

As in some of the other pseudepigrapha, the voice has ceased to be something heard and has become a hypostatic creature. In 2:2, we have the familiar concept of a voice; but in 3:1, we hear that "a voice came before my face" and, although he appears to be speaking to Jacob, he actually addresses words to Sariel. A hypostatic voice also appears in the Apocalypse of Abraham, chapter 9, and tells Abraham to sacrifice. In the History of the Rechabites, a voice comes to an individual (2:7) and even speaks to the traveler (3:1). The concept of a hypostatic voice appears also in the Apocalypse of Sedrach and some of the apocalypses preserved in the Mani Codex.¹¹

In contrast to the Treatise of Shem (contained herein), there appear to be anti-astrological overtones in at least two passages. In 2:12, it is stated that the sun is controlled by God "so that it might not seem a god" and similarly in 2:14 it is said that the stars are controlled by God "to pass on so that they too might not seem gods."

Running throughout the six chapters in an unorganized fashion—reflecting the fragmentary nature of the text—¹² appears to be an apocalyptic vision of the future. First, the descendants of Jacob will suffer desolation and exile (5:7; 6:2). Because of the sins of Jacob's descendants (5:7), they "shall be exiled in a strange land" and be afflicted with slavery and wounds every day (5:16). Second, his descendants will be freed by God (6:2), because angels (6:6) and finally God (6:9) will fight for Jacob's tribe (cf. 1QM). Finally, at the end of time, Jacob's descendants will inherit the land promised to him (1:9) and become as many "as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea" (1:10). The future will indeed be glorious according to God's own words to Jacob: "And through your seed all the earth and those living on it in the last times of the years of completion shall be blessed" (1:11).

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¹¹ See the discussions in the contributions herein on ApAb 9, HistRech 3:1, ApSedr 2:1–4; also cf. TJob 3:1, "a loud voice came to me in a very bright light saying, Jobab, Jobab"; and 3Bar 11:5, "And behold a voice came: 'Let the gate be opened'" (Gk., cf. Slav.).

¹² Perhaps the Slavs deleted portions of an earlier longer document; certainly there were ideas in Early Judaism that would have been offensive or confusing to the medieval Slavs.

THE LADDER OF JACOB

- 1.2 **1** Jacob then went to Laban his uncle. •He found a place and, laying his head on a stone, he slept there, for the sun had gone down. •He had a dream. •And behold, a ladder was fixed on the earth, whose top reached to heaven. •And the top of the ladder was the face^b as of a man, carved out of fire. •There were twelve steps leading to the top of the ladder, and on each step to the top there were two human faces, on the right and on the left, twenty-four faces (or busts) including their chests. •And the face in the middle was higher than all that I saw, the one of fire, including the shoulders and arms, exceedingly terrifying, more than those twenty-four faces. •And while I was still looking at it, behold, angels of God ascended and descended on it. •And God was standing above its highest face, and he called to me from there, saying, "Jacob, Jacob!" And I said, "Here I am, LORD!" •And he said to me, "The land on which you are sleeping, to you will I give it, and to your seed after you. •And I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea. •And through your seed all the earth and those living on it in the last times of the years of completion shall be blessed. 12 My blessing with which I have blessed you shall flow from you unto the last generation; the East and the West all shall be full of your tribe."

- 2 **2** And when I heard (this) from on high, awe and trembling fell upon me. •And I rose up from my dream and, the voice still being in my ears, I said, "•How fearful is this place! This is none other than the house of God and this is the gate of heaven." •And I set up the stone which had been my pillow as a pillar, and I poured olive oil on the top of it, and I called the name of that place the House of God. •And I stood and began to sing, and I said,
- 6 "LORD God of Adam your creature and LORD God of Abraham and Isaac my fathers and of all who have walked before you in justice!

