

Triadon

Part Two

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The following is a translation stanzas 460 to 732, with the omission of stanzas 535 to 582,1, which have not been preserved.

It is known if Stanza 732 was meant to be the final one, but the last two lines (cf. plates after p. 250 of Lemm's edition) are written in such that suggests that the writer did not want to start a new page. For my own part, the final question seems a stylish way to end the work, but this is of course purely personal taste. Since this is not intended to be a work of scholarship, I feel at liberty to say this.

460

Truly the God of your prayer has received it
He has made you worthy to take a place¹ at his great banquet
Of a thousand years which cannot be counted,
For it has not entered in the counting of the years of the 'tonthion'.²

461

Who is the wise one that he will know this
And find an illuminated mind to count this
And solve the mystery of the measure of the step,
Which is written in the wonderful vision ?³

¹ The vb is lit. 'throw oneself'. Ar. 'recline'

² This word is unknown in Coptic or Greek. Similarly the Arabic word as written is unknown. Lemm's Arabic expert, Baron Rosen, suggests that it is the Greek ἐπακτ-, a reference to the intercalary 5 days required by the Egyptian calendar, though Lemm does not put the word into his Greek indexexpert suggests that it is a metathesized of 'al aqbâty', Coptic. Nagel does not mention Rosen's suggestion. It is difficult to imagine that anyone familiar with the Arabic form of 'Coptic' would miswrite it. 'Year of the Copts' might conceivably an alternative to Year of the Martyrs (284 AD)

³ 'wonderful vision' is also the final phrase of the poem.

462

One has seen the vision in the island, another in the field.
First the book became sweet in his mouth, in his heart it became bitter.
The second told us about the furnace which was lit with tow
In the time of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Chaldeans.

463

This man whom the three saints⁴ rebuked,
They did not hear his command and they did not accept his⁵
But they trusted in God with all their heart, for his
Is the power over the corporeal and spiritual.

464

After these things this man knew the condemnation.
His sin was revealed to him. He cursed his birth.
He became strong in his heart, for it has to be
That God⁶ appears in the flesh.

465

He then said: These men have not accepted mine.
I the wretched said: Mine
Is the power over them, and now I know that this one
Who is the fourth is the true son of God.

466

The one who saw my outrageous deeds,
He wanted these children for my sake.
It was also he who created woman from the rib
Which he had first taken from Adam's side.

⁴ Ar. 'young men'

⁵ Presumably 'command', as also in 465, 1. Ar. 'saying' (463) and 'command' (465)

⁶ Ar. 'son of God'

467

I know now that the prayer of these saints was accepted
Before God the almighty who is,⁷
The one in whose grip is heaven, earth and everything in them,
From the beginning for all time.

468

See this man who fell from his position,
How he spoke with these great words.
He became worthy to obtain this great rank
That he might prophesy these great mysteries.

469

Come with me, my brothers, to Babylon that
You may see those sitting in the shade of the willow trees,
Grieving when they hear the people singing
With all musical instruments.

470

I now wish to go to Rhama
And seek there many men
And go with them to the city of Rome
And dwell in it like Paul the architect.

471

Everyone who sees me says that this is an Alexandrian.
How have I become like vagabonds ?⁸

⁷ Ar. 'the eternal'

⁸ Ar. 'wanderers'. The Coptic word has been the subject of several studies and is generally understood as a term of abuse. The instances are given in CD 354b, but I do not know if more have appeared since the Coptic Dictionary was published in 1939. The element **ca** often means a 'man of', the following noun being either concrete or abstract. The element **pa** can mean 'state, condition'. The third element is most probably the verb 'turn'. The Arabic word used here is used elsewhere to translate this word, and this would seem at least to point in that direction as the meaning of it. One suspects that 'wanderers', like the Roma, Sinti and Travellers today, did not enjoy a favourable reputation, though it may also be pointed out that there is a term for those forced to live away from their home, viz. **ⲙⲏⲧⲱⲙⲙⲟ** (condition of being a stranger), which generally excites a certain sympathy for those compelled to endure it.

I have decided in all my thoughts to turn
From city to city, according to the word of the Gospel.

472

How have I abandoned my country
And been like children in the market place
And have not been compared to the works of the widow
Whom the judge of injustice judged justly.

473

I need to take for myself knowledge and understanding
And power like the simple widow
To whom the judge gave what belonged to her
In his true judgement, after a long time.

474

I wish to ascend the tree
To see the one who rescued our father Noah.
He also said to his disciples: Leave
The dust of your feet upon the lawless cities.

475

Come, my fathers, and let us divide the booty
Before they bind the weeds in bundles
And burn them in the place of the gnashing of teeth,
According to the commandment of the lord.

476

My beloved, I have not spoken to you about Mammon.
But let us all say: God, give us
Your elevated grace, for without⁹
Your help we would be food for the animals.

⁹ Coptic word is misspelled.

477

Let us then say: God, do not leave us
Completely, we the wretched. And even if
We seize this transient life which will come to an end,
You know that the thought of man inclines to evil.

478

My brothers, let us sit and shed our tears
Until they flow like water streams
For what we did in our first years,
Which have passed in this life full of suffering.

479

Let us remove ourselves, my beloved, from deceit
And seize Christ, for he is the head¹⁰
And the one who knows how great the number is
Of my years, I this wretched one.

480

He who cured the one with the lame hand,
He saw the harlot, that she believed,
And had mercy on her. He made her
Free from sin in the house of Simon.

