
Assumptio Moysis • THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES

INTRODUCTION

The *Assumption of Moses* (also called the *Testament of Moses*) is extant in one poorly preserved 6th/7th Century Latin manuscript discovered by A. M. Ceriani in the Ambrosian Library of Milan and published in 1861; it is estimated that between one-third and one-half of the original work has been lost. The titles, “Assumption of Moses” and “Testament of Moses” are known from ancient lists of apocryphal books. Ceriani originally identified the manuscript as a copy of the *Assumption* of Moses on the basis of a Greek quotation attributed to that work that corresponds to the Latin text of 1.14; others, observing that the Latin MS takes the form of a testament and does not mention Moses’ assumption, suggest instead that it is a copy of the *Testament* of Moses. Due to the fragmentary nature of the evidence, neither identification can be regarded as certain.

The [Latin text](#) here presented is from the [Online Critical Pseudepigrapha \(OCP\)](#) and is that of A.M. Ceriani; in this file, Roman numerals in the text are presented in SMALL CAPS. The English text is based that of [R.H. Charles](#) with some emendations and conjectures removed, and others added following the work of H.F.D. Sparks¹.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

There is no doubt that the Latin text was translated from Greek; according to the current scholarly consensus, the Greek version was itself a translation from a Semitic (most likely Hebrew) original. Most scholars conclude that the document was completed in the first half of the 1st Century CE, because the death of Herod the Great is mentioned (6.8–9) but no reference is made to the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. However, since Ch. 8 seems to refer to the persecution under Antiochus IV, the reference to Herod in Ch. 6 is often regarded as a later modification of a text originally composed around the time of the Maccabean revolt (*circa* 167 BCE). The work contains little or no trace of Christian influence.

According to Charles, Chs 8–9 reflect the period of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees so closely that, in their present context, they must be out of place; originally, Charles thought, these chapters stood between Ch. 5 & Ch. 6 and were transposed by the ‘final editor’, However, given the chaotic state of the existing text, their present position is more likely due to an accident in transmission rather than deliberate transposition.

—| XXX-IV-MMXXV |—

¹ “*The Apocryphal Old Testament*,” H.F.D. Sparks (ed.); Oxford University Press (Clarendon Paperbacks), 1984.

Assumptio Moysis 1

¹ ² qui est bis millesimus et quingentesimus annus a creatura orbis terrae ³ nam secus qui in oriente sunt numerus ... mus et .. mus et mus profectionis fynicis ⁴ cum exiuit plebs post profectionem quae fiebat per mosysen usque amman trans iordanem ⁵ profetiae quae facta est a moysen in libro deuteronomio ⁶ qui uocauit ad se iesum filium naue hominem probatum domino ⁷ ut sit successor plebi et scene testimonii cum omnibus sanctis illius ⁸ ut et inducat plebem in terram datam extribus eorum ⁹ ut detur illis per testamentum et per iusiurandum quod locutus est in scenae dare de iesum dicendo ad iesum uerbum hoc ¹⁰ et promitte secus industriam tuam omnia quae mandata sunt ut facias quemadmodum sine

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 1

¹ ... ² that is the two thousand five hundredth year from the creation of the world. ³ <But, according to those of the east, the two thousand and seven hundredth, and the four hundredth> after the departure from Phoenicia, ⁴ when the people had gone out after the Exodus led by Moses, to Amman beyond the Jordan, ⁵ in the prophecy made by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy; ⁶ he called to him Joshua the son of Nun, ⁷ a man approved by the Lord to be the minister of the people and of the tabernacle of the Testimony with all its holy things, ⁸ and to bring the people into the land given **to their fathers**, ⁹ that it might be given to them according to the covenant and the oath, which he said in the tabernacle to give *it* by Joshua, saying to Joshua, ¹⁰ "Promise to do with diligence all that has

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- ¹ Three lines (v. 1:1) are missing at the beginning of the MS; Charles offers a restoration, based on the model of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: "*The Testament of Moses, even the things that he commanded in the one hundred and twentieth year of his life.*"
- ² This verse continues a sentence absent from the MS (see #1).
- ³ Charles includes the whole of this verse in (square) brackets; here, we use the angle-brackets if Sparks' edition.
- ⁴ The literal translation of 'Exodus' is 'departure'.
- ⁵ Sparks encloses the whole of this verse in angle-brackets.
- ⁶ In place of the opening 'he', Sparks has 'Moses'; the Latin text has 'who'.
- ⁷ The literal translation of 'minister' is 'successor' (a Latin word that occurs again in 10:15 and probably renders an underlying διάδοχος, used in several passages of the LXX, and elsewhere, in the sense of 'minister').
- ⁸ Although Charles emboldens the word, 'fathers', he does not do so with 'to their', here following Sparks.
- ⁹ In place of 'saying to Joshua', Sparks starts a new sentence with, "*And Moses said to Joshua.*"
- ¹⁰ Literally translated, the verse opens, 'And promise'; a verb seems to have dropped out and Charles conjectures, "<Be strong> **and of good courage**" on the basis of Dt 31:7.

