

Foreword: THE REVELATION OF PAUL

preface

The contents of the Revelation of Paul can be compared with that of the Revelation of Peter. In this revelation the apostle Paul may now visit heaven and hell. The reason for writing this work is a remark made by Paul in his second letter to the church in Corinth. It says that he went up to the third heaven and heard unspeakable things there (2 Cor. 12:1-5). Paul is said to have made a record of that visit. According to the introduction to this Revelation, Paul buried that record under the foundations of his house in the city of Tarsus where it was found in AD 388. This date is evidence that the work must have been written about AD 400. But then we are talking about Revelation in its present form. The contents indicate that the work has been compiled from several much older sources. Moreover, it is quoted by early Christian writers, and it appears that it must have been known to Origen in some form or another about AD 200.

The following text is a translation of a Latin manuscript, but it is likely that the Revelation was written in Greek. It is usually believed that this happened in Egypt. The work has not only been translated into Latin, however. There are also arrangements in - among others - Coptic and Syriac.

Content and character

The Revelation of Paul consists of a number of parts, the contents of which are first summarized here. Every part contains something that catches our attention.

1-2 Throughout Revelation, Paul is speaking. Here he tells about his visit to the third heaven. It explains how the work was found.

3-6 From these chapters we can see the purpose of this Revelation. For Paul must tell the people that it is sinful, and that this will not go unpunished. The judgment and punishments will therefore be written in detail later. The rest of this piece describes how the sun, moon, stars, sea, water and earth complain to God about the sins of men.

7-10 This section is about the angels. We notice that the author has made extensive use of traditions concerning the duties of the angels, some of which are also found in Jewish writings. Here it is said that the angels appear before God at set times to worship Him and that they offer Him all that man has done on earth.

11-18 The Revelations are about the contact between heaven and earth. It is the angels who bridge the distance between heaven and earth. In these chapters two tasks of the angels are discussed. An important task of the angels is to praise God. We already come across in Jewish sources that this is done by means of a fixed schedule. This again agrees with the idea that the angels are also classified in different classes. Another mission is to transfer the dead to heaven. We are reminded of this task in a regular part of the Roman Catholic funeral service where the following is sung at the end:

In paradisum deducant te angeli. In tuo adventu suscipiant te martyres perducant te in civitatem sanctam Ierusalem.

In English

May the angels guide you. May the martyrs receive you at your arrival and lead you to the holy city of Jerusalem.

19-30 In the Old Testament we find that the righteous Enoch, according to Genesis 5:22, 'walked with God'. It was supposed that is why he was given a place in heaven where Paul meets him in the third heaven. Yet it is not given to mortal men to visit this heaven and therefore Paul is said to descend to the second.

In chapter 21 it is said that Christ will reign on earth with his followers for a thousand years. This is an original Jewish tradition that we also find in the Revelation of John 20:1-6. In the later church this idea was not always appreciated because the representation is said to be too 'earthly'.

31-44 Paul may glance at the punishment that will befall the unjust. Here we find, without a doubt, the influence of the Revelation of Peter. In chapter 44 follows an indictment against the Jews who rejected Jesus. Again we are dealing here with old traditions. Among the Jews already existed a list of the sins they had committed and about which God would lament. This has been adopted by the Christians, who especially recalled that the Jews had rejected the Messiah. This 'complaint of God' was part of the Christian liturgy surrounding Good Friday for many years. Today, under strong resistance from Jews and Christians, this part is omitted or toned down.

45-51 In these chapters Paul visits paradise. After the foregoing, we can only conclude that this piece must be regarded as an independent tradition. It is striking that during his visit Paul met a large number of righteous people. Successively he meets Mary, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Lot, Job, Noah, Elijah and Elisha. Something is said about all of them, which again we suppose to have been taken from existing traditions.

Perhaps, to our taste, this Revelation gives a very detailed account of Paul's journey. We can only conclude that the author was well acquainted with the traditions of heaven and hell and that he thought he should include everything he knew in his description.

We are apparently dealing with a writer who had become familiar with all kinds of Christian traditions about, among other things, the angels, heaven, hell and Old Testament figures. The stories had gradually become popular and were incorporated in Christian literature, but also in the visual arts. They were subjects about which the Bible hardly speaks, but which have been given an increasingly prominent place in the preaching of the church.

Literature

The text below is a translation of a Latin manuscript from the eleventh century in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelle acq. lath. 1631, edited by Th. Silverstein and A. Hilhorst, *Apocalypse of Paul*, Geneva 1997, 23-28 and 66-167.

An English translation is present in Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, G16-644, a German one in Schneemelcher, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen II*, 644-675, edited by H. Duensing and A. de Santos Otero, The following translation is based on that of A Hilhorst in: AFJ Klijn, *Apocrypha of the New Testament*.

Dear reader,

I scanned the original with OCR. As a result, there may still be some scan (language) errors.

The translators have clearly tried to reproduce the original pieces as truthfully as possible, but it is clear in their preface that the human view prevails here and there. It is special that people are inspired to do what they do and that it is insightful to us in this truthful way.

I haven't changed anything in this translation, however on page 15 the salutation they use is "Hell". Rather, I refer to the much more loving possibility recorded in 1 Cor. 3:13 -15 and according to the text in Revelation 14:18 – 20

1 Cor. 3: 13 – 15

The fire will show what everyone's work is worth. When one's edifice persists, he will be rewarded. When it burns, he will pay the price for it: He himself will be saved, but through the fire.

Revelation 14: 18 – 20

18. Let your sharp sickle come to harvest the grapes in the vineyard of the earth, for the grapes are ripe.

This is another clear reference to Leviticus 23:33-34 The Feast of Tabernacles.

Finally.

Reference is made in this writing to Enoch, the scribe of righteousness (chapter 20).

Like Paul, Enoch had a viewing. Enoch speaks of a great cavern (world of the dead) with three partitions, and beyond this cavern is the lake of fire with brimstone.

Three partitions create 4 spaces (bottomless pits).

Room 1: presence of the source of life

Room 2: gathering place of people with a good / religious life

Room 3: gathering place of people for whom rescue is still possible

Room 4: gathering place for people who cannot be rescued

preface

2 Corinthians 12:1-6 But I will go on with visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ. It's been fourteen years and it happened inside or outside the body. I don't know, but God does. That man was taken up to the third heaven. But I know that that man in or out of the body - I don't know, but God does - was taken up to paradise and there heard secret words which it is not lawful for men to utter. In that man I will boast, but not in myself, except as far as my weaknesses are concerned."

The finding of the revelation that Paul had received had

I When did the book become known? During the consulship of Teodosius Augustus the Younger and Kynegius, a distinguished man who then lived in Tarsus in the house that had belonged to Saint Paul had an angel apparition at night. This revealed to him that he must break open the foundations of the house and make known what he found there. But he thought it was bullshit.

2 But when the angel came the third time, he scourged him and made him break the foundation by force. While digging, he came across a marble box that was written on the sides. In it was the revelation of Saint Paul and the sandals on which he had walked when he had taught the word of God. But the man did not dare to open the box and took it to the judge. The judge received it and sent it sealed as such with lead to Emperor Teodosius because he did not quite trust the matter. The emperor received it, opened it and found the revelation of Saint Paul. He sent a copy to Jerusalem and kept the original for himself.

