

**Pseudo-Passecrates**

**The *Passio* of St George**

(*BHL* 3363)<sup>1</sup>

2020

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<sup>1</sup> V.1.0. This translation was made by David Bryson and revised by Roger Pearse, and is released by them into the public domain.

## Introduction

The legend of St George is extant in the medieval manuscripts in a variety of forms, as with most major saints' "lives". This is a translation into English of the oldest form of the St George legend, most likely 5<sup>th</sup> century in date, and condemned as foolish and heretical by the church in the 6<sup>th</sup> century *Decretum Gelasianum*. In his study of the various forms of the text, Matzke chose to give this original form the slightly confusing label of "the apocryphal text". A later revised form, purged of the worst excesses of the original, he called "the canonical text".<sup>2</sup>

The Greek text<sup>3</sup> of this original form is mostly lost, but a palimpsest in Vienna contains some 5<sup>th</sup> century leaves. This was published by D. Detlefsen in 1858.<sup>4</sup> Two Latin translations were made of this text at an early date. One of these is preserved in a 9<sup>th</sup> century manuscript in the Bollandist library in Antwerp and was printed by Arndt in 1874.<sup>5</sup> This document translates that text.

The text printed is ungrammatical, often unintelligible, and sometimes illegible. Huber in his introduction notes that Arndt's text has suffered from both poor translation from Greek and bad copying. A medieval reader seems to have recognised this, and produced a corrected version. This is preserved in two 12<sup>th</sup> century manuscripts in Munich, and was printed by Huber.<sup>6</sup> In addition Arndt often prints an ending of "-ae" where the sense requires "-e", leading to the suspicion that his transcription is not accurate.

This translation came about because David Bryson offered to translate a piece of Latin while recovering from surgery, which I revised. All errors and omissions are of course my responsibility. A translation must have meaning, so Huber's text has been used where Arndt's text is plainly defective. The production of a coherent Latin text is beyond the scope of this little project, but I have indicated problems in the footnotes. The chapter divisions are those of Arndt; chapter summaries have been composed by me as a help to the reader. References to the psalms are to the Vulgate.

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## April 24 - The passion of the Martyr George<sup>7</sup>

### 1. The emperor Datianus orders everyone to sacrifice to the gods on pain of torture

At this time the devil took hold of Datianus<sup>8</sup>, king of the Persians and king over the four corners<sup>9</sup> of the world, which are above all the kings of the earth; and he sent out an edict that all the kings

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<sup>2</sup> John E. Matzke, "Contributions to the History of the Legend of Saint George, with Special Reference to the Sources of the French, German and Anglo-Saxon Metrical Versions", in: *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 17 (1902), p.464-535.

<sup>3</sup> BHG 670.

<sup>4</sup> D. Detlefsen, "Über einen griechischen Palimpsest in der k.k. Hofbibliothek mit Bruchstücken einer Legende vom heiligen Georg", in: *Wiener Sitzungsberichte phil.-hist.Kl.*, 27 (1858), 383-404.

<sup>5</sup> W. Arndt, "Passio Sancti Georgii", in: *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der k. sachs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phi.-Hist. Classe*, (1875), pp. 43-70.

<sup>6</sup> M. Huber, "Zur Georgslegende" (1906), p.213-231. In this collection it is as "Passio III".

<sup>7</sup> This line in red in the manuscript. The date is "VIII kal. Mai", but St George's Day is April 23. Is VIII kal. Mai intended? Both Arndt and Huber give VIII.

should gather together. And when the kings were assembled, to the number of seventy-two, and seated before his tribunal, with the senators in a circle and innumerable soldiers, the emperor Datianus ordered that every kind of torture, which he had prepared, should be gathered together in the sight of all the people. Among these were brass boxes<sup>10</sup>, in which were twice-sharpened swords, frying-pans, cooking pots<sup>11</sup>, very sharp saws, bronze bulls, fiery hooks fixed into boots, iron wheels and many other types of torments, without number. And he began to say, "If I find anyone who speaks against the gods and does not sacrifice to them, I shall cut out their tongue, I shall pluck out their eyes, I shall make their ears deaf<sup>12</sup>, I shall split their jaws, I shall pluck out their teeth, I shall tear their brain from their head, cut off their arms, bruise their neck<sup>13</sup>, sever their upper arms and shins<sup>14</sup>, cut the nerves of their feet<sup>15</sup>, rake out their bowels, and whatever is left I will hand over to the worms!" On seeing these torments displayed, many who were thought to believe in God recoiled in fear, and no-one was heard to say that he was a Christian.

## **2. An army officer from Cappadocia named George appears, and tells them not to.**

And while innumerable people were assembled, behold the saint of God, George, bright as the middle of heaven and earth, a native of Cappadocia, and an officer<sup>16</sup> over many soldiers, a recipient of the gold many times, came to the emperor Datianus; so that he might serve him while the sun was visible. George saw the many kings assembled around the emperor Datianus with his army, blaspheming Christ and worshipping demons. Then all the gold which the servant of God carried with him, he gave it to the poor, he took off the cloak that he was wearing, and threw himself on the ground, and he began to say to himself, "The devil has closed their eyes so that they might not recognize the Lord." Then he in a loud voice he said, "Throw down your coins, O kings, which are worthless, and do not call on the gods, who are not gods but the work of men. For let the gods, who did not create heaven and earth, be destroyed."

## **3. The emperor questions St George**

On hearing this, the emperor was silent and looking to him, said, "Man, you have not only offended us, but you lessen all the gods. They are gods who give favour<sup>17</sup> to everyone. Therefore, advance and give sacrifice to Apollo who preserves the whole earth and governs the whole world. Now tell me from what city are you? What is your name, or for what reason have you come here?"

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<sup>8</sup> Arndt omits the name. There was no Roman emperor named "Datianus", and later revisions of the legend quietly change it to Diocletian. The use of the name of a fictional emperor in this, the very earliest version of the St George legend, is one of the indicators that the whole narrative is fictional. The spelling of the name varies between Datianus and Dacianus in Arndt.

<sup>9</sup> "caedros" is the ms in both cases, "cedars"; "cardinales" a conjecture printed by Arndt.

<sup>10</sup> Arndt: "arcus acres", the manuscript: "arce acre". But it's hard to imagine what this could be, even corrected. Huber: "arcae aeraeae", brazen boxes.

<sup>11</sup> "caccabi". Presumably large pots, in which the victim might be boiled alive.

<sup>12</sup> "aures obdurabo", lit. make insensible their ears.

<sup>13</sup> "cervicem intundam". "intundo" is post-classical, "bruise, pound" (L&S).

<sup>14</sup> "humera et bella secabo" is of doubtful meaning. Huber: "humeros evellam, secabo tibias", so I give "shins".

<sup>15</sup> "nerbona incidam". I have been unable to find any meaning for "nerbona". Huber: "pedum nervos incidam" has been used instead.

<sup>16</sup> "comes".

<sup>17</sup> "gratiam".

St. George replied to him, "I am a servant of God. The name which I have from men is George and in Christ I am a Christian, a Cappadocian. I was over a large number of soldiers, and well have I laboured in the service of Christ. I was also in the province of Palestine. Tell me, O emperor, to which of the gods do you advise me to sacrifice?"

The emperor said, "To Apollo, who oversees the sky, or at least to Neptune, whom we say established the earth."

St. George replied, "I do not worship those of whom you speak, the old serpent.<sup>18</sup> But to the people who are ever awaiting the mercy of God I speak, in the names of saints. I send away many and a few by name, so that I may describe the works of your gods.<sup>19</sup> Which of these do you make me similar to: Eve,<sup>20</sup> or Jezebel, the murderess of the prophets? or instead Mary, who gave birth to the Lord<sup>21</sup>? Be ashamed, O emperor. Those in whom you believe are not gods, but idols, deaf and blind, the works of the hands of men.

#### **4. St George is tortured, without effect.**

Then the angry emperor ordered that he should be suspended on the rack,<sup>22</sup> and scraped with [metal] claws so that his intestines came out<sup>23</sup> and his whole body was wounded; and he endured this punishment in Christ. He then ordered him to be taken down and taken outside the city, and stretched out with four windlasses<sup>24</sup> and the parts of his body which remained<sup>25</sup> to be bloodied with clubs, and salt scattered into his wounds, and his stripes rubbed down with coarse goat-hair cloths. And then he ordered iron military boots to be brought, and once they were put on, his [bare] foot began to press on the spikes<sup>26</sup> and the blood flowed from his feet like water from a spring.

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<sup>18</sup> "hos, quae dicis, non adoro, draconem inveteratum": draconem inveteratum = old serpent. But this is an accusative, and must be the object of "non adoro"; so perhaps "[i.e.] the old serpent", the devil.

