

## 4 Ezra



# 4 Ezra

Facing Syriac and Latin – English Text



Timothy A. Lee Publishing

4 Ezra: Facing Syriac and Latin – English Text

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The Latin text is from Wong, Andy, with Ken M. Penner and David M. Miller, eds. “4 Ezra.” Edition 1.0. In *The Online Critical Pseudepigrapha (OCP)*. Edited by Ken M. Penner and Ian W. Scott. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010. Online: <http://www.purl.org/net/ocp/4Ezra>. This is in the public domain with the caveats noted in the introduction.

The Syriac text is based on A. M. Ceriani, *Monumenta sacra et profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae*, 1861 which is in the public domain. For textual amendments see the introduction.

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# Introduction

This is a facing parallel edition for 4 Ezra. The purpose of this book and its series is to encourage students, scholars, and interested lay persons to read and study numerous Early Jewish Writings that have been marginalised for too long in scholarship. The book displays the Early Jewish Writings in an ancient language alongside a facing English translation for comparison.

This book contains both parallel facing Syriac – English and Latin – English texts for 4 Ezra. These both contain later interpolations, but I start with the Syriac since it does not contain the most obvious mark of Christian interpolation.<sup>1</sup> For interested readers, the Christian additions to 4 Ezra (5 and 6 Ezra) are also included with facing Latin – English texts, but after the main body.

## Introduction to 4 Ezra

4 Ezra was written around 100 CE and probably composed in Hebrew.<sup>2</sup> It was translated into Greek in the second century, Clement of Alexandria quotes the Greek (c. 190 CE). Only a few Greek excerpts remain. The main extant translations are the Latin and Syriac (both translations of the Greek). For most of

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<sup>1</sup> See the reference to Jesus added by a Latin scribe in 7.28.

<sup>2</sup> It might be Aramaic, but infinitive absolute constructions suggest Hebrew.

its history, 4 Ezra was transmitted with two Christian additions that sandwich the work. These are known as 5 Ezra (chapters 1–2) and 6 Ezra (chapters 15–16). Together the work is more commonly known as 2 Esdras, its name in the Latin Vulgate. The Christian interpolations are early, with one fourth century fragment being found among the Oxyrhynchus papyri (P.Oxy VII 1010, 6 Ezra 16.57-59).

4 Ezra is written as a response to the fall of the First Temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians (c. 587 BCE), but this is a cipher for the fall of the Second Temple in 70 CE.<sup>3</sup> The author assumes the identity of the fifth century BCE scribe Ezra, even though he was active a century after the destruction of Jerusalem. It is an apocalyptic work that reveals eschatological things to come through visions and their interpretations.<sup>4</sup>

The apocalyptic genre allows the author to pursue the question of God's justice in light of oppression. Therefore, it deals with the question why did God allow his people to suffer the destruction of their land and temple? It presents a theodicy which addresses questions of evil, sin, and determinism. 4 Ezra might suggest a different tone to earlier Jewish writings, the tension between determinism and free will appears to have given way to the prevalence of determinism. It appears to suggest the evil heart (e.g., 3.20) stems from a grain of evil sown in Adam (4 Ezra 4.30) which leaves little room for human optimism.<sup>5</sup> However, humans are still able to make decisions, for in a paraphrase from

<sup>3</sup> Since the book opens in the thirtieth year of the destruction of Jerusalem (4 Ezra 3.1) scholars date the composition to 100 CE.

<sup>4</sup> The word for interpretation (Syriac ܩܫܩܩ *pshq*) is cognate with Aramaic ܩܫܩܩ (*pasher*) in Daniel and Peshar Habakkuk (1QpHab).

<sup>5</sup> B. M. Metzger. "The Fourth Book of Ezra." In: *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. Volume One*. Ed. by James H. Charlesworth. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1983, pp. 517–560, p. 521. That strand of thought finds some parallel with Paul in Romans 5 and especially its later Latin mistranslation which led Augustine to formula his doctrine of original sin. This view is rejected in 2 Baruch 54.14–19 which might be directly refuting 4 Ezra.



Moses' speech in Deuteronomy 30 they are called to 'choose life' (4 Ezra 7.127–131), so 4 Ezra also assumes free choice.<sup>6</sup>

Other themes are important, not least the Law and Hebrew canon. It refers to twenty-four books of the Bible that correspond with the 24 books of the later Rabbinic canon. These contrast the seventy books that are to be kept secret from the people and only shared with the wise (4 Ezra 14.44-46).<sup>7</sup>

## What are Early Jewish Writings?

This series of early Jewish writings is unique for it presents Greek, Latin, Ethiopic, or Syriac texts alongside an English translation. This allows students, scholars, and interested lay persons to get into these marginalised texts quickly and without the need for unaffordable editions. The works included in this series are those not found in the Rabbinic Bible, Christian deuterocanonical works (or apocrypha), and Hellenistic Jewish works such as Josephus and Philo. They reflect different theologies and a pluriformity of beliefs unknown in Judaism until being rediscovered in the last few centuries. These writings contain numerous genres popular from the period. These include: Apocalyptic writings (e.g., 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, Sibylline Oracles); Rewritten Scripture (e.g., Jubilees, the Genesis Apocryphon, the Temple Scroll, Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, Josephus' Jewish Antiquities); Psalms, and Prayers (e.g., The Psalms of Solomon, additional Psalms); Legends (e.g., the Letter of Aristeas); Testaments (e.g., Testament of Twelve Patri-

<sup>6</sup> Francis Watson. *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith. Second Edition.* Cornerstones. London: T & T Clark, 2016, p. 458. Cf. Michael E. Stone. *Fourth Ezra.* Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990, pp. 63–64, Hindy Najman. *Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future. An Analysis of 4 Ezra.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 81, 127.