481

He is also the one who gave speech to the one without it.
He died for us and was wrapped in a linen sheet
And rose from the dead in his divinity.
His bandages were not unwrapped, but rolled together like clay.¹¹

¹⁰ This is one of the instances pointed out by Lemm (p. xii) where the writer adds a meaningless word in order to achieve the required rhyme.

¹¹ Ar. 'pipe'

482

He is the one who sat on the boat near the bank.
He taught in this way: When you pray, close your mouth.
Woe to me, the wretch, that I did not make use of
A single word of his blessed teachings.

483

He is also the one who said: Not a single iota nor a single
Stroke will be removed from the Law or broken.
As Micha said: Bethlehem, you are not small
Or insignificant in Judea and its governorship.

484

He is also the one who created the Horus Star and the Great Bear.
He ordered the priests to burn the liver and the stomach,
As the remainder is burned that is left over
From the Paschal lamb in uncontentiousness.

485

He is also the one who came from the field to sow.
The good field produced thirty, sixty and a hundredfold from its seed.
His sweat flowed like blood from his armpit
At the time when he prayed the prayer of his sufferings.

486

The angel appeared to him and said to him: You have continued¹²
To show weakness, though you are¹³ and continue to be.
And yours is the power and the glory and lasting victory
And your authority until the completion of eternity.

¹² The use of the verb form here is grammatically unconventional, but necessary for the rhyme. Ar. makes a question of it 'How do you show weakness ...', which makes better sense than the Coptic.

¹³ Ar. understands this phrase as in 417,2 and 467,2 as 'you are eternal'

487

Let us sing praises to him with instruments and choirs
For he is the one whose side was pierced with a javelin, for this is
The implement in the hand of the Cherubim in place of a carving knife.
It opened the way for us to the tree of eternal life.

488

Let us look upon Christ at the time when he turned
To his disciples. He berated the Jews for what they had built.
He compared his kingdom with the fishermen who collected
The good fish in their nets and threw back the bad ones.

489

Let us hear his word, you being quite different from sparrows,
And hear his word that he said to the head
Of the apostles: I will give you the keys
Of the kingdom of heaven that you may close and open.

490

What am I to say about the one who settled their spirits and their nerves
With his divine body and wrote their names
In the book of life and gave them an immeasurable thing
That they might sit on the day of judgement on the twelve thrones ?

491

Truly, no human is like
These people who have eaten dinner and (the last) supper.¹⁴
My beloved, let us strive to liken
Our souls to these great blessed people.

¹⁴ The Coptic is slightly difficult here, because the word means 'similarity'. Nagel suggests 'communion'. Ar. 'supper'.
The similarity intended is probably between the real and the symbolic meals.

492

We now know that the just one will rise like a date palm,
Like an eagle, and he will not be like a swallow,
And he will grow until he reaches the great rank
And becomes king of the aeons in his perfect growth.

493

Woe is me, the poor one, for I have become a horror.
In place of wheat bread I have eaten dinkel bread.
Some have striven in writing, but I to delete it.
Where will the destroyer and his creator be found ?

494

Woe to me even more, the wretched, when people
Know that I love this old woman who has lentigo
And learn that I sleep with her under a blanket
And have congress with her in her great sufferings.

495

The strict teachings have not been able to turn
My dark reasoning from this threshold,
But I slept in the bedchamber full of fleas
And scorpions with this great whore of Babylon.

496

How I did leave behind me the way of the southern monks,
Those who eat salt and vinegar and dry bread and endives.
I followed my evil thoughts. I filled my heart with must.
I became heavy with food and drink and the cares of life.

497

I was like the wild carnivorous beasts.

I resembled the domestic animals eating lettuce.¹⁵

Evil rose against the demons in the love of silver and gold,

For arrogance with me was a major resource.

498

I entered the garden. I desired nothing but pears.

I left behind me sweet fruit as I was satisfied.

I did not heed the word of the one who said: Do not drink

Water, but a little wine for the sake of your stomach.

499

I am a minor one among my brothers. In the house of my father I am small.

I beg you, God, to count me as someone you have converted

To your faith, namely Paul, and count me with those who buried

Your divine body, Joseph and Nicodemus.

500

Look upon my wretchedness, my God, and look

Upon my miserable soul sunk

In the mire of sin. The enemy has approached ...

That he is ... like a lion and he is the dragon.

501

My good God, give me what I desire

That I may find the ability to rebuke him.

Your love allows me to persuade him¹⁶

That I may find benefit in the business of your money.

¹⁵ In the Ancient Egyptian story known as the *Contending of Horus and Seth* the lettuce is an aphrodisiac.

¹⁶ Ar. 'I agree to it'

502

Lord, look out from your heaven upon your servant who has sought refuge
In the protection of your shade. Give strength to him that he may cross
The high sea of this life and let him recite
The ode of Moses and Mariham and Aaron.

503

I will say to you, God, with a psaltery¹⁷ of ten strings
And go into your house and secretly withdraw
And reveal to you all my thoughts which are hidden
About people and they will appear before your face.

504

Make me worthy, my God, to come to your upright house
And worship before your holy temple and kiss your atrium¹⁸
And see you, son of God, sitting on your throne
In your great glory upon the chariot of the Cherubim.

505

My God, make me for you a juniper tree, that is, the cypress
And four-sided wood and make me sit on Mount Ararat.
Make me an olive branch which was the first to grow
Of any tree after the Flood.

506

Purify my heart that it may become for a
Pure tablet and write on it with your finger your columns
That your words may take root in me in truth
And I may preserve the Ten Blessed Commandments.

