

KITĀB AL-MAGĀLL

OR

THE BOOK OF THE ROLLS.

ONE OF THE BOOKS OF CLEMENT.

IN the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy f. 89 b
Ghost, one God, the merciful Lord.

This book is one of the hidden books of Saint Clement the Apostle, disciple of Simon Cepha, which Saint Clement commanded to be kept secret from the laity. Some of them were called "The Book of the Rolls," and there are the glorious genealogies and mysteries which our God and Saviour Jesus the Christ committed to his disciples Simon and James, and what things will happen at the end of time, and how the second coming of our Lord the Christ from heaven to the world will happen, and what will become of sinners and such like. This is the sixth of Clement's books, treasured up in the city of Rome since the time of the Apostles.

Saint Clement said, When our God Jesus the Christ went up to heaven, and the disciples were scattered in the regions of the world to evangelize, and to call mankind to the faith and to immersion by baptism, they took disciples, whom they chose and selected to be with them, and to travel about to the countries in the faith of the Christ. Wherefore Simon Cepha took me for a disciple to himself; I believed in him, and in Him that sent him, with a true faith; I recognized that he was chief of the Apostles, to whom were given the keys of heaven and earth, on whom was built the Catholic Apostolic Church of God, which

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- f. 90 a the gates of Hell shall not destroy, as our God Jesus the Christ said in the holy Gospel. After a long time he took also my brothers Constans¹ and Constantinus¹ to be his disciples. Twenty years after he had taken me as his disciple, he brought me together with my father and my mother, who was called Metrodora, and committed to me all the mysteries which had been given him by our Lord Jesus the Christ on the Mount of Olives². At that time the rest of the Apostles and all the believers had a struggle with the unbelieving Jews because the Jews were killing every one of the believers whose murder was possible to them. I and my gracious Teacher Simon encompassed some of the countries, and we met with great trouble from the controversy of the Jews, and their questioning about the genealogy of the pure Mary, for their saying about her was that she was not of the children of Judah that they might invalidate by this the coming of our Lord the Christ into the world, and His Incarnation from her. They were increasing [their] bribe of money and other things to the Greeks and the Romans that they might help them in the destruction of the believers and the bringing to nought of their business, and hinder the Apostles from the reading of the Law, lest they should teach out of it about the state of mankind, and how it was in the beginning. When I saw in what misery we were with the Jews, I sought from my gracious Teacher that he would make known to me how mankind were at the beginning, and that he would make me perfect about the reasons, for he had learned everything from the Lord Jesus the Christ, and I was acquainted with the tongue of the Greeks and their
- f. 90 b books, and was learned in their mysteries, and I had deposited their secrets which had been entrusted to me, [in] my two books called the seventh and the eighth. I informed my Teacher what I conjectured about the envy towards the Lady Mary, and my anxiety at the reproach of the Jews to me that I did not understand the Torah, and their much questioning of me about the creation of our father Adam, and what I had heard with my ears of their insult to the Lady Mary and their

¹ See note, p. xv.

² Lit. oil.

fiction about her without any resource being possible for me [how] I should refute them in regard to their hateful saying. The Teacher was moved by my excitement, and zeal entered him when I told him about it. He said, "I will put it in order for thee, O my son, as thou hast asked me about it, and will initiate thee in things since the beginning of the creation, and will teach thee the genealogy of the Mother of Mercy, Mary the pure, and its authenticity, and that without doubt she is of the lineage of Judah the son of Jacob and his tribe, and I will relate to thee mysteries, and what reason there was for the fall of the Devil, the prince, from heaven. Know, O my son, that the Lord is the beginning and before the beginning, He who is Infinite, raised above the height, equal with the Highest, there is nothing lower about Him, nothing inward, nothing outward, He is before the beginning, the ancient substance, He who is boundless, whom no intelligence can reach, and no discernment nor quality can comprehend. He was above Being, and with Being, and below Being, the creative Substance, the glorious Light, which darkness reacheth not, Light dwelling in the Light which eyes cannot reach, before creation He was; and He is the Former of forms, whose glory is from Himself and in Himself, and in His Essence. [He is] the Creator of what glorifies Him, that thou f. 91 a mayest learn His divinity and His power, He made the heaven and the earth, He created before harmony the division of things. Angels worship Him, ten homogeneous choirs, I mean by this ten ranks. The highest rank, some of whom are nearest to the throne of the Lord God, pouring out praises in abundance, is the rank of Satanaeel, who was the prince, and praises rose up to God from all the Angels; that was the beginning in the first day which was the holy first day (Sunday), chief of days; early in it God created the upper heaven and the worlds, and the highest rank of Angels, which is the rank of Satanaeel, and the Archangels, and powers, and chiefs, and thrones, and dignities and governors, and cherubim and seraphim, and light, and day and night, and wind and water, and air, and fire and what is like these elements. Verily the Lord formed all this, may His names be sanctified! by the completion of His eternal Word

