# Ktâbâ d-rêš mellê or Summary history of the world

John bar Penkaye (fl. c. AD 687)

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Note: Alphonse Mingana only translated book 15. I include Brock's translation of the end of book 14 for completeness: When the kingdom of the Persians came to an end, in the days of their king Khosro , the kingdom of the children of Hagar at once gained control over more or less the whole world, for they took the whole kingdom of the Persians. overthrowing all their warriors who prided themselves in the arts of war. We should not think of the advent (of the children of Hagar) as something ordinary, but as due to divine working. Before calling them, (God) had prepared them beforehand to hold Christians in honour, thus they also had a special commandment from God concerning our monastic station, that they should hold it in honour. Now when these people came, at God's command, and took over as it were both kingdoms, not with any war or battle, but in a menial fashion, such as when a brand is rescued out of the fire; not using weapons of war or human means. God put victory into their hands in such a way that the words written concerning them might be fulfilled, namely, 'One man chased a thousand and two men routed ten thousand'! How, otherwise, could naked men, riding without armour or shield, have been able to win, apart from divine aid, God having called them from the ends of the earth so as to destroy, by them, a sinful kingdom, and to bring low, through them. the proud spirit of the Persians.

Only a short period passed before the entire world was handed over to the Arabs; they subdued all the fortified cities, taking control from sea to sea , and from East to West - Aigyptos and the whole of Mesrin, and from Crete to Cappadocia, from Yahelman to the gates of Alan, Armenians, Syrians. Persians, Byzantines, Egyptians and all the intermediary regions: their hand was upon everyone, as the prophet says. Only half the Byzantine empire was left by them. Who can relate the carnage they effected in Greek territory, in Kush, in Spain, and in other distant regions, taking captive their sons and daughters and reducing them to slavery and servitude. Against those who had not ceased in times of peace and prosperity from fighting against their Creator, there was sent a barbarian people who had no pity on them. Having reached thus far, however, in the narrative, let us end this book here, and give praise to Father, Son and Holy Spirit for ever, Amen.

**BOOK 15**

[Translated by Alphonse Mingana and Englished by Roger Pearse] While our affairs were prospering, purely by divine providence than by any human help, we saw ourselves victorious, thanks to the assistance of our invincible King, in all the wars raised against us by tyrannical despots; and all of us were saved while the pagan kings remained, because the weak (in faith) who were among us were not left in peace for fear of the persecutors. As soon as someone started dozing in the vigilance of the truth, the furnace of persecution isolated him (from his brothers), without requiring the punishment of a synod. Sometimes when the violence of the persecution slackened somewhat, the fathers met as usual, judged the few current disciplinary cases, solved unresolved problems, and put into force the apostolic discipline, and whatever other disciplinary measures as the circumstances of the time required them to take and decide. Consequently, as I said earlier, our faith was very successful and our way of life flourished. There were, indeed, many synods even before Nicaea, but they were not ecumenical, and were not convoked in order to make a new creed, but only for the purposes indicated indicated above. But once peace was restored and Christian kings had taken over the reins of government of the Romans, then vice and scandal entered the Church, and synods and sects multiplied, because every year someone invented a new creed. Security and peace led to many evils. The lovers of glory stirred up troubles unceasingly, using gold to obtain the consent of kings, so they could play about with them like little children. All this happened among the Romans.

As for the Church of Persia, as it was under the domination of the Magians, it was had nothing else to oppose. Although some scandals arose, these scandals, however, were not allowed to grow, because from the first the Lord repressed them. So while these things were going thus from apostolic times to the reign of the last Khosro , our Saviour, to whom everything is clear even before it happens, saw how much we had lost during this long peace and to what evils we were led by the interference of Christian kings who wanted us to say that this nature above to all suffering suffered -- something even the demons have not dared to put forward . He revealed to us many signs, some of which we did not even notice. For since that unfortunate schism happened right up until today, three times he has showed us the sun which he showed to those who crucified him at the time of the crucifixion along with tremblings, quakes and terrifying signs in the sky, indicating the malice of the heretics and the events that were to happen on the earth.

