

**A COMMENTARY ON THE MASS
BY THE NESTORIAN GEORGE,
BISHOP OF MOSUL AND ARBEL**

Translated by Dom R.H. Connolly

Edited by Fr. Robert Matheus

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Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

A COMMENTARY ON THE MASS

(which has been attributed to, but it is not really)

BY THE NESTORIAN

GEORGE,

BISHOP OF MOSUL AND ARBEL

(10TH CENTURY)

*Translated from the Syriac by R.H. Connolly
(1909)*

Edited by F. Robert Matheus



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Translator: R.H. Connolly, O.S.B.

Editor: Fr. Robert Matheus

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Acknowledgment

I am happy to present to the public this non published translation by Dom Connolly of the "*Expositio Officiorum*" of the anonymous author, attributed to George of Arbela (10th C.), a work, very detailed, but in a mystagogical style. As the Most Reverend Abbot, Richard Yeo, of his abbey, has already said in his preface, this translation, originally made in 1909, was only intended as a tool for his Latin translation. So, we cannot consider it as a completed work. Nevertheless, Dom Connolly was an eminent scholar not only in the Syriac language, but in the whole patrimonium of the Syriac churches. Therefore, his translation will be a very useful help for those interested in the Eucharistic celebration of the East Syrian tradition.

I thank the Most Reverend Abbot Richard Yeo for his permission to publish this manuscript; I thank also Dom Daniel Rees for his kindness to have photocopied the whole manuscript and sent it to me. I thank my bishop, Mar George Alencherry for his help, in spite of his busy time schedule, and for the encouragement he gave me.

I must, finally, explain some modifications I have made to the original manuscript:

1. Since the pagesetting of this book is different, I have not kept the original references of the translator to the pages in his own manuscript.

2. I have not reproduced the plan of two Armenian churches and the accompanying letter (in French) sent by abbé Chabot to Dom Connolly.

3. I have kept the original division of the manuscript: the commentary of Tract 4 on the Qurbana (Mass) is preceded by some texts, as explained in the preparatory remarks.

4. In a few places the manuscript was unreadable. I have indicated these passages by: ...?

Thuckalay, 4 August 2000

The editor

Foreword

Dom Hugh Connolly (1873-1948), a Benedictine monk of Downside Abbey in England and a eminent Syriac scholar, made what he described as a “rough English translation” of this work as a preliminary aid to translating it into Latin. He never intended the English translation to be published, and appears not to have been pleased when the Librarian placed his translation in the monastery library at Downside.

The Syriac text and Latin translation appeared under the title “Expositio Officiorum Ecclesiasticorum” in *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Scriptores Syri* (Rome 1913), XCI-XCII. It is clearly desirable that the work be more accessible, and Downside Abbey is therefore happy to agree to the publication of Dom Connolly’s “rough translation”. However, we also feel it only fair to remind the reader that the translator would almost certainly have wished to revise the English text before publication.

19 August 2000

Richard Yeo OSB

Abbot of Downside Abbey
Stratton on the Fosse,
Bath, U.K.

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Preparatory Remarks

The translation is from the photographs (sent by Fr. J.-B. Chabot, one of the editors of the *Corpus Scriptorum Orientalium* to R.H. Connolly) taken from a copy of a manuscript in the library of Alkosh near Mosul.

The following pages contain a translation of George of Arbel's fourth Tract or Discourse [Syr. *Mêmrâ*] on the *Ecclesiastical Offices*, which deals with the liturgy, or "Mysteries". Prefixed to this are:

1. A translation of chapter 2 of Tract 2, in which the writer gives a description of his church, and explains the symbolism of its different parts.

2. A translation of Tract 2, chapter 6 (with a few omissions of unimportant matter) on the different orders of clergy.

3. Some passages of special liturgical interest.

4. A summary of the information he gives as to the arrangement of his church, with a tentative plan.

5. A short key to his symbolism in connection with the Mysteries.

The pages of these introductory sections are numbered from 1 to 25 (in the original Connolly had numbered them in Roman numbers).

NB. (1) Words within brackets are not represented in the Syriac text.

(2) Those in round brackets are (for the most part) inserted merely to eke out the meaning in English, or to accommodate the English idiom to that meaning of the Syriac.

(3) Those in square brackets are for the most part explanatory notes which might as well have been at the foot of the page; but here and there a word seems to have fallen out of the Syriac text itself, or to have been omitted by the scribe; in these cases the word is supplied in square brackets: these can easily be distinguished from mere notes.

(4) All parentheses marked by dashes: - - are represented in the Syriac text.

(1) TRACT 2. CHAPTER 2

Why do we divide the church into apse [κογχη] nave [lit. "temple" - *haiklâ*] and the place of the women? and why did Ishô'Yabh command that the baptistery should be on the south side?

Some say that that house which was in Jerusalem, that is, the tent of testimony, was so arranged, and part of it was called the Holy of Holies, part the tent of (*fol. 52v*^o) testimony, part the house before the tent. Moreover, its doors also (they say) opened on the South towards Jordan. And they shew (proof) by this (fact), that they (the Israelites) crossed Jordan and settled in the land of promise, and on this account they [= the Israelites] opened the doors of the house towards Jordan, that is, on the South side of Jerusalem.

But others say that this [= having the door on the South] is not a matter of necessity, and that it does not matter how the doors happen to open or the baptistery to stand. And they adduce in proof churches that are thus (differently) arranged and are not found fault with. But blessed Ishô'Yabh prescribed such things as should signify some mystery, not insisting that it should be so done of necessity (as he prescribed). Even as he said concerning the furniture of the church: that at midday the presbyters and deacons and subdeacons [should go to the church and clean the lamps]¹: whereas it is a matter of no importance even if they go in the morning or before daylight: so has he spoken now also.

The ancients² indeed say that formerly³ the parts of the church were not thus orderly divided up, but that even the women used to enter the apse, and there receive the Sacrament. And this especially was done in the land of the Romania⁴ (sic). But when blessed Nestorius was elected to Byzantium, by his godly zeal he studied the mysteries which the church administers; and when he had seen what they were, he arranged the church according to the mysteries which she administers. And since our Lord performed His dispensation in the locality of Jerusalem, when He

¹So in Tract 2, chap. 5.

²Or "old men".

³Lit. "before now".

⁴Ῥωμανί

came down from heaven and put on our manhood; and again descended from Jerusalem to heaven; he so arranged the church also. The Holy of Holies [= sanctuary] he set in place of heaven; the καταστρωμα in place of Paradise, which is high even unto the ether; (but) which, while in height it stands (on a level) with heaven, is within the boundary of earth. So the καταστρωμα also while it has (an equal) height with the apse, is bound (*fol. 53r^o*) to the nave; and there is a door shut between it and the apse, which is heaven. It shares with heaven by its height; it cleaves to earth in its essence [ουσια]. As far as this καταστρωμα the readers ascend, and represent the lowest church of the angels, who are messengers to men.

But the nave is the whole earth. The bema, which is in the midst of the nave, is the locality of Jerusalem, which is in the middle of the world. But the altar which is in the midst of the bema takes the place of Golgotha. The bishop's throne is in place of the high priest, the son of Aaron. The priest used to sit before this sanctuary, which was [lit. "is"] overagainst all Jerusalem, and overagainst the East. The place of the readers is on the right hand and on the left: in the one are read the prophets, and in the other the Apostle or the Gospel; in the one stands the deacon who fills the place of the Levite - I mean on the inferior [= left]. That the places of the prophets and the Apostle are equal is forasmuch as the apostles and the prophets were teaching Israel concerning the light of the manifestation of our Lord. But the apostles are superior in honour to the prophets, since the prophets saw our Lord (only) by a mystery, but the apostles face to face. Thus Paul also teaches: "For God set in His church first apostles, and after them prophets" [1 Co. 12:28]. Wherefore the greater honour is accorded to the place of the apostles [sc. (probably) it stands on the right].

Again, the straight way that leads from the bema to the apse - I mean the gangway⁵ - is the way of truth, by which everyone who walks (therein) enters heaven. For whoever wishes to enter heaven, - let him come to the beginning of this way, that is into Jerusalem. Let him believe in the Scriptures and the dispensation of Christ, which was in Jerusalem, let him accept His commandments and His laws, and lo, he

⁵Κλίμαξ ἡ

has guides who will lead him from earth to heaven, even the deacons who, like angels (*fol. 53v*^o) go forth and receive those who are worthy to inherit life. And in the same gangway are set doors, opening in three places from apse to bema; that is to say, before the apse, and in the middle, and before the bema: doors which are opened before everyone who wishes to enter into this holy way, the beginning of which is Jerusalem. And from Jerusalem (he goes) to Paradise [= καταστρωμα], from Paradise to heaven.⁶

But the nave is all the earth. The place of the men is the region of Eden and the East; the place of the women is the region of the West. And as the East and the region of the earth which is in that direction [lit.: “which is before it”] is the more excellent, consider the place of the men as the habitation of the 10 generations before the flood. Consider the place of the women as the place into which Canaan was cast when he sinned against his father. But since the door of heaven is closed before those who would enter⁷, whether they be of the house of Shem or of the house of Canaan, it is nor right for those to boast whose place signifies the earth before the flood. Because those (who were before the flood) were not virtuous, they were drowned in the flood. Neither let the priests boast, who are in Jerusalem, for to them the light was a stumbling block and they were darkened from (receiving) the light of our Lord by their works. Neither let the deacons boast, who stand like the angels in heaven, because Satan’s exalted place did not profit him when he sinned, but he was cast into the nether parts of the earth. Abraham, who was elected unto sanctification performed service before Canaan⁸, and the West had authority over the East.

And so let every one in his place strive after virtue, that he may receive what he looks for: I mean, that the deacons when they observe their place with knowledge shall be with the angels; the priests when

⁶The three doors were no doubt (1) opening on to the καταστρωμα from the apse - see p. 3 above; (2) one at the bottom of the steps of the καταστρωμα; (3) one at the bottom of the steps leading up to the bema.

⁷He means this to apply to the laity, as is shown by what follows.

⁸Sc. in Egypt.

they fulfil their canons shall be with Christ; the faithful, observing what is fitting shall be with Henoah; and the women observing the commandments (*fol.54r*^o) shall be with Mary, who dwelt in Nazareth, a place inferior to any (part) of Jerusalem [lit. “to all Jerusalem”], (and) in which it was thought there was nothing good. But even Ruth the Moabitess shewed more virtue than Rachel who was of the true seed. The one acted treacherously against her father and against God: against her father by stealing the images that he used to worship: against God by playing the harlot in His worship⁹. Against her husband also she dealt treacherously; for he loved her, but she deceived him and did not make know to him her theft.

But Ruth observed everything seemly: she fulfilled her widowhood; she honoured her mother-in law, she left her father’s house for the sake of (her) loving fidelity, she hearkened to her mother-in law, she was united in chaste wedlock. All these things God has set down [in the Scripture] that those members which have a more honourable place in the body should not boast.

But again (as to) the doors of the nave and the place of the baptistry, it is seemly that they should be so arranged¹⁰. As soon as we desire to become heirs of heaven, let us take part in those present things which signify the resurrection and the enjoyment (of heaven); and let us know the dispensation of our Lord and the pleasantness of His mysteries. And when we seek these things, we have need of a door whereby to enter to them: which (door) is baptism. Let us begin with baptism and then let us enter to the Mysteries. When we come to enter rightly [or “directly”]¹¹ into the church we enter from the South side; and thus we rightly or [“directly”] receive baptism and enter to the Mysteries, which are in Jerusalem, the which will lead us to Paradise, which is the καταστροφῶμα; and from Paradise we shall enter heaven.

⁹Sc. by having the idols for the purpose of worshipping them.

¹⁰Sc. in the south part of the church.

¹¹ⲕⲣⲓⲛⲓ lit. “straight”, in a straight line.

This appears to be the reason why this blessed man [Ishô'Yabh] prescribed these things. But if any adopt this (view), that Jordan is so situated with regard to Jerusalem [sc. on the South]¹²: let those who know the locality of Jerusalem speak (concerning this matter): for my part I will cry out with Habakkuk: "I have not seen Jerusalem, neither do I know Jordan".¹³

Note. In Tract 2, ch.9 George tells us that they worshipped towards the East: so that the apse was probably in the East of the church.

Symbolism of the Parts of the Church.

The following is from Thomas of Marga's *Book of Governors*. Bk.5, ch.15, ed. Budge II, p.541 ff. (trans.), I, p.306 fol.. (Syr. text).

"Now there was in the Monastery of the holy Abbâ Simon of Shennâ, an old man whose name was Mârî. This man related to me concerning the holy man [sc. Narsai bishop of Shinnâ], that in as much as the blessed man was endowed with the knowledge [of God] and his mind was continually carried away towards God, he was unable to keep himself from this holy contemplation; and as in [the case of] many [other] things he was prevented from going down to the service of the holy mysteries or the first days of the weeks, it was thought by the believers that he acted thus by reason of the weight of his old age.

And it came to pass one certain first day of the week, when he was forced by the elect of God, Rabban Shubhhal-Mâran, the head of our monastery, to be with him in the pulpit for the performing of the service of the church, that Mar Shubhhal-Mâran saw that he was occupied in meditating upon this subject and in doing so he saw that he became unconscious of every feeling and movement, so much that he was utterly unmindful of the necessary acts which the service of psalmody required, to sit down for the *keryânê* [= lections], and to lead off in the *exordia* [Syr. *Shurrâyê*], and he saw that his eyes were closed and that he did not know where he was.

[His superior asks for an explanation].

¹²cf. p. A.

¹³See Dn.14:34. .

And the holy man Narsai having required the head of the monastery to keep this matter secret until his death, answered and said him, ‘Every time I am in the church during the service of the Mysteries [= Mass], my mind is lifted up above the sight of these things which are done during the service, and above the church and its congregation, to the things which are in heaven; and these things which are before my eyes are explained [mystically] by the things which are secret and hidden from every man. The church which is depicted before me [represents] that of Jerusalem which is upon earth. the platform [βημα] which is in it represents] Zion; the altar which is in it represents the ark of the Old Covenant; the cross which is upon it, and the Book of the Gospels [represent] the New Covenant, and then the throne of Christ at the time of His dispensation here, and the connection which both covenants possess, each with the other; the body of priests which are in it [represents] the company of the apostles; and the path [ܠܕܝܢܐ] [leading] from the platform [βημα] to the cupola [κογχη = apse] above the platform [=] the narrow path which goeth up to heaven. The three steps which are before the platform [symbolize] the third heaven whither the blessed Paul was taken up. The *kestrômâ* [=καταστροφμα] the place [which extends] from this [earth] to the firmament; the screen [ܦܢܝܬܐ = ριακτη; “lattice”] which is over the door of the chancel [κογχη], and the veils [wêlê] which are upon it indicate to me a type of the firmament. The chancel [symbolizes] the place which is above the heavens; the *naos*¹⁴ [ναος] [symbolizes] the heaven of heavens and the Divine shechinah; and the veils which are upon it [indicate] that the Godhead is hidden even from the angels. The altar [represents] the throne of the Deity;

[he goes on to symbolize on the ministers]

¹⁴Budge says in note: “Here ܢܐܘܨ [= naos] seems to ÷ κιβωριον (see Du Cange, *Glossarium*, col. 653), called also ܠܕܝܢܐ [= “Paradise”], the coffer or chest in which the eucharistic elements were placed; it was also veiled. See Payne Smith, *Thes.* col. 3240. The ܢܐܘܨ must have been a central part of the “nave” (!) scarcely “Apse”.

2) TRACT 2. CHAPTER 6

What each one of the orders in the church represents, from the patriarch unto the readers and even the baptized; and why they are thus arranged one after another. God-inspired men have said many things concerning the orders which are in the church. Some (say) that they represent the nine orders of angels, placing together in the lowest church¹⁶ the readers and subdeacons and deacons; (in) the middle church the presbyters and periodeutae and chorepiscopi; (in) the highest church the bishops and metropolitans and catholici. But since they have not found in the (ecclesiastical) grades any besides these, they have passed over the patriarchs in silence...

