

A Commentary on the XIVth Vision of Daniel

According to the Coptic Version

INTRODUCTION

After the Arab Conquest, the Egyptian Christians did not follow the dictates of the rulers blindly. Whenever the rulers openly persecuted the Church, the Copts adopted the classical attitude of passive resistance, as prescribed by the visionary of the *Apocalypse* "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints". (*Apoc.* XIII, 10). Thus, there are numerous instances recorded, when the Copts regarded the rulers as being inherently evil, and to be condemned for their wickedness. Though there were some Copts, who interpreted the Arab Conquest as a deliverance from Byzantine oppression, other Copts soon realized that their new masters were not much different in their attitude towards them; and John, Bishop of Nikiou, describing the Arab Conquest said: "The yoke they laid on the Egyptians was heavier than the yoke which had been laid on Israel by Pharaoh. Him God judged by a righteous judgment by drowning him in the Red Sea, after He had sent many plagues both on men and cattle. When God's judgment lights upon these Muslims, may He do unto them as He did aforetime unto Pharaoh" ⁽¹⁾.

Yet, except for the unsuccessful Coptic revolts between 726 and 773 A. D., the opposition of the Copts towards the state confined itself to theological denunciations. A systematic and consistent attitude of opposition to the rulers never emerged among the Copts. Whenever there was cause for opposition, this was in response to a particular oppressive and discriminatory decree by the respective Governor or Caliph.

(1) John of Nikiou, *Chronique*, Ed. Zotenberg, Paris, 1883, p. 578.

Certainly, the Copts did not share the view of St. John of Damascus (d. 754 A.D.), who treated al-Islâm as a Christian heresy, and who relates how in the days of the Emperor Heraclius a false prophet arose among the Arabs, namely Mamed (1). On the contrary, it can be said, that, though the Copts had to respect the rulers, they abhorred the teachings of al-Islâm.

It is this frame of attitude, which underlies the Coptic XIVth Vision of Daniel. Indeed, the vision is an apocalyptic testimony to the Islâmic persecutions of the Copts. Its message was to counter the growing anxiety and incipient despair, maintain enthusiasm for the religious cause and encourage loyalty to God, and, at the same time, keep bright the believer's hope in a future which could be even more wonderful than the past. What God had done in the past, He could do again, and as He humbled Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, so He could deal with Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the respective Caliphs. For his story, the author used the figure of Daniel, a man with a symbolic name, "God hath given decision".

It is important for us to remember, however, that in compositions of this kind the historical details which are supplied are only the framework for the essentially religious message, and that these details were not intended to provide accurate historical information. The instruction is basically religious and not historical, so that only those details need to be historically accurate and precise, which concern the contemporary situation for which the message is relevant. Moreover, the picture of past events has to conform only to the popular ideas and conceptions of the past, and its image of the future should conform to the believers' traditional eschatological aspirations.

Even in the canonical *Book of Daniel* there are numerous discrepancies. For example, the capture of Jerusalem was not in the third year of Jehoiakim, *i.e.* in 606 B.C., but in 597 B.C. under Jehoiakin. Belshazzar was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar, but the son of Nabonidus, moreover, there is utter confusion in the order of the Persian kings.

Thus, we should not necessarily expect all statements in our apocalypse to conform to historical accuracy and veracity.

(1) MIGNE, P. G., XCIV, 764-765. *De Haeresibus*, cf. 101.

In spite of its late-apocryphal character, the XIVth Vision of Daniel has retained the features of the classical apocalypse. This is evident from its essentially eschatological and dualistic nature of the material. For this dualism is not merely that of spirit and matter, or soul and flesh as taught by the Orphics or Gnostics. In our apocalypse we discover a gradual evolution from a historical-political dualism to a cosmic dualism, which is ultimately resolved by the Ancient of Days. Following the confrontation of Sarpidos with Pitourgos, both of whom are Ishmaelites, though the one is more "righteous" than the other, the seer confronts the Ishmaelites with the King of the Romans. Though still in the sphere of "this world", the introduction of the King of the Romans shows definite apocalyptic symptoms. Then follows the encounter of Gog and Magog, which prepares the final cosmic advent of the Antichrist, whose reign is terminated by the victory of the Ancient of Days.

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edition, London, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1960; Stanley Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages*, London, Methuen and Co., 1901; Stanley Lane-Poole, *Saladin*, New York, The Knickerbocker Press, 1898; and F. Wüstenfeld, *Die Statthalter von Ägypten zur Zeit der Chalifen*. Göttingen, Dieterich'sche Verlags-Buchhandlung, 1875.

The Problems of Historical Identification of the Fourth Beast

The problems of the historical identification of the Fourth Beast with persons or nations begins with the description of the ten "kings" of the House of Ishmael (verses 24-64), *i. e.* the 10th to the 19th "king", after which period Pitourgos shall appear and encounter and finally overcome Sarapidos.

So far, two possible alternatives have been suggested. C. H. Becker, writing in the *Göttingische Gesellschafts Nachrichten* interprets the XIVth Vision of Daniel as pertaining to the Fall of the 'Umayyad Dynasty (¹). On the other hand, F. Macler, who wrote in the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* maintains that our apocalypse deals with the Fall of the Fâtimîd Dynasty (²). Throughout our exposition, we shall present both alternatives; however, in many instances our commentators merely intimate a historical identification, and, wherever this is the case, we have added the pertinent historical material to demonstrate either the justification or the fault of their argumentation.

It is our contention, that the apocalypse includes material pertaining to both dynasties, the 'Umayyad and the Fâtimîd Dynasty. And, indeed, one wonders, whether perhaps an original version of the apocalypse dealing with the Fall of the 'Umayyad Dynasty may not have been rewritten sometime around the middle of the XIIth century so as "to bring it up to date" and to include the Fall of the Fâtimîd Dynasty.

The purpose of the following introductory remarks is to outline briefly the arguments of the expositors and to state the reasons for our interpretation.

(¹) BECKER C. H., "Das Reich der Ismaeliten im koptischen Danielbuch", in *Göttingische Gesellschafts Nachrichten*, 1916, pp. 7-57.

(²) MACLER, F., "Les apocalypses apocryphes de Daniel", in *Rev. hist. relig.* XXXIII, 1895, pp. 163-176.

A. — BECKER'S INTERPRETATION:
THE FALL OF THE 'UMAYYAD DYNASTY.

Becker points out, that the XIVth Vision of Daniel was written "under the immediate impression of the monumental historical events of the catastrophe of the 'Umayyad Dynasty". Moreover, he insists, that the principal theme of the apocalypse is the defeat of Marwân II — Sarapidos — Challe — Mametios, the "king" with the cryptic number 666, who is killed by the Ishmaelites at al-Ašmûnâin in Upper Egypt. And since only one caliph responds to the given description, Becker identifies the 17th "king" with Marwân II, the last one of the 'Umayyad Caliphs. However, in order to maintain his general principle of interpretation, that of the Fall of the 'Umayyad Dynasty, he is compelled to identify the 19th and last "king" with the 17th "king". "Sarapidos-Marwân appears as the 17th "king", and yet the apocalypse concludes with his death, which is related in the course of the description of the 17th and the 19th "king".

From a genealogical point of view, Becker is certainly justified in seeing in Marwân II the 17th "king", if one adds to the four Orthodox Caliphs thirteen 'Umayyads, and omits Mu'âwiyah II, who, indeed, is often not included. Following this identification, Sulaimân, who has the number 399, becomes the 10th "king", and 'Umar II, his successor, would be the 11th "king", and so forth. Then, however, any further historical correlation becomes almost impossible. Therefore, for Becker, only two "kings" are definitely assured, *i. e.* Sulaimân the 10th "king" and Marwân II, the 17th and 19th "king", the two caliphs, who are given numbers. Becker does not attempt any further historical identification or interpretation, and speaks of the descriptions of the other eight "kings" in terms of a "heilloser Wirrwarr" (hopeless chaos).

It should be pointed out, however, that Becker's theory of identifying the events described in the XIVth Vision of Daniel with the Fall of the 'Umayyad Dynasty finds support from certain external sources and parallels. There is no doubt, that during the VIIIth century, eschatological hopes among Christians, Jews and Muslims were quite common. Thus, for example, after the

death of Zâid Ibn 'Alî Ibn Huṣâin, there was a great agitation and a general expectation of the Last Day, which was expected without any warning. G. van Vloten had already pointed out, that the period which preceded the rise of the 'Abbâsid Dynasty was pregnant with eschatological expectations and aspirations (1). J. Wellhausen mentioned that Abû Muḥammad, who was released by Marwân II, was recognized by the Syrians as the legitimate caliph. Eventually, he was assassinated by Abû Ga'far al-Manṣûr, and with his death his prestige only increased. The Syrians saw in him the Messiah. "Als Geist in der islamischen Eschatologie überdauerte das Haus der Umaja seinen Untergang" (2).

Moreover, several non-Coptic apocalyptic parallels to the XIVth Vision of Daniel exist, which also deal with the Fall of the 'Umayyad Dynasty. Thus, there are the "Revelations of Rabbi Simon ben Yohai" בן יוהי נסדרהו וי שמעון, which were composed during the stormy period of the Fall of the 'Umayyads. The apocalypse describes plainly the wars of Marwân II, who is mentioned by name, as well as his flight after the battle on the bank of the Great Zab, his capture and his assassination. The revelations about the End are made by Metatron to Rabbi Simon ben Yohai, while the latter is dwelling in a cave, hiding from the Roman Emperor. The history of al-Islâm is reviewed from the appearance of the Prophet to the Fall of the 'Umayyads. Then, the real prophecy begins. It opens with the prediction, that, after Marwân's successor has reigned three months, the nine months' dominion of the "wicked empire" will set in for Israel. After the dispersed Israelites are gathered together, and the earthly Jerusalem is consumed by fire from heaven, the glorious new Jerusalem will descend from heaven. Israel will dwell in it for two thousand years in peaceful existence. At the end of this time, God will descend into the Valley of Jehoshaphat to hold judgment, and heaven and earth will disappear, the heathen will be sent to hell, and Israel will enter Paradise, and for a year the

(1) VAN VLOTEN, G., *Recherches sur la Domination Arabe, le Chittisme et les Croyances messianiques sous le Khalifat des Omayyades*. Amsterdam, 1894, p. 81.

(2) WELLHAUSEN, J., *Das Arabische Reich und sein Sturz*. Berlin, 1902, p. 346.

sinners of Israel will suffer the tortures of hell and then be admitted to Paradise (1).

The *Armenian Enoch Apocalypse* describes an eagle with eight wings and three heads, which is attacked by a dragon with nine eyes coming from the south. The dragon devours all nations and their rulers sixteen-times-six, *i. e.* ninety-six years. Afterwards, the eagle returns on a chariot drawn by white horses, conquers the dragon, which, however, is not killed but just wounded. The eagle is the King of the Romans, while the dragon is interpreted as standing for the Children of Ishmael. The nine eyes may signify the nine "kings", who succeed the first ruler. The tenth "king", therefore, is Sulaimân, who ruled until 717 A. D. If we add ninety-six years to 622 A. D., the Anno Higra, we obtain the year 718 A. D. However, the *Enoch Apocalypse* deals primarily with the Byzantine political developments and the second siege (716-717) of Constantinople by the Muslims, which ended in disaster for the aggressors (2).

In addition, Becker quotes an *apotelesmaticum*, which foreshadowed, according to the constellation of the stars, the political events. This horoscope was issued according to H. Usener in 775 A. D. In this work twenty-four Islamic rulers are described, though without being named. Usener has identified them historically, and Sulaimân appears as the 10th, Marwân II as the 17th, Saffâh as the 18th and Manşûr as the 19th "king" (3).

Yet, the most convincing argument which Becker uses for the dating of the events, which are described as having occurred "under the Fourth Beast", is his reference to the *Vita Michaelis* (4).

(1) GRAETZ, H., *Geschichte der Juden*. V, 158, 446. Steinschneider, *ZDMG*, XXVIII, p. 635. Also, *Jew. Encyclop.* I, 683, p. 10.

(2) ISSAVERDEN, J., *The Uncanonical Writings of the Old Testament, found in the Armenian Manuscripts of the Library of St. Lazarus*. Venice, 1901, p. 309.

(3) USENER, HERMANN, *Stephani Alexandrini quod fertur opusculum apotelesmaticum*. Bonner Univ.-Programme, 1879.