When he saw that there was no amendment, he raised a barbarian kingdom against us, a people who would not hear supplications, who knew no compromise, no peace, and disdained flattery and meanness. Its delight was in shedding blood without reason, and its pleasure laying hands on everything. Its passion was raiding and stealing, and its food hatred and anger; it was never appeased by offerings made to it. When it had prospered and done the will of Him who sent it, it had taken possession of all the kingdoms of the earth, had subjected brutally all the peoples and brought their sons and daughters into a bitter slavery, had avenged in them the opprobrium of God the Word, and the blood of the martyrs of Christ shed through no fault of their own, then our Lord was satisfied and rested, and He agreed

to give grace to his people. So the Lord, to punish the sons of Hagar for the ravages they had made, gave them two leaders from the beginning of their kingdom and divided them into two sections. This was so that we might understand the word that was spoken by our Saviour. But they were united until they had subjected the whole earth, but when they returned to tranquility and rested from war, they fought one another. Those in the West said: ”superiority is due to us, and the king must be chosen from among us. Those of the East contradicted them and claimed that it was to them that this was due.

As a result of this contention, they came to blows. When they had settled the business according to their methods, the victory fell to the Westerners called Ummayyads , and this after a great slaughter that took place between them. A man among them named Mu‘awiya , took the reins of government of the two empires: Persian and Roman. Justice flourished under his reign, and a great peace was established in the countries that were under his government, and allowed everyone to live as they wished. They had received, as I said, from the man who was their guide , an order in favour of the Christians and the monks. Similarly because of his guidance they held to the worship of one God, according to the customs of the old law. Firstly, they were so attached to the tradition of Muhammad who was their leader, that they inflicted the death penalty on anyone who seemed not to obey his commands. Their troops went every year into distant countries and islands, raided and brought back captives from all the nations that are under heaven. From every man they required only the tribute, and left him free to hold any belief, and there were even some Christians among them: some belonged to the heretics and others to us. While Mu‘awiya reigned there was such a great peace in the world as was never heard of, according to our fathers and our fathers’ fathers. It was as if our Lord had said:

”I will test you in this way, as it is written: ’by grace and justice iniquity may be pardoned.’”

The accursed heretics who received such assistance for the present time, instead of evangelizing and baptizing the heathen, as required by the ecclesiastical law, undertook a contrary evangelization, perverting to their sacrilegious (faith) almost all the churches of Rome, and revived and rebuilt what had already been abolished. As a result, most Westerners have always used (the addition to the Trisagion): ”... immortal, who was crucified for us.” All the churches of (these countries) became like a wasteland. In the same way as we recounted earlier the deeds of the brave when we deserved praise, we should expose our weakness without concealment: because the Scripture says: ”Cursed is he who calls good evil and evil good.” This period of calm was to us the cause of so much weakness, that there happened to us what happened to the Israelites, of whom it is said: ”Israel has grown fat and lazy, he has become fat and wealthy, he has abandoned the God who made him, and despised the strong one that saved him.” The westerners, it is true, clung tightly to their sacrilegious (faith), but we who believe we adhere to the true faith, we were so far from the works of Christians, that if one of the former had risen and had seen us, he would have had been dizzy and said: ”this is not the faith in which I died.”

So I am forced to reveal everything, so that we know that everything that happened to us, happened to us justly, and that we were punished according to the measure of our deeds and our merits. The bishops have forgotten the command: ”preach the word, get up with zeal, in season and out of season, keep trying, in all patience and doctrine.” Instead of all this, they did the opposite: they dictated orders and shouting loudly as archons, and sent the terror of their voices to their subjects, like animals without reason. They drew their strength and power not from Christ, but from the civil courts, involved themselves in public affairs and uncanonical quarrels. They tried very much to show themselves ministers of Christ by pride more than by humility. They have many people running before and behind them. They receive ovations on horseback and mules, like hyparchs. One mocks another, and a perpetual confusion reigns among them. They judge harshly and punish severely. They teach not in order to edify, but to glory in twisted words and affected speech, and they always breathe severity. Even in their letters they speak like proud men. Look at those who are set at our head.