Therefore, brother, the degrees which are in use in the church, as the reason and holy Gospel teach us, are those orders which our Lord in His dispensation has exercised; sc. when He was baptized until when, by sending the Spirit upon the apostles, He completed His dispensation. He became a baptized when He was baptized by John; and we are baptized and are reborn from water and Spirit in His resemblance. He was made a lector when He took the book in the synagogue and read: The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, etc. (Lk.4:18). He became a subdeacon when He made a whip from cords and* drove out all those who were buying in the temple and selling. He became a deacon when He girded a cloth upon His loins and cast water into a basin and washed the feet of His disciples. And these three orders He observed while He was fulfilling the Old (Testament), and He did not introduce the New until the supper of the Mysteries ... (*fol.66r*^o) And He did not undo the Law and the Prophets; but He was observing the Sabbath and offering sacrifices; and the legal passover He was eating. And though He was afterwards to give His body and His blood, yet He delayed this...

But when He had fulfilled the Old and begun the New, then He begun and typified the order of the presbytery. And He fulfilled the presbyter's office when He broke His body and His blood for His disciples. He became a periodeutes when He said to His disciples: "My peace

¹⁶According to George there are 3 churches of angels, each containing 3 orders or grades.

* I added this paragraph missing in the original from Connolly's Latin text.

I leave to you, My peace I give to you". He became a chorepiscopus when he said to His disciples in prayer: "Father, sanctify them" and the rest. Now these two orders¹⁷ are given without laying on of hands, by the sole command of the bishop. He became a bishop when He rose from the grave and came to His disciples and said to them: "All authority is given to Me in heaven and on earth", and when He breathed on His disciples and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit: if ye shall remit sins to any man they shall be remitted to him" and the rest. He became a metropolitan when He appeared by the sea of Tiberias and said to Cephas: "Pasture Me My lambs and My sheep and my ewes".¹⁸ He became a catholicus when He lifted up His hands and blessed His disciples and even parted from them and ascended to heaven. He became a patriarch when He sent His Spirit to His apostles (*fol. 66v*^o) in the upper room.

And these orders, which (were instituted) after He rose from the grave, having received authority in heaven and earth, shew forth in the church a perfect dominion; and the hands of (those who possess) them¹⁹ are kissed, and they are worshipped [= bowed to], because they represent Christ risen from the grave. And as He was not worshipped until He had risen from the grave - I mean by the women and the disciples - so all those orders which were fulfilled [i.e., instituted by Christ and fulfilling them] in the church before His resurrection, they have not the honour of dominion [or "Lordship"]. And although a presbyter consecrates (the water of) baptism [or simply "the font"] and the body and blood: yet to bind and loose, and to give the laying on of hands [χειροτονία] he is not able: neither to take up the staff and to sit upon the throne; since as yet our Lord had said that He had not where to lay His head.

But again, even though with us in the region of the East the catholicus and the patriarch are one; yet the holy apostles did not so deliver (to us); but they specified [or, "ordained" either a simple bishop, or a metropolitan bishop, or a bishop-catholicus; or a bishop-patriarch. And this canon

¹⁷Sc. those of periodeutes and chorepiscopus. Hence we learn that these in George's day were merely presbyters with special powers and functions.

¹⁸Idem 21:15-17 (Syr. version Pesh).

¹⁹Lit.: "their hands are kissed".

obtained in all part of the East until the time of the King [= emperor] Theodosius the Younger. In his days, when Cyril and John of Antioch and the rest of the Westerns had lawlessly anathematized saint Nestorius, and he had been driven into exile, then the East rejected the headship of the patriarch of Antioch from her, as was right, and set him aside, because he had erred, and did not accept his dominion. Nevertheless formerly he of Antioch was a patriarch, he of Seleucia a catholicus, and he [the latter] was set under his [the former's] authority. And also the Patriarch of Antioch was proclaimed²⁰ before him.

But when the patriarch of Antioch dared to anathematize Nestorius, the catholicus in the see (*fol. 67r^o*) of Seleucia was Dadh-Ishô the Aramaean.²¹ And then the East anathematized John of Antioch and Cyril and Celestine of Rome and Mâmôn [= Memnon] of Ephesus, and all that were with them in that insolent and ungodly assembly. And since the East was left without a patriarch, and it is unseemly that the (our) confession should stand without a supreme head [ܐܰܒܰܝܰܐ ܐܰܒܰܝܰܐ], the fathers determined to add the patriarchate²² to the catholicus: since from the Western and holy Synod he had received this name by the consensus of those who were true: for they saw that it was not seemly that our confession should be without a patriarch. But that they did not make any other patriarch, but (the catholicus) himself, was because they would not care of themselves to make a head. But as those who themselves alone had remained orthodox and kept the truth of the holy apostles, they²³ appointed themselves patriarches.

But the apostles also were appointed by Him [Christ] readers when He chose twelve and seventy. They were appointed subdeacons when He sent them two and two before His face". They were appointed deacons when He took them up to Mount Tabor, and His colour [= appearance] was changed before their eyes. They were appointed presbyters when He taught them to break His body and His blood. He appointed

²⁰I.e. read out in the diptychs - ܠܰܐܰܡܰܢ ܝܰܝܰܬܰܐ

²¹I.e. probably of Bêth-Armâyê

²²Lit. 'to add "patriarch"'.
²³I.e. the catholici of Seleucia. He means they did not appoint a patriarch over the catholicus, but united the 2 offices in one.

them bishops when He rose from the grave and came to them in the upper room. He appointed them metropolitans when He appeared to them by the sea of Tiberias. He appointed them catholici when He blessed them and ascended to heaven. He appointed them patriarchs when He sent them His Spirit. But although He had breathed upon them, and though again He had said to them: “Pasture Me My lambs and My sheep”, and though He had lifted up His hands and blessed them: yet a full blessing and perfect operation was not made good to them except when the Spirit descended upon them in the upper room. But (before this) those orders were conferred upon them imperfectly and incompletely...(fol.67v°)

But (as to) those who liken all the orders of the church to the grades of the spiritual beings, - I do not understand how they have devised this. But we will say to them: If all the ranks in the church are a likeness of the supernal orders, who represents Christ in the church? And how do you say, “The priest is as the soul of Jesus”,²⁴ or again²⁵ “for²⁶ the soul of Jesus he does battle with the evil one”? And how do you make the spiritual orders worthy to consecrate the body and blood of our Lord, since the spiritual ones have learned from the church the wisdom of God and His power, as blessed Paul has said: “In the church hath been revealed the wisdom of God to the principalities and authorities that are in heaven”[Eph.3:10]? If the prophet Isaiah, when he saw the coal which denotes a mystery of this sacrifice, saw that seraph who is of the highest church (of angels), holding it with a tongs as though he were not worthy to touch it. How now does he who represents the seraph, while he is inferior to him, consecrate and distribute not the symbolical but the true coal, and even causes orders which are below him to consecrate and distribute the coal? Which coal is the greater, that which the prophet saw, or this which is in the church? I know you will say, this that is in the church; for that expressed only a figure of this. But again we will

²⁴Or “as Jesus Himself”. George tells us later on (fol.71, r°) that these words occurred in a certain anthem (ônîthâ)

²⁵ 𐌲𐌹 George elsewhere uses this in this manner. Thus he says Tract.4 fol.130, r° “or even our Lord”.

²⁶ 𐌲𐌹 may = “for”, or “instead of”, i.e. a representing.

say to you, whether is of more account, the seraph, or he who represents
the seraph? And again I know you will say, He who is the true seraph is
of more account than he who represents him. And so the seraph is of
more account than the man who represents him, even as the coal of our
Mysteries is better than that which the prophet saw. (When) therefore
the true seraph did not take that symbolical and figurative coal (*fol. 68r^o*)
in his hand through fear of it, how should the figurative seraph conse-
crate and distribute the true coal, and command the Spirit so that It
[fem.] come down? For when Gabriel announced to Mary, he did not
say to her, "I have brought thee the Holy Spirit", but he merely made
known to her that "the Holy Spirit shall come and the power of the Most
High shall light down upon thee". But the priest really commands the
Spirit in supplication and It [fem.] comes down: and he calls to It and It
comes down unto him secretly, as the great Ephraim has said: He says:

The priest stands and calls
to the Holy Spirit secretly:
And It [fem.] also does His will,
And comes down unto him from high.

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ܐܪܡܝܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ
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ܐܪܡܝܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ²⁷

For when It [fem.] lighted down upon man, It did not perform the
will of the angel; but he was a messenger to announce concerning His
[mas.] coming.

And if the order be as you say, - that the readers are the lowest
church: but with them the subdeacons and deacons: how do the deacons
come as far as the throne? And how, - whereas the seraphim and cheru-
bim bear the throne of the Lord and attend it, and are not messengers, -

²⁷The quotation is in 4 seven-syllable verses. The fact that the H. Spirit is
feminine, may point to an early date, but already in George's time (10th C.)
so many spurious words were current under S. Ephraim's name that we can
place little confidence in its genuineness.

are the archangels and principalities become the ministers of the throne of the Lord? And how is the bishop or priest to be seen commanding his fellows in the apse, if he also is one of them? And lo, one of the orders of the lowest church, the deacons who represent the principalities, are the ministers of the altar which is the throne of the Lord: what superior place then, is left for the middle church, and what again for the highest church? Wherever the presbyter or bishop enters, a deacon enters with him. But it is not so with those supernal churches: the lowest church does not invade the place of the middle, the middle church does not invade the place of the highest. But now with you the lowest are become the highest, and sometimes give orders. And the seraphim, who do not dare to look (*fol. 68v^o*) upon the throne of God, are now become eaters of Him and consecrators of Him and distributors of Him. You ought to have left something in the apse to which a deacon might not come, or, if (this) is impossible, open a house above the altar, and forbid the lowest church - which the deacons are - to enter it. And let not (even) the middle church - which the presbyters are - enter it: that there may be left a place for the highest church, which the bishops are; and let them have a little honour ... [and so on] ...

But if it appears to you that the catholicus (*fol. 69r^o*) and the patriarch are one: yet they are not so in the ecclesiastical writings. The four patriarchs are not catholici - that is, those of Rome and Ephesus and Antioch and Alexandria - but they are called “bishops”; but each one of them has one catholicus. It was granted to the see of Jerusalem to have [lit. “to be”] a catholicus; it was granted to the see of the East - that of Seleucia - to have a catholicus. But it was not permitted to them (to exercise) the patriarchate in place of a patriarch. Lo, even a visitor represents a bishop; but not in everything, nor at all times. So also the catholicus takes the place of a patriarch: but not in every place. The matter of the catholicus who became a patriarch has been discussed by us above.

So then, O reader [lit. “hearer”], in our service we represent the dispensation of Christ, and not the dispensation of the spiritual beings. The spiritual beings are the ministers of God; and the deacons in the church are the ministers of the priestly orders. “Not all are ministers of

spirit,” says blessed Paul, “who are sent by God to those who are about to inherit life”. So then the priest is mediator, and door, and the pardoner of debts: he is not a messenger and if so be that the body and blood of Christ have been given “for the pardoning of debts”, and He commanded His disciples to do continually [what He did], he who changes the bread and wine into the body and blood performs “a pardoning of debts”, and confers “forgiveness of sins”. But the spiritual beings are messengers always: and (even) if the seraph said to the prophet, “Behold this hath touched the lips that it may pardon thine iniquity and forgive thy sins”: yet they were not forgiven by him, but by other than him. But our Lord said to His disciples: “This is My body, which for your sake is broken for the forgiveness of sins”²⁸. Thou seest (*fol. 69v*^o) that here the priest gives a pardon of sins; for an anthem (*ônîthâ*) says somewhere “a medecine of penance our Lord gave to skilful physicians”, and the rest. Wherefore they heal of iniquity by a spiritual medicine.

And know this, O brother, that that dispensation of the church is the true one which represents the dispensation of our Lord; for by it we signify heaven and earth and Paradise and Jerusalem and Nazareth; and all things that were there fulfilled in the dispensation of Christ. But if it be so as thou sayest, (that) the lowest church is that of the readers and subdeacons and deacons; why dost thou not collect these into our church? Why dost thou leave the readers on the καταστρωμα; why dost thou bring the subdeacons as far as the lamps, the deacons as far as the throne? And where is there place for the orders of presbyters and their companions? All these, from the deacons and upwards, are allowed to enter everywhere. But if it is right that the deacons and the presbyters should be in one church: (yet) I know not where the readers and subdeacons are to stand. And behold the vesture of the readers is unlike that of the subdeacons, the vesture of the subdeacons is unlike that of the deacons. They are different in garb and in place. The vesture of the presbyters and periodeutae and chorepiscopi is the same; and the vesture of those from the bishop and upwards is the same. How is it then

²⁸ As in the Liturgy of Nestorius.

that there is agreement in these higher churches as to dress and place, but that the lowest church is different in everything?²⁹

Return then to the way of truth, and ascribe the ministry of servitude to the spiritual beings, and the ministry of lordship to Christ, God; and let the readers be in place of the lowest church, and let their place be the καταστροφή, which is the ether. And let the subdeacons be in place of the middle church, (*fol. 70r^o*) and let them enter as far as the middle of the apse³⁰. And let the deacons be the highest church, who are able to minister to the Lord close at hand continually. And leave the other grades to take the place of Christ in the church; that he who fills His place may be able to bestow pardon upon us, even as He was a mediator between us and God. And let us give to Him and to His Father and to the Holy Spirit glory and honour for ever and ever. Amen.

Note. In chapter 5 of Tract 2 George writes (*fol. 63, r^o*): -"The deacons enter as far as the divine throne [i.e. the altar]; the subdeacons as far as the middle of the apse, which is at the place of the lamps, which signifies the light of the sun which is in the midst (of the heaven); but the readers as far as the door of the apse".

From Fr. Bridgett's *History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain* (Re-edited by Fr. Thurston s.j., 1908), pp.60-61:

The priest represented our Lord Jesus Christ, the "Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedech". It is interesting to read in the pontifical of Egbert, Archbishop of York in the eighth century, how the various orders of the clergy were understood to participate in our Lord's priesthood. I translate literally, omitting only a few unimportant phrases: "Christ was a Porter (ostiarus) when He shut and opened the ark of Noe, and opened the gates of hell. Wherefore now those who are called porters have charge of the doors of the church and sacristy, and ring the bell to call all men to church. Christ was a reader (lector) when He opened the book of Isaias the prophet; He was an exorcist when He cast the seven devils out of S. Mary

²⁹ He means that those who constitute the lowest church - readers, subdeacons and deacons - differ in dress, etc., and not that the lowest church is different from the higher ones.

³⁰ These lamps evidently hung in the apse midway between the door and altar.

Magdalene; He was a subdeacon when He blessed water at Cana and changed it into wine. The subdeacon must read the epistle, clothe and decorate the altars, and minister to the deacon. Christ was a deacon when He broke the loaves to feed the multitudes, and washed the feet of His disciples; for the deacon must minister at the altar, read the Gospel in the church, baptize and give communion in the absence of the priest, wash the feet of pilgrims (or strangers), and bury the dead. Christ was a priest (presbyter) when He took bread and the chalice into His sacred hands...

(3). Passages of Liturgical Interest in George of Arbel's Exposition of the Ecclesiastical Offices

1) Tract 4. Chap.21 fol. 139 r°

[referring to *Sursum Corda*] "Aloft then, and on high let your minds be. Where the whole abide is pure, and the dwellers thereof are glorious - where the angels in the awful place cease not from flying and honouring the nature of the Godhead, and with plaudits [Syr. *hullâllê*] praise and sing to His Majesty, and with pleasant utterances [ܠܬܗܠܠܐ ܠܕܢܝܢ] with honour please the Lord - there, as men who have been shaken free of death and have become companions of the spiritual beings [let your minds be]". A few lines further on: "and when you have seen them [= the mysteries] on earth, consider that they are in heaven. and let there your minds be".

This is clearly taken from either the Liturgy of 'Theodore' or that of 'Nestorius' ['Theodore' and 'Nestorius' agree here], which are alone in having a very long and elaborate *Sursum Corda*. But as George goes on to refer to the *Sursum Corda* as in 'Addai and Mari' immediately after, it appears that he utilizes 'Theodore' - 'Nestorius' only by way of commentary; for he says just after "And as he said 'aloft', and did not explain [where 'aloft' is], then they [= people] ... say whither 'aloft': that is 'unto thee, the God of Abraham", etc.