¹⁷ The Arabic word for Psalms, oddly enough, is one associated with a wind and not a string instrument.

¹⁸ The Greek word used in probably and adaptation of the Latin word. Ar. 'threshold'.

507

If I keep them, I will become a dwelling place for your contemplation
And consider all the mysteries of your creation
And receive the authority to loosen and to bind
And become king over ten cities in the heavens.

508

I know that I will achieve this if I abandon the works of pollution
And light wicks of my lamp and strengthen its stand
And see the queen standing swathed in the glory of Hesbon,¹⁹
The queen of women and the mother of God, the coeval Logos.²⁰

509

I have said these things, Lord, because the zeal to be in your house has consumed me
Bring me, my God, to your holy mountain which is fat²¹
That I may consider the entire creation with its height and depth
And speak in it words of truth.

510

Bring my soul from the field of Tanis
That I may see your ark which is called 'Box'
That I may look upon you as you heal the lame and the sick
And give light to the blind and cast out demons.

511

My God, do not cast my words upon me like a judgement,
But let them be for me glory and praise.²²
Save me from the tribulations of this place of sojourn and this region
For the power over all things is yours, eternal ruler.

¹⁹ Nagel has an elaborate note about this passage, with a reference to 310,1. Both passages seem to have their origin in Ps. 45,10 and Ps. 45,14.

²⁰ Ar. 'self-created'.

²¹ The Coptic word has to be emended to produce this meaning.

²² It looks as if the writer has tried to make a noun from the Gk κλέω

512

Give me my request through the intercession of those you have placed in her womb.
Your beloved apostle saw upon her head a diadem²³
Of the twelve stars. And he also bore witness
That she is clothed in light, the moon under her feet.

513

You, Christ our God, in your love you became flesh
From the daughter of the one tread upon the lion and the bear.²⁴
We offer up to you censers, incense and styrax.
We bring you offerings of blessing upon the altar.

514

And we say : The year of your goodness,²⁵ bless its crown
Give the earth to drink from your dew until its furrows drink,
Increasing its fruit in without loss and decay.
Give the rams pleasure with the sheep in its good pastures.

515

Grant us all that we may find mercy before you
On the day of the great trumpet and the great earthquake.
Give us strength that we may swim in the great flood
And the river of burning fire may be extinguished before us.

516

God, sprinkle our souls with hyssop from your vessel.²⁶
Write our name with your saints on your board.
Give us an inheritance in Jerusalem and Zion.

²³ The Gk word in the sense of 'diadem' is attested in Callimachus *Hymn to Delos* 166.

²⁴ Ar. 'lioness'.

²⁵ Ar. 'anointing'

²⁶ Ar. 'of basil'

You have not cast us from the number of your great horde.

517

My brother, do not say to me: You have said many things. What does it mean ?
I have not said many words, but I gather my young, like a hen,
Because I am afraid of the beaker of wine which he passes from one to another
And which all sinners will drink unmixed.

518

Now I am sad, my brothers, and mourn
For this people to which all vows and offerings belong.
How it is fallen gradually into error throughout its life
Until its soul has robbed it of the return to the place of rest.

519

Come to me now, you spinning women,
And tell me the news of your husbands
Who slaughter sheep when the moon is at its tail end,
Which is called the Descending Node²⁷

520

Tell me now, you women who spin in the moonlight,
What has prevented you from working in daylight ?
Loitering in the alleys, in the houses, on the roads,
To set a bad example.

521

What shall I say about you, fig-tree, that has no gardener ?
The people who did not know the burning of the sheep's bones from head to foot
Or the secret of sprinkling its blood on the doorposts
Of their houses so that the destroyer of the first born might not destroy them.

²⁷ The term used in astronomy: the point at which the ecliptic orbit crosses the plane going south.

522

You are like your mother, who concealed the idols
Under the saddle of her camel. She was not afraid of Jacob and the oath,
So she gave birth to Benjamin, her soul departed.
She died in Ephratha after a just judgement.

523

You are the woman rebuked by the prophet for their hairstyle, adornment and fringe,
The locks of their hair and anointing their lap.
They abandoned their hymns and singing
And embraced necklaces and armbands.

524

They are the women who liked cushions and pillows,
Who left their husbands and married merchants,
Who in turn killed the wives after they had taken their pleasure from them,
In spite of their beauty and beloved children.

525

This is the retribution for those who indulge in drunkenness and gluttony,
Who luxuriate in revelry, baths and washing,
So that those with whom they luxuriate pierce them with sharp spears
And see their enemies and rejoice over the downfall of the godless.

526

This is the retribution for those who have walked in great luxuriance,
And boasting, pride and drunkenness.
Their fire will be lit with tow and sulphur and brushwood
And they will be forever lifeless in the outer darkness.

527

This is the revenge for those who continue in strife
And abandon discernment²⁸ and counsel
And kick up dust at the gates
And walk in the way of Balaam the ventroloquist.²⁹

528

I am speaking of the man whom God shamed with a donkey,
Which held fast to the wall, as when one drives in a dowel rod.
The donkey taught him that the angel of the Lord wanted retribution from him,
As he commemorated his people in evils.

529

When this man heard this, he became sad,
But the gifts and the silver robbed him of his intelligence.
Then God gave him great understanding.
He prophesied about the star that was clearly to rise from Judah.

530

Let us leave this man and look upn the cedar³⁰ becoming green
And distinguish between leprosy and the still unhealed scar³¹
And sing in this Psalm, i.e. to the end, about the wine presses
And be angry without sinning so that we may see the good.

