

# Pseudo-Pseudo-Ephraem

## Grant Jeffrey II, the Sequel!

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### Grant Jeffrey's "Mission Impossible"

Recently, Grant Jeffrey produced a translation of a sermon reportedly written by Ephraem of Syria in the fourth century. It is now heralded by other prominent pre-tribbers (including **Thomas Ice** of *The Pre-Trib Research Center*) as an "ancient pre-trib statement." This document contains a statement that Jeffrey claims is a clear reference to a pre-trib rapture. Jeffrey is demanding that post-tribulationists, in future printings of their books, recant their often stated theme, that post-tribulationism is ancient and pre-tribulationism is modern. He writes; "*A number of these [post-trib] authors will have to drastically revise the next edition of their books based on the discovery of new pretribulation rapture texts from the writings of the early church.*" His conclusion is as follows.

"I believe Ephraem the Syrian's A.D. 373 manuscript, *On the Last Times, the Antichrist and the End of the World*, fully meets the challenge of Dr. William Bell and Rev. John Bray's \$500.00 challenge. This new evidence clearly refutes the dogmatic declarations of many that there is no evidence that anyone ever taught the pretribulation rapture before A.D. 1830. The biblical truth of the glorious rapture of the church prior to the Tribulation was definitely taught in the early church. As I have shared in my earlier books, the truth of the pretribulation rapture is supported by the clear insistence on the imminent return of our Lord found throughout the writings of the Ante-Nicene Fathers. In addition, as I pointed out in my *Apocalypse* book, the apocalyptic fourth vision of *The Shepherd of Hermas* from A.D. 110 declared that the elect will escape the Great Tribulation. This finding of the pretribulation rapture in Ephraem's writings illustrates that the biblical truth of God's blessed hope and deliverance of the saints was upheld by a remnant of the faithful from the beginning of the church until today."

[When the Trumpet Sounds, pg. 125]

Apparently Grant Jeffrey is quite confident he has found the smoking gun. But he also claimed that the *Didache*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, *Hippolytus*, *Cyprian*, and *Victorinus*, all taught an 'imminent' (pre-trib) rapture. As we demonstrated in our article [Grant Jeffrey's Apocalypse Debacle](#), all of these claims are bogus! Jeffrey has been engaged in blatant 'revisionism' of the Church Fathers. We demonstrated from these very writings that the early Church did not believe in an imminent, pre-trib rapture, and that Jeffrey manipulated the texts, by omitting key sentences that clearly show they were post-trib, in an attempt to make them appear to support 'imminence.' So far, Jeffrey has grossly overstated his evidence. It is clear, from Grant Jeffrey's own words, that he was determined to find evidence of pre-tribulationism in the early Church no matter what.

"Over the last decade I came to the conclusion that the pretribulation rapture is taught so clearly in the New Testament that it is virtually impossible that no one ever taught this doctrine in the 18 centuries before 1830."

[When the Trumpet Sounds, pg. 108]

Usually, someone that determined to find his "evidence" will eventually find it.

### Ephraem of Syria? or Pseudo-Ephraem?

The quotation Jeffrey referred to is found in "Pseudo-Ephraem." The prefix "pseudo—" means "false" or "falsely ascribed to—." Scholars doubt this document is genuinely from the hand of Ephraem of Syria,

or that it was written in the fourth century. It was most likely written much later by an anonymous author, who falsely ascribed it to Ephraem the Syrian. So, when Jeffrey wrote "*I believe **Ephraem the Syrian's A.D. 373 manuscript**, On the Last Times, the Antichrist and the End of the World...*", he has already mis-represented his evidence, and demonstrated the same kind of "spin" that is evident in his other claims. This sermon was neither written by *Ephraem the Syrian* nor was it written in A.D. 373! And Jeffrey knows this! Ephraem's genuine writings, contained in the Post-Nicene Fathers collection, display no hint of pre-tribulationism. Here is the allegedly pre-trib statement that Jeffrey provides from Pseudo-Ephraem.

"For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins."

This quote, even if not genuinely from Ephraem of Syria, seems impressive on the surface. But based on Jeffrey's track record, we should approach this with some healthy skepticism, and carefully consider the entire sermon, as well as Ephraem's known writings.