quaerellam est ¹¹ ideo haec dicit dominus orbis terrarum ¹² Creauit enim orbem terrarum propter plebem suam ¹³ et non coepit eam inceptionem creaturae et ab initio orbis terrarum palam facere ut in eam gentes arguantur et humiliter inter se disputationibus arguant se ¹⁴ itaque excogitauit et inuenit me qui ab initio orbis terrarum praeparatus sum ut sim arbiter testamenti illius ¹⁵ et tunc palam facio tibi quia consummatum est tempus annorum uitae meae et transio in dormitionem patrum meorum et palam omnem plebem ¹⁶ autem percipe scribaturam hanc ad recognoscendam tutationem librorum quos tibi tradam ¹⁷ quos ordinabis et chedriabis et reponis in uasis fictilibus in loco quem fecit ab initio creaturae orbis terrarum ¹⁸ ut inuocetur nomen illius usque in diem paenitentiae in respectu quo respicit illos dominus in consummatione exitus dierum

been commanded, so you may be blameless before God.’ ¹¹ So says the Lord of the world. ¹² For, he created the world for his people. ¹³ But he did not reveal this purpose of creation at the world’s foundation, so the Gentiles might thus be convicted and, to their humiliation, might by *their* arguments convict one another. ¹⁴ So, he designed and devised me, and prepared me from the foundation of the world, to be the arbiter of his covenant. ¹⁵ And now I warn you that my span of life is over and I am passing away to sleep with my fathers, even in the presence of all the people. ¹⁶ And study this writing, so you may know how to preserve the books that I entrust to you; ¹⁷ Set them in order and anoint them with cedar oil and put them away in earthen jars in the place he made at the beginning of the creation of the world, ¹⁸ *where* men should invoke his name until the day of repentance, when the Lord will look on them favourably at the final consummation.

¹¹ A more literal – and less idiomatic – translation of this verse is, “So, the Lord of the world says this.”

¹² Charles ends with, ‘on behalf of his people’.

¹³ In place of ‘did not reveal’, Charles has ‘was not pleased to manifest’.

¹⁴ For ‘designed and devised’, Sparks has ‘chose and appointed’.

¹⁵ Charles has ‘the time of the years of my life’ in place of ‘my span of life’.

¹⁶ Charles has ‘receive’ in place of ‘study’, here (loosely) following Sparks.

¹⁷ In place of ‘the place he made’, Sparks has ‘the place the Lord intended’.

¹⁸ Literally translated, the verse ends, “in the respect with which the Lord will respect them in the consummation of the end of the days.”

Assumptio Moysis 2

¹ *Intrabunt per te in terram quam decreuit et promisit dare patribus eorum* ² *in qua tu benedicis et dabis unicuique et stabilibus eis sortem in me et constabilibus eis regnum et magisteria locorum dimittes illis secus quod placebit domino eorum in iudicio et iustitia* ³ *autem postquam intrabunt in terram suam annos et postea dominabitur a principibus et tyrannis per annos XVIII et XVIII annos abrumpens tibi X nam descendunt tribus duae et transferunt scenae testimonium* ⁴ *tunc deus caelestis fecit palam scenae suae et ferrum sanctuarii sui et ponentur duae tribus sanctitatis* ⁵ *nam X tribus stabiliunt sibi secus ordinationes suas regna* ⁶ *et adferent uictimas per annos XX* ⁷ *et uii circumuallabunt muros Et circumibo VIII et adcedent ad testamentum domini et finem polluent quem fecit dominus cum eis* ⁸ *et immolabunt natos suos diis alienis et ponent idola scenae seruientes illis* ⁹ *et in domo domini facient scelestae et sculpent omnem animalium idola multa.*

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 2

¹ ... they shall go by you into the land that he determined and promised to their fathers, ² in which you shall bless and give to each of them and confirm their lot in me and establish for them a kingdom; and you will appoint them judges according to their Lord's will in judgement and justice. ³ And after they enter the land years ... and years ... later, they shall be ruled by chiefs and kings for 18 years; and, 19 years the ten *tribes shall break away*. ⁴ Then, the God of heaven will make the court of the tabernacle and the tower of his sanctuary and the two holy tribes shall be established; ⁵ but 10 tribes will set up kingdoms for themselves with their own laws. ⁶ And they will offer sacrifices for 20 years; ⁷ and seven will surround the walls and I will protect nine; but they will *transgress* the Lord's covenant and profane the oath the Lord made with them. ⁸ And they will sacrifice their sons to alien gods and set up idols to serve them. ⁹ And in the Lord's house they will act wickedly and carve many idols in every form of animal.

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 2

- ¹ At the start of this verse, Sparks & Charles add '<And now>' (but Charles lacks the angle-brackets).
- ² Sparks has 'in it' in place of 'in me', here following the MS and Charles.
- ³ The Latin text for the end of the verse is untranslatable; here, we loosely follow Charles.
- ⁴ At the start of this verse, Charles adds, "For, twelve tribes shall go down and transfer the tabernacle of the testimony."
- ⁵ Charles and Sparks have 'establish' in place of 'set up'.
- ⁶ Charles and Sparks spell out 'twenty' in place of using the numeral of the Latin text.
- ⁷ In place of 'surround', Charles has 'entrench'.
- ⁸ In place of 'alien', Charles has 'strange' and Sparks has 'foreign'.
- ⁹ Charles ends with, "they will work impiety and carve every form of beast, even many abominations."

Assumptio Moysis 3

¹ *Illis temporibus ueniet illis ab oriente rex et teget equitatus terram eorum et* ² *incendet colonia eorum igne cum aede sancta domini et sancta uasa omnia tollet* ³ *et omnem plebem eiciet et ducet illos in terram patriae suae et duas tribus ducit secum* ⁴ *Tunc inuocabunt duae tribus x tribus et ducent se ut liena in campis puluerati esurientes et sitientes cum infantibus nostris* ⁵ *et clamabunt iustus et sanctus dominus quia enim uos peccastis et nos pariter adducti sumus uobiscum* ⁶ *tunc plorabunt x tribus audientes inproperia uerborum tribum duarum* ⁷ *et dicent quid faciemus uobis fratres nonne in omnem domum istrahel aduenit clibsis haec* ⁸ *et omnes tribus plorabunt clamantes in caelum et dicentes* ⁹ *deus abraham et deus isaac et deus iacob reminiscere testamentum tuum quod factasti cum eis et iusiurandum quod iurasti eis per te ne umquam deficiat semen eorum a terra quam dedisti illis*