But, what of those who come behind them, the phalanx of priests and deacons, who serve not Christ but their belly, who are not concerned about the fracture of Joseph; servants of Caesar and not of Christ, lovers of sordid interests and not the interests of faith. Shrines are built, and there is no one to open the doors. Altars are erected, and they are covered with cobwebs. O! What a crime! What long-suffering! Let’s talk about the leaders and superiors, whose crime has exceeded all limits. Because you have to tell them what they want to hear, or else be prepared to have a war with them, those who have no mercy on the members of Christ: those whose food is human flesh; those who require not only what they asked for (by law), but who are not even satisfied with superfluity; those whose pasture is the poor. They suck human blood like the leeches of Solomon, and don’t get their fill. They never intend to do the will of God, so that in their internal hatreds, they cause the loss of the world. They pick up, throw away and give to the moth. Like a tomb, nothing can satisfy their greed. They cannot live in justice, and do not understand that they are men and that it is men they govern. They do not remember they are mortal, and never inquire for whom they collect and hoard. And what is the worst of all, they blaspheme the Most High, believing he is an accomplice of their wickedness. They grow fat on the labours of other, like a calf on grass. They do not understand that the needy exist. Their thought, day and night, is to know who to catch in their net: our rich men. As for the judges, they allow themselves to bribed with gifts. Deception and hypocrisy, anger, malice and harshness, these are their own.

Let’s talk about the people, it is open to everyone to live like a sheep, in his own way. The law isn’t for him, so he transgresses the law. I would say here these memorable words: all have sinned and made themselves hateful, there is none, not even one who does good. Their throats are like gaping graves, and their mouths are full of curses and poison, and the rest of the chapter (of the Scriptures) is applicable to us. We have forgotten the One who created us, and we never speak of the One who has saved us. We have never thought about what he asks of us. He who excelled in exactions, he was welcome among us. We merely envied those who amassed money, because everyone, as much as he could, put on the yoke of evil, and if

someone broke this yoke, it was because he lacked time or strength. What wickedness does not our perverse century not bear! There was no difference between pagan and Christian, the believer was not distinct from the Jew, and did not differ from the deceiver.

Let's say some more about the crimes that we commit! We have all broken the yoke and severed the ties. I strongly dislike saying this, I say it notwithstanding and I will not lie. Because if there is someone who denies with his mouth the truth of what I say, he certainly confesses in his heart that the words I say are true. In Egypt, the mother of witches, witchcraft was not as widespread as in our century. At Babel, the soothsayers and diviners were not so numerous as they are now, within the Christian people. The pagans did not leave the dead unburied, like the so-called Christians of today. We even thought we could seek a refuge apart from God! How can I say this without tears! Who will call such people Christians? Who will call them men who know Christ. Who can consider them as the people of God? They shouted like dogs at the poor who knocked at their door, and looked at the foreigners who traveled for the name of Christ as enemies of God, and that class of monks that the demons themselves fear and that the angels honour were vile and despised in their eyes, they were regarded them like the soiled linen of a woman's period. This is the evil of Sodom, the haughty sister, who fed herself on bread and remained in repose, never lend a helping hand to the poor and needy. Time will show us the things that happen following these crimes. O you who hear me, do these things exist, yes or no? Yes, they exist, and I also who am of your number, and possibly worse than you, I know they exist.