531

Let us distinguish between common scratches and the scar
And recognize the rash and pock marks and the scar
And the abscess and the wound so that we are not harmed
And the wise among us do not become stupid without knowledge.

²⁸ I Cor. 12,10

²⁹ Ar. 'soothsayer'.

³⁰ Ar. 'Christ's Thorn'.

³¹ Ar. 'living scar'.

532

If we are able to distinguish between leprosy, the rash and the scar,
And divide the light from the darkness, we will be saved from harm
And worthy to celebrate our holy Pasch on the 16th day
After the new moon of the month of Parmoute, called April.

533

Come with me, my brothers, to Golgotha, until
You see the one on whose head the Jews set a crown of thorns.
For he is the one who has borne our sins that are like woven barbs
And for our sake took up the curse on his cross in the Place of Skulls.

534

Come and let us bring the offering
And cut out the roots that bear no fruit with hoes³²
And make music with trumpets and bells
With strings and psalters.³³

Stanzas 535 to 582,1 are missing

582

.....
But he called Lazarus. He came forth with covered face
And as he passed by walked on the grave, which the sons of Hemor
Had sold to Abraham for a thousand.³⁴

583

He speaks to us in the Bible
And we all know that He is the one
Who has promised to give us the crown and the diadem

³² Ar. 'fuels'.

³³ The Ar. form means 'psalms'

³⁴ The Coptic is 'meliarison'. Ar. has two words: 'paper' and 'dirhems'.

And who lets us sit on the spiritual thrones.

584

He gave Moses the offering of bulls
And instituted the office of priest of Aaron for a long time.³⁵
When it was finished, he gave to his apostles on their side
The mercy of the Paraclete spirit.

585

He said to the old ones: You should not steal,
But to us he said: Love your enemies.
He also said: Those who dare to blaspheme the holy spirit
Will not be forgiven in both aeons.

586

He also prepared our ways.
He taught those nearby and far away
Not to be angry with those who curse them
And strike them in the face, as he himself showed us.

587

He taught us all these teachings for these times
So that all our branches might blossom and not wither
And we might bring good cargo and enter
The house of God with our first offerings and tithes.

588

And that we might bring our pomegranate and figs³⁶
And our oil and wine in jars
And bring our requests and prayers
And put them up on feast days to the horns of the altar.

³⁵ Lit. 'days'

³⁶ AR. 'walnuts'

589

He who was swathed in linen bandages
Revealed the great wonders.
He knows all my works which I have done
And my thoughts, the crooked and the straight.

590

I beg his goodness that he save me
Listen to my prayer and heed me
And send his mercy that it may feed me
And that I may be sated with the fruits of his benevolence.

591

I beg him to give strength to my bones
And protect me that my light may not be extinguished
And to grant me the oil of mercy that
The door may not close upon me on the day of the terrible judgement.

592

I beg him to give strength to my bones,
To loosen my chains that bind me
That I may follow him and leave the dead who should bury
Their own dead and inter them in graves.

593

I beg him to save me from a fall and a demon of midday
And forgive me most of my sins, as I
Love his holy name and say in my heart:
Will my soul not submit to the true God ?

594

I now know, I the miserable one, I am
Like the one who stained his garment and, when he
Tried to remove the stain, called to his soul: Arise !
And desist immediately from evil deeds.

595

Why did you (fem.) allow evil desires to seduce you
Did you put on garments that are more contemptible than a pack saddle ?
Arise with me now, for I want to divide Sichem
And count the valley of the true tent.

596

Why, my soul, have you fallen to earth and attached yourself
To the earth like two pieces of wood pierced by nails ?
Arise now and sing with the Praise of the Steps.
I have lifted my eyes to you, invisible God.

597

If you do this, you will receive the mercy of God
And he will send you his help and strength, and they will be with you.
He will illuminate you with the light of a true spirit,
Which is the Paraclete spirit.

598

Arise (fem) and bring your oath to the Lord
And be like the one who covered the feet of the Lord
With her tears, and say: If the Lord does not
Build a house, the effort of a builder is in vain.

599

Call and say: sprinkle me
With your hyssop so that I can
See your mysteries and receive the key
To your heavenly kingdoms.

600

My brothers, come and see the jubilation and joy
Which I have obtained in abstemiousness and self-sufficiency,³⁷
For I have heard the one who says: The sun has risen
And the animals have gathered and have fallen asleep in their holes.

601

The man comes out to his work and seeks nourishment
From the herbs of the field, which one throws into the oven.
So I said: Will God
Forget the works of his hands ?

602

Then I said: You, God, have created me
You have tested my works and known me,
And in your mercy have saved and liberated me,
Have guaranteed me everlasting life.

603

When I multiplied my errors
And wove the chain of my sins, you behaved to me in your own way,
You had mercy on me and were not angry with me
Because of my evil deeds.

³⁷ The Coptic **ⲡⲟⲩⲉ** can mean either 'care' or 'sufficiency'. It is not clear to me why Nagel thinks that the Arabic word has to be translated and not the Coptic.

604

So I know, you are God and turn from your anger,
And you will have mercy and not be angry.
I have truly learned that you have not omitted
Your acts of mercy before the aeons.

605

Have mercy on me, God, and forgive
The multitude of my sins and do not spit me
Out of your mouth, you who openly forgave
The wrongs of the people of Niniveh.

606

I know, my God that you want mercy
More than sacrifice. In this you know all my ways.
So I have tried
To tear out all my limbs from the worldly body.