### The Real Ephraem of Syria

The well respected scholar, Dr. Robert H. Gundry, chairman of the Department of Religious studies at Westmont College and author of seminary textbooks and books on eschatology, has recently authored a book entitled, *First the Antichrist*. On pages 161-188, he gives several quotes from the real Ephraem of Syria which show that Ephraem believed the resurrection and translation of believers would occur after the tribulation. So, this alleged pre-trib statement, if it is indeed such, would directly contradict statements known to be genuinely from Ephraem of Syria who lived in the fourth century. (For further information regarding this aspect, see Dr. Gundry's book, [First the Antichrist](#)). Therefore, we should conclude that either the Pseudo-Ephraem sermon is not genuinely Ephraem's, or Pseudo-Ephraem did not mean to imply a pre-trib rapture, or both!

### Pseudo-Ephraem's Sermon

Now, lets consider the sermon to see if it consistently supports Jeffrey's claim. (The entire sermon appears at the bottom of this article for those who wish to examine it themselves).

In the first section, the author alluded to the condition of his times, seeing the corruption of the world as indicative of the end of the age.

"Dearly beloved brothers, believe the Holy Spirit who speaks in us. We have already told you that **the end of the world is near, the consummation remains**. Has not faith withered away among mankind? How many foolish things are seen among youths, how many crimes among prelates, how many lies among priests, how many perjuries among deacons! There are evil deeds among the ministers, adulteries in the aged, wantonness in the youths--in mature women false faces, in virgins dangerous traces! In the midst of all this there are **the wars with the Persians, and we see struggles with diverse nations threatening and "kingdom rising against kingdom."** When the Roman empire begins to be consumed by the sword, **the coming of the Evil One is at hand**. It is necessary that the world come to an end at the completion of the Roman empire."

Notice the quotation from Matthew 24:7. **Also, notice what the author sees as being at hand, "the coming of the Evil One."** He anticipated that the Roman Empire was about to fall, and supposed that that upon its fall, the kingdom of Antichrist would arise. He continues;

"...In those days many will rise up against Rome; the Jewish people will be her adversaries. **There will be stirrings of nations and evil reports, pestilences, famines, and earth quakes in various places. All nations will receive captives; there will be wars and rumors of wars.** From the rising to the setting of the sun the sword will devour much. The times will be so dangerous that in fear and trembling they will not permit thought of better things, because many will be the

oppressions and desolations of regions that are to come."

Note again the allusion to Matthew 24. It is becoming clear that this author was using Matthew 24 as his backdrop for the sermon. Again, we have no hint as yet of a pre-trib rapture. He continues;

"We ought to understand thoroughly therefore, my brothers, **what is imminent or overhanging. Already there have been hunger and plagues, violent movements of nations and signs, which have been predicted by the Lord, they have already been fulfilled (consummated), and there is not other which remains, except the advent of the wicked one in the completion of the Roman kingdom.** Why therefore are we occupied with worldly business, and why is our mind held fixed on the lusts of the world or on the anxieties of the ages? Why therefore do we not reject every care of worldly business, and why is our mind held fixed on the lusts of the world or on the anxieties of the ages? Why therefore do we not reject every care of earthly actions and prepare ourselves for the meeting of the Lord Christ, **so that he may draw us from the confusion, which overwhelms all the world?**"

Thus far, it appears that the author was not expecting a pre-trib rapture. He saw some of the signs Jesus gave in Matthew 24, hunger, plagues, violence among the nations, as already current and fulfilled. What he saw as "imminent" or "overhanging" was ONLY the arrival of the Antichrist, which Jesus spoke of in verse 15. Pseudo-Ephraem spoke as though Christians should expect the Antichrist's appearance at any time. "[T]here is not other which remains, except the advent of the wicked one..." This seems to rule out a pre-trib rapture. Had he taught a pre-trib rapture, one would expect that this would be "imminent" for the believers rather than the appearance of Antichrist. He then encouraged believers to reject their earthly cares and prepare themselves so that "he may draw us from the confusion, which overwhelms all the world." Some might suppose that this means a rapture to heaven. However, later we will see that Pseudo-Ephraem believed Christians would be sustained in remote locations on earth (the "woman" of Rev. 12 sustained "in the wilderness") while the rest of the world reeled under the tribulation. So, with this thought in mind, our forsaking worldly cares, and making preparation to be "drawn" away from the confusion to remote places where Christ will sustain us, is a logical inference from the above statement. Pseudo-Ephraem continues;

