

THE TESTAMENT OF RE'UBAN

CHAPTER 1

1 The copy of the testament of Re'uban, even the commands which he gave his sons before he died in the hundred and twenty-fifth year of his life.

2 Two years after the death of Yahusaph his brother, when Re'uban fell ill, his sons and his sons' sons were gathered together to visit him.

3 And he said to them: My children, behold I am dying, and go the way of my fathers.

4 And seeing there Yahudah, and Gad, and Asher, his brethren, he said to them: Raise me up, that I may tell to my brethren and to my children what things I have hidden in my heart, for behold now at length I am passing away.

5 And he arose and kissed them, and said unto them: Hear, my brethren, and do you, my children, give ear to Re'uban your father, in the commands which I give you.

6 And behold I call to witness against you this day אֱלֹהִים of shamayim, that you walk not in the ignorance of youth and fornication, wherein I was poured out, and defiled the bed of my father Ya'aqob.

7 And I tell you that He smote me with a sore plague in my loins for seven months; and had not my father Ya'aqob prayed for me to אֱלֹהִים, אֱלֹהִים would have destroyed me.

8 For I was thirty years old when I wrought the evil thing before אֱלֹהִים, and for seven months I was sick unto death.

9 And after this I repented with set purpose of my soul for seven years before אֱלֹהִים.

10 And wine and strong drink I drank not, and flesh entered not into my mouth, and I ate no pleasant food; but I mourned over my sin, for it was great, such as had not been in Yashar'al.

CHAPTER 2

1 And now hear me, my children, what things I saw concerning the seven ruachim of deceit, when I repented.

2 Seven ruachim therefore are appointed against man, and they are the leaders in the works of youth.

3 And seven other ruachim are given to him at his creation, that through them should be done every work of man.

4 The first is the ruach of life, with which the constitution of man is created. The second is the sense of sight, with which arises desire.

5 The third is the sense of hearing, with which comes teaching. The fourth is the sense of smell, with which tastes are given to draw air and breath.

6 The fifth is the power of speech, with which comes knowledge.

7 The sixth is the sense of taste, with which comes the eating of meats and drinks; and by it strength is produced, for in food is the foundation of strength.

8 The seventh is the power of procreation and sexual intercourse, with which through love of pleasure sins enter in.

9 Wherefore it is the last in order of creation, and the first in that of youth, because it is filled with ignorance, and leads the youth as a blind man to a pit, and as a beast to a precipice.

CHAPTER 3

1 Besides all these there is an eighth ruach of sleep, with which is brought about the trance of nature and the image of death.

2 With these ruachim are mingled the ruachim of error.

3 First, the ruach of fornication is seated in the nature and in the senses; the second, the ruach of insatiableness, in the belly;

4 The third, the ruach of fighting, in the liver and gall. The fourth is the ruach of obsequiousness and chicanery, that through officious attention one may be fair in seeming.

5 The fifth is the ruach of pride, that one may be boastful and arrogant. The sixth is the ruach of lying, in perdition and in jealousy to practice deceits, and concealments from kindred and friends.

6 The seventh is the ruach of injustice, with which are thefts and acts of rapacity, that a man may fulfill the desire of his heart; for injustice works together with the other ruachim by the taking of gifts.

7 And with all these the ruach of sleep is joined which is that of error and fantasy.

8 And so perishes every young man, darkening his mind from the amat, and not understanding the Torah of אֱלֹהִים, nor obeying the admonitions of his fathers, as befell me also in my youth.

9 And now, my children, love the amat, and it will preserve you: hear the words of Re'uban your father.

10 Pay no heed to the face of a woman, nor associate with another man's wife, nor meddle with affairs of womankind.

11 For had I not seen Bilhah bathing in a covered place, I had not fallen into this great iniquity.

12 For my mind taking in the thought of the woman's nakedness, suffered me not to sleep until I had wrought the abominable thing.

13 For while Ya'aqob our father had gone to Yatschaq his father, when we were in Eder, near to Ephrath in Beyth Lacham, Bilhah became drunk and was asleep uncovered in her chamber.

14 Having therefore gone in and beheld her nakedness, I wrought the impiety without her perceiving it, and leaving her sleeping I departed.

15 And forthwith a malak of אֱלֹהִים revealed to my father concerning my impiety, and he came and mourned over me, and touched her no more.

