The Ladder of Jacob

The Ladder of Jacob, exists in two recensions in Slavonic, and is said to be translated by Bonwetsch in the Göttingen Nachrichten, in 1900.

Chapter One:

1. Now Jacob went to his Uncle Laban, and he found a place and fell asleep there, laying his head on a stone, for the sun was set: and there he saw a vision.

2. And behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, whose top reached to heaven; and the top of the ladder was in form like a man hewn of fire.

3. It had twelve steps to the top of the ladder, and on each step, up to the top, were two human forms, one on the right and one on the left: there were twenty-four forms on the ladder, visible as far as their breasts. But the central form, which I saw, was on fire as far as the shoulders and arms; and much more terrifying than those twenty-four forms.

4. And while I was looking, behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it; and the Lord had taken His stand upon it.

5. For so it is to be understood, as when a man leans on his staff.

6. O the angels we understand: those who were ascending are a figure of this — when the tree of the Cross was fixed in the earth at the Lord’s passion, as the ladder was fixed in Jacob’s sight, and the Lord received the heathen who were baptized, and they ascended into heaven; but those who were descending — they are the disobedient perverse ones.

7. For Moses prefigured this, and said to them, “Deceitful and perverse generation! Is this your thanksgiving to the Lord?”

8. In this, then, we see the heathen ascending, but the Jews descending… [Text missing. This is noted to be an obvious interpretative “Christian gloss”.

9. [Text missing]…on the highest form. And from there He called to me saying, “Jacob, Jacob.” And I said, “Here am I, Lord!”

10. And He said to me, “The land on which you are sleeping, to you will I give it, and to your descendants after you; and I will multiply your race as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the sea.

11. Through your descendants will the whole land be blessed, and those who live in it, until the last times, even the years of the End: my blessing, with which I have blessed you, shall go forth from you to the last generation. And the East and West shall all be filled with your race.”
Chapter Two:

1. And as I heard His voice from the height, fear and trembling fell on me. And I got up from my sleep; and while the voice was still speaking, and the word of God was in my ears, I said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

2. And the stone, which had been my pillow, I set up as a pillar, and poured oil [Noted as oil from trees, not animals.] on top of it; and I called the name of that place the House of God...

3. “O Lord God of Adam, thy...[Text missing]...and Lord God of Abraham and Isaac my fathers, who were righteous in all their ways before thee,

4. who sittest in might upon the cherubim and on the fiery throne of glory and the many-eyed ones (as I saw in my dream),

5. thou who sustainest the four-faced cherubim, who bearest also the many-eyed seraphim, who bearest the age of all beneath thine arm and art supported by nothing;

6. thou hast established the heavens to the glory of thy name and stretched out on the clouds of heaven the shining heaven beneath thee,

7. that thou mightiest move the sun below it, and hide it in the night, that it should not be taken for God.

8. Thou has set on them a course for the moon and stars: the former thou makest to wane and to wax;

9. and the stars thou commandest to pass by, that they too should not be taken for Gods.

10. Of the face of thy glory the six-winged seraphim are afraid; and they hide their feet and their faces with their wings.

11. And, as they fly with the others, they sing...[Text missing]...

12. High One, with twelve faces, many-named, Fiery One, in form like lightening, Holy One, holy, holy, holy, Jao, Jaoa, Jaoil, Sabakdos, Chabod,

13. Sabaoth, Omlelech, Ilabir, Amis’mi, Barech, Eternal King, Strong One, Mighty One, Most Great, longsuffering, blessed, who fillest the heavens and earth and the sea and the abyss and all the ages with thy glory.

14. Hear my song which I have sung to thee, and grant me my request which I shall ask of thee; and tell me the interpretation of my dream, as thou art God, mighty, powerful, and glorious, holy God, Lord of my fathers and my God.”
Chapter Three:

1. And while I was still making my prayer, a voice spoke before my face, saying, “Sarekl, elder of the joyful ones, you who are over dreams, go and explain to Jacob the dream that he has seen, and tell him everything that he has seen; but first give him a blessing.”
2. And the archangel Sarekl came to me, and I looked upon him: there was a face...
3. But I was not afraid of his glance, for the face I had seen in my dream was more terrifying than this; and I was not afraid of the angel’s face.
4. And the angel said to me, “What is your name?” And I said, “Jacob.” And he said, “You name shall be called Jacob no longer, but your name shall be like my name—Israel.”
5. And when I was coming from Fandana [i.e. Paddan-aram] in Syria to meet Esau my brother, the angel came to me and blessed me and called my name Israel.
6. And he did not tell me his name until I adjured him; and then he told me, “As you have prevailed.” [As stated in Genesis 32. This complete sentence has been lost.]