Man is being sued

3 When I was in the body in which I was taken up to the third heaven, the word of the Lord came to me: "Say to the people, 'How long will you do wrong, and heap sin upon sin, and will you worship the Lord you are children of God and yet you do the work of the devil because of the cares of the world though you trust in Christ So remember that all creation is subject to God but human beings are generation alone sins. It rules over all that is made, but it sins more than all nature.'"

4 Often the sun, the great light, has addressed the Lord, saying, 'Lord, God Almighty, I look upon the wickedness and iniquity of men. If You allow me I will let my strength feel so that they know that You alone are God. And a voice arose and said to her: 'All this is known to Me, for my eye sees it and my ear hears it, but my patience endures them until they repent and do penance. But if they do not return to Me, I will condemn them all.

5 And often the moon and the stars have addressed the Lord, saying: 'Lord, God Almighty, You have given us power over the night. How much longer must we look upon the wickedness and fornication and murder of the children of men? Allow us to exercise our strength that they may know that You alone are God.' And a voice came and said unto them, All this I know, for mine eye seeth and my ear heareth, but my patience endureth them till they repent and repent. But if they do not return to Me, I will condemn them all."

6 And again and again the sea cried out, 'Lord, God Almighty, men have defiled your holy name in me. Grant that I may arise and cover every forest, the trees, and the whole world until I have destroyed all the children of men before You that they may know that You alone are God.' And again a voice spoke and said: 'It is all known to Me, for my eye sees all and my ear hears, but my patience bears them until they repent and do penance. But if they do not return to Me I will condemn them.' Often the waters also turned to the children of men and said to the Lord, 'Lord, God Almighty, the children of men have all defiled your holy name.' And a voice came out and said: 'I know everything before it happens, for my eye sees and my ear hears everything, but my patience endures them until they repent. If not, then I will pronounce judgment.' Again and again the earth cried out to the Lord in view of the people: "Lord, Almighty God, I suffer more harm than the rest of your creation because I commit fornication, adultery, murder, theft, perjury, sorcery and witchcraft of the people, and all the other evil they do, it is that a father rises against his son, and a son against his father, a stranger against a stranger, each one defiles the woman of his neighbour. The father ascends upon his son's bed, and the son likewise upon his father's. And with all these evil things those who offer sacrifices in name have defiled your holy place. Therefore I suffer more harm than all creation and I intend no longer to give my strength and my fruits to the children of men. If You grant me I will destroy the strength of my fruits. And a voice came out and said: "It is all known to Me and there is none who can hide from his sin. I know their wicked deeds. But my holiness endures them until they repent and do penance. But if they do not return to Me, I will condemn them.'

The angels report

7 Children of men, behold, creation is subject to God, but only the human race sins. Therefore you, children of men, must bless the Lord God unceasingly, every hour and every day, but especially when the sun goes down. For then all the angels will go to the Lord to worship Him and to present the works of men that each has done from morning to evening, both good and bad. And there is an angel who joyfully leaves the man he inhabits. So when the sun has set, at the first hour of the night, at that hour comes the angel of every nation and of every man and woman. These are the angels who protect and keep them, for man is the image of God. Also at the morning hour, that is, the twelfth of the night, all the angels of men and women come to God to worship Him. Then they offer all the work that every human being has done, both good and bad. Every day and night the angels present to God the sum total of all the work of the human race. Therefore I say to you, children of men, the Lord God tirelessly blesses all the days of your life.

The Adoration of the Angels

8 At the appointed hour, therefore, all the angels joyfully come before God at once, and they appear in time to worship. And behold, suddenly their meeting took place, and the angels came to worship before God, and the Spirit met them.

And there was a voice that said, "Angels of us, whence have you come, you who are in charge of reporting?

9 They answered, 'We come from those who have given up this world for your holy name. They roam as strangers and dwell in caves of rock and all the time they dwell on the earth they weep and hunger and thirst for your name. They have girded their loins, and in their hands they have the frankincense of their hearts. Every hour they pray and bless and they

control themselves more than any other human being on Earth. They weep and mourn. And so do we, their angels. So order us to serve them as you see fit. They have chosen poverty more than anyone else on earth.' And the voice of God was heard and said to them: 'Know that from now on

grace is ordained for you by Me, and that My help consisting of My dearly beloved Son will stand by them and guide them at every hour. Yes, he will rule them and never leave them because they will be his home.

10 Then when these angels had withdrawn, suddenly other angels came forward to worship before the Glory. They cried. And the Spirit of God went out to meet them, and a voice was heard saying, 'Angels of us, whence came you with your burdens, ministers with tidings of the world?' They answered before God: 'We come from those who have called on your name, but the cares of the world have made them unhappy. Every hour they came up with new excuses and they have not uttered a single pure prayer with all their heart in all their lives. So why is it necessary to assist sinners?' And the voice of God was heard and said to them, "Yet it is necessary that you help them until they repent and do penance. But if they do not return to Me, I will condemn them." So children of men, know that whatever is done by you is reported to God by angels, both good and evil.

The Judgment on the Righteous and the Sinners

11 And the angel spoke and said to me: 'Follow me and I will show the place of the saints. After their death they are taken there. Then I will take you to the abyss and show you the souls of the sinners who were brought there after their death.' And I followed the angel, and he brought me up to heaven, and I saw the expanse, and there I saw the powers and the forgetfulness that is deceitful and draws the heart of man to itself. And I saw the spirit of slander and that of fornication and of wrath and the spirit of impudence. There were the princes of all that is evil. This saw I under the expanse of heaven. And again I looked and I saw merciless angels who knew no pity. Their faces were full of fury, and their teeth protruded from their mouths. Their eyes sparkled like the morning star of the east and of the hairs on their heads shot sparks of fire as well as from their mouths." And I asked the angel, "Who are they, my lord? And the angel answered me, 'These are they who are destined for the souls of the wicked in the hour of fate, those who believed not that they had the Lord as a helper, and have not hoped in Him.'"

12 And I looked up and I saw other angels. Their faces shone like the sun, their loins were girded with girdles of gold, and they had palm branches in their hands and the sign of God. They were clothed in robes with the name of the Son of God written on them. And they were full of mildness and mercy. I asked the angel, "Who are they, my lord, who are so fair and merciful?" And the angel answered me, "These are the righteous angels who are sent forth in the fateful hour to fetch the souls of the righteous, who have believed that they have the Lord as a helper." And I said to him, 'Is it necessary for the righteous and the sinners to meet witnesses when they are dead? And the angel answered me: 'There is only one road that everyone passes on their way to God, but the righteous who have a holy helper with them are not confused when they go along this road to appear before God. "

13 And I said to the angel: 'I would like to see the souls of the righteous and of the sinners when they leave the world.' And the angel told me to look down on the earth. And I looked down from the sky and I saw the whole world that was almost insignificant in my eyes. I saw the children of men as if they were nothing and had no size. I marveled and said to the angel, "Is this the greatness of the people?" And the angel answered me: 'Indeed, And it is they who do evil from morning to night. And I looked again and I saw a cloud of fire that spread over all the earth, and I said to the angel, 'Lord, what is this? And he said to me that this is the injustice that is cooked up by the princes of the sinners.