607

God, you are my help and protection,
My salvation and my oath,
By which I swore in my great distress,
Help me to fulfill it in honour.

608

Help me, my God, in your strength until
My feet are able to walk on the thorns
And I receive from your goodness this great incense³⁸
And heal the sufferings of my innards.³⁹

³⁸ A. 'antidote' from 'theriaca'.

³⁹ Ar. 'extremities of the body'.

609

Look, what is better or more pleasant than if
Two or three brothers live in a house
Whose love comes down in its balm
Like that on the head of Aaron

610

That comes down on the beard and the seam of
His clothes until his mouth breaks into laughter.
These are compared with the wise virgins.
They have become like the dew of Hermon.

611

Save me, my God, from the illness of jaundice
For I have become old and bennt.
Make me young that I might stretch like the cedar of Lebanon
That is planted in the house of the true God.

612

Raise me, my God, like the date palm, planted
In your house and count me with the one who has sown
The good seed and torn up weeds
From his land, and it has become clear.

613

In this I will rejoice in my good works
And be jubilant when I see my many fruits
And be glad about my land, which will be left,
After it is cultivated and has borne spiritual fruits.

614

But if I see that my field is tilled,
I prepare my net and hunt

The phoenix, the large long-lived bird
That truly has in it the mystery of the resurrection.

615

So I will go forth and gather up the seams
Of my garments and humiliate the gates
And see how they carry sacks on their necks,
Filled with sand because of their evil deeds.

616

My brother, try to give what you owe
So that the mercy of God seeks you and hastens to you
And numerous peoples bend down before you
And the sons of kings adore you with gifts.

617

Then you will see them all, how they have bent
Their knee to you and are clothed
With their best garments, but you will clothe yourself
In luminous white garments

618

And wear a gold chain around your neck and brooches
Of precious stones and walk in your finery, full of peace,
Until the help of God raises you and carries you
To the sublime ones in the eternal tents.

619

Then you will have a seed in Zion
And will be worthy to reach Zion
And will dare to sing
New spiritual hymns in Zion

620

Then a seed will be given to you in Zion,
And you will overcome the wicked who are envious of Zion
And rejoice when you put in Zion
All your possessions that are kept in the other aeon.

621

You will obtain this if you learn about the kingdom of God and do what is acceptable
And bring forth from your intellectual treasure new and old.
If the wisdom of God says to you: You have known this, you will say that
You hear through them the sweet blessed voice.

622

Blessed are the watchful servants, for I am coming
At an hour which they do not know. And I will give them
My kingdom because I am among those on high and I see
Those humble in their heart and the upright.

623

My brother, make your way to God and do not be hesitant,
For the one who makes his way to him will receive some of his grace.
Through this the soul which has wisdom, sees
The good things of the kingdom of heaven.

624

This is the part of those who have looked for heavenly goods
And followed Christ and taken his burden upon them.
They have imitated him who said: The brilliance of the sun
Is one thing, but the brilliance of the moon something else.

625

They are the people who have received a share of the wage and recompense
From the one who appeared to his disciples and took honey

And fried fish in lowliness
And explained to them all the thoughts of the prophets.

626

This is the part of the man who attaches himself
To God and acts according to the law which he set.
God blessed him and made him rich
With many days and taught him his true healing.

627

And he gave him strength to tread on snakes and basilisks⁴⁰
And fly up on high like an eagle and a falcon
And to hear Philip say: Unless there two hundred
Staters of bread, I will not be able to satisfy this large crowd.

628

And he sees the one who overcame the temptations of Satan
And with five loaves satisfied a large crowd
In the desert. Then he showed Thomas the twin
The nail wounds and spear marks in the divine side.

629

And we may believe that there is no separation
Between his divinity and his humanity.
He is the one whose divine light has diffused
Over those who sit in the dark and the shadow of death.

630

We also believe that his divinity has become one
With his humanity and that he is the one who answered
The man who went sadly and was far

⁴⁰ Ar., not surprisingly, has understood this word, a mythical creature wearing what looks like a crown, as 'king'

From the kingdom of God because he liked Mammon.

631

"If you keep the commandments and if
You really want to become perfect and receive
The nutrition of the kingdom of heaven and hasten
To receive what is due to you,

632

Go and sell all your possessions
And give to the poor, and you will be saved from damnation
And turn your thoughts from this place
To the place your treasure is true."⁴¹

633

But when he heard all these words, which we write down,
He went sadly away, for they became a curse to him
Through the one who said: You have seen in what way
The rich remove themselves from the kingdom of heaven.

634

Then he said: It is easier for the camel
To pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person, as I teach you,
To enter the kingdom of God with you,
You poor in spirit, you rich in spiritual goods.

635

When they heard these words from both sides,
Namely, those who had left their boats and nets,
Christ called them his companions and brothers.
He blessed them, for they had seen his secrets.

⁴¹ Both Coptic and Arabic indicate that stanzas 631 and 632 are direct speech.

636

These are the men whom he called wise.
He granted them various gifts.
He gave them joy and caused their hearts to laugh,
For he promised them that they would sit on twelve thrones.

637

These are the men who made their way to Christ with a broken heart.
He caused their senses to wake up from their sleep.
He caused his words to light up in them through his answer.
He illuminated them with his beaming light.

638

My beloved, come, for we collect
Beautiful precious stones and spices
And receive from the 80 eggs
And catch the falcon and the crane.

639

So let us catch the great antelope
And smell the fragrance which
Diffuses over us and thresh
On our threshing floor and take the wheat into our granary.