(4) EVETTS, B. T. A., *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church. Patrologia Orientalis*, V. This is Khâil I, the 46th Patriarch of Alexandria (743-767 A. D.). The *vita*, which is written in the 1st pers. sing., is an eye-witness report by the Deacon John (or Elias Paul or both), the spiritual son(s) of Anbâ Mûsâ, Bishop of Ausîm, who faithfully endured all the trials and tribulations of the Patriarch.

Indeed, the *vita* is the most detailed report of the last weeks and days of the 'Umayyad Dynasty, though with some errors pertaining to the dates (¹). The patriarchate of Khâil I (743-767 A. D.) saw many apocalyptic manifestations. Twice the plague raged at Mişr, followed by famine and drought which lasted for three years. The mortality among the people was so great that not even a part of those who died could be counted, for on one day two thousand perished, and on another day one thousand two hundred, and another day two thousand four hundred at Mişr and at al-Ğazah. The burial of the dead had to be interrupted, as there were no tombs to hold them. Later, a great pestilence among the infants broke out, so that they all died. The people of Egypt had perished through oppression, poverty and taxation, and the Patriarch suffered much. Furthermore, there was a great earthquake, and many houses were ruined in all the cities, and, likewise, on the sea many ships were sunk. Six hundred cities and villages were wrecked that night. Then, civil-war broke out, and Marwân, who had seized the empire by force, appointed 'Abd al-Malik ibn Mûsâ ibn Naşîr as governor of Egypt, who hated the Christians greatly.

These events must have reminded the Christians of the apocalyptic descriptions as given by Jesus Christ:

" And you will hear of wars and rumors of war; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places". *Matthew XXIV, 6, 7.*

B. - MACLER'S INTERPRETATION: THE FALL OF THE FÂTIMÎD DYNASTY

According to F. Macler, the XIVth Vision of Daniel refers to the Fall of the Fâtimîd Dynasty in Egypt, because the seer composed his apocalypse in Egypt. Pitourgos, the Turk, is identified with Şalâh ad-Dîn, the first of the Ayyûbids. Then, the

(¹) For example, the year 467 A. M. (751-752) is impossible. It should read 465 A. M., for Marwân II was assassinated in August (Misrâ), 750 A. D.

"King of the Romans" shall arise, who shall enslave the Ishmaelites, afterwards, Gog and Magog shall rule the earth. Then the Antichrist will appear, and, finally, the Ancient of Days will come, Who will kill the Antichrist.

The references to the Romans should, therefore, be seen in the light of the Crusaders. By identifying the 10th "king" with al-'Azîz, Macler ignores al-Mu'izz, the first of the Egyptian Fâtîmîds, who arrived in Alexandria in 973 A. D., and who proceeded to instruct his new subjects in Shi'ism. Then, however, the Fâtîmîd rulers are listed chronologically, with al-Hâkim as the 11th, az-Zâhir as the 12th, al-Mustansîr as the 13th, al-Must'âfî as the 14th, al-Amîr as the 15th, al-Hâfiz as the 16th, az-Zâfir as the 17th, al-Fâiz as the 18th and, al-'Adîd as the 19th "king".

Macler does not attempt to relate the Fâtîmîd rulers to the numbers, which are given by the visionary to the 10th "king". Only with regard to the 19th "king" and the last of the Fâtîmîds does he attempt to do so. However, it is not clear, how he arrives at the number 666 for the name Adîd (اديد). For "a" he gives the numeral "1", and for "d" 300. Now, "d" (dhal and delta) according to either the Graeco-Coptic or Arabic numerals has the value of "4". If we suppose that he gives to "d" (dhal) the phonetic value of "t", then according to the Graeco-Coptic numerals we shall have "300". The "î" he considers as equal to ε or "5". We now have $1 + 300 + 5 + 300 = 606$. To arrive at 666, he adds an "h" to which he gives the numerical value of "60". Among the Graeco-Coptic numerals, however, there is no "h", and according to the Arabic numerals "h" (ه) has the value of "5" and "h" (ح) the value of "8". To obtain "60" according to the Graeco-Coptic numerals, we must use the letter "x" (ξ), and according to the Arabic numerals the letter مس.

Moreover, according to Becker, the original text was written in Coptic, and later, translated into Arabic. The Arabic text was then translated into Coptic. This is evident from the numbers of the proper names, which take for granted the Graeco-Coptic rather than the Arabic system of numerals.

The wars of Gog and Magog are interpreted by Macler historically as pertaining to the invasions of Jenghiz Khan (1162-1227), of Ogdai, his second son, and especially of Hulagu. In 1258, the Mongols entered Baghḏâḏ and sacked the city. The fall of

Baghḏād was almost contemporaneous with the end of the Seljuks of Konia as an independent power. The Mongols went through Syria, Aleppo was sacked, Damascus surrendered and Hulagu was meditating the capture of Jerusalem to restore it to the Christians, when news of Mangu's death (the nephew of Ogdai Khan) reached him, which caused him to return to Mongolia.

Macler's brief study consists of the text and extensive footnotes, and, therefore, only few historical facts are given. He feels, that the author of the apocalypse arranged certain facts, which he could well remember, and then filled in the lacunae with other events, which he only vaguely remembered.

C. - THE FALL OF THE 'UMAYYAD AND FĀṬIMĪD DYNASTIES

Whereas, Becker renounced attempting to relate the XIVth Vision of Daniel to any historical events beyond identifying the 10th "king" and the 17th "king", Macler, on the other hand, tried "to match" every "king" with a corresponding Fāṭimīd caliph. In principle, we should not treat the apocalypse as a historical document, and, therefore, it is unnecessary and unwarranted "to match" every statement in the apocalypse with a historical event.

If we maintain that the XIVth Vision of Daniel is a product of the XIIIth century, written, perhaps, under the stress of the Fall of Jerusalem (1244), we must admit, that only the principal historical developments, as they pertained to the Egyptian Christians, would be reflected in the document. These, then, were the periods of persecution, which the Copts interpreted in terms of the Divine Judgment, for suffering and martyrdom was always explained either from a soteriological or from an eschatological point of view. The author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* had warned and exhorted: "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, do not lose courage when you are punished by him. For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives" (1). Aware of this warning, the Copts interpreted their sufferings as ordained by God, and the

(1) *Hebrews* XII, 5-6.

Patriarch Šanûdah I (859-880 A. D.) could lament: "Of what is the Church of God guilty, that He shall bring down upon it this great trial?" Cf. *HPEC*, II, I, 37. The answer is given by the patriarch himself, when he considers the persecutions as the legitimate punishment of God "on account of my sins". Yet, according to the Divine Plan, the chastening is a temporary and merely cleansing act of God, for ultimately, "God preserveth His elect and leaveth them not to see corruption". Cf. *HPEC*, II, I, 62.

For that matter, the Arab Conquest and the subsequent Muslim administration was interpreted as a chastening which descended from heaven from the Lord Christ upon all the Christians, and it overtook even others besides them of the nations, in order to punish them for all their offences in this world, and to save them in the next life. As David had said: 'Blessed is the man whom the Lord shall chasten'. (*Psalms* XCIII, 12-13). Or as Solomon had said: 'O my son, be not discontent at the chastening of the Lord, for whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth'. (*Prov.* III, 11, 12).

To the author of the XIVth Vision of Daniel, the most memorable persecutions during the first seven centuries of Islamic Rule were those during the reigns of the 'Umayyad caliphs Sulâfîn, 'Umar II, Yazîd II, Marwân II, and the violent oppressions by the Fâṭimîd caliph al-Ḥâkim. Apparently, the persecutions of these caliphs impressed themselves so strongly upon the "corporate mind" of the Copts, that the author of our apocalypse could easily recall and incorporate them in his vision.

On the other hand, it is possible, that our text has undergone some development and was rewritten at a later date. In this case, the original XIVth Vision of Daniel may have been composed during the first few years of the 'Abbâsid Dynasty. The similarity between the *Vita Michaelis* and the description as given in verses 47-51 provides a strong argument to place the date of authorship of the original text in the second half of the VIIIth century. The dramatic and far-reaching events during and following the Crusades in the XIIIth century, many have lent an additional "hand" to extend the visions, so as to bring them "up to date" and incorporate the Fall of the Fâṭimîd Dynasty. For example, there is little doubt, that verses 54, 56, 58, 59 apply to al-Ḥâkim, whose violence and persecution must have left a

permanent impression upon the memory of the Copts. Moreover, Sarapidos (verses 56, 66, 67, 68), the 19th "king", should not be identified in terms of a person; on the contrary, Sarapidos the Egyptian stands for the Dynasty of the Egyptian Fâtimîds.

We have to accept the fact that it is impossible to find for every statement in our apocalypse a historical corollary, and the synthetic approach, as followed with regard to the Islamic dynasties — relating the events to the 'Umayyads *and* Fâtimîds — seems to be the most satisfactory one. In conclusion, it should be noted that the "kings" are either caliphs or dynasties. Certainly, it is impossible to identify the "kings" with the governors of Egypt, even though they were referred to as *al-malik*, for under the 'Umayyads there were thirty-one changes of governors in 109 years, whereas, under the 'Abbasîds there were sixty-seven changes in 118 years.

The Nubian Invasions

Our apocalypse knows of four, apparently distinct, invasions of Egypt by the Ethiopians, *i. e.* the Nubians. These are recorded as having occurred during the reign of the 12th "king" (verses 30, 32), the 14th "king" (verses 36, 37), the 15th "king" (verses 41, 43) and the 17th "king" (verse 50).

If we accept, that the 17th "king" should be identified with Marwân II (744-750 A. D.), the last of the 'Umayyad caliphs, then, the four Nubian invasions must have occurred during the period of the 'Umayyad Dynasty. However, Islamic history provides us with no references to any Nubian invasion during the reign of the 'Umayyad caliphs, cf. Quatremère, Et., *Mémoires Géographiques et Historiques sur l'Égypte, et sur quelques contrées voisines*. Paris, 1811, Vol II.

After the conquest of Egypt (641 A. D.) by the troops of 'Amr ibn al-'As, the new rulers considered all of Egypt and the land south of it as part of their possession. About a year after the conquest of Egypt, 'Amr ibn al-'As sent an expedition with twenty thousand men under the command of 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'ad into Nubia. The Nubians, however, had no intention of changing their Christian Faith for that of al-Islâm, nor of abandoning their ancestral practice of raiding the wealthy cities of Egypt.

The Islamic Dynasties

The caliphs in their historical sequence	(A) Becker	(B) Macler	(C) Meinardus
1. 'Umar (634-644)	1. —	1. —	1. —
2. 'Uthmân (644-656)	2. —	2. —	2. —
3. 'Alî (656-661)	3. —	3. —	3. —
4. Ḥasan ibn 'Alî (661)	4. —	4. —	4. —
5. Mu'āwiyah I (661-680)	5. —	5. —	5. —
6. Yazîd I (680-683)	6. —	6. —	6. —
7. Mu'āwiyah II (683)	(excluded by Becker)	7. —	7. —
8. Marwân I (684-685)	8. —	8. —	8. —
9. 'Abd al-Malik (685-705)	9. —	9. —	9. —
10. Al-Walîd ibn 'Abd al-Malik (705-715)	10. Sulaimân	10. 'Azîz (975-996)	10. Sulaimân and 'Umar II
11. Sulaimân (715-717)	11. 'Umar II	11. Al-Ḥakim (996-1021)	11. 'Umar II and Yazîd II
12. 'Umar II (717-720)	12. Hishâm	12. Az-Zâhir (1021-1036)	12. Hishâm
13. Yazîd II (720-724)	13. Yazîd II	13. Mustansîr (1036-1094)	13. Al-Walîd ibn Yazîd
14. Hishâm (724-743)	14. —	14. Must'alî (1094-1102)	14. —
15. Al-Walîd ibn Yazîd (743-744)	15. —	15. Al-Amit (1102-1130)	15. —
16. Yazîd III (744)	16. —	16. Al-Ḥâfiz (1130-1149)	16. —
17. Ibrâhîm (744)	17. Marwân II	17. Az-Zâfir (1149-1154)	17. Marwân II
18. Marwân II (744-750)	18. As-Saffâh	18. Al-Fâ'iz (1154-1160)	18. —
19. As-Saffâh (750-754)	19. Marwân II	19. Al-'Adîd (1160-1171)	19. Al-Ḥakim
20. Al-Manṣûr (754-775)			

The first expedition, which was sent against them not only failed to conquer the Nubians, but also the invading forces were compelled to retreat, after having suffered much loss from the exceptional skill of the Nubian archers (1). In 652 A. D., however, 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'ad returned to Nubia and accomplished the final subjection of the Nubians. The Muslims penetrated as far as Dongola and laid siege to the city; and King Kalidomat opened negotiations for peace. The agreement, which was made between the Arabs and the Christians, stipulated that from henceforth the Nubians had to pay an annual tribute of three hundred and sixty slaves to the Governor of Aswân. Thus, every year, about four hundred slaves (it was estimated that 10% of the slaves would perish during the transport) were taken to al-Qaṣr opposite the island of Philae, where they were surrendered to the Egyptian authorities (2).