<sup>7</sup> The figure of twenty-four is derived from the ninety-four books mentioned in 14.44 minus the seventy hidden books in verse 46.

archs, Testament of Abraham); and more explicitly Hellenistic works (e.g., Exagoge).

These books have historically been referred to as pseudepigrapha (singular pseudepigraphon); however, growing awareness of the problems with this term have led me to disregard it in place of the more neutral ‘early Jewish writings’. There are two main problems with the term pseudepigrapha.

Firstly, it involves anachronistic value judgements of different corpus when the boundaries were not so clear.<sup>8</sup> For instance, 4 Ezra is normally included among the Pseudepigrapha since it is not found in the Septuagint, but from the eighth century it began to be included among the Latin Vulgate with Christian additions in a work known as 2 Esdras, so is found in many Catholic and Anglican Bibles today. Likewise, Jubilees and 1 Enoch are found in the Ethiopic Bible and so canonical for the Ethiopian Orthodox church and Beta Israel (Ethiopian Jews).<sup>9</sup>

Secondly, the term pseudepigrapha contains the idea of forgery and falsehood which degrades the works.<sup>10</sup> It is probable that many of these works were not written to deceive, but followed the accepted literary conventions of the day in a culture for whom our modern concepts of authority would be alien. The place use of pseudepigrapha was contested in the early church.<sup>11</sup> We should not assume these writings are frauds, or literary devices that the audience were expected to recognise. Michael

<sup>8</sup> See Hindy Najman. “The Vitality of Scripture Within and Beyond the “Canon.”” In: *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 43 (2012), pp. 497–518.

<sup>9</sup> Likewise, the Psalms of Solomon and Book of Odes are sometimes also included among the Deuterocanonical works since they are preserved in several Septuagint manuscripts.

<sup>10</sup> James C. VanderKam. *An Introduction to Early Judaism. Second Edition*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, MI, 2022, p. 56. The Oxford English Dictionary simply defines the pseudepigrapha as spurious (i.e. fake) writings.

<sup>11</sup> The term pseudepigrapha was used by the Church Fathers. Eusebius quotes Serapion of Antioch (c. 200 CE) who speaks of rejecting works false ascribed to Peter, such as the ‘Gospel of Peter’ (Eccl. Hist. 6.12.3)

τὰ δὲ ὀνόματι αὐτῶν ψευδεπίγραφα ἔμπειροι παραιτούμεθα

‘the writings which **falsely ascribe** their names we reject intelligently.’

Stone argues a kernel of actual visionary activity or religious experience lies behind many of these visions.<sup>12</sup> Philip Alexander also finds it possible the scribes were inspired interpreters like the Teacher of Righteousness at Qumran (1QpHab 7.4-5), though thinks it more likely the authors received traditions they believed originated with figures such as Moses.<sup>13</sup> Origen adopted an eclectic position where he considered some works neither genuine, nor spurious, but mixed and thus for for (cautious) use (Commentary on John 13.104).<sup>14</sup>

Initially, these writings were accepted as authoritative in many Jewish and Christians communities. However, they came to be rejected by the Jews and most of the church, especially in the Western Catholic tradition (which includes Protestants). Take, for example, 1 Enoch which was cited as authoritative in the Epistle of Jude, and the Epistle of Barnabas (Barn. 4.3). A century later (c. 200 CE) Tertullian still considered this book to be authoritative scripture given its use in the New Testament Epistle of Jude, while recognising it was not received by some and rejected by the Jews.<sup>15</sup> Tertullian goes on to explain that 1 Enoch had been rejected in part given the impossibility of it surviving the flood. A few years later, Origen labelled the works

<sup>12</sup> Michael E. Stone. *Ancient Judaism. New Visions and Views*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011, p. 90.

<sup>13</sup> Philip S. Alexander. "Retelling the Old Testament." In: *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF*. ed. by D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 99–121, p. 101.

<sup>14</sup> Πέτρου κηρύγματος ... ἐξετάζοντας καὶ περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου, πότερον ποτε γνήσιον ἔστιν ἢ νόθον ἢ μικτόν.

"The Preaching of Peter ... we would have to examine whether it is genuine at all, or spurious, or a mixture." (Origen, Commentary on John 13.104, cited William Adler. "The Pseudepigrapha in the Early Church." In: *The Canon Debate*. Ed. by Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002, pp. 211–228, p. 215)

<sup>15</sup> Scio scripturam Enoch, quae hunc ordinem angelis dedit, non recipi a quibusdam quia nec in armarium Iudaicum admittitur... Eo accedit quod Enoch apud Iudam apostolum testimonium possidet.

'I know that the scripture of Enoch, which has given this order to angels, is not received by some people, because it is not admitted into the Jewish chest ... To these considerations is added the fact that Enoch possesses a testimony in the Apostle Jude.' (*de cultu Feminarum* 1.3)

apocrypha, but not in a disparaging way.<sup>16</sup> Due to hesitancy over their origins, they never circulated widely in the church or synagogue and so were not included among the fourth century canon lists. Some works such as Jubilees and 1 Enoch were translated around the fifth century from Greek into Ethiopian where they remained part of a church untouched by Catholic influence after the Christological debates and split of the 4th and 5th centuries.

