

Decoding of the Voynich Manuscript 4

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Abstract

This document is a continuation of the papers “Decoding of the Voynich Manuscript 1, 2 & 3”, which were already published on the enspace.net site. In its first part we introduce the transcription and the translation of the text of the upper, right rosette of the foldout - pages 85v-86r – of the VMS, placed around the image. We make use of the alphabet and decrypting method presented in the anteceded papers. Some terms used in this text passage demand a short explanation. They are closely connected to the Hebrew bible written record. In the second part we investigate this passage in detail and point to apocalyptic and gnostic views which, in our opinion, are embodied in the text.

Regarding the wording used in this passage the most outstanding Aramaic word here is *yarad*. It is used several times and is the cause for the cumulation of the glyphs **c89** at the beginning of Voynichese words. The varied but similar meaning of this word is according to Hebrew dictionary (lexicon concordance): *to go down, descend, decline, march down, sink down, to go or come down, to sink, to be prostrated, to come down (of revelation), to bring down, to send down, to take down, to lay prostrate, to let down, to be brought down, to be taken down or simply down*. It is used in both, in a figuratively and a non-figuratively way.

Some other peculiarities of Aramaic used here become apparent, like e. g. use of singular and plural in case of representational use of substantives (har/harim mountain/mountains) and only singular in case of non-representational use (tohuw vanity; shoma' report/rumour) but that should be left out of scope as for this document.

1 Decryption of the upper right rosette text

The decrypted text reads as follows (each Voynichese "word", which is in fact one or many Aramaic words, is explained in a separate line):



`aph qesheb

af keh'-sheb

furthermore, moreover, yet, but, indeed
attentiveness, attention

'koh ehi huwk bo' **ko e-hee' hook bo**

until now, meanwhile, here, thus, so
where, will, will be
to come, go, be brought (again)
to enter, come in, cause to come in, cause to come, to be introduced, be put

'ath 'ab **awth ab**

miraculous signs, wonders, portents
father

kehah ner 'abash **kay-haw' nare aw-bash'**

dulling, lessening, weakening
lamp
to shrivel, dry up

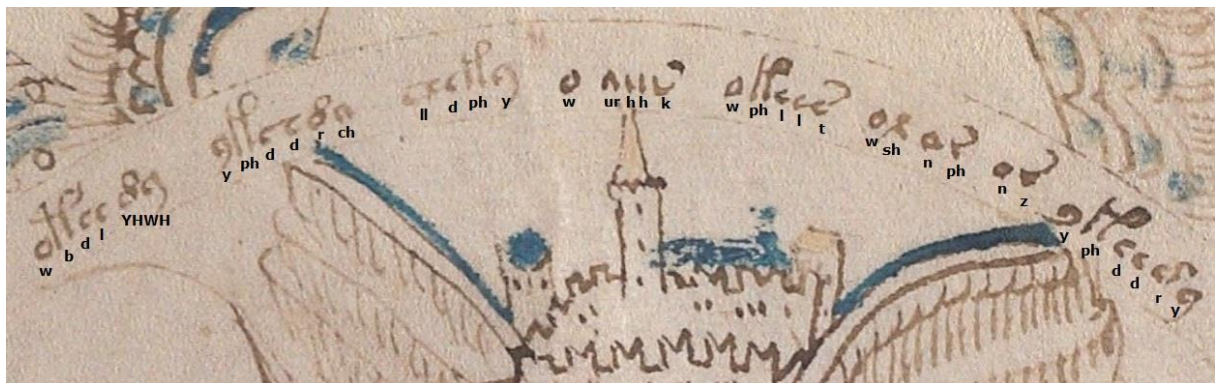
gol 'eth a' **gole ayth aw**

bowl of a lamp
with, near, together with
wood, beam, timber

...

