

**THE DOCTRINE OF ADDAI, THE  
APOSTLE. NOW FIRST EDITED IN A  
COMPLETE FORM IN THE ORIGINAL  
SYRIAC WITH AN ENGLISH  
TRANSLATION AND NOTES**

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The doctrine of Addai, the Apostle. Now first edited in a complete form in the original Syriac with an English translation and notes by George Phillips

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**GEORGE PHILLIPS**

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OF  
ADDAL, THE APOSTLE,

NOW FIRST EDITED IN A COMPLETE FORM IN THE  
ORIGINAL SYRIAC,

WITH AN

English Translation and Notes.

BY  
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## PREFACE.

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THE MS. of which a portion is here edited, belongs to the Imperial Public Library of St. Petersburg. It is in fine condition, written in a bold Estrangelo character, comprising several works besides the one now published, and is apparently of the sixth century. It is the only known MS. which contains the Syriac text of "The Doctrine of Addai, the Apostle," entire. There exists in the British Museum a MS. of this work, which forms one of the ancient Syriac documents edited and translated by the late Dr. Cureton, and published after his death. That MS., however, is very imperfect. It does not contain so much as a half of the entire text, and consequently the value of the work in so mutilated a condition is greatly impaired.

Addai, according to Eusebius, was one of the seventy, or according to this document, the Armenian version, and "The Doctrine of the Apostles," one of the seventy-two disciples. Whatever may be the explanation of this numerical discrepancy, it must in either case be inferred that Addai was one of the second batch of disciples, ordained by our Lord to the office of the ministry (Luke x. 1). The purpose of his mission to Edessa is stated in

the beginning of the document. Abgar, the then king of Edessa, sent Hannan, the keeper of the archives, and others to Sabinus, the deputy in the east of the emperor Tiberius, with letters concerning the affairs of the kingdom. The messengers, having most probably heard of the fame of Christ, took that opportunity of going to Jerusalem to see Him. Having entered that city, they saw Christ, and rejoiced. Hannan wrote down what he saw and heard of Christ, for the sake of making a full report to Abgar of our Lord's wonderful deeds on his return to Edessa. The king was greatly impressed by what was related to him, and as he himself was afflicted with a disease, and unable to obtain a cure, he wrote a letter to Jesus, entreating Him to come and heal him. Hannan, the bearer of the letter, delivered it to Jesus. A verbal reply was returned by our Lord to Abgar, in which He promised that after He had gone up to His Father, He would send one of His disciples to cure him of the disease. After Christ had ascended to heaven, Addai was the disciple selected by Judas Thomas to go on the mission to Edessa. His arrival at the city was soon made known to Abgar, who sent immediately for him. Abgar, surrounded by his nobles, received Addai, and he in their presence cured the king of the disease from which he had for a long time been suffering.

A very important inquiry is that which concerns the genuineness, the authorship, &c., of "The Doctrine of Addai, the Apostle." Into this inquiry it is necessary to

enter. When we consider the great deeds of Addai, his miracles, and the success of his labours as an evangelist, we might reasonably infer that some written account of them would soon appear. Accordingly we find it stated at the conclusion of the document, that, agreeably to the custom of the kingdom, Labubna, the king's scribe, "wrote these things of Addai, the Apostle, from the beginning to the end;" whilst Hannan, the king's sharrir, placed the account among the records. As to the expression "from the beginning to the end," we understand no more than that all which was written of the doings of Addai, and deposited in the archives of Edessa, was written by Labubna. The report drawn up by him might have consisted only of memoranda of the principal acts and chief points of the teaching of Addai, or he might have written in the main the document as we now have it. The latter is the opinion of Dr. Alishan, who translated the Armenian version of "The Doctrine of Addai," under the title of "Lettre d'Abgar." His words are:—"Notre opinion est qu'il est en grande partie rédigé par Laboubnia, Archiviste d'Edesse, contemporain d'Abgar et des disciples de notre Sauveur." I am inclined to this opinion; for if we except certain interpolations, the whole history seems to be consistent with itself, as if it issued from the pen of one and the same individual. The interpolations are considerable. In one place the Acts of the Apostles are mentioned, in another the Epistles of St. Paul; but