<sup>19</sup> "dico nomina sanctorum de capite et paucos nomine ut narram opera deorum tuorum" seems corrupt. Huber: "dico nomina sanctorum. Plures dimitto et paucos nomino", and omits "ut ... tuorum". Huber then adds here: "Which of these do you make me similar to: the first apostle Peter, who is a pillar of the church, or Apollo, who is the destruction of the age; Elijah the Tishbite the first man and a heavenly angel, or instead Cumandrus (Scamander?) the great (or possibly "the mage"), whose works have collapsed in public? Tell me, O emperor, ..."

<sup>20</sup> Eve here as the bringer of sin to the world. But Huber omits Eve.

<sup>21</sup> Huber: "God" instead of "Lord".

<sup>22</sup> "in haeculeum adpendi": "adpendi" seems to be "hanged, suspended". "aeculum" is a rack, an instrument of torture.

<sup>23</sup> "et stentinas eius spargere": "pulled out" seems to be the sense; Huber has instead "ita ut intestina eius separarentur".

<sup>24</sup> "per quattuor maganas". This unusual word appears here for the first time. It is given both as "maganum" and "magganum" in Arndt's text. Matzke evades the issue by giving "machine". It seems to be derived from the Greek μάγγανο, magganon, which has several meanings. Here it must mean a windlass, a device invented by Archimedes. See G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford, 1961, p.818 μάγγανον 2, "machine for hoisting or lowering weights; windlass, or crane. Eusebius *H.E.* 8.9.1 (PG 20, 760A)," etc. Huber instead has "per quatuor membra tendi", "stretched out by his four limbs". Possibly it could be rendered "mechanism".

<sup>25</sup> "carnes": lit. "fleshes". Arndt: "his limbs, which he had overcome in his body". I have followed Huber.

<sup>26</sup> "acutis" generally seems to mean "spikes" in this text.

And again, Dacianus<sup>27</sup> ordered him to be led into the city, and, seeing that no torture prevailed over him, he further ordered him to be shut up in a large box, and his helmet pierced with spikes, inside the box, with an iron hook, and his tendons torn out.

And because it seemed that no torture injured him, he ordered him to be held down, and instructed his head be crushed with an iron mallet so that his brain came out through his nostrils. And he was still more strengthened by the grace of Christ.

And again he ordered him to be thrown into prison and commanded that he be stretched out and fettered on four sides.<sup>28</sup> Then he ordered a section of a column to be cut off, which eighteen men could with difficulty carry, and they placed it on his stomach and it did not injure him.

### **5. While in prison, St George is visited by Christ who tells him that he will die three times and be resurrected, and then truly die a fourth time.**

And while he was in prison, he was praising God, who comforted him both in mind and in body so that he might conquer the devil. Behold, suddenly a bright light illuminated the prison. And in the same night the Lord opened the doors of the prison and said to him, "Take comfort George, do not let yourself grow weak, for I am with you. I will witness for you both by myself and by my power and by my angels, because among those born of women, there is no greater than John the Baptist among the prophets and in my kingdom and among my saints, none is greater than you. Because in your suffering, which you are about to suffer from these seventy-two kings for seven years, no tortures will be injurious to you. Three times you will die and three times I will resurrect you. The fourth time, indeed, I will come to you, and you will give to me what I have entrusted to you."<sup>29</sup> Believe in me then and do not grow weak, because I am with you." And after visiting him the Lord ascended into heaven with his angels. Indeed the whole night St. George did not cease to pray to the Lord, and sleep did not come to his eyes owing to his joy because the Lord had appeared to him.

### **6. The emperor Dacianus writes a letter seeking a magician to combat the sorcery of St George. The magician Athanasius comes to him and demonstrates his abilities.**

On another day at dawn the emperor ordered him to be brought out of prison into his presence. Indeed St George came to the auditorium, singing a psalm and saying, "O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me."<sup>30</sup> And arriving before the emperor he said to him, "Behold! You with your god Apollo, but I with my God Jesus Christ."<sup>31</sup> Then the emperor ordered him to be spread out and beaten harshly, until he had received a hundred stripes on his back, and forty on his stomach, and so he ordered him to be returned to prison, and he ordered his feet to be bound with cords.

And he wrote a letter having this content: "Emperor Dacianus (sends) greetings to all nations. If any magician can dispel the magic of the Christians, let him come to me and I will give him thirty pounds of gold, and seventy pounds of silver and many possessions, and he shall be second in my kingdom."

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<sup>27</sup> Dacianus in Arndt; Huber has "imperator".

<sup>28</sup> "quarto pugnato in chippo".

<sup>29</sup> I.e. his life.

<sup>30</sup> Ps. 69:2.

<sup>31</sup> "ecce tu cum Apollone deo tuo, ego autem cum deo meo Jesu Christo." This seems to be a catchphrase, and is repeated in chapters 12 and 15.

When this message was read through all nations, on hearing it a certain magician, named Athanasius,<sup>32</sup> went to the emperor and he was filled with great joy and said to him, "I have come about the one that you are saying is a Christian, if I can dispel his magic." And when the emperor heard this he was filled with great joy.

Then the emperor said to him, "What is it that you will do to dispel his magic?" The magician replied, "Order two bulls to be brought and you will see." And when the bulls came he chanted in the ear of the bull, and the bull was divided into two halves. And the emperor was delighted, and said, "Then<sup>33</sup> you will be able to dispel his magic." And the magician said, "Be patient, O emperor, and you will see a miracle." Again he ordered a yoke, and the bull, which was divided, he rejoined it. And the crowd marvelled at his deed.

### **7. The magician Athanasius attempts to poison St George, in vain, and is himself converted to Christ, and then executed.**

Then the emperor ordered St. George to be brought into his presence and said to him, "George, on your account I have brought in this magician. Let you dispel his magic or let him dispel yours; let him destroy you, or you destroy him.<sup>34</sup> Then looking, the blessed George saw the young man,<sup>35</sup> and said, "Do quickly that which you must do. For I see that you will be seized by the hand of the Lord."<sup>36</sup>

And at that moment, Athanasius, taking a cup, called upon the name of the first of demons, and gave it to St George to drink, and nothing harmed him.<sup>37</sup> And the magician said to the emperor, "Once is what I am doing,<sup>38</sup> but if I do not harm him [next time]<sup>39</sup>, may I be converted to the Lord." Then taking the cup Athanasius called on the name of the first of demons and gave him it to drink, and it did him no harm.

Then indeed Athanasius declared in a loud voice, saying, "George, friend of Christ, through the crucifixion of the living son of God, who came down from heaven to earth and set free everyone who was held [prisoner] by the devil, set free my soul and give me the seal of Christ, so that I may deserve to pass through the gates of paradise." Then the emperor, seeing what had happened, ordered that Athanasius should be led out of the city and struck with a sword, in the month of January, on the first hour of the Sabbath. He again ordered that George, the saint of God, should be held in prison, until he might think in what way he might destroy him.

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<sup>32</sup> The name of Athanasius is that of the famous and revered leader of the anti-Arian party after the First Council of Nicaea. To use this for the name of a pagan magician suggests a deliberate slur, and that the author of the work was an Arian. This may explain why the *Decretum Gelasianum* condemns a *Passio S. Georgis* as the work of heretics.

<sup>33</sup> "vero" always means something like "then" in this text.

<sup>34</sup> Each phrase has "certe" for emphasis: I have omitted these. "*aut certe solvas magicas eius aut certe solvat magica tua*" has the sense of "let St George dispel the magician's magic, or the magician dispel St George's magic". I've chosen to paraphrase a bit.

<sup>35</sup> The magician Athanasius.

<sup>36</sup> Arndt: "vestigia Domini", "hand of the Lord". Huber has "gratiam Domini".

<sup>37</sup> Later accounts specify that the magician has poisoned the cup.

<sup>38</sup> "unum est quod et facio", Huber: "unum est quod faciam". The context requires something like "I will try again."

<sup>39</sup> Using future tense.

## 8. St George is faced with torture again and makes a long prayer.

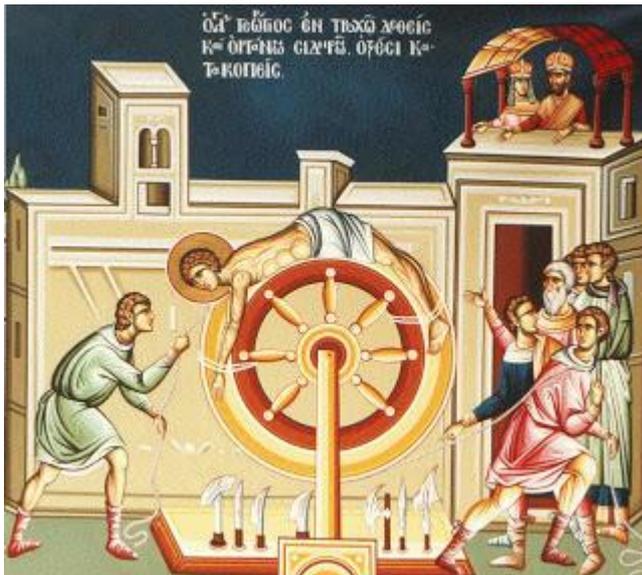
On another day the emperor ordered a wheel to be brought, and exceedingly sharp spikes, and glass nails,<sup>40</sup> as if whitewashed,<sup>41</sup> and he set up windlasses, and on these windlasses [he placed] swords twice sharpened, and he commanded St. George to be placed in the middle of these.<sup>42</sup> And St. George came and saw the windlasses and the wheel revolving and roaring. And he said to himself, “Do you think I can be freed from these windlasses?” Then, turning his head, he said, “Woe to you, George, be mindful of the time when Christ was crucified between two robbers.”