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 3

¹ In those days, a king from the east shall come against them and his cavalry will cover their land. ² And he will burn their city with fire together with the Lord's holy temple, and he will carry off all the holy vessels. ³ And he will cast forth all the people and take them to his own land; and he will take the two tribes with him. ⁴ Then will two tribes call on the 10 tribes, like a lioness on the dusty plains, hungry and thirsty. ⁵ And they will cry aloud, "Righteous and holy is the Lord; for, as you have sinned, we too, in like manner, have been carried off with you, with our children." ⁶ Then the 10 tribes will mourn on hearing the reproaches of the two tribes, and they will say, ⁷ What can we do for you, brothers? ⁸ Has not this misery come to all the house of Israel?" And all the tribes will mourn, crying to heaven, saying, ⁹ "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, remember your covenant that you made with them, and the oath that you swore to them by

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 3

- ¹ Charles adds 'And' at the opening of the verse and Sparks has this in angle-brackets.
- ² The Literal translation of 'city' (as Sparks) is 'colony' (as Charles); cf. v. 6, 6:8.
- ³ In place of 'all the people', Sparks has 'the whole population'.
- ⁴ After 'call', Sparks adds 'indignantly' (in bold font, suggesting that it is not original).
- ⁵ In the Latin text, 'with our children' follows 'thirsty' at the end of v. 4.
- ⁶ Throughout this book, we transcribe Roman numeral in the Latin text as numbers in the translation.
- ⁷ For the 1st question, here following Sparks, Charles has, "What have we done unto you, brethren?"
- ⁸ The Latin text has 'and' before 'God of Isaac'; here, we use the more contemporary English style.
- ⁹ In place of 'seed', Sparks has 'descendants'.

¹⁰ Tunc remiscetur me die illo dicentes tribus ad tribum et homo de proximo suo ¹¹ nonne hoc est quod testabatur nobis cum moyses in profetis qui multa passus est in aegypto et in mari rubro et in heremo annis XL ¹² testatus et inuocabat nobis testes caelum et terram ne praeteriremus mandata illius in quibus arbiter fuit nobis ¹³ quae aduenerunt nobis de isto secus uerba ipsius et secus adfirmationem ipsius quomodo testatus est nobis temporibus illis et quae conuenerunt usque nos duci captiuos in partem orientis ¹⁴ qui et seruiet circa annos LXXVII.

yourself, that their seed should never fail in the land you gave them.” ¹⁰ Then they will remember me that day, tribe saying to tribe and a man to another, ¹¹ “Is not this what Moses said about us in prophecies, who suffered much in Egypt, in the Red Sea, and in the desert for 40 years: ¹² he testified and called heaven and earth to witness against us, to not transgress his commandments, of which he was mediator to us? ¹³ These things have befallen us after his death, just as he said and warned us at that time; these have happened, even to our being carried off captive into eastern lands.” ¹⁴ And who will be kept in slavery for about 77 years.

¹⁰ The literal translation of ‘to another’ is ‘about another’.

¹¹ Literally translated, the verse opens, “Is not this what Moses was testifying to us.”

¹² Charles lacks the opening ‘he testified’. Sparks had ‘God’s commandments’ in place of ‘his commandments’.

¹³ The literal translation of ‘warned us’ (as Sparks) is ‘testified to us’.

¹⁴ In place of ‘be kept in slavery’, Charles has ‘be also in bondage’.

Assumptio Moysis 4

¹ Tunc intravit unus qui supra eos est et expandit manus et ponit genua sua et oravit pro eis dicens ² Domine omnis rex in alta sede qui dominaris saeculo qui uoluisti plebem hanc esse tibi plebem hanc exceptam tunc uoluisti inuocari eorum deus secus testamentum quod fecisti cum patribus eorum ³ et ierunt captiui in terram alienam cum uxoribus et natis suis et circa ostium allofilorum et ubi est maiestas magna ⁴ respice et miserere eorum domine caelestis ⁵ Tunc reminiscitur deus eorum propter testamentum quod fecit cum patribus illorum et palam faciet misericordiam suam et temporibus illis ⁶ et mittit in animam regis ut misereator eorum et dimittit illos in terram eorum et regionem ⁷ tunc ascendent aliquae partes tribuum et uenient in locum constitutum suum et circumuallabunt locum renouantes ⁸ duae autem tribus permanebunt in praeposita fide sua tristes et gementes quia non poterint referre immolationes

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 4

¹ Then shall enter one over them, and spread out his hands, and fall to his knees and pray for them, saying, ² "Lord of all, King on the lofty throne, who rules the world, and willed that this people should be your elect people: then you willed that you should be called their God, according to the covenant you made with their fathers. ³ And they have gone captive into another land with their wives and children, and around the gate of strange peoples and where there is great vanity. ⁴ Regard and have pity on them, Lord of heaven." ⁵ Then God will remember them because of the covenant he made with their fathers, and he will show his pity at that time also. ⁶ And he will put it into the mind of a king to pity them, and he will send them to their land and country. ⁷ Then some part of the tribes will go up and come to their appointed place, and once again surround the place. ⁸ But the two tribes will continue in their given faith, sad and groaning, being unable to offer

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 4

¹ After 'enter', Sparks adds 'his house'.

² Sparks adds 'who sits' after 'King'.

³ Charles surrounds 'around' with dagger symbols, indicating doubts about the word's correctness; Sparks emends to '*living among foreign peoples*'. For 'great vanity' (as Charles), Sparks has '*much idolatry*'; the text has '*great majesty*' but 'vanity' is often used in the OT for idolatry.