[Further allusions to, or quotations from 'Theodore' and 'Nestorius' are given in *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* in an English translation in

Text and Studies, vol.8, no.1, pp.83. I give here the Syriac of those passages as there numbered]:

(1): ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ
ܡܠܐ ܡܠܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗ
ܡܠܐ ܡܠܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗ
ܡܠܐ ܡܠܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗ
ܡܠܐ ܡܠܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗ

This passage is found in the present intercession of the Liturgy of Nestorius [Urmi Syr. text p.48]: the only variants in ‘Nestorius’ are

(1) ܠܡܢ] ‘N’ + ܠܡܢ

ܠܡܢ] ‘N’ ܠܡܢ

i.e. God] ‘N’ + of hosts

and unto favour] ‘N’ and unto redemption.

(2) ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

(3) ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

An earlier writer - Ishô’dad of Mero - also quotes ‘Nestorius’ (= his liturgy) for this.

(4) [“And as the Interpreter has said”, etc.]

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

In Tract 2, chapter 6 fol.69 r° George speaks of the priest as: “He who changes the bread and wine into the body and blood”.

ܠܡܢ ܡܥܬܐ ܡܥܬܐ ܠܗܠܝܬܐ ܠܗ

In the Invocation of ‘Nestorius’ occur the words: “Than changing (ܡܥܬܐ) and sanctifying them” [sc. the bread and the cup, mentioned just before.]

2) Tract 2. Chap.6 fol. 68 r°

“But the priest really commands the Spirit in supplication, and It [fem.] comes down: and he calls to it, and It comes down unto him

secretly, as the great Ephraim has said: [The passage quoted from S. Ephraim is in 4 seven-syllable verses]. He says:

“The priest stands and calls to It,

Is the Holy Spirit, secretly:

And It also does his will,

and comes down unto him from on high”.

ܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ
ܕܠܗܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܝܬܐ
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In Tract 4, chapter 20 fol.136 v° we read: “Because now [when the priest approaches the altar to make the offering] the priest, Christ, fulfils this ministry, the name of presbyter and bishop is removed. ‘For He is priest and pontiff’, says blessed Ephraim, ‘and it is He that offers and receives, also consecrates³²’”. [Similarly in a Hipure of Severus (Brooks II, p.680); but not attributed to S. Ephraim].

³¹ The fact that the Holy Spirit is feminine here [in the quotation and in George here (influenced by the quotations elsewhere makes the H. Spirit masculine)], may point to an early date. But already in George’s day (10th C.) there were many spurious words under the name of Ephraim. It would appear not to be in any of Ephraim’s published works, which would have been ransacked for the ‘Epiklesis’.

³² Ishô’dad of Mero in his comments on Mt.26:27 says: “And Mar Ephraim also bears witness concerning this [that our Lord Himself ate of the Eucharist in the poem (mêmrâ) on the Epiphany: he says:

From the bread of life

That was given to the world,

Not the angels did eat,

But the Lord of the angels’.

For of that bread which He ate with His disciples He broke and gave to them, Mar Nestorius also in his liturgy (quddasha) bears witness concerning this”. Just before this Ishô’dad says: “And it is right that we should know that our Lord Himself is priest and sacrifice and eater”.

Here “he” may refer to the priest, but it more naturally refers to Christ. George has him saying that up to the offertory the celebrant was spoken of as either ‘presbyter’ or ‘bishop’, but after that he is called ‘priest’, and represents Christ, the true priest.

In Tract 4, ch.21 (*fol.138v^o*) commenting on the “canon” “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” etc. before the *Sursum Corda* George says:

For when Christ fulfilled grace, He fulfilled it by the love of God the Father. And there is one will in the whole Trinity; but the descent [of the Son] is by grace; the good pleasure [or ‘consent’] of the Father is by love; and the communicating of completeness is through the descent of the Spirit. And thus when the Father willed our redemption, it was not perfected until the Son consented and came down; when the Son came down and visited us by His dispensation, our redemption was not perfected save by the descent of the Holy Spirit.

The first part of this would seem to apply to the H. Eucharist, and imply a descent of the Son first, and then a descent of the H. Spirit.

NB. It is curious that in Tract 4 (On the Mysteries) George says not a word about the *intercession*, though in Tract 2, ch.3 he gives a quotation from the intercession of Nestorius (see above: *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, p.83). Note that in Addai and Mari the large point (B 286f.) has nothing of the nature of an intercession. The *cushapa* in small print on p.285 (as also those on pp.273, 282,-284) is probably later than George’s time; he makes no comment on any of these prayers, in fact does not use the term *kushshâphâ* at all.³³ It looks as though Addai and Mari had no intercession distinct from the diptychs. Narsai’s intercession copied from ‘Nestorius’ was a novelty in this line it would seem (?)

On fol.144r^o (Tract 4, ch.24) he says: “But perhaps some will say: If the mysteries have been consecrated by the death of our Lord, and the Spirit has come down and consecrated them, and they have been completed with all true completeness. What is this that he should break and sign? Here “the death of our Lord” is not identical in George’s mind with the descent of the H. Spirit...? in (see transl. of Tract 4). That the

³³ He calls the whole of the preface - institution a *gêhântâ* -, and from the institution to the invocation also a *gêhântâ*.

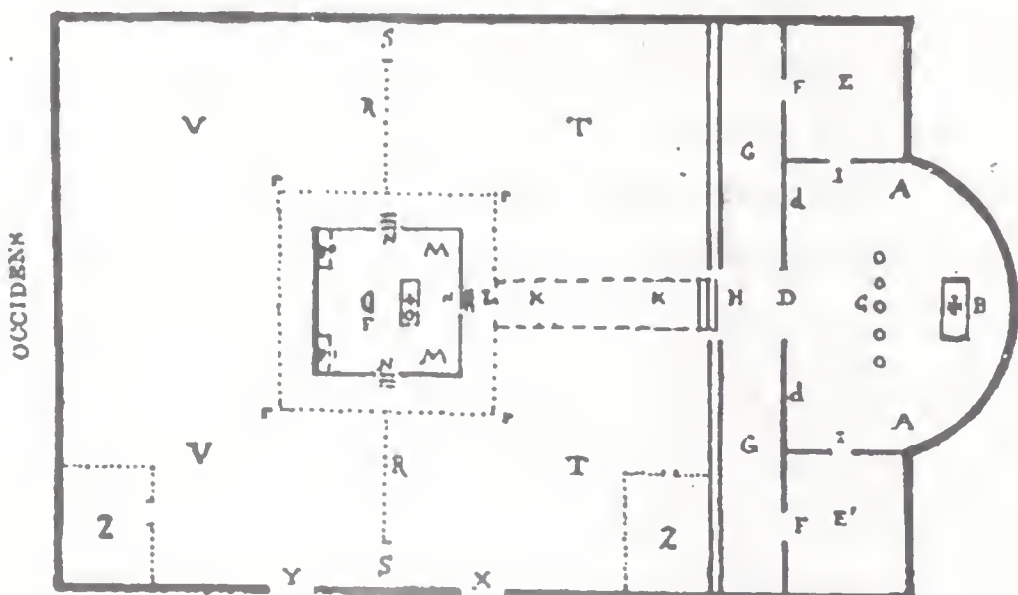
death of our Lord is symbolized by the part of the priest's prayer (after institution) which precedes the descent of the H. Spirit; and that the descent of the H. Spirit signifies our Lord's resurrection. Hence he seems to give some part in the consecration to the prayer preceding the invocation. This is the more intelligible when we remember that the invocation in Addai and Mari contains no prayer for actual consecration. He goes on (*fol. 144 v^o*) to say: "And he [= the priest] gives thanks to Christ who perfects [or "celebrates"]. There the word "perfects" or "celebrates" is practically the same as "consecrates".

4. George of Arbel's church

- [In the Notes B = Brightman's *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, vol. 1
1. Apse or sanctuary (pp. 2f.). This appears to have been at the East end of the church, as in Tract 2, chapter 1 George tells us that worship was performed towards the East. It of course contained an altar.
 2. Somewhere in the apse was the diaconicon [*bêth dêyâqôn*: "deacon's house"]. Whether or no it was walled off from the sanctuary part is not indicated. See pp. 36f.
 3. Outside the apse was a platform called the *καταστροφμα*³⁴ [*gestroma*]. This was on a level with the apse, and had steps leading up to it from the level of the nave. See pp. 2f., 35.
 4. The apse had at least two doors leading out to the *καταστροφμα*, a great door and a little one. See pp. 40, 42f.
 5. There was a door leading from the *καταστροφμα* into the diaconicon. See pp. 36f. It seems to be implied (p. 42) that the door of the diaconicon was the same as the little door of the apse.
 6. Between the (great) door of the apse and the altar lamps were suspended (pp. 16, 35); by these lamps was the station of the subdeacons (pp. 16, 47); lamps were also hung at the (great) door of the apse (p. 35).
 7. Veils or curtains were hung in front of the apse, certainly over the great door, and probably over the little one (pp. 35).

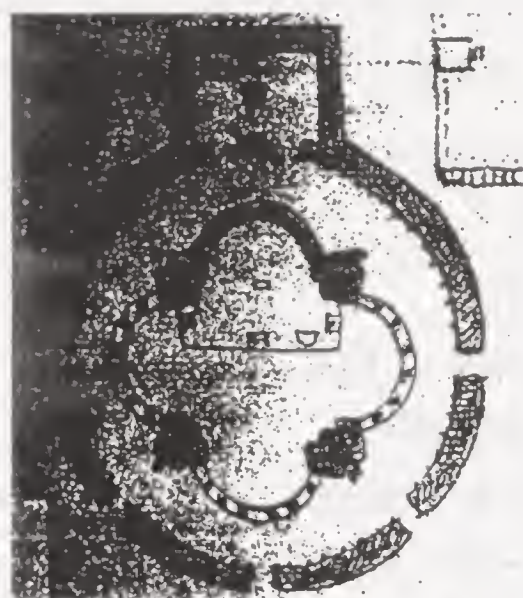
³⁴ On the *καταστροφμα* the readers took their stand (p. 3). It is quite certain that the *καταστροφμα* was a platform just outside the apse, on the level of the apse, approached by steps from the level of the nave: but how far it reached, there is nothing to indicate.

8. "In the midst of the nave" stood the bema, which seems to have been a raised platform large enough to accommodate the bishop and a considerable number of presbyters (p.2). The whole of the service (of the Mysteries) up to the dismissals of catechumens (inclusive) was conducted by the bishop, or celebrant, from this bema. After the dismissals the bishop and attendant presbyter went in procession to the apse.
9. In the bema was an altar (pp.3, 35), a throne for the bishop (pp.3, 34), and two lecterns or "places of reader", one on the right, the other on the left (p.3). These lecterns were probably raised somewhat above the level of the rest of the bema, see pp.46, 48, p.54 note 2, p.60 note 3.
10. On pp.39 and 43 it is implied that when the bishop sits down in the bema he cannot be seen by the people. Hence the bema was in all probability surrounded by a low parapet.
11. Between the apse and the bema was a straight gangway [shêqâqône, or bêth shêqâqône]. In this were three doors, one "before the apse", one "in the middle", and one "before the bema" (pp.3f.). It is reasonable to suppose that the one "before the apse" was the great door, and that the one "before the bema" was at the bottom of the steps leading up to the bema. The one "in the middle" (or, "in the midst", i.e. somewhere between the others) may well have been at the bottom of the steps leading up to the καταστρωμα.
12. The doors of the church, and also the baptistery were somewhere on the south side (pp.2f.). There was a special door for the women (pp.61,64).
13. The men and women sat in different parts of the nave. From p.4 may be inferred that the men had the eastern halt, the women the western - behind the men.

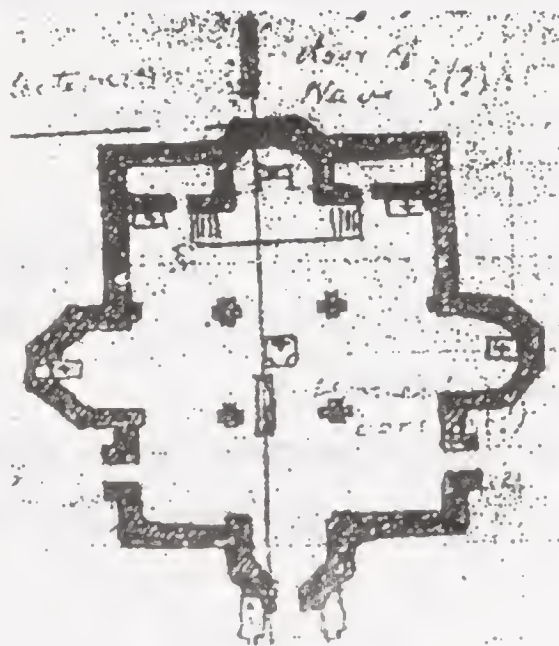


- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| A. Apse | M. Bema |
| B. Altar | N. Steps |
| C. Lamps | O. Altar |
| D. Great door or Door before the apse | P. Throne |
| d. Wall | p. Lecterns |
| E, E'. Diaconicon | R. Wall between men and women |
| F. Little doors or Doors of diaconicon | r. Wall around bema |
| G. Qestroma.καταστρωμα | S. Passage between men and women |
| H. Steps | T. Place of men |
| I. Door in the middle | V. Place of women |
| K. Gangway | X. Door of men |
| L. Door before the bema | Y. Door of women |
| | Z (or E'). Baptistery |

Church of S. Gregory, Etschmiadsin c.650 AD (Lethaby, *Medieval Art*, p.74)



Cathedral, Etschmiadsin (Lethaby, *Medieval Art*, p.75), probably same date as S. Gregory's



The above is a purely tentative sketch, and does not pretend to give the shape etc. of George's church. The only parts the relative positions of which we may feel pretty sure about are the apse, great door, lamps, apse altar, καταστροφή, gangway, and bema. The rest is merely a suggestion. For references see preceding pages. In former page the attached plans of 2 old Armenian churches, taken from Lethaby's *Medieval Art*. That of the Cathedral of Etschmiadsin seems to shew the bema in the middle of the nave.

Symbolism

George of Arbel had an elaborate symbolism for all matters ecclesiastical and liturgical. As he often refers to actual persons and things in terms of this symbolism without explaining himself, it will be useful at the start to have a key to it. The following may help to make him more intelligible.

1. Apse = heaven.
2. Qestroma.καταστροφή = Paradise.
3. Bema = Jerusalem.
4. Nave = all the world.
5. Altar in apse = throne of God.
6. Altar in Bema = Golgotha.
7. Bishop (celebrant) = sometimes our Lord, sometimes S. Peter (Cephas).
8. Presbyters who assist = disciples of our Lord.
9. Deacons = "highest church" of angels.
10. The 2 deacons who make addresses to the people = Gabriel and Michael respectively.
11. Subdeacons = "middle church" of angels.
12. Readers = "lowest church" of angels.
13. Holy Eucharist is often spoken of as "the mansions": i.e. the heavenly mansions which shall be given to the righteous ("In My Father's house there are many mansions".)
14. The reception of Holy Communion is usually spoken of as "the enjoyment": i.e. heavenly bliss, the happy lot of those who are rewarded with heaven.

15. "Nature" signifies the period of the world's history before Abraham.
16. Lay communicants are spoken of as "those on whom mercy has been done", "or who have received mercy": i.e. those who have not really earned heaven by their labours (like those who assist in the service), but have received it through God's free grace: there is an allusion to the parable of the husbandmen (those of the 11th hour).
17. Sitting on the ground signifies death.
18. Rising up = resurrection.
19. Jordan = baptismal font.
20. The commemorations of names in diptychs are spoken of as "gifts" distributed to the person commemorated.

Other items of this symbolism are explained by George (or will be commented on in footnotes) as they occur. The above run more or less through the whole, and must be kept in mind.

