

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:
'Bishop Shelemon of Armenia – Forgotten Nestorian Christian Mystic'

Issue Twenty One

Compiled by Marilyn Hughes

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!

www.outofbodytravel.org



Modern Armenian Bishop

(To have your Questions, Articles, Poetry or Art included in future editions, submit to: MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org!)

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Having worked primarily in radio broadcasting, Marilynn Hughes spent several years as a news reporter, producer and anchor before deciding to stay at home with her three children. She's experienced, researched, written, and taught about out-of-body travel since 1987.

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The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:
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Of this issue's forgotten mystic, Bishop Shelemon of Armenia, little is known except for the a small excerpt from an introduction to his one known work, 'The Book of the Bee,' by his translator E.A. Wallis Budge, renowned Egyptologist and historian.

"OF the author of 'the Book of the Bee,' the bishop Shelêmôn or Solomon, but very little is known. He was a native of Khilât or Akhlât (in Armenia, at the western end of lake Vân), and by religious profession a Nestorian. He became metropolitan bishop of al-Baṣra (in al-`Irâk, on the right bank of the united streams of the Tigris and Euphrates) about A.D. 1222, in which year he was present at the consecration of the catholicus or Nestorian patriarch Sabr-îshô` (Hope-in-Jesus) (see Assemânî, *Bibl. Orient.*, t. ii, p. 453, no. 75; Bar-hebraeus, *Chron. Eccl.*, t. ii, p. 371). In the Catalogue of Ecclesiastical Works compiled by `Ebêd-yêshû` or `Abd-îshô` (the-Servant-of-Jesus) he is stated to have written, besides 'the Bee,' a treatise on the figure of the heavens and the earth, and sundry short discourses and prayers (see Assemânî, *Bibl. Orient.*, t. iii, pt. i, p. 309, where there is a lengthy analysis of the contents of 'the Bee'). A Latin translation of 'the Bee' by Dr. J. M. Schoenfelder appeared at Bamberg in 1866; it is based upon the Munich MS. only, and is faulty in many places.

The text of 'the Bee,' as contained in this volume, is edited from four MSS., indicated respectively by the letters A, B, C and D.

The MS. A belongs to the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. It is dated A.Gr. 1880 = A.D. 1569, and consists of 188 paper leaves, measuring about 8 in. by 5³/₄. Each page is occupied by one column of writing, generally containing 25 lines. This MS. is so stained and damaged by water in parts that some of the writing is illegible. The quires are twenty-one in number and, excepting the last two, are signed with letters. Leaves are wanting after folios 6, 21, 49, 125, 166 and 172; and in several pages there are lacunae of one, two and more lines. The volume is written in a good Nestorian hand, with numerous vowel-points. Originally it was the property of the priest Wardâ, son of the deacon Moses, who was prior of the convent of Mâr Ezekiel. Later on, it belonged to one Mâr John of Enzelli (near Resht, on the south shore of the Caspian Sea). In the year A.Gr. 1916 = A.D. 1605 it was bound by a person whose name has been erased. The Book of the Bee occupies foll. 26 *a* to 92 *b*, and the colophon runs: 'By the help of our Lord and our God, this Book of the Bee was completed on the 16th day of the month of Tammuz, on the Saturday that ushers in the Sunday which is called Nûsârdêl, in the year 1880 of the blessed Greeks, by the hands of the sinful servant the faulty Elias. Amen.'

The MS. B is on paper, and is numbered Add. 25,875 in the British Museum. See Wright's *Catal.*, p. 1064, no. dccccxxii, ff. 81 *b*-158 *a*. It is written in a good Nestorian hand, with numerous vowel-points, etc., and is dated A.Gr. 2020 = A.D. 1709. The colophon runs:--

'It was finished in the year 2020 of the Greeks, on Friday the 22nd of the blessed month Tammûz, by the wretched sinner, the deacon Hômô of Alkôsh. I entreat you to pray for him that perchance he may obtain mercy with those

upon whom mercy is freely shewn in the day of judgment, Amen. And to Jah be the glory, Amen.

'The illustrious priest and pure verger, the priest Joseph, the son of the late deacon Hormizd of Hôrdaphnê, took pains and was careful to have this book written: may Christ make his portion in the kingdom of heaven! Amen. He had it written for the holy church called after the name of our Lady Mary the pure and virgin mother, which is in the blessed and happy village of Hôrdaphnê in the district of `Amêdîa. From now and henceforth this book remains the property of the (above-) mentioned church, and no man shall have power over it to carry it off for any reprehensible cause of theft or robbery, or to give it away without the consent of its owners, or to abstract it and not to return it to its place. Whosoever shall do this, he shall be banned and cursed and execrated by the word of our Lord; and all corporeal and incorporeal beings shall say "Yea and Amen."

From the manner in which B ends, it would seem either that the MS. from which it was copied was imperfect, or that the scribe Hôrnô omitted to transcribe the last leaf of the MS. before him, probably because it contained views on man's future state which did not coincide with his own.

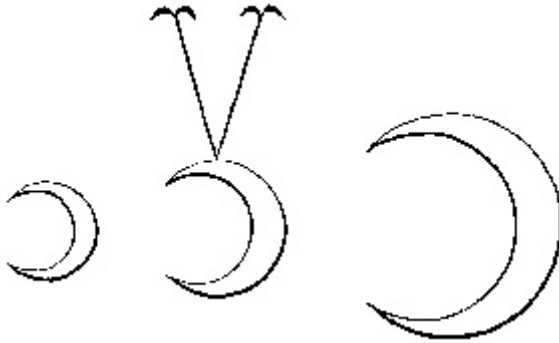
The MS. C, belonging to the Royal Library at Munich, consists of 146 paper leaves, measuring about 12 1/8 in. by 8 1/4. There are two columns, of twenty-four lines each, to a page; the right-hand column is Syriac, the left Kârshûnî or Arabic in Syriac characters. The MS. is beautifully written in a fine Nestorian hand, and vowels and diacritical points have been added abundantly. The headings of the chapters are in Estrangelâ. The last two or three leaves have been torn out, and on fol. 147 *a* there are eighteen lines of

Kârshûnî in another hand, which contain the equivalent in Arabic of B, fol. 157 *a*, col. 2, lines 10 to 24.

On the fly-leaf are five lines of Arabic, which run:--

'This book is the property of the church of Mâr Cyriacus the Martyr at Baṭnâye. The deacon Peter bar Ṣaumô has purchased it for the church with its own money, and therefore it has become the lawful property of the church. Whosoever taketh it away without the consent of the directors of the church, committeth sin and is bound to restore it. This was on the 17th of the month of Âdhâr in the year of our Lord 1839, in the protected city of Moṣul.'

Dr. Schoenfelder in the preface to his translation, p. ii, assigns this MS. to the fourteenth century ('ad saeculum decimum quartum procul dubio pertinet'). From this view, however, I differ for the following reasons. The MS. B, dated A.Gr. 2020 = A.D. 1709, is written upon water-lined paper, having for water-mark upon each leaf three crescents of different sizes, and a sign like a V:--



The paper is smooth and thick. The Munich MS. C is written upon rather rougher paper, but with the same water-mark exactly, only the three crescents are on one

leaf, and the V-shaped mark upon that next to it. Therefore Dr. E. Maunde Thompson, keeper of the MSS. in the British Museum, who has kindly given me the benefit of his great experience in these matters, considers that the paper on which these two MSS. are written was made at the same manufactory and about the same time. Add to this that the writing of both MSS. is almost identical, and that the signatures of the quires and the style of ornamentation is the same, and it will be evident that the Munich MS. belongs rather to the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century than to the fourteenth.

The MS. D, belonging to the Bodleian Library, Oxford, consists of 405 paper leaves, measuring $8 \frac{5}{8}$ in. by $6\frac{1}{4}$. There is one column of twenty-one lines, in Kârshûni or Arabic in Syriac characters, to each page. The MS. is written in a fine bold hand, the headings of the chapters, names, and diacritical points being in red. It is dated Friday the 28th day of Âb, A.Gr. 1895 = A.D. 1584, and was transcribed by Peter, the son of Jacob.

The Arabic version of 'the Bee' contained in this MS. borders at times on a very loose paraphrase of the work. The writer frequently repeats himself, and occasionally translates the same sentence twice, though in different words, as if to make sure that he has given what he considers to be the sense of the Syriac. He adds paragraphs which have no equivalents in the three Syriac copies of 'the Bee' to which I have had access, and he quotes largely from the Old and New Testaments in support of the opinions of Solomon of Baṣrah. The order of the chapters is different, and the headings of the different sections into which the chapters are divided will be found in the selections from the Arabic versions of 'the Bee'. This MS. is of the utmost

importance for the study of 'the Bee,' as it contains the last chapter in a perfect and complete state; which is unfortunately not the case either with the bilingual Munich MS. or the copy in Paris.

Assemânî says in the *Bibl. Orient.*, t. iii, pt. i, p. 310, note 4, that there are two codices of 'the Bee' in the Vatican Library, and he has described them in his great work--*MSS. Codicum Bibliothecae Apostol. Vatic. Catalogus*, t. iii, nos. clxxvi and clxxvii. The latter is incomplete, containing only forty chapters (see *Bibl. Orient.*, t. ii, p. 488, no. ix); but the former is complete (see *Bibl. Orient.*, t. i, p. 576, no. xvii). It was finished, according to a note at the end, on Wednesday, 14th of Shēbât in the year of Alexander, the son of Nectanebus², 1187, which Assemânî corrects into 1787 = A.D. 1476. The name of the scribe was Gabriel, and he wrote it for the 'priest John, son of the priest Jonah' (Yaunân), living at the village of ### in the district of Baz, (see Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus syr. Akten pers. Martyrer*, pp. 204-5). At a subsequent time it belonged to the church of Mâr Cyriacus in the village of Sâlekh, in the district of Barwar, (see Hoffmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 193, 204).

*The Book of the Bee, By Bishop Shelemon of Armenia,
Edited and Translated by Earnest A. Wallis Budge, M.A.,
Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1886, Scanned and Edited by
Christopher M. Weimer, May 2002*

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:
Question and Answer Forum!

Please Send Your Questions to:

MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org

For Future Inclusion in this Section!