14 When I heard this, I sighed and wept, and I said to the angel that I would like to see the souls of the righteous and the sinners, to know in what form they leave the body. And the angel answered me that I should look at the earth again. I looked down and I saw the whole earth and the people were next to nothing and in miserable conditions. I saw a man lay dying, and the angel said to me: He that you see there is a righteous man. And I looked again and I saw all the works that he had done for the name of God and all that he had planned, both that which he remembered and that which he no longer remembered. It all stood before him in the fateful hour. And I saw that the righteous prospered and that he had found grace and confidence. And before he left the world, both the holy and the wicked angels stood before him. And I saw them all, but the wicked did not dwell with him, but the saint ruled over his soul and accompanied her until she had left the body. They urged the soul and said: 'Soul, you must be able to recognize your body from which you came, for it is necessary that you return in the same body on the day of resurrection. Then you will receive what has been promised to all the righteous.' Then they took the soul from the body, and immediately they kissed her as if they had known her daily, and told her to be of good cheer because she had done the will of God. when she was on the earth, and the angel who daily guarded her came to meet her, and said to her, "Be of good cheer, soul. For I rejoice in you because you have done the will of God on earth. For I have all your works reported to God as they are.' Likewise, the spirit came to her and said: "Soul, do not be afraid and do not be dismayed until the moment when you have come to a place that you have never known, for I will be your helper. For I found a refreshing place in you during the time I lived with you when I was on earth.' And her spirit gave her courage, and her angel took her up and accompanied her to heaven. And an angel said.' Where are you going so fast, soul? Do you dare to enter into heaven? Wait a minute and we'll see if there's anything of us in you. Unfortunately, we found nothing on you. I also see a divine helper and your angel and the spirit is pleased with you because you have done the will of God on earth." They carried her on until she fell before God in worship. And when they had finished they fell immediately Michael and all the army down and worshiped the footstool of his feet and his gates, saying to the soul that this is the God of them all. He created in his image and likeness. And the angel returned and said: " God, remember her works for this is the soul whose work I reported to You, Lord, as You commanded me.' And so the spirit said: 'I am the quickening spirit that breathed in her. For in her I refreshed myself while I dwelt in her as You commanded me.

And the voice of God was heard and said: 'As this one grieved Me not, neither will I grieve her, for as she showed mercy, so will I also show mercy. So let them be handed over to Michael, the angel of the covenant, to carry her over to the paradise of joy, that she too may become a joint-heir with all the saints.' And after that I heard the voices of thousands of thousands of angels and archangels and cherubim and of the twenty-four elders who sang hymns and praised the Lord and cried, "Justice art thou, Lord, and righteous is thy judgment, and thou favorest none, but thou repayest every one." according to your judgment. And the angel spoke and said to me. "Have you believed and noticed that each of you will see all that he has done in the fateful hour?" And I said, 'Yes, Lord.

15 And he said to me, 'Look down again to the earth, to see how the soul of a wicked man leaves her body, a soul that hath embittered the Lord day and night, making sure that it has nothing else in this world. and that she eats and drinks and enjoys what is in the world. For who has descended to the underworld and ascended again to inform us that there is a sentence of punishment? And I looked again and saw all that the sinner had despised and all that he had done. All this stood before him in the fateful hour. And at the hour when he was to be removed from the body, that would be the cause of his condemnation. And I said it would have been better for him if he hadn't been born. And after that the holy angels and the wicked angels met with the sinner's soul, and the holy angels found no place with her. The wicked angels threatened her, and as they removed her from the body the angels admonished her three times, saying: 'O wretched soul, look at the flesh you have left. For it is necessary that you return in that flesh on the Day of Resurrection in order to receive an appropriate recompense for your sins and your wicked deeds.'

16 And when they brought her out, the angel she trusted came and stood before her, and said to her, 'O wretched soul, I am the angel who was with you, and who daily reported your evil deeds, which you did by night and by day. had done. And if I had mastered my own eyes I would not have served you a day. But I could do nothing: He is merciful and a just judge, and He has commanded us to keep serving the soul until you repent, but you have let the time of repentance pass. That's why we have become strangers to each other. So let's go to the righteous judge before I know further that I have become a stranger to you. The ghost put her to shame and the angel frightened her. Then when they had come to the (heavenly) powers and were about to enter heaven, one torment after another was inflicted on her. Error, forgetfulness, and gossip met her, and the spirit of fornication and the other powers. They said to her, 'Where do you want to go, unhappy soul? Do you dare to run into heaven? Stand still and we can see if there is something of ourselves in you, for we see no holy helper near you.' Then I heard voices in the high heavens say, 'Bring the wretched soul before God that it may know that it is God whom it has despised. All the angels saw her, thousands of thousands, when she had entered heaven. They all cried in unison: Woe unto thee, wretched soul, for the works thou hast done on earth. What will you answer to God when you have come near to worship Him?' The angel who was with her spoke up and said: "My dearly beloved, weep with me, for in this soul I have found no rest." And the angels answered him, "Let that soul be taken from us, for from the moment it entered its stench has penetrated to us angels." Then she was taken to fall down before God in worship. The angel showed her God the Lord who had made her in his image and likeness. But her angel ran forward and said: Lord, Almighty God, I am the angel of this soul. I have offered you the works of her day and night. Deal with her as you see fit.' And the spirit also said: 'I am the spirit that has dwelt in her since she was created and I know her through and through, but she has not obeyed my will. Judge her, Lord, according to thy judgment.' And the voice of God came and said to her, "Where is the fruit which you have brought forth according to the mercies you have received? Have you perhaps bridged the distance of but one day between you and a righteous man? surely the sun will rise on you and on the righteous?' But she kept silent, for she could not answer. And again the voice came and said, "Justice is the judgment of God, and God favors no one. For he will have mercy on everyone who has shown mercy, and who has not known mercy will also receive no mercy from God: let it be handed over to the angel Tartaruchus, who is appointed over the punishments, and let him cast her into the utter darkness where there is weeping and the gnashing of teeth and let it remain there until the great day of judgment.' Then I heard a voice of angels and archangels saying that the Lord is just as righteous as his judgment.

17 And I looked again, and behold, there was a soul brought by two angels. She wept and said, "Have mercy on me, righteous God, divine judge, for today is the seventh day since I left my body and I was handed over to these two angels and taken by them to places that I have never seen before." had seen.' And God the righteous judge said to her, "What have you done? For you have never shown mercy. Therefore you have been delivered to these angels who have no mercy. Because you have not done good, therefore they have treated you without love. in the fateful hour. You must therefore confess your sins which you committed while you were in the world."

And she answered, "Lord, I have not sinned." And the Lord, the righteous God, was furious when she said this, for she lied. And God said, 'Do you think you're still alive in the world? There they all sin without being caught, and each hides his sin from his neighbor. But here nothing is hidden, for when the souls have come to worship before the throne, everyone's works, both his good works and his sins, are made manifest.'" When it heard this, the soul was silent, for it did not know what to answer. And I heard the Lord, the righteous God, further say, "Come, angel of this soul, and stand in the midst." And the angel of the sinful soul came with a scripture in his hand and said: 'Lord, here in my hand are all the sins of this soul from its youth to this day, from ten years after its birth. And if You ask "Lord, can I also tell her deeds from the age of fifteen."

The Lord God, the righteous judge, said, "I tell you, angel, I expect no record of you from her fifteenth year, but list her sins for the last five years before her death when she came here." And further said the Lord God, the righteous judge: 'For I swear by Myself and by My holy angels and My power that if she had repented five years before her death, even if it were but one year, all her sins that she had done before, would be forgiven, and she would have had pardon and forgiveness. But now let her be lost.' And the angel of the sinful soul gave word: 'Lord, let that angel fetch those souls.'