NB. The two deacons who take part more immediately in the service, and address the people, are called "keepers of the order", which I have usually rendered "on duty".

TRACT 4. CHAPTER 1¹

Time for Celebration of Mysteries

Why Blessed Ishô' Yabh² commanded that the Mysteries should be performed at the third hour; and what is (the meaning of) this name Mysteries. (*fol.113r^o*) By the power of the Spirit and by your prayers, brothers, we have come forth from three contests, wherein we pursued our course in the fear that perchance we should not be able to add the fitting conclusion to our discourses. But now that we have spoken of those matters which were explained with the evening, night and morning offices, it remains to explain this also on account of which those were set forth. I beg and beseech thee, take care³ (of me) and increase the power of thy prayers, that I may be able to pass along this bridge set over fire: that I may (at least) save my life, even though I profit nothing more; for the Scripture has said "Who shall dwell for us with devouring fire?⁴ and again, "The Lord our God is a devouring fire". Only by this power do we approach the expositions of the glorious Mysteries.

Meaning of Mysteries (Theological discussion)

Thou hast asked concerning the time of the Mysteries: As some hand down: - even as Mar Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, and as we have heard from the Acts, thus, they say, in the days of the apostles and in the time after them they used to perform the Mysteries in the middle of the night and receive the Sacrament, and they would spend the night in the church till morning. And they adduce as a testimony from the Acts the story of Eutychus: "At night", he says, "when we were assembled to break the Eucharist, and Paul prolonged his discourse, a youth fell from three stories"⁵. And again Paul rebuking the Corinthians:

¹The translation was made from a ms. (in monastery of Alqosh Mosul): a number of corrections have since been made from ms. S (in library of Seert Kurdistan).

²That is Ishô' Yabh III, Nestorian Catholicus A.D. 647-658.

³For the meaning of the word cf. Je.23:2. The word occurs in the same sense in Tract 1 fol.7r^o.

⁴Is.33:14.

⁵Acts 20:9

“On the day”, he says, “when ye are assembled to the church, one of you is hungry and one is drunken”⁶: for thus they used to carry food to the church, and there sup; and some of them were rich and some poor.

And they say that this practice prevailed for a considerable length of time. But when they suffered evil things at the hands of plunderers and robbers, the class of believers [= laity] requested that they should change this practice. (*fol. 113v*^o) And what the apostles used (at first) to do was this: they used to give the Sacrament at the time when (our Lord) delivered His body and His blood, and also at the time when He rose from the grave⁷. But when the faithful requested that they should change the time to the day, on account of the evils they had to put up with, they decided that the Mysteries should be performed at the time when Cephas said "Lo, it is yet the third hour"⁸, - the former practice passing away. They left, however, as a witness to the former time (of celebrating) those two days wherein the actual Mysteries and the resurrection were accomplished: that is Passover⁹ and Resurrection (day). Wherefore Ishô' Yabh orders that at the 3rd hour of the day they begin the Mysteries.

Thou hast asked concerning the name "Mysteries". "Mystery" [Syr. *raza*] is the name (of something) that is absent:- like the depicting of a portrait of a king, which is drawn on a board: or as when a man builds [i.e., probably, draws a plan of] a house which resembles (another) house; and though the one is much less than the other, yet their angles and chambers (? *ܐܡܬܐ ܕܡܝܫܬܐ*) and entrance and exit are alike. So the Mysteries of the church, - they depict a mystery of what is past and what is to be. What is past we imitate by recounting (it): what is to be we imitate by faith. And thus we imitate both times by the Mysteries: typifying heaven and Jerusalem and Paradise and the world and Christ and the

⁶cf. 1 Co.11:20-21.

⁷This meant that these times were the same, viz. after dark on Saturday.

⁸cf. Acts 2:15

⁹So the East-Syrians (at least) call Good Friday. The writer means that the Mysteries were still celebrated in the night of (= preceding, since with the Syrians the liturgical day began in the evening) Good Friday and Easter Sunday (cf. Tract I chapter 10 fol.28v^o)

angels and men¹⁰ : and all things that are visible in creation we depict by them, and all things that by the mind are known. There is nothing in creation that ought to typify something, which is not enacted in this divine service. Let us then in the power of God set forth in quest of the glorious significations (of those things) that are enacted in order at the time of the Mysteries.

¹⁰See introductory remarks on George's symbolism.

CHAPTER 2

Marmitha

(*fol.114r*^o) Why at the beginning of the Mysteries we say a *Marmitha*¹, and then after if the *Lakhu Mara*² [= "Thee, O Lord"], and then the Holy³. As I have said above, all the services represent (things) from the beginning of creation and unto the end (of the world). And those who are officiating take pains, so far as the mind is able to shew forth a mystery of them all. And though they [i.e. the representations] do not fully and adequately correspond to the actual things, yet (at least) in part: for neither are any mysteries or representations able to copy the true image; but those who trace the image of a king on a board are not able to depict his image accurately as it is, but they copy (it) is as far as they can. And even though they could copy all things, yet they could not (so) depict that he should move and give command. So this representation of things hidden, which is depicted in the Church: so far as it is possible to imitate, we imitate by it.

We commence, then, in the beginning with the *Marmitha*, showing that we have begun from the Law, (and) that at the end the "commencement" (*shurraya*)⁴ will close with the New Testament. We begin with the seventh chant [*qala*], which I have already said, expresses the mys-

¹Cf. B 254 1.28. A marmitha is a certain division (1/60) of the Psalter. See Brightman *Litt. Eastern and Western* Vol.I (hence forward referred to by the letter B) p.253 1.10. Note that George says nothing of the *Order of Preparation* (B 247-253 1.8). He says positively (ch.15) that Ishô' Yabh did not prescribe any order of baking the eucharistic bread or mingling the wine. Before this Marmitha in Brightman (p.252) stands what B calls an εναρξίς. This is represented in the Malabar rite in a somewhat shorter form. It is followed by the prayer "Strengthen, O Lord" (B.253 1.4-8) and than the prayer "The adorable" (given in B. note α: for "memorials and ordinary days"). This is followed by the Ps. "Domine quis habitabit", (Ps. 150 + Ps.116 "Laudate Domine omnes gentes").

²B 285 1.17.

³B 285 1.17.

⁴This is used here technically to indicate a part of the service before the "Mass of the faithful". See B 256 1.6.

tery of the coming of John⁵. Inasmuch as this service approaches nearer to the revelation of the truth, from its beginning one should [or, 'it should'] shew a representation of him who was our Saviour's kinsman: Whereas the Marmitha of the evening office the first chant [*qala*] was used on account of the remoteness of the thing (signified); but at the night office, all the chants [*qale*]⁶.

Here then we use the last chant, shewing that the aim of all the (other) offices is directed (*fol. 114v*^o) towards this one. And what is the Marmitha? Some employ "Caeli enarrant" (Ps.19), some "Exaltabo te" (Ps.95). And these (employ them) on all Sundays. But on festivals⁷ and memorials⁸ some change and some do not change. Those who say "Caeli enarrant" deliver (themselves) thus: - It is fitting and right, they say, that that Marmitha, as being in itself appropriate, should stand (here)⁹, and be said with its own chant; since also the Marmitha itself in its beginning recounts the glories of God and His greatness. Again the middle psalm (Ps.20) shews that God answers (us) out of tribulation, and also that all we have is from God. The last psalm (21) fills up the joy of the elect and the confusion of unbelievers. So also the Marmitha, according to its position in the psalter [lit. "David"], symbolizes Jacob, the father of the tribes, with his fathers before and his seed after him, as far as Moses. And forasmuch as the Marmitha itself ends with a *Qinta*¹⁰; and the psalms also, according to their order (in the psalter), are the begin-

⁵In Tract 2 he said that the Ps. "Cantate" (The 1st Ps. of the present Marmitha cf. B253 l.10) signifies the baptism of John.

⁶Qala seems to be used here as equivalent to Marmitha.

⁷I.e. of our Lord.

⁸I.e. Saints' days

⁹I am not sure that this is what is meant by ܩܠܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ

ܩܠܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ

¹⁰I have not been able to discover what in general George means by a Qinta. It usually = a mournful chant In George, but he uses it always in a technical sense to signify some sort of joyful singing. See below chap.4, p.39 where the non-scriptural verses interposed between verses of the O.T. in the Shurraya (B 256 l.7 ff.) are called a Qinta. There, as here (at least in B 253 l.15) Halleluiahs occur; and it is possible that the Qinta refers to this. See p.47 where Qinta certainly means the Halleluiahs sung in the Zummara (B 258).

ning of the Law and the promises¹¹, and because it (the Marmitha) is extremely appropriate, let us say it: Since it has three witnesses- I mean the *Qinta*, (its being) the beginning of the Law, and its appropriateness.

Those who say “Exaltabo te” (Ps.145) answer thus: - Since this Marmitha typifies the end of the times, and also the victory of Elijah and the confusion of the son of perdition [= Antichrist], and is very near to the Marmitha of the psalms which typify the resurrection, let us make it the beginning of this great service. Furthermore, because its phrases magnify God exceedingly: (such as) that He answers those who call upon Him in truth (Ps.145:18); and other appropriate things, - such as, that He heals and binds up (cf. Ps.147:3), and raises up the poor, and (*fol.115r*^o) humbles the ungodly (cf. Ps.147:6), and that He gives rain (Ps.147:8), and makes (the grass) to grow, and gives food and drink (*ibid.* v.9): some of which typify the glorious Mysteries, - with others as well.

Now the idea of each part is exceedingly good and accurate. Those who change [the Marmitha] for festivals and memorials say thus: - It is right that on festivals of the dispensation of our Lord we should say “Cantate Domino” (Ps.96), which is a figure of the manifestation of our Lord and of His dispensation in Jerusalem. Whereas we celebrate a festival of his dispensation, let the Marmitha that typifies His dispensation be said. On memorial days, since we honour the saints, let that Marmitha be said which signifies the election of Aaron and his sons and the Levites and the constitution of the tabernacle of testimony [i.e. (?) Pss.33 (Vulg.32) ff.]¹². As those were chosen to the priesthood, so the saints dedicated themselves to the Lord, and some of them were chosen to the priesthood, some of them apostleship and martyrdom, and some of them to prophecy. Now the opinions of all these are very appropriate and good.

¹¹cf. his application of the psalms in Tract 2 ch.3 (*fol.56 r*^o) as these pss. are applied to the times of the Israelites just before Moses, so they ought to be said here, just before the reading of the O.T.: that seems to be the argument.

¹²See Tract 2 ch.3, (*fol. 56v*^o).

CHAPTER 3

Variation of Marmitha

What is the meaning of the *variation*¹ (or change) in the apse [A omitts]. "I will confess to Thee in the great church" (Ps.35:18). The variation signifies the coming of John: so also the evening office has a variation of two verses. But now the bishop comes forth; and at the time of his entering into the apse² they change (to) "I will confess to Thee", even though the Marmitha be not ended; since the whole Marmitha signifies the voice of John³, but now these verses typify the concourse overagainst our Lord [i.e. at the baptism]. And whereas they introduce the "variation" [lit. 'they change'] first in the apse⁴ (that means) that John first of all saw the angels conducting our Lord⁵ with honour, and the heavens opened, and the Spirit (*fol.115v*^o) coming down. And when he saw these things he also stirred himself up to say, "Behold the Lamb of God".

¹The verses (18ff) of Ps.35 (cf. B 253 l.14) are evidently regarded as not belonging to the Marmitha proper.

²So text: but if "apse" be right it is not clear where the bishop "comes forth" from. What follows is evidently a description of a procession from the apse to the bema: and so it is possible we should read "bema" here. Still the Ms S says the "variation" is begun in the apse; and the anthem that follows is "of the apse" Probably the bishop's first entrance to apse is meant: then follows his procession to the bema.

³This implies that the Marmitha began with Ps.96 "Cantate" (as in B 253, l.10), cf. above (ch.2).

⁴The "canon", when used absolutely, usually means the "Sanctus" with George. B 253 has nothing corresponding to this. S has "in the apse", which is probably right.

⁵George elsewhere explains the "Sanctus" as the song of angels who appeared singing it during a certain earthquake at Constantinople. The allusion to angels in connection with our Lord's baptism derives from the apocryphal story, found in Tatian's *Diatessaron*, of a fire on the Jordan, and the appearance of angels at the time of the baptism (cf. *infra* p.41).

⁶I.e. the "Anthem of the Sanctuary". B 253 l.27.

Anthem of the Throne

Again the Anthem (*Onitha*) which is said - which is styled "Of the throne", or "Of the apse"⁶, - is as it were a recognition (of the fact) that God the Word came down from heaven [= apse] and was united to flesh, and came to Jerusalem [= bema] that He might accomplish His dispensation. And so the subdeacons and deacons, with the archdeacon and the bishop, shew a witness of these things. What then?⁷

The subdeacons carry lanterns [*naphtere*, which is said to be the same as the Greek λαμπτήρ], and stand at the door of the altar without the veils⁸ - that is, shewing that their position is at a distance from the throne - but the deacons carry, some of them candles [κηρωτός], some of them thuribles. But those on duty⁹ - the two deacons who take the place of Gabriel and Michael - go forth empty (-handed), that they may fulfil their office: Gabriel, as holding the office of the New (Testament), and Michael as a helper, and as handing over (to him) the rule¹⁰. And these come first; and after them the subdeacons, who belong to the middle church (of the angels)¹¹, and then the highest church, who have the management of the throne: and their head is the archdeacon. As knowing first what things are dispensed by the Creator, he is near to the bishop, keeping on [or 'holding'] his left hand: that is, inasmuch as the right hand performs actions, and then they are made known to the left hand. So our Lord also said: "When thou doest an alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth"¹². And so the arch-

⁷Here probably began the procession to the bema.

⁸This appears to be a quotation from a rubric.

⁹Lit. "the keepers of the order": i.e. the 2 officiating deacons.

¹⁰Michael, as the deacon of the O.T., is said earlier to hand over the people to Gabriel.

¹¹This symbolism is worked out in Tract 2 ch.2. There are according to George 3 churches of angels, each divided into 3 orders (9 orders in all). These 3 churches are represented, (1) by the deacons, (2) by the subdeacons, (3) by the lower clergy (readers etc.).

¹²Mt.6:3.

deacon keeps on [or 'holds'] the left hand of the bishop; since the things that the bishop requires and commands to be done, he commands as the right hand; and then he stirs up the left hand to shew (these things) to those that are near him. So the archdeacon, who keeps on [or, 'holds'] his left hand, when he (*fol.116r^o*) learns a secret, then he beckons to his companions, that they may carry out the things that this second God (sic) desires and wishes to be done.

And so he beckons and they roll (back) the veils. And the subdeacons hold themselves in readiness, and he shews them (saying): "The Lord hath been well-pleased with His people, and has made ready to come down for the redemption of His creation. In procession go forth before him"¹³. And thus they go forth rank after rank. And first those on duty, Gabriel and Michael, and after them the subdeacons, and after them the deacons; then he who holds the standards of the victorious King, even the cross, and the list of His commandments [which] He is about to deliver in the adorable Gospel; and finally the bishop, who is Christ, comes forth. And whither? To the place which was first employed for the worship of God, and in which were set forth carnal commandments, that as those [= Jews] were trained by carnal laws, they may now receive a spiritual law, and to those to whom the prophets prophesied concerning the revelation of the Lord, His revelation may be shewn; and in the peace of typical oblations He may give the true oblation. And so he descends from heaven¹⁴ by the way trodden by the prophets - the ladder which Jacob saw - and he comes to Jerusalem [= bema]. So the ministers go forth from the apse, and come to the bema, Jerusalem. The subdeacons stand in the gangway [*sheqaqone*], here also observing their order, and they do not go up to this throne which is in Jerusalem¹⁵. What then?

¹³This may be merely an ideal speech, - there is nothing to the same effect in B.

¹⁴The text has wrong by *shammashē*, "deacons", instead of *shemaya*, "heaven" (i.e. the apse, according to George's symbolism). George never uses the word *shammashē* for "deacons", always employing *meshamshane*.

¹⁵The service from this point is conducted from the bema. The bishop does not return to the sanctuary (apse) till the dismissals of catechumens have been read out.