Question from Matthew Ott, St. Johns University Theology Major, Minnesota, USA: I was reading the Quran for research in one of my classes. I did not read the whole thing, but what I did read sounded a little exclusive to me, not to say that some Christian texts are not exclusive. What do you think about the Quran, Islam, and Muhammad? Honestly, I feel a little fear about the exclusivity of the Quran, but I'm sure there are some positives though - let me know what you think.

Marilynn: There are plenty of passages in the Qur'an which can be misused in the exclusivity realm. It is very much an Old Testament type of theology: an eye for an eye. But if you have any confusion, go back and read some of the Old Testament and you'll see great similarity. This is one reason the Islamic - Jewish question in Israel may never be resolved, because the New Testament is vital for forgiveness and redemption.

If you read a lot of the ancient texts from most of the major world religions, you'll find a great deal of this, especially for the Abrahamic religions like Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Less so in Buddhism, more so in Hinduism.

When you read these lines, the thing to do is to remember the similar lines that come from our own Old Testament. Unfortunately, if you understand history and the times of

the crusades and the inquisition, the Catholic Church is equally, if not more, guilty of utilizing some of these words to inspire war rather than peace.

Christ came to fulfill the law. Without His fulfillment which brings in mercy, forgiveness and redemption - there is little else except vengeance.

You might enjoy Scott Hahn's interpretation of the Old Testament Scriptures, because he's not afraid to deal with any of it. But if you read through the Old Testament, you'll find that the Israelites waged wars on many nations and claimed that God told them to make sure that no one remained living, man, woman or child. And they did this regularly without a second thought. Very much like the Qur'an.

I have a different view on some of the events in the Old Testament. For instance, I wonder if God ever asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. I believe it was possibly a demonic suggestion and God stayed his hand because he was too simple to understand. I believe that some of the wars that the Israelites were supposedly told by God to forge, were also possible demonic suggestions. If you read the Old Testament as 'the Word of God' alone, without taking into account the understanding of the people at the time, their beliefs in how all events were punishment or reward from God, and also look at archaeological evidence which suggests that much of the Old Testament is a narrative of events from that perspective, you cannot understand it. Common sense is required.

Sodom and Gomorrah were recently found and archaeological evidence shows that it was destroyed by earthquake and volcanic ash. In Old Testament times, this would be viewed as the wrath of God. Some people would

view it the same way today. But it was unlikely literal tongues of fire coming out of the sky from God. Do I believe that the Israelite prophet were warned to leave with the few good people remaining? Yes. God does this sometimes. But geological history shows us that the world has been destroyed in various areas of the earth many times over in its history. This is the way God created nature to behave. Do I believe Noah was warned and others weren't because they were evil? Yes. But I'm not convinced the flood was divine punishment because it is written about in the tablets of every known civilization in that part of the world. It affected many cultures and they all have stories of it. It was a big event. Not unlike the Cyclone of today and the tsunami of 2004, and yet, these did not destroy the entire world. But it did destroy the entire world of those people involved as they knew it. To them, it was the apocalypse. I got e-mails from survivors who at the time felt this was so.

260,000 were confirmed dead after the tsunami and they believe it will be many more when the final count is done. Their world has been destroyed as they knew it. But it will regenerate.

Even Jesus can be misunderstood. He said He did not come to bring peace to the earth, but a sword - that would divide men and families. An extremist can (and they have done so in the past and even in the present) use these words to justify violence. But Jesus was speaking metaphorically, mystically - the sword of truth - the Word which would divide people by the master they serve.

Sometimes, we are not encouraged to read our scriptures with the tool of discernment. But our Old Testament is extremely violent and encourages holy war of all kinds. Do I believe this is the will of God? No. I believe the

scriptures have always been utilized to record history, to tell the story of prophets who came among men, but also to twist history to suit the purpose of a people. "If God told me to do it than it must be okay." But many religions practiced the slaughter of millions of animals to appease an angry God, not unlike the Aztecs, other tribes in MesoAmerica and around the world which practiced human sacrifice.

Sometimes, an understanding of anthropology is very necessary if you wish to understand the EVOLUTION of religion. We have to acknowledge the level of understanding held by those who recorded these histories, because they are all very similar.

In ancient men, all natural events were either a punishment or a reward from God. They believed that BLOOD SACRIFICE was necessary. We carry this belief to today in the Holy Eucharist in that we celebrate the bloody sacrifice of God's own Son on a Cross in the Holy Mass. Jesus Christ came to fulfill the law and to stop the incorrect views of God as a wrathful deity just looking for a reason to smite mankind.

One of our priests said something in Mass the other day that I thought was profound. He said that we have to remember that every time we come to Mass we are celebrating the brutal torture and crucifixion of a human being. The Holy Eucharist came as God's way of setting a cease fire to blood sacrifice. If you'll recall, Jesus said that God doesn't want your blood sacrifice, he wants you to sacrifice in your hearts, your mind, your life. He wants your sacrifice to be repentance.

When Muhammad came to Arabia, it was a time of great polytheism. They had so many Gods in Arabia, it's

impossible to count them. Nobody could reach them but an Arabian Man. They were an extremely violent culture, and as a result, when Muhammad tried to spread his word - he had armies who had to fight tooth and nail just to keep Muhammad alive. But Muhammad was an illiterate man who knew nothing of biblical history who received it from the mouth of Gabriel. How else could he have written it? Thus, Muhammad was also a man of his times. But just as Abraham, in his time, could honestly believe it would be God's will to sacrifice and torture his own son - because of the ancient belief in blood sacrifice - Muhammad believed that in his time punishing those who betrayed the path of Islam had to be killed. If you read from the Hadith, you'd be shocked. Because beheading was the general punishment when somebody did something seriously wrong. That's part of the reason why it continues into today. He came from a very violent culture, so he had to be a prophet of his culture at the time. But God didn't stop with Muhammad, and many people don't understand this including the people of Muhammad.

Baha'u'llah and the Bab came in 1844 starting the Bahai faith which teaches more than any religion, including Christianity, before it, that the different religions are an evolution of understanding begun by God with Hinduism 5000 years ago and culminating in the faith of peace taught by Baha'u'llah today. He believes that God sends the prophet that a particular area of the world needs at that time, in that culture. He was an Arabian prophet also, and many Baha'is have been martyred in Iran and Iraq especially in the 1800's, but even today. They are very much like the early church in Christianity. The battle between Islam and the Baha'i Faith is very much like the battle between Judaism and Christianity. Muhammad also prophesied that another prophet would come, whom Baha'u'llah claims to be the culmination. But of those

who embrace Islam - only a very few a few million - have embraced him as the prophet. The battle sounds familiar - does it not?

If you want to understand more about these different faiths, go to my web-site at <http://www.outofbodytravel.org/sacredchantrecitation.html>. You can watch 'The Message' which is the entire movie about the life of Muhammad or watch a documentary explaining the times in which Muhammad lived and how he came to be. You can do this with any of 14 religions including the Baha'is. There is also information about their faiths, and some of their religious chants and recitations of scripture.

What you'll find, Matthew, is that just like Christianity - Islam has a few skeletons in its closet. We have our Old Testament, the Crusades, the Cathars, the Native Americans - they have their Qur'an and Hadith, but they also have many, many writings as we do which outline the true moral teaching of Islam.

We have Father Adolphe Tanquerray, in the Spiritual Life - they have Imam Gazzali in the Ihya Ullum Ud Din - which is a moral theology of Islam. If you take out a few buzzwords, you wouldn't be able to tell which one was Christian and which was Islamic.

Did you know the history of the temple mount, the place that the Christians, Jews and Muslims have been fighting over for thousands of years? Well, Jews revere it because it was the original location of Solomon's temple. So we know they'll never give that fight up. Christians the same reason. But to Muslims, this place is the location of the 'Holy Rock.' Muhammad had his great 'journey to heaven' on the rock in this mosque. What happened on

Muhammad's journey to heaven? Well, Muhammad was instructed on heaven and hell by all the prophets including Moses and Jesus. Like Jacob before him, he saw a staircase ascending to heaven and the prophets descended to greet him on the infamous 'Night Journey' to heaven. Muslims will never give it up, either. But isn't that ironic? Moses and Jesus came to greet him there, does this tell us anything? It should if we are paying attention.

Muhammad is one in a line of many great prophets who come to fulfill the will of God in their own time, and their mission is formed and created out of the cultures and beliefs of the time in which they are sent. Arab countries may be violent today, but compared to the times before Muhammad, they are dramatically a much more peaceful people. And what Baha'u'llah has proposed (TOTAL PEACE AND UNITY OF RELIGIONS) could be considered in total contradiction to some of the things you may see in the Qur'an, but Baha'ullah claims to be the prophet to succeed Muhammad and reveres him with great respect.

We must use our discerning eye, which is a gift of our times from God - and the gifts of science, anthropology and archaeology - to understand the extent of biblical and qur'anic history. We have to be willing to accept that contradictions will and MUST come up because there is a continuum, an evolution, going on from the beginning of time. Prophets have to work and operate from within the world they live in, their own times - and we must look at what they accomplish by truly examining the society in which they lived before and after their coming. We cannot judge only by who we are today, thousands or hundreds of years later. And when you begin to take on the reading of the sacred texts of another culture, be ready to acknowledge how our scriptures must look to them, especially the Old Testament. The biggest obstacle I find

in people converting to Christianity is the Old Testament. There is a lot of crazy stuff in there. But there is a lot of crazy stuff in these biblical type histories of all religions.

You should check out the Srimad Bhagavatam of Hinduism, it's filled with unbelievable acts of violence not unlike our own Old Testament. But it is a true history and there is a very profound spiritual belief wound up around some very horrific events. But isn't that also the story of the Old Testament? It will also be true of much of the Qur'an.

As you read it, remember this. This is what makes Jesus Christ and Baha'u'llah so important. Because they were sent to take the understanding of man one step further for their respective cultures and the world; from a religion of ancient man which involves a very limited understanding of God as a wrathful deity - to the understanding of God as mercy and peace and as He who Is.

Read the Qur'an knowing that it is very much an Old Testament theology, and read it to understand the Islamic people - not to judge them. Islamic people are very much an Old Testament people. But Baha'u'llah came to bring in the New, the Baha'i faith represents a very New Testament theology.

Go to my site to learn about these different prophets - and their lives and times - remember that the times and circumstances of their coming ARE relevant to what God wished for them to accomplish. There was no other way for God to bring monotheism into Arabia at the time of Muhammad. It HAD to be him. But God sees the full picture, and to whence He is going with the people of all nations.