640

My beloved, let us thresh on our threshing floor
And call our friends and ask them
To remove themselves from the works of the idler,
That is, the worthless ne'er-do-well.

641

So we want to gather, my brothers, and shed
Our tears and transfer our fragrance to the persea⁴² tree
So that we can escape and remove ourselves
From all thoughts that shock.

642

Let us hear the one who says: Honour the widows !
The widows truly perform the service we require,
The service of the saints which makes use of them
Who practise it in true love.

643

But we, if we follow the words of this great teacher,
Will be saved from the great conflagration,
Which is ready for the sinners, as it is written:
They will be subjected to eternal punishments.

644

This is the true word, written in the
Gospel about those who stain themselves
With pitilessness, and they will be like stained graves,
Over which people will walk and not know them.

645

They are the people about whom he said:
They hated the light, because their works were bad.
So their years and days have disappeared.
They have passed with their impure thoughts.

⁴² It seems odd that the Ar. translator has not understood this word.

646

As they hated the light, God hated them.
He knew their thoughts beforehand and examined them.
Before they were conceived and born
They were prepared for the great tribunal.

647

These are the ones who prepared their souls for the fiery flames
In the outer darkness. Even if the light shines in the fire,
This fire is darkness that casts flaming arrows
And penetrates the hearts of the godless with its glowing heat.

648

Did you, my brother, know this great fiery flame
And really understand it ? Although the light shines in the fire,
It is still fire, which is dark and casts fiery flame,
An extreme darkness below at the bottom of the underworld.

649

If this truly is my thought and knowledge, why
Do I spend day after day looking after
Wordly desires, even though I do not know
At what hour death will overtake me.

650

Why did I let my enemies steal my money ?
I have said before: If they catch me, they will throw me to the ground.
I have failed and not said: The zeal for my house will consume me,
And I will drive the merchants and dealers from my temple with a whip.

651

How could I forget until my enemies took my property ?

What shall I reply when the judge asks me

About the talent and says to me :

Was it the right thing for you to throw my money before the money changer and lender ?

652

I have come to get my money with interest

And to receive the one human being I have chosen,

To pasture Jacob, the people of many crowds

That he may become king over their leaders and armies.

653

Woe to me, who have become more wretched as I change,

I became violent in my measure and weight.

I was hated in the midst of my men and my tribe.

I was like someone from another tribe before them.

654

So I was very gloomy and my heart was afflicted.

I said: God, you can take away my iniquity

And loosen the chains of my crimes

And make my wretched soul free.

655

Let you angel say to my soul: Why

Do you weep ? And give me the pleasure of this young girl called Rhode,

To whom those gathered in the house of Mary said: You realize

That you are saying that Peter has come out of prison ?

656

My God, give me strength and resilience

And a fate like that of the one who has afraid of the gatekeeper (f.)

And then announced the magnitude of your divinity,
Until he died on the cross in the time of Nero. with his head down.

657

This is your vicar, to whom you have given the keys
Of the kingdom of heaven. So he did not bore and dig
His way through the roof, but went in through the gate and saw
What many prophets and just people wanted to see.

658

My God, you are the gate and the shepherd and the gatekeeper.
I beg your goodness to kill
The limbs of my sins from the heels to the neck
And let your life take root in my skull.

659

Woe to my poor soul, for it did not think
Of the praise of the mother of God on her feast day.
This was not genuine forgetting, but it was conscious of
Its weakness while making the great encomium to her.

660

How will I forget this virgin whose fragrance
Is everywhere, while fragrant women⁴³
Make plaits for their garments, their insatiability having found
A way to make their clothes colourful and gilded.

661

This is the ark and the lamp and the incense.
It too is the tent and the measure of manna and the daughter
Of Joakhim and the Anna, the seed of Jesse, whose
Parents became for her children, whom she cared for in her piety.

⁴³ Ar. 'weavers' (f.)

662

This is the virgin and chosen⁴⁴ lady.
She too is the fragrant lily and the staff of the hazel⁴⁵
Who has found openness of speech and a great opportunity⁴⁶
To become an ambassador for humanity.

663

This is the holy and special Theotokos
Above heaven and earth. She is a vine laden
With her fruit of truth. I ask her to receive me
To her to give me to drink of her true wine of reason.

664

As a stag likes to linger at the spring,
My soul likes to drink the must
Of the true vine and cut the branches of the date palm,
And I sing before the one who moves into Zion.

665

I praise him with the children of the Hebrews in songs of praise
And watch him mount the donkey's child
And see his sublime works, which he will do,
While he throws away the gold of the money changer.

666

I see him, as he drives⁴⁷ the sheep and cattle with a whip,⁴⁸
And as he bores through the hearts of the priests and Jews

⁴⁴ Ar. 'noble'

⁴⁵ Ar. 'almond'

⁴⁶ Ar. 'means'

⁴⁷ Coptic uses the same verb here and in verse 2, while Ar. has two different verbs.

⁴⁸ Ar. 'stick'

With his words, that they have made
The house of his father into a trading place of evil.

667

The he said a true word to them with his tongue:
Each one who falls on this stone is bruised.
None of you was able to bear this excuse
For it is the stone enviously rejected by the builders.

668

For he, our Lord, knew their thoughts and moves
And he destroyed the structure that they built.
No stone remained on another. Their captivity could not be turned.
They became rejected⁴⁹ in the two aeons.

669

The word spoken over them by our saviour was fulfilled.
It drove the spear of revenge into their entrails and pierced
Their pit full of lions. But their enemy he dug out
For them and directed him against them that they might remain in peace.