And looking toward heaven, he said, “I am mindful of your commandments, Lord Jesus Christ, whose kingdom lasts to eternity and for an age of ages. The crown of the praising and suffering martyrs is both [their] joy and strength in you, holy Lord. Before you were making heaven and earth, you yourself are, whose spirit was borne upon the waters, and you were resting, you whom no man knew, nor was able to see your perpetual wisdom; Lord, you who established the earth and raised the vault of heaven and filled up the clouds, and you rain on the just and on the unjust, Lord, who established the earth and the mountains and everything through your power, and the hills and the fields, you who commanded the gathering of the winds, and those who did not have faith in you, you handed over into the deepest prison,<sup>43</sup> O Lord my God, who in later times sent to us your only son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who enclosed his majesty within the chamber of a virgin’s womb, whom no man can understand, the only begotten son of God, Lord Jesus Christ, who walked on his feet across the waters of the sea, and the foot did not sink into the water, but his footsteps appeared<sup>44</sup> on the sea as if on the most unyielding pavement.<sup>45</sup> Who rules over the wind and the sea, and all things are subject to you. Who with five loaves fed five thousand men; and now, hear me O Lord, so that you

<sup>40</sup> Lit. “clavia vitrea”: presumably for “clava vitrea”.

<sup>41</sup> Lit. “clalica”: I am unable to locate such a word. Huber “calica”.

<sup>42</sup> This scene is depicted in Greek icons, such as this below. St George is lashed to a wheel, with a row of swords and daggers against one side, so that as the wheel rotates the swords bite into him. The windlasses on either side turn the wheel.



<sup>43</sup> The reference to the incarnation in the next phrase as “later” means that this must be a reference to an Old Testament event; perhaps to the sons of Korah who opposed Moses in Numbers 16.

<sup>44</sup> “pareo” = appareo. See Souter, *l.c.*

<sup>45</sup> Gaffiot gives “strata viarum saxea” as pavement, lit. stone blankets, from Lucretius 1:315.

might hasten<sup>46</sup> and deliver me from the troubles which have surrounded me, because my soul relies on you and in the living God; to you be glory forever. Amen.”

### **9. St George is chopped into ten pieces, dies, and is resurrected. His guards are executed.**

And when the prayer was finished, he was placed on the wheel, and bound with the windlasses and chopped into ten pieces. And he gave up his spirit.

And the emperor Dacianus, rising up, spoke to the kings in a great voice, saying, “You all see that there is no other [god] than Apollo and Hermes and Diana and Athena and Mandres and Hercules and Neptune, who secure the three branches of heaven, through whom emperors rule and kingdoms maintain their power. Where is the god of George, Jesus Christ the crucified, whom the Jews killed. Why does he not come, and free him from my hands?” Then Dacianus ordered the bones of St. George thrown into a pit, saying in the meantime to himself, “lest any of the Christians should carry off some of his members and set up a martyrdom,<sup>47</sup> and believe in him, and his blood may be on our head.” For it was the Sabbath on that day.

When the emperor was in his palace and those 72 kings were with him so that they might have dinner, suddenly clouds covered the pit, and there was a great [peal of] thunder, as if a rift<sup>48</sup> had opened in the sky, and the earth trembled and the mountains were made low, and Michael, the angel over the cherubim, sounded a trumpet, and the Lord came upon a cloud and stood above the pit and collected the bones of St George together, because the saint had declared while he was alive, “Do you think that I can be freed from this windlass<sup>49</sup>, so that they may have faith and learn [about Christ], because I have the Lord.” Then the Lord appeared to him saying, “George, behold the hands which fashioned Adam, and just now have refashioned you.” The Lord breathed into him and the spirit of life refilled him and he grew strong in spirit. And having visited him, the Lord ascended into the heavens, and St George, having been raised from death, immediately began to walk about.

And he saw the emperor judging people in his palace, and hastening St George went in to him, saying, “You who are emperor, behold I am George, who was killed by you.” Then gazing at him, he said to him, “Behold the likeness of George.” Others were saying, “No, but he is similar to him.” The servant of God was crying out, saying, “I am George, who was killed by you. Why have you called upon the name of my God, in whom you have not believed?” For Athanasius, who was Master of the Soldiers,<sup>50</sup> seeing that the servant of God had been raised from the dead, immediately believed in Christ crucified with all his army. And he proclaimed [this] in a loud voice, saying, “O George, servant of Christ, we also believe in Christ crucified who brought you back from death to life.” But hearing this, the emperor ordered them to be cast forth from the city and drove them forth to a deserted place, and placed them in fifteen groups, and, after they had made the sign of Christ, he ordered them to be punished by the sword. And the martyrdom was completed through the good confession in the month of February at the ninth hour.

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<sup>46</sup> Lit. “adsceleres”, i.e. asceleres or adceleres.

<sup>47</sup> The grave/shrine of a martyr.

<sup>48</sup> “cataractes.”

<sup>49</sup> George is referring to his earlier thoughts.

<sup>50</sup> “Magister Militum”. According to Matzket the name is given as Anatolius in other sources.

## **10. St George is tortured again, and Christ again appears to him in prison.**

Again, he ordered that the saint of God, George, should be led before his tribunal, and he instructed that he should be taken to a brazen bed, and instructed the blessed one to be stretched out [on it]. Again he ordered lead and iron, and having melted<sup>51</sup> them, he ordered the mouth of the venerable George to be opened, in order to pour it into his mouth. And it became like cold water and did not harm him. Again he ordered him to be untied from the bed, and sixty burning-hot nails driven through his head, and he ordered that a large worked stone should be placed on top of his head and melted lead poured upon the stone; and so he ordered him to be untied so that his limbs could be spread out. But by the command of God the spikes fell out, and he was freed from the punishments,<sup>52</sup> and the lead became like water, and no mark was found upon him.

On seeing this, however, Dacianus the emperor was angry; again he ordered him to be hanged upside down, and a large stone suspended from his neck, and to smoke him with brass fumes, and nothing harmed him. And, giving up, Dacianus the emperor instructed a brazen bull to be brought in, and he fixed spikes and iron hooks<sup>53</sup> in it, and sent the saint of God into it, and instructed that the brazen bull be revolved using the windlasses, so that<sup>54</sup> his limbs might be severed and might be made like dust, which the wind blows<sup>55</sup> away from the face of the earth. But St. George inwardly gave thanks to God who was strengthening him.

Once again he<sup>56</sup> ordered St. George to be taken from that place, and instructed that he be sent to prison, and bound firmly with sinews,<sup>57</sup> until he could think of a way to do away with him, because he prevailed against him in none of the tortures. And the Lord appeared to him in the prison in the middle of the night and said to him, "George, take courage in righteousness, and don't be afraid that every torture will be applied, for I am with you. Consider that already you have died and I have resurrected you; a second time you will die and I will resurrect you. Take courage in the truth and in the good confession." And having visited him, the Lord ascended into heaven with his angels. Indeed St. George did not cease that night to give thanks to God, so that he did not give way to sleep and he rejoiced that the Lord had appeared to him.

## **11. St George works a miracle to make wood flower. Then he is sawn in half, dies, and his body boiled in a pot. Then God raises him from the dead again.<sup>58</sup>**

But at day-break the emperor Datianus ordered St George to be led before his judgement seat. As soon as King Magnetius saw him, he said to him, "George, I seek a favour from you, and if you will do this thing for me, by the lord Sol, and by the seventy-two<sup>59</sup>, and by the Mother of the Gods, Diana,

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<sup>51</sup> "solutum"=dissolved, i.e. melted?

<sup>52</sup> Arndt: "poena separata est." Huber: "a poenis liberatus est".

<sup>53</sup> "amos ferreos": i.e. "hamos", hooks. The leading "h" is also omitted elsewhere.

<sup>54</sup> The subjunctive requires "ut"; the text has "et"!

<sup>55</sup> Lit. proiciet, "will throw away".

<sup>56</sup> The emperor.

<sup>57</sup> Arndt: "nervibus", Huber has the correct form: "nervis".

<sup>58</sup> Huber omits chapter 11 entirely.

<sup>59</sup> Presumably the seventy-two kings.

who are the safety of the world, then I will believe in your God.” St George replied to him, “Ask<sup>60</sup> what you will.”