"Believe you me, dearest brother, because the coming of the Lord is nigh, believe you me, because the end of the world is at hand, believe me, because it is the very last time. Or do you not believe unless you **see with your eyes?** See to it that this sentence be not fulfilled among you of the prophet who declares: "Woe to those who desire to see the day of the Lord!" **For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins.**"

This is the statement that Jeffrey claims clearly teaches a pre-trib rapture. But, note that no rapture, no resurrection, and no coming of the Lord is mentioned. What is said is the elect are "taken to the Lord" prior to the tribulation for the purpose of avoiding the "confusion." Now, such terminology could fit with a pre-trib scenario. But, it does NOT require one. If Pseudo-Ephraem believed Christians would be preserved in remote earthly places, like Elijah was fed by the Lord, like the Israelites were protected in Goshen during the plagues, and fed in the wilderness with manna, and like the prophecy of Revelation 12, where the "woman" is fed by God "in the wilderness," then there is no reason to imagine a pre-trib rapture was meant! He continues;

"**And so, brothers most dear to me, it is the eleventh hour, and the end of the world comes to the harvest, and angels, armed and prepared, hold sickles in their hands, awaiting the empire of the Lord.** And we think that the earth exists with blind infidelity, arriving at its downfall early. Commotions are brought forth, wars of diverse peoples and battles and incursions of the barbarians threaten, and our regions shall be desolated, and we neither become very much afraid of the report nor of the appearance, in order that we may at least do penance; because they hurl fear at us, and we do not wish to be changed, although we at least stand in need of penance for our actions!"

True to his text, Pseudo-Ephraem alluded to the angels gathering the elect "*immediately after the tribulation*" [Matt. 24:29-31], and also seems to place this at the "*empire of the Lord*" (or Millennial Kingdom of God). He seems to be tying in the parable of the wheat and tares in Matthew 13, where the reapers (the angels) harvest the wheat immediately before the Kingdom of God, and after the tribulation, according to Matt. 24:29-31.

In section IV, while describing the horrors of the tribulation, our author made the following interesting statement; "*In those days people shall not be buried, **neither Christian, nor heretic, neither Jew, nor pagan, because of fear and dread there is not one who buries them; because all people, while they are fleeing, ignore them.***" He obviously believed Christians would still be present in the tribulation, perhaps not all prepared themselves, as he exhorted earlier, and so would not be taken to the Lord for protection in remote places.

Furthermore, his comment about dead people not being buried during the tribulation is clearly a reference to Isaiah 26. And this passage also refers to the elect being preserved from the tribulation ON EARTH!

| Isaiah 26:20,21   | Pseudo-Ephraem   |
|---|--|
| <p>20 Come, my people, <b>enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself</b> as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.</p> <p>21 For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, <b>and shall no more cover her slain.</b></p> <p>(KJV)</p> | <p><b>"In those days people shall not be buried,</b> neither Christian, nor heretic, neither Jew, nor pagan, because of fear and dread there is not one who buries them; because all people, while they are fleeing, ignore them."</p> |

Since Pseudo-Ephraem referred to this passage, it is very likely that he also had in mind the preservation of the elect on earth during the tribulation, as is indicated in the immediate context.

In the following quote, we see clearly that Pseudo-Ephraem believed Christians would be preserved in remote places even while the rest of the world starved and went without water.

"Then gold and silver and precious clothing or precious stones shall lie along the streets, and also even every type of pearls along the thoroughfares and streets of the cities, but there is not one who may extend the hand and take or desire them, but they consider all things as good as nothing because of the extreme lack and famine of bread, because the earth is not protected by the rains of heaven, and there will be neither dew nor moisture of the air upon the earth. **But those who wander through the deserts, fleeing from the face of the serpent, bend their knees to God, just as lambs to the adders of their mothers, being sustained by the salvation of the Lord, and while wandering in states of desertion, they eat herbs.**"

Clearly, these who flee from the "*face of the serpent,*" who "*bend their knees to God,*" who leave the cities, who are sustained by God as nursing lambs, and have herbs to eat, **are Christians.** These are the ones who were "*taken to the Lord*" so as not to witness the destruction of the world. And it is clear from this passage, that being "*taken to the Lord*" is NOT a rapture to heaven. It is fleeing the cities to places where the Lord will provide for their needs, as a nursing lamb depends on its mother!

