



# **APOCRYPHA ARABICA**

**MARGARET DUNLOP GIBSON**

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# **APOCRYPHA ARABICA**

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MARGARET DUNLOP GIBSON**

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the priesthood. Jehoiachin did not cease to be bound in the land of Babylon, and shut up in prison for thirty-seven years. Meanwhile there was born to Mardul a son named Mardahi, and the king let Jehoiachin out of the prison, and married him to Helmuth the daughter of Eliakim. By him she gave birth in the land of Babylon to a son, who was called Salathiel. Then he married another who was called Melkat the daughter of Ezra the teacher, and had no child by her in Babylon. At that time Cyrus reigned in Babylon. He married Masabet the sister of Zerubabel a nobleman of the Jews, according to the custom of Persia; he let her rule his affairs; she begged him to restore the children of Israel to Jerusalem, and he did this to its place where it had been before him. He commanded a herald to proclaim, that there should not remain one of the children of Israel, who should not present himself to Zerubabel his brother-in-law. When they were gathered together, he commanded him to take them to Jerusalem and that they should build it. The children of Israel returned to Jerusalem in the second year of the reign of Cyrus the Persian. At that time was completed the fifth thousand from the beginning. The children of Israel after their return to Jerusalem remained without a teacher to teach them the law of the Lord or any writings of the prophets. When Ezra saw this, he went to the well in which the Law had been put, uncovered it, and found the vase full of fire and incense, and he found the writings faded, there was no means to get them. God revealed to him that he should receive of them from His hands; he succeeded, and threw it on his mouth once, and twice and thrice, and God put into it the power of the spirit of prophecy; he kept all the writings, and that fire which was in the vase in the well was from the fire of Paradise which was in the house of the Lord. Zerubabel journeyed to Jerusalem as king over it. By Joshua son of Jozadak the High Priest and by Ezra, the writing of the Law and the Books of the Prophets were completed. After their return, the children of Israel kept the feast of the Passover, and all the feasts that they celebrated were three. The first was the feast of Moses in Egypt, the second the feast of Josiah, and the third after their return from Babylon in the days of Cyrus the Persian. The number of the years of the Captivity which Jeremiah the prophet mentions are seventy years. The children of Israel built the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, and its building was finished by the hands of Zerubabel and Joshua the son of Jozadak the

priest, and Ezra the scribe of the Law, in six and forty years. When the books of the genealogies were destroyed, the fathers were in despair about genealogy, and there was despair about it after them, until their accuracy was guaranteed by the secret books of the Hebrews. I relate this to thee, my son Clement, that when Zerubabel journeyed to Jerusalem, he married Malka the daughter of Ezra the teacher, and by her he begat a son called Abiud. She had already been the wife of Jehoiachin before him. When Abiud grew up, he married Ragib, daughter of Joshua the son of Jozadak the priest. By he he begat a son called Jehoiachim. Jehoiachim married a wife, and begat a son by her. When he grew up, he married Alfeet, daughter of Hesron, and by her he begat Zadok. Zadok married Felbin the daughter of Rahab, and by her he begat Atin. Atin married Hesheeb, daughter of Jula, and by he he begat Tur (Eliud). Tur (Eliud) married Salsin, daughter of Hasoul, and by her he begat Eleazar. Eleazar married Habeeth, daughter of Malih, and by her he begat Manar (Matthan). Manar (Matthan) married Seerâb, daughter of Phinehas, and by her he begat two sons in [one] womb. One of them was Jacob, who was called by two names, Joachim son of Yartâh. Jacob married Had the daughter of Eleazar, and by her he begat Joseph. Joachim married Hannah, daughter of Ka'rdal, and by her he begat Mary, by whom our Lord the Christ was incarnate. On account of our knowledge, O my son Clement, about the genealogy of the Lady Mary, and the genealogies of her ancestors, the Jews begin by assertions about us that we do not understand the genealogies, and we do not know them; and they venture to mock the mother of Light, the Lady Mary, the Virgin, and they attribute he genealogy to fornication, because they do not know that it was the Holy Ghost who came down on us, a company of twelve in the upper room of Zion, who taught us all that we need to know about the genealogies and the rest of the mysteries, as He had taught Azariah (Ezra) the teacher all the Law, so that he kept it and renewed it. Let the mouths of the cursed Jews now be stopped, and let them know assuredly that Mary the pure was of the race of Judah, also of the race of David, also of the race of Abraham; that they have nothing against the genealogies which the Holy Ghost taught us, and there is not a book left in their hands from which they can make a stand against genealogy, since their books have been burnt three times; the first time in the days of Antiochus, who defiled the temple

of the Lord, and commanded sacrifices to idols; the second by Herod at the time of the devastation of Jerusalem; and the third, hear, O blessed son, what the Holy Ghost has revealed to me, about the sixty-three fathers, whose names are registered, and how the pedigree came about to the tribe from which was incarnate our God the Christ.