I have yet to disclose other impurities darker than these: persecution of priests, slander against the Saints, trade with unbelievers, union with the perverse, relationships with heretics, friendship with the Jews. What! Are these things real? We are obliged to tell the truth. You can still see desecrations greater than these: contempt for holy shrines, mockery of the divine sacraments, mocking profanation of the holy day of Sunday, neglect of the meetings which are the feast days of Our Lord, transgression of the law, and of the apostolic canons, termination of emoluments and canonical tithes. Do these things exist, my dear friends, or do they not exist? Yes, they exist. I have yet to disclose other impurities greater than these: impure and useless ablutions; lying inventions consisting of consulting the lot in the water , attendance at the doors of soothsayers, too great attachment to the cinders and ligatures of arms , a profane liberty of hiding things in the dwellings of demons , a too great facility to allow oneself to be persuaded by the diabolical illusions of dreams; quarrels, disputes, murder, adultery, robbery, theft. What, my brothers! Do these things exist, yes or no? I know they exist, and I am tired of telling others so .

All these evils are the product of the period of peace. This is not to say that in these days we are obliged to do all this, but that our wickedness has not enjoyed his honour. This period, if we had wanted, could have been a time of great blessings. Peace reigned everywhere, the land gave us ample fruit. Good health prevailed, friendship was everywhere, commerce was doubled, the children bounded with joy, wealth was widespread, riches were immense, the kings were at peace, there were good relationships between the lords, the roads were open,

the enemy's forces were broken, the trumpets of war were asleep. Did all this exist because of what? It is the effect of the hand of Christ, almighty and full of grace. What have we done, we, as an return for all these benefits, if not the iniquity that we recounted above. We have returned evil for good, hatred for love, and we have become ungrateful to our benefactor.

Therefore when we were mixed up in every evil and all the impurities that we have mentioned, and God looked on and was saddened, and began to show mercy as usual, in order to excite our minds gradually to repentance. There were an earthquake in the city , but the hardness of our hearts saw them and was silent. He made signs appear in the sky, and our wicked nature saw them and did not take the hint. He sent grasshoppers and locusts that ravaged the fields and vineyards, and none of us wondered the cause of all this. The empire began to totter, and our heart was not moved at all. He used up our strength through taxes, and our thought was undisturbed in any way. The kingdom which ruled us was divided in two sections, each of them raided the other, and the hardness of our hearts did not change. He sent troops, destroyed cities and made the roads deserted. As for us, as we remained penned in our iniquity, like sheep in pasture, (punishment) began to reach us gradually, so that our hearts might awaken, if possible. He brought plague on the cattle, so that perhaps we would wake up, but we thought that this was a mere incident. News of captives being taken and epidemics came to us from our neighbours, and we said that this was a fluke. So I too, taking the part of Christ, I will say with the prophet Isaiah: "Heaven, earth, reasoning beings and unreasoning beings, judge between Me and My people. What could I do to my people that I have not done? For I expected them to do good, and they have done evil. Wait a bit and see what I will do to my people."

When Mu'awiya ended his days and left the world, Yazid his son reigned in his stead . He did not follow in the footsteps of his father, but he loved children's games and the pastimes of the idle. The strength of men declined under his weak government; because the devil put the finishing touch to the punishment of men, that of useless toil; but God took him soon after. When he had thus left the world, there was one of them (the Arabs) named Zubayr , who made his voice heard from afar. He said of himself that he was come out of zeal for the house of God. He threatened the west, as transgressors of the Law. So he went south, into the place where was their place of worship, and settled there. A war with him was prepared, and he was defeated. They even set fire to their own place of worship, and a lot of blood was shed. Since that time the kingdom of the (eastern) Arabs has never recovered. So when (Zubayr) died, they elected his son to be emir. The westerners had a general named 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Ziyad and the easterners had another called al-Mukhtar . Nisibis at that time belonged to the west, and an emir named Ibn 'Uthman governed it. Another emir of the westerners named Ibn Nitron attacked him. The westerners said that "Nisibis belongs to us by right because it was part of the realm of the Romans" and the easterners pretended that it belonged to the Persians and that it was rightfully theirs. Because of this conflict, there was great trouble in Mesopotamia. The westerners triumphed and the easterners were expelled. The year after, Ibn Nitron gathered a large army and gathered horsemen to

him, (as numerous) as the sand. He set himself up very arrogantly and marched to battle with the ʾAkoulians . He took with him John, who at that time was bishop of Nisibis .