Time for Opening Veils

Some open the veil before the bishop, and some do not open (it) until the *Lakhu Mara* ("Te Domine"). Those who open say thus: - In the hour when God the Word has come down to save us, then let the doors of heaven be opened. Those who do not open say thus: - Even though God came to save us, yet mortals did not perceive Him. And the doors of heaven were opened that we might believe: not that he had need (*fol. 116v^o*) of the opening of heaven, neither the angels. But we did not recognize Him as God save at the baptism and His baptism was at Jerusalem, and at His baptism the heavens were opened, For what? "When Jesus was baptized, straightway He went up from the water, and the heavens were opened", and all marks of honour were shewn (to Him). And so now, - until the *Lakhu Mara*¹⁶, which signifies the epiphany of our Lord, let not the apse be opened. Though both these views are excellent, yet that of those who do not open is the more significant of a mystery.

So those also who hold the lamps and candles, when the bishop ascends the bema, return to the *καταστρωμα* and stand (there): shewing by this that they must not leave the service of the natures which they hold¹⁷. They accompanied the Lord till He came down, and again they have returned to their service. And others add lamps also over the door of the apse; for whereas their Lord comes to visit His creation, they have increased the honour of their service. And though all these things be not done in every place, yet this blessed man [Ishô'Yabh] is diligent to set down, as I said above, those things which signify a mystery.

After Procession to the Bema

The two deacons on duty also he commands to remain in the bema by the altar. And he says, "they remain to honour the altar and the bishop"¹⁸, that thus by the book of the Gospel and the sign standard of the cross they may honour the Hidden One who is among them, the

¹⁶See p.36.

¹⁷I.e. the oil and wax: these deacons and subdeacons represent angels; and according to the East Syrians the angels had charge of the whole world and all the various things therein.

¹⁸It is impossible to say where the quotation should end.

bishop: even as, revealed in a man, the Hidden One fulfilled the dispensation; so that after the union of the body and God the Word worship and honour and lordship was proclaimed to both equally - to God become man, and to man become God [ܡܠܚܝܠܐ]. And the archdeacon or the deacon announces the “Peace” - both of them being on duty - whether on account of the Lord’s (*fol.117r*^o) being brought down to them of earth, or on account of the exaltation of our nature.

Lakhu Mara

Why he says “Peace be with us”, and not “Let us pray”¹⁹, has been explained by us in the exposition of the evening office. And they begin the *Lakhu Mara*²⁰ [Te Domine]. Those who carry censers act according to the ceremony of the evening office²¹.

Trisagion

Those who are on the καταστροφή return and enter the door of the deacons’ apartment [*beth deyaqon*], since the mystery which they were signifying has been completed. And they of the censers also descend. But those on duty remain, and they ascend [the bema and say (?)]²² the Canon “*Holy*”²³, which is the completion of (this part of the service) of the Mysteries²⁴. Thus far they typified only the service of the dispensation; but now the dispensation is completed. They began with nature, and (now) they introduce the Scriptures²⁵, and what follows.

¹⁹In B 255 l.6 we find “Let as pray. Peace be with us”; but this is after the Lakhu Mara. No “Peace” is indicated before it.

²⁰B 254 l.28.

²¹Cf. Tract 2 Chap 11: first those who hold the thurible are blessed by the bishop; then they cense the altar [in the bema?] and the apse; then the bishop (3 times); then the presbyters (once each); then the people all together. See p.52 below.

²²Some words appear to have been omitted here by a scribe. (Both MSS have same reading).

²³Cf. B 255 l.17. The reading of Scripture begins immediately after.

²⁴Or, “which is the fulfilling of the Mysteries”: i.e. the point at which the service proper beings. The context seems to favour this interpretation.

²⁵Cf. B 255 l.30; 256 l.1.

CHAPTER 4

Lessons. The Law

Why they read the Law and the Prophets, and then stand and say the *Shurraya*.¹ As I said at the beginning, nature was first created, and then the Law was given to it; and men spent a long time without Law and Scripture. Thus they signify now also by the lections: they first read the Torah [= Law] wherein is contained (the account of) the creation of nature and the constitution of the world, after it the book of the prophets, which teaches the Law and carnal commandments. Now this blessed man [Ishô' Yabh] says: "The reader comes forth from the door of the diaconicon² and worships to the altar, and comes to the bema and is blessed by the bishop. And the deacon on duty says 'Sit ye, and be silent'."³

That the reader comes forth from the diaconicon: (that means) from the archives of testimony⁴ he comes, that (he comes) not from the apse, is because the peace of the lower church (of angels) is removed from heaven. Although they [i.e., the readers, = lowest church of angels] are high above us, yet they are lower than the church above them, since they perform their service with the voice. And to shew (*fol. 117v*^o) truly that they are not subtle, like the higher (angels), they wear their stole [*orarium*] upon their hands, which is the King's sign and mark⁵. He comes forth from the diaconicon, because the way has not yet been trodden that they should come forth from heaven. He comes to the bema, - (that is) the place of commandments, even Jerusalem. He worships to the bishop, as having received authority from God to speak concern-

¹B 256 l.6.

²cf. preparation for 'Apostle' which seems to shew that the door of the diaconicon was the same as the little door of the apse.

³This is not found in B 255 or 256.

⁴S omits "and". Note of the editor: Connolly also omits it here.

⁵Later (p.42) it is said that the stole on the shoulder is the "standard of the king".

ing the things of nature. But he who is now on duty (is he that) represents Michael⁶; and he commands: "Sit ye, and be silent"⁷.

The people sit, and the priests (also), for as yet the world is concerned with earthly things, and of dust it was composed, and unto dust it returns. And thus all men are equal: no son of Abraham is recognized, nor any son of Canaan. And while he [= the reader] is enacting this period of nature, it is as when the angel appeared to Noah and gave him command concerning the ark. And a revelation was given to Abraham and Isaac, and to Hagar and Jacob: Though laws and commandments were not given to them, but only (this), that they should know Him [God]. So also this reader comes to speak; and all men, whether they be in Jerusalem [= bema] or the world [= nave], sit after one fashion, and typify death.

Prophets

But again: when the first (reader) has begun to read, then another reader after him, in this (same) garb (σχημα), bearing the book of the laws and commandments, ascends according to the manner of the former, and stands at his side, looking for the completion of the words of nature. And then he delivers his testament, even fleshly commandments. And he on duty also commands, "Be ye silent"⁸: shewing (on this wise): Although you behold a change of events, yet this (reader) is of the same sort [lit. "is near to"] as the former, and is not much superior. Whereas he [the other] will command that [the law of nature?] should be kept, (this one) does not add anything to the duties of nature. He corrects [or 'regulates'] nature by the Law, by adding sacrifices and shadows that are to pass away. (*fol. 118r*⁹)

And when he who represents the Law concludes, what then? He [the deacon] commands something else: "Stand ye for prayer"⁹. These things then (belong to) the laws of the flesh, until another revelation is

⁶Michael is not the reader of O. T., though later Gabriel apparently reads the Apostle.

⁷Not found in B 255-6 (Here it only resumes what was said in this page - this is not a second remark of the deacon.

⁸Not in B 255-6.

⁹Not in B 256.

shewn. But after the people have received the Law by which they were trained by the hand of the prophets, and have received the promise of that light which is to dawn: what then? [They go] to Babylon; and there in Babylon they receive a promise, like the promise to Abraham. In the former (promise, God) made Abraham go up (out of Egypt) by a promise and a fixed number of years: So too, there arose in Babylon also a man who was charged with a new (promise); and to him was given a promise concerning the dawning of the Light, and he shews them that they are to abide with the promise, until it [the Light] be revealed, the same space that they remained after the promise to Abraham, until they received the Law and inherited the land of promise. Thus said Daniel: "I saw the man of fire, Gabriel, fly and swoop and come from heaven. And he taught me how long the old oblation must abide"¹⁰. And according to the word spoken to Daniel, "stand up", - (the like) does he on duty employ, in that he says, "Stand ye for prayer". What then? Stand up (and) receive those things which you are to hear¹¹ at the end, which are for your help and your redemption

Shurraya

And when they stand up, they say verses from the Old (Testament), with a Quinta¹² of the New¹³: shewing by this that it was with a promise of the New that the children of Israel were performing (their) sacrifices after their going up from Babylon until the appearance of our Lord. And thus they employ a few verses from the middle of a psalm, or from the end, which are appropriate to the lesson that has been read, inasmuch as they do not depart from the character of the oblations of the Law. But they change (*fol. 118v^o*) (the psalms) forasmuch as a limit (σηκωμα) has been appointed them, until the oblation pass away. But now the bishop does not stand up. Whereas he fills the place of our Lord, let not the promise which was given concerning him be seen¹⁴ [i.e. appear, be realized] get. And as soon as the Shurraya is concluded another mystery is enacted.

¹⁰Cf. Dn.9:21 ff.

¹¹A: "perform" (better).

¹²cf. supra (p.30).

¹³Cf. B 256 ll.7 ff.

¹⁴cf. supra, p.43, note 15.

CHAPTER 5

Preparation for Apostle

Why the deacon takes the Apostle and goes forth from the apse, and (why) some bring it out by the great door, and some by the little one; and why the deacons go forth before him as far as the bema. Now Gabriel has come from heaven [= apse] to announce the conception of John: for the *Shurraya* typifies the promise of the same Gabriel to Daniel and now he comes forth from the apse to perform what he promised to Daniel. And the deacons come before him: which shews that this coming is more excellent than that of Michael¹, who delivered the Old Testament. And he comes and stands, - where? On the right hand of the altar of incense, where he appeared to Zacharias. He stands there on the right hand of the bema. And (he does this) that he may shew him [sc. Zacharias] by his very coming that, "I am Gabriel who aforetime appeared to Daniel and announced to him concerning this hope".

But now Michael announces the "Peace"², or leaves the place where he is standing, and of his own accord hands over his own to this new one that is come. And he [sc. Michael] commands as usual "Be silent"³. And at his word the people are silent; and the deacon cries out⁴. Gabriel speaks, and Zacharias holds his peace. He who has no tongue [sc. Gabriel, representing an angel] speaks, and he who possesses a tongue

¹This can hardly be the same Michael as the one mentioned just below, i.e. the one "on duty", for in chap.4, cf. above, p.37) it was said that the first reader of the O.T. belonged to the lower church of angels, i.e. he was not a deacon (= highest church).

²Cf. later where it is said that he also says "Be ye silent". He evidently said together "Be ye silent: peace be with us" cf. B 257 l.11 where however the formula is "Let us pray. Peace be with us".

³Cf. former footnote.

⁴This appears to be the other deacon - he who reads the apostle: cf. below, where it is said that the first words are said very loud. The names Michael and Gabriel are evidently not confined to the 2 deacons "of the order" or "on duty": cf. p.43, where the archdeacon is called Gabriel at one point.

and speech [sc. Zacharias, represented by the presbyters in the bema: cf. infra] holds his peace. And how this came about I will tell thee: - Because by the hands of his [sc. Zacharias'] son the Old Testament was (*fol. 119r^o*) to be changed and put to silence, before (this event) the priest was silenced, "from whose mouth (men) seek the law"⁵. And the angel Michael also, when he delivered his own testament to him [the deacon Gabriel], commanded that they should be silent; but (he did) not (say) "Sit ye". (He said) "Be silent", first, on account of Zacharias; secondly, because the light of our Lord was not yet manifested over Jordan⁶, they were still in darkness, the people and the peoples. But Jerusalem and those in her - who are the priests in the bema - sit, since they do not yet know the Light, and it has not appeared to them. The peoples afar off⁷, not sealed with the stamp of the Law, stand up before Him: the East runs with gifts, thus offering worship: Egypt receives Him with honour: the rude shepherds especially saw His glory. So also those in the nave stand upon their feet, representing those who received Him immediately upon his birth. The orders of women (also) stand upon their feet, with [i.e. representing] the women who assent to⁸ those things which are above nature, and with those who prophecy: I mean, Elizabeth **and** Hannah in the matter of prophecy, but Mary in that which is above nature. The priests with Zachary do not even consent to accept (that which is according to) nature: - "How shall I know this, who am an old man, and my wife an old woman?" said Zachary to the angel. Not even to nature does he assent, though he is one of those who know the promises and nature⁹. But what does the woman [Mary] (say)? "Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord: be it done into me according to Thy word". And what the

⁵Mal.2:7.

⁶Another reference to the Diatessaron story of a fire, or light, over Jordan at the baptism: cf. p.32, note 5.

⁷I.e. the congregation.

⁸مختف

⁹All this was worked out in Tract I chap.9. By "nature" here he means that it was not against nature that a married women should have a son, as witness Sarah and Hannah.

Magi, who did not know the promises? “For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him”. The shepherds (also) run to worship the Babe in the manger, accepting the promise of the angel. Jerusalem, mistress of the promises and prophecy, sleeps in the grossness of the flesh.

And so¹⁰ the reading of the Apostle typifies: The first utterance he [the reader] shouts aloud and stirringly; which is (*fol.119v*^o) the appearance to Zachary. After this, he speaks gently or quickly: which is the appearance of the angel to Mary, when he announced to her. The people in the nave stand upon their feet, like the East and Egypt and the company of shepherds. But the priests, the fellows of Zachary, sit and are silent. They sit, waiting for the coming of Christ, representing the old order, like Zachary: they are silent, as he was: and they remain in Jerusalem [= bema] as he remained, until the days of his ministry should be ended.

But how is it that some bring the Apostle out from the great door, and some from the little door? In any case he has come out from the apse. Those who bring him out from the great door say thus:- If the angel comes down from heaven, let him come by this beaten way - let him come out from the great door - that his promise may be the more perfect. Those who bring him out by the little door say this :- Although he is come down from heaven, yet he has travelled by the way of the Law of Moses. Where did he appear? At the right hand of the altar of incense. When? While the priest was celebrating the festival of atonement. To whom? To the offerer of the sacrifices of the Law. Let him therefore come by the way by which the Torah and the prophets came¹¹, and let the honour of the standard of the King be enough for

¹⁰A: now.

¹¹Cf. p.37, note where it is said that the Law was brought from the diaconicon, “not from the apse”. Evidently the diaconicon, though ...? [Note of editor: unreadable in manuscript] find with the apse... Here by the ‘little door’ he seems to mean the door of the diaconicon. When he says that the Apostle comes from the apse, he seems to speak more loosely than earlier of the diaconicon as part of the apse. Perhaps the diaconicon was behind the altar.

him, even the stole [*orarium*] which is upon his shoulder, and not upon his hand¹². Moreover the honour of the deacons who come out before him¹³ is sufficient for him.

Now as it appears this [latter practice] is the more suitable: that is, that he should come forth from the little door. And thus he enacts, by the reading of the Apostle as far as the end, (the period) from the time when John was announced until he came from the wilderness to Jordan. And few were acquainted with this period: the angel, and our Lord and John. Thus the bishop also sits, as our Lord sat in Nazareth without (*fol. 120r^o*) showing His power. And he sits in silence. And the priests sit with John and with Zachary. The archdeacon, who holds the bishop's staff and stands, is the angel Gabriel¹⁴, who guarded the honour of our Lord, even though he was hidden from the generality¹⁵.

¹²cf. p.37 above.

¹³cf. p.40.

¹⁴cf. note 4.

¹⁵cf. p.40, where also it is implied that the bishop's sitting down in the bema causes him to be hidden from the congregation. There would appear to have been a low parapet around the bema, such as would hide a man sitting down, but not standing up.

CHAPTER 6

Apostle

Why he [Ishô' Yabh] says, "When he reads three sentences [or "verses"] of the Apostle, the deacon on duty and those with him come down to the door of the bema and worship towards the bema, and a presbyter rises and worships and enters with them". When he reads three sentences of the Apostle, this is what they mean: - The first passage is the annunciation of our Lord; the second the birth of John; the third the birth of our Lord. Now that he is born, - what? The Magi come from the East with the shepherds, and they offer worship. So the deacons also draw nigh to the door of the bema, with their faces, to the West and their back to the East, and that is, when the Magi came. And they worship towards the priest¹, as towards Christ. And when this is done the angel appears to Joseph in a dream (and warns him) to flee to Egypt. What then? "And the angel appeared in a dream to Joseph, and said to him, arise, take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt", etc. Now he on duty, as in a dream, stands at a distance from the priest², in the door of the bema, and not near (him). They bow their head because they are worshipping their Lord, Christ. The priest stands up and worships, and kisses the cross and the bishop, and then goes with them. Here Christ³ goes from Jerusalem⁴. And he descends by the way by which the promises came. From heaven the promises came to Egypt, to the people. And from Egypt to Jerusalem the angel, their guide, travelled with them.

