

THE ANGEL AND THE STAR

of our land I went, an old man who lived remote from the world's fevers and ambitions, its joys and griefs. I told him my story. Swift was his answer 'What thou lovest best, offer that to God and thou shalt find peace.' Like a sword in my bones was that word, for I had but one son, a beautiful youth. I turned away from the priest with my sin and my agony upon me. Vainly I sought escape! Vainly I sought peace! Then I remembered thy Abraham, and, for the sin of my soul, I offered the fruit of my body. Ah! My son! My son! But even that sacrifice availed not. From that high altar I came down cursing the gods of my people, and determined that I should seek no longer peace in life but death. That night, as I swept the heavens in my last study of the mysteries, my eye caught the rising of a star of wondrous light and beauty. As if from Heaven a voice cried, 'Follow where I lead,' and faint hope trembled in my heart. I knew that somewhere a Great One was to be born who might have help for me. But where? All books I studied in the light of my knowledge of the stars, till in thy sacred books I read thus of thy coming King. 'The Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising.' And again, 'From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name and a peace offering, for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith Jehovah of hosts.' I obeyed the leading of the Star, and following, we have four J Him. And now we have done our homage