The History of the Patriarchs records, that Cyriacus, the King of the Nubians, had heard of the civil-war, which prevailed in Egypt between Marwân II and Abû'l-'Abbâs, and that the Governor of Egypt had begun to persecute the Egyptian Christians, and that he had imprisoned Khâil I (743-767 A. D.), the 46th Patriarch of Alexandria. Thereupon, Cyriacus sent one of the notables of his kingdom to Egypt to demand that the patriarch should be set at liberty. The Nubian diplomat, however, was arrested by the Egyptian Governor. Enraged at the ill-treatment of the Egyptian Christians, Cyriacus invaded Egypt with an army of one hundred thousand men and one hundred thousand camels. All Christians, who were still far more numerous than the Muslims, welcomed the Christian army of Cyriacus with joy. The Nubians penetrated as far north as Miṣr, and demanded the liberation of the patriarch. Faced with the assault of the Nubians, the Governor begged the patriarch to intervene and to ask Cyriacus to withdraw his troops. Upon word that the patriarch had been set at liberty, the Nubian troops returned, taking with them considerable booty from the Muslim inhabitants (3).

(1) BUTLER A., *The Arab Conquest of Egypt*. Oxford, 1902, p. 432.

(2) RÖDER G., 'Die christliche Zeit Nubiens und des Sudans', in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, XXXIII, 3, 1912. MASSENBACH, G. V., *Als Mohrenland noch christlich war*. Wiesbaden, n. d.

(3) Becker points out that the invasion of the Nubians under King Cyriacus is the invention of the author of the *Vita Michaelis*, which Abû

In the beginning of the IXth century, the Christian kingdoms of Nubia gained in political importance and military strength. Thereupon, they determined to discontinue to pay the *bakt*, the annual slave-tribute. And while the Egyptian rulers were kept fully occupied with the Coptic insurrections, the Nubians stopped paying their tribute. Then, during the patriarchate of Yûsâb (831-850 A. D.), Ibrâhîm, the brother of the Caliph al-Mâ'mûm (813-833 A. D.), sent a message to Zacharias, King of Nubia, ordering him to pay the annual *bakt*, which was fourteen years in arrears. As Zacharias found it impossible to pay his debt, he sent his son George to Ibrâhîm. Ibrâhîm received him graciously and granted all the petitions of Zacharias. The Nubians achieved their purpose of not paying the *bakt* for the years of which they were in arrears, and a further concession was made that the *bakt* was to be paid only once in every three years, instead of every year to the caliph.

In 854 A. D., the Bejas invaded Upper Egypt, plundering both Esna and Edfû, but the Egyptian troops were quickly assembled, and the Bejas were defeated. During the reign of King George, the son of Zacharias, Nubia was invaded by the rebel forces of Abû 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Umarî, who was determined to get possession of the gold mines of the Nile Valley. After several battles, al-'Umarî was defeated and escaped towards Egypt⁽¹⁾.

In 956 A. D., the Nubians attacked again Aswân, but the following year they were repelled by the Egyptians⁽²⁾. The Nubians fought their way back to their own country, but they were forced to surrender to the Muslims their fortress of Ibrîm. Again in 967 A. D. the Nubians invaded Egypt, when they recovered the territory which they had lost. This time, they overran the country as far as Akhmîm.

'I-Makarim used. Apparently, the chronicler of the *History of the Patriarchs* joined the liberation of the patriarch, his hero, with one of the numerous Nubian invasions. It is unlikely, that the Nubians ever penetrated as far north as Fustât.

⁽¹⁾ For the detailed account of the adventures of al-'Umarî, cf. QUATREMÈRE, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 59 ff.

⁽²⁾ BUDGE, E. A. W., *The Egyptian Sudan, its History and Monuments*. London, 1907, II, XII.

During the reign of Şalâh ad-Dîn (1171-1193), the Nubians again invaded Egypt, pillaging Aswân. Having knowledge of this, the new sultan despatched an army to meet the Nubian forces, and the King of Nubia ordered his troops to withdraw. In spite of the retreat of the Nubians, Şalâh ad-Dîn's troops entered Nubia. A battle was fought, and both parties claimed victory over the other. Yet, Şalâh ad-Dîn was far from being satisfied, and he commissioned Şams ad-Dawlah, his brother, to invade Nubia and to punish the marauding Christians. Şams ad-Dawlah attacked the fortress of Ibrîm and took it after three days. All the Christians who survived the siege were sold as slaves. Seven hundred thousand Nubians were either killed or sold into slavery. Towards the end of the XIIIth century, during the reign of az-Zâhir Baybars (1260-1277), David, King of the Nubians, engaged in one of the periodic invasions of Upper Egypt, damaging considerably the town of Aswân. Immediately, the Egyptians took the opportunity to invade Nubia and to penetrate as far south as Dongola. The Egyptians made many prisoners, among whom there were several Nubian notables, who after having been exhibited as trophies, were barbarically hewn asunder.

By the end of the XIIIth century, the Northern Kingdom of Nubia had decreased in power and prestige, and though still Christian, it depended largely upon the good will of the Egyptian Sultan. During the XIVth century, the Northern Kingdom suffered a final blow and ultimately collapsed.

If we accept the XIIIth century as a possible date for the final composition of the XIVth Vision of Daniel, then we may assume that the XIIIth century developments in Nubia may have led the author to intersperse the text with references to the Nubian invasions. The verses pertaining to the Nubian invasions, therefore, should be understood as parenthetical accounts, rather than as events falling into the reigns of the respective kings or dynasties.

The Structure of the Apocalypse

The principal theme of the XIVth Vision of Daniel, that of the history of the Ishmaelites, is disguised in the apocalyptic frame of the canonical visions of Daniel, and it constitutes the central part. Verses 1-21 and 78-88 are modelled on the Old

Testament visions of Daniel. The apocalypse begins with a prologue (vers. 1-3), which corresponds to Daniel's *Vision of the Last Days* (*Dan.* X, 1-XII, 13). Then, instead of following the canonical sequence, the author reverts to the *Vision of the Four Beasts*, which finds its parallel in *Dan.* VII, 1-28. Whereas, most scholars have interpreted the Biblical Vision of the Four Beasts as pertaining to the empires of the Babylonians, the Medians, the Persians and the Graeco-Macedonians, our author explicitly identifies his Four Beasts with the empires of the Persians, the Romans, the Hellenes (Byzantines) and the Ishmaelites. Then follows the description of the ten Islamic rulers, at the end of which Pitourgos, the Turk, appears and defeats Sarapidos the Egyptian. With the victory of Pitourgos over the Egyptians, the stage is set for an apocalyptic conclusion, which the author borrows from the canonical Apocalypse of Daniel. Gog and Magog shall move the earth before the Antichrist appears, whose reign comes to an end with the final victory of the Ancient of Days.

Verses	1- 3	Prologue.
	3-10	First Vision of the Four Beasts.
	11-15	Second Vision of the Nineteen Horns.
	16-23	Interpretation of the First Vision.
	24-64	Interpretation of the Second Vision.
	24	Description of the 10th "king".
	25-26	Description of the 11th "king".
	27-32	Description of the 12th "king".
	33	Description of the 13th "king".
	34-39	Description of the 14th "king".
	40-44	Description of the 15th "king".
	45-46	Description of the 16th "king".
	47-51	Description of the 17th "king".
	52-53	Description of the 18th "king".
	54-64	Description of the 19th "king".
	65-75	Appearance of Pitourgos and encounter with Sarapidos.
	76-77	Intervention of the King of the Romans.
	78	Appearance of Gog and Magog.
	79-80	Appearance of the Antichrist.
	81-84	Final struggle of the Ancient of Days with Antichrist.
	85-88	Epilogue.

Exposition

Note: The exposition will furnish the reader with the appropriate Biblical parallels and a brief exegesis of the text. The historical inter-

pretation of the Vision of the Fourth Beast or the Nineteen Horns and the subsequent appearances (verses 24-78) offer the possible applications of the text to:

- (A) The Fall of the 'Umayyad Dynasty.
- (B) The Fall of the Fâtimîd Dynasty.
- (C) The Fall of the 'Umayyad and Fâtimîd Dynasties.

DANIEL, Chapter XIV

1. *And in the third year of Cyrus the Persian who took the Kingdom of Babylon, a word was revealed to Daniel whose name is Baldasar. True is the word.*

Bibl. Par. "In the third year of Cyrus, King of Persia, a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshaz'zar. And the word was true". *Dan. X, 1 a.*

Verse 1 is a historical comment by the redactor, for Daniel's revelation begins with verse 2, where he speaks in the first person. *Third year of Cyrus, i. e.* the third year after Cyrus took Babylon, would be 536-535 B. C. A *word* means a "word of the divine oracle (*Dan. IX, 23*). *Baldasar* or Balthasar, Belshazzar was the last King of Babylon, and here, Daniel is called Baldasar.

2. *I, Daniel, was fasting twenty-one days until the evening, daily. I did not eat flesh neither did I drink wine. I did not anoint myself with oil.*

Bibl. Par. "In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks". *Dan. X, 2.*

Fasting, from *Dan. X, 12* we learn that Daniel prepared himself for such a revelation by ascetic practices, "seeking him by prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes". *Dan. IX, 3. Twenty-one days, i. e.* three weeks. *Flesh* and *wine* were indications of luxurious living, and *anointing* also was a luxurious practice, which was omitted during mourning.

3. *It happened to me, while standing at the river Tigris, that a matter was revealed to me.*

Bibl. Par. " On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted up my eyes and looked ". *Dan. X*, 4, 5 a.

Tigris is Hiddekel (*Gen. II*, 14). Babylon, however, is situated on the banks of the Euphrates, where Daniel might be expected. With regard to *Dan. X*, 4, the *Peshitta* has " Euphrates ", though the *LXX* has " Tigris ".

4. *I saw, I beheld, four winds of the heavens struck upon the great sea.*

Bibl. Par. " Daniel said, ' I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea ' ". *Dan. VII*, 2.

Beginning with verse 4, the author adopts the apocalyptic " four empire " theory, cf. *Dan. VII*, 1-28. The *four winds of heaven* resemble the four winds of the creation epic, referred to in *Zech. II*, 6, VI, 5. The *great sea* normally stands for the Mediterranean, here, however, it is a mythological concept referring to the circumambient ocean, which in the classical mythology goes all around and underneath the earth and is the antipodes of heaven, e. g. the waters of the deep of *Gen. I*, 2, VII, 11. Moreover, the sea being a seat of evil and the home of fearsome monsters, it was an appropriate place from which the beasts should emerge.

5. *I saw four beasts, they came from the river, being exceedingly terrible.*

Bibl. Par. " And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another ". *Dan. VII*, 3.

Pagan powers and dynasties were frequently portrayed as beasts. In the Old Testament we find such animal symbolism in *Ezek. XVII*, XIX, XXIX, XXXII. Apparently, each of the four winds produced a beast. The " Four Beasts " are generally interpreted as the Babylonian Empire, which originated in the

south of Babylon, the Median in the north, the Persian in the east and the Greek Empire in the west of Babylon. Other scholars, like Hugo Gressmann, *Der Messias*, Göttingen, 1929, have argued, that the powers must be contemporary with one another. They are, therefore, interpreted as the four kingdoms of the Diadochi, who succeeded Alexander the Great. Our author identifies the four beasts as the empires of the Persians, Romans, Hellenes (Byzantines) and the Ishmaelites.

6. *The first animal being like a bear having wings on it like an eagle. I was looking until its wings were mowed; and they gave to it a heart of men, and it stood upon its feet.*

Bibl. Par. "The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand upon two feet like a man; and the mind of a man was given to it". *Dan.* VII, 4.

The word used in the Coptic text $\lambda\alpha\beta\omicron\iota$, may be either bear or lion, also she-bear or lioness. Whereas, the bear (*Dan.* VII, 5) is inferior to the lion and does not play any significant part in Oriental symbolism, the lion-eagle or winged lion represented the Babylonian Empire as seen by the great winged lions of the Mesopotamian temples and palaces. In *Jer.* IV, 7, XLIX, 19, I, 17 Nebuchadnezzar is compared to a lion and his armies to eagles.