We have a great DVD called 'More than Dreams' about Muslims - even a former terrorist - who had dreams of Jesus Christ which led them to Christianity. God is always at work in His creation to bring things forward. But evolution does play a part in the religious understanding of humankind. It's great that you're reading the Qur'an, but do it to UNDERSTAND, not to judge. When you do this with understanding, it will help you to better know the parameters of their vision. It then makes you more effective when you speak with them.

<http://www.outofbodytravel.org/sacredchantrecitation.html>

With love, Marilyn

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:

Different Voices!

This is our section devoted to the writings and opinions of others, which may not reflect the views of author, Marilyn Hughes. Inclusion of any author's writings or work does not denote an endorsement or recommendation in regards to their writings.

Some of these will be individual writings of others on subjects of spiritual interest, other people's out-of-body experiences - some which may agree with and/or contradict the experiences of the author, poems, journals of spiritual transformation, and critiques - both positive and negative opinions and/or analysis, of the author's work.

We choose to include ALL of these because we feel that the ability to discuss our similarities and differences openly is 'ALL GOOD' as GANDHI used to say.

We welcome and encourage your submissions for possible future inclusion in this section, although we stress that we are a non-profit organization and payment is not available:

MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org

We have found that some of the best critiques, analysis, writings and experiences come from people all over the world in different walks of life who are pursuing their spiritual path with passion and are completely unknown.

THANK YOU ALL, whether you agree or disagree with our work, FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO SEEK THE TRUTH IN WHATEVER WAY THAT TRUTH MAY COME TO SEEK YOU!

Excerpts from the Book of the Bee

*By Bishop Shelemon of Armenia
Translated by E.A. Wallis Budge*

CHAPTER II.

OF THE CREATION OF THE SEVEN NATURES
(SUBSTANCES) IN SILENCE.

WHEN God in His mercy wished to make known all His power and His wisdom, in the beginning, on the evening of the first day, which is Sunday, He created seven natures (substances) in silence, without voice. And because there was as yet none to hear a sound, He did well to create them in silence, that He might not make anything uselessly; but He willed, and heaven, earth, water, air, fire, and the angels and darkness, came into being from nothing.

CHAPTER IV.

OF HEAVEN.

HEAVEN is like a roof to the material world, and will serve as the floor of the new world. It is by nature shining and glorious, and is the dwelling-place of the invisible hosts. When God spread out this firmament, He brought up above it a third part of the waters, and above these is the heaven of light and of the luminaries. Hence people say 'the heaven, and the heaven of heavens'; for we call both the firmament and the waters which are above it 'heaven.' Some consider that the verse 'Let the waters

which are above the heavens praise the name of the Lord' refers to the holy angels and to our Lord's humanity; but neither the Church nor the orthodox teachers accept this.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE ANGELS.

THE Angels consist of nine classes and three orders, upper, middle and lower. The upper order is composed of Cherubim, Seraphim, and Thrones: these are called 'priests' (*kumrê*), and 'chief priests,' and 'bearers of God's throne.' The middle order is composed of Lords, Powers and Rulers: these are called 'priests' (*kâhnê*), because they receive revelations from those above them. The lower order consists of Principalities, Archangels and Angels: and these are the ministers who wait upon created things. The Cherubim are an intellectual motion which bears the throne of the holy Trinity, and is the chief of all motions; they are ever watchful of the classes of themselves and those beneath them. As concerning the epithet 'full of eyes,' which is applied to them, the eyes indicate the mystery of the revelations of the Trinity. Their head, and the foremost and highest among them, is Gabriel, who is the mediator between God and His creation. The Seraphim are a fiery motion, which warms those below it with the fire of the divine love. The six wings which each of them is said to possess indicate the revelations which they receive from the Creator and transmit to mankind. The Thrones are a fixed motion, which is not shaken by the trials which come upon it. The Lords are a motion which is entrusted with the government of the motions beneath it; and it is that which prevents the demons from injuring created things. The Powers are a mighty motion, the minister of the will of the Lord; and it is that which gives victory to

some rulers in battle and defeat to others. The Rulers are a motion which has power over the spiritual treasures, to distribute them to its companions according to the will of the Creator. This class of angels governs the luminaries, the sun, moon, and stars. The Principalities are a defined motion which possesses the direction of the upper ether, of rain, clouds, lightning, thunder, whirlwinds, tempests, winds, and other ethereal disturbances. The Archangels are a swift operative motion, into whose hands is entrusted the government of the wild beasts, cattle, winged fowl, reptiles, and everything that hath life, from the gnat to the elephant, except man. The Angels are a motion which has spiritual knowledge of everything that is on earth and in heaven. With each and every one of us is an angel of this group--called the guardian angel--who directs man from his conception until the general resurrection. The number of each one of these classes of angels is equal to the number of all mankind from Adam to the resurrection. Hence it is handed down that the number of people who are going to enter the world is equal to the number of all the heavenly hosts; but some say that the number is equal to that of one of the classes only, that they may fill the place of those of them who have fallen through transgressing the law; because the demons fell from three classes (of angels), from each class a third part. If then it is an acknowledged fact that there are three orders of angels, and in each order there are three classes, and in every class a number equivalent to that of all mankind, what is the total number of the angels? Some say that when the angels were created, and were arranged in six divisions--Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels--the three lower divisions reflected (saying), 'What is the reason that these are set above, and we below? for they have not previously done anything more than we, neither do we fall short of them.'

On account of this reflection as a cause, according to the custom of the (divine) government, Justice took from both sides, and established three other middle classes of angels--Lords, Powers, and Rulers--that the upper might not be (unduly) exalted, nor the lower think themselves wronged. As for the dwelling-place of the angels, some say that above the firmament there are waters, and above them another heaven in the form of infinite light, and that this is the home of the angels. Here too is God without limit, and the angels, invisible to bodily eyes, surround the throne of His majesty, where they minister to 'the tabernacle not made with hands.' Others say that, from the beginning, when God created the angels, until the second day, in which the firmament was made, all the classes of angels dwelt in the upper heavens; but when the firmament was made, they all came down below it, with the exception of three classes--the Cherubim, Seraphim, and Thrones--who remained above it. These surrounded and supported the Shechinah of God from the beginning of the world until our Lord ascended unto heaven; and after the Ascension, behold, they surround and support the throne of the Christ God, who is over all, until the end of the world. The Expositor and his companions say: 'The tabernacle which Moses made is a type of the whole world.' The outer tabernacle is the likeness of this world, but the inner tabernacle is the similitude of the place that is above the firmament. And as the priests ministered in the outer tabernacle daily, while the high priest alone entered into the inner tabernacle once a year; so of all rational beings, angels and men, no one has entered (the place) above the firmament, save the High Priest of our confession, Jesus Christ. The fathers, when they have been deemed worthy at any time to see our Lord in a revelation, have seen Him in heaven, surrounded by the Cherubim and Seraphim. Hence some say that there are angels above the heavens.

All these celestial hosts have revelations both of sight and of hearing; but the Cherubim have revelations by sight only, because there is no mediator between them and God. The angels have an intellect superior to that of the rest of rational beings; man has stronger desire, and the demons a greater degree of anger.

CHAPTER VI.

OF DARKNESS.

DARKNESS is a self-existent nature; and if it had not had a nature, it would not have been reckoned among the seven natures which were created in the beginning in silence. Others say that darkness is not a self-existent nature, but that it is the shadow of bodies.

CHAPTER VII.

OF EFFUSED (CIRCUMAMBIENT) LIGHT.

WHEN the holy angels were created on the evening of the first day, without voice, they understood not their creation, but thought within themselves that they were self-existent beings and not made. On the morning of the first day God said in an audible and commanding voice, 'Let there be light,' and immediately the effused light was created. When the angels saw the creation of light, they knew of a certainty that He who had made light had created them. And they shouted with a loud voice, and praised Him, and marvelled at His creation of light, as the blessed teacher saith, 'When the Creator made that light, the angels marvelled thereat,' etc.; and as it is said in Job, 'When I created the morning star, all my angels praised me.' Now by nature light has no warmth.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE FIRMAMENT .

ON the evening of the second day of the week, God willed to divide the heavens from the earth, that there might be luminaries and stars beneath the heavens to give light to this world, and that the heavens might be a dwelling-place for the righteous and the angels after the resurrection. God said, 'Let there be a firmament which shall divide the waters from the waters'; and straightway the waters were divided into three parts. One part remained upon the earth for the use of men, cattle, winged fowl--the rivers and the seas; of another part God made the firmament; and the third part He took up above the firmament. But on the day of resurrection the waters will return to their former nature.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

OF THE MESSIANIC GENERATIONS.

GOD created Adam. Adam begat Seth. Seth begat Enos. Enos begat Kainân. Kainân begat Mahalaleel. Mahalaleel begat Jared. Jared begat Enoch. Enoch begat Methuselah. Methuselah begat Lamech. Lamech begat Noah. Noah begat Shem. Shem begat Arphaxar. Arphaxar begat Kainân. Kainân begat Shâlâch. Shâlâch begat Eber. Eber begat Peleg. Peleg begat Reu. Reu begat Serug. Serug begat Nahor. Nahor begat Terah. Terah begat Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac. Isaac begat Jacob. Jacob begat Judah. Judah took a Canaanitish wife, whose name was Shuah.

And it was very grievous to Jacob, and he said to Judah, 'The God of my fathers will not allow the seed of Canaan to be mingled with our seed, nor his family with our family.' There were born to Judah by the Canaanitish woman three sons, Er, Onan, and Shelah. Er took Tamar, the daughter of Merari the son of Levi, to wife, and he lay with her in the Sodomite way and died without children. After him his brother Onan took her, to raise up seed to his brother; he also, when he lay with her, scattered his seed outside of her on the ground, and he too died without children. Because Shelah was a child, Judah kept his daughter-in-law in widowhood, that he might give her to Shelah to raise up seed by her. But Tamar went into her father-in-law by crafty devices, and lay with him, and conceived, and gave birth to twins, Pharez and Zarah. Pharez begat Hezron. Hezron begat Aram. Aram begat Amminadab. Amminadab begat Nahshon. Eleazar the son of Aaron, the priest, took the sister of Nahshon to wife, and by her begat Phinehas; and the seed of the priesthood was mingled with the royal line. Nahshon begat Salmon. Salmon begat Boaz by Rahab. Boaz begat Obed by Ruth the Moabitess. Obed begat Jesse. Jesse begat David the king by Nahash.