18 And immediately the souls were brought forth, and the soul of the sinner recognized them. And the Lord said to the soul of the sinner I command you to declare openly what you did to the souls you see here when they were in the world And she answered: Lord, not a year ago I killed them and her blood have I shed on the earth, and I have committed fornication with another. And besides, I have grossly harmed her by using up her wealth. And the Lord God, the righteous judge, said: Did you not know that the one who suffered violence and died first are kept here until the culprit dies who harmed the other, and then both come before the judge and that thereupon each one receives that which is in accord with what he has done?

And I heard the voice of one who said, 'Let that soul be delivered into the hands of Tartrachus. She must be brought down to the underworld. Let him put her in the prison of the underworld and let her be tortured to remain there until the great day of judgment.' And furthermore I heard thousands of thousands of angels singing a song of praise to the Lord and crying, 'Justice art thou, O Lord, and righteous is thy judgment.'

The first visit to paradise

19 The angel spoke and said to me if I had seen all this, and I said, "Yes, sir." And he told me to follow him again to take me and show me the places where the righteous dwell. I went after the angel and he carried me up to the third heaven and he set me down at the door of the gate. And I looked around and saw that it was a gate of gold. Before it stood two pillars of gold, and on the pillars were two tables of gold, which were written all over with letters of gold. And the angel again turned to me and said: "Blessed are you when you have entered these gates, for it is only lawful to enter with a good and innocent body. I asked the angel about everything and said: 'Lord, tell me in view of which these letters are written on those tables.' The angel replied that these were the names of the righteous who dwell on the earth and serve God with all their hearts, And I said further, Lord, so their name is written in heaven.'" And he replied, 'Not only their name but also their faces, the image of those who serve God, are in heaven, and they are known to the angels. After all, they know who are servants of God with all their hearts before they have left the world.'

20 And when I had entered the gate and the paradise there met me an old man whose face shone like the sun. He hugged me and said, "Hail, Paul, dearly beloved friend of God." And he kissed me with a happy face. He cried and I said, 'Brother, why are you crying?' And he sighed again and crying he said: 'We are bothered by all the people and they make us very sad. For the good things which the Lord has prepared are many and His promise is great, but many do not get to them.' And I asked the angel, 'Who is this, sir?' And he said it was Enoch, the scribe of righteousness. I went inside and immediately saw the sun. He came to greet me with joy and gladness. And when he saw me, he turned away from me and wept. He said to me: 'Paul, may you be rewarded for the efforts you have made among the people. As for me, I have seen many great and good things which God has prepared for the righteous, and the promises of God are great, but most receive them not. Hardly a single person enters despite a great deal of effort.'

21 And the angel spoke and said to me, "Do not tell anyone on earth what I am showing you here and what you are hearing here." And he took me and let me look and I heard there words that no man is allowed to utter.⁹ And he went on to say, 'Come with me again and I will show you what you may tell and report to everyone.' And he brought me down from the third heaven to the second. He brought me again to the expanse, and from there to the heavens' doors. There began the foundations, above the river that waters the whole earth. And I asked the angel: Lord, what is this river?' And he said it was the ocean. Immediately I left heaven and I understood that this was the light of heaven that shines over the whole world. There was a land seven times more radiant than silver. I said, "Lord, what is this place?" And he told me that this was the land of promise: 'Have you not heard what is written: 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall receive the land for an inheritance? Well, when the souls have left the body, they are brought to this place for the time being.' I said to the angel, "Will the land one day be revealed? The angel answered me, "When Christ whom you preach comes to reign, then by the decree of God the first earth will be torn down" and then this land of promise shall come to light, and it shall be as dew or mist, and then shall the Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting king, be revealed, and shall come with all his saints to dwell therein, and shall he be upon them a thousand years reign and they will eat of the good things that I will show you."

22 And I looked over that land, and I saw a river flowing with milk and honey, and upon the bank of that river trees were planted full of fruits. And each tree bore fruit twelve times a year, all kinds of different fruits. And I saw what that place looked like and all the work of God. There I saw palms twenty cubits high and others ten. That land was seven times brighter than silver. There were trees full of fruits from the root to the top, ten thousand fruits from the palm, and another ten thousand fruits. The vineyards had ten thousand bushes. And on each vine were ten thousand times a thousand clusters, and on each cluster a thousand grapes.

The trees each bore a thousand fruits. And I said to the angel, 'Why does every tree bear a thousand fruits?' The angel answered me, 'Because the Lord God gives bountiful gifts to those who deserve it. They voluntarily sacrificed themselves to the death by doing everything for the sake of his holy name while in the world.'

And I went on to say to the angel, "Lord, is this all the Lord God promises to His saints?" And he answered me, 'No, for there are some seven times greater than these. I tell you that the righteous will see the reward and the good things that God has in store for them as soon as they leave the body. Nevertheless they will sigh and cry and say, "Why was there still a day when a word escaped our mouths with which we offended our neighbor?"

And I asked him further if these were the only promises of God. And the angel answered me that what I now see is for the married people who have kept the chastity of their marriage by living in abstinence, but for the virgins and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and those who turn to sacrifice death for the name of the Lord God will give seven times greater things yet. And I would see that too.

He then lifted me up from the place where I had seen this and behold, a river of very white water, whiter than milk, I said to the angel: What is this? He said this was the Acherusian Lake, where the city of Christ is. 'But it is not lawful for everyone to enter that city. For this is the way that leads to Him. If anyone commits fornication and is wicked, but repents and repents and has brought forth the fruits of his repentance, he is first taken to worship God as soon as he has left the body. Then, at the command of the Lord, he is handed over to the angel Michael who immerses him in the Acherusian Lake. Then he brings him into the city of Christ with those who have not sinned.' I was amazed and blessed the Lord God for all that I had seen.

23 And the angel spoke and told me to follow him and he would bring me into the city of Christ. And he stood by the shore of the Acherusian Sea and put me in a boat of gold, and before me about a thousand angels sang a song of praise until I came to the city of Christ. Those who dwelt in the city of Christ rejoiced at my coming.

When I was inside I saw the city of Christ. It was all gold and twelve walls surrounded it. It contained twelve towers. And all the walls were separated from each other around one stadium. I said to the angel, "Lord, how much is one stage?" The angel answered me, "As far as between the Lord God and the people of the earth, for there is only one great city of Christ on earth." Around the city were twelve gates of great beauty, and four rivers flowed around them. For there was a river of honey, another of milk, and finally one of wine and oil.

And I said to the angel, 'What are these rivers that flow around the city?' And he said that these are the rivers that flow abundantly for those who dwell in the land of promise, 'Their names are Pishon for the river of honey, Euphrates for the river of milk, Gihon for the river of oil, and Tigris for the river of wine. Those who were righteous in the world have left their power over these things unused, but they have starved to miss this and they have

sacrificed himself to death for the sake of the Lord God. Therefore the Lord will grant them this transcendent gift as soon as they enter the city."

