show me, for thou hast led me up for this purpose; since thou hast led me up on thine height, make known to me, thy beloved, as much as I ask: whether my seed will be in the end as many as I saw." And he showed me a multitude of his people and said to me: "Therefore, through the four exits which you saw cometh anger to me from them, and in these events is my recompense for their deeds. But in the fourth event, however, of a hundred years and one hour of the æons,—the same one hundred years will consist of evil among the Gentiles, with mercy for an hour among them."

XXIX.

And I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, and how much time is an hour of the æons?" And He said: "Twelve years have I ordained this wicked æon to rule among the Gentiles, and among your seed, and what you saw will come to pass in the last days up to the end of time;—calculate and know what you behold in the picture." And I looked and saw a man going out from the left side of the Gentiles, and there went out men, women and children from the side of the Gentiles, and many hosts, and worshipped him. And while I yet looked, there went out from the right side some who derided that man, some who smote him, but others worshipped him. And I saw at the time that these worshipped him, that Azazel ran and worshipped, and having kissed his face he turned himself and stood behind him. And I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, who is the derided and smitten man worshipped by the Gentiles, with Azazel?" And He answered and said: "Hear, Abraham, the man whom you have seen derided and smitten, and again worshipped, that is the Salvation (Pardon) from the heathen to the people which is to come of thee, in the last days,—the twelfth hour of the

æon of wickedness. But in the twelfth year of my æon of the last days, I will raise up this man which you saw from your seed, out of my people, and him shall all follow, and they shall be added as they are called of me, and as they change in their decisions (repent). And those whom you saw going out of the left side of the picture, having worshipped him, are these: Many from the Gentiles shall rely upon him; and others which you saw, from your seed on the right side, some deriding and smiting him, others worshipping him, many of them shall be offended in him. But he shall put to the test, in the twelfth hour of the end, those of your seed who have worshipped him; but in that hour of the end, there will be a shortening of the æon, because of wickedness. Before the æon of the righteous commences to grow, my judgment cometh over the dissolute Gentiles, through the people of your seed, separated for me. In those days I shall bring ten plagues over all creatures of the earth, through evil, and sickness, (tribulation) and the sighs and the sorrows of their souls. Even these I bring over the generations of men which are upon the earth, because of the anger and vileness of their natures, wherewith they anger me. And then there will be righteous men left out of your seed, a select number, hastening, in the glory of my name, to the place which has before been prepared for them, and which you saw desolate in the picture; and they will be planted there, to dwell, through sacrifice and gifts of righteousness and truth, in the æon of the righteous, and in my name they shall rejoice ever-more; they shall destroy those who destroyed, and shall deride those who derided them; and those who abuse them will be spit upon and defamed before me, while they shall look upon me with gladness, rejoicing with my people, and receiving those who turn to me in repentance. Behold, Abraham, how much you have seen, and hearken to what you have heard, and know what has been taught to you. Go, labor with my inheritance, and I am with you forever."

XXX.

While he was still speaking I found myself on the

earth. And I said: "Primeval One, Strong One, so soon am I bereft of the glory in which I was above, and my soul longs to know so much in my heart,—so much that I have not learned." And He said to me: "That longing of your heart I will tell to you: you have sought to see the ten plagues which I have prepared for the Gentiles and which I had before prepared at the passing of the twelfth hour upon the earth. Hear, as all I shall make known unto you, so shall it be: the first calamity shall be great need; the second, conflagration of cities; the third, destruction, pestilence of animals; the fourth, hunger over the whole world of its species; the fifth, destruction among its rulers, earthquakes and destruction by the sword; the sixth, the multiplying of hail and snow; the seventh, wild animals shall be its grave; the eighth, hunger and pestilence will bring about its downfall; the ninth, punishment by the sword and flight in sorrow; the tenth, an uproar of voices and destroying earthquakes."

XXXI.

"Then shall I blow my trumpet from on high and send my Chosen One who has a fullness of all my power, and he shall call together my despised people from the nations, and I shall burn with fire those who have derided them and who have domineered over them in this æon. And I shall make those who have covered me with derision, also a derision in the coming æon, for I have prepared them as food for the fire of Hades, and for unceasing flitting about in the sphere of the Under-World, beneath the earth, their bodies filled with worms. For those of them who have chosen my will, shall behold the righteousness of the Creator, and those who have openly kept my commandments shall rejoice with great rejoicing over the destruction of those men who have abandoned me and followed idols and committed deeds of murder. And corruption shall overtake them in the body of the Evil Worm, Azazel, by the fire of whose tongue they shall be burned; for while I waited for them to come to me, they loved and praised the stranger, and followed him with whom they were told to have no part, but the Mighty Lord they have deserted."

XXXII.

“Therefore, hear, Abraham, and see, behold your seventh generation shall go with you, and they shall go into a strange land, and be made servants unto those who shall do evil unto them, as one hour of the æon of godlessness; but of the nation by whom they are made servants, shall I be the judge.”

 THE TEAR OF PITY.

So bright the tear in Beauty's eye
 Love half regrets to kiss it dry.
 —*Lord Byron.*

There is a gem that far outshines
 The diamond glittering in its ore,
 The splendor of Peruvian mines,
 Or Indus' gold-enamelled shores.

Search ye the caves of ocean wide,
 No coral there can it excel;
 Ask not the glittering child of pride
 Its worth: alas! he cannot tell.

But yon old wretch, so thin and pale,
 With grateful heart can well reply,
 For, when he told his mournful tale,
 It sparkled in my Mary's eye.