⁴ Charles has 'compassion' in place of 'pity' (as also in v. 5).

⁵ In place of 'at that time', Charles has '*in those times*'.

⁶ Charles has '*to have compassion on them*' in place of 'pity them'. Before 'land', Sparks adds '*own*' (in italics).

⁷ Sparks has '*some from the tribes*' in place of '*some part of the tribes*'. Charles adds '*with walls*' at the end of the verse and Sparks has the words italics.

⁸ In place of '*groaning*', Charles has '*lamenting*'.

*domino patrum suorum⁹ et x tribus crescent et deuenient
apud natos in tempore tribum*

sacrifices to the Lord of their fathers. ⁹ And the 10 tribes will grow and become a tribe among those born in the time ...

⁹ After 'grow', the text becomes more than usually uncertain; Charles reads, "*And the ten tribes shall increase and multiply among the Gentiles during the time of their captivity.*"

Assumptio Moysis 5

¹ et cum adpropriabunt tempora arguendi et uindicta surgit de reges participes scelerum ² et punientes eos et ipsi diidentur ad ueritatem propter quod factum fuit ³ deuitabunt iustitiam et accedent ad iniquitatem et contaminabunt in genationibus domum seruitutis suae et quia fornicabunt post deos alienos ⁴ non enim sequentur ueritatem dei sed quidam altarium inquinabunt de muneribus quae inponet domino qui non sunt sacerdotes sed serui de seruis nati ⁵ qui enim magistri sunt doctores eorum illis temporibus erunt mirantes personas cupiditatum et acceptiones munerum et peruendent iustitias accipiendo poenas ⁶ et ideo implebitur colonia et fines habitationis eorum sceleribus et iniquitatibus a deo ut qui facit erunt impii iudices erunt in eam post fines habitationis sceleribus et iniquitatibus a domino qui faciunt erunt impii iudices inerunt in campo iudicare quomodo quisquae uolet

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 5

¹ And, when the times of reckoning draw near and retribution arises through the kings who share in their guilt and punish them, ² they themselves also will be divided as to the truth. ³ Hence, it has been said, "They will turn aside from righteousness and approach iniquity, and they will defile with *their* pollutions the house of their worship," and because, "they will go a-whoring after strange gods." ⁴ For, they will not follow the truth of God; but some of *them* shall pollute the altar with the <very> gifts that they offer to the Lord, who are not priests but slaves *and* sons of slaves. ⁵ And many in those times shall have respect for desirable persons and receive gifts, and pervert judgement [on receiving presents]. ⁶ And, on this account, their city and the borders of their habitation shall be filled with acts of lawlessness and deeds of evil; and those who wickedly depart from the Lord shall be judges; they shall be ready to judge for money as each may wish.

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 5

- ¹ Charles has 'chastisement' in place of 'reckoning'; a more literal translation would be 'censuring'.
- ² Sparks omits 'in' before 'their guilt'.
- ³ The opening, 'Hence it has been said', does not appear in the Latin text but is here included (loosely) following Charles/Sparks.
- ⁴ In place of 'go a-whoring after', Sparks has 'turn wantonly to'. Both Charles and Sparks include the angle-brackets around 'very'.
- ⁵ For this verse, here following Charles, Sparks reads, "And those who are their masters, that is their teacher at that time, will show favour to **the rich** and **take** bribes and sell judgement in return for **presents**."
- ⁶ The literal translation of 'their city' is 'the colony' (cf. 3:2, 6:8). The text of vv. 5–6 is very corrupt, although the general sense is plain.

Assumptio Moysis 6

¹ tunc exurgent illis reges imperantes et in sacerdotes summi dei uocabuntur facient facientes impietatem ab sancto sanctitatis ² et succedit illis rex petulans qui non erit de genere sacerdotum homo temerarius et improbus et iudicabit illis quomodo digni erunt ³ qui elidit principales eorum gladio et locis ignotis singuli et corpora illorum ut nemo sciat ubi sint corpora illorum ⁴ occidit maiores natu et iuuenes et non parcat ⁵ tunc timor erit illius aceruus in eis in terram eorum ⁶ et faciet in eis iudicia quomodo fecerunt in illis aegypti per xxx et iiii annos et puniunt eos ⁷ et .. rodincit natos ... ecedentes sibi breuiora tempora donarent ⁸ in pares eorum mortis uenient et occidentes rex potens quia expugnabit eos ⁹ et ducent captiuos et partem aedis ipsorum igni incendit aliquos crucifigit circa coloniam eorum

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 6

¹ Then will arise a king to rule over them; and they will be called priests of the Most High God; they will work evil in the holy of holies. ² And an insolent king will succeed them, not of priestly stock, a man arrogant and shameless, and he will judge them as they deserve. ³ And he will put their leaders to the sword and **bury** them in secret, so that no one may know where their bodies are. ⁴ He will kill old and young and will spare none. ⁵ Then fear of him will be bitter to them in their land. ⁶ And he will judge them as the Egyptians judged them, for 34 years, and punish them. ⁷ And he will have children, *who* will succeed him for short periods. ⁸ Into their **parts** will come **cohorts** and a powerful king of the west, **who** will conquer them, ⁹ and take them captive, and burn a part of their temple with fire, *and* crucify some around their city.

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 6

¹ Charles opens, "Then there shall be raised up unto them kings bearing rule."

² In place of 'priestly stock', Charles has 'the race of the priests'.

³ Charles has 'destroy' in place of 'bury', here following the speculation of Sparks.

⁴ The literal translation of 'will spare none' is 'will not spare'.

⁵ For this verse, Sparks reads (conjecturally), "He will be the object of universal dread and detestation."

⁶ Charles has 'execute judgements' in place of 'judge'. The literal translation of '34 years' is '30 and 4 years' (xxx et iiii annos).

