

said to me: You search and inquire into everything. And he said to me: Hallelujah is a word in Hebrew, the language of God and angels. And the meaning of Hallelujah is this: tecel. cat. marith. macha. And I said: Sir, what is tecel. cat. marith. macha? And the angel answered and said to me: Tecel. cat. marith. macha is this: Let us bless him all together. I asked the angel and said: Sir, do all who say 'Hallelujah' bless the Lord? And the angel answered and said to me: That is so; and again, if anyone should sing Hallelujah and there are some present who do not sing (it) at the same time, they commit sin because they do not join in the singing. And I said: Sir, does someone who is doting or very old sin in the same way? And the angel answered and said to me: No, but whoever is able, and does not join in the singing, you know that he is a despiser of the word. And it would be proud and discreditable that he should not bless the Lord God his maker.

31. And when he had ceased speaking to me, he led me forth out of the city through the midst of the trees and back from the sites of the land of good things, and he set me above the river of milk and honey. And then he led me to the ocean that bears the foundations of the heavens. And the angel answered and said to me: Do you understand that you are going away from here? And I said: Yes, sir. And he said to me: Come, follow me, and I shall show you the souls of the godless and sinners that you may know what the place is like. And I set out with the angel and he brought me towards the setting of the sun, and I saw the beginning of heaven, founded on a great river of water, and I asked: What is this river of water? And he said to me: This is the ocean which encircles the whole earth. And when I was beyond the ocean I looked and there was no light in that place, but darkness and sorrow and distress; and I sighed.

And there I saw a river boiling with fire, and in it was a multitude of men and women immersed up to their knees, and other men up to the navel, others up to the lips, and others up to the hair. And I asked the angel and said: Sir, who are these in the river of fire? And the angel answered and said to me: They are those who are neither hot nor cold* because they were found neither among the number of the righteous nor among the number of the godless. For these spent the period of their life on earth in passing some days in prayers but other days in sins and fornications right up to their death. And I asked and said: Who are these, sir, who are immersed up to the knees in fire? And he answered and said to me: These are those who when they have come out of church occupy themselves in discussing (in) strange discourses. Those, however, who are immersed up to the navel are those who when they have received the body and blood of Christ go away and fornicate and do not cease from their sins until they die. And those who are immersed up to the lips are those who when they meet in the church of God slander one another. Those immersed up to the eyebrows are those who give the nod to one another and (in that way) secretly prepare evil against their neighbour.

32. And I saw to the north a place of varied and different punishments which was full of men and women, and a river of fire poured over them.⁹⁷ And I looked and saw very deep pits and in them there were very many souls together; and the depth of that place was about 3,000⁹⁸ cubits, and I saw them sighing and weeping and saying: Lord, have mercy on us. But no one had mercy on them. And I asked the angel and said: Who are these, sir? And the angel answered and said to me: These are those who did not hope in the Lord that they would be able to have him for a helper. And I asked and said: Sir, if these souls remain through thirty or forty generations thus one above another, I believe the pits will not hold them unless⁹⁹ they are made to go deeper. And he said to me: The abyss has no measure; moreover there also follows on it the (gulf, void?) which is below it. And it is as if perhaps someone takes a stone and throws it into a very deep well and after many hours it reaches the ground; so is the abyss. For when these souls are thrown in they have scarcely reached the bottom after five hundred years.

33. Now when I had heard that, I wept and sighed for the race of men. The angel answered and said to me: Why do you weep? Are you more compassionate than God?¹⁰⁰ For since God is good and knows that there are punishments, he bears patiently the race of men, permitting each one to do his own will for the time that he lives on earth.

34. And I looked yet again at the river of fire and I saw there a man being strangled by angels, the guardians of Tartarus, who had in their hands an iron instrument with three prongs with which they pierced the intestines of that old man. And I asked the angel and said: Sir, who is that old man on whom such torments are inflicted? And the angel answered and said to me: He whom you see was a presbyter who did not execute his ministry properly. While he ate and drank and fornicated he offered to the Lord the sacrifice on his holy altar.¹⁰¹

35. And not far away I saw another old man whom four evil angels brought running in haste and they immersed him up to his knees in the river of fire and they struck him with stones and they wounded his face like a storm and they did not allow him to say: Have mercy on me. And I asked the angel and he said to me: He whom you see was a bishop but he did not execute his episcopal office properly; he did indeed receive a great name but he did not enter into the holiness of him who gave to him that name all his life, for he did not give righteous judgments and he had no compassion on the widows and orphans. But now he is being requited according to his iniquity and his deeds.