The beginning of genealogies.

Adam begat Seth. Seth married Aclima, sister of Abel, and by her begat Enos. Enos married a woman called Hita, daughter of Mahmouma of the sons of Har son of Seth, and by her begat Cainan. Cainan married Karith, daughter of Kersham son of Maheâl, and by her begat Mahlaleel. Mahlaleel married Teshabfatir, daughter of Enos, and by her begat Jared. Jared married Zebeeda, daughter of Kargilan son of Cainan, and by her begat Enoch. Enoch married Jardakin, daughter of Terbah son of Mahlaleel, and by her begat Methuselah. Methuselah married Rahoub, daughter of Serkeen son of Enoch, and by her begat Lamech. Lamech married Kifar, daughter of Jutab son of Methuselah, and by her begat Noah. Noah married Haikal, daughter of Mashamos son of Enoch, and by her begat Sem. Sem married Leah, daughter of Nasih, and by her begat Arphaxad. Arphaxad married Fardou, daughter of Salweh son of Japhet, and by her begat Salah. Salah married Muldath, daughter of Kahin son of Sem, and by her begat Obed (Eber). Obed (Eber) married Rasdah sister of Melchisedek, daughter of Malih son of Arphaxad, and by her begat Peleg. Peleg married Hadeeb, daughter of Hamlâh, and by her begat Jareu (Reu). Jareu (Reu) married Tanaa'b, daughter of Obed (Eber), and by her begat Serug. Serug married Feel, and by her begat Nahor. Nahor married a wife, A'âkris daughter of Reu, and by her begat Tarah. Tarah married two wives, one of them Juta, and the other Salmat, by Juta he begat Abraham and by Salmat Sarah. Abraham married Sarah, daughter of this Salmat his father's wife, and by her begat Isaac. Isaac married a wife called Rebecca, daughter of Fathâel, and by her begat Jacob. Jacob married Leah, daughter of Laban, and by her begat Judah. Judah begat Pharez by Tamar. Pharez son of Judah married Afdeeb, daughter of Levi, and by her begat Hesron. Hesron married Farteeb, daughter of Zebulon, and by her begat Aram. Aram married Safuza, daughter of Judah, and by her begat Aminadab. Aminadab married Baruma,



daughter of Hesron, and by her begat Nahshon. Nahshon married Aram, daughter of Adam, and by her begat Salmon. Salmon married Saleeb (Rahab), daughter of Aminadab, and by her begat Boaz. Boaz married Aroof (Ruth), daughter of Lot, and by her begat Obed. Obed married Nefut, daughter of Shela, and by her begat Asse (Jesse). Asse (Jesse) married Amrat, daughter of Othan, and by her begat David. David married Balseba' (Bathsheba), daughter of Joutân son of Shela, and by her begat Solomon. Solomon married Naama, daughter of Maheel, and by her begat Rehoboam: who had none like him. Rehoboam married Naheer, daughter of Al, and by her begat Abia. Abia married Maachah the daughter of Abishalom, and by her begat Asa. Asa married Auzbah the daughter of Shalih, and by her begat Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat married Na'mna the daughter of Amon, and by her begat Joram. Joram married Tala'ia, daughter of Amoi, and by her begat Ahaz. Ahaz married Suma the daughter of Balhi, and by her begat Amaziah. Amaziah married Kama, daughter of Caram, and by her begat Uzziah. Uzziah married Jerousa, daughter of Zadok, and by her begat Jeream (Jotham). Jeream (Jotham) married Jahfat, daughter of Hani, and by her begat Ahaz. Ahaz married Ahir, daughter of Zachariah, and by her begat Hezekiah. Hezekiah married Hephzibah, daughter of Jarmoun, and by her begat Manasseh. Manasseh married Artida, daughter of Azuriah, and by her begat Aman. Aman married Tarib, daughter of Murka, and by her begat Josiah. Josiah married Hamtoul, daughter of Armeed (Jeremiah), and by her begat Jehoahaz. Jehoahaz married a woman and had no sons by her. Jehoiakim reigned after the death of his brother, and married a woman called Carteem, daughter of Haluta, and by her begat Salaeel (Salathiel). Salaeel (Salathiel) married Hamtat, daughter of Eliakim, and by her begat Zerubabel. Zerubabel married Malkut, daughter of Ezra, and by her begat Armeed (Abiud). Armeed (Abiud) married Awarkeeth, daughter of Zadok, and by her begat Jachim. Jachim married Hali, daughter of Zurniem, and by her begat A'zor. A'zor married Afi, daughter of Hasor, and by her begat Sadoc. Sadoc married Faltir, daughter of Dorteeb, and by her begat Asham Joteed. Joteed Asham married Hasgab, daughter of Jula, and by her begat Liud (Eliud). Liud (Eliud) married Shabshetin, daughter of Hubaballia, and by her begat Eleazar. Eleazar married Hanbeth, daughter of Jula, and by her begat Mathan. Mathan married Seerab, daughter of Phinehas, and by her begat Jacob.