without speech, and in the first day in which these things were created, the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters, and in its hovering over them they were blessed and sanctified, and heat was formed in them by which the watery beings are born, and with this were mixed yeasts of the creatures, such as the bird which lays¹ the egg by its wings, and from this is formed the living bird, for by reason of the nature of the heat of flaming fire, it verily reneweth heat in the wings of the bird, and lo!

f. 91 b with them it lays an egg in which chickens are formed. Verily the reason why the holy Paraclete hovered over the waters in the form of a bird, was that every winged fowl should be formed in this shape. On the second day God created the lower heaven, which is called the firmament, on which the gaze of men falls, that thou mayest know that the beings of the highest heavens which the heaven of the visible firmament covers are like the nature of the heaven of the firmament, except that the heaven which the eyes reach is separated from the highest heavens. All the heavens are three heavens. The visible firmament, and what is above it; it is called *Δίπαιον* and above it there is flaming fire; and a heaven which is above the fire; and the two heavens are filled with light and fire which created eyes cannot look at. On the second day which is the second of the days (Monday) the Lord, to Whom be praise! separated between the higher water and the lower water. Verily the rising up of the water which was formed in the height that day was like gathered clouds clinging together, and the waters remained resting in the air, none of them inclining to any one district. On the third day (Tuesday) God commanded the waters which were below the firmament that they should be gathered together to one place, that the dry land might be seen. When this happened, the veil was removed which was above the earth and the earth was disclosed. He looked upon it, and it was barren of verdure, [it was] dust and water mixed together.

f. 92 a The water was in it and below it and above it, and it was shaken to the blowing of the winds through it. The air went up from the bosom of the earth, and rested in the bosom of its

¹ يحط. Bezold يحضن = hatches.

crevices and passages that in these caves might arise heat and cold for the service and consolidation of the earth, because the earth was created like a sponge standing above the water. On this day God commanded the earth to bring forth grass and reeds and trees and seeds and roots and other things. On the fourth day (Wednesday) God formed the sun and the moon and the stars that the heat of the sun might be spread over the earth and it should be strengthened by its mellowness and that the moisture communicated to it by the water high above it should be dried up. On the fifth day God commanded the waters to bring forth animals of various colours and forms, some of which should fly in the bosom of the water, and others should fly above the water, and from them should spring the whales and Leviathan, and Behemoth, so terrible in their appearance, and air-fowl and water-fowl. On the sixth day God created from the earth all the beasts, and animals and insects and creeping reptiles¹. This day is Friday, and on it God created Adam of dust, and formed Eve from his rib. On the seventh day God had completed all creation, and He called it Sabbath. God had created Adam in the third hour of Friday the sixth day. Iblis had laid claim to Godhead which had entered him in the second hour f. 92 b of that day, and God had hurled him down from heaven to earth. Before God the Lord created Adam, rest fell upon all the powers; and God said, 'Come, let us create a Man in our likeness and form and image.' When the Angels heard this saying from the Lord they became frightened and much terrified, and they said to one another, 'What is this great wonder which we hear, and how is it possible that the form of our God and Creator can appear to us?' Then all the Angels looked towards the right hand of the Lord, which was stretched out above all creation, and all of it was in His right hand. Then they looked towards the right hand of the Lord, and it took from all the earth a little handful of dust, and from all the waters a drop of water, and from the air a soul and a spirit, and from fire the force of heat, and it became in the grasp of the

¹ See note, p. xv.