Pseudo-Ephraem's eschatology is not all that different from the Ante-Nicene Fathers, who saw Christians on earth during the tribulation. They viewed the "woman" who fled into the wilderness in Revelation 12, as the Church. Pseudo-Ephraem simply made the logical deduction that the preservation in the wilderness applied to believers who prepared themselves. Notice in the following quotes, earlier writers viewed the "woman" as the Church.

**Hippolytus**

"Now concerning the tribulation of the persecution which is to fall **upon the Church** from the adversary, John also speaks thus, "And I saw a great and wondrous sign in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, ... And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." That refers to the one thousand two hundred and threescore days (the half of the week) during which the tyrant is to reign and persecute the Church.... These things then, being come to pass, beloved, and the one week being divided into two parts, and the abomination of desolation being manifested then, and the two prophets and forerunners of the Lord having finished their course, and the whole world finally approaching the consummation, what remains but the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ from heaven, for whom we have looked in hope." [Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, 60, 61, 64]

**Victorinus**

"**The woman** clothed with the sun, and having the moon under her feet, and wearing the crown of twelve stars upon her head, and travailing in her pains, **is the ancient Church** of fathers, and prophets, and saints, and apostles,... "But the woman fled into the wilderness, and there were given to her two great eagle's wings." The aid of the great eagle's wings — to wit, the gift of prophets — was given to that Catholic Church, whence in the last times a hundred and forty-four thousands of men should believe on the preaching of Elias; but, moreover, he here says that the rest of the people should be found alive on the coming of the Lord. And the Lord says in the Gospel: "Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains;" that is, as many as should be gathered together in Judea, let them go to that place which they have ready, and let them be supported there for three years and six months from the presence of the devil. "Two great wings" are the two prophets — Elias, and the prophet who shall be with him." [Commentary on the Apocalypse, 12:1,6,14]

There is every reason to believe that Pseudo-Ephraem held a similar view of Revelation 12's "woman" referring to the Church. But, Pseudo-Ephraem seems to have picked up on and emphasized the **provision and protection** for the Woman "*in the wilderness*," while earlier writers seemed to focus on the "remnant of her seed" [vs. 17] who become the targets of the Antichrist's wrath.

| <b>Revelation 12:6,14</b>   | <b>Pseudo-Ephraem</b>  |
|---|--|
| <p>6 And the woman <b>fled into the wilderness</b>, where she hath <b>a place prepared of God</b>, that <b>they should feed her there</b> a thousand two hundred and threescore days.</p> <p>14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might <b>fly into the wilderness</b>, into her place, <b>where she is nourished</b> for a time, and times, and half a time, <b>from the face of the serpent</b>.</p> | <p>"For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are <b>taken to the Lord</b> lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins."</p> <p>"But those who wander <b>through the deserts, fleeing from the face of the serpent</b>, bend their knees to God, <b>just as lambs to the adders of their mothers, being sustained by the salvation of the Lord</b>, and while wandering in states of desertion, <b>they eat herbs</b>."</p> |

The phrase "*fleeing from the face of the serpent*" is a dead give-away that our author was referring to Revelation 12. And Rev. 12 certainly is not referring to a pre-trib rapture in anybody's eschatology! Pseudo-Ephraem was most likely referring to this very passage when he wrote that the elect are "*taken to the Lord*" prior to the tribulation (which he saw as 3.5 years), and "*as lambs to the adders of their mothers, being sustained by the salvation of the Lord*." Our author continues:

"Then, when this inevitability has overwhelmed all people, **just and unjust, the just, so that they may be found good by their Lord**; and indeed the unjust, so that they may be damned forever with their author the Devil, and, as God beholds the human race in danger and being tossed about by the breath of the horrible dragon, he sends to them consolatory proclamation by his attendants, the prophets Enoch and Elijah, who, while not yet tasting death, are the servants for the heralding of the second coming of Christ,..."