Magentius replied and said, “Behold, there are twenty-two seats among us, and by each [seat] there are its tables, which are not fruit-bearing. Let them produce a harvest of gratitude<sup>61</sup>, let them be made like a [living] tree. And if you do this I will believe in your God.”

St. George said, “I will not do this for you, but on account of the bystanders, who will come to believe in Christ.” Then St George knelt<sup>62</sup> on the ground for the space of an hour, and suddenly the day was made dark, and as he said “Amen,” having finished the prayer, and a great sound occurred, of the kind that there will be on the day of resurrection, and the Holy Spirit came and fourteen seats were loosened, and the tables<sup>63</sup>, which had been dry, took root and brought forth fruit according to their likeness.<sup>64</sup>

But on seeing this king Magentius said, “I thank you, Apollo and Hercules and all of the gods, because your power prevails over dry wood. I have found that George is indeed a Galilean, [so] in what way should I destroy him?” Then the emperor ordered that St George, tightly bound, be positioned between two windlasses, and a saw placed over his head. And they sawed<sup>65</sup> him into two halves, and so St George gave up his spirit.

Then the emperor ordered him to be carried to a brass pot, and he placed in it tar and lead and tallow<sup>66</sup> and bitumen, and he instructed the holy corpse to be placed there, and set a fire underneath so that his limbs might be destroyed. Indeed the attendants swiftly did as they were ordered. Then the pot was boiling<sup>67</sup>, and there was silence<sup>68</sup> for fifteen feet around, and it was reported to the emperor that<sup>69</sup> the flesh parts were loosened and his bones had become just like wax. Then the emperor ordered him to be buried along with the pot, saying, “Let’s not have some Christian get hold of some of his bones and set up a martyrrium for him.”

And while they were on their way suddenly there was a great earthquake, and the sun was darkened, and a great darkness happened on the same day. Then the Lord came down with his angels above the pot, and said to the angel Michael, “Verily, verily, I say to you, pour out the pot upon the earth, and gather together all the dust and drops that were inside, and produced by the boiling.” The angel Michael did as the Lord commanded. And in the same place a great and clear light thus appeared, so that no-one could see the majesty<sup>70</sup> of the Lord. And all who were standing nearby fell on their faces in fear. Then the Lord called out to the saint of God, George, saying,

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<sup>60</sup> “petae” (sic) for “pete”. There are many other instances in the text where –æ appears when it should be –e. Are these perhaps a transcription error from the manuscript?

<sup>61</sup> “fructum gratiae”. For this odd phrase see Livy, book 45, 35:9, last sentence (LCL 396, p.370).

<sup>62</sup> I.e. prayed. Present participle as verb.

<sup>63</sup> Reading “tabulae” rather than “babulae”.

<sup>64</sup> “secundum similitudinem suam.” I.e. the fruit was that appropriate to the type of wood.

<sup>65</sup> segaverunt i.e. secaverunt

<sup>66</sup> Reading sebum for sibem.

<sup>67</sup> Lit. “bullibat”, i.e. “bulliebat”.

<sup>68</sup> Lit. “silibat”, i.e. “silebat”, “It was being silent”. But “silibat cubitos XV” seems out of place, and is perhaps corrupt.

<sup>69</sup> “quoniam” for “quod” once again.

<sup>70</sup> “claritatem”.

“George, I am the Lord, who raised Lazarus from the dead.” And immediately he went forth out of the pot, and stood upon his feet. And at that same moment He raised the saint, although<sup>71</sup> he had been five days dead, and all those standing around admired the mercy of God.

And the Lord said, “Be of good courage, George, because there is great rejoicing in heaven and in earth in the sight of the angels of God in your suffering. Because you have overpowered every work of the enemy and disarranged all of his tools, for the fourth [time] I will come to you and I will lead you into my paradise; and there you will be with my heirs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Be of good courage, George, and do not falter, for I am with you, in all your suffering.” And having visited him, the Lord ascended into the heavens with his angels. But rising, St George began to walk about alive in the city.

## **12. St George is arrested again. He restores life to a poor woman’s ox.**

Then it was reported to the Emperor, “George, whose limbs were seared by fire in the brass pot, has risen again, and is walking around alive in the city, and is teaching the Christians.” And when the emperor had heard this, he ordered them to arrest him and bring him before him. And when St George had come into the audience chamber, he said to the emperor, “You with your god Apollo, but I with my Lord Jesus Christ.”

And while the saint was standing in the palace, a certain woman came and fell at his feet, saying, “Lord George, servant of Christ, behold my son yoked some oxen to do some work, and it disturbed an altar of the Lord<sup>72</sup>, and an ox fell down and died. And, Lord, I ask you to help my unbelief, because I have no property in my house.” And Saint George said to her, “Woman, take this ring<sup>73</sup> and go, place it on the ox and say to it, ‘George, servant of God, says this: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, get up and stand on your feet.’” Hearing these words of the saint, the woman carried out the command of St George, and at once the ox got up and began to walk about, and the woman magnified the Lord saying, “A great prophet has arisen among the people, and the Lord has visited his people for a good purpose.”

## **13. St George raises a long-dead pagan named Jovis who testifies to the truth of Christianity.**

After this, king Tranquillinus rose to his feet and said to the blessed George, “You prayed over the timber and the tables, which<sup>74</sup> you made blossom through your prayers. I do not understand whether your God did this miracle, or whether he was aided by you.<sup>75</sup> But I make only one request from you, that you will do<sup>76</sup> this for me. For there is a lead sarcophagus, bound with iron, and no man knows the origin<sup>77</sup> of those who were placed there. If through your prayer you make those who are there in the monument arise from dead bones, we will believe in your ‘lord God’.” The servant

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<sup>71</sup> “quasi”, “as if”, but the sense must be “although”.

<sup>72</sup> Reading “domini” for “domino”.

<sup>73</sup> “signaculum”, seal-ring.

<sup>74</sup> Arndt gives “per ligna et per tabulas aridas, quas” – “through the timber and dry tables”, which makes no sense. Huber prints “Super lignum et tabulas orasti, quas et”.

<sup>75</sup> I.e. Is this sorcery, rather than God.

<sup>76</sup> “praesto”.

<sup>77</sup> “introitum”, “the beginning”, i.e. when they were buried.

of God said to him, "I know that I am doing this, and you do not believe in it"<sup>78</sup>, but on account of the bystanders who are about to believe in Christ I will do what you ask. But I ask only that you gather together all the kings, and that the sarcophagus is opened in the presence of you all; and if you find either bones or dust in it, bring it to me. For I believe in the one who said to his disciples, 'If you have faith as much as a mustard seed, you will say to a mountain "move" and it will move.' For nothing is impossible for my God, but all things are possible for him."

Then the emperor heard the precepts of the servant of God and going to the tomb, they found nothing except so much dust, and collecting it they carried it to the blessed George. Then the blessed George knelt,<sup>79</sup> and prayed for two hours,<sup>80</sup> although none heard his voice. Then a great darkness came about, and at the same time a great clap of thunder, and all creatures under heaven trembled. And a great light shone down and a radiance came over the dust of the dead. Having finished his prayer, the servant of God said, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, get up and stand upon your feet." Then five men and nine women and three little children rose up.

Seeing this, the emperor shouted to one of them, "Who has revived you from the dead?" Also he said to him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Jovis." The emperor said, "How long were you dead?" The<sup>81</sup> man replied, "Many years, 460." The emperor said to him, "Did you worship Christ while you were living in that age?" The man replied, "In those days, Christ was not named." The emperor said to him, "Then what god did you worship while you were in that age?" The man replied, "Don't ask, O emperor, I blush to name his name. For I truly believed that god was Apollo, who is the destruction of souls, deaf and blind and without soul, an object<sup>82</sup> made by hands. For that reason a narrow, dark place was assigned to me, over me flowed rivers of fire, and there is in the same place undying maggots and inextinguishable flames.<sup>83</sup> Or did you not hear, O emperor, what was written, 'O Lord, make known to me that great and terrible judgement on the great day.'<sup>84</sup> On that occasion, truly there are great flames welling up and great trembling before the sight of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all deeds will appear before his eyes. The archangel Michael cried out, saying, 'Behold your deeds, and receive the punishment of sinners.' Now listen, O emperor. I shall expound to you, that every man who has been born on the earth, let him confess the Lord Jesus Christ our saviour, and if he has many sins and withdraws from this world<sup>85</sup> and he comes into a totally new place, even so on the day of the Lord<sup>86</sup> he will receive forgiveness, so that he may look to the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he has confessed, so that he may see him walking with his angels. For I did not receive forgiveness on the day of the Lord, for I did not confess Christ. For what do I have to say for myself, who used to serve deaf and blind mindless idols, objects made by the hands of men?"

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<sup>78</sup> Huber "will not believe in me".