24 When I entered the gate, I saw at the entrance of the city very large and tall trees that had no fruit, but only leaves. Among the trees I saw a few people scattered and they cried a lot when they saw someone enter the city. The trees did penance for them by bowing and bowing. Then they straightened up again. When I saw that, I also wept and the angel asked, "Lord, who are they who have not been given permission to enter the city of Christ?" And he told me that these are the people who diligently withdrew from the world day and night by fasting. But their hearts were proud, more than other people's. They have glorified and praised themselves and done nothing for their neighbors. Some of them greeted them kindly, but others didn't even say hello. They only opened the door to whoever they wanted, and they prided themselves on doing a little thing for their loved ones.

I said, 'Lord, how are you? Has their pride prevented them from entering the city of Christ?' And the angel answered that the root of all evil is pride. Are they better than the Son of God who came very humbly to the Jews?' I asked him why the trees bent and then rose again.

The angel answered me, "All the time they have spent on earth in the service of God, they humbled themselves for a time out of shame before men and their reproaches, but they had neither sorrow nor repentance, so that they turned away from the pride that lived in them. That's why the trees lean and straighten up again.' And I asked why they are allowed at the entrance of the city. The angel answered me, "Because this is the entrance for all its saints who enter this city. Therefore they have been left in this place, that when the eternal king Christ enters with his saints, the righteous at his entry pray for them, and then they will enter the city with him, but that does not mean that any of them can be unconcerned because they have humbled themselves all their lives while serving God.

25 I went on while the angel explained to me, and he brought me to the river of honey. There I saw Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Micah, and Zechariah—the minor and the great prophets—and they welcomed me to the city. I asked the angel what this road was. He said this was the way of the prophets. Anyone who has grieved himself and has not done his own will because of God is handed over to Michael by God's command as soon as he has left the world. After he has been brought before the Lord God and worshiped Him, he brings him within the city to the place of the prophets, and they greet him as their friend and companion, because he has done the will of God.

26 Then he brought me to the river of milk. There I saw all the children that King Herod had killed for the name of Christ. They greeted me. And the angel told me that all who maintain chastity and purity are handed over to Michael and taken to the children, as soon as they have left the body and after they have worshiped the Lord God. They greet them and say: They are our brothers, friends and relatives. With them they will receive promises from God as an inheritance.'

27 Then he lifted me up and carried me to the north of the city and brought me to the river of wine. There I saw Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Lot and Job and other saints. And they greeted me. And I asked, "What is this place, my lord?" The angel said that all who show hospitality to strangers worship the Lord God first, as soon as they have left the world. They are handed over to Michael and are led into the city by this way. All the righteous greet him like a son or a brother and say to him: 'Because you have shown kindness and hospitality to strangers, you may come and receive your inheritance in the city of the Lord.

take. Every righteous man shall receive the good things of God in the city according to his own works.

28 Then he brought me to the river of oil on the east side of the city. There I saw people shouting and singing psalms. I said, "Who are they, my lord?" The angel said that these are the people who have devoted themselves to God with all their heart without being proud. For whoever rejoices in the Lord God and sings psalm with all his heart the Lord is brought here into this city.

29 And he carried me into the midst of the city by the twelfth wall. There was a high wall there. And I asked whether in the city of Christ there is a wall more venerable. The angel replied that the second is better than the first and so is the third than the second because one is better than the other and so on until the twelfth wall. And I said, Why, lord, does one outshine the other in magnificence? Explain that to me.' And the angel answered: 'Whoever in the least engages in slander, jealousy, or pride is slightly despised as soon as they are in the city of Christ. Just look behind you.' When I turned around I saw thrones of gold at every gate, with men wearing diadems of gold and precious stones. And I watched and saw within the circle of the twelve men yet another row of thrones so radiant with great splendor that none is able to tell their praise.

And I asked the angel, "Lord, who sits on the throne?" And the angel answered me that those thrones belong to those who had goodness and understanding, but have made themselves stupid because of the Lord God. They knew neither the scriptures nor many psalms, but they had in mind one chapter on the commandments of God, and when they heard it they lived in accordance with these commandments with great devotion and zeal for the Lord God. "And all the saints shall become full of admiration before the Lord God. For they will speak to one another and say to each other: "Look, and see these ignorant who had no knowledge whatsoever, how they have deserved such a great and beautiful robe, and such great splendor because of their innocence. And I saw in the midst of the city a large and very high altar.

Next to it stood someone with a face that shone like the sun. In his hand he held a harp and a harp and singing a psalm he said: Hallelujah. And his voice was heard in all the city. As soon as those who were at the towers and gates heard him, they consented so that the foundations of the city were moved.

I asked that angel who it was that sang so powerfully, And he said it was David. This is the city of Jerusalem, and when Christ, the eternal king, comes with his unwavering kingship, he will again lead the way to sing psalms, and all the righteous will join in and reply with "Hallelujah." I asked the angel, Lord, why does David alone and not the other saints begin to sing psalms?" The angel answered me, "Because Christ the Son of God sits at the right hand of his Father, this David will also sing psalms to him in the seventh heaven. And as it is in heaven, so it is below, because without David it is impossible to offer an offering to God. But it is necessary that David should sing a psalm at the hour when the body and blood of Christ as it is done in heaven, so it is on earth.

30 And I said to the angel, 'Lord, what does 'hallelujah' mean? And the angel answered me that I seek and ask for everything. And he said to me that "hallelujah" is used in Hebrew which is the language of God and angels.

The interpretation of hallelujah is this: recel chat, marith, macha.

'I asked, 'Lord, what does that mean?'

And I was answered that these words mean "Let us bless Him all together."

I asked the angel, 'Lord, do all who say 'hallelujah' bless God? And the angel answered that it was so. If someone says 'hallelujah' while singing psalms, then the

attendees if they do not agree.

And I said: Does that also apply to someone who is demented or very old?' The angel said it was not, 'But it is known that whoever is able to do this and does not sing along, despises the word and must be regarded as haughty and unworthy because he does not bless the Lord God his Creator.

Hell --- Through Fire 1-Cor. 3: 13 - 15

31 When he had finished speaking, he led me out of the city, through the trees, far from the places of the land where the good dwell. And he set me on the bank of the river of milk and honey, Then he brought me to the ocean that bears the foundations of heaven. The angel asked if I noticed that I had gone from there. I said it was. He told me to follow him. Then he would show me the souls of the wicked and the sinners, that I might know what a place that was. I went away with the angel and he carried me to the west and I saw the beginning of heaven which was founded on a great river. And I asked what was this river of water. He said it was the ocean that surrounds the whole earth. And when I got to the very tip of the ocean, I looked, but I saw no light in that place, but only darkness, sadness, and gloom. I sighed.

I saw there a raging river of fire, and in it a multitude of men and women plunged to their knees, others to their navels, and others to their lips, and others to their hair. I asked the angel: Lord, who are they in that river of fire?' And the angel answered, "They are neither hot nor cold, for they are not found among the number of the righteous nor among the wicked. For they have spent their time on earth in such a way that they spent some days in prayer, but others in sin and fornication unto death followed.

And I asked, 'Who are they, my lord, who are knee-deep in fire?' He replied to me that these are the people who indulge in inappropriate conversation as soon as they get out of church. "Those who are submerged up to their navels are those who begin to commit fornication and have not ceased to sin until they die, as soon as they have received the body and blood of Christ. And those who are submerged to their lips are the people who have slandered one another during the meetings in the church of God. And those who are submerged to their eyebrows are the people who beckon one another and plot evil against their neighbor.