## Why Read these Writings?

There are several reasons why these writings should be read. Firstly, these texts were very important for many people in early Judaism and the early church so they should be for us, whether a Jew or Christian. In several communities, many of these works were authoritative and even considered scripture on par with the books that we now consider Scripture. The Dead Sea Scroll community (almost certainly Essenes) had more copies (and often luxurious ones) of 1 Enoch, Jubilees, and the Temple Scroll than most books of scripture. In fact, as mentioned previously, books like 4 Ezra, Jubilees, and 1 Enoch are still considered scripture by various churches and Jewish groups today.

Secondly, the Pseudepigrapha is saturated with examples of early Jewish biblical interpretation. If one wants to know how Jews and early Christians understood scripture they should study the exegetical practices employed in these writings. They contain some of the earliest examples of biblical hermeneutics, commentary, and theological reasoning. These texts record developing and competing theologies of determinism, free-will, messianism, resurrection, and the origins of evil.

Thirdly, related to this, reading these texts are important for correcting false ideas about early Judaism. In Protestant schol-

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<sup>16</sup> Adler, "Pseudepigrapha in the Early Church," pp. 214–215.

arship since the days of Martin Luther, later ideas of legalism, often inspired by narrow readings of Rabbinical Judaism were assumed to reflect the scene in Second Temple Judaism. However, reading these writings, and the Dead Sea Scrolls shows this not to be exactly the case.

Fourthly, for Christians the New Testament itself quotes and depends upon these writings. Here are three examples. Jude 14 cites 1 Enoch 1.9 with the same formula the synoptic gospels use to cite Isaiah.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, Paul makes a typological reference of Jesus being a rock that followed the Israelites in the wilderness (1 Corinthians 10.4). Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (sometimes labelled Pseudo-Philo) describes a well of water following the Israelites to miraculously water them in the Exodus (LAB 10.7). This – by extension – implies the rock Moses struck to supply water (Exodus 17.6) is supposed to have miraculously followed them – a theme developed further in Rabbinic literature. Finally, the magicians who assist Pharaoh during the plagues of Egypt are never named in Exodus. However, 2 Timothy 3.8 supplies the names Jamnes and Mambres. Origen notes these names are found in a secret (pseudepigraphical) work titled ‘the book of Jamnes and Mambres’ (Commentariorum Series 117)<sup>18</sup>

Fifthly, these writings were not only read throughout early Judaism and the early church, but even more recently. It was used in debates over the origins of native Americans in the New

<sup>17</sup> Προεφήτευσεν δὲ καὶ τούτοις ἑβδομος ἀπὸ Ἀδάμ Ἐνώχ λέγων.

‘about these things Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied’ (Jude 14)

Καλῶς ἐπροφήτευσεν Ἡσαΐας περὶ ὑμῶν

‘Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you’ (Mark 7.6)

καλῶς ἐπροφήτευσεν περὶ ὑμῶν Ἡσαΐας

‘Well did Isaiah prophesy of you’ (Matt 15.7)

<sup>18</sup> item quod ait »sicut Iamnes et Mambres restiterunt Moysi« non invenitur publicis libris, sed in libro secreto qui suprascribitur liber Iamnes et Mambres.

Likewise, what he says, “as Jamnes and Mambres resisted Moses,” is not found in public books, but in a secret book which is titled the book of Jamnes and Mambres.

(This section of his commentary is only extant in its Latin translation.)

World.<sup>19</sup> One might think Protestants have flatly rejected them with an insistence on *sola scriptura*. However, history is more complex. Bruce Metzger draws attention to one unexpected allusion to 4 Ezra by none other than Hugh Latimer, one of the architects of the English Reformation.<sup>20</sup> The spot where he was burned alive is marked with a cross on Broad Street in Oxford. On the stake with his fellow reformer Nicholas Ridley, Latimer echoed 4 Ezra,

Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.

I will light a lamp of understanding in your heart which will not be put out until the things have ended about which you will write. (4 Ezra 14.25)

I suggest these writings are not only relevant to Jews, and Catholics, but also to Protestant heirs of Latimer.

## Further Study

If you want more commentary on the English texts, then you can consult the two-volume collection of English translations by James Charlesworth.<sup>21</sup> This collection spurred on modern study into the Pseudepigrapha.<sup>22</sup> Since the 1980s more collections of texts have been added.<sup>23</sup> And recently a more student-friendly

<sup>19</sup> Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, p. 47.

<sup>20</sup> Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," p. 523.

<sup>21</sup> James H Charlesworth, ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. Two Volumes*. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1983-85.

<sup>22</sup> This supplants R. H. Charles, ed. *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English. Two Volumes*. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1913.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alex Panayotov, eds. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. More Noncanonical Scriptures*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, MI, 2013.

anthology with helpful introductions has appeared.<sup>24</sup> There are also several good introductions to these early Jewish writings, but pride of place goes to George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*.<sup>25</sup>

## Sources

The Latin text is from Wong, Andy, with Ken M. Penner and David M. Miller, eds. “4 Ezra.” Edition 1.0. In *The Online Critical Pseudepigrapha (OCP)*. Edited by Ken M. Penner and Ian W. Scott. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010. Online: <http://www.purl.org/net/ocp/4Ezra>. With the exception of 8:8b, 20-36, the Latin text of 4 Ezra is the standard text of the Latin Vulgate. Although A.F.J. Klijn’s edition<sup>26</sup> of 4 Ezra is still within the copyright period, I follow OCP and consider the brief quotations made here to fall within the terms of “fair dealing.”

The Syriac text is based on A. M. Ceriani, *Monumenta sacra et profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae*, 1861 which was based on Codex Ambrosianus B. 21 (7a1) and is in the public domain. I have taken this again from the above mentioned OCP, while correcting a few typos. The scattered conjectural emendations are almost all the product of older scholarship. Where these are Bidawid’s original contribution

<sup>24</sup> E.g., Brad Embry, Ronald Herms, and Archie T. Wright, eds. *Early Jewish Literature. An Anthology. Two Volumes*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018.