Furthermore, attention will be brought (will go) now (here) to Father's miraculous signs (portents). The weakening lamp will shrivel, bowl (of the lamp) together with wood (shaft)¹

...



yarad dophiy **yaw-rad' dof'-ee**

to go or come down, to be brought down, to be taken down, to send down, sink
blemish, fault

zan **zan**
a form, kind, sort

¹ Possible reserve oil tank in the shaft

'owphan show'

o-fawn' sho-aw'

wheel, chariot wheel
ravage, devastation, ruin, waste

t@lal 'ephow

tel-al' ay-fo'

have shade, have a shadow, cover with shade
then, now, so

kehad 'uwr

kay-haw' ore

dulling, lessening, weakening
flame, light of fire

`ayeph dall

aw-yafe' dall

faint, exhausted, thirsty
low, poor, weak, needy

charad dophiy

khaw-rad' dof'-ee

to tremble, be afraid, be startled, be terrified, to be anxiously careful
blemish, fault

YHWH 'al 'adab 'ow

YHWH al aw-dab' o'

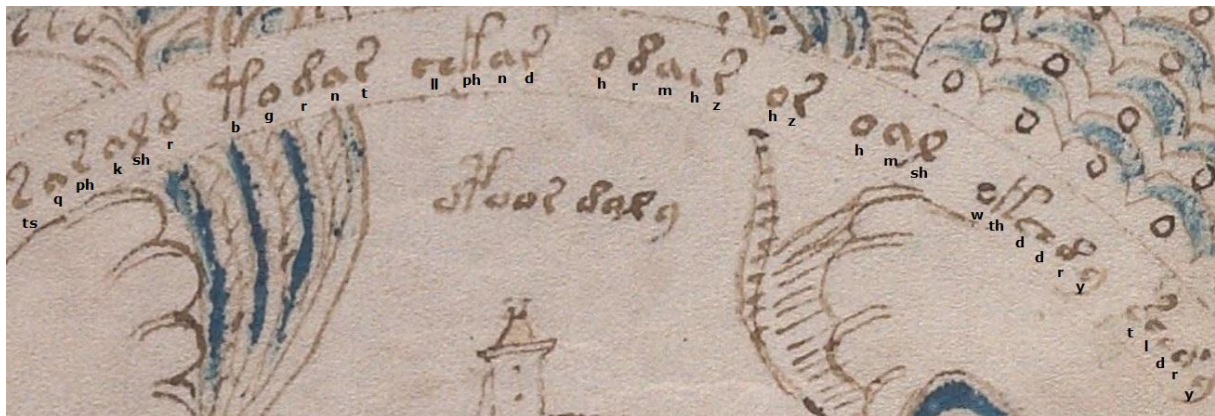
YHWH

do not, let not (with a verb), let there not be (with a verb), not, no (with substantive)
to grieve, cause to grief
or else, whether, not the least, if, otherwise, also, and, then

...

Blemish will be brought down, a kind of chariot wheel devastation, will cover so with shade
the weakening flame of the exhausted poor (low) terrified at fault. YHWH, let there not be a
cause to (for) grief, whether

...



yarad la't

yaw-rad' lawt

to go or come down, to be brought down, to be taken down, to send down, sink
secrecy, mystery, enchantment, incantation

yarad dath 'ow

yaw-rad' dawth o'

to go or come down, to be brought down, to be taken down, to send down, sink
decree, law, edict, regulation
or

shoma'

sho'-mah

report, rumour, news, fame

zoh

zo'

this, thus, that, what

zaham 'owrah

zaw-ham' o-raw'

be foul, be loathsome, abhorrent
light of joy and happiness

diy naphal lo'

dee naw-fal' lo

who, which, that, (mark of genitive) that of, which belongs to, that, because
to fall, to fall prostrate, fall into the hand of, go away to, to fall (of violent death), to
cause to fall
not, no

tan 'ereg bo`

tan eh'-reg bo

dragon, whale, (sea) monster
loom, shuttle, looming
to enter, come in, cause to come in, cause to come, to be introduced, be put

rasha` 'ekeph qets

raw-shah' eh'-kef kates

to be wicked, act wickedly (in ethics and religion)
pressure, urgency, burden, stroke
end, at the end of (of time, space), infinite

...

whether brought down by secret enchantment, brought down by law (edict) or rumour (fame),
what is abhorrent to the light of joy and happiness (of those) who don't fall into the hand of
the (sea) monster looming to come in, to act wickedly, with an infinite burden.