Now two genealogies are handed down from David to Christ; the one from Solomon to Jacob, and the other from Nathan to Heli. David begat Solomon. Solomon begat Rehoboam. Rehoboam begat Abijah. Abijah begat Asa. Asa begat Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat begat Joram. Joram begat Uzziah. Uzziah begat Jotham. Jotham begat Ahaz. Ahaz begat Hezekiah. Hezekiah begat Manasseh. Manasseh begat Amon. Amon begat Josiah. Josiah begat Jeconiah. Jeconiah begat Salathiel. Salathiel begat Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begat Abiud. Abiud begat Eliakim. Eliakim begat Azor. Azor begat Zadok. Zadok begat Achin. Achin

begat Eliud. Eliud begat Eleazar. Eleazar begat Matthan.
 Matthan begat Jacob. Jacob begat Joseph. Or again: David
 begat Nathan. Nathan begat Mattatha. Mattatha begat
 Mani. Mani begat Melea. Melea begat Eliakim. Eliakim
 begat Jonam. Jonam begat Levi. Levi begat Mattitha.
 Mattitha begat Jorim. Jorim begat Eliezer. Eliezer begat
 Jose. Jose begat Er. Er begat Elmodad. Elmodad begat
 Cosam. Cosam begat Addi. Addi begat Melchi. Melchi
 begat Neri. Neri begat Salathiel. Salathiel begat Zorobabel.
 Zorobabel begat Rhesa. Rhesa begat Johannan. Johannan
 begat Juda. Juda begat Joseph. Joseph begat Semei. Semei
 begat Mattatha. Mattatha begat Maath. Maath begat
 Nagge. Nagge begat Esli. Esli begat Nahum. Nahum begat
 Amos. Amos begat Mattitha. Mattitha begat Joseph. Joseph
 begat Janni. Janni begat Melchi. Melchi begat Levi. Levi
 begat Matthat. Matthat begat Heli. Heli begat Joseph.

Know too, O my brother, that Mattan the son of Eliezer--
 whose descent was from the family of Solomon--took a
 wife whose name was Astha (or Essetha) and by her begat
 Jacob naturally. Mattan died, and Melchi--whose family
 descended from Nathan the son of David--took her to wife,
 and begat by her Eli (or Heli); hence Jacob and Heli are
 brothers, (the sons) of (one) mother. Eli took a wife and
 died without children. Then Jacob took her to wife, to raise
 up seed to his brother, according to the command of the
 law; and he begat by her Joseph, who was the son of Jacob
 according to nature, but the son of Heli according to the
 law; so whichever ye choose, whether according to nature,
 or according to the law, Christ is found to be the son of
 David. It is moreover right to know that Eliezer begat two
 sons, Mattan and Jotham. Mattan begat Jacob, and Jacob
 begat Joseph; Jotham begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Mary.
 From this it is clear that Joseph's father and Mary's father
 were cousins.

CHAPTER XXXIV.**OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE ANGEL TO
YÔNÂKÎR (JOACHIM) IN RESPECT OF MARY.**

THIS Zadok, who was called Yônâkîr, and Dinah his wife were righteous before God, and were rich in earthly riches and in goods and chattels; but they had neither fruit nor offspring like other people. They were reproached by the people for their barrenness, and they did not allow them to offer up the offering except after every one else, because they had no children among the people of Israel. And Yônâkîr went out into the desert, and pitched his tent outside the encampment, and he prayed before God with mournful tears, and put on garments of mourning; so also did Dinah his wife. And God heard their prayers and accepted the sacrifices of their tears. The angel of God came to them, and announced to them the conception of Mary, saying, 'Your prayer has been heard before God, and behold, He will give you blessed fruit, a daughter who shall be a sign and a wonder among all the generations of the world; and all families shall be blessed through her.' Then they two praised God, and Zadok returned to his habitation. And Dinah his wife conceived, and brought forth Mary; and from that day she was called Hannah (Anna) instead of Dinah, for the Lord had had compassion upon her. Now the name 'Mary' (Maryam or Miriam) is interpreted 'lifted up,' 'exalted;' and they rejoiced in her exceedingly. And after six months her parents said to one another, 'We will not allow her to walk upon the ground;' and they carried her with sacrifices and offerings, and brought her to the temple of the Lord. And they sacrificed oxen and sheep to the Lord, and offered Mary to the high priest. He laid his hand upon her head, and blessed her, saying, 'Blessed shalt thou be among women.' Two years

after she was weaned, they brought her to the temple of the Lord, even as they had vowed to the Lord, and delivered her to the high priest. He laid his hand upon her head, and blessed her, and said to her that she should give herself over to the aged women who were there. And she was brought up with the virgins in the temple of the Lord, and performed the service of the temple with joyful heart and godly fervour until she was twelve years old. Because she was beautiful in appearance, the priests and the high priest took counsel and prayed before God that He would reveal to them what they should do with her. And the angel of God appeared unto the high priest and said to him, 'Gather together the staves of the men who have been left widowers by their first wives, and are well known for piety, uprightness, and righteousness, and what God sheweth thee, do.' And they brought many staves and laid them down in the temple; and they prayed before God that day and its night. The chief priest went into the temple and gave to each of them his staff, and when Joseph took his staff in his hand, there went forth from it a white dove, and hovered over the top of the rod, and sat upon it. The chief priest drew near to Joseph and kissed him on his head, and said to him, 'The blessed maiden has fallen to thy lot from the Lord; take her to thee until she arrives at the age for marriage, and (then) make a marriage feast after the manner and custom of men; for it is meet for thee (to do so) more than others, because ye are cousins.' Joseph said to the chief priest, 'I am an old and feeble man, and this is a girl, and unfit for my aged condition; it is better to give her to one of her own age, because I cannot rely upon myself to watch her and guard her.' The chief priest said to him, 'Take heed that thou dost not transgress the command of God, and bring a punishment upon thee.' So Joseph took Mary, and went to his dwelling-place.

Some days after the priests distributed various coloured silken threads to weave for the veil of the sanctuary; and it fell to Mary's lot to weave purple. And while she was in the temple in prayer, having placed incense before the Lord, suddenly the archangel Gabriel appeared to her in the form of a middle-aged man, and a sweet odour was diffused from him; and Mary was terrified at the sight of the angel.

CHAPTER XXXV.

OF THE ANNUNCIATION BY GABRIEL TO MARY OF THE CONCEPTION OF OUR LORD.

AT the ninth hour of the first day of the week, on the twenty-fifth of the month of Adar,—though some say on the first day of the month of Nisan, which is correct,—in the three hundred and seventh year of Alexander the son of Philip, or of Nectanebus, the Macedonian, six months after Elizabeth's conception of John, the archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary and said to her, 'Peace be to thee, O full of grace! our Lord is with thee, O blessed among women!' As for her, when she saw (him), she was terrified at his words, and was thinking what this salutation was. The angel said to her, 'Fear not Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive and bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Emmanuel, which is interpreted, "our God is with us." This (child) shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest.' Mary said to the angel, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to thy word.' And the angel went away from her. In those days Mary arose, and went to Elizabeth her cousin, and she went in and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard Mary's salutation, the babe leaped in her womb, and John in Elizabeth's

womb bowed down to our Lord in Mary's womb, as a servant to his master. Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her house. After the lapse of six months, Joseph saw that Mary had conceived, and he was troubled in his mind, and said, 'What answer shall I give to the high priest in respect of this trial which has befallen me?' And because he relied upon the purity of his spouse, he fell into perplexity and doubt, and said to her, 'Whence hast thou this? and who has beguiled thee, O perfect dove? Wast thou not brought up with the pure virgins and venerable matrons in the temple of the Lord?' And she wept, saying, 'As the Lord God liveth, I have never known man nor had connexion with any one;' but she did not speak to him of the angel and the cause of her conception. Then Joseph meditated within himself and said, 'If I reveal this matter before men, I fear lest it may be from God; and if I keep it back and hide it, I fear the rebuke and penalty of the law.' For the Jews did not approach their wives until they made a feast to the high priest, and then they took them. And Joseph thought that he would put her away secretly; and while he was pondering these things in his heart, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said, 'Joseph, son of David, fear not to take Mary thy wife; for that which is born in her is of the Holy Spirit.' He spake well when he said 'in her,' and not 'of her.'

And the priests heard of Mary's conception, and they made an accusation against Joseph, as if deceit had been found in him. Joseph said, 'As the Lord liveth, I know not the cause of her conception;' and Mary likewise swore this. There was a custom among the Jews that, when any one of them was accused with an accusation, they made him drink 'the water of trial;' if he were innocent, he was not hurt, but if he were guilty, his belly swelled, and his body

became swollen, and the mark of chastisement appeared in him. When they had made Mary and Joseph drink of the water of trial, and they were not hurt, the high priest commanded Joseph to guard her diligently until they saw the end of this matter.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OF THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD IN THE FLESH.

ONE year before the annunciation of our Lord, the emperor of the Romans sent to the land of Palestine Cyrinus the governor, to write down every one for the poll-tax, for the Jews were subject to the empire of the Romans; and every man was written down in his city. And Joseph the carpenter also went up that he might be written down in his city; and by reason of his exceeding great watchfulness for the blessed (Mary), he took her with him upon an ass. When they had gone about three miles, Joseph looked at her and saw that her hand was laid upon her belly, and that her face was contracted with pain; and he thought that she was troubled by the beast, and asked her about her trouble and pain. She said to him, 'Hasten and prepare a place for me to alight, for the pains of childbirth have taken hold upon me.' When he had lifted her down from the animal, he went to fetch a midwife, and found a Hebrew woman whose name was Salome. The heretics say that she was called Hadyôk, but they err from the truth. When Joseph came to the cave, he found it full of brilliant light, and the child wrapped in swaddling clothes and rags, and laid in a crib. And there were shepherds there keeping watch over their flocks, and behold the angel of God came to them, and the glory of the Lord shone upon them; and they feared with an exceeding great fear. The angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I

announce to you a great joy which shall be to all the world; for there is born to you this day a Redeemer, who is the Lord Jesus, in the city of David: and this shall be the sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a crib.' And suddenly with the angel there appeared many hosts of heaven, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the heights, and on earth peace and tranquillity and good hope to men.' And the shepherds went and entered the cave, and they saw as the angel had said to them. The names of the shepherds were these: Asher, Zebulon, Justus, Nicodemus, Joseph, Barshabba, and Jose; seven in number.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PROPHECY OF ZÂRÂDÔSHT CONCERNING OUR LORD.