<sup>25</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg. *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah. Second Edition*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005. For an introduction to the setting and academic questions of the period, see Matthias Henze and Rodney A. Werline. *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*. Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2020. For a simple introduction just to the Pseudepigrapha see Daniel M. Gurtner. *Introducing the Pseudepigrapha of Second Temple Judaism. Message, Content, and Significance*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020.

<sup>26</sup> A. F. J. Klijn, *Der lateinische Text der Apokalypse des Esra*. Berlin: Akademie 1983.

they are clearly credited and are considered by the OCP editors to constitute “fair use” of his published work. Occasional footnote reference are made to The Old Testament in Syriac - according to the Peshitta version by The Peshitta Institute Leiden, published by E.J. Brill, 1987.

The English translation is based on the World English Bible (WEB) British Edition which is a Public Domain. In a few places (e.g., 7.28) I have corrected the text and modified footnotes. I also inserted my own translation for the missing Syriac text of 4 Ezra 14.49. I have inserted section headings that are modified forms of those found in G. H. Box, *The Apocalypse of Ezra (II Esdras III-XIV)*. London: SPCK, 1917. This text is in the public domain.

## Contact

If a reader finds an issue with this book, or wishes to suggest an improvement, please email: [corrections@timothyalee.com](mailto:corrections@timothyalee.com).

## Acknowledgments

My interest in these writings stems from the encouragement Hindy Najman gave to me to read broadly and to read ancient biblical interpretation. Through her Oxford Biblical Interpretation Seminars during my MPhil, I had my mind blown open by the whole new world of fascinating text to explore. So, I thank Hindy for all the encouragement she has given me and all her students in Oxford. Through my ongoing studies, now in Cambridge, I have continued to engage with many of these texts, especially rewritten scriptures(/Bible), or as Molly Zahn would say simply ‘reuse’. Discussions with the late Jim Aitken, and now Nathan MacDonald have also been fruitful. When I did not find any useful resources that laid out English transla-



**12** “It came to pass that when those who lived upon the earth began to multiply, they also multiplied children, peoples, and many nations, and began again to be more ungodly than their ancestors.

**13** It came to pass, when they did wickedly before you, you chose one from amongst them, whose name was Abraham. **14** You loved, and to him only you showed the end of the times secretly by night, **15** and made an everlasting covenant with him, promising him that you would never forsake his descendants. To him, you gave Isaac, and to Isaac you gave Jacob and Esau. **16** You set apart Jacob for yourself, but rejected Esau. Jacob became a great multitude. **17** It came to pass that when you led his descendants out of Egypt, you brought them up to Mount Sinai. **18** You bowed the heavens also, shook the earth, moved the whole world, made the depths tremble, and troubled the age. **19** Your glory went through four gates, of fire, of earthquake, of wind, and of ice, that you might give the law to the descendants of Jacob, and the commandment to the descendants of Israel.

**20** “Yet you didn’t take away from them their wicked heart, that your law might produce fruit in them. **21** For the first Adam, burdened with a wicked heart transgressed and was overcome, as were all who are descended from him. **22** Thus disease was made permanent. The law was in the heart of the people along with the wickedness of the root. So the good departed away and that which was wicked remained. **23** So the times passed away, and the years were brought to an end. Then you raised up a servant, called David, **24** whom you commanded to build a city to your name, and to offer burnt offerings to you in it from what is yours. **25** When this was done many years, then those who inhabited the city did evil, **26** in all things doing as Adam and all his generations had done, for they also had a wicked heart. **27** So you gave your city over into the hands of your enemies.



**28** “Then I said in my heart, ‘Are their deeds of those who inhabit Babylon any better? Is that why it gained dominion over Zion?’ **29** For it came to pass when I came here, that I also saw impieties without number, and my soul saw many sinners in this thirtieth year, so that my heart failed me. **30** For I have seen how you endure them sinning, and have spared those who act ungodly, and have destroyed your people, and have preserved your enemies; **31** and you have not shown how your way may be comprehended. Are the deeds of Babylon better than those of Zion? **32** Or is there any other nation that knows you beside Israel? Or what tribes have so believed your covenants as these tribes of Jacob? **33** Yet their reward doesn’t appear, and their labour has no fruit, for I have gone here and there through the nations, and I see that they abound in wealth, and don’t think about your commandments. **34** Weigh therefore our iniquities now in the balance, and theirs also who dwell in the world, and so will it be found which way the scale inclines. **35** Or when was it that they who dwell on the earth have not sinned in your sight? Or what nation has kept your commandments so well? **36** You will find some men by name who have kept your precepts, but you won’t find nations.”

*Uriel’s Reply: God’s Ways Are Inscrutable*

**4** The angel who was sent to me, whose name was Uriel, gave me an answer, **2** and said to me, “Your understanding has utterly failed you regarding this world. Do you think you can comprehend the way of the Most High?”

**3** Then I said, “Yes, my Lord.”

He answered me, “I have been sent to show you three ways, and to set before you three problems. **4** If you can solve one for me, I also will show you the way that you desire to see, and I will teach you why the heart is wicked.”

is fulfilled.”

**38** Then I answered, “O sovereign Lord, all of us are full of ungodiness. **39** Perhaps it is for our sakes that the threshing time of the righteous is kept back—because of the sins of those who dwell on the earth.”

**40** So he answered me, “Go your way to a woman with child, and ask of her when she has fulfilled her nine months, if her womb may keep the baby any longer within her.”