...



y@tsa'

yets-aw'

to bring to an end, finish, bring out to an end

kehah bar ell (alternativ 'elleh) **bow'**

kay-haw' bar alle bo

dulling, lessening, weakening
pure, clear, choice, select, purify
these

to be introduced, to be brought, to enter, to come in

'ophen radad

o'-fen raw-dad'

timely, fitly, in right circumstances
to beat down, beat out, subdue, spread

yarad `athaq

yaw-rad' aw-thak'

to go or come down, descend, sink down
to move forward, proceed, move on, advance

s@ga'

seg-aw'

to grow great, increase

kehah ner guwph

kay-haw' neer goof

dulling, lessening, weakening
lamp
to shut, close, shut off

ge'

gay'

proud, pride, haughty

tohuw 'ed da'

to'-hoo ade (Aramaic) **daw**

nothingness, empty space, vanity
mist, vapour (in the sense of enveloping)
this, one another

`athaq rahab qe'

aw-thawk' raw-hawb' kay

forward, bold, arrogant (of speech)
proud, defiant
vomit, what is vomited up²

² In Isaiah 28:8-10 (King James Version) we can find: *for all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean. Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little...* This description gives nearly the impression mathematical or logical theorems are demanded by the prophet as foundation of uncontradicted knowledge. Regarding the knowledge teaching other telling is literally *vomit* for him.

'at `agabah **at ag-aw-baw'**

charmer, gently, secret, softly, charming
lustfulness, inordinate love

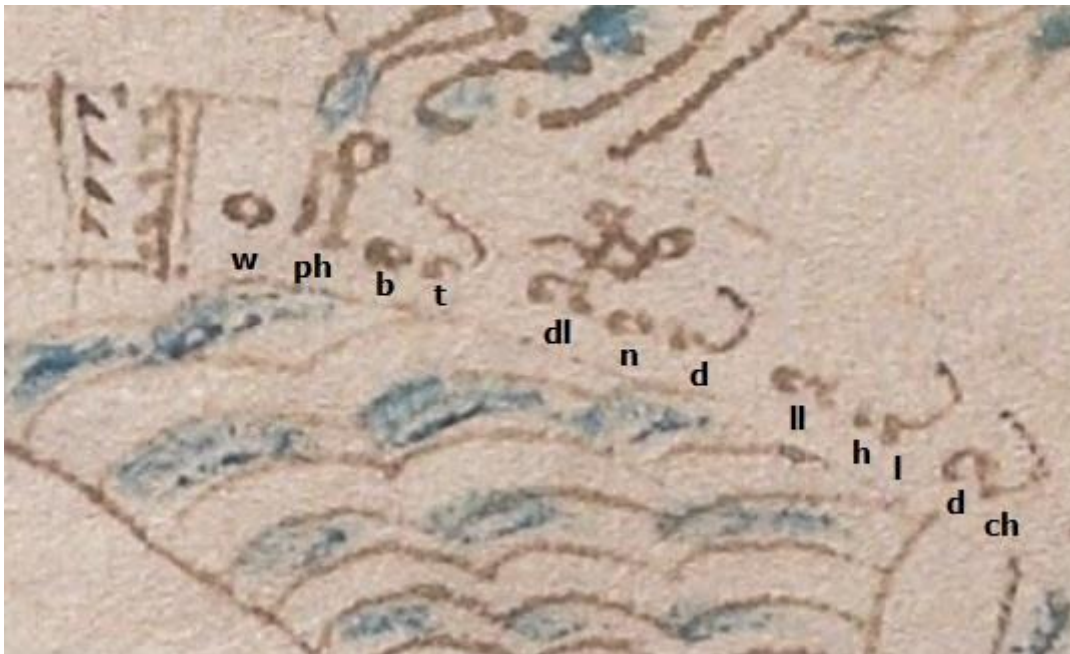
yarad luw' 'eth gal 'abeh **yaw-rad' loo ayth gal aw-beh'**

to go or come down, to be brought down, to be taken down, to send down, sink
if, oh that!, if only!
with, together with
spring, wave, billow, waves (fig. of chastisement of JHWH)
entreat, longing, desire

...

Bring to an end the weakening, select (purify) these to be introduced, fitly subdue, descend to
advance to grow great the weakening lamp, shut off haughty, vanity, enveloping one another,
arrogant (of speech), defiant vomit, charming (secret) lustfulness (inordinate love). Descend,
oh that!, together with longing waves of chastisement.

...



'echad 'Elohe `ella' **ekh-awd' el-o-hay' ale-law'**

one (number), only, once, once for all
mighty God
above

diyn `adla **deen ad-lah'**

to judge, to act as judge, minister judgment, to execute judgment
just³

towb 'ephow **tobe ay-fo'**

to do well, do good, act right, act rightly, be right
then, now, so, here (but used of time)

³ from the verb עָדַל ('dl), to be just or act equitable

...