Jacob married Harteeb, daughter of Eleazar, and by her begat Joachim, known as Jonahir. Joachim married Hannah, and returned to the house of Eleazar. And after sixty years of his marriage to her, he begat by her Mary the Virgin, her by whom the Christ became incarnate. Joseph the Carpenter was the son of her [paternal] uncle Laha, and therefore his vote did not fall against her when Ram, priest of the children of Israel, delivered her to a man who should be surety for her. It was in the hidden work of God (may He be glorious and exalted!) and in the mystery of His knowledge that there was no escape from the Jews reproaching Mary the pure on account of her bearing the Christ. To our Master and our God and our Lord Jesus the Christ be praise and power and greatness and dignity and worship with the Father and the Holy Ghost from now unto all time and throughout all ages. Amen.

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## APHIKIA

IN the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the one God, we begin to transcribe the story of Aphikia wife of Jesus the son of Sirach, vizier of King Solomon, the son of David, King of the children of Israel.

It is said: Solomon the wise heard about Aphikia wife of Jesus the son of Sirach, his treasurer and vizier, that there was not among the women of the children of Israel nor in all Jerusalem one like her, so perfect in body and wise in mind. So he wished to see her and talk with her that he might know the utmost of her wisdom. So he sent to her the eunuch his chancellor, saying to her, "I long to meet with thee and talk with thee." When the eunuch went to her and told her the saying of the King, her heart was pained and she sobbed, and said to the Chief, "Say to my lord the King, 'Thy wisdom has filled the whole world, and how has it given place to this idea, that it should come into thy heart, thou whose teaching turneth the fool into a wise man. Yet if it be thy will, I will acquiesce in this unworthy idea; but let it not be carried out while my husband is in this city, lest there be any scandal.'" When the eunuch related this saying in the ears of the King, he wondered the more; and begged earnestly to meet with her. He talked with Jesus her husband, saying, "O my son, we have urgent business with the King of Mosul, and I do not see a man suitable to meet with him like thyself." And Jesus said, "May my lord the King live! according to what he says so be it." And he wrote the letters for him, and made him ride with honour like the son of kings. He sent with him troops and gifts, and he took his journey. Then King Solomon commanded the eunuch, saying to him, "Go to Aphikia wife of Jesus the son of Sirach, and say to her, 'Be ready for my Sovereign's reception in thy dwelling.'" The eunuch went to her with the saying of the King. And Aphikia said to the Chief, "Tell my lord the King, saying, 'Is a humble handmaid worthy of this great honour that her Sovereign should walk and come to her? I beg him not to taste any food until he comes and eats in the abode of his servant.'" And the eunuch went away from her to the King and told him of this saying. But Aphikia, when the

eunuch had gone, called her cook and said to him, "Ask for all thou requirest, fowls, fish and mutton. Cook me from them forty kinds with one taste and let them be different and various in kind." When the time came, she spread for the King in the chamber of her husband Jesus the son of Sirach, according to the honour of the king. The evening had come, even the end of a part of the night; King Solomon came to her abode, and people went before him with lanterns, and they brought him in to the chamber in which they had spread for him. He was amazed at what he saw. Then Aphikia came up, she and her maidens, and they bowed themselves down to the earth before the King, and they sat behind the door of the chamber in which it had been spread for the King. Then she commanded that the table should be brought up, and upon it were all kinds of bread. Then she commanded that they should present the kinds on the top. The King ate with gusto on account of the purity of the meats of which he was eating, and taking account. He remained contemplating the kinds and wondered at their variety from one another in resemblance. When he had tasted these kinds which were put there, he found that they had all one taste. He ate, and was satisfied, and raised his hand. Then they brought forward many kinds more, and put them before him. He merely tasted them without eating of them. He knew certainly that this was a parable of wisdom. Then he said, "Thy favours are acceptable, O God of Israel! I would know, O Aphikia! the meaning of what thou commandest me by thy foods." And Aphikia said, "O my lord the King! thy wisdom is sufficient for thee and for the whole world. Of what worth is the light of a candle placed before the sun? And what is the measure of thy handmaid that she should speak before the lord the King? The soul from God moves in her body. To-day she hides her corruption and her fetidness, and to-morrow she will be thrown into a grave beyond the place of the fields in which she appears, and she will be a naked soul, with a soul that never dies." Then said Solomon, "Blessed be the day when they gave thee birth into the world since thou hast filled it with wisdom." Then he arose, wondering at what he had seen and heard from this chaste woman. When he was outside the door of the room, behold, a ruby got detached from his crown between the lintels of the door, without any one seeing it till the return of Jesus from the journey. He saw it lying, and he took it and examined it in his hand and he recognized it. He knew for certain