7. *The second beast being like man's flesh, being exceedingly terrible, and is stood upon its side, and I was looking until three parts of its mouth were broken and the fourth part of the mouth was strengthened, and I was looking until its teeth were rooted out from its mouth.*

Bibl. Par. "And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth, and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh'". *Dan.* VII, 5.

This beast moved lopsidedly to symbolize an unstable and unbalanced empire as compared to the Babylonian Empire. In the context of the Vision of Daniel, it has been advanced, that the three ribs or the three parts of its mouth represent the three

provinces, which the Medes conquered. Our apocalypse, however, identifies this beast with the Roman Empire.

8. *The third beast being like a leopard having wings on it, and four heads, eating quickly, rejecting the rest.*

Bibl. Par. "After this I looked, and lo, another like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back, and the beast had four heads; and dominion was given to it". *Dan.* VII, 6.

According to the Vision of Daniel, the winged, four-headed leopard symbolized the Persian Empire. Though the leopard is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, this is a heraldic animal like the winged lion. In our apocalypse, the third beast is identified with the Empire of the Hellenes (Byzantines). Apparently, there is a number symbolism running through this section of the vision, *e. g.* the symbolic number of the first beast is two (two wings of an eagle). The number of the second beast is three, therefore, lopsided, and the number of the third beast is four (four heads).

9. *The fourth beast I saw being like a lion, being terrible beyond any of all the beasts which were before.*

10. *There was given to it authority and a great power. Its hands were iron, its claws were bronze, eating, chewing, trampling the rest beneath its feet.*

Bibl. Par. "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrible and dreadful and exceedingly strong; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it...". *Dan.* VII, 7. Also *Dan.* VII, 19.

The fourth beast of the Vision of Daniel symbolizes the Greek Empire of Alexander's successors with its policy of Hellenization. This was already recognized by the author of the *Sibylline Oracles* (III, 388-400). Like the Greeks, who attempted to transform the local customs and religious attitudes of the people they conquered, so also the Ishmaelites, whom our apocalypse identifies

with the fourth beast, imposed their religion upon their new subjects.

II. *I saw ten horns which came up upon its head, and I saw a small horn which came up near the ten horns; there was given to it great authority and strong power.*

Bibl. Par. " . . . And it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came upon them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots. . . ". *Dan.* VII, 7 b and 8.

In apocalyptic literature, the horns always represent kings or dynasties of that empire, which is symbolized by the beast, whose horns they are. In the Vision of Daniel, the ten horns refer to the ten kings who succeeded Alexander, and the *Sibylline Oracles* referred to the horns as individuals in the Seleucid succession. In our apocalypse, however, the ten horns are caliphs, who belong either to the 'Umayyad Dynasty or to the Fâtimîd Dynasty or to both dynasties. The *small horn* was interpreted in the context of the Vision of Daniel as representing Antiochus IV Epiphanes. In our apocalypse, however, the "small horn with great authority and strong power" represents Muḥammad the Prophet.

12. *I saw another four which came up on its left and I saw another four which came up after them all, each different, and these all make nineteen.*

With verse 12, the author departs from the canonical Vision of Daniel and clearly adopts his own scheme. In order to arrive at nineteen horns, it is necessary to add the "small horn" of verse II (10 + 1 + 4 + 4 = 19). According to Old Testament symbolism, the nineteen horns could also be interpreted in terms of the nineteen Kings of Israel from Jeroboam I to Hoshea. Whereas Macler sees in the nineteen caliphs fourteen caliphs belonging to the Fâtimîd Dynasty and five caliphs as belonging either to the Ṭūlūnids or the Ikshîdids, Becker interprets the nineteen horns as representing the fourteen 'Umayyad caliphs, the four orthodox caliphs and the Prophet Muḥammad (or Ḥaṣan ben 'Alî or 'Abdullah ben Zubaîr).

13. *I heard a voice saying to me: "Daniel, man of desires, hast thou understood what thou hast seen?" I said to him: "How is it ever possible for me to know, if no one leads me?"*
14. *I beheld, I saw an angel of God standing on my right hand, his wings being of great lightness. I feared, I fell down upon the earth.*
15. *The angel took me, he set me up and he said to me: "Stand upon thy feet that I may instruct thee in those things which shall be at the end of the times".*

Bibl. Par. "When I, Daniel had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the U'lai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision". So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was frightened and fell upon my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end". *Dan.* VIII, 15-17.

The *voice* is that of a celestial being, which according to *Dan.* VIII, 16 had the appearance of a man. Daniel, who realizes his own insufficiency with regard to the interpretation of his vision, requests help and insight. Another vision occurs, and the revelation is in the form of an *angel*. The *wings* are the descriptive attributes of the angel and, in this case, they stand for illumination. The angel, therefore, is Gabriel the messenger of God. Whereas, in the company of Christ, Gabriel stands on His left side, in the company of men, he stands on the "right hand". Gabriel is commemorated by the Coptic Church on the 22nd of Kihak, the 26th of Baû'ûnah and the 30th of Baramhât. — Falling down upon the earth or falling on the face at the approach of an angel is a common response in accounts of celestial appearances cf. *Josh.* V, 14; *Ezek.* I, 28; III, 23; XL,III, 3; *Apocalypse* I, 17; *Enoch* XIV, 14, 24; II *Esdras* X, 29. In part, this was an Oriental mark of respect, but, likewise, it was a desire to hide the face from the *mysterium tremendum*. The *end of the times* stands for the Last Days, and this reference, is certainly eschatological. The "end" is the culmination of the present era which makes way for the entrance of the new and final era.

16. *The four beasts which thou hast seen are four kingdoms, and the beast which thou didst see, being like a bear, this is the King of the Persians. He will possess the earth 555 years. After these things his kingdom shall perish, and it shall not be powerful for ever.*

For the "four beasts" cf. verse 5; for the "bear" cf. verse 6. The domination of the Persians in Egypt began with Cambyses, who was crowned King of Egypt and assumed all the titles of a pharaoh in 525 B. C. The Persian rule lasted until 332 B. C. In that year, the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great marked the end of the Persian domination. The number 555 should not be understood in historical terms, on the contrary, it belongs the realm of apocalyptic mythology. Everything related to "five" represents enlightenment, whereas "three" stands for dynamic perfection. 555 therefore, would be the "perfection of enlightenment".

17. *The second beast which thou hast seen, being like man's flesh, this is the King of the Romans, as iron he shall hold the earth, he shall spread over it. He shall be in strength unto the land of Ethiopia, and he shall rule upon the earth 911 years.*

For the "second beast", cf. verse 7. In 30 B. C., Egypt was reduced to a Roman Province, which was placed under the personal jurisdiction of the Emperor. In 395 A. D., the Roman Empire was divided, and from then on, Egypt formed part of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire with Byzantium (Constantinople) as its capital. The Roman Era, therefore, lasted 425 years: *He shall hold the earth, he shall spread over it.* The Roman Empire included all of Europe south of the Danube and approximately west of the Rhine, Asia Minor, all of North Africa and Egypt as far south as the first cataract, *i. e.* "unto the land of Ethiopia".

18. *But the city of the kingdom he shall not possess until many days are completed.*

Though Nero (54-68 A. D.) conceived the idea of invading "Ethiopia", *i. e.* the region south of Egypt, no one was able to supply him with exact information, and he abandoned his

plan. For the next 200 years (60-260 A. D.), the Romans contented themselves with developing the district between Aswân (Syene) and Dakkah; and Trajan (98-117 A. D.), and Hadrian (117-138 A. D.) repaired the temples of Philae and Kalabshah. In the beginning of the IIIrd century, the Blemmyes invaded Egypt, and, during the reign of Diocletian (284-305 A. D.), the Roman garrison at Aswân was withdrawn. The *city of the kingdom* refers probably to the Northern Kingdom of Nubia, known as Nobadia, and its capital was Ballana. In 542 A. D., the capital was moved to Bukharas or Faras. However, this reference could also refer to the Kingdom of Makorita or Mukarra with its capital of Old Dongola. At the time of the Arab Conquest, when in 651-652 A. D. 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'ad, the Governor of Egypt, made his second expedition to Nubia, he found the whole country from Aswân to the frontier of Alodia under one ruler. This means, it would seem, that either before or in 652 A. D. the kingdoms of the Nobatae and the Makoritae were amalgamated with a joint capital of Dongola.

19. *The third animal which thou hast seen, being like a leopard, this is the King of the Hellenes. He shall rule upon the earth one thousand years and thirty days, and his kingdom shall not remain unto the age.*

For the "third beast" cf. verse 8. The *King of the Hellenes* stands for the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine rule in Egypt lasted from 395 A. D. until the Arab Conquest in 640 A. D., when Egypt was invaded by 'Amr ibn al-'As. The *one thousand years* refer to the "Day of the Lord" (*II Pet.* III, 8, *Ps.* XC, 4), which stands for a long period.

20. *The fourth beast which thou hast seen, being like a lion, this is the King of the Sons of Ishmael.*

21. *His kingdom shall be upon the earth very strong for many days.*

22. *That kingdom shall be from the race of Abraham, from the maid-servant of Sarah, the wife of Abraham.*

Bibl. Par. "Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar; and Sarai said to Abram,

'Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children; go in to my maid; it may be that I shall obtain children by her...' "And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived... and Hagar bare Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael". Gen. XVI, 1, 2, 4 a, 15.

For the "fourth beast" cf. verse 9.

23. *It shall destroy all the cities of the Persians and the Romans and the Hellenes, and nineteen kings shall rule upon the earth from that race from the Sons of Ishmael, until the completion of the end they shall be.*

The *cities of the Persians* were conquered during the caliphate of 'Umar (634-644 A. D.). Sa'ad ibn Abî-Waqqâs, one of the Companions of the Prophet, defeated in 637 A. D. the troops of the Persian Rustam, the administrator of the Empire, at Qâdisiyah, not far from al-Hîrah. The same year, Ctesiphon (al-Madâ'in), the Persian capital, 32 km south-east of Baghdâd, was captured. In 641 A. D., Mosul (Mawṣil) near the site of the ancient Nineveh was captured. The military camp al-Kûfah became the capital of the newly conquered territories. The *cities of the Romans and the Hellenes* refer to the Islamic expansion especially during the 'Umayyad and 'Abbasîd dynasties. Large sections of the Roman and Byzantine Empires, especially all of North Africa and Spain fell into the hands of the Muslims, and Constantinople was attacked three times by 'Umayyad forces. For the *nineteen kings*, cf. verse 12.

24. *The tenth king who shall be from them will be as a prophet, the number of his name is 399. He will do justice, he will give bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked, and he will perform salvation for those who serve. His mercy will extend over all the earth, and his justice unto the height of heaven.*

(A) (1)

The 10th "king" is Sulaimân (715-717 A. D.), who, indeed, is the 10th caliph, if we do not include Mu'âwiyah II (683 A. D.),

(1) For the *sigilla* (A), (B), (C), cf. pp. 398-405.

who is frequently omitted. The Greek letters of Sulaîmân added up give the number 399. Σολημαν = Σ (200) + ο (70) + λ (30) + η (8) + μ (40) + α (1) + ν (50) = 399.

(B)

The 10th "king" is Abû Manşûr Nizâr al-'Azîz (975-996 A. D.), son of al-Mu'izz and the fifth caliph in the Dynasty of the Fâtimîds. He was the first Fâtimîd to commence his reign in Egypt. During his reign, a large amount of toleration was conceded to the Christian communities. In his attitude, he was undoubtedly influenced by his Christian vizir 'Isa ibn-Nastûr and his Ukrainian wife, the mother of his son and heir al-Ĥâkim, and sister of the two Melkite patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem, cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 632. The chronicler of the *History of the Patriarchs* states: "There was great peace for the churches during the reign of Nazâr Abû'l-Manşûr al-'Azîz bi'llah (HPEC, II, II, 151). *His mercy will extend over all the earth.* During the reign of al-'Azîz the Fâtimîd empire reached its zenith, and the name of this caliph was recited in the Friday prayers from the Atlantic to the Red Sea, cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 620.