⁷ Charles has 'who' in angle-brackets and does not embolden 'rule' (following Sparks).

⁸ Sparks includes the text of v. 9 as part of this verse.

⁹ The literal translation of 'their city' is 'the colony' (cf. 3:2, 5:6).

Assumptio Moysis 7

¹ ex quo facto finientur tempora momento etur cursus a
... horae IIII ueniant ² coguntur secun ae ... pos ... initiis
tribus ad exitus VIII propter initium tres septimae secunda
tria in tertia duae h .. ra .. tae ³ et regnarunt de his homines
pestilentiosi et impii docentes se esse iustos ⁴ et hi
suscitabunt iram animorum suorum qui erunt homines
dolosi sibi placentes ficti in omnibus suis et omni hora diei
amantes conuiuia deuoratores gulae ⁵ s ... n ... ca nus
diis omnis u o rue elentes ⁶ rum
bonorum comestores dicentes se haec facere propter
misericordiam qu ... ⁷ se et exterminatores quaeru ... fallaces
celantes se ne possent cognosci impii in scelere pleni et
iniquitate ab oriente usque ad occidentem ⁸ dicentes
habebimus discubitiones et luxuriam edentes et bibentes Et
putauimus nos tamquam principes erimus ⁹ et manus
eorum et mentes immunda tractantes et os eorum loquetur

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 7

¹ And when this is done the times shall be ended, in a moment
the <second> course shall <come to an end>, the four hours
shall come. ² They shall be forced ... *the first tribe to the end of
nine ... three of the seventh ...* ³ And, in the their time,
destructive and impious men shall rule, saying that they are
just. ⁴ And these shall stir up the anger of their minds, being
treacherous men, self-pleasers, dissemblers in all their own
affairs and lovers of banquets at every hour of the day,
⁵ gluttons, guzzlers ... ⁶ who devour the goods of the <poor>,
saying that they do so on the ground of **justice**, ⁷ **but** in reality
to destroy them, grumbler, deceitful *people*, concealing
themselves lest they should be recognized, impious, filled
with lawlessness and iniquity, from sunrise to sunset, saying,
⁸ "We shall have feasts and luxury, eating and drinking, and
we shall esteem ourselves as if we were princes." ⁹ And,
though their hands and their minds touch unclean things, yet

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 7

- ¹ In place of 'come to an end', Charles has 'be ended'.
- ² The *Latin MS* is here so defective as to be virtually untranslatable.
- ³ Another reading for 'in their time' is (possibly) 'from among them'.
- ⁴ Charles has 'poison' in place of 'anger'.
- ⁵ The *Latin MS* is here, again, highly defective.
- ⁶ Charles opens with, "Devourers of the goods."
- ⁷ Charles lacks 'people', here following Sparks.
- ⁸ Sparks ends with, "and let us behave like princes."
- ⁹ Sparks ends this verse with, "even saying."

ingentia et super dicent ¹⁰ *noli tange ne inquines me loco* their mouth shall speak great things, and they shall say
in quo ... s is d su us in re rui in moreover, ¹⁰ "Do not touch me lest you should pollute me in
plebem quae s .. a .. illis the place <where I stand>" ...

¹⁰ The *Latin MS* is here defective and breaks off suddenly.

Assumptio Moysis 8

¹ et .. ta .. ueniet in eos ultio et ira quae talis non fuit in illis a saeculo usque ad illum tempus in quo suscitauit illis regem regum terrae et potestatem a potentia magna qui confitentes circumcisionem in cruce suspendit ² Nam necantes torquet et tradidit duci uinctos in custodiam ³ et uxores eorum diis donabuntur gentibus Et filii eorum pueri secabantur a medicis pueri inducere acrosiam illis ⁴ nam illi in eis punientur in tormentis et igne et ferro et cogentur palam baiulare idola eorum inquinata quomodo sunt pariter continentibus ea ⁵ et a torquentibus illos pariter cogentur intrare in abditum locum eorum et cogentur stimulis blasphemare uerbum contumeliose nouissime post haec et leges quod haberent supra altarium suum

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 8

¹ And there shall come to them visitation and wrath, such as has not befallen them sine the world began until the time he will stir up against them a king of the kings of earth, *who will rule* with great power and crucify all who confess circumcision; ² and all who deny *it* he will torture, set in chains, and imprison. ³ And their wives will be given to the gods of the Gentiles, and their boys will be operated on by physicians to stretch their foreskin. ⁴ And others of them will be punished by torture, fire, and sword, and be forced to bear their idols in public, defiled like those who keep them. ⁵ And they shall be forced by those who torment them to enter their inmost sanctuary and forced by goads to blaspheme and insult the word; and, last, the laws they had above their altar.

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 8

¹ Before 'visitation', Sparks has 'second' in angle-brackets.

² For 'those who deny it', we read *negantes* for the MS *necantes*; Charles proposes *celantes* ('those who conceal it').

³ Operations to hide the effects of circumcision were known from (at least) Maccabean times.

⁴ After 'defiled', Sparks adds 'things'.

⁵ Sparks ends with, "by having **a pig** upon the altar."