Some time earlier George , patriarch of the church of Christ, had been transported to the life of glory, and the patriarchal see was occupied by Mar Hnanishoʿ the exegete, so Ibn Ziyad promised John that "if you come with me, I will depose Mar Hnanishoʿ and establish you in his place in the patriarchate." So he long believed that victory would be his, because he had many generals. But al-Mukhtar was angry with the ʿAkoulians because they were unfit for war, and he gave order that all their slaves should be freed and enrolled in the army in their place. When this order was published, many slaves, former prisoners of war, gathered to him. He gave them as general a man named Abraham , and sent him to battle with Ibn Ziyad, with 13,000 men who were all on foot, without arms, equipment, horses, or tents; but each having in his hand a sword, a lance or a club; and they set off.

When they met on a river named Khazir , they fought a terrible battle. All the warriors of the westerners were killed, and their pride was turned into a great shame; they were conquered not by warriors but by weaklings. The man seeking the patriarchate had difficulty saving even his coat. The westerners were cut to pieces, lost their general, while their enemies seized their military stores, their wealth, their equipment, their arms and their silver and they themselves (the westerners) took flight in confusion until they had crossed the river Euphrates. These slaves were called Shourte , a name which indicates their ardour for justice. They came and entered Nisibis, which they took. They seized all of Mesopotamia, and in every clash with the enemy the victory was theirs. When they entered Nisibis Abraham left his brother as general, while he went down to ʿAkoula. But because the Nisibites wanted a general from their own town, and because Abraham, like his brother, was of the Tayayes , they rose up against the latter and killed him together with his officers and set up to govern them one of their country, named ʿAbu-Karib.

The ʿAkoulians repented of what they had done, because they saw that their slaves had revolted against them. So they rose up against al-Mukhtar and made war on him. After he had beaten them several times, at last he was beaten and killed by them, he and a great army which he had formed from prisoners of war. Many other prisoners assembled and gathered to those who were at Nisibis. And every day they gathered men from all sides and enrolled them with them. They took many fortresses and spread fear throughout the Arabs, and wherever they went they were victorious. From that time God began to be angry against the earth. He stirred and arose like a giant; he caused his sword to flash out and terrified the world; He revealed his arm and the universe trembled; he summoned destruction on all his enemies and began to take vengeance on all those who hated him. It is as if it was said: "I have kept silence for eternity, shall I continue to be silent?" and then: "Now I will arise, says the Lord, now I will lift myself up, now I will be exalted; you shall conceive thorns" and give birth to the bow in your spirit etc.

For seeing that, in all the circumstances that have happened, we had stayed in our wickedness, and did not become penitent; because the priests do not tell us: "where is the Lord

your God," and the guardians of the law have not recognised Him; because the pastors have betrayed him, while each of us has retired and said to the Lord "Depart from here," the Lord was justly angry against us. He began to make war on us, not by means of despotic kings forcing us to worship idols, nor by way of the Arians, nor by that of Eunomians, but Himself. By the force of his power the peoples were stirred up and the kingdoms shook. He raised his voice and the earth was shaken. He set people against people, and kingdom against kingdom. According to his word, he created famines, earthquakes and plagues. He handed over the sinning generation to overwhelming and unparalleled tribulations. What they sowed, they reaped. He blew (this generation) away and it disappeared, and he gave us into the hands of raiders. Who can calculate the many tribulations that surround the world; especially the unequalled tribulations of plague and famine? Men were imprisoned (indoors) for fear of raiders, for could not even move away to the places elsewhere where there was security.