<sup>79</sup> Understanding "flexit" not "fixit".

<sup>80</sup> Huber: "per duas horas", Arndt "duabus oris" (sic) "with two mouths"; clearly it should be "duabus horis", as in chapter 14.

<sup>81</sup> Treating "ille" as the definite article, medieval-style.

<sup>82</sup> "opera."

<sup>83</sup> Lit. "inextinguishable [burning] wood".

<sup>84</sup> The "great day" is judgement day.

<sup>85</sup> "saeculo".

<sup>86</sup> I.e. judgement day.

The emperor said to him, "You are mad,<sup>87</sup> man 460 years old." Then, looking around, the man who had been raised from the dead said, "George, servant of God, light of the truth, clearest star, I ask you to give mercy to me and to all those who are with me, that you grant us the seal of Christ, so that we might not suffer again to be led into the same darkness." Then St George, seeing the faith of that man, stamped on the ground with his right foot and living water sprung up, and he baptized them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and he sent them forth in peace and said to them, "Go in peace, for you have fulfilled<sup>88</sup> the command of the Lord," and suddenly they disappeared.

**14. The emperor is now convinced that George is a sorcerer. George is imprisoned in the house of a starving widow, and works a miracle to provide food. He partly heals her son.**

Then the emperor was stupefied for the space of two hours. Afterward he said to the kings, "Did I not say to you that this man is a magician and a sorcerer, who has called up demons in our sight and says that he has raised the dead? For I am confounded by the Galilean race." Then he said to his attendants, "Seek out a poor<sup>89</sup> widow woman, who has no daily bread, let her have the Galilean as a guest.<sup>90</sup>" Then they sought out the poor woman – there was none poorer than her in that time -, and they shut him up in there. Then the saint of God George became the guest of the widow woman, and he said to her, "Woman, give me a portion of bread so that I might eat." The woman replied to him. "O lord, servant of God, there is no bread in my dwelling." Then St George said to her, "Woman what god do you worship?" The woman replied to him, "I worship Apollo and Hercules."<sup>91</sup> St George replied to her, "Deservedly is there no bread in your dwelling." Looking at him,<sup>92</sup> the woman said to herself, "I see the face of this man as the face of an angel of God. I will go out to my neighbour, perhaps he will supply<sup>93</sup> me a loaf of bread on the arrival of this man, and I shall find grace before his eyes, and I shall put it before him so that he may eat, and tomorrow I shall die."<sup>94</sup> And when the woman went out of her house to the neighbours to seek bread, then St George sat next to the wooden Y-post,<sup>95</sup> which supported<sup>96</sup> his lodging, and it grew 15 cubits high,<sup>97</sup> and bore fruit. And behold an angel of the Lord carried bread [to him] and St George ate and was satisfied.<sup>98</sup>

But the woman returning to her lodging saw wonders done, the barren Y-post in leaf<sup>99</sup> above the roof of her lodging, and the table full of every good thing. Then kneeling, she honoured St George saying, "I bless the Lord Jesus Christ, who has transformed himself into a man, and come down from heaven to earth and has come into the home of a widow to help us." Then St George took the hand

<sup>87</sup> Arndt gives "deteras", Huber the obviously correct "deliras".

<sup>88</sup> Arndt: "completo in eis" – "having completed in them". Huber gives "complestis enim", "for you have fulfilled".

<sup>89</sup> "payperam", should be "pauperem".

<sup>90</sup> Huber has "quae panem non habeat diei in domo sua et includite eum ibi, ut confundatur." – "who has no daily bread in her house, and shut him up in there, so that he is distressed."

<sup>91</sup> Arndt: "the wretched Apollo and...".

<sup>92</sup> Huber: "at blessed George".

<sup>93</sup> Arndt has perfect tense here, "prestavit". The future "praestabit" in Huber must be right. The confusion of v and b is characteristic of Greek.

<sup>94</sup> Arndt: "he shall die".

<sup>95</sup> "furca," the wooden gable post that supported the house.

<sup>96</sup> Arndt: "contained".

<sup>97</sup> Huber: "12 cubits".

<sup>98</sup> Arndt: "comforted".

<sup>99</sup> "florere".

of the woman and raised it, saying, "I am not the God of the Christians, but I am his servant." The woman replied, "I ask you, lord, if I have found grace before your eyes, speak to your handmaiden a word from your holy mouth." St George replied to her, "Tell me woman, what do you want?" Then she said to him, "My lord, behold a son was born to me and he is three months old, but he is blind and deaf and paralysed, I am disturbed lest my neighbours see him. But I believe that my son will be saved through your prayer, and I believe in your God." Therefore St George seeing the faith of the woman said to her, "Bring him to me." And she brought him. Receiving him, he placed the child on his knee<sup>100</sup>, and placing his hand on him he prayed to the Lord, and once he had finished his prayer, he blew into his eyes and immediately there fell from the eyes of the child something like scales,<sup>101</sup> and immediately his eyes were opened and he began to see.

Again the woman spoke to the servant of God, "Lord, make it so that his ears hear and his feet walk." St George replied, "This is right for you, O woman. For so I wish him to be until the day when I shall call him.<sup>102</sup> Then let him come to me, and he will deliver a message for me. And further the woman did not speak, for she feared, for she saw the face of the saint was like that of an angel of God.

For that day was the sabbath.<sup>103</sup>

**15. George is arrested again, tortured again and dies again, and is buried on Mt Asinaris. He rises for the third time, and converts the guards sent with him. These are then executed.**

Springing up, the emperor began to pace through the palace, and looking about, he saw a tree in leaf above a widow woman's house and he said to his attendants, "What do I see? Behold a great and miraculous sign, out of season, a tree in leaf over the roof of the widowed woman. Look! Surely one of the gods hasn't taken up residence there?"<sup>104</sup> The attendants said to him, "George, the servant of God, was shut up in the place of the poor woman, just as you commanded us, lord." Then the emperor ordered him to be ejected from the house of the woman and to come to the palace. And after stretching him out, he ordered him to be beaten<sup>105</sup> with clubs, and he ordered a fiery helmet to be placed on his head, and his body to be scraped with iron claws, but his attendants faltered while working on him, and none of the tortures prevailed over him. Also he ordered torches to be placed under his flanks, and he suffered. For his body melted like wax, and he cried out to the Lord in a great voice, and he gave up his spirit.<sup>106</sup>

Then the emperor ordered them to carry off the corpse of St George and place it upon the top of a high mountain. "Let the birds of the sky descend and devour him, and let his bones be scattered upon the earth, so that no Christian man or woman may take up his bones and wrap them in linen and keep him for themselves as a source of healing, and create a martyrdom for him." And he was

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<sup>100</sup> Reading "genua" for "ienua".

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Acts 9:18.

<sup>102</sup> Arndt: "until the great day when I shall pray to hear the voice of the Lord" cannot be right as this refers to the events of chapter 18.

<sup>103</sup> This sentence is not in Huber.

<sup>104</sup> The sentence seems to be corrupt. Arndt I would punctuate as "Videte! Ne aliquo ex diis placuit ibidem". The "videte" is omitted in Huber ("Num aliqui ex diis ibidem placuit commorari?" - reading "aliqui" for "alicui"). Reading "aliqui", "some" instead of Huber's "alicui" (and Arndt's "aliquo"), and treating this as the subject of the sentence seems to make the most sense of it. Adding an exclamation mark after Arndt's "Videte" helps.

<sup>105</sup> Huber "caedi", Arndt "carminare", probably meaning "beaten bloody".

<sup>106</sup> The rest of the chapter is not found in Huber.

placed on the top of a high mountain, which is called Asinaris. And the attendants and soldiers who carried him turned back.

But after they descended around 300 stades, suddenly there was a sound and roll of thunder so great that all the foundations of the mountains were shaken. And the Lord came and descended upon a cloud with his angels, and he illuminated that place, and he called to the blessed George and said to him, "George, my servant, arise from your sleep!" And at that very moment,<sup>107</sup> he arose and stood upon his feet. And after greeting him, the Lord ascended into the sky with his angels. Then Saint George descended from the mountain in haste, and began to shout after the soldiers. And looking back the soldiers recognized him as if he were an angel descending, and in fear they fell on their faces, and worshipped him and kissed his feet, weeping and saying, "George, servant of the living God, give us the seal of Christ." Then St George struck the earth with his right foot. A fountain of living water poured forth, and he baptized them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

And they entered the city together, and these are the names of the first soldiers who were baptized: Silicodies, Silentarius, and Massarius, and many others with them. And they went in to the emperor, crying out, and saying to the emperor, "Behold! you with your god Apollo, but us with the Lord Jesus Christ." Then, looking at George the saint of God, he<sup>108</sup> growled like the roar of a lion, and he ordered Silicodies to be hanged up by the feet and another sword to pierce<sup>109</sup> him. Again he ordered Silicodies to be taken down and thrown to the beasts, and they did not harm him, but they kissed his feet<sup>110</sup> and returned to their places. Then they<sup>111</sup> were cast out of the amphitheatre, and he ordered them to be put to the sword on the 11<sup>th</sup> May<sup>112</sup>, and they entered into Paradise with joy.