Here it is quite clear that Pseudo-Ephraem saw Christians still on earth in the tribulation, and that this is partly a test of the just as well as the unjust. Our author concludes his sermon as follows;

"And when the three and a half years have been completed, the time of the Antichrist, through which he will have seduced the world, after the resurrection of the two prophets, in the hour which the world does not know, and on the day which the enemy of son of perdition does not know, will come the sign of the Son of Man, and coming forward the Lord shall appear with great power and much majesty, with the sign of the wood of salvation going before him, and also even with all the powers of the heavens with the whole chorus of the saints, with those who bear the sign of the holy cross upon their shoulders, as the angelic trumpet precedes him, which shall sound and declare: Arise, O sleeping ones, arise, meet Christ, because his hour of judgment has come! Then Christ shall come and the enemy shall be thrown into confusion, and the Lord shall destroy him by the spirit of his mouth. And he shall be bound and shall be plunged into the abyss of everlasting fire alive with his father Satan; and all people, who do his wishes, shall perish with him forever; but the righteous ones shall inherit everlasting life with the Lord forever and ever."

Note that our author was still following Matthew 24. Here he alluded to verses 29-31, where the Lord appears in great glory. Notice he placed the trumpet blast here and the resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus! Since Matthew 24 does not mention the resurrection, we cannot avoid the conclusion that our author was tying in 1 Thess. 4:13-17 (which mentions the resurrection of the "sleeping ones" at the trumpet blast) with the second advent "immediately after the tribulation" mentioned in Matt. 24:29-31. He also placed obtaining "eternal life" with this advent of the Lord. This would hardly be appropriate had he held to pre-tribulationism.

It seems to me that the vigorous searching for some hint of pre-tribulationism has caused Grant Jeffrey to project modern concepts into ancient quotations that the author never intended. One out-of-context quote does not establish a belief in a pre-trib rapture, especially when the context supports a post-trib resurrection of the saints, Christians present on earth in the tribulation, and believers relying on the Lord for nourishment in remote places, as nursing lambs! The mistake made by Jeffrey (and Ice) is the assumption that "taken to the Lord" means a pre-trib rapture, while ignoring nearly everything else in this sermon that clearly indicates Pseudo-Ephraem was not pre-trib!

### Pseudo-Alexander

The Pseudo-Ephraem sermon was found by Jeffrey in Paul Alexander's *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*. Both Grant Jeffrey and Thomas Ice have claimed that Paul Alexander believed Pseudo-Ephraem taught a pre-trib rapture. Here is one example.

#### [Examining an Ancient Pre-Trib Rapture Statement](#)

by Thomas Ice

"Finally, the Byzantine scholar Paul Alexander clearly believed that Pseudo-Ephraem was teaching what we call today a pre-trib rapture. According to Alexander, most Byzantine apocalypses were concerned with how Christians would survive the time of severe persecution by Antichrist. The normal approach given by other apocalyptic texts was a shortening of the time to three and a half years, enabling the survival of some Christians.<sup>19</sup> Unlike those texts, this sermon has Christians being removed from the time of tribulation. Alexander observed:

'It is probably no accident that Pseudo-Ephraem does not mention the shortening of the time intervals for the Antichrist's persecution, for if prior to it the Elect are 'taken to the Lord,' i.e., participate at least in some measure in beatitude, there is no need for further mitigating action on their behalf. The Gathering of the Elect according to Pseudo-Ephraem is an alternative to the shortening of the time intervals.'<sup>20</sup>"