**41** Then I said, “No, Lord, that can it not.”

He said to me, “In Hades, the chambers of souls are like the womb. **42** For just like a woman in labour hurries to escape the anguish of the labour pains, even so these places hurry to deliver those things that are committed to them from the beginning. **43** Then you will be shown those things which you desire to see.”

*The Dialogue Continued: How the End Will Come*

**44** Then I answered, “If I have found favour in your sight, and if it is possible, and if I am worthy, **45** show me this also, whether there is more to come than is past, or whether the greater part has gone over us. **46** For what is gone I know, but I don’t know what is to come.”

**47** He said to me, “Stand up on my right side, and I will explain the parable to you.”

**48** So I stood, looked, and saw a hot burning oven passed by before me. It happened that when the flame had gone by I looked, and saw that the smoke remained. **49** After this, a watery cloud passed in front of me, and sent down much rain with a storm. When the stormy rain was past, the drops still remained in it.”





only the splendour of the glory of the Most High, by which all will see the things that are set before them. <sup>43</sup> It will endure as though it were a week of years. <sup>44</sup> This is my judgement and its prescribed order; but I have only shown these things to you.”

*The Debate Continued: Israel's Election and the Problem of Righteousness. The Fewness of the Saved*

<sup>45</sup> I answered, “I said then, O Lord, and I say now: Blessed are those who are now alive and keep your commandments! <sup>46</sup> But what about those for whom I prayed? For who is there of those who are alive who has not sinned, and who of the children of men hasn't transgressed your covenant? <sup>47</sup> Now I see that the world to come will bring delight to few, but torments to many. <sup>48</sup> For an evil heart has grown up in us, which has led us astray from these commandments and has brought us into corruption and into the ways of death. It has shown us the paths of perdition and removed us far from life—and that, not a few only, but nearly all who have been created.”

<sup>49</sup> He answered me, “Listen to me, and I will instruct you. I will admonish you yet again. <sup>50</sup> For this reason, the Most High has not made one world, but two. <sup>51</sup> For because you have said that the just are not many, but few, and the ungodly abound, hear the explanation. <sup>52</sup> If you have just a few precious stones, will you add them to lead and clay?”





**53** I said, “Lord, how could that be?”

**54** He said to me, “Not only that, but ask the earth, and she will tell you. Defer to her, and she will declare it to you. **55** Say to her, ‘You produce gold, silver, and brass, and also iron, lead, and clay; **56** but silver is more abundant than gold, and brass than silver, and iron than brass, and lead than iron, and clay than lead.’ **57** Judge therefore which things are precious and to be desired, what is abundant or what is rare?”

**58** I said, “O sovereign Lord, that which is plentiful is of less worth, for that which is more rare is more precious.”

**59** He answered me, “Weigh within yourself the things that you have thought, for he who has what is hard to get rejoices over him who has what is plentiful. **60** So also is the judgement which I have promised; for I will rejoice over the few that will be saved, because these are those who have made my glory to prevail now, and through them, my name is now honoured. **61** I won’t grieve over the multitude of those who perish; for these are those who are now like mist, and have become like flame and smoke; they are set on fire and burn hotly, and are extinguished.”

*Humanity’s Evil Case Bewailed*

**62** I answered, “O earth, why have you produced, if the mind is made out of dust, like all other created things? **63** For it would have been better that the dust itself had been unborn, so that the mind might not have been made from it. **64** But now the mind grows with us, and because of this we are tormented, because we perish and we know it. **65** Let the race of men lament and the animals of the field be glad. Let all who are born lament, but let the four-footed animals and the livestock rejoice. **66** For it is far better with them than with us; for they don’t look forward to judgement, neither do they know of torments or of salvation promised to them after death. **67** For what does it profit us, that we will be preserved alive, but yet be afflicted with torment? **68** For all who are born are defiled with iniquities,



Lord Most High, and said,

*The Glory of the Law and Israel: A Contrast*

**29** “O Lord, you showed yourself amongst us, to our fathers in the wilderness, when they went out of Egypt, and when they came into the wilderness, where no man treads and that bears no fruit. **30** You said, ‘Hear me, O Israel. Heed my words, O seed of Jacob. **31** For behold, I sow my law in you, and it will bring forth fruit in you, and you will be glorified in it forever.’ **32** But our fathers, who received the law, didn’t keep it, and didn’t observe the statutes. The fruit of the law didn’t perish, for it couldn’t, because it was yours. **33** Yet those who received it perished, because they didn’t keep the thing that was sown in them. **34** Behold, it is a custom that when the ground has received seed, or the sea a ship, or any vessel food or drink, and when it comes to pass that that which is sown, or that which is launched, **35** or the things which have been received, should come to an end, these come to an end, but the receptacles remain. Yet with us, it doesn’t happen that way. **36** For we who have received the law will perish by sin, along with our heart which received it. **37** Notwithstanding the law doesn’t perish, but remains in its honour.”

*The Vision of the Disconsolate Woman*

**38** When I spoke these things in my heart, I looked around me with my eyes, and on my right side I saw a woman, and behold, she mourned and wept with a loud voice, and was much grieved in mind. Her clothes were torn, and she had ashes on her head. **39** Then let I my thoughts go in which I was occupied, and turned myself to her, **40** and said to her, “Why are you weeping? Why are you grieved in your mind?”