36. And I saw another man up to his knees in the river of fire. And his hands were stretched out and bloody, and worms came out of his mouth and from his nostrils and he was groaning and weeping and crying, and he said: Have mercy on me, for I suffer more than the rest who are in this punishment. And I asked: Who is this, sir? And he said to me: He whom you see was a deacon who ate up the offerings and committed fornication and did not do right in the sight of God. Therefore unceasingly he pays his penalty.

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And I looked and saw at his side another man who was brought with haste and thrown into the river of fire, and he was (in it) up to the knees. And the angel came who was (appointed) over the punishments and he had a great blazing razor with which he lacerated the lips of that man and in the same way his tongue. And sighing I wept and asked: Who is that, sir? And he said to me: He whom you see was a reader (lector) and he read to the people; but he himself did not keep the commandments of God. Now he also pays his own penalty.

37. And in that place I saw another set of pits and in the middle of it a river full of a multitude of men and women whom worms were devouring. I then wept, and with a sigh I asked the angel and said: Sir, who are these? And he said to me: They are those who exacted usury at compound interest and trusted in their riches¹⁰² and did not hope in God that he would be a helper to them.

And then I looked and I saw another place which was very confined, and there was as it were a wall and fire in its bounds. And in it I saw men and women chewing at their tongues. And I asked: Who are these, sire? And he said to me: They are those who reviled the Word of God in church, paying no attention to it, but counting God and his angels as nothing. Therefore in the same way they now pay their own special penalty.

38. And I looked and I saw another hole below in the pit,¹⁰³ and it had the appearance of blood. And I asked and said: Sir, what is this place? And he said to me: All (the) punishments flow together into this pit. And I saw men and women submerged up to their lips and I asked: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: These are magicians who dispensed magical charms to men and women and made it impossible for them to find peace until they died. And again I saw men and women with very black faces in the pit of fire; and sighing and weeping I asked: Who are these sir? And he said to me: These are fornicators and adulterers who although they had their own wives committed adultery; and similarly the women committed adultery in the same way, though they had their own husbands. Therefore unceasingly they pay the penalty.

39. And there I saw girls wearing black clothing and four dreadful angels who had blazing chains in their hands. And they set them (the chains) on their necks and led them into darkness. And again weeping I asked the angel: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: They are those who although they were appointed as virgins defiled their virginity unknown to their parents. For that reason they pay their own particular penalty unceasingly.¹⁰⁴

And again I saw there men and women set¹⁰⁵ with lacerated hands and feet (or with hands and feet cut off) and naked in a place of ice and snow, and worms consumed them. And when I saw it I wept and asked: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: They are those who harmed orphans and widows and the poor,¹⁰⁶ and did not hope in the Lord; therefore they pay their own particular penalty unceasingly.

And I looked and saw others hanging over a channel of water and their

tongues were very dry and much fruit was placed within their sight and they were not allowed to take of it; and I asked: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: They are those who broke their fast before the appointed hour; therefore they pay these penalties unceasingly.

And I saw other men and women suspended by their eyebrows and hair, and a river of fire drew (?) them; and I said: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: They are those who did not give themselves to their own husbands and wives but to adulterers, and therefore they pay their own particular penalty unceasingly.¹⁰⁷

And I saw other men and women covered in dust, and their faces were like blood, and they were in a pit of tar and brimstone, and they were running in a river of fire. And I asked: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: They are those who have committed the iniquity of Sodom and Gomorrah, men with men.¹⁰⁸ Therefore they pay the penalty unceasingly.

40. And I looked and saw men and women clothed in bright clothing, whose eyes were blind, and they were set in a pit of fire;¹⁰⁹ and I asked: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: They are the heathen who gave alms and did not know the Lord God; therefore they pay unceasingly their own particular penalty.