(C)

Sulaîmân is the only caliph, whose Graeco-Coptic letters would correspond to the number 399. Moreover, he can be legitimately regarded as the 10th caliph of the 'Umayyad Dynasty. *As a prophet* may also apply to Sulaîmân, who considered himself as the person referred to by *hadîth* that a caliph bearing the prophet's name was to conquer Constantinople, cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 203. On the other hand, the *History of the Patriarchs* (HPCC, P. O., V, 68-70) bears witness, that during the reign of Sulaîmân the Christians were severely persecuted, and fear ruled over Muslims and Christians alike. "At last the gracious and merciful God heard their (the monks') supplication and delivered them suddenly, for Sulaîmân, who was at that time sovereign prince, died and was succeeded by 'Umar, son of 'Abd al-'Azîz". Indeed, it is unlikely, that our author could have thought of Sulaîmân as a "king of justice and mercy". On the contrary, Sulaîmân was

noted for his cruelty and jealousy. The description sounds more like the Islamic glorification of 'Umar II (717-720 A. D.), who, in fact, was the 'Umayyad saint. To later tradition, which expected a *mab'ûth* (one sent) to appear every hundred years to renovate al-Islâm, he became the "one sent" at the beginning of the second century A. H. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 202.

The 10th king, therefore, might stand for the era of the reigns of Sulaimân and 'Umar II.

25. *The eleventh king who shall be from them will do injustice upon all the earth; he will destroy the ancient things made by hand.*

(A)

The 11th "king" is 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz (717-720 A. D.) as he must have appeared to the Christians. The most striking regulation issued by this 'Umayyad caliph was the exclusion of Christians from public offices, the prohibition of their wearing turbans, the demand to cut their forelocks, to wear distinctive clothes with girdles of leather, to ride without saddles or only on pack-saddles, to erect no places of worship and not to lift their voices in time of prayer. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 234. In the *History of the Patriarchs* (HPCC, P. O. V, 71-72) we read that 'Umar (though he did much good before men, acted ill before God". He demanded from the Christians to accept the faith of al-Islâm or to leave the country. He extended the poll-tax to include all men, even in cases where it was not customary to take it. God, however, destroyed him swiftly, because he was like Antichrist.

(B)

The 11th "king" is al-Ḥâkim (996-1021), whose violent persecutions of the Christians and the destructions of the churches sadly interrupted the tolerant and peaceful attitude of the Fâtîmîd rulers. Al-Ḥâkim killed several of his vizirs, and he also ordered the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. He was the third caliph in al-Islâm after al-Mûta'wakkil and 'Umar II to impose stringent measures on the Christians.

(C)

The reference to the destruction of the *ancient things made by hand* would apply more to Yazîd II (720-723 A. D.), who issued orders that the crosses should be broken in every place, and that the pictures, which were in the churches should be removed. "Moreover, his reign of 28 months may be inferred in the " ' forty months ' of verse 26, which stands for a "short time".

The 11th "king", therefore, might be interpreted to signify the reigns of 'Umar II and Yazîd II.

26. *He will afflict those who are upon the earth that thou wilt not be able to find him who is there, neither he who gives forth every groan for forty-two months. If the God of heaven be long-suffering towards him, his kingdom will endure for forty months.*

The description of this verse reflects a limited period of severe persecutions, which occurred during the caliphates of 'Umar II (717-720 A. D.) and al-Ḥâkim (996-1021). The period of forty-two months is definitely apocalyptic, and it stands for "a time, two times and half a time" (*Dan.* VII, 25, VIII, 14). In the Vision of Daniel, this is the period, during which the Syrians under Antiochus IV Epiphanes would desecrate the Temple and persecute the Jews. The Seer of Patmos also used the forty-two months to describe the power of the Roman beast. "... And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months". *Apoc.* XIII, 5. The number forty also stands for a limited, yet complete, time, cf. *Ex.* XVI, 35; *Nu.* XIV, 33; *Ps.* XCIV, 10; *Matt.* IV, 4.

27. *The twelfth king who shall be from them, his kingdom shall be strong according to the judgments of his mouth.*

28. *He shall do changing works upon the earth in his kingdom until those things which he did were admired (sic).*

(A)

The 12th "king" should be Yazîd II, yet any identification seems to be impossible.

(B)

The 12th "king" is az-Zâhir (1021-1036), the successor of al-Hâkim. During the reign of az-Zâhir there was great tranquility and peace, and "the religion of the Christians" was in good state and its people respected. The churches were rebuilt. Cf. HPEC, II, II, 209, Az-Zâhir also received permission from Constantine VIII to have his name mentioned in the mosques of the emperor's domain and to have the mosque at Constantinople restored in return for the caliph's permission to have the Church of the Holy Sepulchre rebuilt. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 621.

(C)

The description of the 12th "king" conforms best to the accounts which we have of the reign of Hishâm (724-743 A. D.). The *History of the Patriarchs* portrays him as a God-fearing man, who loved all men. No one was treated unfairly, so God gave him a prosperous reign, and he continued to rule twenty-two years; and no war continued against him, but everyone that rose up against him was delivered by God into his hands (HPCC, *P. O.*, V, 74). In the eyes of Muslim authorities, he was the last statesman of the house of 'Umayyah.

29. *There will be many wars in his kingdom. At the end of times there shall be a king who shall trouble all the kingdom of the Sons of Ishmael for one hundred and forty seven years.*

Neither Becker nor Macler refer to the "troublesome king". If we assume, that our apocalypse treats of the Fall of the Fâtimîds, then this king, who is not identified with a beast, may be identified with the orthodox and zealous Seljuk Turkomans, who, after having subdued Persia, conquered Palestine and entered Jerusalem in 1071 and Damascus in 1076.

If, however, we identify the "kings" with the 'Umayyad caliphs, in that case, "the 'king' who shall trouble all the kingdom" could refer to the Coptic revolts. In fact, the first revolts broke out in 720 A. D. during the caliphate of Yazîd II, the 12th "king" of the 'Umayyads. Though temporarily suppressed,

the Copts revolted again in 767 A. D., when they defeated the governor's forces and expelled the tax-collectors. A considerable part of the Nile Delta was in open revolt, and order was not restored until several years later. The 147 years may indicate the year 147 A. H. or 764 A. D., which approximately coincides with the date of the last rebellion.

30. *And in the one hundred and tenth year of his kingdom there shall be a war in his midst with the Ethiopians.*
31. *The Sons of Ishmael shall dominate over them until they take the city of the kingdom which is Souban.*
32. *They shall send to them seeking peace, and they shall give to them much silver and gold, and they shall be paying tribute among the Ethiopians.*

For the Ethiopian wars, *i. e.* the Nubian invasions, which are referred to in verses 30, 31, 32, 36, 37, 41, 43 and 50, cf. the introductory discussion on "The Nubian Invasions". The *one hundred and tenth year* would correspond to A. D. 728. Verse 31 may be a reference to the military exploits of al-Kâsim, who "went up the river to Upper Egypt as far as Aswân". Cf. HPCC, P. O., V, 95. *Souban* is Aswân or Syene, which was never the capital of the Ethiopians, *i. e.* the Northern Kingdom of Nubia. On the other hand, Becker reads Sûba, the capital of Alodia, which is situated at the confluence of the Blue and the White Nile. Yet, there is no evidence, that the Egyptians ever penetrated as far south as Sûba. The reference to *much silver and gold* and the payment of the *tribute* in verse 32 can only be understood in terms of the *bakt*, the slave tribute, which had been imposed upon the Nubians by 'Abd 'Allah ibn Sa'ad in 652 A. D. Every year, about four hundred slaves were taken to al-Qaṣr opposite the Island of Philae, where they were surrendered to the Governor of Aswân. Cf. Röder, G., "Die christliche Zeit Nubiens und des Sudan", in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, XXXIII, 3, 1912.

33. *The thirteenth king shall be from among them, there is not mercy in him at all, neither fear before him. His kingdom shall endure a few days only.*

(A)

Becker suggests that the 12th and the 13th "king" be exchanged. This would make Yazîd II (720-723 A. D.) the thirteenth "king".

In this case, the text may refer to the financial oppressions of the Copts by 'Ubaidallah ibn al-Ḥabḥâb, who was known for his ruthlessness and cruelty. Cf. Wüstenfeld, *op. cit.*, 43.

(B)

Macler identifies the 13th "king" with al-Mustanşir (1036-1094). The son of a Sudanese slave, al-Mustanşir ascended the throne at the age of seven and ruled for fifty-eight years, which is the longest reign in Muslim annals.

(C)

The 13th "king", whose *kingdom shall endure a few days only* is al-Walîd ibn Yazîd ibn 'Abd al-Malik (743-744), who exploited the Egyptians terribly and was assassinated. Cf. HPCC, *P. O.*, V, 115. Al-Walîd II was the most "incorrigible libertine", who spent his life in desert castles, at parties, at festivities and in drinking. He instituted the harem system with its concomitant auxiliary of eunuchs.

34. *The fourteenth king who shall be from them shall take much gold and silver, and he shall give judgment upon the earth.*
35. *He will assemble a war in Egypt that the East may have rest in their sighings and sufferings.*

(A)

Following the 'Umayyad chronology, the 14th "king" would be al-Walîd ibn Yazîd, and as stated (verse 33 C), he exploited the Egyptians.

(B)

The 14th "king" is al-Must'alî (1094-1102), whose vizir Šahîn Šah al-Afdal was always victorious and assured the caliph of both peace and glory.

(C)

This "king" should not be identified with any particular caliph, and the taking of *much gold and silver* may refer to any of the VIIIth century oppressions of the Copts by the vizirs, which resulted in the Coptic insurrections. The *war in Egypt* refers either to the Coptic revolt under a certain John in the vicinity of Samannûd (749 A. D.) or to the insurrection of 'Amr ibn Suhafl ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz ibn Marwân, who had ambitions to become ruler.

36. *The Ethiopians shall not submit to him at all, nor shall they give to him the tribute, and there shall be war in the land of the Romans in those days.*

In the beginning of the IXth century, the Christian kingdoms of Nubia gained in political importance and military strength. Thereupon, they determined to discontinue the annual payment of the *bakt*, which had been imposed upon them by 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'ad. Then, during the patriarchate of Yûsâb (831-849 A. D.), Ibrâhîm, the brother of al-Mâ'mûm (813-833 A. D.), sent a message to Zacharias, King of Nubia, ordering him to pay the annual *bakt*, which was fourteen years in arrears. The *land of the Romans* in connection with the "Ethiopians" could *à la rigueur* refer to the Kingdom of the Makoritæ. Cyriacus, the King of the Nubians, was known as "the Orthodox Ethiopian King of al-Mukarrah, and he was entitled the 'Great King', upon whom the crown descended from Heaven for he is the Greek (Rûmî) King, fourth of the kings of the earth". Cf. HPCC, P. O., V, 146.

37. *The Ethiopians shall war with the southern parts, and they shall pillage all the villages and the cities of Egypt until they reach the city which Cleopatra built in the south, which is Šmoun.*

The parallel to this verse is found in the questionable account of the Nubian invasion in the *Vita Michaelis*. According to the

History of the Patriarchs, King Cyriacus of Nubia with one hundred thousand horsemen and one hundred thousand camels invaded Egypt. "They plundered and slew and made prisoners of the Muslims in Upper Egypt", and finally, they reached Miṣr, where they forced the Governor 'Abd al-Malik to release the imprisoned Patriarch", cf. HPCC, P. O., V, 144. Šmoun, al-Ašmûnaîn or Hermopolis Magna is mentioned by Abû 'l-Makarim as the city, which was built by Alexander the Macedonian, who called it Cleopatra. Moreover, this is also the place, where the last of the 'Umayyad caliphs was killed on the rock. Cf. Abû Šâlih, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*. Oxford, 1895. 221.

38. *After these things, the King of Syria shall hear and shall fear for the end, because the war drew near to him.*
39. *And at the end his kingdom shall be established and shall stand well.*

(A)

Though neither Becker nor Macler identify the "King of Syria", we may attempt to see in the "king's fear" a certain awareness that with the fall of the 'Umayyads the glory of Syria passed away. The Syrians awoke too late to the realization that the centre of gravity in al-Islâm had passed from their land, and had shifted eastward. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 286.

(B)

However, the "King of Syria" may also stand for the Seljuks, who appeared in Syria shortly before 1070. In this year, Sultan Alp Arslân made the Arab prince of Aleppo his vassal, and Alp's general Atsiz entered Jerusalem and wrested Palestine from Fâtimîd hands. By 1098, Jerusalem had reverted to the Fâtimîds, whose strong fleet had also recaptured the coastal towns including Ascalon, 'Akka, Tyre and Byblos. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 635.

40. *After these things there shall arise a child of the Sons of Ishmael, who is the fifteenth king who is from them.*

(A)

According to the 'Umayyad chronology, the 15th "king" should be Ibrâhîm (744 A. D.).

(B)

Macler identifies the 15th "king" with al-Amir (1102-1130), who ascended the throne at the age of five and ruled for twenty-eight years.