¹This appears to be the presbyter who is going to fetch the Gospel book: cf. *postea*.

²Evidently, the presbyter who is to fetch the Gospel.

³Not the bishop here, but the presbyter of the Gospel: also probably just before.

⁴S adds "to the diaconicon".

And when they arrive at the door of the apse (fol.120v^o) That is at (the place) whither the promises descended, which is Egypt - there they stand and pray a prayer⁵: which prayer signifies the short time they [Joseph, with Mary and the Child] remained in Egypt. Then they enter the door of the diaconicon, whence came forth the Law and the Prophets. And the priest remains in the diaconicon, like Christ at Nazareth: and no one knows what is the lection, which is the office of the priest, except the angels who are standing before him. And thus they typify secretly, and make ready for the procession in which they are going to bring the Gospel: which [procession or Gospel] is the manifestation of our Lord at Jordan.

Now as regards the dispensation of the Old Testament, it is being enacted in the bema, which is Jerusalem, by the reading of the Apostle. That the priests are standing⁶ in wonder and silence: (that is) forasmuch as now their own leader, Zachary, has been put to silence. And thus the priest [who is to read the Gospel] remains in the diaconicon, as it were in Nazareth, until the time of the baptism of our Lord.

⁵ Cf. B 258 l.5,

⁶ It has been said emphatically above that all in the bema sit during the reading of the Apostle. We should, probably, read "sitting" here instead of standing. But cf. next page which tells us that after the Apostle they stand waiting for the Gospel to commence, while a zummara is sung; it may be this that is here referred to.

CHAPTER 7

Zummara after Apostle

Why when the Apostle is ended, the deacon says, "Be ye silent"; and a cantor (*amora*) ascends¹ and says [or sings] a hymn (zummara)². Gabriel, who is the deacon, when he has enacted (his) part as far as the coming of John, makes an end³ and commands according to custom, "Be ye silent"⁴: for thus you are to stand in silence until the true Light appears. And a cantor ascends from [or "on"] the other side to say [or "sing"] the Zummara. That he [Ishô' Yabh] calls him a "cantor", and not a "deacon", (means) that he is not an angel, but a priest of the seed of Aaron. Moreover he called him a "cantor" also, or "singer," because the priests also used to sing praises to the Lord before the people. And he ascends from [or "on"] the other side, and does not come whence the deacon⁵ came: because John came from the wilderness.⁶ But that he ascends to the place of the deacon, the angel, is because he represents how an angel made the promise concerning him. (*fol.121r*^o)

Again, the (readers of the) lessons of the Old (Testament) stand on the left side of the bema, that is, in an inferior position - and also deliver inferior and weak commandments: that is to say, according to their commandments is also their peace. But this one (stands) on the right side. The cantor, John, ascends then and stand on the right hand;

¹...? (Note of the editor: few words unreadable in manuscript) get in a presbyter (see *postea*): but the presbyters all stayed in the bema with the bishop. Hence it is not to the bema he ascends but probably ... of the "places of the readers", elevates somewhat above the bema.

²Cf. B 258, l.31.

³So S; A: "delivers".

⁴B 259 l.7 has "Be still and silent" after the Zummara, but before a Turgama which precedes the Gospel (this Turgama does not appear in George of Arbel).

⁵Apparently he who read the Apostle.

⁶The presbyter of the Zummara evidently impersonates John Baptist.

and with words which John formerly used he also speaks: that is “Halleluiah”⁷ (which is) in place of the saying which John said, “Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand”. And the people answer after him, assenting to his words. Thus says the Gospel: “Then went thereforth unto him all Jerusalem and all Juda; and they were baptized of him confessing”⁸. Moreover the word “Halleluiah” in Hebrew (means) “celebrated with praises”⁹ and he adds a clause (ܠܗܠܠܘܝܐ) (consisting) of phrases from the Old (Testament). And what do they typify? The answer with which John answered the priests, when they sent to him to know his way: “I,” said he, “am a voice that crieth in the wilderness, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet”. This is the first clause (ܠܗܠܠܘܝܐ). And that he says a phrase (or verse) from David: (this is) forasmuch as (John) said ‘I am come with prophecy’: the phrase (or verse) witnessing to the prophecy. By the chant (*Qinta*)¹⁰ which he adds to them, {he shews) the fulfilment of the prophecy. What then? They assent to his words and say Halleluiah¹¹ (ܠܗܠܠܘܝܐ). The second clause (is) the rebuke of the Jews, - “brood of vipers”, etc. That is, even though from the Scripture of the Old (Testament) you maintain that you are sons of Abraham: do not, he says, rely on this. What then? For lo, the axe is laid at the root of the trees; every tree that maketh not good fruits is cut down and falls into the fire”. Heretofore, he says, the Law was wont to cut of the branches of sins from trees that were unprofitable; but now He (God) tears up the roots of sin; and what tree soever is not apt to give fruits is cut down. What then? The priests did not consent to be baptized, (*fol. 121v*^o) or to receive him (John). Publicans and harlots accepted him and cried out “Halleluiah”.

But after the singer has typified the part of John and his baptism: that is to say, the saying (by which) he preached the kingdom of heaven, and again the fulfilment of prophecy, and the rebuke of the Jews: thus

⁷B 258 1.34.

⁸The writer makes the word here mean “praising”, whereas in the Gospel it is “confessing (sins)”. The Syr. word can mean either on occasion.

⁹It really means “Praise Ye Jah” (= Jehovah).

¹⁰This certainly refers to the Halleluiahs: See p.30 (on marmitha), note 10.

¹¹Lit: “and they hallel”.

he makes ready with exultation¹², because he sees the standard of the manifestation of our Lord¹³: he sees the apse shining with lamps, and the subdeacons standing on guard. The doors of heaven are moved, and he smells the odour of the King who is coming. The deacon also at the same movement moves the veils. And when the singer sees these things he stands with exultation¹⁴, and refrains from the teaching of the baptism of the people¹⁵. He turns to praise and meet Him who is coming. And he says a *Hullala*¹⁶. And he descends to the door of the bema. And he stands until the Gospel has gone up; and then he descends¹⁷: indicating the which he [= John] said to the people: "He must increase, and I must decrease". And the door of the bema is, as it were, Jordan, which is before the land of promise: the people cross the Jordan, and then inherit the land and so he stands at the door of the bema, as it were by Jordan. And when he has baptized Christ¹⁸, he descends below; and our Lord goes up to Jerusalem to fulfil His dispensation. He [or 'it']¹⁹ goes to the right side, to the place of the readers, observing the order of the Old (Testament), and with it he makes the New, His teaching, to agree whereas it [= the Gospel] goes first to the bishop, and he kisses it²⁰, by this it shews that the Word who came down from heaven - whom the Gospel signifies - was united to a man taken from us - that is, the bishop.

¹²Syr. ܕܝܝܫܐ deyasa: an uncommon word, and one that really signifies "dancing": but there is no further hint at something like ceremonial dancing. See however note 14.

¹³i.e. probably, the Gospel being carried in procession.

¹⁴Here the word deyasa does seem to imply some sort of action on part of the singer, rather than an attitude of mind.

¹⁵This seems to mean that he does not continue his Zummara to the point where it would signify this.

¹⁶= a division (1/20) of the Psalter: but may here be a Halleluiah.

¹⁷This would seem to imply two levels on the bema - the main portion and that where the reading took place; cf. ch.10 (on Gospel), note.

¹⁸I.e. finished the Zummara.

¹⁹The writer does not distinguish between the Gospel book and the priest who carries it - both here represent our Lord coming to Jordan.

²⁰Cf. ch.54.

CHAPTER 8

Preparation for Gospel - Dress of Presbyter and Deacons

Why Ishô' Yabh ordered that the presbyter who brings forth the Gospel should wear a chasuble [(?) Gk. word φαينوλης], but the deacon's tunics; and that they should carry lights and censers, and go forth before him; and that the subdeacons should leave their places, and come overagainst him with lamps. (*fol. 122r^o*) The deacons, as representing the highest church (of angels), prepare themselves at once to go forth before the King, being distinguished by the dress of the king's servants¹; but the presbyter (wears) the phaina [= φαينوλγς, paenula]; that is, he receives the garb [οχημα] of royalty. But the deacons (wear) tunics, which shew truly the order of servitude. (They have) thuribles and lights, which befit the time of a reception²: for so also our commandments are not suitable for him³. But when he announced the hope of the "revelation of the gentiles"⁴, he commanded, "Be ye silent". Since he is putting the Old (Testament) to silence and causing the New to be heard, let us be silent with the Old, and "stand up" to receive the New⁵. But now that the light of the redemption of all is come, "Stand ye [read 'we' (?)] ready". And when you stand, yield not to any other thought; and do not rush⁶ into prating words, and do not appear (to be occupied) with other thoughts, but pray with your ears, and listen to the words of the Gospel.

Now before this he was commanding others: "Sit ye", he said, and again "Be ye silent". But now, associating himself with the community, he says, "Let us stand ready and hear"⁷ shewing by this (on this

¹Lit "the service of the kingdom" (or 'royalty').

²Or "banquet", "entertainment".

³This refers to the use of the 2nd person in the deacon's former remarks, whereas he now says "Let us stand ready". This will appear presently.

⁴I.e. before the Apostle.

⁵This refers back to before the reading of the Apostle.

⁶Meaning of this word doubtful (ܥܝܕܐܝܬܐ) Brun says that Ethpe. has something the sense of Arabic "se occultavit, erravit".

⁷B 259 l.5.

wise): Heretofore you were commanded commandments suited to you: that is, Eat this, (*fol. 122v*^o) and Ye shall not eat that, and Ye shall not commit adultery, and Ye shall not steal, and the rest: Which things are not suitable for us [sc. angels] when they are commanded. For we do not commit adultery, whether we be commanded: not to commit adultery, or whether we be not commanded: Not yet like manner theft and murder, - if we were not commanded (not to commit them). (But) in this we are with you, when you live spiritually. These things we truly stand in need if, and seek and wait for, - to be set free from inconstancy⁸. And if you are not free from death, neither are we free from inconstancy. And heretofore we had not heard of the hope of the resurrection of the dead, but we considered our labour for you to be in vain. But now that this mystery has been revealed, and the Lord is about to work a redemption for mortals, rightly do we hear this saying [sc. "Let us stand"] together with you. Up to this time we, in the work in which we were (engaged), were going our diligence that we should not be cast off with the devils; nor were we looking for any other salvation; since we saw that to the good sons of Adam their reward was given in this world. Now we have heard of the hope of the resurrection of the dead, and we have gotten the hope of being set free from the evil disposition and passions of intelligent beings⁹; (therefore) "let us stand" and joyfully become one company, and "let us hear" the utterances which rejoice us and you: let us be one church. For this cause he commanded "Let us stand ready". And so the priest¹⁰, who is our Lord, seeing angels and corporeals being well prepared to receive him, utters a fitting speech: that is "peace be with you"¹¹.

Now on no occasion when angels appeared or even our Lord, appeared, have we heard that He used this saying: (but) to Adam, "Where

⁸ *حيال الله* a common word with George. It means 'a bias towards' (what is bad), possibility of deterioration, defectibility. According to him even the angels are not entirely freed from this till after the general resurrection day.

⁹I.e. such as intelligent beings may have.

¹⁰This is evidently the presbyter who reads the Gospel (not the bishop), cf. p. 56 *infra*.

¹¹B 260 l.31 George knows nothing of the long Turgama to B 259-260.

art thou?"; to Abraham He said, "I am El Shaddai, God", etc.; to Moses, "Moses, Moses, loose thy (*fol. 123r*^o) shoes from off thy feet"; to (sic) Isaiah, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a high throne". But what now? A word that is (more) lofty: "Peace be with you": the trouble which was laid upon the nature of mortals has been loosed: the distress which reigned over you is taken away. Heretofore envoys were coming to you with terror: now the Lord of the envoys with peace. And when he employs this (saying) the spiritual and bodily ones pay the interest: "And with thee, and with thy spirit":¹² out of that which is Thine we give Thee thanks, even the wisdom which Thou hast taught us. And since, when we were unworthy, Thou didst honour us, with what can we repay Thee. And shewing that He is God become man and man become God, even our Lord Jesus Christ, the people give glory to Him.¹³

Afterwards, what? "Be ye silent now"¹⁴. And why? Now that we have been set free, and have been united one with another, and have become one people, our Saviour, who is of our race, is come to redeem us and you. And I [sc. the deacon] have been made His [i.e. the presbyter, who reads the Gospel] keeper of the order¹⁵ that you may hear from him His words, - which I know, because I have learned the mystery [or "secret"] of them. Harken, that he may recite (them) into you.

The people are obedient, as it were to the master and (his) servant¹⁶; and they turn their faces towards the king who has appeared [i.e. the reader of the Gospel], uncovering their heads, which before were covered by the sin of Adam, and they lift their faces upward, for the sake of the house of Adam, whose nakedness they have seen. And thus they remain until the reading is ended. But the ministers who are hold-

¹²B 260 1.32.

¹³The idea no doubt is that the words "thee" and "thy spirit" signify the manhood and Godhead of Christ.

¹⁴Not in B 260: but at 259 1.7 (after the deacon's "stand we prepared")

¹⁵ܡܨܬܪܐ usually translated by me "on duty": it means one of the deacons who make remarks to the people.

¹⁶Perhaps a reference to the parable of the supper.

ing things stand in order: the subdeacons in the midst of the gangway, since they have no authority to ascend to the throne; the deacons of the tapes, on either side of the bema. And they¹⁷ do with the thuribles as is proper: they go and are blessed by the bishop, as (by) our Lord. And they go to the altar [on the bema (?)]¹⁸ and to the cross and the Gospel; and first to the right side, (*fol. 123v*^o) and then to the left, and thirdly to the band of deacons on duty.

Incense

There are some who give (incense) to the deacons together with the congregation¹⁹. But those who do not give to them together with the congregation say thus: - As the order of slaves may not banquet with the masters and the guests: but after these have banqueted, then they banquet: so it is not right for the order of deacons, who perform a service, to be associated with the congregation, but when the congregation has been censured with the incense, then let those [the deacons] be censured. But those who give them the incense together with the congregation say thus: - Since we are become one church in Christ, let us not name (any) slaves or masters, but let us offer (them) the smoke and incense alike, associating them together. Now the former follow the distinction of spiritual and corporeal natures; the latter say that we are (now) above nature. And such is the tradition of the one side and the other.

¹⁷“They” appears to be indefinite, not the deacons just mentioned, but others.

¹⁸There was an altar on the bema: cf. Tract 2 ch.2, *fol. 52r*^o

¹⁹On incensing see above, p.36.

CHAPTER 9

Salutation of the Deacon Before the Gospel

Why in the days of passion and at Baptism the deacon says before the Gospel “Be still and silent”¹, and does not say “Let us stand ready”. Because the days of the fast appertain especially to us², and the angels are not sharers (in it) with us. Again, the passion and death of our Lord were for us. Baptism again was given to us; while the spiritual beings do not share with us in the fast - for neither do they eat - nor do they take part with us in the passion, since it was for us that Christ died; nor do they take part in baptism. Since we are baptized into the death of the Son, and typify death and the resurrection, rightly now that he is reading the Gospel which signifies these things, does the deacon command us³, as being himself removed from these things. But when he transacts the dispensation of redemption and declares the doctrine (thereof), (*fol.124r^o*) they [the angels = deacons] are associated with us. When the reading signifies those things which are peculiarly ours, he [the deacon] separates himself from us, and does not share in the commandments that are given to us, - the fast, the passion, baptism. But whereas these things are peculiarly ours - since an angel actually strengthened even the Lord of glory Himself in (His) passion, as it is said: “There appeared to Him an angel from heaven strengthening Him”; and again in His fast; after He had vanquished Satan, angels drew nigh and ministered unto Him; and again when He was baptized, angels came down to honour Him⁴ - rightly now does the deacon command us, not associating himself with us. (But) on festivals and Sundays - since we typify the resurrection, and at the resurrection angels sat upon the stone, and the supernal orders rested with us - He associates Himself with us when on (these) days of gladness we stand up to keep festival. And these things according as it is fitting we have set down.