And I looked and saw other men and women on a fiery pyramid and wild animals were tearing them to pieces, and they were not allowed to say: Lord have mercy on us. And I saw the angel of punishments¹¹⁰ laying punishments most vigorously on them and saying: Acknowledge the judgment of¹¹¹ the Son of God! For you were forewarned; when the divine Scriptures were read to you, you did not pay attention; therefore God's judgment is just; for your evil deeds laid hold on you and have led you into these punishments. But I sighed and wept; and I asked and said: Who are these men and women who are strangled in the fire and pay the penalty? And he answered me: They are the women who defiled what God had fashioned in that they gave birth to children from the womb and they are the men who went to bed with them. However their children appealed to the Lord God and the angels who are (set) over the punishments, saying: Defend us¹¹² from our parents,¹¹³ for they have defiled what is fashioned by God; they have the name of God but they do not keep his commandments, and they gave us for food to dogs and to be trampled by pigs;¹¹⁴ and they threw others into the river. But those children were handed over to the angels of Tartarus,¹¹⁵ who were over the punishments, so that they should lead them into a spacious place of mercy. However their fathers and mothers were strangled in an everlasting punishment. And after this I saw men and women clothed in rags full of tar and sulphurous fire, and dragons were wound about their necks and shoulders and feet; and angels with fiery horns confined them and struck them and closed up their nostrils, saying to them: Why did you not know the time in which it was right for you to repent and to serve God, and did not do it? And I asked: Who are these, sir? And he said to me: They are those who seemed to renounce the world by wearing

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our raiment, but the tribulations of the world made them miserable so that they did not arrange a single¹¹⁶ Agape and had no compassion on the widows and the orphans; they did not take in the stranger and the pilgrim nor present a gift (oblation) nor show mercy to their neighbour. Not even for one day did their prayer go up pure unto the Lord God. But the many tribulations of the world held them back and they were not able to do right in the sight of God. And angels went round¹¹⁷ with them to the place of punishments. And those who were being punished saw them and said to them: We, while we were living in the world, neglected God; why have you done the same? And they led them to another place and these also spoke in the same way to them: We, while we were in the world, knew that we were sinners; we saw you in holy clothing and we called you happy and said, 'These are the righteous and the servants of God.' But now we have recognised that in vain were you called by the name of God; therefore you pay the perpetual penalty.

And I sighted and wept and said: Woe to men! woe to sinners! Why were you born? And the angel answered and said to me: Why are you weeping? Are you more compassionate than the Lord God, who is blessed for ever, who has appointed judgment and allowed every man to choose good or evil and act as he wishes? Again I wept even very vehemently, and he said to me: Are you weeping, when you have not yet seen the greater punishments? Follow me and you will see those that are seven times greater than these.

41. And he brought me to the north, to the place of all punishments,¹¹⁸ and he placed me above a well and I found it sealed with seven seals.¹¹⁹ And the angel who was with me¹²⁰ answered and spoke to the angel of that place: Open the mouth of the well that Paul, God's dearly beloved, may look in, because power has been given him to see all the punishments of the underworld. And the angel said to me: Stand at a distance, for you will not be able to bear the stench of this place. Then when the well was opened there came up immediately a disagreeable and very evil smell which surpassed all the punishments. And I looked into the well and saw fiery masses burning on all sides, and the narrowness of the well at its mouth was such that it was only able to take a single man. And the angel answered and said to me: If some one is sent into this well of the abyss and it is sealed above him, reference is never made to him before the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and the holy angels. And I said: Who are these, sir, who are sent into this well? And he said to me: They are those who have not confessed that Christ came in the flesh¹²¹ and that the Virgin Mary bore him, and who say¹²² that the bread of the Eucharist and the cup of blessing are not the body and blood of Christ.

42. And I looked from the north towards the west and I saw there the worm that never rests,¹²³ and in that place there was gnashing of teeth.¹²⁴ Now the worm was a cubit in size¹²⁵ and it had two heads. And I saw there men and women in the cold and gnashing of teeth. And I asked and said: Sir, who are

these in this place? And he said to me: They are those who say that Christ has not risen from the dead and that this flesh does not rise.¹²⁶ And I asked and said: Sir, is there neither fire nor heat in this place? And he said to me: In this place there is nothing other than cold and snow. And again he said to me: Even if the sun were to rise over them they would not become warm because of the excessive coldness of the place and the snow.

When I heard this, I stretched out my hands and wept and with a sigh I said again: It would be better for us if we who are all sinners had not been born.