It seems that Jeffrey and Ice not only have misrepresented Pseudo-Ephraem's sermon, but they also



misrepresented the Byzantine scholar, Paul Alexander! Yes, Alexander did make a note of the fact that Pseudo-Ephraem seems to emphasize being "*taken to the Lord*" i.e., *participate at least in some measure in beatitude*". But, Ice and Jeffrey are forcing a pre-trib rapture into this statement and assuming that 'taken to the Lord' means a pre-trib rapture. That is simply not so! Alexander saw Pseudo-Ephraem as a post-tribulationist! He was NOT making a distinction between other post-trib writers and a pre-trib Pseudo-Ephraem, as Jeffrey and Ice would have you believe! Rather, Paul Alexander distinguished between two different forms of **preservation** of believers through the tribulation until the second coming after the tribulation in Christian apocalyptic literature. Other Byzantine writers saw the elect suffering in the tribulation, but their extinction would be prevented by the shortening of the days as per Matt. 24:22. Alexander's point was that Pseudo-Ephraem spoke of "*some measure of beatitude*" for the saints, (that is, being 'taken to the Lord' and sustained in remote places **on earth**), in accordance with Revelation 12's "woman" who fled from the face of the serpent, and was sustained by God "in the wilderness." This concept was apparently new in Byzantine eschatology.

A few pages after the quote provided above by Thomas Ice, Paul Alexander laid out his understanding of the sequence of events in Pseudo-Ephraem's sermon, and he did NOT include a pre-trib rapture! Here is Alexander's commentary on the sequence of events in Pseudo-Ephraem's eschatology.

"In Pseudo-Ephraem the sequence is as follows. After the attack of the *gentes nequissimae* or *bellicae* (1) there follows the surrender of the Christian Empire (2), the apparition of the Antichrist (3), an illusion to the blessings of Moses and Jacob on the tribe of Dan (4), then the division of the Antichrist's career into a period of adolescence before his seizure of imperial power and a second period, of maturity, when he will hold imperial power (5). Then comes his challenging God by sitting in the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem (6), the "great tribulation" of three and a half years (drought, famine, etc.:7) and during it the mission of Enoch and Elijah (8), and, finally, the Second Coming and punishment of the Antichrist (9). This schedule may be presented schematically as follows:

1. Attack of *gentes bellicae* or *nequissimae* 212.13-213.17
  2. Surrender of the Empire 214.1
  3. *apparebit ille nequissimus et abominabilis draco* 214.4
  4. Blessings of Moses and Jacob on Dan 214.6
  5. *adulescens ... antequam sumat imperium; factus legitimus sumet imperium* 216.2,11
  6. Sitting in the Jewish Temple 217.1
  7. *tribulatio magna* lasting three and a half years 217.14
  8. Mission of Enoch and Elijah 219.10
  9. Second Coming of Christ and punishment of the Antichrist 220.2"
- [Alexander, Paul J., *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Univ. of California Press, 1985), pp. 218,219]



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Below is the text of Pseudo-Ephraem's sermon for your examination.

## **On the Last Times, the Anti-Christ, and the End of the World**

A Sermon by Pseudo-Ephraem

### **Section I**

Dearly beloved brothers, believe the Holy Spirit who speaks in us. We have already told you that the end of the world is near, the consummation remains. Has not faith withered away among mankind? How many foolish things are seen among youths, how many crimes among prelates, how many lies among priests, how many perjuries among deacons! There are evil deeds among the ministers, adulteries in the aged, wantonness in the youths--in mature women false faces, in virgins dangerous traces! In the midst of all this there are the wars with the Persians, and we see struggles with diverse nations threatening and "kingdom rising against kingdom." When the Roman empire begins to be consumed by the sword, **the coming of the Evil One is at hand**. It is necessary that the world come to an end at the completion of the Roman empire.

In those days two brothers will come to the Roman empire who will rule with one mind; but because one will surpass the other, there will be a schism between them. And so the Adversary will be loosed and will stir up hatred between the Persian and Roman empires. In those days many will rise up against Rome; the Jewish people will be her adversaries. There will be stirrings of nations and evil reports, pestilences, famines, and earth quakes in various places. All nations will receive captives; there will be wars and rumors of wars. From the rising to the setting of the sun the sword will devour much. The times will be so dangerous that in fear and trembling they will not permit thought of better things, because many will be the oppressions and desolations of regions that are to come.