Chapter Four:

1. Then the angel said to me, “The ladder which you have seen, having twelve steps, and each step having two human forms on it, changing their shape — the ladder is this Age, and the twelve steps are the times of this Age;
2. but the twenty-four forms are the kings of the heathen tribes of this Age.
4. They will rise against the heathenness of your children’s children; and he will lay waste this place through four generations of the sins of your children’s children.
5. And from the wealth of their forefathers will be built a sacristy in the temple to the name of your God and the God of your fathers.
6. And because of the provocation of your children it will lie waste until the fourth generation of this Age, for you have seen four forms.
7. The first — him who you saw stumbling upon the step (the angels ascending and descending, and the forms in the midst of the steps) — that is, the Most High will raise up a king from the descendants.
8. And they will be given into his hand; and they will suffer him unwillingly.
9. He will hold them by force and rule them; and they will not be able to resist him until the day he decides that they should serve idols… [Text missing] … and sacrifice to dead things.
10. And he will command that all the people in his kingdom be forced to do this. And those who will be guilty of such an offence, some will serve the greatest of your race, and some Falkonagargail.

Chapter Five:

1. And your descendants, Jacob, will be like strangers in a foreign land; and they will be ill-treated, and made slaves of, and flogged daily.
2. But the heathen, to whom they will be subject, God will judge.
3. When a king shall rise up and execute judgement, then will there be a place for him:
4. then will your descendants, Israel, be delivered from the oppression of the heathen, who have held them by force, and they will be free from every reproach of their enemies;
5. for the king will be the source [also meaning ‘head’] of all vengeance and retribution upon those who have afflicted you, O Israel.
6. And at the end of the Age, those who have suffered bitterly will rise up and cry out, and the Lord will hear them, and be moved [also meaning ‘entreated’], and the Mighty One will feel compassion for their suffering.
7. For the angels and archangels pour out their prayers before Him for the sparing of your tribe.
8. Then will their women be fruitful; and then will the Lord protect your race.”
Jacob’s Vision of the Ladder

Printed by various Russian scholars and, like other apocrypha, is found in the text of the Palæa, or Old Testament History.

Chapter One:

1. Now Jacob was going to Laban his uncle; and he found a place and fell asleep there, having laid his head on a stone.
2. Now the sun had gone down, and he saw there a dream; and behold, a ladder was fixed on the earth, and it reached to the heavens.
3. And at its top there was a form, like a man, hewn out of fire.
4. Now it had twelve steps; and on every step there were two human forms, one on the right and one on the left: there were twenty-four forms on the ladder.
5. And the central form, which I saw, was of fire as far as the shoulders and the arms, and much taller than all the others:
6. he was very terrifying, much more terrifying than the other twenty-four forms.
7. And while I was looking, behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it; and the Lord had taken his stand upon it.
8. God stood, as it were, above the highest form.
9. And from there He called to me saying, “Jacob, Jacob.” And I said, “Here am I.”
10. And He said to me, “The land on which you are sleeping, to you will I give it, that it may be filled with your descendants.
11. My blessing, with which I have blessed you, shall go from you to the last generation.
12. And the East and the West shall all be filled with your race.

Chapter Two:

1. And as I heard his voice from the height, trembling and terror fell on me.
2. After getting up, I, Jacob, from my sleep, I said (the voice was still in my ears) — after getting up, I said, to my feet, I prayed to God and spoke thus. Lord, the Creator, Lord of all Creation. [Noted to be an obvious confusion whether the narrative should be in the first person or the third, and presumably also some dittography or dislocation of the text.]
3. And again I said, “God, of Abraham and of Isaac my father, and God of all who have walked before thee in righteousness: behold, I saw a terrifying vision, and trembling fell on me.
4. But remember, O Lord, Abraham my forefather, how he walked before thee in innocence and was perfect in all the ways of thy commandments. So also my father, thy servant Isaac, did not disobey thy commandments.
5. Therefore, O Lord, look mercifully upon me also, on thy servant, and tell me what is the interpretation of this terrifying vision I have seen.”

Chapter Three:

1. And while the voice and prayer were still on Jacob’s lips, behold, an angel of God stood before him saying, “Jacob, I am sent by the Creator of all to you to explain your dream to you. So pay attention to the explanation of your dream.

2. The ladder which you have seen, having twelve steps, and each step having two human forms on it, changing their shape — the ladder is this Age, and the twelve steps are the times of this Age, and the twenty-four forms are the rulers of the tribes of the heathen Age.

3. By those tribes will your children’s children (and the family of your sons) be tried.

4. And they will rise against the heathenness of your children’s children, and they will make this place desolate for four generations of your children’s children.