43. However when those who were in this very place saw me weeping with the angel, they cried out and themselves wept, saying: O Lord God, have mercy on us! And after that I saw heaven opened and the archangel Michael coming down from heaven, and with him the whole host of angels, and they came to those who were placed in the punishments. And seeing him they cried out again with tears, and said: Have mercy on us, archangel Michael, have mercy on us and on the human race, for because of your prayers the earth continues. We have now seen the judgment and known the Son of God. It was impossible for us to pray for this¹²⁷ previously before we came to this place. For we did hear that there was a judgment before we came forth from the world, but tribulations and a worldly-minded life did not allow us to repent. And Michael answered and said: Listen when Michael speaks: It is I who stand in the presence of God every hour.¹²⁸ As the Lord lives,¹²⁹ in whose presence I stand, for one day or one night I do not cease from praying continually for the human race, and I pray for those who are (still) on earth. They, however, do not stop committing iniquity and fornication and they do not help me in what is good while they are placed on earth. And the time during which you ought to have repented you used up in vanity. But I have always thus prayed and now I beseech that God may send dew and that rain may be appointed over the earth, and I continue to pray until the earth bring forth its fruit; and I say that if anyone has done even only a little good I will strive for him and protect him until he escapes the judgment of punishments. Where are your prayers? Where is your repentance? You have squandered time contemptibly. But now¹³⁰ weep, and I will weep with you, and the angels who are with me together with the dearly beloved Paul, if perchance the merciful God will show mercy and give you ease. And when they heard these words they cried out and wept much and said all together: Have mercy on us, Son of God. And I, Paul, sighed and said: Lord God, have mercy on what thou hast fashioned, have mercy on the children of men, have mercy on thine own image.

44. And I looked and I saw heaven move¹³¹ as a tree shaken by the wind. And they suddenly threw themselves on their faces before the throne; and I saw the 24 elders and the 4 beasts worshipping God,¹³² and I saw the altar and the veil and the throne, and all were rejoicing; and the smoke of a good odour rose up beside the altar of the throne of God, and I heard the voice

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of one who said: For what reason do you pray, angels and ministers of ours? And they cried out and said: We pray because we see thy great goodness to the race of men. And after that I saw the Son of God coming down from heaven, and a diadem was on his head. And when those who were placed in the punishments saw him, they all cried out together: Have mercy on us, Son of the most High¹³³ God; it is thou who hast granted ease¹³⁴ to all in heaven and on earth; have mercy likewise on us; for since we have seen thee, we have had ease. And a voice went forth from the Son of God throughout all the punishments, saying: What¹³⁵ work have you done, that you ask me for ease? My blood was poured out for your sakes and even so you did not repent. For your sakes I bore the crown of thorns on my head;¹³⁶ for you I was slapped on the cheeks, and even so you did not repent. Hanging on the cross I begged for water, and they gave me vinegar mingled with gall;¹³⁷ with a spear they laid open my right side.¹³⁸ For my name's sake they killed my servants, the prophets and the righteous,¹³⁹ and in all these things I gave you the opportunity for repentance, and you were not willing. Now, however, for the sake of Michael, the archangel of my covenant, and the angels who are with him, and for the sake of Paul, my dearly beloved, whom I would not sadden, and for the sake of your brethren who are in the world and present offerings, and for the sake of your children, because my commandments are in them,¹⁴⁰ and even more for my own goodness - on the very day on which I rose from the dead I grant to you all who are being punished a day and a night of ease for ever.¹⁴¹ And they all cried out and said: We bless Thee, Son of God, because thou hast granted to us ease for a day and a night. For one day's ease is better for us than all the time of our life which we were on earth: and if we had clearly known that this (place) was appointed for those who sin we would have done no other work at all, have practised nothing,¹⁴² and have committed no evil. What need was there for us to be born into the world?¹⁴³ For here is our pride comprehended, which rose up out of our mouth against our neighbours. Discomfort and our exceptionally great anguish and tears and the worms which are under us, these are worse for us than the punishments which . . . us.¹⁴⁴ When they said this, the wicked angels and those in charge of the punishments were angry with them and said: How long have you wept and sighed? For you have shown no mercy. This indeed is the judgment of God on him who has shown no mercy. However you have received this great grace - ease for the day and night of the Lord's day for the sake of Paul, the dearly beloved of God, who has come down to you.

45. And after this the angel said to me: Have you seen everything? And I said: Yes, sir. And he said to me: Follow me and I will lead you into paradise, and the righteous who are there will see you: for behold, they hope to see you and are ready to come to meet you with joy and exultation. Impelled by the Holy Spirit I followed the angel and he transferred (*lit.* 'set')