Lord portions of the four elements, heat and cold, moisture and drought. Verily God, the glorious and strong, created Adam from these four weak elements, which have no power, that all creatures created from them might hear and obey him: dust, that man might obey him; water, that all that is born of it and in it might obey him; air, that it might be possible for him to breathe it and to feel its breezes, and that its birds might obey him; and fire, that the heat of forces created from it should be a powerful helper to his sense. The reason why God, may His holy names be sanctified! created Adam with His holy hand in His form and image was that he should receive wisdom and speech and animal motion, and for the knowledge concerning things. When the glorious and illustrious Angels saw one like Him in Adam, they were affrighted. The wondrous glory upon his face terrified them, his form appeared shining with divine light greater than the light of the sun, and his body was bright and brilliant like the well-known stars in the crystal. When the figure of Adam drew itself up, he leapt standing; he was in the centre of the earth, he stretched out his right hand and his left hand and put his feet in order upon Golgotha, which is the place where was put the wood (cross) of our Saviour Jesus the Christ. He was dressed with a royal robe, he wore upon his head a diadem of glory and praise and honour and dignity, he was crowned with a royal crown, and there he was made king and priest and prophet. God set him upon a throne of honour, and gathered to what was there all the animals and beasts and birds and all that God had created, and made them stand before¹ Adam. They bent their heads and did obeisance to him, and he called each of them by its name. He made all the creatures obey him and they responded to his command. The Angels and the Powers heard the voice of God, may He be glorified and exalted! saying to Adam, 'O Adam, I have made thee king and priest and prophet and ruler and chief and governor over all creatures that are made. All creation shall obey thee

¹ between the hands of, *passim*.

and follow thy voice. Under thy grasp they shall be. To thee alone I have given this power ; I have placed thee in possession of all that I have created.' When the Angels heard this saying from the Lord they redoubled honour and respect to Adam. When the Devil saw the gift that was given to Adam from the Lord, he envied him from that day and the schismatic from God set his mind in cunning towards him to seduce him by his boldness and his curse ; and when he denied the grace of the Lord towards him, he became shameless and warlike. God, may His names be sanctified ! deprived the Devil of the robe of praise and dignity and called his name Devil, he is a rebel against God, and Satan, because he opposes himself to the ways of the Lord, and Iblis, because He took his dignity from him. While Adam was listening to the speech of his Lord to him, and standing upon the place of Golgotha, all the creatures being gathered together that they might hear the conversation of God with him, lo ! a cloud of light carried him and went with him to Paradise and the choirs of Angels sang before him, the cherubim among them blessing and the seraphim crying 'Holy !' until Adam came into Paradise. He entered it at the third hour on Friday, and the Lord, to Him be praise ! gave him the commandment, and warned him against disobedience to it. Then the Lord, to Him be praise ! threw upon Adam a form of sleep, and he slept a sweet sleep in Paradise. And God took a rib from his left side, and from it He created Eve. When he awoke and saw Eve he rejoiced over her and lived with her, and she was in the pleasant garden of Paradise. God clothed them with glory and splendour. They outvied one another in the glory with which they were clothed, and the Lord crowned them for marriage, the Angels congratulated them, and there was joy there such as never has been the like and never will be till the day in which the people at the right hand shall hear the glorious voice from the Lord. Adam and Eve remained in Paradise for three hours. The site of Paradise was high up in the air, its ground was heavenly, raised above all mountains and hills, that were thirty spans high, that is fifteen cubits, according to the cubit of the Holy Ghost. This

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Paradise stretches round from the east by a wall from the hollow to the southern place of darkness where the cursed Prince was thrown, it is the place of sorrows. Eden is a fountain of God lying eastwards, to a height of eight degrees of the rising of the sun, and this is the mercy of God on which the children of men put their trust, that they shall have a Saviour from thence, because God, may He be exalted and glorified! knew in His foreknowledge what the Devil would do to Adam. Adam lived in the treasury of His mercy, as David the prophet said, 'Thou hast been a fortress to us, O Lord, throughout all ages; cause us to live in Thy mercy.' The blessed David said also in his prayer about the salvation of men, 'Remember, Lord' (the tree was the Cross which was planted in the middle of the earth),