I a. We follow Tikhonravov in beginning LadJac here, a decision supported, as far as we know, by only one MS, V'. The preceding material in the Palaia tells of Esau's murderous anger and Rebecca's advice that Jacob flee to Laban. The wording is essentially Gen 27:41b–45, slightly altered in sequence; nothing remains of Gen 27:45–28:9. In the oldest MSS of rec. B there is no hint of a subdivision here or nearby. Rec. A, however (with two MSS of B), makes a break after "dream" in vs. 3 and provides a heading: "Concerning the Ladder." MS S has a miniature showing the sleeping Jacob and God appearing behind a craggy mountain but, oddly enough, no ladder. It is probable, in view of the first-person narrative from vs. 6 on, that LadJac originally began with Jacob's own account of events that brought him to this place.

b. Here and below surely *prosōpon* in the sense of "bust" or "portrait." We retain the traditional "ladder," although surely this is rather a solid staircase, lined with statues, as on a ziggurat. (Cf. E. A. Speiser's comment on Gen 28:12 in his *Genesis* [The Anchor Bible; Garden City, N.Y., 1964] p. 218.)

c. At this point there is an insertion, starting

with the beginning of Gen 28:13 in explicitly LXX form: "And the LORD was established on it." A short commentary on this phrase follows, then reference to the angels ascending (identified as the gentiles) and descending (the Jews). This is the only interruption of the text up to 6:8.

2 a. From here through 5:1 the text is preserved only in A. B has a poorly constructed condensation as follows:

"LORD, Creator of all creation, and again LORD God of Abraham and of Isaac my father, and God of all who have walked in justice before you. (Behold, I saw a terrible vision; trembling fell upon me.) But remember, LORD, my forefather Abraham, how he walked before you in innocence, and in all ways fulfilled your commandments. And also my father, your servant Isaac, did not disobey your commandments. Therefore, LORD, look on me mercifully, on your servant, and explain to me this vision, this terrible one I have seen." And while the word and prayer were still in Jacob's mouth, behold an angel of God stood before him, saying, "Jacob, I have been sent to you by the Creator of all things to tell you of your dream. Put this announcement of your dream in your heart."

God staying
the face!

Gen 28:11–12a

Gen 28:12b

Gen 28:13f.

Gen 28:17–19

col. 1
hol. text

7 You who sit firmly^b on the cherubim and the fiery^c throne of glory
 . . . and the many-eyed (ones) just as I saw in my dream,
 8 holding the four-faced cherubim,
 bearing also the many-eyed seraphim,
 9 carrying the whole world^d under your arm,
 yet not being borne by anyone;
 you who have made the skies firm for the glory of your name,
 10 stretching out on two heavenly clouds the heaven which gleams under you,
 11 that beneath it you may cause the sun to course and conceal it during the
 12 night so that it might not seem a god;
 (you) who made on them^e a way for the moon and the stars;
 13 and you make the moon wax and wane, and destine the stars to pass on
 14 so that they too might not seem gods.
 15 Before the face of your glory^f the six-winged seraphim are afraid, and they
 16 cover their feet and faces with their wings, while flying with their
 17 other (wings), and they sing unceasingly a hymn:
 18 "whom I now in sanctifying a new (song) . . .
 19 Twelve-topped,^g twelve-faced, many-named, fiery one!
 Lightning-eyed holy one,
 Holy, Holy, Holy, Yao, Yaova, Yaoil, Yao,
 Kados,^h Chavod,ⁱ Savaoth,
 Omlenlech^j il avir^k amismi^l varich,^m
 eternal king, mighty, powerful, most great,
 patient, blessed one!ⁿ
 20 You who fill heaven and earth, the sea and abysses
 and all the ages with your glory,
 21 hear my song with which I have sung you and grant me the request I ask
 of you,
 22 and tell me the interpretation of my dream,
 for you are a god who is mighty, powerful and glorious,
 a god who is holy; my LORD and LORD of my fathers."^o

cf. ApAb 7:8

Isa 6:2

PrJac

1 3 And while I was still saying this prayer, behold, a voice came before my face
 2 saying, "Sariel, leader of the beguiled,^p you who are in charge of dreams, go
 and make Jacob understand the meaning of the dream he has had and explain to
 3 him everything he saw; but first bless him." And Sariel the archangel came to
 4 me and I saw (him), and his appearance was very beautiful and awesome. But I
 was not astonished by his appearance, for the vision which I had seen in my
 5 dream was more terrible than he. And I did not fear the vision of the angel.