that the King had entered into his chamber, and he was grieved in his heart and did not speak, nor did he return to his wife another time in conjugal intercourse till the end of two years, nor inquire of her, that she might appease him. She also did not wish to say to him, “Why art thou estranged from me?” saying in her heart that her husband must not say in his heart, “This one is longing for reunion.” And after two years her mother gazed in her face, and saw it, and behold, it was altered and changed. She looked at her limbs, and saw in them great weakness. And she said, “O my beloved daughter, what gives thee pain? for thou art very weak.” She took her by the hand, and went with her to a quiet place in the house, and told her all that had happened, and that she was grieved in her heart on account of her husband more than [on account of] the weakness that had come on her body. Her mother arose at once and went to Solomon, and met with him in a palace alone in a retired spot, for she was in much honour with him. She said, “O my lord the King, live for ever! I had a pleasant vineyard, where I could enjoy life, by God! in the first place, and be comforted by it; I gave it over to a vine-dresser to cultivate it. He waited to give me fruit for a time, then also to himself. I trusted in regard to my vineyard to this vine-dresser that he should not neglect to improve my vineyard. I did not visit it for two years. I walked to-day till I reached it, and I found it waste, going to ruin. I implore thee, O my lord the King, to judge between me and this vine-dresser, for he has spoiled a noble vineyard.”

The King said to her, “What has happened to thee about my neglect of thy vineyard until this day?” for he knew the object of her speaking and the meaning of her wisdom. And he commanded them to call Jesus up to his presence, and made him sit by his side with his mother-in-law. And he said to her, “All that thou hast said, repeat it to us once again according to what thou didst tell me,” and she was silent. Then Solomon said, “What sayest thou?” And he said, “All that she said is true, except that I did not weary of doing my best for the cultivation of this vineyard until the day that my lord the King sent me to Damascus. But on my return, O King, to my vineyard, as I went up to the interior of the vineyard looking [about], behold, there was a trace of the steps of a great lion within the threshold. And I feared, and turned back, lest the lion should destroy me.”

Then King Solomon said to him, “Listen to me, that I may speak unto thee, By the truth of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of Moses and Aaron, the great and high God who has appeared to us, He who hears us when we swear by Him, because that lion did not aim at doing anything beyond conversation in speech suitable to wisdom, a gain to all souls who should hear it, now, O my son! rise with joy and a pure heart; enter into thy vineyard and cultivate it in honour, for its honour is great before the Lord of Hosts.” Then Jesus rose at once, and his mother-in-law, and entered his abode and sat with Aphikia his wife and inquired of her, and she informed him of what had happened, and he glorified the Lord God of the name of Israel.

By the help of God, the story of Aphikia wife of Jesus the son of Sirach, vizier of Solomon the son of David, is finished and completed.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, one true God. To Him be glory, and on us His mercies for ever.

It was Alfarag who copied the book of Jesus the son of Sirach, and the story of his wife Aphikia, on Friday at the sixth hour, the fifth Friday of the holy fast, twenty-six days having passed of the month of Adar, the blessed, the second day of the feast of the Gospel, in the year 1885 of the Greeks, and this by the hand of the poor hoarse preacher, rich in sins, poor in good things, unlucky in works pleasing to God, by name a priest, by deed a robbing wolf, entitled by two names, Nekoula son of David of the village of Kafr Houra, in the district of Tarabulus. This is by command of the Priest, Joseph the Syrian, the Jacobite, of Damascus, surnamed “Golden,” God be gracious to him for it! and guide him in the work of exposition and of its meanings, and give him the reward of his labour with us, as He prescribed by His holy mouth, one thirty-fold, sixty-fold and a hundred-fold, and cause him to dwell eternally in the pleasant gardens, in the bosoms of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the saints. Amen. Amen. Amen.

It was written in the fortress Damascus, in the house of the [above] mentioned father, the priest Joseph.

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