¹B 259 l.7 the formula is ܐܠܬܐ ܢܥܡ ܕܠܝܬ ܒܝܬܝܢ ܠܝܬ ܒܝܬܝܢ lit be ye in silence and be silent

²ܕܠܝܬ ܡܕܝܬܐ ܐܝܡ ܕܠܝܬ Lit: “an attendant on us”. ܕܠܝܬ is evidently a noun here, and probably = Persian (so Brun), i.e. “satelles”, “lictor”. In Tract I Ch. 13 fol.28v^o Good Friday is said to be a ܕܠܝܬ of the fast, i.e. “an appendage”, not part of the fast itself : since they broke the fast that day, i.e. after the celebration of the Mysteries on Thursday night.

³Using the 2nd person (“be ye still”) see heading of chapter.

⁴The Diatesseron story again: see p.32 above.

CHAPTER 10

Gospel

Why a presbyter draws near and supports the Gospel together with him who reads; and why, when the Gospel is ended, the bishop kisses it, and the archdeacon takes it and sets it upon the altar, and why there are some who when the Gospel comes forth kiss it¹, and some who do not kiss it until it comes down from the bema². That the [second] presbyter supports the Gospel, - (with thus) agree the words of our Lord who says: "Upon the month of two or three witnesses every word shall stand". Moreover from the beginning God said thus: "It is not good for Adam to be alone: I will make for him", (etc.) and God, when He appeared to Abraham, shewed Himself with two angels. And at our Lord's manifestation [or 'Epiphany'] the Father bore witness to him, and the Spirit. So now also, when the presbyter draws near to support the Gospel, (it is) in order that the Gospel by the writing, the presbyter by (his) voice, and another (*fol. 124v^o*) by an (outward) sign and in silence, should typify the three witnesses who are worthy to be believed.

And when, it is said, the Gospel is ended, it goes to the bishop, and he kisses it: shewing that this dispensation was fulfilled by a Man who is from us, (but) who was anointed with the Godhead. And so let us regard ~~the~~ the Gospel as God the Word who dwelt in a man who is from us, even the bishop. And as the dispensation was to be fulfilled

¹I.e. when it has come forth (from the apse) George constantly uses the present in this way for the past in what follows, it appears to be implied that this was the kissing of the Gospel in the bema by the bishop just before the reading.

²This can hardly mean that immediately after the reading the Gospel is taken away from the bema, for in chap 13 we are told that after the litanies the Gospel and cross are taken in solemn procession to the apse. What is meant may perhaps be gathered from ch.12, p.60 which refers to this as follows: "Its [the Gospel's] descent from the place of readers signifies their leading Him to be crucified: its being set on the altar cf. p.55 (signifies) His crucifixion". So its coming down from the bema can only mean from an elevated part of the bema where it was read. Another passage (Zummara) seems to imply that there were two levels in the bema.

by the reading, the bishop took part in it by kissing it [the Gospel] at the beginning, and now (again) at the end³.

But we have already said that the going forth of the Gospel from the apse is the coming of our Lord from heaven to Jerusalem, and the reading of it His teaching and dispensation after baptism. But now that He has fulfilled His dispensation, - what? He has come to deliver Himself to death. And the archdeacon, the bishop's substitute⁴, takes the Gospel and sets it upon the altar⁵. That he⁶ himself does not set it is forasmuch as by the instrumentality of others He was hanged upon the cross. The priest [= who read] comes of himself [sc. to the bishop, for him to kiss the Gospel], and the Gospel with him, forasmuch as He came to the passion of His own will, and was not brought (thereto) by force.

It remains to say why some kiss the Gospel when it goes forth⁷ from the apse, and others do not kiss it until it is entering⁸. Those who kiss it when it is coming forth say thus: - What time the Light of the world has been manifested and has come from heaven [= the apse] to Jordan [= door of bema]⁹, let us go forth to meet Him with rejoicing, since we know that He is our lifegiver. Those who do not (go to) receive it [= the Gospel] say thus: - In his coming from heaven, even though the angels and spiritual ones perceived Him, yet we did not recognize Him until He was baptized, and John bore witness to Him, and the Father from heaven cried out, and the Spirit came down. And

³Cf. p.48, above.

⁴ܠܡܠܝܚܐ ܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ: George elsewhere uses ܡܠܝܚܐ "Fill (the place) after" in the sense of "Take the place of": his usual word for "represent" is ܡܠܝܚܐ

⁵This is evidently the altar on the bema. cf. p.79.

⁶Probably the reader still, (possibly the bishop).

⁷I.e. probably just after it has come forth (before the reading): cf. p.54, note 1

⁸This may mean: is entering the bema proper, after coming down from the "place of readers": cf. p.54, note 2.

⁹Cf. p.48.

if indeed we typify these mysteries that were done there, (*fol. 125r^o*) it is right that we should shew forth even as it was there done, and not now run to receive Him: even as we did not there know Him nor receive Him: and that we should not turn our faces towards Him until we know Him accurately. And so at the "peace" which he [the presbyter who reads the Gospel]¹⁰ gives, and (at) what the deacon says - "Let us stand ready" - now we stand ready when our faces are towards the East - let us so stand and answer to the "Peace", that we do not turn our faces round; and thus let us remain until we hear the character of a man's speech¹¹, let us not assent to everyone who calls (or 'reads') until we learn whether he has the truth. For our Lord also wrought wonders and miracles through His name to this end, that He should be known and preached and believed. And so now we act in like manner as it was done at the baptism: when He was baptized and began to perform signs, then many believed in Him. So we also, by His teaching and His signs¹² let us be converted to Him; and after His passion let us receive Him¹³, - when He is going down from the dispensation of the bema, after his passion¹⁴, that we may imitate the women and the disciples. Before His passion they did not account Him worthy of worship; but the women honoured Him with ointment, and were styling Him the Messiah, the Son of God - some of them, with the disciples - though they (so) called Him as one of the anointed ones of the

¹⁰cf. p.50, note 10.

¹¹For further notes on bema cf. pp.48 & 50. This last sentence seems only to mean the same as the one before. Those in the bema probably stood usually facing the bishop and the altar (of bema) with backs to apse. They are not to turn round to greet the Gospel till it begins to be read.

¹²I.e. during the reading of the Gospel cf. p.55.

¹³The word **ܡܠܟܐ** here means "welcome", "Give a reception to": it refers to the kissing of the Gospel after the reading.

¹⁴This may mean that those who did not kiss the Gospel before the reading did not do so after the reading at once, but only when it was about to be taken back to the apse after the litanies (cf. ch.13, p.71): for on pp.55 & 60 it is said that its being set on the altar (of the bema) after the reading = crucifixion.

of the house of David, and as (any) religious man who is called a son of God: - as it is said in a certain place, "sons of Elohim", and again, "My son and my first-born Israel", and, "Sons have I reared up", etc. But of worship they did not account Him worthy before His passion. But when He was glorified on the cross, and rose from the grave, women took hold of His feet and worshipped him, and the disciples, when they saw Him, worshipped Him. So let us act, - let us worship Him with the women and the disciples, and honour Him. And as it would seem the (opinion) of these last is (the more) accurate.

CHAPTER 11

Homily after Gospel

What the sermon (or "homily" - amorutha) after the Gospel signifies; and why the deacon says here, "Sit ye, and be silent"¹. As our Lord spoke in parables with the multitudes, and interpreted those parables to His disciples alone, so does the sermon typify: even as He interpreted over again to His disciples the parable of the seed and the sower, and the field and the tares, when they did not understand it. That the deacon says "Sit ye, and be silent", shews on this wise: Now you have heard the signs of our Lord, and His dispensation: but you have not understood. And when you have learned with the disciples what is the sign of the coming of the end of the world, cause yourselves to die [= 'sit down'] a voluntary death, that you may know hidden mysteries.

And thus the preacher shews in his instruction an exposition of the festival² and an interpretation of the reading. The interpretation of the reading in a type of this teaching (given) to His disciples. By the allegorizing (?) of the feast (he shews), as it were, that He was transfigured on the Mount of Tabor before Cephas and James and John, and appeared in a vision of the resurrection³. And as we are those who came to believe through the disciples, and not through the crucifiers, rightly now do we learn over again the interpretation of that teaching which was delivered before all.

Again differently: That the deacon commended "Sit ye, and be silent", shews thus: O men, do not suppose that you are equal to under-

¹B has nothing corresponding to this: cf. pp.260-261 (i.e. after Gospel); but the MS A has here in margin "On the turgama" whether this = the turgama (= hymn) before the Gospel in B p.259 is not clear: a real homily on Gospel is rather implied.

²ⲙⲁⲙⲟⲩⲩⲁ cf. Brun's lexicon S.V. ⲙⲁⲙⲟⲩⲩⲁ "allegorice exposuit": whence the noun here may mean "an allegorical explanation"

³I.e. in a glorified form, such as He would have after the resurrection.

standing the power of the dispensation of our Lord, unless you rid yourselves of the grossness of your flesh by death. Die now by a mystery [i.e. by sitting down], that you may be able, like Christ, who is risen, and know the good things that have been done towards us. And the preacher stands, like our Lord, (*fol.126r*^o) shewing that He is above sin, and was not deserving to die.

And these things the deacon commands, as a steward who knows the will of his master: for so the deacon also learns beforehand in [lit. "from") the diaconicon those things that the teacher is about to interpret: whereby he signifies this: that hidden things are first made known to the spiritual beings in secret, and then they shew them openly. He [Ishô' Yabh] says also that the deacons do not sit: that is, the spiritual ones are not liable to death: also, they stand in honour of our Lord.

CHAPTER 12

Litanies

What the Litanies¹ here signify ; and why he who stands on duty proclaims the first one, and he who reads the Apostle proclaims the second. Already in the exposition of the evening office we have shewn that the litanies typify the passion and death, and the petition and supplication shew forth His [Christ's] resurrection. So now also: for the reading of the Gospel typifies the dispensation of our Lord after the baptism: its descent from the place of readers² (signifies) their leading Him to be crucified: its being set on the altar³ (signifies) His crucifixion. By His crucifixion was given a peace for mercy: I mean, in that He reconciled with our race the Father who sent Him; and again, when He asked for mercy upon His crucifiers, and upon penitents also, - like as He acted towards the thief. Now that the leaders [= deacons] have seen these things, they urge the people to ask for mercy, as sinners and penitents.

First ascends Michael, as he is the first leader, and knows the petitions that are suitable for mortality, - as we have said in the exposition of the evening office. But now he does not say "Thou that art rich in mercy"⁴, and those other (petitions)⁵. Why? Because lo, His goodness and His mercifulness have now appeared; and that He "is rich in mercy" you have learned, since He has visited you in His mercy; and (*fol. 126v*^o) that He "is immortal"⁶ and did not suffer in the death of the son of your race⁷ whom He joined to Himself. Again Gabriel, the leader of the New (Testament) comes to perform his part. And he typifies death and resurrection. Now that He is risen from the grave, and the dispensation is accomplished, it remains for Him to ascend to heaven.

¹The word Karozutha is applied to all addresses of any length made by the deacon, but especially to the litanies led by them. cf. B p 262.

²cf. ch.7 & 10 (note).

³No doubt the altar in the bema cf. 10.

⁴B 263 l.1

⁵It seems pretty clear that the subsequent petitions (B 263 ll. 3-19) also were in George's church omitted in the liturgy.

⁶B 263 l.14.

⁷i.e. in the Man, Jesus: or in His human nature.

CHAPTER 13

Expulsion of Catechumens

Why two deacons bear the cross and the Gospel, and those (deacons) who are on duty go before them; and what is the meaning of those sayings “Whoso has not received baptism”¹, (etc.); and why, when they say “Go, ye hearers”, the deacons bind the veils, and the subdeacons (shut) the door of the nave, (and) the religious women² (shut) the women’s door. Now that the whole dispensation has been completed, the spiritual ministers, who are set over the spiritual service, typify the ascension, That they do not say the canon “Holy”, is because this canon asks for mercy: (but) the mercy of God has (already) been revealed (and so) it is not becoming that now a petition for mercy should be uttered. What then? The presbyter who reads the Gospel supplies what is fitting: he prays, “Do Thou³, we beseech Thee, complete with us Thy grace, and pour out upon our hands this Thy gift⁴, which Thou didst appoint us from the beginning of Thy dispensation. And as in all things Thou hast renewed us, renew us on Thine accusation into heaven by the manifestation of Thy Spirit, which Thou dost make to dawn upon us.

And the deacon prepares the people that they receive, like the disciples, the blessing of the ascension⁵. And when he gives the command, the archdeacon and others bear the cross and the gospel⁶; and those on duty (go) before them. For with four is the ascension accomplished, even as all things connected with us have their accomplishment by means of four: by 4 elements we are controlled: and there are four humours in man: the quarters (of the words) also, which are round

¹B p 267 l.25.

²Syr. Benath Qeyama: lit “daughters of the covenant”.

³Text ܐܬܝܬܝܬ “as”: but read ܐܬܝܬ “Thou”.

⁴Cf. B 266 l.27ff; also 267 l.11 ff. What comes after this appears to be merely ‘ideal’

⁵I.e. the blessing which symbolises that given by our Lord at His ascension.

⁶Cf. B 268 l.32 (after dismissals).

about us, are four. Man also turns to the right and to the left, and forwards (*fol. 127r^o*) and backwards. And if in three parts we lift a thing up, but it is not lifted up in the other part, its elevation is incomplete. Again, as the earth and the waters minister to us with what they bear, so also do air and fire minister. And so two deacons accompany the ascension walking, and two laden [sc. with cross and Gospel]. And when they arrive at heaven - the apse - those on duty stand at the door, and those who bear the cross and the Gospel enter to the altar: for even so those who bear our Lord⁷ shall conduct Him even unto His throne, and the rest remain here until they cut off the vision of the disciples [= presbyters assisting the bishop] from beholding the ascension: even as Luke has said in the Acts: "And while they were looking into heaven, while He was going, there appeared to them two men standing by them in white apparel". He says "who were standing by them", as though they were not far off: that they might cut off their vision from striving after those things which cannot be reached, and teach them that He is about to come at the end of the times. And thus they stand, waiting for the bishop to bless the people, even as He [= our Lord] commanded them⁸. The bishop is now a ruler in stead of our Lord, from whom he has received that whatsoever he binds and looses is bound and loosed also in heaven. And thus, as our Lord has said: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I amongst them", - so is the priest as though Christ Himself should bless the people.

But when they have received the blessing, like the disciples, when He lifted up His hands and blessed them - what then do those spiritual ones [= deacons] do? He on duty, Gabriel, cries: "Whoso has received baptism, let him depart". That is, O mortal men, all these things that you have seen, by faith are they known now, by which (faith) you received baptism. And if in the death of Christ and in His resurrection you were baptized, confess that you also with Him shall rise up in the day when He shall come to be glorified in His saints. And if, having been baptized, you do not believe in the resurrection, you shall also become aliens from the fold of the kingdom. Hear Paul saying "We

⁷Syr. ܡܚܬܝܢܝܢ practically = "Christophori Viri".

⁸Cf Acts 1:4.

who have been baptized in Christ, in His death have we been baptized". And if you have been baptized in His death, you have risen with Him by a mystery: and if this be not affirmed by you, go forth from the fold of the kingdom.