### Section II

We ought to understand thoroughly therefore, my brothers, **what is imminent or overhanging**. Already there have been hunger and plagues, violent movements of nations and signs, which have been predicted by the Lord, they have already been fulfilled (consummated), and there is not other which remains, except the advent of the wicked one in the completion of the Roman kingdom. Why therefore are we occupied with worldly business, and why is our mind held fixed on the lusts of the world or on the anxieties of the ages? Why therefore do we not reject every care of worldly business, and why is our mind held fixed on the lusts of the world or on the anxieties of the ages? Why therefore do we not reject every care of earthly actions and prepare ourselves for the meeting of the Lord Christ, so that he may draw us from the confusion, which overwhelms all the world? Believe you me, dearest brother, because the coming (advent) of the Lord is nigh, believe you me, because the end of the world is at hand, believe me, because it is the very last time. Or do you not believe unless you see with your eyes? See to it that this sentence be not fulfilled among you of the prophet who declares: "Woe to those who desire to see the day of the Lord!" For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins. And so, brothers most dear to me, it is the eleventh hour, and the end of the world comes to the harvest, and angels, armed and prepared, hold sickles in their hands, awaiting the empire of the Lord. And we think that the earth exists with blind infidelity, arriving at its downfall early. Commotions are brought forth, wars of diverse peoples and battles and incursions of the barbarians threaten, and our regions shall be desolated, and we neither become very much afraid of the report nor of the appearance, in order that we may at least do penance; because they hurl fear at us, and we do not wish to be changed, although we at least stand in need of penance for our actions!

### Section III

When therefore the end of the world comes, there arise diverse wars, commotions on all sides, horrible earthquakes, perturbations of nations, tempests throughout the lands, plagues, famine, drought throughout the thoroughfares, great danger throughout the sea and dry land, constant persecutions, slaughters and massacres everywhere, fear in the homes, panic in the cities, quaking in the thoroughfares, suspicions in the male, anxiety in the streets. In the desert people become senseless, spirits melt in the cities. A friend will not be grieved over a friend, neither a brother for a brother, nor parents for their children, nor a faithful servant for his master, but one inevitability shall overwhelm them all; neither is anyone able to be recovered in that time, who has not been made completely aware of the coming danger, but all people, who have been constricted by fear, are consumed because of the overhanging evils.

### Section IV

Whenever therefore the earth is agitated by the nations, people will hide themselves from the wars in the mountains and rocks, by caves and caverns of the earth, by graves and memorials of the dead, and there, as they waste away gradually by fear, they draw breath, because there is not any place at all to flee, but there will be concession and intolerable pressure. And those who are in the east will flee to the west, and



moreover, those who are in the west shall flee to the east, and there is not a safer place anywhere, because the world shall be overwhelmed by worthless nations, whose aspect appears to be of wild animals more than that of men. Because those very much horrible nations, most profane and most defiled, who do not spare lives, and shall destroy the living from the dead, shall consume the dead, they eat dead flesh, they drink the blood of beasts, they pollute the world, contaminate all things, and the one who is able to resist them is not there. In those days people shall not be buried, neither Christian, nor heretic, neither Jew, nor pagan, because of fear and dread there is not one who buries them; because all people, while they are fleeing, ignore them.

#### **Section V**

Whenever the days of the times of those nations have been fulfilled, after they have destroyed the earth, it shall rest; and now the kingdom of the Romans is removed from everyday life, and the empire of the Christians is handed down by God and Peter; and then the consummation comes, when the kingdom of the Romans begins to be fulfilled, and all dominions and powers have been fulfilled. Then that worthless and abominable dragon shall appear, he, whom Moses named in Deuteronomy, saying: -Dan is a young lion, reclining and leaping from Basan. Because he reclines in order that he may seize and destroy and slay. Indeed (he is) a young whelp of a lion not as the lion of the tribe of Judah, but roaring because of his wrath, that he may devour. "And he leaps out from Basan." "Basan" certainly is interpreted "confusion." He shall rise up from the confusion of his iniquity. The one who gathers together to himself a partridge the children of confusion, also shall call them, whom he has not brought forth, just as Jeremiah the prophet says. Also in the last day they shall relinquish him just as confused.

#### **Section VI**

When therefore the end of the world comes, that abominable, lying and murderous one is born from the tribe of Dan. He is conceived from the seed of a man and from an unclean or most vile virgin, mixed with an evil or worthless spirit. But that abominable corrupter, more of spirits than of bodies, while a youth, the crafty dragon appears under the appearance of righteousness, before he takes the kingdom. Because he will be craftily gentle to all people, not receiving gifts, not placed before another person, loving to all people, quiet to everyone, not desiring gifts, appearing friendly among close friends, so that men may bless him, saying: -he is a just man, not knowing that a wolf lies concealed under the appearance of a lamb, and that a greedy man is inside under the skin of a sheep.