1,2,3 4 And the angel said to me, "What is your name?" And I said, "Jacob." (He
 announced), "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but your name shall be

b. Slav. *krěpčē*; perhaps better read *krěpčē*, "O Mighty One, sitting (who sittest)."

c. The text is corrupt at this point. In the phrase *na přestolě slavy ogněné*, the last word may be locative and an epithet of "throne," as translated, but it could be a banal error for *ogněne*, a vocative ("O fiery one!") which introduces a new invocation, cf. vs. 17 below and ApAb 17:19. At least a few words must have been omitted at this point.

d. Or "age"; Gk. *aion*, Heb. *olām*. Grammar obscure; possibly "the age of everything" or, assuming a lacuna, "the age of the whole . . ."

e. Presumably the clouds.

f. Text corrupt.

g. Or "twelve-crested."

h. Heb. *qādōš*, "holy."

i. All copies written with an abbreviation mark obviously understood by scribes as *xrista vod*, "Christ of the waters." Surely Heb. *kāvōd*, "Glory" in the sense of a "theophanic cloud."

j. Probably distorted Heb. *melek*, "king," perhaps plus *olām*.

k. For Heb. *'ēl 'ābīr*, "LORD-Bull; mighty LORD."

l. Var. *amimis*. Probably contains Heb. *'amīš*, "strong, firm, courageous."

m. Heb. *bārāk*, "blessed."

3 a. Slav. *uslaxdaemyx*, lit. "sweetened," but here surely for Gk. *katathelgō*, "enchant, charm," or with negative sense "delude, deceive."

4 similar to my name, Israel."^q And when I was going from Phandana of Syria^r
 to meet Esau my brother, he came to me and blessed me and called me Israel.
 5.6 And he would not tell me his name until I adjured him. And then he said to me,
 "As you were *kep zul*^s . . ."

1 5 Thus he said to me: "You have seen a ladder with twelve steps, each step
 2 having two human faces which kept changing their appearance. The ladder is
 3.4 this age, and the twelve steps are the periods^t of this age. But the twenty-four
 5 faces are the kings of the ungodly nations of this age. Under these kings the
 children of your children and the generations of your sons will be interrogated.
 6.7 These will rise up against the iniquity of your grandsons. And this place will be
 made^u desolate^v by the four ascents^w . . . through the sins^x of your grandsons.
 8 And around the property of your forefathers a palace will be built, a temple in
 9 the name of your God and of (the God) of your fathers, and in the provocations
 10 of your children it will become deserted^y by the four ascents^z of this age. For
 11 you saw the first four busts^{aa} which were striking against the steps . . . angels^{ab}
 12 ascending and descending, and the busts amid the steps. The Most High will
 13 raise up kings from the grandsons of your brother Esau, and they will receive all
 14 the nobles of the tribes of the earth who will have maltreated your seed. And
 15 they will be delivered into his hands and he will be vexed^{ac} by them. And he will
 hold them by force and rule over them, and they will not be able to oppose him
 until the day when his thought will go out against them to serve idols and (to
 16 offer) sacrifices of the dead.^{ad} . . . (He will) do violence to all those in his
 kingdom who will be revealed in such guilt, both to the highest (man)^{ae} from your
 17 tribe and *kfalkonagargailyuya*.^{af} Know, Jacob, that your descendants shall be
 exiles in a strange^{ag} land, and they will afflict them with slavery and inflict wounds
 17 on them every day. But the LORD will judge the people for whom they slave.

cf. Gen 15:13f.

1,2 6 "And when the king arises, judgment too will come upon that place. Then
 your seed, Israel, will go out of slavery^{ah} to the nations who hold them by force,

4 a. Heb. *srj-ʾl*, "Sariel," with transposition of one letter is *ysr-ʾl*, "Israel."

b. This same form, clearly representing Padan Aram (Aram = "of Syria"), is found in ApAb 2:3.

c. R U *kop zul*. Presumably more detailed discussion of the angel's name has been deleted here.