#### **16. As it is late, St George agrees to sacrifice to Apollo in the morning. The emperor sends him to speak to his wife Queen Alexandra overnight.**

Then the emperor said to the saint of God, George, "By the sun god, and the ...<sup>113</sup>, and by the mother of the gods Diana, join me, .... George,<sup>114</sup> and listen to me as if I was your father, and convert. Sacrifice to Apollo who rules all the earth, and you will forgo bodily tortures."<sup>115</sup> St George said to the emperor, "Where were those gentle words of yours hiding? Look, I am in your hands for such a long time, and never have I heard such things from you, and you handed me over to bitter torments. And three times have I died in your hands, and three times did my Lord Jesus Christ resurrect me, and never did I hear such a gentle and good speech. Or do you not know, O emperor, that the race<sup>116</sup> of the Christians is immortal, and will stand against every work of the enemy devil and will endure every torture. And now you persuade me to sacrifice to Apollo, and to follow<sup>117</sup> your wish."

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<sup>107</sup> "ora", i.e. "hora".

<sup>108</sup> The emperor.

<sup>109</sup> Treating "percuti" as a deponent form, "percussi".

<sup>110</sup> Lit. "footsteps".

<sup>111</sup> The soldiers.

<sup>112</sup> Lit. "III Idus Maii".

<sup>113</sup> Half a line is missing in Arndt, which gives "LXX...", "70" (if the numeral is complete). Huber gives "78 gods", but it should probably read "72 kings", as it does later on.

<sup>114</sup> Arndt's manuscript is illegible at this point, but Huber is almost identical except that it omits Arndt's "...eus George", possibly because it wasn't legible in their exemplar either. The "eus" ending is perhaps from some adjective of approval.

<sup>115</sup> Huber adds here: "you will forgo any punishment and you will be second in my kingdom."

<sup>116</sup> Reading "genus" with Huber. Arndt's text reads "deus", absurdly.

<sup>117</sup> "faciam" is intentionally ambiguous and could also mean "I will follow".

Then the emperor became full of joy, and went to kiss his head. But St George did not allow him to kiss his head, saying to him, "O Emperor, the Galileans are not like this, but after my first sacrifice to the gods, you shall kiss my head thus."<sup>118</sup> Again St George spoke, "The daylight is now already spent, and the sun has gone down. I cannot sacrifice to your gods today. So permit me to be held in custody, and bind my feet with sinews,<sup>119</sup> until<sup>120</sup> I sacrifice to your gods." The emperor said, "George, it will not be now<sup>121</sup> that I imprison [you] and hand [you] over to punishments, but the blows that I have imposed on you, let them be forgotten. But indulge me as if I were your father. And now enter into the palace, to my queen Alexandra, and remain there with her.

### **17. Queen Alexandra questions St George about the Christian faith, and becomes a Christian.**

But St George went into the palace to the queen, and they closed the doors of the palace, for it was evening. Then kneeling, the servant of God George prayed, saying, "What God is great like our God? You are He who does wonderful things."<sup>122</sup> Again he said, "Why have the nations raged, and the people devised useless things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord and against his Christ."<sup>123</sup> Then after completing his prayer he said, "Amen."

Then St. George said, "I ask you, O Queen Alexandra, to hear me carefully." The queen replied, "My Lord, who are these nations that have raged, or who are these people who devised useless things? Which kings of earth have stood up, or who is Christ? teach me, because it pleases me to hear your words."<sup>124</sup>

So St George, opening his mouth, said to her, "Hear, O Queen Alexandra. God in His wisdom formed man in his image and likeness, taking the dust of the earth."

And the queen said, "Lord, why was flesh made from earth, or the skin of the flesh, or the veins, or the breast, or the head, or the eyes, or the tongue, or the face, or the hand, or the feet, or other members which are part of the body?"

St George said to her, "Surely you, O Alexandra, are not [made] from dust only?<sup>125</sup> For He made Adam and Eve through His wisdom, and the Maker made them by various workings.<sup>126</sup> Or surely you cannot indicate to me in what way man was made, unless you can<sup>127</sup> understand them through his workings?<sup>128</sup> Or how the sins of men are wiped out, he whom God through his wisdom shaped; in His image and likeness He made him. Because of him the heavens were roofed over<sup>129</sup> and the sun

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<sup>118</sup> Huber: "For first I shall sacrifice to your gods, and then you shall kiss me."

<sup>119</sup> Arndt, "et nervos", Huber correctly "nervis", as earlier.

<sup>120</sup> Arndt "quodusque", Huber "donec".

<sup>121</sup> Arndt has the meaningless "utinam ut". Huber's text reads "ut iam".

<sup>122</sup> Ps. 77:13-14.

<sup>123</sup> Ps. 2:1-2.

<sup>124</sup> Arndt: "or what spirit, which teaches me?"

<sup>125</sup> Arndt: "Numquid non tu Alexandra ipsa terra es tota?", Huber: "Numquid non totum terra est?", perhaps "Surely it is not completely from earth?" "terra" seems to be ablative here.

<sup>126</sup> "variis operibus."

<sup>127</sup> Inserting "poteris" from Huber.

<sup>128</sup> The text is probably corrupt here. Huber as ever is more intelligible, but different: "Sed per sapientiam suam aedificavit eam et operibus variis artifex summus fecit eam."

<sup>129</sup> Adopting "cameratum est" from Huber in place of the meaningless "camerarii".

appeared, and the moon and the stars in the sky, through the cycle day [passes] into daylight from day,<sup>130</sup> and every ornament of the age. But hear, O Queen Alexandra, for He is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man.”

Queen Alexandra replied to him, “George, servant of God, it pleases me to hear your words. So, tell me, O George, servant of Christ, why did he suffer and why did he appear on earth?” St. George replied to her, “Hear, O queen, because all men were corrupted<sup>131</sup> and were sacrificing to demons and were enslaved to idols, just like your emperor does, and his kings.”

Queen Alexandra replied to him, “So our gods are demons?” St. George replied to her, “Hear, O Queen Alexandra, David the prophet saying, ‘You who sit above the Cherubim, appear to us, stir up your power and come and save us’;<sup>132</sup> -- he prophesied in the Holy Spirit. Again, David himself says, ‘Let him come down like rain upon the fleece.’<sup>133</sup> For a ‘fleece’ is a virgin. Hear, O Queen, Habakkuk the prophet saying, ‘O Lord, I heard your tidings and I was afraid, I considered your works and I trembled.’”<sup>134</sup>

The queen said, “What did the prophet hear, or what did he consider, or what did he tremble at?” The saint of God said to the queen, “The prophet then said, ‘I heard’, because He has come, the Lord Jesus Christ has come; and ‘I was afraid, I considered’ because He has come among men, and ‘I trembled’ when I had seen His work.”<sup>135</sup>

The queen said to him, “Everything you say is true. It pleases me to hear you, lord George. But pray for me to your lord, and may the works of idols withdraw from me.” St George said to her, “Believe in the Lord, our crucified saviour, and they will withdraw from you.”<sup>136</sup>

The queen replied to him,<sup>137</sup> “I am afraid of the emperor, because he is an enemy and a murderer.” St George replied to her, “I ask you, Queen Alexandra, hear me carefully, and keep our words secret until I reach the gates of the Lord. But send me away for a short time.”<sup>138</sup>

And he went off<sup>139</sup> to sleep, and did not speak further to her. But the venerable George knelt in prayer until daylight and his sleep did not control him.

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<sup>130</sup> The phrase is omitted by Huber. As the day began at sunset, perhaps the sense is that after one day finishes, as the world turns, the new day reaches daylight?

<sup>131</sup> “conversi”.

<sup>132</sup> Ps. 79:2-3, Vulgate: “Qui sedes super cherubim, manifestare coram Ephraim, Benjamin, et Manasse. Excita potentiam tuam, et veni, ut salvos facias nos.” Douay: “Thou that sittest upon the cherubims, shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses. Stir up thy might, and come to save us.”

<sup>133</sup> Ps. 71:6, Vulgate (72:6 English). In the OLD “vellus” = “villus” is indeed fleece, as the Douai confirms. But most English versions have “mown grass”. The sense seems to be a field that has been cut and is waiting to be ploughed and sown again.

<sup>134</sup> “domine audivi auditum tuum et timui, consideravi opera tua et expavi”. This sentence is loosely based on the Old Latin for Habakkuk 3:2, but appears to be in fact an ancient Latin chant. See Eamonn O Carragain, “The Santa Sabina crucifixion panel”, in: Eric Cambridge, Jane Hawkes, *Crossing Boundaries: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Art, Material Culture, Language and Literature of the Early Medieval World*, Oxbow 2017.