(C)

A child of the Sons of Ishmael. Al-Ḥâkim was 11 years of age when he became caliph. After al-Ḥâkim, immature youths were made caliphs, with the real power in the hands of the vizirs, who later even assumed the title al-malik. Al-Ḥâkim's son and successor az-Zâhir was sixteen years of age when he came to the throne. After al-Must'alî, his son, a child of five years, was declared caliph by al-Afdal, who gave him the honorific title of al-Amir. When al-Ḥâfîz (1130-1149) died, his son and successor az-Zâfir (1149-1154) was then a gay youth. After the death of az-Zâfir, his four year old son, al-Fâ'îz (1154-1160) was proclaimed caliph. The young caliph died at the age of eleven and was succeeded by his nine years old cousin al-'Adîd. Young caliphs, therefore, were quite common among the Fâtîmîds.

41. *He shall be hard as iron in his soul, and he shall send forth his sword unto the Romans, his right hand upon the Ethiopians, he shall be of two faces and two tongues.*

Bibl. Par. "And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things, and like iron which crushes, it shall break and crush all these". *Dan.* II, 40.

The *hard as iron* should refer to a dynasty rather than to a particular caliph. In the *Book of Daniel*, the fourth kingdom is described as being "strong as iron".

(A)

If we assume that our apocalypse treats of the Fall of the 'Umayyads, then, *the sword unto the Romans* may refer to the landings of the Greeks at several places on the Egyptian Mediterranean coast. They besieged Tarûga in the vicinity of Alexandria and took many prisoners. *His right hand upon the Ethiopians* could possibly refer to the appointment of 'Ubaid 'Allah ibn al-Ḥabhâb as Governor of Africa. Both events, however, occurred during the caliphate of Hishâm (724-743 A. D.). Cf. Wüstenfeld, *op. cit.*, 45.

(B)

If, however, we assume that our apocalypse treats of the Fall of the Fâṭimîds, then, *the sword unto the Romans* would refer to the Crusaders. During the reign of al-Amir (1102-1130), the Christian kings of Jerusalem occupied 'Akka, Tripolis and Sidon. In 1117, Baldwin I, successor of Godfrey of Bouillon, pushed into Egypt as far as al-Farâma (Pelusium). In 1118, the Crusaders occupied Tyre, which, at that time, was under Egyptian administration. *His right hand upon the Ethiopians* could refer to the intrigues of Kanz ad-Dawlah and Saif ad-Dawlah in Nubia, which led to the capture of Solomon, King of Nubia, at the Nubian Monastery of St. Onuphrius, and his transfer to Cairo, where he died and was buried in the Monastery of St. George at al-Khandaq.

(C)

This verse should not be interpreted as applying to any particular caliph. The two principal concerns of the caliphs, *i. e.* the Christians and the Nubians, are expressed in apocalyptic language. To be of *two faces and two tongues* may depend on "the sharp two-edged sword" of *Apoc.* I, 16, II, 12. The tongue is a powerful weapon, a symbolism, which is derived from *Isa.* XI, 4, where the Messiah "shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked". Analogous symbolism is to be found in other sources. In *II Thess.* II, 8 the Lord Jesus will destroy the lawless one

“with the breath of his mouth” and in *II Esdras XIII*, 9-13, the Man from the sea (Messiah) will destroy his enemies with the fiery stream from his mouth, the flaming breath from his lips, and the storm of sparks from his tongue.

42. *In the days of his kingdom there shall be great trouble upon all the earth, and his word shall be hard as iron.*

Bibl. Par. “And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars, see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places”. *Matt. XXIV*, 6, 7.

This verse is a prediction of political developments, which will usher in the Last Day.

43. *The Ethiopians shall bring to him gifts, gold, silver, and pearls, and he shall impose labour upon every one.*

This verse is a parenthetical account. For an explanation of the *bakt*, cf. verse 36.

44. *He shall take captive many lands and shall afflict them, and they shall not be satisfied with bread all the days of his kingdom, nor shall there be peace in the days of his kingdom, and there shall be much pillage in his days.*

Like verse 42, this verse reflects the traditional apocalyptic expectations preceding the Last Day, *i. e.* the *penuria panis*, wars and pillage.

45. *The sixteenth king who shall be from them, there shall not be war in his kingdom.*

46. *There shall be given to him a long peaceful time, and his kingdom shall be set up in uprightness.*

(A)

In terms of the Fall of the ‘Umayyad Dynasty, the 16th “king” would be either Yazîd III (744 A. D.) or Ibrâhîm (744

A. D.), whose reigns were very brief, and, therefore, would not correspond to a long and peaceful time. Moreover, there was a great deal of strife within the 'Umayyad realm, mainly on account of theological parties, *i. e.* the Qaysites and the Khârijites.

(B)

According to the Fâṭimîd chronology, al-Ḥâfiẓ (1130-1149) would be the 16th "king". At his time, however, the power of the Fâṭimîds had steadily declined, so that when he died, his influence hardly extended beyond his own palace.

(C)

The description of the 16th "king" should not be interpreted historically. The long and peaceful reign of the 16th "king" provides the background to the catastrophic events as described in verse 47.

47. *The seventeenth king who shall be from them, there shall be war between him and his race. His name will make the number 666.*

(A)

Becker identifies the 17th "king" with Marwân II (744-750 A. D.), the last of the 'Umayyad caliphs. By adding to the four orthodox caliphs thirteen 'Umayyad caliphs, we arrive at the 17th caliph, who is Marwân II. Moreover, his name corresponds to the number 666: $\mu\epsilon\rho\upsilon\alpha\nu = \mu (40) + \epsilon (5) + \rho (100) \omicron (70) \upsilon (400) + \alpha (1) + \nu (50) = 666$.

(B)

Without commenting on the number 666. Macler identifies the 17th "king" with az-Zâfir (1149-1154), the successor of al-Ḥâfiẓ, who ascended the throne at the age of seventeen. During his reign, Baldwin occupied Ascalon. The Muslims of Sicily revolted and landed in Egypt, and set fire to the city of Tanis.

The assassination of Ibn as-Sallâr (1153), the Kurdish vizir, by his wife's grandson Naşr ibn 'Abbâs, who was later encouraged by the caliph to make an attempt on the life of his father, 'Abbâs, Ibn as-Sallâr's successor in the vizirate, and, finally, the secret murder of aḡ-Zâfir himself by the young conspirator, form one of the darkest chapters in the history of Egypt. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 623.

(C)

The 17th "king" is Marwân II, for his number is 666 as shown under (A). *There shall be war between him and his race.* In the *History of the Patriarchs* we read: "And for a time the Muslim fought one against the other, and shed one another's blood, so that on one day twenty thousand or thirty thousand or seven thousand were slain". Cf. HPCC, *P. O.*, V. 150.

Bibl. Par. "This calls for wisdom: let him who has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number, its number is six hundred and sixty-six". *Apoc.* XIII, 18.

The number 666, or 616 according to Codex C Ephraemi, has been suggested to stand for *Nero revivivus*, i. e. the Antichrist. By transliterating the Greek Νέρων Καῖσαρ into Hebrew letters, a solution to the enigma may be found. נרון קסר = 7 (200) + 6 (60) + 7 (100) + 5 (50) + 6 (6) + 7 (200) + 5 (50) = 666.

48. *There shall arise one of his race and he shall war with him, he shall pursue him into Egypt with the wealth of his kingdom.*

One of his race, this was either Abû Muslîm, the hero of the new 'Abbâsîd Dynasty, or his son 'Abd 'Allah. Having conquered the 'Umayyad empire, except Egypt, Abû Muslîm pursued Marwân II into Egypt.

49. *And he shall abandon his race and his host, and he shall scatter the money in the streets and the paths.*

He shall abandon his race, when Marwân learnt that his enemy's troops had been divided into four parts, he fled two days before they crossed the river, and thus he escaped secretly. Cf. HPCC,

P. O., V, 183. *He shall scatter the money in the streets.* Realizing his utter helplessness, Marwân set fire to Fustât, to the store-houses of provisions, and cotton and straw and the supplies of barley. Then Mişr was set on fire, and the people were lying in the streets and lanes and gardens in the district of al-Ğazah like corpses. Cf. HPCC, *P. O.*, V, 165.

50. *And descending into Egypt with the wealth, he shall go to the south in Egypt, wishing to pillage Aswân, city of the Ethiopians, with the rest of the wealth.*

Bibl. Par. "And I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia". *Ez.* XXIX, 10.

To the south is *μαρις* (maris) or the Şa'id, *i. e.* Upper Egypt. *Aswân* or Syene constitutes the extreme southern limit of Egypt. The population of Aswân was and still is largely Nubian. Ever so often, the Nubians invaded Upper Egypt and occupied Aswân, though never for any length of time. Becker reads Sûba, the capital of the southern Kingdom of Nubia. Sûba does not correspond to the "south in Egypt".

51. *And one of his race shall kill him in the southern part of Egypt, and he shall carry off the remainder of the wealth.*

One of his race shall kill him. "And they (the 'Abbâsids) followed him as far as Mount Abbah *i. e.* Ğabal al-Tûnah, to the west of Cleopatra, the city founded by Alexander the Macedonian (cf. verse 37). And with Marwân was killed also Rayân, son of 'Abd al-'Azîz, but the sons of Marwân escaped". Cf. HPCC, *P. O.*, V, 186. As to the place of Marwân's death, there pertains some uncertainty, since the village of Başîr is mentioned. However, there is a Bûşîr al-Malak at the entrance to the Fayyûm, a Buşîr in the Province of al-Ğazah, and a Bûşîr west of al-Aşmûnaîn, *i. e.* Ğabal at-Tûnah. *And he shall carry off the remainder of the wealth.* "And the Khorassanians seized all the money of Egypt, and Marwân's followers were slain by the sword". Cf. HPCC, *P. O.*, V., 187.

52. *The eighteenth king who shall be from them, shall do many evils in the beginning of his reign, one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

Bibl. Par. " And I will grant my two witnesses power to prophecy for one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth ".
Cf. Apoc. XI, 3; also XII, 6.

(A)

Becker identifies the 18th " king " with Abû'l-'Abbâs as-Saffâh (750-754 A. D.), who referred to himself as as-Saffâh, the bloodshedder. He ruled just a little more than one thousand two hundred days.

(B)

Macler, on the other hand, sees in the 18th " king " al-Fâ'iz (1154-1160), who ascended the throne at the age of five. The infant, who had been permanently incapacitated by the scenes of violence which accompanied his accession, died in 1160.

(C)

The 18th " king " should not be identified with a historical personage. As in the *Apocalypse*, the one thousand two hundred and sixty days or three and a half years stand for the period, during which the Romans will be permitted to continue their evil rule and wickedness, so in our apocalypse, the one thousand two hundred and sixty should be interpreted as an indefinite period of oppression, which culminates in the persecutions of the 19th " king ".

53. *And there shall be war against him in the western parts, and he shall gain the victory up to the day of his death.*

The western parts. With the emergence of the 'Abbâsid caliphate residing in Baghdâd, the western parts would be Syria, which, indeed, was in constant turmoil. Becker, however, reads *maghrib* for " western parts ". Şâlih ibn 'Alî, the vizir of Egypt,

was also appointed vizir of Palestine and Maghrib. In 753 A. D. as-Saffâh sent a large army towards Africa, while Abû 'Aûn prepared a fleet to sail for Barqa (Pentapolis). *Up to the day of his death.* As-Saffâh died at the age of thirty-three due to small-pox, and his successor 'Abd Allah Abû Ġa'far al-Manşûr ordered the return of the troops from Barqa. Cf. Wüstenfeld, *op. cit.*, II, 4.

54. *Afterwards, a child shall arise from them, who is his son, who is the nineteenth king who shall come from them. For he shall be born of two races, his father being from the Sons of Ishmael, his mother a Roman.*

(A)

Becker identifies the 17th and the 19th "king" with Marwân II, who also had a non-Arab mother. Eutychius calls her an Armenian, whereas Tabarî, Belâdhurî and Abû 'l-Maĥâsin call her a Kurd. — Following the chronological sequence, the 19th "king" should be al-Manşûr (754-775 A. D.), who also had a non-Arab mother. She was a Berber, and was known as 'Umm walad Salâma. However, al-Manşûr was the brother and not the son of as-Saffâh. Yet, al-Manşûr was the real founder of the 'Abbâsid Dynasty, and he proved to be one of the greatest, though most unscrupulous, of the 'Abbâsids.

(B)

Though chronologically speaking al-'Adîd (1160-1171) is the 19th "king", and also the last one of the Fâtimîds, Macler concedes that "the author must have confused this person with al-Ĥâkim, who, indeed, had a Christian mother".