5 a. Slav. *vrěmena*, probably Gk. *kairoi*.

b. Vs. corrupt. A has singular transitive "he will make," B plural "they will make"; neither subject is clear.

c. Or "empty."

d. Positing instrumental plural *vāxody*: the majority reading is *xody*, "descents." The word means "going up" in various senses, including "stairway," and its exact meaning here, in vs. 9 below, and in ApAb 27:3 and 28:4f. is obscure. It is used in an early version of Ezek 9:3 to render the Gk. *aiθrion*, referring to the threshold of the Temple. If this is the sense, F. M. Cross, Jr., suggests it may be taken as a boundary: To enter the Holy of Holies one must cross four thresholds or make four "ascents," while in leaving it would be four "descents." Cf. Ezek 10:4, 18f. and 11:22f. for the descent or abandonment and chs. 42-48 for the ascent or return.

e. Instrumental plural in S, nominative or accusative singular or else genitive plural elsewhere.

f. Slav. *zapustēt*, intransitive.

g. Reading *vāxody* and interpreting it as instrumental. Yet *do xod* is possible, and might mean

"before the fourth ascent"; cf. ApAb 28:5, in which this term seems to denote a period.

h. The text is corrupt; possibly "you saw the four faces first when they were striking" (or "hitting"). The sense of the latter verb is obscure.

i. B omits the vs. In A, "angels" is nominative, but the accompanying participles are accusative. The "busts" or "faces" are either nominative or accusative.

j. Slav. *negodujem*, a passive participle, though the verb is always intransitive elsewhere.

k. A has no verb, but the genitive "of the dead" with no clear context. B has "that they may sacrifice to the dead" with appropriate dative. Neither rec. has a clear connection to the following "do violence"; there must be something missing.

l. A (with U) *vyšānemu*; S R an incongruous *vyšānem*.

m. S R; U, with rec. A, omits final *-ya* but starts next vs. with the conjunction *a*, "and, but." A omits initial *k*, probably equating it with the preposition "to," deemed inappropriate in the context. Meaning possibly "crooked tempter," i.e. Satan.

n. Note that the wording of this vs. is not quite that of Gen, either in Heb. or Gk.

6 a. This is the text of A, where it follows 5:17. In B and in the repetition found embedded in the commentary, 5:17 is followed by 6:5, and the text of 1f. is slightly different: "Then the Most High will give judgment to that place, and he will lead your seed out of slavery."

3 and they will be free from any rebuke of your enemies. •For this king is the head of all revenge and retaliation^b against those who have done evil to you, Israel, and the end of the age. •For bitter ones will rise;^c they will cry out, and the LORD will hear them and accept their plea. •And the Mighty One will repent because of their sufferings. •For the angels and archangels will hurl their bolts of lightning before them for the sake of the salvation of your tribe. •And you will gain the mercy of the Most High. •Then their wives will bear many children. •And afterward the LORD will fight for your tribe^d through great and terrible signs against those who made them slaves. •He filled their storehouses, and they will be found empty. •Their land swarmed with reptiles and all sorts of deadly things. There will be earthquakes and much destruction. •And the LORD will pour out his wrath against Leviathan the sea-dragon; he will kill the lawless Falkon with the sword, because he will raise the wrath of the God of gods by his pride. •And then your justice will be revealed, Jacob, and that of your children^e who are to be after you (and) who will walk in your justice. •And then your seed will sound the horn and all the kingdom of Edom will perish together with all the peoples of Moab.

* * *

1.2 7 "And as for the angels you saw descending and ascending the ladder," in the last years there will be a man from the Most High, and he will desire to join the upper (things) with the lower. •And before his coming your sons and daughters will tell about him and your young men will have visions about him. •Such will be the signs at the time of his coming: •A tree cut with an ax will bleed; •three-month-old babes will speak understanding; •a baby in the womb of his mother will speak of his way; •a youth will be like an old man. •And then the expected one will come, whose path^b will not be noticed by anyone. "Then the earth will be glorified, receiving heavenly glory. •What was above will be below also.^c •And from your seed will bloom a root of kings; •it will emerge^d and overthrow the power of evil. •And he himself will be the Savior for every land and rest for those who toil, and a cloud shading the whole world from the burning heat. •For otherwise the uncontrolled^e will not be controlled. •If he does not come,^f the lower (things) cannot be joined with the upper. •At his coming the idols of brass, stone, and any sort of carving will give voice for three days.^g They will give wise men news of him and let them know what will be on earth. By a star, those who wish to see on earth him whom the angels do not see above will find the way to him. •Then the Almighty will be on earth in body, and,

b. Not congruous with "vengeance," though the error is minor. Perhaps, however, the sense is "and yours is the vengeance of those who have done evil to Israel."

