And when Judas had entered **into the realm of India** with the merchant Habban, Habban went to salute Gundaphar, the king of India, and he told him of the artificer whom he had brought for him. And the king was very glad, and ordered Judas to come into his presence. And the king says to him: “What art do you know to practice?” Judas says to him: “I am a carpenter, the servant of a carpenter and architect”. He says to him: “What do you know to make?” Judas said to him: “In wood I know (how) to make **yokes and ploughs and ox-goads, and oars for barges and ferryboats, and masts for ships**; and in hewn stone, tombstones and monuments and palaces for kings”. The king says to Judas: “**And I want such an artificer**”. The king says to him: “Will you build me a palace?” Judas says to him: “I will build it and finish it, for I have come to work at building and carpentry”.

**Commentary.** **into the realm of India.** Greek: “into the cities of India”, but Sachau: καὶ ἐπὶ πόλεις, see ch. 16. Sinai is present from “And the king says …” until ch. 19: “and what I shall send (you)”. **yokes ... ships.** Greek: ἕν μὲν ξύλοις ἄφοτα ἐνυγούς τρυπάνας τροχίλες ἀκαὶ πλοία ἀκαὶ κόσμας καὶ ἱστούς see ch. 3. **The king says ... artificer.** This passage is present in the Greek manuscripts B H and Z only.

And he took him and went outside the gate of the city, and was **talking** with him about the construction of the palace, and about its foundations, how they should be laid. And when he had reached the place where the king wished him to build a palace for him, he said to Judas: “Here I wish you to build for me a palace”. Judas says to him: “(Yes), for this is a place which is suitable for it”. Now it was of his sort; it was a meadow, and there was **plenty of water** near it. The king
says to him: “Begin to build here”. Judas says to him: “Now I cannot build, at this time”. The king says to him: “And at what time will you be able to build?” Judas says to him: “I will begin in Teshri, and I will finish in Nisan”. The king says to him: “All buildings are built in summer, and you build in winter”. Judas says to him: “Thus (only) is it possible for the palace to be built”. The king says to him: “Well then, trace it out for me that I may see it, because after a long time I shall come hither”. And Judas came and took a cane, and began to measure; and he left doors towards the east for light; and windows towards the west for air; and (he made) the bake-house to the south, and the water-pipes for the service (of the house) to the north. The king says to him: “Verily, you are a good artificer, and are worthy to serve a king”; and he left with him a large sum of money, and departed from him.

Commentary. talking. Apart from the Greek manuscripts S H and Z the words “on the way” have been added. See for the following story A. Hilhorst, “The Heavenly Palace in the Acts of Thomas”, in: J.N. Bremer (ed.), The Apocryphal Acts of Thomas, in: St. in early Chr. Apocrypha, Leuven 2001,53–64. plenty of water. See Krauss, Talmud. Archeol. I 22: “In Babylonien baute man mit Vorliebe am Wasser”. I will begin in Teshri … winter. The Greek manuscripts B H Z read ἵπτεσθε τάοτειν in place of Teshri, but the other ones διῶν. The word Nisan has been rendered ξανθὼπος in the Greek manuscripts. According to Chronicon Edessenum, ed. Hallier 87, winter falls from Tishri to Nisan. Building is supposed to be reprehensible in winter, see Erklärung des Evangeliums, ed. Schäfers 7–8: “Und z.B. die, denen Gebäude gehören, beeilen sich die ganze Zeit des Sommers um zu bauen und zu vollenden (cf. the end of ch. 17!), dass sie unter Obdach sind und ruhen in den Tagen des Winters, denn die Tage des Sommers gehören den Bauten”. Jacob of Serug gives the following explanation of Thomas’ suggestion in: Zeitschr. Deutschen Morgenl. Gesellsch. 25 1871, 356: “Im Winter möge der König bauen … denn gut wird der Bau und Arbeiter findet man”, which is probably wrong. Thomas decided to “build” during winter because at that time many people were in need of support, see ch. 19. Winter as the time during which one prepared oneself for baptism, see ch. 14–27, seems to be far-fetched, but cf. Ephrem, de virginitate, quoted in E. Beck, “Le Baptême chez Saint Éphrem”, in: l’Orient Syrien I 1956, 113–136, esp. 125: (Mensis) October recreat fatigatos a pulvere et sordibus aedtatis, pluvia eius lavat, et res eius ungit arbores et fructus earum. Aprilis recreat