THIS Zârâdôsht is Baruch the scribe. When he was sitting by the fountain of water called Glôshâ of Hôrîn, where the royal bath had been erected, he said to his disciples, the king Gûshnâsâph and Sâsân and Mahîmad, 'Hear, my beloved children, for I will reveal to you a mystery concerning the great King who is about to rise upon the world. At the end of time, and at the final dissolution, a child shall be conceived in the womb of a virgin, and shall be formed in her members, without any man approaching her. And he shall be like a tree with beautiful foliage and laden with fruit, standing in a parched land; and the inhabitants of that land shall be gathered together³ to uproot it from the earth, but shall not be able. Then they will take him and crucify him upon a tree, and heaven and earth shall sit in mourning for his sake; and all the families of the nations shall be in grief for him. He will begin to go down to the depths of the earth, and from the depth he

will be exalted to the height; then he will come with the armies of light, and be borne aloft upon white clouds; for he is a child conceived by the Word which establishes natures.' Gûshnâsâph says to him, 'Whence has this one, of whom thou sayest these things, his power? Is he greater than thou, or art thou greater than he?' Zârâdôsht says to him, 'He shall descend from my family; I am he, and he is I; he is in me, and I am in him. When the beginning of his coming appears, mighty signs will be seen in heaven, and his light shall surpass that of the sun. But ye, sons of the seed of life, who have come forth from the treasuries of life and light and spirit, and have been sown in the land of fire and water, for you it is meet to watch and take heed to these things which I have spoken to you, that ye await his coming; for you will be the first to perceive the coming of that great king, whom the prisoners await to be set free. Now, my sons, guard this secret which I have revealed to you, and let it be kept in the treasure-houses of your souls. And when that star rises of which I have spoken, let ambassadors bearing offerings be sent by you, and let them offer worship to him. Watch, and take heed, and despise him not, that he destroy you not with the sword; for he is the king of kings, and all kings receive their crowns from him. He and I are one.' These are the things which were spoken by this second Balaam, and God, according to His custom, compelled him to interpret these things; or he sprang from a people who were acquainted with the prophecies concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, and declared them aforetime.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OF THE STAR WHICH APPEARED IN THE EAST ON THE DAY OF THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD.

SOME say that that star appeared to the Magi simultaneously with the birth of our Lord. As for Herod's commanding that all children from two years old and downwards should be slain, it is not as if they required all that length of time for their journey, but they had some accidental delay either in their own country or on the road. Again, Herod did not command that the children should be slain immediately after his having met the Magi, but much time passed in the interval, because he was waiting to hear from them.

The holy Mâr John Chrysostom, in his exposition of Matthew, says, 'The star appeared a long time before, for their journey was accomplished with great delay that they might come to the end of it on the day of our Lord's birth. It was meet that He should be worshipped in swaddling bands, that the greatness of the wonder might be recognised; therefore the star appeared to them a long time before. For if the star had appeared to them in the east when He was born in Palestine, they would not have been able to see Him in swaddling bands. Marvel not, if Herod slew the children from two years and downwards, for wrath and fear urged him to increased watchfulness; therefore he added more time than was needful, that no one should be able to escape.'

As touching the nature of that star, whether it was a star in its nature, or in appearance only, it is right to know that it was not of the other stars, but a secret power which appeared like a star; for all the other stars that are in the firmament, and the sun and moon, perform their course from east to west. This one, however, made its course from north to south, for Palestine lies thus, over against Persia. This star was not seen by them at night only, but also during the day, and at noon; and it was seen at the time

when the sun is particularly strong, because it was not one of the stars. Now the moon is stronger in its light than all the stars, but it is immediately quenched and its light dissipated by one small ray of the sun. But this star overcame even the beams of the sun by the intensity of its light. Sometimes it appeared, and sometimes it was hidden entirely. It guided the Magi as far as Palestine. When they drew near to Jerusalem, it was hidden; and when they went forth from Herod, and began to journey along the road, it appeared and shewed itself. This was not an ordinary movement of the stars, but a rational power. Moreover, it had no fixed path, but when the Magi travelled, it travelled on also, and when they halted, it also halted; like the pillar of cloud which stopped and went forward when it was convenient for the camp of Israel. The star did not remain always up in the height of heaven, but sometimes it came down and sometimes it mounted up; and it also stood over the head of the Child, as the Evangelist tells us.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

OF THE COMING OF THE MAGI FROM PERSIA.

WHEN Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judah, and the star appeared to the Magi in the east, twelve Persian kings took offerings--gold and myrrh and frankincense--and came to worship Him. Their names are these: Zarwândâd the son of Artabân, and Hôrmîzdâd the son of Sîtârûk (Santarôk), Gûshnâsâph (Gushnasp) the son of Gündaphar, and Arshakh the son of Mîhârôk; these four brought gold. Zarwândâd the son of Warzwâd, Îryâhò the son of Kesrô (Khosrau), Artahshisht the son of Holítî, Ashtôn`âbòdan the son of Shîshrôn; these four brought myrrh. Mêhârôk the son of Hûhâm, A^hshîresh the son of Hasbân, Sardâlâh

the son of Baladân, Merôdâch the son of Beldarân; these four brought frankincense. Some say that the offerings which the Magi brought and offered to our Lord had been laid in the Cave of Treasures by Adam; and Adam commanded Seth to hand them down from one to another until our Lord rose, and they brought (them), and offered (them) to Him. But this is not received by the Church. When the Magi came to Jerusalem, the whole city was moved; and Herod the king heard it and was moved. And he gathered together the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired about the place in which Christ should be born; and they told him, in Bethlehem of Judah, for so it is written in the prophet. Then Herod called the Magi, and flattered them, and commanded them to seek out the Child diligently, and when they had found Him to tell Herod, that he also might go and worship Him. When the Magi went forth from Herod, and journeyed along the road, the star rose again suddenly, and guided them until it came and stood over (the place) where the Child was. And when they entered the cave, and saw the Child with Mary His mother, they straightway fell down and worshipped Him, and opened their treasures, and offered unto Him offerings, gold and myrrh and frankincense. Gold for His kingship, and myrrh for His burial, and frankincense for His Godhead. And it was revealed to them in a dream that they should not return to Herod, and they went to their land by another way. Some say that the Magi took some of our Lord's swaddling bands with them as a blessed thing.

Then Longinus the sage wrote to Augustus Caesar and said to him, 'Magians, kings of Persia, have come and entered thy kingdom, and have offered offerings to a child who is born in Judah; but who he is, and whose son he is, is not known to us.' Augustus Caesar wrote to Longinus,

saying, 'Thou hast acted wisely in that thou hast made known to us (these things) and hast not hidden (them) from us.' He wrote also to Herod, and asked him to let him know the story of the Child. When Herod had made enquiries about the Child, and saw that he had been mocked by the Magi, he was wroth, and sent and slew all the children in Bethlehem and its borders, from two years old and downwards, according to the time which he had enquired of the Magi. The number of the children whom he slew was two thousand, but some say one thousand eight hundred. When John the son of Zechariah was sought for, his father took him and brought him before the altar; and he laid his hand upon him, and bestowed on him the priesthood, and then brought him out into the wilderness. When they could not find John, they slew Zechariah his father between the steps and the altar. They say that from the day when Zechariah was slain his blood bubbled up until Titus the son of Vespasian came and slew three hundred myriads of Jerusalem, and then the flow of blood ceased. The father of the child Nathaniel also took him, and wrapped him round, and laid him under a fig-tree; and he was saved from slaughter. Hence our Lord said to Nathaniel, 'Before Philip called thee, I saw thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree.'

CHAPTER XL.

OF OUR LORD'S GOING DOWN INTO EGYPT.

WHEN the Magi had returned to their country, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and said to him, 'Arise, take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt; and stay there until I tell thee.' So Joseph arose and took the Child and His mother by night, and fled to Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod. When they were

journeying along the road to Egypt, two robbers met them; the name of the one was Titus, that of the other Dûmâchos (?). Dûmâchos wished to harm them and to treat them evilly, but Titus would not let him, and delivered them from the hands of his companion. When they reached the gate of the city called Hermopolis, there were by the two buttresses of the gate two figures of brass, that had been made by the sages and philosophers; and they spoke like men. When our Lord and His mother and Joseph entered Egypt, that is to say that city, these two figures cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'A great king has come into Egypt.' When the king of Egypt heard this, he was troubled and moved; for he feared lest his kingdom should be taken away from him. And he commanded the heralds to proclaim throughout the whole city, 'If any man knoweth (who He is), let him point (Him) out to us without delay.' When they had made much search and did not find Him, the king commanded all the inhabitants of the city to go outside and come in one by one. When our Lord entered, these two figures cried out, 'This is the king.' And when our Lord was revealed, Pharaoh sought to slay Him. Now Lazarus--whom Christ raised from the dead--was there, and was one of the king's officials, and held in much esteem by the lord of Egypt. He drew near to Joseph and asked them, 'Whence are ye?' They said to him, 'From the land of Palestine.' When he heard that they were from the land of Palestine, he was sorry for them, and came to the king and pledged himself for the Child. And he said to the king, 'O king, live for ever! If deceit be found in this Child, behold, I am before thee, do unto me according to thy will.' This is the (cause) of the love between Lazarus and Christ. One day when Mary was washing the swaddling bands of our Lord, she poured out the water used in washing in a certain place, and there grew up there apûrsam (that is to say balsam) trees, a species of tree not

found anywhere else save in this spot in Egypt. Its oil has (divers) properties; if a man dips iron into it, and brings (the iron) near a fire, it shines like wax; if some of it is thrown upon water, it sinks to the bottom; and if a drop of it is dropped upon the hollow of a man's hand, it goes through to the other side. Our Lord remained two years in Egypt, until Herod had died an evil death. He died in this manner. First of all he slew his wife and his daughter, and he killed one man of every family, saying, 'At the time of my death there shall be mourning and weeping and lamentation in the whole city.' His bowels and his legs were swollen with running sores, and matter flowed from them, and he was consumed by worms. He had nine wives and thirteen children. And he commanded his sister Salome and her husband, saying, 'I know that the Jews will hold a great festival on the day of my death; when they are gathered together with the weepers and mourners, slay them, and let them not live after my death.' There was a knife in his hand, and he was eating an apple; and by reason of the severity of his pain, he drew the knife across his throat, and cut it with his own hand; and his belly burst open, and he died and went to perdition. After the death of Herod who slew the children, his son Herod Archelaus reigned, who cut off the head of John. And the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in Egypt and said to him, 'Arise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the life of the Child are dead.' So Joseph took the Child and His mother, and came to Galilee; and they dwelt in the city of Nazareth, that what was said in the prophecy might be fulfilled, 'He shall be called a Nazarene.' In the tenth year of the reign of Archelaus the kingdom of the Jews was divided into four parts. To Philip (were assigned) two parts, Ituraea and Trachonitis; to Lysanias one part, which was Abilene; and

to Herod the younger the fourth part. And Herod loved Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip.