32 In the north I saw a place where various punishments were meted out. It was full of men and women and a river of fire flowed out on it. And I looked and saw exceedingly deep pits in which very many souls were gathered. The depth of that place was about three thousand cubits. I saw how they sighed and howled, and they said, 'Have pity on us, my lord.' But no one felt sorry for them.

And I asked the angel: Who are they, my lord? And the angel answered me that these are the people who did not expect their Lord to be their help. And I asked, "Lord, if those souls have been so plunging upon each other for thirty or forty generations, I think these pits cannot contain them, even though that pit is still so deep. And he said to me that that abyss is beyond measure. "For after that there follows another abyss beneath it. It is as if one takes a stone and throws it into a very deep pit, and after many hours it falls to the bottom. So is the abyss, for when the souls are thrown into it. they only just reach the bottom after five hundred years.

33 When I heard this, I wept and sighed for the gender of the people. The angel spoke and said to me, "Why are you weeping? Are you sometimes more merciful than God? Since God is good and knows that there are punishments, He patiently bears the race of men and allows each to act according to his own will in the time that he lives on earth."

34 I looked again into the river of fire and saw a man being strangled by the angels who guard the underworld. In their hands they had a three-pointed iron with which they pierced that old man's entrails. I asked the angel who was that old man who was being tortured like that. And the angel said that there I saw a priest who had not performed his service well.

While eating and drinking and committing fornication he had offered the sacrifice to the Lord on the holy altar.

35 Not far from there I saw another old man. Four evil angels rushed him and lowered him to his knees in the river of fire. They beat him with stones and wounded his face as if it were a gust of storm, did not allow him to ask for pity. And when I asked, the angel told me that it was a bishop who had not performed his ministry properly. He had been given a great name, but all his life he had not acted according to the holiness of Him who had given him his name, for he had not judged righteous judgment, and had had no compassion on widows and orphans. "But now it is recompensed to him according to his iniquity and his works."

36 And I saw another man in the river of fire who was knee-deep in fire. He had his hands outstretched and he was covered in blood. Worms crawled out of his mouth and nose. He sighed and cried and shouted, 'Have pity on me, for I am being punished more severely than the others who suffer this punishment. And I asked: Who is that, sir? And he said that the one I saw there was a deacon who had eaten offerings, and committed fornication, and done no good before God, 'Therefore he suffers this punishment continuously.' And I noticed that on his other side was another human that they hurriedly brought. They threw him into the river of fire. He was up to his knees in it. The angel who was appointed over the punishments came with a great fiery razor and with it he cut that man's lips and also his tongue. And I sighed and wept and asked, "Who is that, sir?" He told me that the one I saw there was a reader reading to the people, but he himself did not keep God's commandments, "But now he will receive his just punishment."

37 And I saw more pits in that place, and in the midst of them was a river full of a multitude of men and women. Worms ate them. And I wept and sighing I asked the angel: 'Lord, who are they?' And he said these are people who demand interest on interest. They trust in their wealth, but they don't expect God to be their helper.' And then I saw another scary place. There was something like a wall and a fire around it. Inside I saw men and women biting their tongues, and I asked, 'Who are they, my lord?' He told me that these are the people in the church who despise the word of God by not paying attention to it. "They regard the Lord and his angels as nothing. That is why they are now also getting an appropriate punishment."

38 And I saw another old man down in the pit, and he looked like blood. I asked, "Lord, what kind of place is this?" And he said that in this pit all the punishments come in. And I saw men and women submerged up to their lips. I asked, 'Who are they, sir?' He said these were the wizards who had exposed men and women to magical wizardry. "It has been seen that they did not stop until they died." And further I saw men and women with pitch-black faces in a pit full of fire. I sighed and cried and asked, 'Who are they, sir?' And he said that these are fornicators and adulterers. They had their own wives, but they had committed fornication. Likewise, women have committed adultery even though they had their own husbands. Therefore, they undergo punishment incessantly.

39 And I saw there maidens in black clothes, and four terrible angels with chains of fire in their hands. They put it around her neck and brought them into the darkness. And again I weeping asked the angel, "Who are they, my lord?" And he told me that these were virgins who had defiled their virginity without their parents knowing. Therefore, they constantly undergo the just punishment. And suddenly there I saw men and women with their hands and feet cut off. They stood naked in a place full of ice and snow, and worms ate them. When I saw that, I wept and asked, 'Who are they, my lord?' He said, "These are the people who have harmed orphans, widows and the poor."

have not set their expectation upon the Lord, therefore they undergo their due punishment continually.' And I noticed others hanging over a stream of water. Their tongues were parched.

Before their eyes were many fruits, but it was not lawful for them to partake of them. And I asked him, "Who are they, sir?" He told me that these are the people who ended the fast before the appointed hour. Therefore they are given this punishment incessantly. Also I saw men and women who were hung by their eyebrows and hair. A river of fire dragged them along. And I said : "Who are they, sir? He told me that these are the people who do not associate with their own husband or wife, but with adulterers. That is why they incessantly receive their just punishment. I also saw men and women covered in dust. They looked like blood and they dwelt in a pit full of pitch and brimstone and went down to the river of fire And I asked, "Who are they, my lord?" Gomorrah have committed men with men." That's why they constantly undergo punishment.

40 And I saw men and women clothed in shining robes, but their eyes were blind. They were in a pit. And I asked: Who are they, sir?' He told me that these were Gentiles who had given alms but had not known the Lord God. That is why they constantly undergo a just punishment. And I saw other men and women hanging over a fiery rod. Animals tore them to pieces and they were not allowed to say: Have pity on us, lord! And I saw the punishment angel who punished them with great power, saying: 'Recognize the Son of God. For it has been promised to you, but when the divine scriptures were read to you, you did not pay attention. Therefore, God's judgment is just. Your evil deeds have caught you and brought you to these punishments.' And I sighed and cried and I asked who were these men and women who were strangled in the fire and suffered punishment.

And he answered me that these are the women who defile the creation of God by taking children out of their wombs and it is the men who slept with her. Their children cried to the Lord God and to the angels in charge of the punishment, saying, "Defend us from our parents, for they have defiled the creation of God. They knew the name of God, but they kept not his commandments, and they gave us as food for the dogs and let us trample on by the pigs. Others threw them into the river."

Those children were handed over to the angels of the underworld who oversee the punishments to take them to a wide place of mercy. But the fathers and the mothers were strangled as a punishment for eternity. Furthermore, I saw men and women clothed in rags of pitch, coiled around their necks, shoulders, and feet, and they were held by angels with horns of fire. They beat them and pinched their nostrils. They said to them, "Why did you not observe the time when it would have been right to repent, to go and serve God, and have you not done so? And I asked, Who are they, sir?" And he told me that these were the people who had apparently renounced the world to God by clothing themselves with our robes, but they have become unhappy with the cares of the world, they held no love feasts, they had no pity for widows and They did not take in orphans, strangers, and pilgrims, they offered no sacrifices, and they had no pity on their neighbour.

Not even a day did their prayer ascend cleanly to the Lord God. But they were engrossed in the cares of the world, and they were unable to do good before God, and in the place of punishment there were angels about them.

There were other punished men who saw them and said to them, "When we were on earth we neglected God just as you have done. We knew when we were on earth that we were sinners, but you were said to be righteous and servants. of God Now we know that you were called only by the name of the Lord.