קאמ זכח.א זל דאמנ 52 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ 53 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ 54 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ 55 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ 56 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ 57 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ 58 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ 59 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ

Vision 5. The Eagle Vision

זכח.א זל דאמנ זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 60

11
 קאמ זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 2 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 3 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 4 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 5 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
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 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 7 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 8 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ 9 זכח.א זל דאמנ  
 זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ זכח.א זל דאמנ

ness of her glory and the attractiveness of her beauty. <sup>51</sup> Therefore I asked you to remain in the field where no house was built, <sup>52</sup> for I knew that the Most High would show this to you. <sup>53</sup> Therefore I commanded you to come into the field, where no foundation of any building was. <sup>54</sup> For no human construction could stand in the place in which the city of the Most High was to be shown. <sup>55</sup> Therefore don't be afraid nor let your heart be terrified, but go your way in and see the beauty and greatness of the building, as much as your eyes are able to see. <sup>56</sup> Then will you hear as much as your ears may comprehend. <sup>57</sup> For you are more blessed than many, and are called by name to be with the Most High, like only a few. <sup>58</sup> But tomorrow at night you shall remain here, <sup>59</sup> and so the Most High will show you those visions in dreams of what the Most High will do to those who live on the earth in the last days."

*Vision 5. The Eagle Vision*

<sup>60</sup> So I slept that night and another, as he commanded me.

**11** It came to pass the second night that I saw a dream, and behold, an eagle which had twelve feathered wings and three heads came up from the sea. <sup>2</sup> I saw, and behold, she spread her wings over all the earth, and all the winds of heaven blew on her, and the clouds<sup>1</sup> were gathered together against her. <sup>3</sup> I saw, and out of her wings there grew other wings near them; and they became little, tiny wings. <sup>4</sup> But her heads were at rest. The head in the middle was larger than the other heads, yet rested it with them. <sup>5</sup> Moreover I saw, and behold, the eagle flew with her wings to reign over the earth and over those who dwell therein. <sup>6</sup> I saw how all things under heaven were subject to her, and no one spoke against her—no, not one creature on earth. <sup>7</sup> I saw, and behold, the eagle rose on her talons, and uttered her voice to her wings, saying, <sup>8</sup> "Don't all watch at the same time. Let each one sleep in his own place and watch in turn; <sup>9</sup> but let the heads be preserved for the last."

<sup>1</sup>So the Syriac. The Latin has only *and were gathered together*.

10 אַנשׁוֹת דַּמְלָה לֵב נַפְשׁוֹ אֶת־כָּחַיִּים, אֵל אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 חַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 11 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים לֵבֵנִי, וְחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 12 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 13 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 14 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 15 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 16 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 17 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 18 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 19 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 20 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים. 21 אַנְשׁוֹת אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים  
 אֶת־כָּחַיִּים אֶת־כָּחַיִּים.

**10** I saw, and behold, the voice didn't come out of her heads, but from the midst of her body. **11** I counted her wings<sup>1</sup> that were near the others, and behold, there were eight of them. **12** I saw, and behold, on the right side one wing arose and reigned over all the earth. **13** When it reigned, the end of it came, and it disappeared, so that its place appeared no more. The next wing rose up and reigned, and it ruled a long time. **14** It happened that when it reigned, its end came also, so that it disappeared, like the first. **15** Behold, a voice came to it, and said, **16** "Listen, you who have ruled over the earth all this time! I proclaim this to you, before you disappear, **17** none after you will rule as long as you, not even half as long."

**18** Then the third arose, and ruled as the others before, and it also disappeared. **19** So it went with all the wings one after another, as every one ruled, and then disappeared. **20** I saw, and behold, in process of time the wings<sup>2</sup> that followed were set up on the right<sup>3</sup> side, that they might rule also. Some of them ruled, but in a while they disappeared. **21** Some of them also were set up, but didn't rule.

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<sup>1</sup>The Syriac has *her little wings, and, etc.*

<sup>2</sup>The Syriac has *little wings.*

<sup>3</sup>The Ethiopic has *left.*

**35** Et dixit ad me: Non potes.

Et dixi: Quare, domine, aut quid nascebar, aut quare non fiebat matrix matris meae mihi sepulchrum, ut non viderem laborem Iacob et defatigationem generis Israhel?

**36** Et dixit ad me: Numera mihi qui necdum venerunt, et collige mihi dispersas guttas, et revirida mihi aridos flores, **37** et aperi mihi clausa promptuaria et produc mihi inclusos in eis flatus, aut monstra mihi vocis imaginem, et tunc ostendam tibi eum laborem quem rogas videre.

**38** Et dixi: Dominator domine, quis enim est qui potest haec scire, nisi qui cum hominibus habitationem non habet? **39** Ego autem insipiens, et quomodo potero dicere de his quibus me interrogasti?

**40** Et dixit ad me: Quomodo non potes facere unum de his quae dicta sunt, sic non poteris invenire iudicium meum aut finem caritatis quem pro populo meo promisi.

*The Succession of Generations and the Divine Plan of the World. God's Judgement Reaches All Alike*

**41** Et dixi: Sed ecce, domine, tu praees his qui in fine sunt, et quid facient qui ante me sunt aut nos aut hii qui post nos?

**42** Et dixit ad me: Coronae adsimilabo iudicium meum. Sicut non novissimorum tarditas, sic nec priorum velocitas.

**43** Et respondi et dixi: Nec enim poteras facere qui facti sunt et qui sunt et qui futuri sunt in unum, ut celerius iudicium tuum ostendas?

**44** Et respondit ad me et dixit: Non potest festinare creatura super creatorem, nec sustinere saeculum qui in eo creati sunt in unum.

**45** Et dixi: Quomodo dixisti servo tuo, quoniam vivificans vivificabis a te creatam creaturam in unum? Si ergo viventes vivent in



Most High, and to seek out part of his judgement.”