CHAPTER XLI.

OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, AND OF THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD.

JOHN the Baptist lived thirty years in the desert with the wild beasts; and after thirty years he came from the wilderness to the habitations of men. From the day when his father made him flee to the desert, when he was a child, until he came (again), he covered himself with the same clothes both summer and winter, without changing his ascetic mode of life. And he preached in the wilderness of Judaea, saying, 'Repent, the kingdom of God draweth nigh;' and he baptised them with the baptism of repentance for the remission of their sins. He said to them, 'Behold, there cometh after me a man who is stronger than I, the latchets of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. I baptise you with water for repentance, but He who cometh after me is stronger than I; He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire:' thereby referring to that which was about to be wrought on the apostles, who received the Holy Spirit by tongues of fire, and this took the place of baptism to them, and by this grace they were about to receive all those who were baptised in Christ. Jesus came to John at the river Jordan to be baptised by him; but John restrained Him, saying, 'I need to be baptised by Thee, and art Thou come to me?' Jesus said to him, 'It is meet thus to fulfil the words of prophecy.' When Jesus had been baptised, as soon as He had gone up from the water, He saw that the heavens were rent, and the Spirit like a dove descended upon Him, and a voice from heaven said, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' On this

day the Trinity was revealed to men; by the Father who cried out, and by the Son who was baptised, and by the Holy Spirit which came down upon Him in the corporeal form of a dove. Touching the voice which was heard from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him,' every one heard the voice; but John only was worthy to see the vision of the Spirit by the mind. The day of our Lord's birth was the fourth day of the week, but the day of His baptism was the fifth. When John rebuked Herod, saying that it was not lawful for him to take his brother Philip's wife, he seized John, and cast him into the prison called Machaerûs. And it came to pass on a certain day, when Herod on his birthday made a feast for his nobles, that Bôzîyâ, the daughter of Herodias, came in and danced before the guests; and she was pleasing in the sight of Herod and his nobles. And he said to her, 'Ask of me whatsoever thou desirest and I will give it to thee;' and he swore to her saying that whatever she asked he would give it to her, unto the half of his kingdom. She then went in to Herodias her mother and said to her, 'What shall I ask of him?' She said to her, 'The head of John the Baptist;' for the wretched woman thought that when John should be slain, she and her daughter would be free from the reprover, and would have an opportunity to indulge their lust: for Herod committed adultery with the mother and with her daughter. Then she went in to the king's presence and said to him, 'Give me now the head of John the Baptist on a charger.' And the king shewed sorrow, as if, forsooth, he was not delighted at the murder of the saint; but by reason of the force and compulsion of the oath he was obliged to cut off John's head. If, O wretched Herod, she had demanded of thee the half of thy kingdom, that she might sit upon the throne beside thee and divide (it) with thee, wouldst thou have acceded to her, and not have falsified thy oath, O crafty one? And the king

commanded an executioner, and he cut off the head of the blessed man, and he put it in a charger and brought and gave it to the damsel, and the damsel gave it to her mother. Then she went out to dance upon the ice, and it opened under her, and she sank into the water up to her neck; and no one was able to deliver her. And they brought the sword with which John's head had been cut off, and cut off hers and carried it to Herodias her mother. When she saw her daughter's head and that of the holy man, she became blind, and her right hand, with which she had taken up John's head, dried up; and her tongue dried up, because she had reviled him, and Satan entered into her, and she was bound with fetters. Some say that the daughter of Herodias was called Bôzîyâ, but others say that she also was called by her mother's name Herodias. When John was slain, his disciples came and took his body and laid him in a grave; and they came and told Jesus. The two disciples whom John sent to our Lord, saying, 'Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another,' were Stephen the martyr and deacon, and Hananyah (Ananias) who baptised Paul. Some say that the wild honey and locusts, which he fed upon in the wilderness, was manna,--which was the food of the children of Israel, and of which Enoch and Elijah eat in Paradise,--for its taste is like that of honey. Moses compares it to coriander seed, and the anchorites in the mountains feed upon it. Others say that it was a root like unto a carrot; it is called Kâmûs, and its taste is sweet like honey-comb. Others say that the locusts were in reality some of those which exist in the world, and that the honey-comb was that which is woven by the little bees, and is found in small white cakes in desert places.

CHAPTER XLII.

OF OUR LORD'S FAST; OF THE STRIFE WHICH HE WAGED WITH THE DEVIL; AND OF THE MIGHTY DEEDS THAT HE WROUGHT.

TWO days after His baptism, He chose eight of the twelve disciples; and on the third day He changed the water into wine in the city of Cana. After He went forth from the wilderness, He completed the number of the twelve, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel and according to the number of the months. After the twelve disciples, He chose seventy and two, according to the number of the seventy-two elders. When He went out to the desert after He had changed the water into wine, He fasted forty days and forty nights. Some say that our Lord and the devil were waging war with one another for forty days; others say that the three contests took place in one day. After He had conquered the devil by the power of His Godhead, and had given us power to conquer him, He began to teach the nations. He wrought miracles, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, cast out devils, opened the eyes of the blind, made the lame walk, made cripples stand, gave hearing to the deaf, and speech of tongue to the dumb. He satisfied five thousand with five loaves, and there remained twelve basketfuls; and with seven loaves and two fishes He satisfied four thousand (men), besides women and children, and there remained seven basketfuls. And some writers say that our Lord satisfied forty thousand men and women and children with five loaves. He walked upon the water and the sea as upon dry land. He rebuked the sea when it was disturbed, and it ceased from its disturbance. He raised up four dead; the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son, the servant of the centurion, and His friend Lazarus after (he had been dead) four days.

He subjected Himself to the ancient law of Moses, that it might not be thought He was opposed to the divine commandments; and when the time came for Him to suffer, and to draw nigh to death that He might make us live by His death, and to slay sin in His flesh, and to fulfil the prophecies concerning Him, first of all He kept the Passover of the law; He dissolved the old covenant, and then He laid the foundation for the new law by His own Passover.

CHAPTER XLIII.

OF THE PASSOVER OF OUR LORD.

WHEN the time of the Passover came, He sent two of His disciples to a man with whom they were not acquainted, saying, 'When ye enter the city, behold, there will meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him, and wheresoever he entereth, say ye to the master of the house, "Our Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" and behold, he will shew a large upper chamber made ready and prepared; there make ye ready for us.' And because at that time crowds of people were flocking thickly into Jerusalem to keep the feast of the Passover, so that all the houses of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were filled with people by reason of the great crowd which was resorting thither, our Lord, by the power of His Godhead, worked upon the master of the house to make ready a large upper chamber without his being aware for whom he was preparing it, but he thought that perhaps some great man among the nobles and grandees of the Jews was about to come to him, and that it was right to keep a room for him furnished with all things (needful); because all those who came from other places to Jerusalem were received into their houses by the

people of the city, and whatsoever they required for the use of the feast of the Passover they supplied. Hence the master of the house made ready that upper chamber with all things (needful), and permitted no man to enter therein, being restrained by the power of our Lord. Because a mystical thing was about to be done in it, it was not meet for Him to perform the hidden mystery when others were near. Mâr Basil says: 'On the eve of the Passion, after the disciples had received the body and blood of our Lord, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of His disciples; this was baptism to the apostles. They were not all made perfect, because they were not all pure, for Judas, the son of perdition, was not sanctified; and because that basin of washing was in truth baptism, as our Lord said to Simon Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me," that is to say, "If I baptise thee not, thou art not able to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Therefore, every one who is not baptised by the priests, and receives not the body and blood of Christ our Lord, enters not into the kingdom of heaven.' Mâr Dâd-ishô` says in his commentary on Abbâ Isaiah: 'When our Lord at the Passover had washed the feet of His disciples, He kissed the knees of Judas, and wiped the soles of his feet with the napkin which was girt round His loins, like a common slave; for everything which our Lord did, He did for our teaching.' Mâr Basil in his 'Questions' advises Christians to eat oil, drink wine, and break their fast on this evening; for in it was the old covenant finished, and the new one inaugurated; and in it was the (chosen) people stripped of holiness, and the nations were sanctified and pardoned. Although this saint permits (this), yet the other fathers do not give leave (to do) this, neither do we, nor those of our confession.