(C)

A child, cf. verse 40. He shall be born of two races. There were many caliphs, who were born of two races. Yazîd III (744 A. D.) was the first caliph in al-Islâm, who was born of a slave-mother, she was supposedly a descendant of the last Persian Emperor Yazdagird. Among the 'Abbâsids, al-Manşur (754-775

A. D.) was born of a Berber slave, al-Ma'mûn's (813-833 A. D.) mother was a Persian slave, al-Wâthiq's (842-847 A. D.) mother and al-Muhtadî's (869-870 A. D.) mother were Greeks, the mother of al-Muntaşir (861-862 A. D.) was Graeco-Ethiopian, al-Musta'in's (862-870 A. D.) mother was a Slav, while al-Muktafi's (904-908 A. D.) as well as al-Muqtadir's (908-932 A. D.) mothers were Turkish slaves. Harûn's (786-809 A. D.) mother, another foreign slave, was the famous al-Khaysurân, the first woman to exercise any appreciable influence in 'Abbâsîd caliph al affairs. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 332.

In this case, the child is al-Ĥâkim. "The king al-'Azîz had received a son from a concubine of his, a Greek (Rûmîah), and his son sat on the throne after him, and he was surnamed al-Ĥâkim. . . and he was very young". Cf. *HPEC*, II, II, 170, 174. Moreover, it is possible, that the author engaged here in an intentional play on names. Becker pointed out that the 19th "king" should be al-Manşûr (the victorious), however, al-Ĥâkim was also known as the al-Imâm al-Manşûr. Cf. *HPEC*, II, II, 174.

55. *There shall be a war in Egypt with Syria for twenty-one months.*

The *twenty-one months* is half of the forty-two months of verse 26, and, therefore, stand for a very limited period.

If we accept al-Ĥâkim as the 19th "king", the war between the Egyptians and the Syrians could be any of numerous attempts of the Syrians to gain independence. Syria had been a dependency of Egypt with brief intermissions since the day of Ibn Ţûlûn (870-881 A. D.), but under the Fâtimîds the relationship had become increasingly strained. Only by force could the Syrians be induced to recognize the Egyptian caliph. Even under the rule of al-Ĥâkim, Syria remained in a chronic state of revolt, Tyre had to be reduced, and the Garraḥ family at Ramlah set up a rival caliph in the sherîf of Mecca with the title of ar-Raşîd.

However, this verse could also refer to the dispute between Şâwar, the Prefect of Upper Egypt, and his Syrian allies for the possession of Egypt. Şâwar, being unable to cope with the Syrians, demanded help from Amaury I (Amalric), the Frankish king of Jerusalem and brother and successor of Baldwin III, who hastened to his aid with a large force, which united with the troops of

Šāwar, and besieged Šīrkūh in Bilbais for three months. At the end of this time, owing to the success of Nūr ad-Dīn in Syria, the Franks granted Šīrkūh a free passage with his troops back to Syria, on condition that Egypt would be evacuated (October, 1164). Two years later, Šīrkūh persuaded Nūr ad-Dīn to place him at the head of another expedition to Egypt, which left Syria in January 1167, and entering Egypt by the land-route, crossed the Nile at Iḥfīḥ, and camped at al-Ġīzah, when a Frankish army hastened to Šāwar's aid. Cf. Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, 159.

56. *For that king shall cast their swords among themselves, he, whose name makes the number 666, and is called by three names, and these are Mametios, and Khalle and Sarapidos.*

(A)

Because of the reference to 666 in verse 47 and 56, Becker identifies the 17th and the 19th "king" with Marwān II.

(B)

Macler, on the other hand, here interprets the number 666. Al-'Adīd (1160-1171), whose reign was sadly interrupted by Syrian and Frankish invasions, is the last of the Fāṭimīds, and his name stands for 666.

Adhed = A (1) + d (300) + h (60) + e (5) + d (300) = 666. For a detailed discussion on Macler's theory, cf. "B. Macler's Interpretation: The Fall of the Fāṭimīd Dynasty".

(C)

The names Mametios, Khalle and Sarapidos stand for the number 666.

μαμετίος = μ (40) + α (1) + μ (40) + ε (5) + τ (300) + ι (10) + ο (70) + ς (200) = 666.

χαλλέ = χ (600) + α (1) + λ (30) + λ (30) + ε (5) = 666.

σαραπίδος = σ (200) + α (1) + ρ (100) + α (1) + π (80) + ι (10) + δ (4) + ο (70) + ς (200) = 666.

Mametios is a graecized form of Maḥmet, *i. e.* Muḥammad, Khalle may represent ('Alī), if we accept that the ε has been transcribed by a χ, in order to obtain the number 600. Sarapidos may stand for the "gift of Sarapis", but it is more likely the genitive of Sarapis. Sarapidos represents the non-Christian Egypt, whose strenght and power will ultimately be destroyed, even as the worship of Sarapis disappeared.

Sarapis is the famous Graeco-Egyptian god, whose statue in the Serapeum of Alexandria showed him enthroned with a basket or corn measure on his head, a sceptre in his hand, Cerberus at his feet and a serpent. The name is usually explained as an assimilation of Apis and Osiris. The worship of Sarapis along with that of Isis and Horus spread throughout the ancient world, and ultimately became one of the leading cults in the west. The destruction of the Serapeum in Alexandria (385 A. D.) and of the famous idol within it, marked the death-agony of paganism throughout the empire.

The 19th "king" is al-Ḥâkim, *whose name makes the number 666.*

$\chi\acute{\alpha}\lambda\kappa\epsilon\mu = \chi (600) + \acute{\alpha} (1) + \kappa (20) + \epsilon (5) + \mu (40) = 666.$

57. *For he shall reign being a child and he shall do great evil. He shall command all the Jews who are in every place to return to Jerusalem. All the earth shall be troubled in the days of his kingdom, until they sell a man for a coin.*

He shall reign being a child, cf. verse 40. *He shall do great evil.* Al-Ḥâkim's rule was noted for its terror, cruelty and persecutions of the Christians. But also the Jews were severely oppressed. They had to wear bells, and in the streets they had to display a wooden image of a calf, in pleasing allusion to a discreditable episode in their early history. On the other hand, the return of the Jews to Jerusalem is another apocalyptic image, cf. *Isa. XXXV, 10; LI, 11. They sell a man for a coin.* During the reign of al-'Adîd (1160-1171), the Ghuzz pillaged Miṣr (Cairo), and sold Copts, Sudanese, Armenians and Turks. The price for a Christian being twenty dirhams, a Turk was sold for ten dirhams and a Negro for five dirhams. Cf. *HPEC, III, 1.*

However, this may also be a reference to the "rule of unrighteousness" cf. *Amos II, 6 b.* "... because they sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes".

58. *He shall be impudent of face and shall be unmindful of the fear of God.*

He shall be impudent of face. Al-Ĥâkim's aspect was that of a lion, and his two eyes were large and of blueness in colour. If he looked at a man, he would tremble owing to the greatness of his awe of him. His voice was loud and fearful. Cf. *HPEC*, II, II, 187. *Unmindful of the fear of God.* Eventually, al-Ĥâkim declared himself the incarnation of God, and was so accepted by a newly organized sect, the Druzes, who were so called after its first great missionary, ad-Darazî (d. 1019).

59. *He shall not remember the law of Ishmael, his father, neither his mother, for she is Roman. He shall be arrogant and a drunkard at every hour.*

His mother, for she is a Roman. Al-Ĥâkim's mother, indeed, was a "Rûmî". *A drunkard at every hour.* There were many caliphs, who were drunkards. Mu'âwiyah's son Yazîd was the first confirmed drunkard among the caliphs and won the title "Yazîd al-Khumûr", the "Yazîd of wines". Yazîd, we are told, drank daily, whereas, al-Walîd I contented himself with drinking every other day; Hishâm, once every Friday after Prayers, and 'Abd al-Malik only once a month, but then so heavily, that he perforce disburdened himself by the use of emetics. The palm for drinking should be handed to al-Walîd II, who is said to have gone swimming habitually in a pool of wine of which he would gulp enough to lower the surface appreciably. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 227. However, al-Ĥâkim was a zealous abstainer, as all Muslims are expected to be. Beer was forbidden, wine was confiscated, vines cut down, even dried raisins were contraband, and "the vessels in which was *nabîdh* were broken in every place". Cf. *HPEC*, II, II, 188.

The verse, however, may also be interpreted in its apocalyptic sense, "drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus". Cf. *Apoc.* XVII, 6.

60. *He shall kill a multitude eating with him at a table, by potions of magic medicines, and there shall be great devastations in those days.*

This verse could refer to the Fall of the 'Umayyads, for, following the death of Marwân II (750 A. D.), the 'Abbâsids embarked upon a policy of exterminating the 'Umayyad house. Their general 'Abdullah shrank from no measure necessary for wiping out the kindred enemy. On June 25th, 750 A. D., he invited eighty 'Umayyads to a banquet at Abû Futrus, the ancient Antipatris, and in the course of the feast, he had them all cut down. After spreading leathern covers over the dead and dying, he and his lieutenants continued their repast to the accompaniment of human groans. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 285. However, this may also be a reference to Šâwar's intention of arresting Šîrkûh, the uncle of Šalâh ad-Dîn, and his officers at a banquet (1169). — The administration of poison was always an acceptable method of disposing of the enemy, cf. *II Kings* IV, 38-41, IX, 14-34. In 1811, Muḥammad 'Alî held a reception in the Cairo Citadel to which the Mamelukes were invited. The coffee drinking over, the Mamelukes filed out through a narrow passage towards the main gate, and were then and there abruptly assailed and slaughtered. Of the four hundred and seventy, very few escaped. Cf. Hitti, *op. cit.*, 724.

61. *He will set free Syria and the land of the Jews, and the East and Egypt he will make to suffer, he will establish epistolarios in Egypt.*

During the reign of al-Ḥâkim the territorial extent of the dominions of the Fâṭimids were reduced to a little more than Egypt itself. After 1043, the Fâṭimid possession in Syria, always loosely bound to Egypt, began rapidly to disintegrate, while Palestine was often in open revolt. *Epistolarios* is a vizir or a governor.

62. *The East, two and three, they will be against one another in one year. In the year of this one, who is the nineteenth, he shall not seek judgment nor justice, but he shall seek gold at every hour.*

The first part of this verse may refer to the Seljuk and Crusader invasions of Syria and Palestine. The second part of the verse may again point to the terror or oppression of al-Ḥâkim, the 19th

"king", cf. verse 56. However, the second part may also be an apocalyptic reference to *Dan. XI*, 43, where we read: "He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt".

63. *And he shall establish an epitropos in the regions of Africa with a great multitude, and there shall be war in its midst with them.*

The *epitropos* is a commissioner, delegate or superintendent. *The regions of Africa* are the North African coast-line. The African wars refer to the tribal fightings between the Sunnis under the Governor al-Mu'izz and the Shi'ites. The Egyptians intervened (1044) by sending the Arab tribe of al-Hilâl to bring al-Mu'izz back to his former allegiance. The Hilâl occupied Barqa and Tripolis and settled there. Mu'izz, however, though defeated, maintained his independence at Mahdiah, permitting other minor states to spring up further west. Cf. Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, 138. After 1044, the Fâtîmîd African provinces were severing their tributary connection, and they passed either into open independence or reverted to their old allegiance to the 'Abbâsids.

64. *They shall wipe out the multitude which is with him, and he shall sit in the regions of Africa with those who shall remain to him of the multitude for many years and he will not conquer it.*

This verse, like the preceding, refers to the decline of the Fâtîmîd power in North Africa.

65. *Afterwards, there shall arise over him a nomad nation, called Pitourgos, and he shall war with him.*

(A)

Becker identifies *Pitourgos* with the Turk, and refers to the *History of the Patriarchs*, in which Marwân II is called the "Prince of those Turks". Cf. HPCC, *P. O.*, V, 118.

(B)

Macler also identifies *Pitourgos* with the Turk, but refers to Şalâh ad-Dîn (1138-1193).

(C)

The XIVth Vision of Daniel mentions the *Pitourgos* in six verses, 65, 67, 69, 71, 72, 75. The *Pitourgos* is a "nomad nation", who shall fight the Egyptians (Sarapidos), moreover, the *Pitourgos* dominates "all Syria and its boundaries" and shall fight in Egypt. The *Pitourgos* is of the nation of the Romans. The war with the Egyptians shall take place in the city of al-Ašmûnaîn, where *Pitourgos* shall conquer the Egyptians (Sarapidos) and shall take the kingdom from them. This description would lead us to conclude, that the *Pitourgos*, is Šalâh ad-Dîn, who was born in Takrît on the Tigris in 1138 of Kurdish parentage. To the Egyptians, the troops of Širkûh and his brother's son, Šalâh ad-Dîn, must have appeared like nomads.