That is why you too will undergo your just punishment. And I sighed and wept and said, 'Woe to men, woe to sinners, for what were they born?' And the angel answered me, 'Why are you crying? Are you more merciful than the Lord God, who is blessed for ever, who has pronounced his judgment and has allowed each to choose good and evil according to his own will and to do as he sees fit?' But again I

cried profusely and he said to me, 'Are you crying now that you haven't even seen the harshest punishments yet? Come along and you'll see some seven times heavier than this one.'

Hell

41 And he carried me from the north, and set me over a well, and it turned out to be sealed with seven seals. The angel who was with me spoke up and told the angel of that place to open the lid of the well to allow God's dearly beloved friend Paul to see therein, because he had been given permission to take all the punishments of the underworld. see. The angel told me to stand at a distance to endure the stench of that place. When the well was open, there immediately came up some foul, very vile stench that was beyond all punishment. I looked into the well and saw clumps of fire burning on all sides and a narrow opening. And the space of that opening of the well was so narrow that only one man could pass through. The angel began to speak and said to me that if anyone was thrown into this pit of the abyss and the entrance was sealed over him, he was never heard of again before the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the holy angels. And I said, "Who are they, lord, that are thrown into this pit. He said to me that this is everyone who confesses not that Christ has come in the flesh" and that the virgin Mary gave birth to him, and whoever denies that the bread of the Eucharist and the cup of blessing is the body and blood of Christ."

42 From the north I looked to the west and I saw the worm that knows no rest, and in that place there was the gnashing of teeth. That worm was one cubit long and it had two heads. And I saw there were men and women there who were cold and gritted their teeth. And I asked, Lord, who are they in that place? And he said that in this place there was nothing but cold and snow. He said these are the people who say that Christ did not rise from the dead and claim that the flesh is not raised. And I asked, 'Lord, is there no warmth at all in this place? He went on and told me that even though the sun goes over them, they don't get warm because the place is extremely cold, also because of the snow. When I heard that I stretched out my hand and wept and sighed again said it would be better for us if we, who are all sinners, were not born

43 When they saw me there weeping before the angel, they cried out to me also weeping, 'Lord God, have mercy on us.' And thereupon I saw the heavens open and the Archangel Michael descended from heaven and with him all the army of the angels and they went to people who suffered the punishments. When they saw him, they cried out again and wept and said: 'Have mercy on us, Archangel Michael, have mercy on us and the human race, for by your prayers the world is preserved. We have seen the judgment and come to know the Son of God. In the past, before we entered this place, it was impossible for us to pray for this. After all, before we left the world, we heard that there would be a judgment, but worldly worries prevented us from repenting.' And Michael replied, 'Listen, Michael is speaking. It is I who stand before God every hour. As the Lord lives before whose face I stand, I do not cease to pray day or night uninterrupted for the human race. I pray for those who dwell on earth. But they do iniquity unceasingly, they commit fornication and bring me no good all the while they live on earth. You have spent the time when you should have repented in vanity. But I have always prayed the same and I beseech God even now that He give dew and rain be poured out on the earth and I pray until the earth bears its fruit. I say that if someone but did a little good I will fight for him and protect him until he escapes judgment with his punishments. So where are your prayers? Where is your penance?

You have despised time and let it pass. Cry now and I will cry with you and the angels too, along with dearly beloved Paul. Then we can see if the merciful God may have mercy and give you forgiveness. When they heard this, they cried and wept greatly, and said in unison, 'Have mercy on us, Son of God.' And I, Paul, sighed and said: 'Lord, have mercy on your creature, have mercy on the children of men, have mercy on your image.'

44 I looked and I saw the sky move like a tree in the wind. And suddenly they threw themselves before the throne. And I saw the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures worshipping God. I saw the altar and the curtain and the throne and everything shouted. And a sweet-smelling smoke ascended beside the altar of the throne of God.

I heard a voice of one who spoke: 'Angels and servants of ours, why do you beseech?' And they exclaimed that they begged because they had seen his great goodness towards the human race. Then I saw the Son of God descending from heaven, and he had a diadem on his head. When those who were being punished saw him, they all cried together: Have mercy, exalted Son of God. For you have refreshed all in heaven and on earth. Therefore, take care of us as well. For from the moment we saw you we were refreshed.

And the voice of the Son of God sounded in the midst of all these punishments: Have you done anything that you ask me for refreshment? My blood has been shed for you, yet you have not repented. For you I have worn a crown of thorns on my head, For you I have been beaten with fists on my jaws and yet you have not repented. I asked for water when I hung on the cross and they gave me vinegar mixed with bile. They opened my right side with a lance." For my name they killed my servants, the prophets, and the righteous. And in all this I gave you the opportunity to repent, but you would not. Now for Michael, the archangel of my covenant and the angels together with him, and for Paul, my dearly beloved friend, whom I do not wish to grieve, for your brethren who are in the world and who offer sacrifices, and for your children, because they bear my commandments, but still more for my own goodness, on this day that I have risen from the dead, I give to all of you who undergo punishment a night and a day of reparation, forever.

' They all cried out, 'We bless you, Son of God, because you have given us a day's rest. For to us one day's refreshment is better than the whole time of our life that we were on earth. And if it had been clear to us that this place was for those who sin, we would have done no other work at all; then we would not have traded and committed no injustice. Why did we have to be haughty in the world? For here is our pride imprisoned, which has turned out of our mouth against our neighbor. Our sorrows, our terrible torments, our tears, and the worms among us are worse for us than the punishments we...'

The evil angels and the punishing angels became angry with them when they said this. They said, 'How long have you wept and sighed? For you have not been merciful. This is the judgment of God upon him who has shown no mercy. But you have received this great grace consisting of a twenty-four hour of refreshment on the Lord's Day for Paul, the dearly beloved friend of God who has come down to you.'

Visit to paradise

45 Then the angel said to me, "Have you seen all this?" And I said 'yes' and he told me to follow him, then he would bring me to paradise and then the righteous who are there would see me. For they hoped to see me and they were ready to welcome me with joy and exultation.

And spurred on by the Holy Spirit, I followed the angel and he put me in paradise and told me that this was the paradise where Adam and his wife had walked. I entered paradise and saw where the water begins and the angel gave a sign and said to me, 'Look, the water. For this is the river Pishon, which flows around the whole land of Chawila, and that is the Gichon, which flows right through the land of Egypt and Ethiopia. And that one there is the Tigris which is opposite the land of the Assyrians, and the other is the Euphrates which overflows the land of Mesopotamia,'

When I went further inside I saw a tree planted. Water bubbled up from its roots and from it sprang the four rivers. The Spirit of God rested on that tree and when the spirit blew water began to flow. And I asked the lord if this is the tree that makes the water flow? And he told me that before heaven and earth had come forth, in the beginning, and when there was nothing to be seen, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters."

But ever since heaven and earth appeared at the behest of God, the Spirit has rested on this tree. Therefore, water comes out of the tree as soon as the Spirit blows. And he took me by the hand and brought me to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and he told me that this is the tree through which death came into the world. After Adam got the fruit of it from his wife, he ate, and death entered the world." And he showed me another tree in the midst of paradise and told me that it is the tree of life.