CHAPTER XLIV.**OF THE PASSION OF OUR LORD.**

THREE years and three months after His baptism, Judas Iscariot the son of Simon betrayed his Lord to death. He was called Iscariot (Sekhariôtâ) from the name of his town (Sekhariôt), and he had the sixth place among the disciples before he betrayed our Lord. Our Lord was crucified at the third hour of Friday, the ninth of Nisan. Caiaphas, who condemned our Lord, is Josephus. The name of Bar-Abbâ was Jesus. The name of the soldier who pierced our Lord with the spear, and spat in His face, and smote Him on His cheek, was Longinus; it was he who lay upon a sick bed for thirty-eight years, and our Lord healed him, and said to him, 'Behold, thou art healed; sin no more, lest something worse than the first befall thee.' The watchers at the grave were five, and these are their names: Issachar, Gad, Matthias, Barnabas and Simon; but others say they were fifteen, three centurions and their Roman and Jewish soldiers. Some men have a tradition that the stone which was laid upon the grave of our Lord was the stone which poured out water for the children of Israel in the wilderness. The grave in which our Redeemer was laid was prepared for Joshua the son of Nun, and was carefully guarded by the Divine will for the burial of our Lord. The purple which they put on our Lord mockingly, was given in a present to the Maccabees by the emperors of the Greeks; and they handed it over to the priests for dressing the temple. The priests took it and brought it to Pilate, testifying and saying, 'See the purple which He prepared when He thought to become king.' The garment which the soldiers divided into four parts indicates the passibility of His body, The robe without seam at the upper end which was not rent, is the mystery of the Godhead which cannot

admit suffering. As touching the blood and water which came forth from His side, John the son of Zebedee was deemed worthy to see that vivifying flow from the life-giving fountain. Mâr John Chrysostom says: 'When His side was rent by the soldiers with the spear, there came forth immediately water and blood. The water is a type of baptism, and the blood is the mystery of His precious blood, for baptism was given first, and then the cup of redemption. But in the gospel it is written, "There went forth blood and water,"' As to the tree upon which our Redeemer was crucified, some have said that He was crucified upon those bars with which they carried the ark of the covenant; and others that it was upon the wood of the tree on which Abraham offered up the ram as an offering instead of Isaac. His hands were nailed upon the wood of the fig-tree of which Adam ate, and behold, we have mentioned its history with that of Moses' rod. The thirty pieces of silver (zûzê) which Judas received, and for which he sold his Lord, were thirty pieces according to the weight of the sanctuary, and were equal to six hundred pieces according to the weight of our country. Terah made these pieces for Abraham his son; Abraham gave them to Isaac; Isaac bought a village with them; the owner of the village carried them to Pharaoh; Pharaoh sent them to Solomon the son of David for the building of his temple; and Solomon took them and placed them round about the door of the altar. When Nebuchadnezzar came and took captive the children of Israel, and went into Solomon's temple and saw that these pieces were beautiful, he took them, and brought them to Babylon with the captives of the children of Israel. There were some Persian youths there as hostages, and when Nebuchadnezzar came from Jerusalem, they sent to him everything that was meet for kings and rulers. And since gifts and presents had been sent by the Persians, he released their sons and gave them

gifts and presents, among which were those pieces of silver about which we have spoken; and they carried them to their parents. When Christ was born and they saw the star, they arose and took those pieces of silver and gold and myrrh and frankincense, and set out on the journey; and they came to the neighbourhood of Edessa, and these kings fell asleep by the roadside. And they arose and left the pieces behind them, and did not remember them, but forgot that anything of theirs remained behind. And certain merchants came and found them, and took these pieces, and came to the neighbourhood of Edessa, and sat down by a well of water. On that very day an angel came to the shepherds, and gave them the garment without seam at the upper end, woven throughout. And he said to them, 'Take this garment, in which is the life of mankind.' And the shepherds took the garment, and came to the well of water by the side of which were those merchants. They said to them, 'We have a garment without seam at the upper end; will ye buy it?' The merchants said to them, 'Bring it here.' When they saw the garment, they marvelled and said to the shepherds: 'We have thirty pieces of silver which are meet for kings; take them and give us this garment.' When the merchants had taken the garment, and had gone into the city of Edessa, Abgar the king sent to them and said, 'Have ye anything meet for kings, that I may buy it from you?' The merchants said to him, 'We have a garment without seam at the upper end.' When the king saw the garment, he said to them, 'Whence have ye this garment?' They said to him, 'We came to a well by the gate of thy city, and we saw it in the hands of some shepherds, and we bought it from them for thirty pieces of stamped silver, which were also meet for kings like thyself.' The king sent for the shepherds, and took the pieces from them, and sent them together with the garment to Christ for the good that He had done him in

healing his sickness. When Christ saw the garment and the pieces, He kept the garment by Him, but He sent the pieces to the Jewish treasury. When Judas Iscariot came to the chief priests and said to them, 'What will ye give me that I may deliver Him to you?' the priests arose and brought those pieces, and gave them to Judas Iscariot; and when he repented, he returned them to the Jews, and went and hanged himself. And the priests took them and bought with them a field for a burial-place for strangers.

Of Joseph the senator (βουλευτής {Greek: *Bouleuths*}), and why he was thus called. The senators were a class very much honoured in the land of the Romans; and if it happened that no one could be found of the royal lineage, they made a king from among this class. If one of them committed an offence, they used to beat his horse with white woollen gloves instead of him. This Joseph was not a senator by birth, but he purchased the dignity, and enrolled himself among the Roman senate, and was called Senator.

As for the committal of Mary to John the son of Zebedee by our Lord, He said to her, 'Woman, behold thy son;' and to John He said, 'Behold thy mother;' and from that hour he took her into his house and ministered unto her. Mary lived twelve years after our Lord's Ascension: the sum of the years which she lived in the world was fifty-eight years, but others say sixty-one years. She was not buried on earth, but the angels carried her to Paradise, and angels bore her bier. On the day of her death all the apostles were gathered together, and they prayed over her and were blessed by her. Thomas was in India, and an angel took him up and brought him, and he found the angels carrying her bier through the air; and they brought it nigh to Thomas, and he also prayed and was blessed by her.

As regards the name of *`arûbhtâ* (i.e. the eve of the Jewish Sabbath), it was not known until this time, but that day was called the sixth day. And when the sun became dark, and the Divine Care also set and abandoned the Israelitish people, then that day was called *`arûbhtâ*.

Touching the writing which was written in Greek, Hebrew and Latin, and set over Christ's head, there was no Aramean written upon the tablet, for the Arameans or Syrians had no part in (the shedding of) Christ's blood, but only the Greeks and Hebrews and Romans; Herod the Greek and Caiaphas the Hebrew and Pilate the Roman. Hence when Abgar the Aramean king of Mesopotamia heard (of it), he was wroth against the Hebrews and sought to destroy them.

CHAPTER XLV.

OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD.

SINCE the history of our Lord's Passion and Resurrection is recorded in the Gospel, there is no need to repeat it (here). After our Lord rose from the dead, He appeared ten times. First, to Mary Magdalene, as John the Evangelist records. Secondly, to the women at the grave, as Matthew mentions. Thirdly, to Cleopas and his companion, as Luke says. The companion of Cleopas, when they were going to Emmaus, was Luke the Evangelist. Fourthly, to Simon Peter, as Luke says. Fifthly, to all the disciples, except Thomas, on the evening of the first day of the week, when he went in through the closed doors, as Luke and John say. Sixthly, eight days after, to the disciples, and to Thomas with them, as John says. Seventhly, on the mount, as Matthew says. Eighthly, upon the sea of Tiberias, as John says. The reason that Simon Peter did not recognise Him

was because he had denied Him, and was ashamed to look upon Him; but John, because of his frank intimacy with our Lord, immediately that he saw Him, knew Him. Ninthly, when He was taken up to heaven from the Mount of Olives, as Mark and Luke say. Tenthly, to the five hundred at once, who had risen from the dead, as Paul says. After His Ascension, He appeared to Paul on the way to Damascus, when He blinded his eyes; and also to Stephen, the martyr and deacon, when he was stoned.

CHAPTER XLVI.

OF THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD TO HEAVEN.

AFTER our Redeemer had risen from the grave, and had gone about in the world forty days, He appeared to His disciples ten times, and ate and drank with them by the side of the Sea of Tiberias. At this point the heathen say to us, that if our Lord really ate and drank after His resurrection, there will certainly be eating and drinking after (our) resurrection; but if He did not really eat and drink, then all the actions of Christ are mere phantasms. To these we make answer, that this world is a world of need for food; therefore He ate and drank, that it might not be thought He was a phantom; and because many who have risen from the dead have eaten and drunk in (this) world until they departed and died, as, for example, the dead (child) whom Elisha raised, and the dead whom our Lord raised. Our Lord did not eat after His resurrection because He needed food, but only to make certain His humanity: for, behold, He once remained in the desert forty days without food, and was not injured by hunger. Some say that after His resurrection our Lord ate food like unto that which the angels ate in the house of Abraham, and that the food was dissipated and consumed by the

Divine Power, just as fire licks up oil without any of it entering into its substance. Our Lord remained upon the earth forty days, even as He had fasted forty days, and as Elijah fasted forty days, and as Moses fasted forty days at two several times, and as the rain continued for forty days during the flood, and as God admonished the Ninevites for forty days, and as the spies remained (absent) for forty days, and as the children of Israel wandered about in the wilderness for forty years, and like the child whose fashioning in the womb is completed in forty days. After forty days, our Lord took up His disciples to the Mount of Olives, and laid His hand upon them, and blessed them, and commanded them concerning the preaching and teaching of the nations. And it came to pass that while He was blessing them, He was separated from them, and went up to heaven; and they worshipped Him. And there appeared to them angels, encouraging them and saying, 'This Jesus, who has been taken up from you to heaven, is about to come again even as ye have seen Him go up to heaven.' Then they returned to that upper chamber where they were, and stayed there ten days, until they received the Holy Spirit in the form of tongues of fire. Simon Peter said to his fellow-disciples, 'It is right for us to put some one in the place of Judas to complete the number of twelve;' and they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

As concerning the manner in which our Lord entered heaven without cleaving it, some say that He went in as He did through the closed doors; and as He came forth from the virgin womb, and Mary's virginity returned to its former state; and like the sweat from the body; and as water is taken up by the roots of the olive and other trees, and reaches in the twinkling of an eye the leaves, flowers and fruits, as if through certain ducts, without holes or

channels being pierced in them. Thus by an infinite and ineffable miracle our Lord entered into heaven without cleaving it. And if the bodies of us who are accustomed to drink water and wine pour out sweat without our flesh being rent or our skin pierced, how very much easier is it for the Divine Power to go in through closed doors and within the firmament of heaven without rending or cleaving it?

As regards the upper chamber in which our Lord held His Passover, some say that it belonged to Lazarus, and others to Simon the Cyrenian, and others to Joseph the senator; but Joshua the son of Nun, the Catholicus, says that it belonged to Nicodemus. The apostles remained in the upper chamber ten days after the Ascension, being constant in fasting and prayer, and expecting the Spirit, the Comforter, which our Lord Jesus Christ promised them.

CHAPTER XLVII.

OF THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON THE APOSTLES IN THE UPPER CHAMBER.