<sup>135</sup> The punctuation in Huber makes clear that George is explaining each word in turn.

<sup>136</sup> The works of idols. Text: “recedit ad te”, “it will withdraw to you” seems corrupt: perhaps “recedebant ab te” here. Huber has “non operabuntur in te opera diaboli inimici”, “the works of the enemy devil will not have effect in you” which has the same sense.

<sup>137</sup> Reading “eum” for “eam”.

<sup>138</sup> Huber has instead: “Permitte me dormire paululum!” i.e. “allow me to sleep for a bit!”

**18. St George goes to the temple. The poor widow is outraged at his seeming apostasy, so George heals her son and tells him to call the idol. The idol comes out of the temple and reveals himself as Satan, and is banished to the abyss.**

Then at day-break the emperor ordered St George to go into the temple of Apollo. Then St. George said to the Emperor, "Hear me, O emperor, and keep everyone in the palace away, for I myself and the priests of the gods and all the army of soldiers will meet together, so that all may see my sacrifice to Apollo." Then the commander instructed the herald to go forth. The herald was crying out incessantly in a mournful voice, saying to the people, "Let everyone hurry to the temple of Apollo, because George the servant of Christ is going inside to sacrifice to the great god Apollo."

On hearing this the woman whose son had been blind and whose eyes were opened by the prayer of St George, in the same hour the woman disarrayed the hair of her head and tore all her clothes and brought her son, and went to the people waiting, and shouted in a loud voice saying, "Woe to you, George, who has raised the dead, and made the blind to see, and the lame to walk, turned the dry wood green, and made the dry furrow of my home bring forth vegetables and flowers, and filled my table with every good thing, and has laboured much against the evil of the devil, and now you go in to sacrifice to Apollo? And you have turned away all the people, who were desiring to believe in the Name of the Crucified Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord not allow this to happen! Woe to you, O devil, and to your works!"

St George, hearing the voice of the woman, was amazed, and after silence had fallen, he addressed her<sup>140</sup>, and said to her, "Woman, place your child on the ground," for he was deaf and dumb and lame. And St George addressed the child and said to him, "In the name of the crucified Lord Jesus Christ, who has brought light into the secret places of darkness, He orders you to get up and stand on your feet, and let your tongue and your ears be opened, and come and lend me your voice." At that very moment the child arose, and went to the servant of God, stooped down, and kissed his feet.

And holding his hand, St George supported him and said to him, "I say to you, boy, go into the temple of the pagans and say to Apollo, 'Come out quickly, the servant of God George is calling you.'"

So the boy went into the temple of Apollo and said to him, "I say to you, blind and deaf idol, without a soul, without feet, without hands, who are the destruction of souls who believe in you; the servant of God George is calling you."

Immediately the idol came out and began to cry out, saying, "O Jesus of Nazareth, you have drawn everything to yourself and made known your kingdom to them, and you have stirred up this tiny child against me, who is not even two years old. Why have you possessed<sup>141</sup> him against me, that he advanced against me with such fury?" And the idol came and stood before the feet of the servant of God.

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<sup>139</sup> "coepit", literally "began", but the sense here and elsewhere in the text is "went off to do but hadn't started yet."

<sup>140</sup> Lit. "clamavit eam ad se". The same construction appears in the next sentence.

<sup>141</sup> "adquisisti", in both Arndt and Huber.

And St. George said to him, "Are you the god of the pagans?" The idol replied, "Don't you know me, George, who I am?"

St. George said to him, "I do not know you." The idol replied, "Indulge me a moment,<sup>142</sup> George, and I will tell you everything."

St. George said to him, "Say whatever you like."

The idol replied, "When God roofed over the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, [and planted]<sup>143</sup> a garden in the east, God said, 'Let us make man in our image and likeness.' And He went down into the garden, and took the mud of the earth, and formed a man and He said to us angels, 'Come, worship the works of my hands.' And at once the angel Michael worshiped the works of His hands, but I spoke against this to the Lord God, 'How is it that I alone was covered under the wings of the Cherubim, and now shall I worship my inferior? I am not doing this.' And the Lord was angry with me and took from me my glory and threw me down like rain upon the earth, and I became the least of all creatures. And now I remain in [these] about-to-be-toppled statues, and if I can lead<sup>144</sup> anyone astray, it is gain to me. Listen George, once again I shall ascend to the third heaven, and hear and see the command of the Lord. For I keep close to men, because I was thrown from the realm of heaven on account of the race of men. Always I hate them,<sup>145</sup> and I come close and I bind them with fevers and chills and I instill in them every plague. Again I go to the house of God and stand over the palaces of the church, in case perhaps the angel of the Lord excommunicates someone, and I put out my hands in order to take them. And if the priest delays to reconcile him, I get<sup>146</sup> my hooks into him."

And George said to him, "You wretch, you have acted against yourself, and you have been thrown out of the kingdom of heaven; so how do you tempt the souls of Christians?"

The idol replied to him, "Through Him who sits in the seventh heaven and maintains the twice nine regions of the sky<sup>147</sup> and the rays of the sun, the course of the moon, and through the vastness<sup>148</sup> of the deep; because, if I had the power, I would destroy you in a moment."<sup>149</sup>

St. George said to him, "O Enemy of God, why do you plot against me? I myself shall send you into the depths of the earth, and there you will be until the great day of judgement."

Then St George struck his foot on the earth and the earth opened and he said to Apollo, "You who are the destruction of souls, go down into the depths of the earth, where is your father, the devil."

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<sup>142</sup> Lit. "unam horam", one hour.

<sup>143</sup> Words seem to have dropped out of the text here, which reads "paradisum contra orientem Eden". Huber reads what is plainly the sense, "et plantavit paradysum in Eden ab oriente", "and planted a garden in Eden in the East".

<sup>144</sup> Lit. "inducere", "influence"; but Huber has "seducere" which is undoubtedly the sense.

<sup>145</sup> Lit. "Always I have hatred against them."

<sup>146</sup> Lit. "put".

<sup>147</sup> The late Latin use of "pagina" to mean "region" would seem to make the most sense, perhaps referring to some sort of astronomical idea? The phrase is omitted in Huber.

<sup>148</sup> "moles abyssi", see OLD p.1126, §5 (*moles* + GEN).

<sup>149</sup> This odd sentence appears in a similar form in Huber. I understand it as meaning that the idol is allowed only to use temptation to destroy mankind, because the power of God restrains him; for otherwise, if the idol was allowed to, he would just destroy St George on the spot.

**19. St George goes back in the temple and destroys the other idols. He is arrested again and the emperor accuses him of perjuring himself. Discovering that Queen Alexandra has become a Christian, in a rage he has her tortured and executed.**

St. George went back into the temple of the gods and he blew at the statue of Hercules, or at another that was there, and immediately they fell over and became like the dust which the wind blows from the face of the earth. Again St. George said, "Flee before me, all you gods of the pagans, because I come to you in great anger; get you down into the depths of the earth, where is your father the devil."

Then the priests saw the destruction of their gods and how he sent the wretched god Apollo down to the depths of the earth, and the people were crying out, and saying, "Great is the God of George, the servant of Christ, and we also believe in him, because He himself will be able to free us from every tribulation and trouble." Then the devilish priests acknowledged angrily the statement of the people. Then they ordered<sup>150</sup> the saint to be bound. And, binding St George, they led him back to the emperor, and they showed him the destruction of their gods, and how he drove the god Apollo to the depths of the earth.

Then the Emperor Datianus said to St George, "You accursed nation, perjured race!<sup>151</sup> Between us we talked with joy of sacrificing to the gods, and that you would carry frankincense and sandalwood<sup>152</sup> and burn incense to them, and you, you have sent our gods by magic into destruction, and do you not know that your life<sup>153</sup> is in my hands?"

St. George replied to him, "O impious and cruel emperor, Apollo did speak to me, and I have sacrificed to him. But if you do not believe this, O emperor, go quickly and bring Apollo and I will sacrifice in your presence."

The emperor replied to him, "This the priests have told me: you have sent them into the depths of the earth and you hope to send me there living."

St. George said, "O most lost and wicked soul, if your gods, whom you say you worship, cannot help themselves there, in what way can they help you? See,<sup>154</sup> O emperor, what I will do to your gods on the day of judgement, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, when heaven will be folded up and earth will be on fire."

Angrily, the emperor tore off his robes in which he was dressed and went into the palace where the queen<sup>155</sup> was, and the emperor said to her, "My soul has faltered against George the Galilean, who is of the race of the Christians."

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<sup>150</sup> Lit. "preciperunt", reading "praeceperunt".

<sup>151</sup> Huber's version is more like Deut. 32:5.

<sup>152</sup> Arndt text is "thiama"; Huber omits this clause; guessing "thyam", OLD "the Greek name of the citron-wood or sandarac tree, a conifer valued for its fragrant wood," from θύα. A scented wood for burning like sandalwood would seem to be intended.