In the sixty-seventh year of the empire of the Arabs , following the striking signs and the terrors that we talked about earlier, and following the battles and wars through which (the Lord) called us to repentance - but we ignored him - in the same year sixty-seven this cruel plague began, that has not been equaled and never will be, I hope. According to the sacrilegious habit that had developed among men, they did not even bury those whom death reaped, but, like the heathen , they abandoned them and fled. From then on brothers and parents became like dogs and animals to those who died, and the crows and vultures were to be responsible for burying them. The bodies of dead men were lying in the streets and bazaars like manure on the earth , thus contaminating springs and rivers. Dogs began to eat many while they were still alive; each of them saw his fate with his own eyes. Brother had no pity on brother nor father on son. The compassion of the mother for her children was destroyed; she contemplated their convulsions caused by the pains of death and did not approach even to close their eyes. This was a spectacle filled with heartbreak, a terrifying sacrilege. Those who were still alive were scattered in the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd. They wanted thereby to avoid the plague, but it followed them like a harvester. Dogs and wild beasts heaped them up like sheaves.

(What was worst of all), they were constantly hounded by looters, from whom they could not escape, for they wandered about everywhere, following them like gleaners. They would haul them out of hidden places and deprive them of everything and leave them naked. But still they thought that it was possible to escape God without repentance and without returning to him with a heart full of penitence. They beat harshly any that reminded them of this and told him: "Go away from here; for we know that flight is much more beneficial than prayer; we have already repented, but we have not been helped, we can't even do that any more. Men were reduced to despair because of their many sins; such pain came down upon them, and they did not repent at all, because 'the bellows for their fire has failed and their lead is consumed,' according the word of the prophet, and 'it is in vain that the refiner refines them; call them condemned coin, because the Lord has condemned them.' 'He has truly rejected them, and his soul abhorred them.' In vain he has allowed his hand to dwell on

us: we did not wish for his correction. He has sent locusts and other pests, and we are not at all converted; he has sent raiders, and we have not done penance. He has refused the rain during the three months preceding the harvest and we have been unmoved. Plague has herded us like sheep, but we have only added to our wickedness.

The priests and guardians of the law have perished, and the churches have become deserted. The holy vessels have been soiled. Villages were burned, and the cities laid waste and fear commands every roadway. This was just the first generation, that is to say, the beginning of the suffering. He still continued to chasten us seven times over for our sins . All the words of the prophets and apostles, and all the curses contained in the law have been fulfilled against us. We were plundered and scattered over the whole earth , we were in distress, like a reed shaken by the winds. We have been in anguish and agitation, like Cain was upon the earth. What then! another calamity hit us that removed from us any means to flee and escape from it. The famine, I mean, and the plague. After avoiding the plague, we were pursued by the famine, and all that remained was carried off by raiders. We therefore need to use the words of Jeremiah; for him, he only wept over one people: Jerusalem, but we must weep over the whole world; let us borrow his lamentations so that our sorrows may be contained; but alas! they cannot be limited, because we do not deserve it: see the noble children of Zion 'lying asleep at the top of every street, like flabby beetroot, having had their fill with the anger of God's wrath.' The hands of caring mothers have cooked their own children, who have served them as food, in the destruction of the daughter of my people; then if I go out into the desert, there are men struck by the sword; if I go into homes, there are men overwhelmed with hunger; and those who were struck by the sword were better off than those who had died of hunger, because the latter wasted away as if they had been wounded in battle.

Our feeble generation has been overwhelmed by this harsh plague; the severity of hunger has made the ruddy hue of men blue, like a sapphire; or they turned black and became like brands rescued from the burning. Many women refused to recognize their children, and many others gave birth and dumped (their children) living from their wombs into the tomb. There were no more people to bury: hunger had left them exhausted and emaciated. The storage pits that the famine had emptied, the same famine filled with human corpses . He was deemed fortunate who died quickly; and suffering saturated with curses accompanied him who died several times each day from hunger. How many have you seen who fainted when they opened their mouths to ask for bread! Many over-exerted themselves and collapsed in the streets: their fall was their last gasp. It was a sight truly worthy of grief. Small children especially become a terrifying sight: their faces had changed competely, and their fathers recognized them no more. They ate grass like lambs, they hugged stones (in the desert) and won sleep for themselves: but alas! they were found in the morning like pieces of dry wood. Several mothers ate their children. It often happened that a mother spent the night with her children, but their souls were not in this world in the morning.