Only (one) mighty God above, judge just, act rightly then!

...

Furthermore, attention will be brought (will go) now (here) to Father's miraculous signs (portents). The weakening lamp will shrivel, bowl (of the lamp) together with wood (shaft). Blemish will be brought down, a kind of chariot wheel devastation, will cover so with shade the weakening flame of the exhausted poor (low) terrified at fault. YHWH, let there not be a cause to (for) grief, whether brought down by secret enchantment, brought down by law (edict) or rumour (fame), what is abhorrent to the light of joy and happiness (of those) who don't fall into the hand of the (sea) monster looming to come in, to act wickedly, with an infinite burden.

Bring to an end the weakening, select (purify) these to be introduced, fitly subdue, descend to advance to grow great the weakening lamp, shut off haughty, vanity, enveloping one another, arrogant (of speech), defiant vomit, charming (secret) lustfulness (inordinate love). Descend, oh that!, together with longing waves of chastisement.

Only (one) mighty God above, judge just, act rightly then!

The above passage of the text begins with a short reference to the miraculous, exceptional signs occurring at that stage of the end times without being specified in detail.

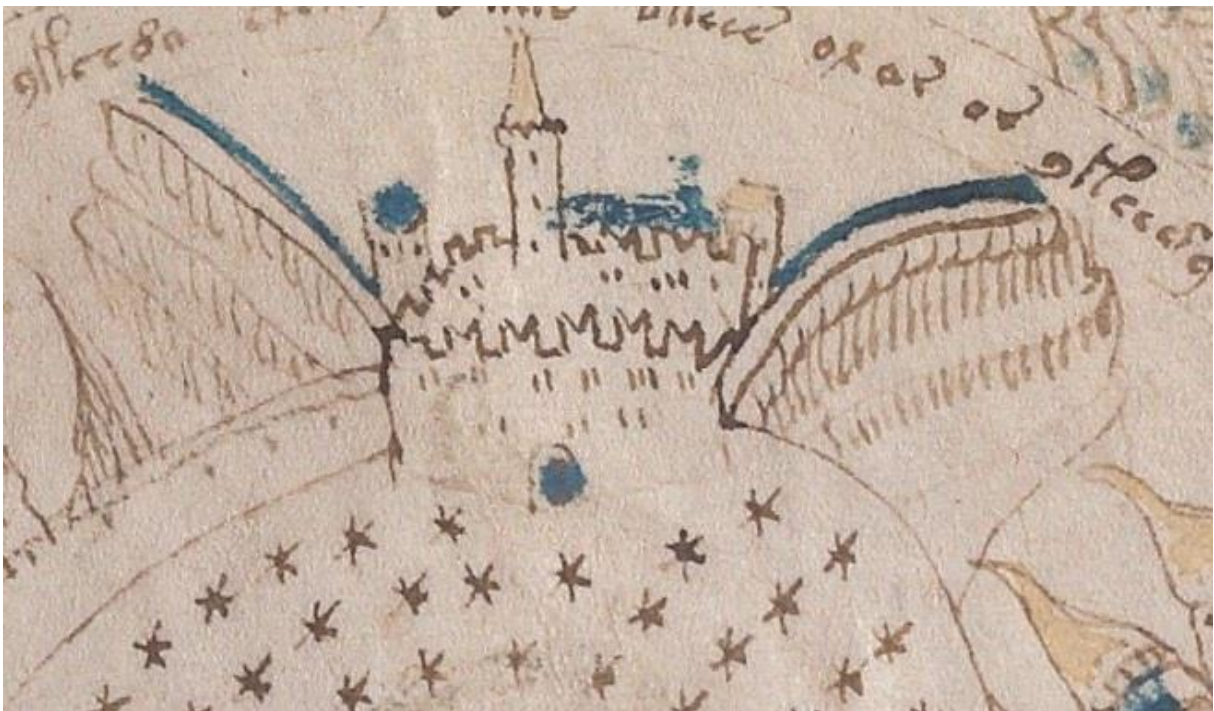
The author laments then over weakening inner, spiritual power of the assumed members of *his* parish or sect. The addressed, who apparently expect a quick coming of Messiah, are terrified *at fault*. But who are the accusers? The text doesn't tell us that but enumerates instead the means of oppression: enchantment, unjust law, rumour. Naturally, this beclouds the *light of joy and happiness*. The oppressed refer to themselves as the *exhausted poor (low)*. If so, that make them vulnerable and inferior to the rich and powerful, yet they seem to be perceived as threat by the later. Because of their faith, their mental and spiritual power? A multitudinous sea monster (a secular or political authority) with power to burden immoderate and to corrupt is looming so that the darkness can spread out even more.