**35** He said to me, “You can’t.”

And I said, “Why, Lord? Why was I born? Why wasn’t my mother’s womb my grave, that I might not have seen the travail of Jacob, and the wearisome toil of the people of Israel?”

**36** He said to me, “Count for me those who haven’t yet come. Gather together for me the drops that are scattered abroad, and make the withered flowers green again for me. **37** Open for me the chambers that are closed, and bring out the winds for me that are shut up in them. Or show me the image of a voice. Then I will declare to you the travail that you asked to see.”

**38** And I said, “O sovereign Lord, who may know these things except he who doesn’t have his dwelling with men? **39** As for me, I lack wisdom. How can I then speak of these things you asked me about?”

**40** Then said he to me, “Just as you can do none of these things that I have spoken of, even so you can’t find out my judgement, or the end of the love that I have promised to my people.”

*The Succession of Generations and the Divine Plan of the World. God’s Judgement Reaches All Alike*

**41** I said, “But, behold, O Lord, you have made the promise to those who are alive at the end. What should they do who have been before us, or we ourselves, or those who will come after us?”

**42** He said to me, “I will compare my judgement to a ring. Just as there is no slowness of those who are last, even so there is no swiftness of those who be first.”

**43** So I answered, “Couldn’t you make them all at once that have been made, and that are now, and that are yet to come, that you might show your judgement sooner?”

**44** Then he answered me, “The creature may not move faster than the creator, nor can the world hold them at once who will be created in it.”

**45** And I said, “How have you said to your servant, that you<sup>1</sup> will

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<sup>1</sup>So the Syriac.

unum et sustinebit creatura, poterit et nunc portare praesentes in unum.

**46** Et dixit ad me: Interroga matricem mulieris et dices ad eam: Decem si paris, quare per tempus? Roga ergo eam, ut det decem in unum.

**47** Et dixi: Non utique poterit, sed secundum tempus.

**48** Et dixit ad me: Et ego dedi matricem terrae his qui seminati sunt super eam per tempus. **49** Quemadmodum enim infans non parit nec ea quae senuit adhuc, sic ego disposui a me creatum saeculum.

*The Earth Is Grown Old and Its Offspring Degenerate*

**50** Et interrogavi et dixi: Cum iam dederis mihi viam, loquar coram te; nam mater nostra, de qua dixisti mihi, adhuc iuvenis est, iam ad senectutem adpropinquat?

**51** Et respondit ad me et dixit: Interroga quae parit, et dicet tibi.

**52** Dices enim ei: Quare quos peperisti nunc non sunt similes his qui ante, sed minores statu? **53** Et dicet tibi et ipsa: Alii sunt qui in iuventute virtutis nati sunt, et alii qui sub tempus senectutis deficiente matrice sunt nati. **54** Considera ergo et tu, quoniam minores statu estis prae his qui ante vos, **55** et qui post vos quam ut vos, quasi iam senescentis creaturae et fortitudinem iuventutis praeterieritis.

*The End Mediated by God Alone*

**56** Et dixi: Rogo domine, si inveni gratiam ante oculos tuos, demonstra servo tuo per quem visitas creaturam tuam.

**6** Et dixit ad me: Initium terreni orbis, et antequam starent exitus saeculi, et antequam spirarent conventiones ventorum, **2** et antequam sonarent voces tonitruum, et antequam splenderent nitores coruscuum, et antequam confirmarentur fundamenta paradisi, **3** et antequam viderentur decores flores, et antequam con-

surely make alive at once the creature that you have created? If therefore they will be alive at once,<sup>1</sup> and the creation will sustain them, even so it might now also support them to be present at once.”

**46** And he said to me, “Ask the womb of a woman, and say to her, ‘If you bear ten children, why do you it at different times? Ask her therefore to give birth to ten children at once.’”

**47** I said, “She can’t, but must do it each in their own time.”

**48** Then said he to me, “Even so, I have given the womb of the earth to those who are sown in it in their own times. **49** For just as a young child may not give birth, neither she who has grown old any more, even so have I organised the world which I created.”

*The Earth Is Grown Old and Its Offspring Degenerate*

**50** I asked, “Seeing that you have now shown me the way, I will speak before you. Is our mother, of whom you have told me, still young? Or does she now draw near to old age?”

**51** He answered me, “Ask a woman who bears children, and she will tell you. **52** Say to her, ‘Why aren’t they whom you have now brought forth like those who were before, but smaller in stature?’”

**53** She also will answer you, ‘Those who are born in the strength of youth are different from those who are born in the time of old age, when the womb fails.’ **54** Consider therefore you also, how you are shorter than those who were before you. **55** So are those who come after you smaller than you, as born of the creature which now begins to be old, and is past the strength of youth.”

*The End Mediated by God Alone*

**56** Then I said, “Lord, I implore you, if I have found favour in your sight, show your servant by whom you visit your creation.”

**6** He said to me, “In the beginning, when the earth was made, before the portals of the world were fixed and before the gatherings of the winds blew, **2** before the voices of the thunder sounded

<sup>1</sup>The Latin omits *If...alive at once*.