Assumptio Moysis 9

¹ tunc illo dicente hom de tribu leui cuius nomen erit taxo qui habens vii filios dicens ad eos rogans ² uidete filii ecce ultio facta est in plebe altera crudelis inmundanda et traductio sine misericordia et eminent principatum ³ quae enim gens aut quae regio aut quis populus impiorum in domum qui multa scelestia fecerunt tanta mala passi sunt quanta nobis contegerunt ⁴ Nunc ergo filii audite me uidete enim et scite quia numquam temptans deum nec parentes nec proau eorum ut praetereant mandata illius ⁵ scitis enim quia haec sunt uires nobis et hoc faciemus ⁶ ieiunemus triduo et quarto die intremus in spelunca quae in agro est et moriamur potius quam praetereamus mandata domini dominorum dei parentum nostrorum ⁷ hoc enim si faciemus et moriemur sanguis noster uindicabitur coram domino

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 9

¹ Then he said, "A man of the tribe of Levi, whose name will be Taxo, having seven sons, will ask them, ² "See, *my* sons, another cruel *and* unclean visitation has come on the people, and a merciless punishment far exceeding the first. ³ For, what nation or what region or what people of those who do not worship *the Lord*, who have done many abominations, have suffered as great calamities as have befallen us? ⁴ So now, my sons, hear me: you know that neither the fathers nor the forefathers tempted God by transgressing his commands. ⁵ For, you know this is our power and we will do this. ⁶ Let us fast for three days and, on the fourth, let us go to a cave in the field and let us die rather than transgress the commands of the Lord of Lords, the God of our fathers. ⁷ For, if we do this and die, our blood will be avenged before the Lord.

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 9

- ¹ Charles opens, "Then, in that day there shall be a man of the tribe of Levi."
- ² Charles opens with 'Observe' in place of 'See', here following Sparks.
- ³ The words, 'the Lord', are not in the Latin MS.
- ⁴ In place of 'by transgressing', Charles as 'so as to transgress'.
- ⁵ Charles opens with 'And' in place of 'For'.
- ⁶ Before 'three days', Charles adds 'the space of'.
- ⁷ Charles and Sparks have identical translations for this verse.

Assumptio Moysis 10

- 1 *Et tunc parebit regnum illius in
omni creatura illius.*
*Et tunc zabulus finem habebit
et tristitiam cum eo adducetur*
- 2 *Tunc implebuntur manus nuntii
qui est in summo constitutus
qui protinus uindicauit illos ab inimicis eorum*
- 3 *..... get enim caelestis a sede regni sui
et exiet de habitatione sancta sua
cum indignationem et iram propter filios suos*
- 4 *et tremebit terra usque
ad fines suas concutietur
et alti montes humiliabuntur
et concutientur et conualles cadent*
- 5 *sol non dabit lumen
et in tenebris conuertent se cornua lunae
et confringentur et tota conuertit se in sanguine
et orbis stellarum conturuauitur*

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 10

- 1 And then his kingdom shall appear throughout
all his creation.
And then Satan shall be no more
and sorrow shall depart with him.
- 2 Then the hands of the angel shall be filled
who has been appointed chief;
and he shall forthwith avenge them of their enemies.
- 3 For, the Heavenly One will *arise* from his royal throne
and he will go forth from his holy habitation
with indignation and wrath on account of his sons.
- 4 And the earth will tremble;
to its limits will it be shaken;
and the high mountains shall be made low
and the hills shall be shaken and fall.
- 5 And the sun will not give *its* light;
and the horns of the moon will become darkness,
and be turned wholly into blood.
And the circle of the stars shall be disturbed.

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 10

- 1 Both Charles and Sparks format vv. 1-10 as poetry.
- 2 For the 1st line, Sparks has, "*Then shall be consecrated the angel.*"
- 3 The word, '*arise*', is not in the *Latin MS* but is here added by deduction; Sparks has the word enclose in angle-brackets.
- 4 Literally translates, this verse ends, "*And high mountains will be brought low and shaken and valleys will fall.*"
- 5 For the first 3 lines, Charles has, "*And the horns of the sun shall be broken and he shall be turned into darkness; And the moon shall not give her light, and be turned wholly into blood.*" Here, we (loosely) follow Sparks.

⁶ *et mare usque ad abyssum decedit
ad fontes aquarum deficient
et flumina expauescent*
⁷ *quia exurgit summus deus aeternus solus
et palam ueniet ut uindicet gentes
et perdet omnia idola eorum*
⁸ *Tunc felix eris tu israhel
et ascendes supra ceruices
et alas aquilae et inplebuntur*
⁹ *et altauit te deus
et faciet te herere caelo stellarum
loco habitationis eorum*
¹⁰ *et conspiges a summo et uides inimicos tuos
in terram
et cognosces illos et gaudebis et agis gratias et
confiteberis creatori tuo*
¹¹ *nam tu iesu naue custodi uerba haec et hunc librum*
¹² *erunt enim a morte receptionem usque ad aduentum illius*
¹³ *tempora CCL quae fiunt Et hic cursus ... horum quem*

⁶ And the sea shall retire into the abyss;
and the fountains of water shall fail;
and the rivers *shall dry up*.
⁷ For, the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone;
and he will appear to punish the Gentiles,
and he will destroy all their idols.
⁸ Then you, Israel, will be happy,
and you shalt mount upon the necks
[and wings of the eagle] and they will be ended.
⁹ And God will exalt you,
and set you in heaven above the stars,
in the place of their habitation.
¹⁰ And you will look from on high and see your enemies
in earth;
And thou shalt recognize them and rejoice,
And thou shalt give thanks and confess thy Creator.
¹¹ And you, Joshua *son of Nun*, keep these words and this
book; ¹² for, from my death until his advent there shall be 250
times. ¹³ And this is the course of the *times* that they shall

⁶ For 'shall dry up', the Latin MS reads 'shall be afraid' (*expauescent*).

⁷ Note that the Latin text does not capitalize 'Eternal God' (*deus aeternus*).

⁸ The first 2 lines of this verse are clearly inspired by Dt 33:29 (*LXX*); hence, the text in brackets is likely to be a gloss.

⁹ Charles encloses the text of the last line in daggers.

¹⁰ For 'in earth', Charles reads 'in Ge[henna]', supposing that *in terram* is a rendering of the common Greek abbreviation for 'in the valley'.