CHAPTER 4

1 Pay no heed, therefore, my children, to the beauty of women, nor set your mind on their affairs; but walk in singleness of heart in the fear of אֱלֹהִים, and expend labour on good works, and on study and on your flocks, until אֱלֹהִים gives you a wife, whom He will, that you suffer not as I did.

2 For until my father's death I had not boldness to look in his face, or to speak to any of my brethren, because of the reproach.

3 Even until now my conscience causes me anguish on account of my impiety.

4 And yet my father comforted me much, and prayed for me unto אֱלֹהִים, that the anger of אֱלֹהִים might pass from me, even as אֱלֹהִים showed. And thenceforth until now I have been on my guard and sinned not.

5 Therefore, my children, I say unto you, observe all things whatsoever I command you, and

you will not sin.

6 For a pit unto the soul is the sin of fornication, separating it from אֱלֹהִים, and bringing it near to idols, because it deceives the mind and understanding, and leads down young men into Sheol before their time.

7 For many has fornication destroyed; because, though a man be old or noble, or rich or poor, he brings reproach upon himself with the sons of men and derision with Beliar (Baal).

8 For hear regarding Yahusaph how he guarded himself from a woman, and purged his thoughts from all fornication, and found favour in the sight of אֱלֹהִים and men.

9 For the Mitsri woman did many things unto him, and summoned magicians, and offered him love potions, but the purpose of his soul admitted no evil desire.

10 Therefore אֱלֹהִים of your fathers delivered him from every evil and hidden death.

11 For if fornication overcomes not your mind, neither can Beliar (Baal) overcome you.

CHAPTER 5

1 For evil are women, my children; and since they have no power or strength over man, they use wiles by outward attractions that they may draw him to themselves.

2 And whom they cannot bewitch by outward attractions, him they overcome by craft.

3 For moreover, concerning them, the malak of אֱלֹהִים told me, and taught me, that women are overcome by the ruach of fornication more than men, and in their heart they plot against men; and by means of their adornment they deceive first their minds, and by the glance of the eye instil the poison, and then through the accomplished act they take them captive.

4 For a woman cannot force a man openly, but by a harlot's bearing she beguiles him.

5 Flee, therefore, fornication, my children, and command your wives and your daughters, that they adorn not their heads and faces to deceive the mind; because every woman who uses these wiles has been reserved for eternal punishment.

6 For thus they allured the Watchers who were before the flood; for as these continually beheld them, they lusted after them, and they conceived the act in their mind; for they changed themselves into the shape of men, and appeared to them when they were with their husbands.

7 And the women lusting in their minds after their forms, gave birth to giants, for the Watchers appeared to them as reaching even unto shamayim.

CHAPTER 6

1 Beware, therefore, of fornication; and if you wish to be pure in mind, guard your senses from every woman.

2 And command the women likewise not to associate with men, that they also may be pure in mind.

3 For constant meetings, even though the unrighteous deed be not wrought, are to them an irremediable disease, and to us a destruction of Beliar (Baal) and an eternal reproach.

4 For in fornication there is neither understanding nor righteousness, and all jealousy dwells in the lust thereof.

5 Therefore, then, I say unto you, you will be jealous against the sons of Lewi, and will seek to be exalted over them; but you will not be able.

6 For אֱלֹהִים will avenge them and you will die by an evil death.

7 For to Lewi אֶלְלָא gave the sovereignty and to Yahudah with him and to me also, and to Dan and Yahusaph, that we should be for rulers.

8 Therefore I command you to hearken to Lewi, because he will know the Torah of אֶלְלָא, and will give ordinances for judgement and will sacrifice for all Yashar'al until the consummation of the times, as the anointed High Priest, of whom אֶלְלָא spoke.

9 I adjure you by אֶלְלָא of shamayim to do amat each one unto his neighbour and to entertain ahaba each for his brother.

10 And draw near to Lewi in humbleness of heart, that you may receive a barak from his mouth.

11 For he will barak Yashar'al and Yahudah, because him has אֶלְלָא chosen to be king over all the nation.

12 And bow down before his seed, for on our behalf it will die in wars visible and invisible, and will be among you an eternal king.

CHAPTER 7

1 And Re'uban died, having given these commands to his sons.

2 And they placed him in a coffin until they carried him up from Mitsrayim, and buried him in Hebron in the cave where his father was.