5. And in the name of their forefathers a temple will be built in your name, and that of your fathers.

6. And the provocation of your children will cause it to lie waste for four generations of this Age; for you have seen four forms.

7. The first who stumbled on the step — that is, there will be a ruler from your kin, and he will do evil to your descendants; and he will be suffered unwillingly by them.

8. And he will hold them by force to rule them; and they will not be able to resist him; and he will decide that they should serve idols and sacrifice to dead things.

9. And he will command that all the people in his kingdom be forced to do this.

10. And of those who will be guilty of such an offence, some will serve the greatest of your race, and some Falkonagargail [Noted: Kalkonagargail].

Chapter Four:

1. Know, Jacob, that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land; and they will be ill-treated, and made slaves of, and flogged daily.

2. But that people, whose slaves they are, the Lord will judge; for the Mighty One
will feel compassion for their suffering.

3. For the angels and archangels pour out their prayers before him for the deliverance of your race, and that the Most High should have mercy.

4. Then will their women be fruitful; and after that the Lord will defend your race with terrifying and mighty signs against those who enslaved them.

5. Their storehouses, which were full, will be found empty of wine and of every kind of corn:

6. Their land will seethe with reptiles and all kinds of deadly things; and there will be many earthquakes and catastrophes [Personal note: This is clearly also a Latter Day Time prophecy, as the continuing text confirms; “reptiles” may be an extraterrestrial matter].

Chapter Five:

1. Then will the Most High execute judgement on that place and deliver your descendants from their servitude to those peoples who rule over them by force; and they will be saved from the reproach of their enemies.

2. For the king will be the source of vengeance, and will rise up in bitterness against them.

3. And they will cry out, but the Lord will hear them; and He will pour out His anger on Leviathan the sea-monster and kill the heathen Falkon [idol] with the sword, for against the God of gods he will exalt his pride.

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[This is clearly confused. My personal translation of verses 2 and 3, as according to the scriptures; though could be out of context:]

2. For the Elect One will be the source of vengeance, and will rise up in bitterness against them.

3. And they will cry out but the Lord will not hear them. And the Lord will pour out His anger on Leviathan the sea-monster with the sword, for against the God of gods the heathen have exalted their pride.

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4. Then, Jacob, will come your vindication, and that of your forefathers; and others too, will come after you and share also in your prosperity.

5. And then will your descendants blow the trumpet, and the whole kingdom of Edom will perish together with all the rulers and the tribes of the Moabites.
Chapter Six:

1. And as you saw angels ascending on the ladder — that is in the last years there shall be a man from the Most High, and he will join the higher things with the lower.
2. Of him before his coming shall your sons and daughters prophesy and see visions about him.
3. And there shall be signs at the time of his coming — a tree felled with the axe will drip blood; three-month old babies will speak rationally; a child in his mother’s womb will proclaim his way; and a young man will be like an old man.
4. And then will come the Awaited One, whose path will be found by none.
5. Then will the earth rejoice, having received the glory of heaven; and what was above will be below also.
6. And from your descendants will sprout a kingly root; and he will rise up and overthrow the power of Evil.
7. He will be the savior of all lands, peace to those who labour, and a cloud protecting the whole world from the heat.
8. Otherwise what was in disorder could not be put into order, if he did not come; otherwise the lower things could not be joined to the higher.
9. When he comes the bulls of brass and stone and all the carved images will give tongue for three days, and they will tell the news to certain wise men that they may know what is to be on earth, and they will find their way to him by a star.
10. On earth will they see him whom the angels do not see.
11. Then will the Almighty be found with a body on earth, and be embraced by mortal arms; and he will renew humankind and give life to Adam and Eve — dead through the fruit of the tree.
12. Then will the deceit of the impious be uncovered, and all idols will fall down and be put to shame before his face, clothed, as he will be, in splendor; for they thought only how they might deceive, but they will be able to rule no longer, not will they be able to give prophecies.
13. Their splendor will be taken from them, and they will be left without their glory;
14. for he who is to come will take their power and their might from them, and he will give the truth to Abraham, which he promised to him before.
15. Then will he make all sharp things blunt and the rough smooth, and he will cast all unrighteousness into the depths of the sea, and preform miracles in heaven and on earth.
16. And he will be wounded inside the house of the Beloved; and when he is
wounded, then he is wounded, then comes salvation and the end of all corruption.

17. And those who have wounded him will receive a wound themselves, from which they will never be healed.

18. And all creation will bow down to the Wounded One, and many will put their trust in him; and everywhere, and in all lands, he will be known.

19. Those who have known his name will not be ashamed; and his power and years will never fail.”