c. Slav. *gorci bo vstanuti*, A; B *gorcé vstaneti na nja*, "bitterly will (he) rise against them." In the commentary the subject "Pharaoh" is added.

d. From this point through the end of the ch. the text in both recs. is embedded in commentary; it may have undergone special editing.

e. A *děti*; B has *děd*, "grandfathers," and modifies the following phrase slightly.

7 a. Ch. 7, which comprises about one third of LadJac, was compiled by a Slav as part of the anti-Jewish commentary of the Palaia; apparently his principal source was the Slavonic version of the Tale of Aphroditianus. Presently it is not clear whether ch. 7 was intended as an addition to LadJac or was written originally as a separate polemical exercise. Syntactically this vs. is not properly connected with either the preceding or the following. Cf. 5:11. In A the text is embedded in commentary, but in B it is separate and then

repeated in the commentary. Note that, unlike Gen 28:12, descending comes first. This surely symbolizes Christ's descent to earth, introducing the idea of incarnation, which clearly is the theme of the ch.

b. B "whose path you are: he."

c. Aphr 15.10 negates the first clause: "What was not above was below." Note that the past statements of Aphr are converted to the prophetic future here.

d. Or "raise its head"; Aphr 14.2 *riza entheos kai basiliké anekypsen*.

e. In A the text is garbled, and in B the majority have positive *astrojenaja* instead of *neustrojenaja* (= Aphr *ta adioikēta*, "the [things which are] not administered, managed"). The Slav. could mean "the unordered (things)."

f. Reading *pridet*, against majority *prišel*. "if he had not come," which fits the commentary (and Aphr) but not the appropriate reference to future events.

g. Aphr has the talking idols, but no three-day period is mentioned.

21 embraced by corporeal arms, he will restore human matter.^b •And he will revive 22 Eve, who died by the fruit of the tree. •Then the deceit of the impious will be 23 exposed and all the idols will fall face down. •For they will be put to shame by 24 a dignitary.¹ •For because (they were) lying by means of hallucinations, henceforth 25 they will not be able to rule or to prophesy. •Honor will be taken from them and they will remain without glory.¹

26 "For he who comes will take power and might and will give⁴ Abraham the 27 truth which he previously told him. •Everything sharp he will make dull, and the 28 rough will be smooth. •And he will cast all the iniquitous into the depths of the 29,30 sea. •He will work wonders in heaven and on earth. •And he will be wounded in 31 the midst of his beloved house.¹ •And when he is wounded, then salvation will 32 be ready, and the end to all perdition. •For those who have wounded him will 33 themselves receive a wound^m which will not be cured in them forever. •And all 34 creation will bow to him who was wounded, and many will trust in him. •And he will become known everywhere in all lands, and those who acknowledge his 35 name will not be ashamed. •His own dominion and years will be unending forever."¹

cf. Micah 7:1

cf. Zech 13:6LXX

Ps 102:27

h. Slav. *ponoviti vešči clověčtsku*; cf. Aphr *ponavljajeti clověčtju vešči*, an extremely free rendering of Gk. *tina gennousa anthrópon*, "who bore a man," which refers to Mary. *vešči* has a broad range of meaning, from "thing, matter" (Gk. *pragma, stoicheion*) to "nature" (Gk. *physis*). The author of LadJac 7 combines phrases from his sources with little regard to their original usage.

i. Slav. *ot sanovita lica*, lit. "by a dignity-endowed face"; Aphr *hyper empraktou prosópon*,

"by an office-holding [or 'active'] person."

j. This is the end of the material from Aphr.

k. Or "give back to."

l. Or "the house of his beloved," which corresponds to the Alexandrine text of LXX.

m. Two MSS have *paguba*, either "ruin, perdition" (Gk. *apóleia*, (*kataphthora*) as in 30, or else "pestilence" (Gk. *loimos*); this may have established a connection between the two vss. in the original Slav. compilation.