How many evils, which our sins merited, have I still to tell? Many, pressed by hunger, died on the roads, and their corpses littered in public places: the men trod on them and passed on. Such was the result of the second trial, or rather these are the effects of the evil conduct that we reported. Would all this suffering not suffice to punish our crimes! No, 'you will be further punished'. Because the poor have died of hunger; because orphans and widows have died for lack of care; because the convents and monasteries were destroyed because the monks roamed everywhere, and the saints went into every country; because the wicked were drying up their compassion; because the rich beheld our ruin and said according to the words of the prophet: when then will the month end and the week pass, so that we can open the granary and decrease the measures, etc. Because, we say, they did not stop thinking malicious thoughts, the prophet said: "you will be punished even more than before." The plague returned again and resumed its work of extermination, and herded men, so to speak, one by one; and he whom the famine had spared was devoured by the plague, and he whom the plague had spared, was finished off by the sword. Our iniquity was suppressed by these tribulations; and because we did not recall the fear of God in our rest, God did not remember his mercy in our suffering; he had neither pity, nor compassion, as we had not pitied the torment and suffering of our brothers. On the day of his anger, He did not think of his holy name, but He allowed us to give ourselves to our sins and withdrew his face from us. He did more, becoming our adversary, declaring war on us and pitilessly slaughtering us in his wrath .

These, then, are the causes of the calamities that have come upon us today , O beloved of my soul, brother Sabrisho'! It is our iniquity which is filled with bitterness and which breaks our hearts. I am sure that we have reached the end of time: I deduce this from the Holy Books and especially the words of Our Lord; for everything that has been written (about this) has taken place, and men have become deceitful, full of pride, ungrateful, cruel, enemies of good, addicted to the passions rather than the love of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. The blessed Paul said these things of our times, and here they are fulfilled, and in the words of Our Lord, there is nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there are famines, earthquakes and plagues. One thing only we lack: the army of the Ante-Christ, and I believe that these troubles come from him, according to the words of Our Lord who said: "these things are the beginning of sorrows. The blessed Paul also said: "if that which prevents it at the moment is destroyed, then will appear this wicked one, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and abolish with the brightness of his coming. What is it that prevents it, if it is not the providence of Our Lord, which he has taken from men. There is no more order, and the laws governing the kings, priests, and ordinary people and even the seasons are overthrown.

Because of the magnitude of the iniquity, charity has gone cold, according to what is written. Who do you see today loving his neighbour with the charity of which our Lord has spoken? All classes of men are full of jealousy, hatred, slander and whispering; everyone speaks ill of his neighbour, and there is no one who supports or consoles, and if there be one, he does so in dissimulation and not in truth. The Lord had all this before his eyes when he said: "when

the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth? With whom do you see a shadow of faithfulness? Contemplate those are in the forefront of society, and descend down to me, the last of all, begin with the priests and end with the people, look at the monks and consider carefully the various members of society: do you see a man who keeps his station? Do you notice anyone who follows his own path? Alas! All of us, we walk in darkness; what other stronger evidence do we require for the next fulfillment of the words of Our Lord?