neither the Acts nor the Epistles could have been known to the Church in the time of Addai. In another place it is recorded that a large multitude assembled day by day for prayer and to read the Diatessaron of Tatian, which was not compiled till about the middle of the second century. The paragraph in p. 50 of the translation, about the ordination of Palut by Serapion, Bishop of Antioch, is contradicted in p. 39, where it is said that Palut was ordained an elder by Addai. The narrative of the portrait of our Lord painted by Hannan, which follows immediately after Abgar's letter, and our Lord's reply is not alluded to by Eusebius, although he has followed the Syriac both before and after this statement. This circumstance shows that, if it formed a part of the Syriac text in his time, he did not believe in the truth of what was related. Other passages are met with which contain internal evidence that they did not form a part of the original text. The story of the invention of the cross by Protonice or, as the name is elsewhere written, Petronice must have been written by some person who was very ignorant of the Roman history of the time when the apostles were living. This is obviously an interpolation, and this and several other passages carry on the face of them their own condemnation.

A question arises at what time or times might these interpolations have been introduced into the document. They do not appear to be so many, but that we may fairly assume, in the absence of evidence to the contrary,

that they were made by the same individual. The circumstance of the mention of Tatian's Diatessaron shows that they could not have become a part of Addai's work till after the Diatessaron was compiled, and had begun to be used in the Syrian Church. The interpolations, therefore, could not have been introduced till towards the close of the second century. So much for the upper limit. The next question is, Where is the lower limit to be placed? From what follows, I think we may be able to answer sufficiently this question. Eusebius has devoted a chapter of his Ecclesiastical History to Abgar, and the planting of the church at Edessa by Addai. The Syriac of this chapter, from the letter of Abgar to the end is substantially the same as the Syriac of the corresponding portion of our document. Whoever will take the trouble to compare the two, will find that the variations are not many. He will, I think, be satisfied that Eusebius had our writing before him, when he wrote the thirteenth chapter of the first book of his Ecclesiastical History. Eusebius says:—"The very letters themselves were taken by us from the archives of Edessa." But although the word *us* is used, it does not follow that the extract was made by himself from the archives. He probably did not make it, for it is not known that he was ever at Edessa. He might have consistently employed the pronoun *us*, if the extract, which constitutes a chapter of his history, had been made by a person living at a previous period, who

wrote, as he himself afterwards did, on the affairs of Abgar, and the origin of the Church at Edessa. It is, indeed, conjectured by Grabe and others that Eusebius might have got the substance of what we find in the thirteenth chapter from the Chronographia of Sextus Julius Africanus; but I can find very little evidence to support that conjecture. It is much more probable that Eusebius would have before him a work professing to have been written by a contemporary of Addai, and written too in Syriac, the language of the country. He himself says that what is contained in his chapter from the letter of Abgar to the end was translated from Syriac into Greek.

But the part of the work which Eusebius translated does not appear to contain any thing, which would warrant us to regard it as an interpolation. We cannot, therefore, say whether the interpolations existed in the Syriac text used by Eusebius; but the following evidence renders it highly probable that they did. In p. 19 of the French translation of the Armenian version is the following note:—"Moïse de Khorène dans sa relation du voyage des Stes. Rhipsiméennes, cite et Patronicée et la sainte Croix, dont elle portait un morceau, qui ensuite par hérédité arriva à Rhipsimée, mais encore elle est mentionnée dans l'ancien calendrier ecclésiastique, attribué au S. Isaac l'arrière petit fils de S. Grégoire l'Illuminateur, et qui occupa la chaire patriarcale de 389 à 439; on y lit, le 17 mai; Fête de