#### **Section VII**

But when the time of the abomination of his desolation begins to approach, having been made legal, he takes the empire, and, just as it is said in the Psalm: -They have been made for the undertaking for the sons of Loth, the Moabites and the Ammanites shall meet him first as their king. Therefore, when he receives the kingdom, he orders the temple of God to be rebuilt for himself, which is in Jerusalem; who, after coming into it, he shall sit as God and order that he be adored by all nations, since he is carnal and filthy and mixed with worthless spirit and flesh. Then that eloquence shall be fulfilled of Daniel the prophet: -And he shall not know the God of their fathers, and he shall not know the desires of women. Because the very wicked serpent shall direct every worship to himself. Because he shall put forth an edict so that people may be circumcised according to the rite of the old law. Then the Jews shall congratulate him, because he gave them again the practice of the first covenant; then all people from everywhere shall flock together to him at the city of Jerusalem, and the holy city shall be trampled on by the nations for forty-two months, just as the holy apostle says in the Apocalypse, which become three and a half years, 1,260 days.

#### **Section VIII**

In these three years and a half the heaven shall suspend its dew; because there will be no rain upon the earth, and the clouds shall cease to pass through the air, and the stars shall be seen with difficulty in the sky because of the excessive dryness, which happens in the time of the very fierce dragon. Because all great rivers and very powerful fountains that overflow with themselves shall be dried up, torrents shall dry up their water-courses because of the intolerable age, and there will be a great tribulation, as there has not been, since people began to be upon the earth, and there will be famine and an insufferable thirst. And children shall waste away in the bosom of their mothers, and wives upon the knees of their husbands, by not having victuals to eat. Because there will be in those days lack of bread and water, and no one is able to sell or to buy of the grain of the fall harvest, unless he is one who has the serpentine sign on the

forehead or on the hand. Then gold and silver and precious clothing or precious stones shall lie along the streets, and also even every type of pearls along the thoroughfares and streets of the cities, but there is not one who may extend the hand and take or desire them, but they consider all things as good as nothing because of the extreme lack and famine of bread, because the earth is not protected by the rains of heaven, and there will be neither dew nor moisture of the air upon the earth. But those who wander through the deserts, fleeing from the face of the serpent, bend their knees to God, just as lambs to the adders of their mothers, being sustained by the salvation of the Lord, and while wandering in states of desertion, they eat herbs.

#### **Section IX**

Then, when this inevitability has overwhelmed all people, just and unjust, the just, so that they may be found good by their Lord; and indeed the unjust, so that they may be damned forever with their author the Devil, and, as God beholds the human race in danger and being tossed about by the breath of the horrible dragon, he sends to them consolatory proclamation by his attendants, the prophets Enoch and Elijah, who, while not yet tasting death, are the servants for the heralding of the second coming of Christ, and in order to accuse the enemy. And when those just ones have appeared, they confuse indeed the antagonistic serpent with his cleverness and they call back the faithful witnesses to God, in order to (free them) from his seduction ...

#### **Section X**

And when the three and a half years have been completed, the time of the Antichrist, through which he will have seduced the world, after the resurrection of the two prophets, in the hour which the world does not know, and on the day which the enemy of son of perdition does not know, will come the sign of the Son of Man, and coming forward the Lord shall appear with great power and much majesty, with the sign of the wood of salvation going before him, and also even with all the powers of the heavens with the whole chorus of the saints, with those who bear the sign of the holy cross upon their shoulders, as the angelic trumpet precedes him, which shall sound and declare: Arise, O sleeping ones, arise, meet Christ, because his hour of judgment has come! Then Christ shall come and the enemy shall be thrown into confusion, and the Lord shall destroy him by the spirit of his mouth. And he shall be bound and shall be plunged into the abyss of everlasting fire alive with his father Satan; and all people, who do his wishes, shall perish with him forever; but the righteous ones shall inherit everlasting life with the Lord forever and ever.



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