<sup>153</sup> Lit. "blood".

<sup>154</sup> Lit. "Vere". Huber has "vide", which is at least a verb.

<sup>155</sup> Named "Alexandria" in Huber at this point, Alexandra below.

The queen replied to him, "Hear me, good emperor; for their God is powerful and great in his works, He has scattered your kingdom and ruined your throne." The emperor said angrily to her, "Woe is me, Alexandra,<sup>156</sup> who has cast a spell on you so that you are for him? I see that the sorcery of George prevails in you and has overcome you." Then, full of fury, he seized the hand of the queen, and handed her over to his attendants.

Then she was dragged from the palace, and he ordered that she should be hung up by her hair and beaten with sticks naked until her bones were visible. And he heard no sound from her, except that always she lifted her eyes to heaven. Then she said to St George, "Servant of Christ, pray for me to the Lord your God, because I am struggling a lot in this pain." St. George replied to her, "Be patient, O queen, and believe in the crucified, for today God has crowned you through his hand."

A second time the emperor ordered that she should be taken down and he instructed her to be hanged up by her breasts. And again he ordered burning torches to be placed under her sides, and great pain seized her. Then the queen said to blessed George, "Servant of God, what shall I do - because I am not baptised - in order that the gates of paradise are opened to me, so that I may go into to the Lord in whom I believe, the crucified God, our saviour?" Then St. George said to her, "Don't worry<sup>157</sup>, O queen, for the blood that you are shedding itself will be for you a baptism of salvation and an incorruptible crown."

Then the angry emperor dictated her sentence, and martyrdom by order of the emperor followed.

While the people awaited her execution, she said to the executioners,<sup>158</sup> "Hold on a moment, so that I may go into my palace." And when she looked back at her palace, she raised her eyes to heaven and said, "Jesus, son of David, light of the vine, angelic of voice, crown of the martyrs believing in you Lord, [...]"<sup>159</sup> And filled with every blessing she said, "You, O Lord and Saviour, receive my spirit when I have gone to you from my house. Behold, O Lord, because it is for the sake of your Holy name, in whom I believe, I leave my palace open with every good thing and good treasures. For you, my Lord and Saviour, do not close to me the gates of paradise, but let them be opened to me, Lord Jesus Christ."

And having completed her prayer in silence, in daylight she came to the place where she fulfilled her martyrdom in Christ, on the 18<sup>th</sup> April.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Lit. "de Alexandra". Possibly transliterating the Greek here, with the meaningless "de". Huber makes plain that it is a vocative.

<sup>157</sup> "cogitas".

<sup>158</sup> "spiculatoribus." Gaffiot gives the late meaning of "executioner", via Jerome, *Ep.* 1, 8. The sentence seems to be corrupt, so I have guessed at the intended meaning, reading "adstans" for "adstantium". Huber has "But going to the place of her calling, she said to the executioners".

<sup>159</sup> The main clause is missing, so the rest of the sentence is lost. Huber omits the next couple of sentences also, continuing with "see how on account of the name of the crucified I have left my palace open and filled with all innumerable good treasures".

<sup>160</sup> "die XIII Kal. Madias".

**20. The sub-kings suggest that St George should be put to the sword. He is taken to be executed, prays, and fire comes down from heaven and destroys the emperor and the 72 sub-kings. Then St George is executed for the fourth and final time.**

After this, the emperor said to St George, "Since you have lost the queen, now we must think about you."<sup>161</sup> Then all the kings said, "O lord emperor, hear us, and we will tell you our opinion. Since no torture prevailed against him, we advise<sup>162</sup> that George the Galilean of the race of Christians, who has not listened to our gods nor worshiped them, should be run through with a sword."<sup>163</sup> Then the emperor said, "Listen to me, all my sons<sup>164</sup>, because I am innocent of his blood." Then receiving the water he washed his hands, and all of the kings who were gathered together with him agreed to his sentence.<sup>165</sup> Then receiving this sentence, the saint of God George hurried to fulfill his vow, which he had made to God, and when he had come to the iron gate and put one foot outside the door and the other inside and he said to the executioners, "Hold back a little while I pray, there are seven years on which I am judged by these seventy-two kings. So I request of you that I may make a prayer for one hour."

Then looking up to Heaven, the most blessed and venerable, fair and mighty soldier of Christ, George said, "Lord God almighty, who sent down fire by the prophet Elijah, and consumed the two captains,<sup>166</sup> now, Lord Jesus Christ, let fire come down<sup>167</sup> from the sky and consume the emperor Datianus and all the kings, who are gathered together with him."

And at that moment fire came down from Heaven by the command of God according to the prayer of most holy George and it consumed the seventy-two kings with the emperor himself and the whole multitude of pagans who were gathered together in one place with him. They were in number about five thousand men, and none of them was left.

Then St. George came to the place and said to the executioners, "Hold back a bit so that I may pray for those who have trusted or who are going to trust in Christ. For I see that the souls of the people [are] with open eyes quickly dividing up my clothes among themselves in order to trust in our lord and saviour. My body and my clothes will not be enough, perhaps, for this people!"<sup>168</sup>

Then the holy athlete,<sup>169</sup> both illustrious servant of God and adorned by the strength of God, admirable for his patience, raised his eyes to Heaven, and said, "Lord God Almighty, who has turned aside from the gold and silver statues of the idols and has shattered them into a dust which is being

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<sup>161</sup> Arndt: "cum reginam perdideris, modo nobis cogitans". Huber reads, "Ecce reginam perdidisti; modo cogitandum est de te." – "Behold you have lost the queen; now it is necessary to think about yourself."

<sup>162</sup> "dicentes, saying" cannot be right. I have paraphrased.

<sup>163</sup> "preciperunt", i.e. praeceperunt, "they instructed". Lit. "they advised [eum] to be run through with a sword." The text seems unsure whether it is second person or third. Huber has instead, "And he issued a sentence, saying, 'George the Galilean, of the race of the Christians, who has not worshiped my gods, I order to be killed with this sword.'"

<sup>164</sup> Lit. "filii". Probably filii, pl.

<sup>165</sup> A death sentence.

<sup>166</sup> 2 Kings 1:14: "14 See, fire has fallen from heaven and consumed the first two captains and all their men." The "quinquegenarios" are captains in charge of 50 men.

<sup>167</sup> Should read "descendet" rather than "descendat".

<sup>168</sup> All the new converts are rushing in to get a relic of the saint. St George jokes that there may not be enough of him to go round.

<sup>169</sup> "adhlaeta" = "athleta", "athlete". Ascetics were known as the "athletes of God".



know that all men are flesh and blood so long as they live upon the earth.<sup>183</sup> But as long as they are mindful of your name, and invoke my Father and myself, whether they are in judgement, or in a hard place, or in storms, or in thunder or in darkness, or they are in great sorrow against all the works of the devil, I will deliver them from every affliction, and anguish." Then the Lord stopped speaking to his servant George.

Then St. George said to the executioners, "Come and finish off what you were commanded to do." And kneeling, the servant of God was peacefully beheaded, and water and milk came forth from his body.

After the martyrdom was finished, there was a great earthquake, thunder and lightning, and rain and a hail-storm, and the earth was not able to bear it, nor those who were there waiting to see the miracles of God, seeing the majesty which shone over the body of St George.

## **21. The testimony of Passecrates, who witnessed all this.**

21. I, Passecras,<sup>184</sup> servant of my Lord George, was present for seven years in all his suffering, in which he was judged by the emperor Dacianus and the seventy-two kings. Through each of the years and months and days I have followed what he suffered, and I have written down everything in the order in which they were done by the lord George.<sup>185</sup> The Lord of Heaven and Earth, who will judge the living and the dead, knows that I have neither added to nor subtracted from [the story of] his suffering, but the way that he suffered is as I have written. For St. George completed his martyrdom on April 24,<sup>186</sup> on Friday,<sup>187</sup> in the good confession.<sup>188</sup> For all those who have believed in Christ Jesus, our Lord, through St. George, this is the number of them: 300,900 were crowned<sup>189</sup> in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; also Queen Alexandra, who was crowned by God; to whom is honour, permanence and praise and magnificence and victory forever. Amen.

Here ends the *passio* of St. George the Martyr.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Huber skips this sentence and extends the previous one.

<sup>184</sup> Or "Pasicrates" in other witnesses.

<sup>185</sup> "cum domino," "cum" can also mean 'by' – OLD.

<sup>186</sup> "VIII kal. Madias".

<sup>187</sup> Huber adds "at the 9<sup>th</sup> hour".

<sup>188</sup> "the good confession", i.e. "confesses that Jesus is Lord", i.e. becomes a Christian; rather than the confession of penitence, "I have done these wrongs...". Here the sense is that "he professed the faith by his death".

<sup>189</sup> With the crown of martyrdom.

<sup>190</sup> This sentence not in Huber.