

**TRANSLATIONS OF EARLY  
DOCUMENTS SERIES 1, PALESTINIAN  
JEWISH TEXTS (PRE-RABBINIC). THE  
APOCALYPSE OF ABRAHAM; THE  
ASCENSION OF ISAIAH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649745081

Translations of early documents series 1, Palestinian Jewish texts (pre-rabbinic). The Apocalypse of Abraham; The Ascension of Isaiah by G. H. Box & J. I. Landsman & R. H. Charles

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**G. H. BOX & J. I. LANDSMAN & R. H. CHARLES**

**TRANSLATIONS OF EARLY  
DOCUMENTS SERIES 1, PALESTINIAN  
JEWISH TEXTS (PRE-RABBINIC). THE  
APOCALYPSE OF ABRAHAM; THE  
ASCENSION OF ISAIAH**



V  
TRANSLATIONS OF EARLY DOCUMENTS  
SERIES I  
PALESTINIAN JEWISH TEXTS  
(PRE-RABBINIC)

THE APOCALYPSE OF  
ABRAHAM



# THE APOCALYPSE OF ABRAHAM



EDITED, WITH A TRANSLATION FROM THE SLAVONIC  
TEXT AND NOTES

BY

G. H. BOX, M.A.

LECTURER IN RABBINIC HEBREW, KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON;  
HON. CANON OF ST. ALBANS

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

J. I. LANDSMAN

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING  
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE  
LONDON: 68, HAYMARKET, S.W. 1.  
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1918

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY  
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,  
BRUNSWICK ST., STAMFORD ST., S.E. 1,  
AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.



## EDITORS' PREFACE

THE object of this series of translations is primarily to furnish students with short, cheap, and handy text-books, which, it is hoped, will facilitate the study of the particular texts in class under competent teachers. But it is also hoped that the volumes will be acceptable to the general reader who may be interested in the subjects with which they deal. It has been thought advisable, as a general rule, to restrict the notes and comments to a small compass; more especially as, in most cases, excellent works of a more elaborate character are available. Indeed, it is much to be desired that these translations may have the effect of inducing readers to study the larger works.

Our principal aim, in a word, is to make some difficult texts, important for the study of Christian origins, more generally accessible in faithful and scholarly translations.

In most cases these texts are not available in a cheap and handy form. In one or two cases texts have been included of books which are available in the official Apocrypha; but in every such case reasons exist for putting forth these texts in a new translation, with an Introduction, in this series.

\* \* \* \* \*

An edition of *The Apocalypse of Abraham* is included in the present volume. The explanatory notes, in this case, given in the commentary on the

text, are rather longer and fuller than usual. This was rendered necessary by the fact that the Book is made accessible here to English readers for the first time; and the difficulties and obscurities in the text are not inconsiderable.

W. O. E. OESTERLEY.

G. H. BOX.

## INTRODUCTION

### SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE BOOK

*The Apocalypse of Abraham*, which has been preserved in old Slavonic literature, falls into two distinct parts (cf. the somewhat similar case of *The Ascension of Isaiah*). The first part, contained in chaps. i.–viii., consists of a Midrashic narrative based upon the legend of Abraham's conversion from idolatry, which has several peculiar features.<sup>1</sup> The second part (chaps. ix.–xxxii.) is purely apocalyptic in character, and contains a revelation made to Abraham about the future of his race, after his (temporary) ascent into the heavenly regions, under the guidance of the archangel Jaœl, who here seems to play the part of Metatron-Michael. It is based upon the account of Abraham's trance-vision described in Genesis xv.—a favourite theme for apocalyptic speculation. In the Book, as it lies before us, the two parts are organically connected. Thus in chap. x. the archangel says: *I am the one who was commissioned to set on fire thy father's house together with him, because he displayed reverence for dead (idols)*—an allusion to the narrative of chap. viii.; and the general plan of the whole work seems to be based upon the idea that Abraham's dissatisfaction with the idol-worship by which he was surrounded, which found vent in his strong protest to his father Terah (chaps. i.–viii.), appealed so much to the divine favour, that the archangel Jaœl was specially sent

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I, esp. p. 93.