¹¹ The words, 'son of' are lacking in the Latin MS.

¹² After 'death', Charles adds 'assumption' in brackets - claiming it to be an addition by an editor who merged the 'Assumption' with the 'Testament'.

¹³ The word 'times' is missing from the Latin MS but there is a gap in the text where the word would appear.

conueniunt donec consummentur ¹⁴Ego autem ad
dormitionem patrum meorum eram ¹⁵itaque tu iesu naue
forma te elegit deus esse mihi successorem eiusdem
testamenti

pursue until they are complete. ¹⁴ But I will go to sleep with
my fathers. ¹⁵ So, Joshua, you *son of* Nun, <be strong and> be
of good courage; God has chosen <you> to be minister in the
same covenant.

¹⁴ Sparks has '*depart*' in place of '*go*'.

¹⁵ The words, '*son of*' are lacking in the *Latin MS*.

Assumptio Moysis 11

¹ et cum audisset iesus uerba moysi tam scripta in sua scriptura omnia quae praedixerant scidit sibi uestimenta et procidit ad pedes meos ² et hortatus est cum monse et plorauit cum eo ³ Et respondit illi et dixit iesus ⁴ quid me celares domine monse et quo genere celabor de qua locutus est uoce acerua que exiuit de ore tuo quae est plena lacrimis et gemitibus quia tu discedis de plebe ist ⁵ quis locus recipit te ⁶ aut quod erit monumentum sepulturae ⁷ aut quis audeuit corpus tuum transferre in eut homo de loco in locum ⁸ Omnibus enim morientibus secus aetatem sepulturae suae sunt in terris nam tua sepultura ab oriente sole usque ad occidentem et ab austro usque ad fines aquilonis omnis orbis terrarum sepulcrum est tuum ⁹ domine abhis Et quis nutrit plebem istam ¹⁰ aut quis est qui miserebitur illis et quis eis dux erit in uia ¹¹ aut quis orabit

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 11

¹ And, when Joshua heard that Moses had written in his writing what he had foretold, he tore his clothes and cast himself at Moses' feet. ² And Moses comforted him and wept with him. ³ And Joshua answered him and said, ⁴ "Why do you comfort me, lord Moses? And how can I be consoled when you tell me something so distressing, full of tears and groaning, that you will leave this people? ⁵ ... what place will receive you? ⁶ Or what sign will mark *your* sepulchre? ⁷ Or who will dare move your body **thence** as a man from place to place? ⁸ For, all men who die have their sepulchres corresponding to their age on earth; but your sepulchre is from the rising to the setting sun, and from the south to the confines of the north: all the world is your sepulchre. ⁹ My lord, you are **departing** and who shall feed this people? ¹⁰ Or who is there to pity them and who shall guide them on the way? ¹¹ Or who

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 11

¹ In place of 'foretold', Charles has 'before said'.

² Charles and Sparks have identical translations for this verse.

³ Sparks extends this verse to include the 1st question of (what is here) v. 4.

⁴ Before 'lord Moses', Charles adds 'my' in parentheses.

⁵ For this verse, Sparks reads, "<But now>, where will you be buried?"

⁶ In place of 'sepulchre', Sparks has 'burial place'.

⁷ Before 'man', Sparks adds (in italics) 'as though it were that of an ordinary'.

⁸ Charles transposes 'their sepulchres' to after 'their age'. Throughout this verse, Sparks has 'burial-place' in place of 'sepulchre'.

⁹ In place of 'departing', Sparks has 'are about to go away' (also in bold).

¹⁰ Charles has 'that shall have compassion on them' in place of 'to pity them'.

¹¹ The literal translation of 'day by day' (as Sparks) is 'not [omitting] a single day'. 'Ancestors' assumes an emendation of *araborum* to *atavorum*.

pro eis nec patiens ne uno quidem diem ut inducam illos in terram araborum ¹² quomodo ergo potero plebem hanc tamquam pater unicum filium aut tamquam filiam dominam uirginem quae paratur tali uiro quae timebat corpus custodiens eius a sole et ne scalciati pedes eius ad currendum supra terram ¹³ de uoluntatem eorum praestabo illis ciborum et potui secus uoluntatem uoluntatis eorum ¹⁴ enim illorum erant c milia nam isti in tantum qui creuerunt in tuis orationibus domine monse ¹⁵ et quae est mihi sapientia aut intellectus in domo uerbis aut iudicare aut respondere ¹⁶ sed et reges amorreorum cum audierint expugnare nos credentes iam non esse semet sacrum spiritum dignum domino multiplicem et inconpraehensibilem dominum uerbi fidelem in omnia diuinum per orbem terrarum profetem consummatum in saeculo doctorem iam non esse in eis dicens Eamus ad eos ¹⁷ si inimici impie fecerunt semel adhuc in dominum suum non est defensor illis qui ferat pro eis praeces domino quomodo monse erat magnus nuntius qui singulis horis diebus et noctibus habebat genua sua infixata in terra orans et intuens hominipotentem orbem terrarum cum

shall pray for them, day by day, so I may lead them into the land of their ancestors? ¹² How, therefore, am I to foster this people as a father *his* only son, or as a mother her virgin daughter, raised to be given to the husband she will revere, guarding her body from the sun and *taking care* she does not run about unshod? ¹³ ... shall I supply them with food and drink according to their needs? ¹⁴ ... for, of them there shall be 100 thousand; for, these have become so many through your prayers, lord Moses. ¹⁵ And what wisdom or understanding have I that I should judge or answer by word in the house ... ? ¹⁶ And the kings of the Amorites also when they hear we are attacking, believing that there is no longer *among them* the sacred spirit worthy of the Lord, manifold and incomprehensible, lord of the word, faithful in all things, divine prophet throughout the earth, the most perfect teacher in the world, no longer among them, shall say, "Let us go to them. ¹⁷ If the enemy have but once done wrong against their Lord, they have no advocate to offer prayers for them to the Lord, like Moses the great messenger, who every hour day and night had his knees fixed to the earth, praying, looking to him who rules *all* the world with mercy and justice,

¹² In place of 'mother', Charles has 'mistress'.