670

Then he made a structure⁵⁰ for them so that on it
Their bodies would be crushed until their flesh was decimated
And their bodies were dismantled into pieces for what they had done
Of evil with all the previous prophets.

671

Christ said about them: They saw and looked
And hated me and my father and stopped me.
So I will take away their priesthood and the keys

⁴⁹ Crum (CD) does not cite this example, though he obviously used the *Triadon* extensively for his dictionary.

⁵⁰ Ar. 'threshing machine'.

Of knowledge, prophecy and the kingdom too.

672

This is the wrong race that has not recognized the extent
Of the prophetic word, which is mighty and decisive.
Their soul has shunned the sweet water in the winepress
Which flows from the true rocks.

673

These are the children who complained about the one who fed them
With manna and who longed for the fruit of the cedar.
So they fell into troublesome traps and went down.
They were robbed of their entry into the promised land.

674

They are the ones who liked living in the land of Goshen
And did not think of the grave that Abraham had acquired in Sichem
From the sons of Hemor, who followed Ham,
These who are called the children of Canaan.

675

I want to leave the subject of these men and
Gain some knowledge, insight and ability to judge
And measure the holy city which no-one was able to enter,
Except those who had followed the true lamb.

676

This is the city from the which the dogs and swine are driven
And the blemished and the adulterers, and everything is cast into the furnace
That burns with fire and cleanses their streets and alleys
From the poisoners and the nuisance makers.

677

Blessed is the soul which has not loved
Works that are evil but has loved only love,
Which has become very worthy in the endurance of its place
Of rest in this city of reason.

678

Blessed are those who have become worthy of spiritual
Nourishment. They have taken up their place of rest in paradise of good things.
Their bodies will rise and be nourished
In the church of the first-born and the spiritual shelters.

679

My fathers, come and see that I have dug down to
The roots of the earth. Then I measured another thousand
Cubits down beyond the hole to loose sand,
Where there was no stone or clay.

680

So my fathers, think of the time when I came upon you.
You met me and said
To me: Do you wish to test us
With your words which you throw at us ?

681

I said to you: I want to go to Armenia⁵¹
And learn in that place the skill of interpreting
The whole meaning of the hot washing
Of the feet on the day of the Lord's dinner.

⁵¹ Ar. 'Romania'. The sound connection between the final words of vv. 1 and 2: Armenia-Hermeneia (interpreting); the rhyme in v.3 is achieved by two words pronounced as one: 'therme neia'.

682

One stood with you. She bent her neck
Upon me and sneered at me in the form
Of one laughing at me or one whispering at my form
That she took my word like vain words.

683

I Looked at her and bent my head
To her and said to her: Woman, you are the one⁵²
Who will laugh at me, and you do not know the number
Of the thoughts which I have gathered in this Triadon.

684

I then said to her: Now I beseech you,
My sister, to leave
All my errors, as you left
The milk of your mother to eat perfect food.

685

Then I said to her: I wish to go with you to phoenix,
Woman who has adorned herhair with garlands
And stand with you before the tribunal of the Felix
Until I hear him say to me: You have become delusional with books.⁵³

686

And I will answer: I am not delusional, but rather my defence I have balanced it
With an equitable balance. Accept it now
And take it and know the word that says: It is necessary for
The son of man to be raised so that the faithful can obtain rest.

⁵² Grammatical accuracy has had to yield here to the exigencies of the rhyming scheme. It is the only self-referential stanza in the parts of the work that have survived.

⁵³ One of the meanings of the Ar. word is 'lectures'

687

I beseech you, Apa Barsouma,
Save me from the temptations that are stronger than the body.
Cover my shame with the garment
That you wear, wise one of our time.

688

I beseech you, teacher of Saint Besa,⁵⁴
Grant me the strength of the prophet
Destroyed by the Jews, that I may be with the wise
Virgins who entered with their bridegroom.

689

There are people who have kept the commandments
And become worthy to enter paradise.
God looked on them and did not ignore
Their good⁵⁵ works.

690

These are the people who have weaved
The garland of their works by testing
The straight and uneven ways,
And have run into their arena.

691

These are the virgins who overcame
The arrows of the flames of the fire.
They never menstruated.
They became louder and pure.

⁵⁴ Probably a reference to Shenoute, abbot of the White Monastery near Sohag (Upper Egypt) in the 5th cent. AD.

⁵⁵ In Coptic and Greek.

692

These, whose passions died completely,
Followed the one who died for his people.
They filled the people with the oil of their mercy
As the wise ones filled their vessels.

693

Come, my brothers, see these great deeds
Of the wise virgins, which we too wish to execute,
And teach me how to do them
And how I negligent I am in the neglect of those who are idle.

694

But now I know that the salvation of my appearance is my God.
That the salvation of my lifespan is my God and
That the salvation of my trial is my God
And that my soul is saved by his invisible power.

695

But God is the one who also rescues my soul.
He did not deliver me to those who wished to corrupt my soul.
How could God corrupt a soul
That has trusted his mercy ?

696

Therefore I have presented myself to bear
The burden of our saviour, who came
To save us and relieve us of the burden
That oppresses us.

697

He has provided us with access
To the sheepfold he has pastured
And in his mercy has also guaranteed them
Pasture alongside us.

698

This one who chose the young David and took him
From the flock, tested his heart and measured him,
He took him from among the babies and transformed him
Into a king over wise men and princes.

699

This is the man intended by God
To be king over his people and compared by him
With the loyal man who has attached himself
To God with his works of light.