The arrival of the Shourtes, of which we have spoken, and their victory is the work of God, and I believe that they will cause the destruction of the Ishmaelites (Arabs). So is fulfilled the prophecy of Moses, who said: ”his hand extends over all and the hand of all is on him.” The hand of the Arabs has in fact subjected all peoples, and these Shourtes count among them men of all peoples under heaven. So I think that it is through them that the Arab empire will end. They, in their turn, will cease to exist because they mingle with other kingdoms from which they have taken captives. It appears that the men who avoid the sword, the famine and the plague of today , are reserved for greater evils. They have against them a people from distant countries, and the prophets have already predicted their actions. A kingdom will destroy another realm. They (the Shourtes?) have already attemped to destroy the Roman Empire, and even want to rule over all. This is a greedy people who have been called to do the wrong thing and does not know it. Therefore when you know it has been freed from its bonds, arm yourself against inward things; the senses will be a clear sign, and they will understand everything, when they see it.

The earth will then be like wheat in a sieve: it will shake, and the skies will be darkened and the earth will be filled with human blood. They (the Shourtes?) will no longer focus on acquiring a kingdom, they will no longer want gold and they will despise riches, because they will satisfy the will of God. After that, there will be another evil, hidden in good, like a deadly poison in honey. Let us stop here: because here begins the kingdom of the Lord. We have started and finished with him, because everything comes from him, everything has been done by him and everything is directed by him: to him be glory and blessing, for ever and ever. Amen . We have composed briefly these discourses, giving ten years to each word. Do not be surprised if the same happens here; God knows what other events could still happen. It was important to us, to deposit only, with the grace of God, the talent that we have been given, so that many seek, and so that knowledge increases, and so that the many are tired and that one alone finds. He will command the earth a second time, not to give (as in creation) what did not have, but to provide what has been sown in it. Let us be placed, ourselves, in the eastern part of this area! Let us not see the south nor know the north! because we hope that we shall be as we have been, and that we will not be found in the state where we are now .

We set out, dear (Sabrisho‘), as you know, to tell when the wise creator began to show us his providence, and we have reported how he honoured our creation more than anything else, and we have unveiled our ingratitude to him. We have also recounted what he did before and after the flood; and how he gave his commandments; what he did to the Jewish people

through the prophets, and what the Jews did to the Gentiles. (We have also mentioned) that the rebel demons work against us, and how they are always ready to do us harm, but the (divine) grace prevents them. (We have set out) what (God) did by means of the Maccabees, which he revealed to the prophets, and how their words came true; how the people (of God) and the gentiles entered into iniquity and revolted; how he reconciled himself with men without any merit on their part; what mercy he showed them by sending them the Christ; what He did on joining us, how he worked our salvation, dispersed our enemies, raise us up from our fall, and ascended to heaven; and how He honoured his apostles by the descent of the Holy Spirit and how through them he plucked all the peoples from error; how He was with our fathers whom He made victorious, and how He defeated the evil kings and enhanced the glory of His churches. We have shown what the Christian kings did, and what evils the heretics caused; how God changed the events against the world, and what signs he gave to terrify us; how he brought against us a barbarian kingdom and how he punished us temporarily; and how he gave us the means to repent, and how we are rebels and insurgents; and how he overthrew the empire against us and how he punishes us by a severe penalty today .

In short, we have shown how he began by our creation and led our steps slowly, like a father with his children and like a teacher and his pupil, and how he will finish with us too. Finally we have put in this epitome all that God did in this world, in his gentleness and forbearance, for mankind, and what men did for him in their wickedness and their errors. What will he do with them in the future? We will leave that question to his knowledge, because the hidden things belong to him, and things visible belong to us and our children. — That, in short, is the history of the world, dear Sabrisho‘; we have composed it in epitome, because otherwise we would not have been able to work on it. We have only put the beginning (= the abstract) of the facts, because you can see the end (= extent) in all the books . The Lord has helped us do this only in this way; so here let us finish the book, saying, with the blessed Paul, to him who has helped us: to him who do more than anyone, and whose power working in us more than we can think and believe, be glory in his Church, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, through ages of ages, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen; glory, glory, glory, be to him; three times glorify the Holy Trinity, which has strengthened our weakness, Amen, Amen; let all the people respond: Amen.

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