46 While I was still looking at the tree, I saw a young girl coming from afar, preceded by two hundred angels singing songs of praise. I asked the gentleman who it was who arrived there in such great splendor. He said that this was the virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord. When she came near she greeted me and said: Greetings, Paul, dear to God, angels and men. After all, all the angels begged my Son Jesus who is my Lord that you would come here in the body to see you before you left the world. And the Lord told them to wait and be patient. In a little while they would see me to be with them forever.

And they said further: "Do not grieve us, for we want to see him in the body, for through him your name has been magnified in the world." We have seen that he endured all works, great and small." For we hear from those who come here when we ask them who it was that led them into the world, that they say, "There is one in the world whom Paul has met. He announces Christ in his preaching, and we believe that by the power and sweetness of his words many have entered the kingdom." Behold, all the righteous stand behind me and meet you. Paul, I tell you, I am the first to meet them. Those who have done the will of my Son and my Lord Jesus Christ, I will go to meet them first, so that they are not strangers until they arrive in peace."

47 While she was still speaking, I saw in the distance three men approaching, very beautiful, in the form of Christ. They were beautiful apparitions and their angels were with them. I asked, "Lord, who are they?" And he asked if I did not know them, and I said, 'No.' He said that these are the fathers of the people: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And when they came near, they greeted me and said: 'Hail, Paul, dearly beloved before God and men, for blessed is he who suffereth violence for the sake of the Lord.' And Abraham turned to me and said, "This is Isaac my son and Jacob my beloved. We have known the Lord and followed Him. Blessed are all who have believed in your word, that they may inherit the kingdom of God by suffering, to give up, to live holy, to be humble, to show love, to have meekness, and to have true faith in the Lord.

the Lord whom you proclaim and we have pledged ourselves to assist and serve all souls who believe in him, as a father assists his son. While they were still speaking, I saw twelve venerable men approaching in the distance. I asked the gentleman who they were. He said these are the patriarchs. They came close and said goodbye to me. They said: Hail Paul, much loved by God and man. The Lord has not made us sad so that we have seen you in the body before you leave the world.' And they all called their names in line from Reuben to Benjamin. Joseph told me he was the one who was sold. But I tell you, Paul, that whatever my brothers have done to me, I have not mistreated them in any way, and that for all the suffering they have caused me, I have not been hurt in any way by them, from the morning early until evening. Blessed is he who is afflicted for the Lord and endured it, for the Lord will recompense him many times when he is gone out of the world."

48 While I was still speaking I saw in the distance another fair figure approaching with his angels singing songs of praise. I asked the gentleman who it was with that fair face. And he asked me if I didn't know that. I said no. And he said to me, "Moses, the lawgiver to whom God gave the law." And when he got closer, he immediately began to cry. He greeted me and I asked him why he was crying. You surpass every man in meekness, don't you? He said he wept for the people he had labored to plant, but who had yielded no fruit and no one had made any progress. "I have seen that all the sheep that I have shepherded are scattered and have no shepherd. All the efforts I have endured for the children of Israel have been in vain, and however great wonders I have done in their midst, they have not understood them. I marvel that strangers, the uncircumcised, and idolaters have repented and entered into what God has promised, but Israel has not entered. And I tell you, Brother Paul, that at the moment when the people Jesus, whom you proclaim, hung on the cross, the Father, the God of all, who gave me the law, Michael with all the angels and archangels, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the righteous wept over the Son of God who was hanged on the cross. All the saints then looked anxiously in my direction and said, "Look, Moses, what the people of your people have done to the Son of God." Therefore blessed are you, Paul, and blessed is the generation and the people that believed your word."

49 And while he was yet speaking, twelve more came, and when they saw me they said, Are you Paul, who is worshiped in heaven and on earth?' And I asked who they were. The first said he was Isaiah whose head had been sawn off by Manasseh with a wooden saw. The second said he was Jeremiah stoned and killed by the children of Israel. The third was Ezekiel, whom the children of Israel drew up at his feet over a rock until they knocked out his brains. We all endured these tortures because we wanted to save the sons of Israel.

I tell you that after the torture they inflicted on me, I bowed down to God to pray for them. I bowed my knees until the second hour of Sunday until Michael came to raise me from the ground. Blessed are you, Paul, and blessed are the people who believed through you." As they went on I saw another person, fair in appearance, and I asked the gentleman who it was. When he noticed me he was happy. The angel told me that this is Lot who proved righteous in Sodom. And as he drew near, he

saluted me and said: Blessed are you, Paul, and blessed is the generation that you have served. And I asked if he was Lot who proved righteous in Sodom. He said that he had taken angels as strangers into his house, and that when the men of the city wanted to assault them, he offered them his virgin daughters who had never had intercourse with a man. He had said, 'Use her as you please, but do no harm to these men. Then they had come under the roof of his house. For this reason, we must trust and

know that God often rewards them when they come to Him, if anyone has done something. Paul, blessed are you, and blessed are the people who have believed your word.'

When he had ceased to speak to me, I saw another person approaching from afar, very beautiful in appearance. He smiled and his angels sang songs of praise. And I asked the angel who was with me if every righteous person had an angel as a companion. He said that every righteous man had his own angel who stands by him and sings a song of praise and they do not depart from one another.

And I asked who that was and he said 'Job'. And when he came nearer, he greeted me and said:

Brother Paul, you are greatly honored before God and men. I am Job who has suffered much, for thirty years I had ulcerated wounds. At first the pustules that broke out on my body were like grains of wheat, but by the third day they were the size of a donkey's hoof. And the worms that fell were four fingers long, Three times the devil appeared to me and told me to curse the Lord and die. I told him that if it was the will of God that I should suffer like this all my life until I died, I would not stop blessing the Lord God to get more reward. For I know that the torments of this world cannot be compared with the anguish that comes later. Therefore blessed are you, Paul, with the people who believed through you.'

50 While he was still talking, another came and cried from afar, "Blessed are you, Paul, and I am also blessed, because I have seen you who are loved by the Lord." And I asked the angel who that was. And he said it was Noah at the time of the flood. Immediately we greeted each other. He said with joy that I was Paul, who is much loved by God. And I asked him who he was and he said that he was Noah who lived in the time of the flood. He said that he had spent a hundred years building the ark without taking off the clothes he had worn and without shaving the hair from his head. Moreover, he had committed himself to abstinence and had not approached his wife. In those hundred years the hair on his head had not grown and his clothes did not get dirty. He begged the people at that time to do penance, for a flood would come upon them. But they laughed at him and mocked his words. They kept saying to him: 'On the contrary, this is the time of those who can play and sin to their heart's content, and in which it is possible to commit fornication often. for God seeth not, neither perceiveth what is done by us men, and surely there shall be no flood upon this world. They did not stop sinning until God destroyed all people who had the breath of life in them. "But know that God loves one righteous man more than a whole world full of the wicked. Therefore blessed are you, Paul, and blessed are the people who believed through you.'

51 And as I turned, I saw more righteous men coming from afar, and I asked the angel who they were, and he answered me that they were Elijah and Elisha. They greeted me and I asked who they were. And one of them answered that he was Elijah the prophet of God. He prayed, and at his word it did not rain from heaven for three years and six months because of the iniquities of the people. God is just and true. He does the will of his servants. For often the angels have begged the Lord for rain, and then He told them to be patient until His servant Elijah prayed and asked for it. Then He would send rain upon the earth.

End of Saint Paul's vision.