66. *And Sarapidos shall dominate multitudes of Romans and the Pentapolis and the Metos, and he shall take all their spoils and shall dominate their cities, and he shall go unto the city which he built, and the lands which his father had brought together.*

If we accept that Sarapidos stands for the Egyptian Fâtimîds, then, this verse can only refer to the reign of al-'Azîz, during whose administration the Fâtimîd power reached its height. *Dominate the multitudes of Romans.* This may be a reference to the Fâtimîd encounters with the Emperor Basil II in Syria. Though not victorious, the Fâtimîds captured two hundred and fifty Romans, whom they paraded through the streets of Cairo (995 A. D.). Al-Ĥâkim won two victories over the Romans, by sea off Tyre and on land near Apamea. Cf. Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, 159. *Pentapolis* or the Five Cities. These are: Berenice or Benghazi, Barqa or al-Merg, Ptolemais or Tolmeitha, Cyrene or Shahat and Apollonia or Susa. *Metos* stands for the Medes, who are a people speaking an Iranian language, and who live in the mountainous country to the south-west of the Caspian Sea. In the Old Testament, Medes and Persians are often mentioned together, e. g. *Dan.* V, 28, VI, 12. The Egyptians at this period did not dominate the Medes.

67. *The Pitourgos shall gather together to their wars, wishing to take the kingdom from the hand of Sarapidos.*

The ardent ambition of Şalâh ad-Dîn was to substitute Sunnite al-Islâm for the Shi'ite heresy, which had been maintained in Egypt since the beginning of the Fâtimîd Dynasty.

68. *While Sarapidos sitteth in his house, his spoils before him, beholding a great wealth, gold and silver and every precious stone and every desirable vessel.*

69. *They shall bring news to him that Pitourgos has dominated all Syria and its boundaries. He will go forth with great trepidation with all his multitude. And all his spoils he shall leave them behind, he shall not take anything of them with him.*

Verses 68 and 69 should not be interpreted historically. No doubt, the author attempted to create a similar setting to that of Belshazzar's Feast, cf. *Dan. V, 1-31*. The story of Belshazzar's Feast refers to the end of the Neo-Babylonian Kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar had passed away and was succeeded by Belshazzar, who, like his predecessor, flouts the God of Israel and is punished. Nebuchadnezzar had sinned by idolatry and pride. To these Belshazzar adds the crime of using for his pleasures the sacred vessels taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. The 'writing on the wall' announces his doom, and that night Babylon falls. Similarly, verses 68 and 69 announce the final stage of the Fâtimîd Dynasty.

70. *But he shall be thinking with the heart of a beast, he shall not know what he shall do.*

Sarapidos, the Egyptian Fâtimîd, is the beast. According to *Dan. VII, 4* "a man's heart was given to the first beast".

71. *If he escape, coming down into Egypt, Pitourgos shall precede him with his host.*

72. *And they shall meet one another with their host, and they shall fight with one another until much blood shall flow. And Pi-tourgos is of the nation of the Romans.*

Verse 71 could refer to Širkûh's invasion of Egypt at the beginning of 1167, when he reached the Nile at Iṭfih, some forty miles south of Cairo. Verse 72 might refer to the confrontation of the troops of Šâwar and the Franks, and those of Širkûh on the west and east banks of the Nile. Certainly, Šalâḥ ad-Dîn was not of the nation of the Romans, and the only explanation that can be gives is, that, once upon a time, Mesopotamia, the home of Šalâḥ ad-Dîn, constituted part of the Roman Empire, — but so did Egypt (!)

73. *The war shall be in the city of Šmoun until the water of the river becomes blood through the multitude of the slain, that they may not drink the waters of it.*

74. *A multitude of men shall die by the sword, countless of them. Those who shall be left of them shall flee to their country, the place from which they came.*

Šmoun or al-Ašmûnâin in Upper Egypt was the site of the battle between the troops of Nûr ad-Dîn, which were under the command of Širkûh and his nephew, the young Šalâḥ ad-Dîn, and the troops of the Franks who had been joined by the Egyptians. The Christians and the Egyptians were completely defeated.

However, there is another village of al-Ašmûn, situated about three miles east of Dikrnis on the south bank of the canal which connects the Damietta branch of the Nile with Lake Manzalah. The battle of al-Ašmûn, known as the Battle of the Little River, was fought between St. Louis and his crusaders and the troops of al-Kâmil (1218-1238). The Christians were defeated and suffered great losses. *The water of the river becomes blood.* This image is borrowed from the *Apocalypse*, "the third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of water, and they became blood". Cf. *Apoc.* XVI, 4. *A multitude of men shall die.* The number of warriors engaged in the battle of al-Ašmûnâin is variously estimated. The Arab historians give Širkûh only two

thousand horsemen. William of Tyre (*Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum*, XIX, 25) puts the Saracen force at nine thousand men and three thousand archers and, at least, ten thousand Arabs. The Latins, he says, had only three hundred and seventy-four knights and an uncertain number of light infantry (Turcopoles), and a body of Egyptians, who were more of a burden than a help. *Flee to their country*. After the surrender of Alexandria to Šâwar (August 4th, 1167), Šîrkûh led his exhausted remnant of two thousand soldiers back to Damascus.

75. *Pitourgos shall slay Sarapidos, and shall take his kingdom from him, it shall not be established anymore (that) of the Sons of Ishmael, but this one is the end of their number.*

This verse may refer to the murder of Šâwar the vizir by Šîrkûh in 1169. Šîrkûh, however, died of indigestion two months afterwards and al-'Adîd appointed Šalâh ad-Dîn as successor to Šîrkûh. In 1171, the name of the 'Abbâsid caliph was substituted for that of al-'Adîd in public worship. The latter's death occurred almost at the same time. On the death of al-'Adîd, Šalâh ad-Dîn was confirmed in the prefecture of Egypt as deputy of Nûr ad-Dîn, and on the decease of the latter in 1174, Šalâh ad-Dîn took the title of Sultan, so that with this year the Ayyûbid period of Egyptian history properly begins.

76. *After these things a king of the Romans shall arise over them. He shall give them a wiping out with the edge of the sword among the Sons of Ishmael in the desert of Thribon, the land of their fathers.*

77. *The Sons of Ishmael shall serve the Romans all their time. The Romans shall dominate Egypt for forty years.*

The verses 76 and 77 should not be interpreted historically. The *king of the Romans* could refer to the Crusaders, who invaded Egypt several times, but never gave them "a wiping out". In the eyes of the author, the forty years rule of the Romans is the prelude to the apocalyptic era and the introduction to the cosmic encounters between Gog and Magog. The battle in the *desert of*

Thribon should, therefore, be understood in the light of the apocalyptic blood-bath of *Apoc.* XVI. Becker identifies *Thribon* with Athrib. It is unlikely, that the author would have thought of the battle of Athrib in 641 A. D., when 'Amr ibn al-'As, after taking Nikiou, pressed northwards towards Athrib, Bûşîris, Damsîs and Sakhâ.

78. *After these things, two races will go forth, the names of these are Gog and Magog, they shall move the earth for a multitude of days.*

Bibl. Par. " And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be loosed from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations, which are at the four corners of the earth, that is, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle, their number is like the sand of the sea ". *Apoc.* XX, 7, 8.

The wars of Gog and Magog are interpreted by Macler historically as pertaining to the invasions of Jenghiz Khan (1162-1227), of Ogdai Khan, his second son, and especially of Hulagu.

The author has clearly departed from the historical sphere and projects purely cosmic engagements. The names of *Gog* and *Magog* appear first in the *Prophecy of Ezekiel* XXXVIII and XXXIX. According to the prophecy, God will entice Gog of the land of Magog to attack and plunder the seemingly defenceless Israelites dwelling in their cities in peace and prosperity. This prediction of Gog of Magog changed to Gog and Magog. In some apocalyptic visions, Gog and Magog would make their appearance before the messianic reign, in others, during it, and in still others, as in the *Apocalypse*, following the Kingdom of the Messiah. Cf. *Apoc.* XX.

79. *The number of these is great as the sand, and the Antichrist will appear and he will deceive a multitude, so that if it were possible he would lead astray even the elect.*

Bibl. Par. " . . . their number is like the sand of the sea ". *Apoc.* XX, 8 b " For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, the elect ". *Matt.* XXIV, 24.

The *Antichrist*, the earliest direct mention of the name is in *I John* II, 18, 22, IV, 3, *II John* 7, though the conception of a mighty ruler, who will appear at the end of time, and whose essence will be enmity of God is older and traceable in Jewish eschatology (*Dan.* XI, 36). The historical figure, who served as a model for the Antichrist was Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the persecutor of the Jews. With the beginning of the Islâmic Period and again later at the time of the Crusades, the theme of the Antichrist runs through many prophetic books, e. g. the *Pseudo-Methodius*, the so-called *Liber Clementis discipuli S. Petri (Petri apostoli apocalypsis per Clementem)*, the late Syrian *Apocalypse of Ezra*, the Ethiopian *Wisdom of the Sibyl*.

80. *And he will slay the two prophets Enoch and Elias, that they become for three days half-dead in the streets of the great city of Jerusalem.*

The two prophets are generally identified as Moses and Elijah, cf. *Matt.* XVII,3; *Mk.* IX,4. Although the two martyr-witnesses have deadly supernatural fire at their disposal, with which they are supposed to kill their opponents, they are nevertheless, overcome by the Antichrist. Cf. *Apoc* XI,3-12. In most instances this is the outcome, but in the account of the *Akhmim Apocalypse of Elijah* 42-43, Elijah and Enoch kill the Antichrist. Enoch, son of Cain, "was taken up so that he should not see death". The fact, that his years are given as three hundred and sixty-five suggests that he was a solar-hero (*Gen.* V, 23; *Heb.* XI,5). Elias, the prophet of Tishbeh in Gilead, was a contemporary with Ahab, King of Israel (876-853 B. C.). *Three days half-dead in the street.*

Bibl. Par. "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified". *Apoc.* XI, 8.

81. *Afterwards, the Ancient of Days shall raise them from the dead.*

82. *This is He Whom I saw coming with the clouds of heaven, as a son of man. His power is an eternal power and his kingdom doth not fall.*

Bibl. Par. " I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him ". *Dan.* VII, 13.

" Then I looked, and lo, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand ". *Apoc.* XIV, 14.

In the *New Testament* and in the *Book of Enoch* XLV and LVII, the " son of man " is an individual, whose office is to be interpreted both messianically and apocalyptically. *One as a son of man* is the Heavenly Being seated on the clouds of heaven. In *Apoc.* I, 13; Christ is termed " one like a son of man ", which justified the assumption, that the author here thinks of Christ.

83. *And He shall slay the Antichrist with all his multitude which is with him.*

Verse 83 refers to the cosmic victory of the Ancient of Days over the Antichrist.

84. *Truly, woe to every soul which is upon earth at that time, for, indeed, there shall be violence and great oppression and weeping; and the salvation of men is in the hands of the God of Heaven, and this is the completion of the word.*

This is an apocalyptic description of the events preceding the establishment of the New Era, using partly the New Testament image of the destruction of the Temple.

Bibl. Par. " All these are the beginnings of sorrows ". *Matt.* XXIV, 8. " There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth ". *Matt.* XXIV, 51.

85. *The angel said to me: Daniel, Daniel, close these words; seal them unto the time which shall finish, for this is the end of all things.*

Bibl. Par. " But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, until the time of the end ". *Dan.* XII, 4.

The angel bids the seer to conceal his words until the time is ripe for their disclosure. In the *Apocalypse* XXII, 10, the seer is admonished not to seal up the vision, for the time was

already at hand. Yet, it is not unusual to read that apocalyptic books are to be concealed in some secret place until an appropriate time, cf. *II Esdras XII, 37, Assumption of Moses, I, 17, 18.*

86. *I, Daniel, I arose, I stamped the words, and I sealed them.*

Daniel responds willingly to the order of the angel.

87. *I gave glory to God the Father of all and the Master of everything and Who knows the times and the years.*

Bibl. Par. "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only". *Matt. XXIV, 36.*

88. *To this One is due the glory and the might unto the age. Amen.*

This is a normal liturgical ending, cf. *Romans XVI, 27, Jude 24.*

OTTO MEINARDUS