In the remaining text the author implores God's intercession to prevent the misconduct and judge just at the time of His coming.

The text content is illustrated in the corresponding image. The night sky covers gradual the burning lamps/torches.



The illustrator depicted five lamps and this probably refers to a very popular medieval narrative of five wise virgins which are in possession of oil to fuel their lamps and enables them so to keep the flame burning and find the way to God in the case of Messiah's coming in these dark ages. The other, *foolish* virgins, will realise too late that their lamps are amiss. They can't manage to procure the oil timely and will miss the bridegroom (the coming Messiah) at His wedding with mankind.



Further, the medieval image depicts a generalised power coming from an anonymous authority symbolised as castle and spreading darkness out from its entrance. The secular or

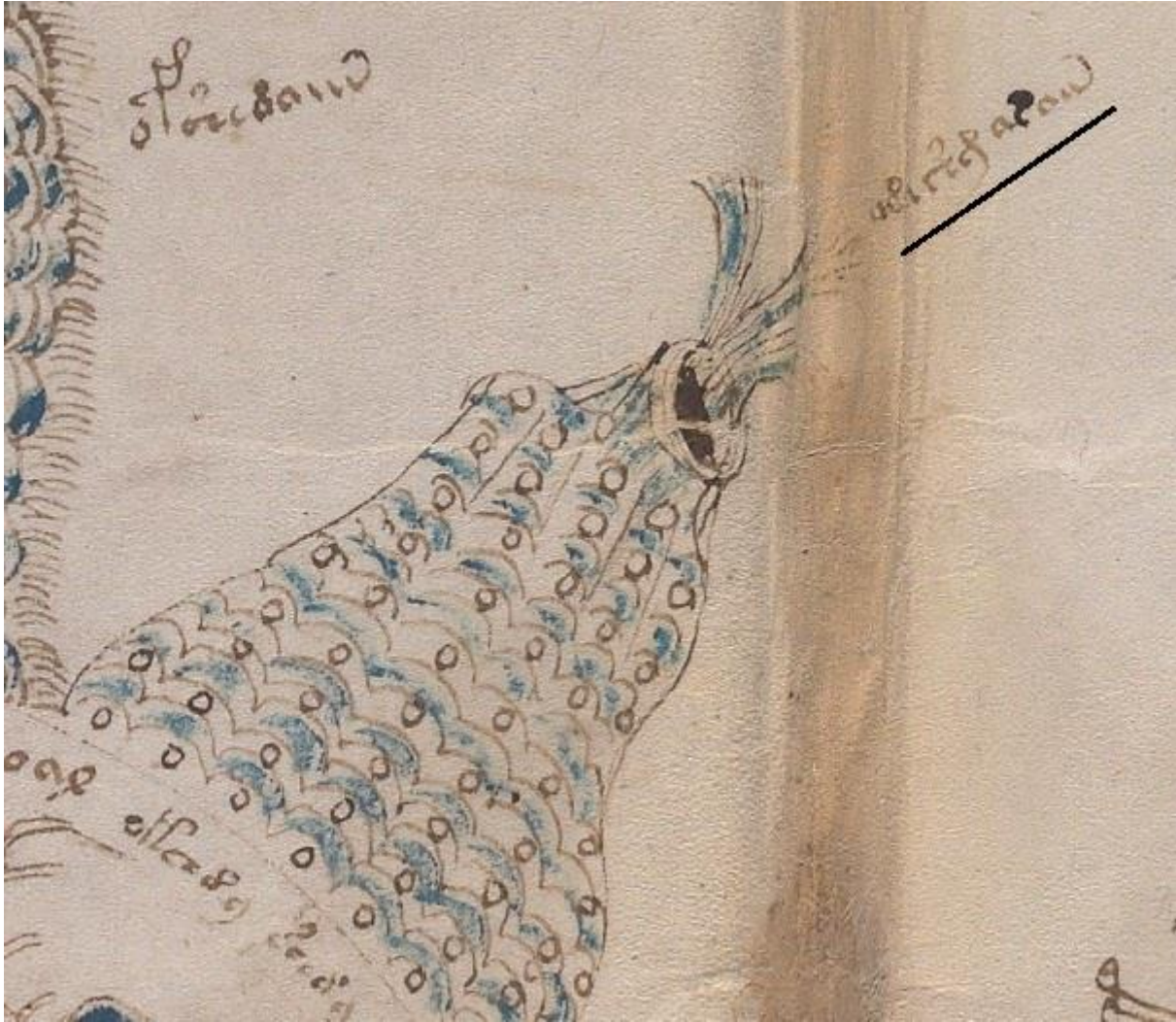
clerical power resides behind high walls and its activity results in covering of the spiritual light in darkness.