700

This is the man who became neither angry nor aggressive,
Who did not eat sour grapes so that the teeth of his sons
Did not become dulled and they were not thrown with her
Who was thrown out of the house of her virginity with her pimps.⁵⁶

701

Hail to the one who went to the place near the desert
And saw the ascetes in the desert.
Some of you recite Jeremiah,
Others read the Paralipomena.

⁵⁶ Ar. 'fornications'

702

Others dispute about the great oven.
Some research into the great wine press.
But I say to you: Why, you great men,
Do you think about these great secrets ?

703

They said to me: Do not speak to us in anger
And think about what Thomas did
With our saviour, until he saw the nail marks
And the spear cuts in his divine side.

704

I said to them: I believe that Christ is alive in me
And I am confident that Christ also in my heart
And I hope that Christ reveals in me
The meaning of the great mysteries.

705

They said to me: Explain
These questions to us with spears
Directed at the the hearts of opponents, for without
Arrows strung the conflict is not finished.

706

I said to them: I will go to those who wash.⁵⁷
Perhaps I will find among them or happen upon
Clothes that are white and clean,
That I may wear white clothes.

⁵⁷ Ar. 'fullers'

707

And that I may raise myself to the house of the heron
Who is very high and not be weak
At heart with those whose hearts have been weak
And have not been steadfast with this temptation.

708

I will utter these words with a broken heart
And I beseech God to send
His help to us that we may find a way
To his eternal kingdom.

709

Those who said to me: Annas is coming,
I said to them: No,⁵⁸my brothers.
But now, my beloved brothers, Anna is coming,
For she is the mother of the Theotokos.

710

This woman who has become a sign for us like the winnowing fan ⁵⁹
She has produced for us the one who purified the threshing floor with the winnowing fan.
He took his wheat to make face-bread with it.
The chaff he burned in the unquenchable fire.⁶⁰

711

He instructed his disciples to invite the Samaritans,
And even though the Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans,
He wanted to have to do with them
To save the one who had fallen among thieves.

712

⁵⁸ The negative particle has been slightly dislocated here, but the sound required by the writer makes this necessary.

⁵⁹ Ar. 'flag' Two variants: 'banner' and 'spear'.

⁶⁰ The same negative word as used in 709, unnecessary for the meaning but necessary for the rhyme.

He took him up to the innkeeper.
He sent Barnabas and Saul to the Antiochenes.
He made the successor of his people the leader
Of the new Israel through his sublime teachings.

713

This is the man who taught me to cut my hair
And instructed me to find a cool place under the shade of my tree.
He taught me to set out my net
And catch the birds that find shade under its branches.

714

If we, my beloved brothers, long for
Great strength and protection,
Let us catch the eagle in its nests,
For they gather where the carrion⁶¹ is.

715

Then let us climb the high tree
That grows in the middle of the citadel⁶²
And look at the women, whose long hair hangs loose
And who go along the roofs of the citadel.

716

Some of the wear dresses with delicate fringes.
They sing songs and hymns.
They dance rondos and clap
Their hands and are joyful in their hearts.

⁶¹ Ref. to Mat 24,28. Ar. 'body'.

⁶² Ar. 'balcony'.

717

Some tap out the rhythm with their feet,
While others lift up baskets.
They have taken these up and enter the sanctuary
After they have walked through the pastophoria.⁶³

718

Then I saw the king, how he entered the great bark.
He is the the great shepherd and the great overseer⁶⁴
He received me and made me an overseer over them
So that I might graze them on the wide meadow.

719

It is right for me, my father, henceforth to take off
The old garment and prepare myself to climb the sycamore
And to do as Zacchaeus did, the descendant of Shem, the son of Noah,
Who was a tax collector.

720

It is right for me not to become an object of ridicule
And henceforth to become a wise man
And to take spruce and cedar wood with me
And with them and cypress to make a roof.

721

I want to look for people who hate people
And bring them to me so that I can take them in and employ them
In my vineyard like the sons of my body
And pay them a holokottinos⁶⁵ each.

⁶³ Rooms on the east side of the church where offerings are normally kept. The Ar. *zuqâq al beit* probably refers to a narrow passage through which lateral access to the church is possible.

⁶⁴ The word used is 'episkopos' but the Arabic text understands 'overseer'.

⁶⁵ A hybrid word meaning 'whole' (Greek) and 'cooked' (Latin), a solid gold coin.

722

I am now an administrator.
It is right for me to pay workers a suitable wage
And to begin with the new before the old
And the last before the first.

723

If I do this, I will be able to neutralize the arrows
That glow in the fire and achieve salvation
And with my right hand grasp the fan
And drive away the small animals from the altar.

724

I want to make this fan from feathers

Verses 724,2 to 728,3 are missing

728,4

They ate from the true hidden man.

729

For they were made worth to lie in the lap of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
I am now imitating their change by doubling and multiplying myself through it
And I heed the words of Ezra, who recalled Akob
And gathered the divine statutes together.

730

This is the man whose old skin is removed and taken off,
Because God anointed him with the salve of his oil.⁶⁶
He went on the straight path and did not take off
The white garment which he had put on.

⁶⁶ 'Oil' can be literal and metaphorical.

731

He was blessed by God, his saviour.

He received mercy when he was taken to his own people.

His soul did not die, even if some thought he was dead.

I do not know. God is the one who knows secrets.

732

I am not saying this for no reason, but when I read the book

Of Ezra the man of truth and how he instructed the wife to go to her husband,

Who saw her looking depressed on their piece of land,

And he thought in his heart: What does this wonderful vision mean ?