¹³ Sparks and Charles open this verse with a conjectural, '<And how>'.

¹⁴ Both Charles and Sparks emend 100,000 (c milia) to 600,000 (cf. Ex 12:37).

¹⁵ Sparks and Charles end this verse with a conjectural, '<of the Lord>'.

¹⁶ After 'attacking', Charles and Sparks add 'them' (in italics). For 'divine prophet' (as Sparks), Charles has 'God's chief prophet'.

¹⁷ A more literal translation of 'advocate' is 'defender'. For 'had his knees fixed to the earth, praying', Sparks has 'prayed without ceasing'.

*miser cordia et iustitia reminiscens testamentum parentum
et iureiurando placando dominum*¹⁸ *dicent enim non est ille
cum eis eamus itaque et confundamus eos a faciae terrae*
¹⁹ *quod ergo fiet plebi isti domine monse*

reminding *him* of the covenant of the fathers and propitiating
the Lord with the oath.”¹⁸ For, they will say, “He is not with
them: so, let us go and wipe them from the face of the earth.”
¹⁹ What, then, shall become of this people, lord Moses?”

¹⁸ Charles has ‘*destroy*’ in place of ‘*wipe*’.

¹⁹ Sparks & Charles add ‘*my*’ (in italics) before ‘*lord Moses*’.

Assumptio Moysis 12

¹ et postquam finiuit uerba iesus iterum procidit ad pedes monsi ² Et monse prendit manum ipsius et erexit illum in cathedra ante se Et respondit et dixit illi ³ iesus et ne contempnas sed praebe te securum et adtende uerbis meis ⁴ omnes gentes quae sunt in ore terrarum deus creauit et nos praeuidit illos et nos ab initio creaturae orbis terrarum ut ad exitum saeculi Et nihil est ab eo neglectum usque ad pusillum sed omnia praeuidit et prououit cum eis .. ⁵ dns omnia quae futura essent in hoc orbe terrarum prouidit et ecce aufertur ⁶ s me constituit pro eis et pro peccatis eorum et in .. ccare .. pro eis ⁷ non enim propter meam uirtutem aut infirmitatem sed temperantius misericordiae ipsius et patientia contegerunt mihi ⁸ dico enim tibi iesu non propter pietatem plebis huius exterminabis gentes ⁹ omnia caeli firmamenta orbis facta ut prouata a deo et sub nullo dexteræ illius sunt ¹⁰ Facientes itaque et consummantes

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 12

¹ And, when Joshua finished speaking, he fell again at Moses' feet. ² And Moses took his hand and lifted him into the seat before him. And he answered and said, ³ "Joshua, do not belittle yourself but take courage and listen to me. ⁴ All nations on earth God has created and us; he foresaw them and us from the beginning of the creation of the earth to the end of the age. And nothing has been neglected by him, even the least thing, but he foresaw everything and provided for them. ⁵ <And> all things to be on this earth the Lord foresaw and behold! **They come forth** ... ⁶ ... has appointed me to pray for them and for their sins and *intercede* for them. ⁷ For, not for any virtue or **strength** of mine, but of his good pleasure have his pity and patience fallen on me. ⁸ For, I say to you, Joshua: you will not uproot the nations because of this people's piety. ⁹ All the pillars of heaven and earth were made and approved by God and are under nobody's right hand. ¹⁰ So, those who

ASSUMPTION OF MOSES 12

¹ In place of 'speaking', Charles has '(these) words'.

² Charles has 'raised' in place of 'lifted'.

³ Charles has 'set thy mind at ease' in place of 'take courage' (here following Sparks).

⁴ In place of 'provided for them', Sparks has 'brought everything about' and Charles has 'caused all to come forth'.

⁵ Charles opens with '<Yea>' in place of '<And>'; the Latin text is corrupt. Charles and Sparks end with a conjectural, '<into the light...>'.

⁶ Charles and Sparks open with a conjectural, 'The Lord>' (following on the conjecture from the end of v. 5).

⁷ For 'strength', the Latin text actually has 'weakness' (*infirmitatem*).

⁸ In place of 'uproot', Charles has 'root out' and Sparks has 'destroy'.

⁹ Charles opens this verse, here following Sparks, with, "The lights of the heaven, the foundations of the earth."

¹⁰ Sparks has 'God's' in bold type but is unclear why; the Latin text is clear: *mandata dei* ('commandments of God').

mandata dei crescunt et bonam uiam exigunt ¹¹nam peccantibus et neglegentibus mandata carere bonam quae praedicta sunt Et punientur a gentibus multis tormentis ¹²nam in totum exterminet et relinquat eos fieri non potest ¹³exiuit enim deus qui praeuidit omnia in saecula et stabilitum est testamentum illius et iureiu ando quod

do and fulfil the God's commandments shall increase and prosper; ¹¹ but those who sin and ignore the commandments will be denied the aforementioned blessings and will be punished with many torments by the nations. ¹² But to wholly uproot and forsake them is not permitted. ¹³ For, God will go forth who has foreseen all things for ever; and his covenant has been established and by the oath that ...

¹¹ Charles has '*set at nought*' in place of '*ignore*'.

¹² In place of '*not permitted*', Sparks has '*impossible*'.

¹³ The Latin text here breaks off mid-sentence and there is no way of knowing how much has been lost.