Even the mentioned chariot wheel comes out under the dark sky ceiling.



The wished purifying billows and waves flood the earth.



The medieval illustrator/coder tried to intensify the impression of a flood and drew a mountain, which spits water running then down in cascades at mountainside, more similar to a volcano. The text he placed above the top reads:

'ak heyk `atsam mabbuwl harim

Truly, how vast are the flood (deluge) mountains

2 Conclusion

In the late first century, around and some years after the destruction of the Second Temple, nearly every bible-believing Hebrew in Near East and Egypt (Alexandria) expected a quick coming of the Messiah and a kind of end time events.

The early Christians trusted in the words that the second coming of Jesus should happen in their lifetime, the new rabbinical world after the temple destruction 70 CE derived its expectations from the Hebrew bible. There must have been disappointment about His non-appearance. The lamp of faith and hope started to diminish in this respect. Rabbi Akiva eventually proclaimed Bar Kochba as the Messiah, what was one of the reasons he had been killed by the Romans. Yet the Messiah claim was not widely accepted. Christians and Non-Christians started to reinterpret the words and recount the years to show, that the period until Messiah's coming must be extended.

It seems at that time a renewed gnostic idea was spawned, that salvation might not be achieved as a service by a passive liturgy consumption, worshipping or a strong observance and good deeds only. Who longed for salvation must have been searching actively for the truth, shall find his way to God by himself. For that he had to fuel his spiritual lamp and keep the light burning.

But who was able to do so? Who was able to understand the creation and God's will by himself? Naturally, not all but a small minority of people *who can see*. One another group was predestined to be taught and convinced, people *whom can be shown* so at the end they will see too. But the vast majority won't see and won't comprehend, whatever vain endeavour, people *who won't see*. This idea was elitist and clear undermined the authority and self-understanding of the early deacons and bishops, who presented themselves as the only interpreters of God's work and will.

However, this idea attracted many well-educated Hellenized Jews, in particular in Alexandria, the city of scholars and scribes. For them acquisition of knowledge based on rational reasoning, Aristotelian logic and Platonic doctrines, were self-evident prerequisites for a study of God's creation and putative will. Apostle Thomas, who was a prototype of a doubter and searcher, was a very popular protagonist for them, as Nag Hammadi library demonstrates. Alexandria apparently became the central hub of Gnosticism.

Very early forms of Gnosticism existed already in pre-Christian Alexandria, as we know from writings of Philon, who was polemizing against sects like Sethians, which didn't obey the mosaic Law and were allegorising the Scriptures.

As for Christians decades later Irenaeus and other early church fathers stigmatized Gnostics as heretics and the idea of the immediacy of God experience despaired, even if not completely, for many centuries. The text itself bemoans the weakening hope for a quick coming of the end days but so far doesn't formulate the gnostic conception of the oil vessel in reserve as mean to survive the dark times and to tame the monster of vice. Therefore, we estimate the last third of the first century CE, the pre-Gnostic period related to the second wave of Jewish Gnosticism, as the time for its composition. Yet this opinion doesn't rule out, that the text origins are Christian. Quite the contrary, we interpret some clues in other passages meanwhile as references to early Hebrew Christianity, still deeply rooted in mosaic Religion and Law.



Reinterpretation: not wisdom but a harlot rides the seven headed monster, shows, however, an oil vessel and not a wine goblet, as in many similar apocalyptic images, to an angel and St. John (from the medieval Lambeth apocalypse)