		Active					
		Pre.	Fut.	Impf.	Pf.	Plpf.	Fut. Pf.
Ind.	1s	audiō	audiām	audiēbam	audīvī	audīveram	audīverō
	2s	audīs	audiēs	audiēbās	audīvistī	audīverās	audīveris
	3s	audit	audiet	audiēbat	audīvit	audīverat	audīverit
	1pl	audiāmus	audiēmus	audiēbāmus	audīvimus	audīverāmus	audīverimus
	2pl	audītis	audiētis	audiēbātis	audīvistis	audīverātis	audīveritis
	3pl	audiunt	audiēt	audiēbant	audīverunt	audīverant	audīverint
	Subj.	1s	audiām		audīrem	audīverim	audīvissem
2s		audiās		audīrēs	audīveris	audīvisēs	
3s		audiat		audīret	audīverit	audīvisset	
1pl		audiāmus		audīrēmus	audīverimus	audīvissemus	
2pl		audiātis		audīrētis	audīveritis	audīvissetis	
Impv.	2s	audi					
	2pl	audīte					
Inf.	audire	audentūrus esse		audīvisse			

		Passive					
		Pre.	Fut.	Impf.	Pf.	Plpf.	Fut. Pf.
Ind.	1s	audiōr	audiar	audiēbar	audītus sum	audītus eram	audītus erō
	2s	audīris	audiēris	audiēbāris	audītus es	audītus erās	audītus eris
	3s	audītur	audiētur	audiēbātur	audītus est	audītus erat	audītus erit
	1pl	audīmur	audiēmur	audiēbāmur	audītī sumus	audītī erāmus	audītī erimus
	2pl	audīminī	audiēminī	audiēbāminī	audītī estis	audītī erātis	audītī eritis
	3pl	audiuntur	audiēntur	audiēbāntur	audītī sunt	audītī erant	audītī erunt
	Subj.	1s	audiar		audīrer	audītus sim	audītus essem
2s		audiāris		audīrēris	audītus sis	audītus essis	
3s		audiātur		audīrētur	audītus sit	audītus esset	
1pl		audiāmur		audīrēmur	audītī sīmus	audītī essīmus	
2pl		audiāminī		audīrēminī	audītī sītis	audītī essītis	
Impv.	2s	audīre					
	2pl	audīminī					
Inf.	audīrī			audītus esse			

		Active					
		Pre.	Fut.	Impf.	Pf.	Plpf.	Fut. Pf.
Ind.	1s	capiō	capīam	capiēbam	cēpī	cēperam	cēperō
	2s	capīs	capīēs	capiēbās	cēpstī	cēperās	cēperis
	3s	capit	capiet	capiēbat	cēpt	cēperat	cēperit
	1pl	capīmus	capīēmus	capiēbāmus	cēpmus	cēperāmus	cēperimus
	2pl	capītis	capīētis	capiēbātis	cēpstis	cēperātis	cēperitis
	3pl	capīunt	capīent	capiēbant	cēpērunt	cēperant	cēperint
Subj.	1s	capiam		capīrem	cēperim	cēpīsem	
	2s	capīās		capīrēs	cēperis	cēpīssēs	
	3s	capiat		capīret	cēperit	cēpīssēt	
	1pl	capīāmus		capīrēmus	cēperimus	cēpīssēmus	
	2pl	capīātis		capīrētis	cēperitis	cēpīssētis	
Impv.	2s	cape					
	2pl	capite					
Inf.	capere	captūrus esse		capisse			

		Passive					
		Pre.	Fut.	Impf.	Pf.	Plpf.	Fut. Pf.
Ind.	1s	capior	capiar	capiēbar	captus sum	captus eram	captus erō
	2s	capīris	capīēris	capiēbāris	captus es	captus erās	captus eris
	3s	capītur	capīētur	capiēbātur	captus est	captus erat	captus erit
	1pl	capīmur	capīēmur	capiēbāmur	captī sumus	captī erāmus	captī erimus
	2pl	capīminī	capīēminī	capiēbāminī	captī estis	captī erātis	captī eritis
	3pl	capīuntur	capīentur	capiēbāntur	captī sunt	captī erant	captī erunt
Subj.	1s	capiar		caperer	captus sim	captus essem	
	2s	capīāris		caperēris	captus sis	captus essis	
	3s	capīātur		caperētur	captus sit	captus esset	
	1pl	capīāmur		caperēmur	captī sīmus	captī essīmus	
	2pl	capīāminī		caperēminī	captī sītis	captī essītis	
Impv.	2s	capire					
	2pl	capiminī					
Inf.	capī			captus esse			



Imperative			
كُنْ	كُنِي	كُنْ	ms
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fs
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	mp
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fp
Infinitive			
كُنْ	كُنِي	كُنْ	ms
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	mp
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fs
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fp
Active Participle			
كُنْ	كُنِي	كُنْ	ms
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	mp
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fs
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fp
Passive Participle			
كُنْ	كُنِي	كُنْ	ms
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	mp
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fs
كُنُوا	كُنِي	كُنِي	fp

### Suffixes on Imperatives and Infinitives

	ms	fs	mp	fp
	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِه , مَهْلِهْ	مَهْلِدْ , مَهْلِتْ
1cs	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِهْ , مَهْلِهْ	مَهْلِدْ , مَهْلِتْ
2ms				
2fs				
3ms	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِهْ , مَهْلِهْ	مَهْلِدْ , مَهْلِتْ
3fs	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِدْ	مَهْلِهْ , مَهْلِهْ	مَهْلِدْ , مَهْلِتْ
1cp	مَهْلِبْ	مَهْلِبْ	مَهْلِبْ , مَهْلِبْ	مَهْلِبْ , مَهْلِبْ
2mp				
2fp				

### Suffixes on Infinitives

	مَهْلِدْ
1cs	مَهْلِدْ
2ms	مَهْلِبْ
2fs	مَهْلِبْ
3ms	مَهْلِبْ
3fs	مَهْلِبْ
1cp	مَهْلِبْ
2mp	مَهْلِبْ
2fp	مَهْلِبْ