TEN days after our Lord's Ascension, when the holy apostles were assembled in the upper chamber waiting for the promise of our Lord, of a sudden, at the third hour of the holy Sunday of Pentecost, a mighty sound was heard, so that all men were terrified and marvelled at the mightiness of the sound; and the chamber was filled with an ineffably strong light. And there appeared over the head of each one of them (something) in the form of tongues of fire, and there breathed forth from thence a sweet odour which surpassed all aromas in this world. The eyes of their hearts were opened, and they began interpreting new things and uttering wonderful things in

the languages of all nations. When the Jews saw them, they thought within themselves that they had been drinking new wine and were drunk, and that their minds were depraved. On that day they participated in the mystery of the body and blood of our Lord, and sanctified the leavened bread of the sign of the cross (the eucharistic wafers) and the oil of baptism.

Some men have a tradition that when our Lord broke His body for His disciples in the upper chamber, John the son of Zebedee hid a part of his portion until our Lord rose from the dead. And when our Lord appeared to His disciples and to Thomas with them, He said to Thomas, 'Hither with thy finger and lay it on My side, and be not unbelieving, but believing.' Thomas put his finger near to our Lord's side, and it rested upon the mark of the spear, and the disciples saw the blood from the marks of the spear and nails. And John took that piece of consecrated bread, and wiped up that blood with it; and the Easterns, Mâr Addai and Mâr Mârî, took that piece, and with it they sanctified this unleavened bread which has been handed down among us. The other disciples did not take any of it, because they said, 'We will consecrate for ourselves whenever we wish.' As for the oil or baptism, some say that it was part of the oil with which they anointed the kings; others say that it was part of the unguent wherewith they embalmed our Lord; and many agree with this (statement). Others again say that when John took that piece of consecrated bread of the Passover in his hand, it burst into flame and burnt in the palm of his hand, and the palm of his hand sweated, and he took that sweat and hid it for the sign of the cross of baptism. This account we have heard by ear from the mouth of a recluse and visitor (περιοδευτής {Greek: *periodeuths*}), and we have not

received it from Scripture. The word Pentecost is interpreted 'the completion of fifty days.'

CHAPTER LIX.

OF THE HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE
TORMENT OF SINNERS, AND IN WHAT STATE THEY
ARE THERE.

IT is right for us to know and explain how those suffer, who suffer in Gehenna. If they do suffer, how can we say that they are impassible? and if they do not suffer, then there is no torture for sinners; and if there be no torture for sinners in proportion to their sins, neither can there be happiness for the righteous as a reward for their labours. The suffering wherewith the Fathers say that sinners will suffer in Gehenna is not one that will pain the limbs, such as the blows of sticks, the mutilation of the flesh, and the breaking of the bones, but one that will afflict the soul, such as grief for the transgression of what is right, repentance for shameful deeds, and banishment from one to whom he is bound in love and for whom his affection is strong. For in the resurrection we shall not be without perception, like the sun which perceives not his splendour, nor the moon her brilliancy, nor the pearl its beauty; but by the power of reason we shall feel perfectly the delight of our happiness or the keen pain of our torture. So then by that which enables the righteous to perceive the pleasure of their happiness, by that selfsame thing will the wicked also perceive the suffering of their torment; (that is) by the power capable of receiving pleasure, which is the intelligence. Hence it is right for us to be certain that intelligence will not be taken away from us, but it will

receive the utmost purification and refinement. The glorious and good things of the world which is to come are not to be compared with those of this world; for if all the glorious and good things and delights of this world were given to us in the world which is to come, we should look upon them as hateful and abominable, and they would not be able to give us pleasure or to gladden us; and our nature by the blessedness of its immortality would be exalted above all their glory and desirability. And if all the torments and afflictions and troubles of this world were brought near to us in the world which is to come, the pain of them would make no impression upon our immortal and immutable nature. Hence the pleasure of that world is something beyond all comparison more glorious and excellent and exalted than those of this world; and the torment of yonder is likewise something beyond all comparison more severe and more bitter than any that is here.

It is also right for us to explain the quality of the light of the righteous. The light of the righteous is not of a natural origin like this elemental light (of ours), but some of the light of our Lord--whose splendour surpasses ten thousand suns--is diffused and shed upon them. Each saint shines in proportion to his purity, and holiness and refinement and sincerity, as the blessed Paul has said, 'One star surpasseth another in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead¹.' And although all the saints will be happy in one kingdom, yet he who is near to the King or the Bridegroom will be separated from him whose place is at the end of the guest-chamber, even though his place be in the same chamber. So also with the sinners in Gehenna; their sentence will not be alike, for in proportion to the sin of each will be his torment. And as the light of the sun is not to be compared with the light of the moon, nor is the

light of the moon like that of the stars, so also will the happiness of the righteous be, although the name and honour of righteousness be laid upon and spread over all of them. And as the light of our Lord's humanity will pass over all our limbs without distinction, and take the place of dress and ornament for us, so also with all our members shall we perceive the suffering and torment of Gehenna. The festal garments which our Lord has prepared for His saints, the children of light, are impassibility; and the filthy garments which hinder us from entering into the spiritual bridal-chamber are the passions. In the new world there will be no distinctive names for ranks and conditions of human beings; and as every name and surname attributed to God and the angels had its origin from this world, and names for human beings were assigned and distributed by the government of this world, in the world of spiritual and intellectual natures there will be neither names nor surnames among them, nor male nor female, nor slave nor free, nor child nor old man, nor Ethiopian nor Roman (Greek); but they will all rise in the one perfect form of a man thirty-three years of age, as our Lord rose from the dead. In the world to come there will be no companies or bands but two; the one of the angels and the righteous, who will mingle and form one Church, and the other of the devils and sinners in Gehenna.

CHAPTER LX.

WHETHER MERCY WILL BE SHEWN TO SINNERS AND THE DEVILS IN GEHENNA, AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN TORMENTED AND SUFFERED AND BEEN PUNISHED, OR NOT? AND IF MERCY IS TO BE SHEWN TO THEM, WHEN WILL IT BE?

SOME of the Fathers terrify us beyond our strength and throw us into despair; and their opinion is well adapted to the simple-minded and transgressors of the law. Others of them encourage us and bid us rely upon Divine mercy; and their opinions are suitable and adapted to the perfect and those of settled minds and the pious. In the 'Book of Memorials' it is thus written: 'This world is the world of repentance, but the world which is to come is the world of retribution. As in this world repentance saves until the last breath, so in the world to come justice exacts to the uttermost farthing. And as it is impossible to see here strict justice unmingled with mercy, so it is impossible to find there strict justice mingled with mercy.' Mâr Isaac says thus: 'Those who are to be scourged in Gehenna will be tortured with stripes of love; they who feel that they have sinned against love will suffer harder and more severe pangs from love than the pain that springs from fear.' Again he says: 'The recompense of sinners will be this: the resurrection itself will be their recompense instead of the recompense of justice; and at the last He will clothe those bodies which have trodden down His laws with the glory of perfection. This act of grace to us after we have sinned is greater than that which, when we were not, brought our nature into being.' Again he says: 'In the world which is to come grace will be the judge and not justice.' Mâr Theodore the Expositor says: 'Those who have here chosen fair things will receive in the world to come the pleasure of good things with praises; but the wicked who have turned aside to evil things all their life, when they are become ordered in their minds by penalties and the fear that springs from them, and choose good things, and learn how much they have sinned by having persevered in evil things and not in good things, and by means of these things receive the knowledge of the highest doctrine of the fear of God, and become instructed to lay hold of it with a good

will, will be deemed worthy of the happiness of the Divine liberality. For He would never have said, "Until thou payest the uttermost farthing," unless it had been possible for us to be freed from our sins through having atoned for them by paying the penalty; neither would He have said, "he shall be beaten with many stripes," or "he shall be beaten with few stripes," unless it were that the penalties, being meted out according to the sins, should finally come to an end.' These things the Expositor has handed down in his books clearly and distinctly.

So also the blessed Diodorus, who says in the 'Book of the Dispensation:' 'A lasting reward, which is worthy of the justice of the Giver, is laid up for the good, in return for their labours; and torment for sinners, but not everlasting, that the immortality which is prepared for them may not be worthless. They must however be tormented for a short time, as they deserve, in proportion to the measure of their iniquity and wickedness, according to the amount of the wickedness of their deeds. This they will have to bear, that they suffer for a short time; but immortal and unending happiness is prepared for them. If it be then that the rewards of good deeds are as great (in proportion to them) as the times of the immortality which are prepared for them are longer than the times of the limited contests which take place in this world, the torments for many and great sins must be very much less than the greatness of mercy. So then it is not for the good only that the grace of the resurrection from the dead is intended, but also for the wicked; for the grace of God greatly honours the good, but chastises the wicked sparingly.'

Again he says: 'God pours out the wages of reward beyond the measure of the labours (wrought), and in the abundance of His goodness He lessens and diminishes the

penalty of those who are to be tormented, and in His mercy He shortens and reduces the length of the time. But even thus He does not punish the whole time according to (the length of) the time of folly, seeing that He requites them far less than they deserve, just as He does the good beyond the measure and period (of their deserts); for the reward is everlasting. It has not been revealed whether the goodness of God wishes to punish without ceasing the blameworthy who have been found guilty of evil deeds (or not), as we have already said before. * * *

* * * * *
 * But if punishment is to be weighed out according to sin, not even so would punishment be endless. For as regards that which is said in the Gospel, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal;' this word 'eternal' (*le-`âlam*) is not definite: for if it be not so, how did Peter say to our Lord, 'Thou shalt never wash my feet,' and yet He washed him? And of Babylon He said, 'No man shall dwell therein for ever and ever,' and behold many generations dwell therein. In the 'Book of Memorials' he says: 'I hold what the most celebrated of the holy Fathers say, that He cuts off a little from much. The penalty of Gehenna is a man's mind; for the punishment there is of two kinds, that of the body and that of the mind. That of the body is perhaps in proportion to the degree of sin, and He lessens and diminishes its duration; but that of the mind is for ever, and the judgment is for ever.' But in the New Testament *le-`âlam* is not without end. To Him be glory and dominion and praise and exaltation and honour for ever and ever. Amen and Amen.

*The Book of the Bee, By Bishop Shelemon of Armenia,
 Edited and Translated by Earnest A. Wallis Budge, M.A.,
 Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1886, Scanned and Edited by
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