f. 94 b 'Thy grace which thou hast wrought from all eternity'; I mean by this the mercy which God loved to extend to all men and to our weak race. Eden is the Church of God, and the Paradise in which is the altar of rest, and the length of life which God has prepared for all the saints. Because Adam was king, priest and prophet, God caused him to enter Paradise that he might minister in Eden, the Church of God the holy Lord, as Moses the holy Prophet testifies about this, saying, 'That thou shouldest minister and declare by noble and glorious service, and keep the commandment by which Adam and Eve were brought into the Church of God.' Then God planted the tree of life in the middle of Paradise and it was the form of the cross which was stretched upon it, and it was the tree of life and salvation. Satan remained in his envy to Adam and Eve for the favour which the Lord shewed them, and he contrived to enter into the serpent, which was the most beautiful of the animals, and its nature was above the nature of the camel. He carried it till he went with it in the air to the lower parts of Paradise. The reason for Iblis the cursed hiding himself in the serpent was his ugliness, for when he was deprived of his honour he got into the acme of ugliness, till none of the creatures could have borne the sight of him uncovered, and if Eve had seen him unveiled in the serpent, when she spoke to him, she would have run away

f. 95 a from him, and neither cunning nor deceit would have availed

him with her ; but he contrived to hide himself in the serpent, the cunning creature, to teach the birds with round tongues the speech of men in Greek and such like. He would bring a broad mirror with much light sending out rays ; he would put it between himself and a bird, and speak what he wished that the bird should know, and when the bird heard this speech, it would glance around and look in the mirror, and see the form of a bird like itself and rejoice at it, and not doubting that it was a bird of its species that was speaking to it would listen to it and attend to its language. And it would comprehend it in a moment and talk to it. But the cursed Devil, when he entered the serpent, came towards Eve, when she was alone in Paradise away from Adam, and called her by her name. She turned to him, and looked at her likeness behind a veil, and he talked to her, and she talked to him, and he led her astray by his speech, for woman's nature is weak, and she trusts in every word, and he lectured her about the forbidden tree in obedience to her desire, and described to her the goodness of its taste, and that when she should eat of it she should become a god ; and she longed for what the cursed one made her long for, and she would not hear from the Lord, may His names be sanctified ! what He had commanded Adam about the tree. She hastened eagerly towards it, and seized some of its fruit in her mouth. Then she called Adam, and he hastened to her, and she gave him of the fruit, telling him that if he ate of it he would become a god. He listened to her advice because he should become a god as she said. When he and she ate the deadly fruit they were bereft of their glory, and their splendour was taken from them, and they were stripped of the light with which they had been clothed. When they looked at themselves, they were naked of the grace which they had worn, and their shame was manifest to them ; they made to themselves aprons of fig-leaves, and covered themselves therewith, and they were in great sadness for three hours. They did not manage to continue in the grace and the power with which the Lord had endued them before their rebellion for three hours, till it was taken from them and they were made to slip and fall down at the time of sunset on that

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day, and they received the sentence of God in punishment. After the clothing of fig-leaves they put on clothing of skins, and that is the skin of which our bodies are made, being of the family of man, and it is a clothing of pain. The entrance of Adam into Paradise was at the third hour. He and Eve passed through great power in three hours, they were naked for three hours, and in the ninth hour they went out from Paradise, unwillingly, with much grief, great weeping, mourning and sighing. They slept towards the East of it near the altar. When they awoke from their sleep, God spoke to Adam and comforted him, saying to him, blessed be His names! 'O Adam! do not grieve, for I will restore thee to thine inheritance, out of which thy rebellion has brought thee. Know that because of my love to thee I have cursed the earth, and I will not have pity upon it, on account of thy sin. I have cursed also the serpent by whom thou hast been led astray, and I have made its feet go within its belly. I have made dust its food. I have not cursed thee. I have decreed against Eve that she shall be at thy service. Know certainly that when thou hast accomplished the time that I have decreed for thee to dwell outside, in the accursed land, for thy transgression of my commandment, I will send my dear Son; He will come down to the earth, He will be clothed with a body from a Virgin of thy race, named Mary. I will purify her and choose her, and bring her into power generation after generation until the time that the Son comes down from Heaven. In that time shall be the beginning of thy salvation and restoration to thine inheritance. Command thy sons when thy death approaches which I have decreed for thee that when thou diest they keep thy body in myrrh and cassia, and put it in the cave where thou art dwelling to-day till the time of the exit of thy children from the bosom of paradise and their passage to the dusty land. When that time comes, instruct the one of thy children who lives until then to carry thy body with him and put it in the place where I shall make him halt. This place where he shall put thy body is the centre of the earth; from it and in it salvation shall come to thee and to all thy children.' God

f. 96 a