Again his fellow, Michael, says: "Whoso receives [or 'accepts'] not the sign of life, let him depart". That is, even though you have been sealed with the sign of life, yet it is from the institution of the tent of testimony that you have been signed - with the sign of the prophets, who prophesied concerning this mystery of life which has been revealed. And if with the sign of these you have been signed, add to the sign the cross. Now the sign shews the capacity of the body⁹: the filling up of this capacity is action [or 'performance']. If then you have been signed with prophecy, paint your members with the paints [or 'drugs'] which those [sc. the prophets] have made known to you who have signed you, that you may become an immortal body. But if you do not receive [or 'accept'], go forth from the fold of the kingdom¹⁰.

⁹Or 'extant' (ܐܬܬܢܐ): this seems to refer to the anointing of the whole body which came before the baptism: See next note.

¹⁰This is an obscure passage but I think there is no doubt that the general drift is this: George interprets the words (in present = future tense) "Whoso does not receive the ܡܠ ܐܬܬܢܐ sign of life", as referring to the Eucharist. Thus above he speaks of the "mystery of life" as the true fulfilment of the prophetic sign, i.e. the pre-baptismal rushma [see Tract 4 cf.29 where it is said that the ceremony of baptism as far as the anointing (inclusive) signifies the old dispensation]. Now "mystery of life" is a common phrase for the Eucharist. Again it is said that by the use of the 'drugs' [another common term for Eucharist] forshewed by the prophets [the coal in Isaiah is regularly interpreted of the Eucharist] those who 'receive' are to become "an immortal body". This applies naturally to the quickening effect of the H. Eucharist (a common idea). Finally he uses the words "but if you do not receive" absolutely, which is natural only in connection with the reception of the Eucharist. He says them in effect that the words mean this: Although your bodies have been anointed with the rushma, yet this is, as it were, only a prophetic symbol of the Eucharist, the "true mystery of life", the drug which will make your bodies immortal: if you do not fulfil this type of the reception of the reality, you may count yourselves as aliens from the kingdom of heaven. See *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* p.78 note 2.

Then he also who carries the cross - the cherub who bears the chariot - says: "Whoso receives not (the sacrament) [بمقد] let him depart. That is, understand, O brethren, that what things these your directors have been commanded: I mean Michael, of the sign, and Gabriel of the true image: faithfully do they command you; for this door no man can find except he do what your directors have commanded. Cease then from the things of death, and receive those things that have been said to you; and if you do not these things, how have you been raised up from death by a mystery? Go forth from the fold of the kingdom. (*fol.128r^o*)

But when three witnesses have borne witness to the people¹¹ he who files up all completeness¹² does not bring in for them (another) witness or command. But he commands the subdeacons¹³, who are the middle church (of the angels), (saying): "Go, ye hearers, see (to) the doors". (That is), you, (who are) our hearers, known you, he says, that we have been commanded this commandment: After the entering into heaven shut ye the doors, upon which the sinners knock. So our Lord also said concerning the foolish (virgins), that when the door was shut they came and knocked at the door and were saying "Lord, Lord, open unto us". So they now signify by driving out the doubters, even as our Lord said by the parable of the king and his servants: and he cast out him that had not on him fair garments for the wedding-supper into the outer darkness. When they drive out the doubters then they also shut the doors, upon which the foolish (virgins) knock. And as He said again, At the end choose out the tares from the midst of the wheat. That the subdeacons so choose out who are of the middle church (of angels) is because they have authority over these things : though from the women also has been chosen an order of deaconesses and of portresses; since the whole race of Adam's house is one, even though they differ in the matter of fruitfulness and natural fecundity.

¹¹I.e. the fourth remark is not addressed to them, but to the subdeacons.

¹²I.e. makes a fourth, cf., what was said about the number 4 at the beginning of the chapter.

¹³Not the people.

Those then [= the subdeacons] do as has been said to them, and they shut the doors. And those who have partaken of baptism without (good) behaviour¹⁴ are left in a middle place: They do not go forth without because of (their) faith, and they are hindered from entering [the apse] because they have not borne the yoke of labours¹⁵. Thus is it done in regard of those who are in the nave: and the veils of the screen¹⁶ of the bridechamber are tied. So too the bishop also, who is in the place of our Lord, (and) who has been left on earth [sc. still in the bema] to fill His place (*fol. 128v^o*) in the mysteries¹⁷, begins (His) teaching by means of a course of action which signifies nature and its cleansing¹⁸.

But others say differently, - that in the beginning of the faith there was a custom, (established) by the apostles that baptizandi were not baptized until their 30th year - that is, at the age¹⁹ of Christ - and one year before baptism they used to sign them with the baptismal sign, signifying by the signing of the year before the baptism of John before our Lord. They say moreover that even those who had been baptized, and on account of accidental (sins) which they had contracted were abstaining from receiving the Sacrament, used to remain at the service of the mysteries up to this point; and for this reason the deacons used to cry out thus; and when he [the deacon] said "Whoso has not received²⁰ (baptism)", "and whoso does not receive (the sign of life)", they who were not baptized used to go forth; and again, if any were not receiving the sacrament for accidental (causes), he would go forth, and those who were receiving [S adds: the sacrament] would remain: and then he commands the subdeacons to shut the doors.

¹⁴Possibly this only means the same as the 'labours' mentioned just after: see next note.

¹⁵George uses "labours" to signify the office of those who actually minister at the service.

¹⁶ܠܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ

¹⁷Lit. "to fill the place of His mysteries".

¹⁸This refers to the washing of the bishop's hands, cf. next chapter.

¹⁹Reading ܡܠܚܘܬܐ for ܡܠܚܘܬܐ (text) "resurrection" [the MS S confirms this conjecture.

²⁰The past tense which follows shows A to be right.

But let them be answered thus: Why then, since this practice has been changed, have not the words (also) been removed? But granting that the deacons command these things²¹, why do the subdeacons shut the doors, and why does not one of the congregation²² do so? How has this office been [So S: A as originally translated] assigned to the subdeacons? But as I have already said, blessed Ishô' Yabh set down and insisted on such things as should signify mysteries, and did not so much care about the (actual) things; and since the subdeacons have authority over intermediate things as (representing) the middle church (of the angels), and those in the nave stand in a middle position - [he ordered the subdeacons to shut the doors of the nave]. Because they [= the congregation] have been signed with baptism and have not been diligent in labours, they stand in the nave. And they shew by this that those who have been diligent in faith and have been sanctified in their soul, but have not (*fol. 129r^o*) laboured with their body, and those who have laboured bodily but have not received baptism, are seen to be [or 'appear'] in one order and in one mansion²³; and those who in name have received baptism, but have believed in our Lord after an heretical confession, go forth out of the kingdom. So those who carry the cross and the Gospel do not place them on the altar until the veils are bound; even as the disciples were not able to attain to [= follow with their eyes] the destination of our Lord- whither He ascended.

²¹I.e. probably use the words they do - especially "go ye hearers".

²²I.e. literal carrying out of the words "go ye hearers" [cf. p.126].

²³The author denies that there was a time when the unbaptized used actually to go out; he says Ishô' Yabh wrote things that signified mysteries, regardless of literal sense of his words - hence he says in effect that the baptized laity stand in the nave, where good unbaptized people would also stand (if there were any): for baptised people who are without "labours" (i.e. probably, not of the clergy) form one class with good and diligent unbaptized people, such as the deacons' remarks refer to: it is only heretics who are excluded. The fact is, that the discipline of the catechumenate (the actual putting forth of the catechumens after the scripture, being long obsolete, the author is quite puzzled by these formulae of dismissal and is driven to allegorize them, in order to extract some meaning from them.

And when the mystery of our Lord's dispensation has been accomplished, and He has ascended into heaven, and made His disciples wise by His spirit, they begin the anthem [onitha]²⁴ which signifies His passion and death, and His resurrection and all His dispensation. When the community have received their [= the deacon's] Gospel [or 'announcement'] and are making confession with them, and all the disciples [= the presbyters in the bema] are saying the anthem, then Simon Peter, the bishop, who is head like his Lord, and all the disciples with him, typify the death with Christ.²⁵

²⁴B 269 (see next page) only the "anthem of the mysteries" is spoken of by George: he says nothing of the long anthem preceding it in B 267-8.

²⁵I.e. they sit on the ground.

CHAPTER 14

Anthem of Mysteries

What signifies the sitting of the bishop and the presbyters during the Anthem of the Mysteries¹; and why one of the presbyters takes the bishop's staff and stands in place of the archdeacon; and why four deacons bring out water and towels, two to the bishop, and two to the priests. Oh the power of the Spirit! - how greatly He has supplied the power of His wisdom in the mind of this blessed man (Ishô' Yabh) What then? The bishop and his companions, the disciples typify the death of Christ², and die with Him, that they may live with Him in the resurrection. But he does not leave the Church without a substitute; and even as he has risen up in place of his Lord³, so he delivers the staff of his pastorship to another after him, that he [the other] may pasture the flock that was committed to him. He then, and his companions die. I have already said that sitting on the (*fol. 129v*^o) ground signifies death everywhere.

But others explain differently : - They say that the sitting of the disciples now represents their hiding and concealing themselves for fear of the Jews. So Abraham Bar Lipeh has handed down and interpreted: and thus he says: - This sitting signifies the hiding of the disciples. But man, (if) the sitting is the hiding of the disciples, what does the rising up and entering into the apse signify? When the disciples had received the Spirit they went forth to all quarters: and so it would be right, according to what you say, that they should depart: but not by one way: but from Jerusalem they [the disciples] went forth to the gentiles, from the gentiles to death, from death to the kingdom. But if the gentiles dwell in heaven [sc. the apse], whither did Christ ascend. It would be right therefore that when the priests rise up, some of them should go to the women, some of them to this side of the bema, and

¹B 269.

²Sc. by sitting on the ground.

³I.e. "has taken the place of": it does not mean that he stands up.

some of them to that side, and that they should preach the Gospel in every place: but not one of them should be seen going into the apse [= heaven]. But we, travelling in the right way, shall leave Abraham Bar Lipheh in his madness, and return to our own lucid expositions⁴, and complete (them) on the same principles with which we began. The sitting of the bishop and the presbyters signifies death. The staff which one of the presbyters holds is the authority which is handed on from generation to generation. What then?

Washing of Hands

Four deacons now come forth, two bearing jugs and basins, and two (bearing) towels, and two wash the bishop, and two the priests. But the washing of the bishop is different from that of the priests. And that the bishop washes first, while the other deacons are standing at the door of the bema, is forasmuch as our Saviour first died and rose, and our whole nature rose afterwards. His washing is different from that of the priests: that is to say, they (*fol. 130r^o*) bring him two towels, one upon his knees, and one to wipe with: even as our Lord is different from our nature - though not⁵ completely - in that He was conceived without wedlock; and His baptism was more excellent than theirs that were baptized in His name; and His resurrection was on the third day; and *He was distinguished into (lit. 'as') two (natures?) rather than any other of the race (lit. 'nature': of men)*⁶. And that the bishop shares in the washing with the priests: that is, our Lord was of our nature in His manhood, and whereas He has risen, we also shall rise with Him. And that they [the deacons] come forth from the door of the diaconicon, and not from the great door, that is, (they come forth) as it were through the door by which death entered in, - from that namely, through which we travelled according to nature. And so the washing,

⁴Lit.: 'to the lucidity of our own expositions'.

⁵Reading ܐܠ ܥܪܬܐ for ܐܪ ܥܪܬܐ (so S).

⁶ܐܝܬܐ ܡܠܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܐ ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܝܗܐ ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܝܗܐ ܕܡܠܬܐ: the above is the only rendering that satisfies the grammar but the Syriac expression is peculiar.

which is a sign of the atonement, comes by the way by which death entered. Thus has it been brought about by the coming of God the Word, - instead of Satan, an angel: a woman instead of a woman: instead of the subtle serpent the priest Zachary, by the conception of whose son Mary was reassured: and instead of the driving forth of our nature - I mean, after it had eaten (the forbidden fruit) - our nature has been lifted up by the baptism of the tree of life. And as Adam did not die at once, so neither do we rise at once. Again: - Since there is no man who does not sin, according to the Scripture, God's mercy has been sent to weak nature through the door of death, that it should be pardoned of its sins, according to the mercy that has been shewn to it, that it may thus enter the kingdom purified from sins and faults. But when these (types) have been fully enacted in the bema - even (the types of) Cephas, or even our Lord, death and atonement - straightway they typify the resurrection. And if our Lord promised His disciples that "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in their midst", it is not absurd if the (*fol. 130v^o*) bishop sometimes fills the place of our Lord, and sometimes the place of Cephas.

And now [they rise] from the dust, like Christ, by a mystery, and become immortal. In Jerusalem [= bema], where, as inspired doctors are agreed, the resurrection will take place, there they rise up like Christ, and then they set out in the way to heaven [= the apse].⁷

⁷George is here anticipating: he tells us later that before the clergy leave the bema the mysteries are prepared by the archdeacon and others.

CHAPTER 15

Preparation of Bread and Wine

Why, whilst they are saying the anthem in the nave, the deacons repeat it in the apse, and why he [Ishô' Yabh] here says¹, they prepare² the mysteries; and why he did not indicate how the bread should be baked and the wine mingled³. When the holy Church was made perfect by the descent of the Spirit in all true fullness of the holy faith, the spiritual powers also received thereof, as the heavenly apostle has said: "In the Church hath been revealed the manifold wisdom of God to the principalities and authorities that are in heaven". And now, after the church has shewn forth the dispensation of our Lord by the anthem, that by this faith they may be made worthy of the kingdom; then He is revealed to the spiritual beings [= deacons]; and they confess with us, agreeing with our confession without doubting. That the archdeacon and those with him make ready [or 'arrange'] the mysteries, as Ishô' Yabh teaches, (is) because it is time that they should prepare the mansions⁴ of the kingdom.

But let us explain [lit. 'say'] why he did not teach how they should prepare them, and whence they have come: even as he has spoken of such small matters as the washing of the lamps, and the rattle⁵, and the like. But as our Lord said "I go to prepare you a place", and "In My Father's house there are many mansions", but did not make known how, and where: even so here also, this blessed man did not make known whence they [sc. the bread and wine] have come, or how they were

¹Or 'says that here'.

²Or 'set in order' (ܡܚܝܬܐ)

³We have already seen (p.29, note 1) that George has no commentary on the "Order of preparation" B 247-252. This positively excludes any such order.

⁴Frequently after this point the eucharistic elements, the Sacrament, is spoken of as the (heavenly) "mansions", i.e. the (heavenly) portion to be given to the saints.

⁵These matters were dealt with in Tract 2.

prepared⁶ and arranged, inasmuch as it passes our nature to know what are the good things that are prepared or whence they are, or whether (*fol.131r*^o) they were from of old or have (only) now been prepared. That he prepares for us we have learned from our Lord, and that the ministers of these things are the spiritual beings we know, and that they bring in those that are worthy to the kingdom. He has revealed to us; but what the good things are we know not. For our Lord has also said, “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it gone up upon the heart of man, what God hath prepared for them that love him”.

And he also⁷ [sc. Ishô’ Yabh] shews by an intimation concerning the preparation of the mansions, which the mysteries are [= represent], inasmuch as it is hidden from us whence they are: not that he was negligent to teach concerning them: but he depicted a type of those things that are incorruptible.

⁶ ܡܠܟܬܐ

⁷ ܡܠܟܬܐ indicates a change of subject.

CHAPTER 16

Procession from Bema to Apse

Why, while they are saying - "Gloria"¹, they roll (back) the curtains, and the deacons come forth and bring in the priests. And each one of the things that are here (done) do thou explain to me. Now that the dead² have risen with our Lord by a mystery, and the mansions of the kingdom have been prepared, and the banquet has been set in order, - what? The spiritual ones [= deacons] within come forth and bring the elect into heaven [= the apse], even those who are the chosen wheat. And first they move the veils. Why? The dead who are in Christ shall rise first at the cry: They see the veils which are [before (?)] heaven, that they are moved; and they (themselves) are shaken free from the dust, and become immortal, while with the sign of the Trinity³, with which they have been signed, they rise from the grave at the completion of the whole dispensation of Christ, - which before the death they had shut off - so that the heavenly ones and also the spiritual ones [= deacons] were learning from them⁴. Now they come forth rank after rank, two and two: that is to say there are many of them. And first (comes) the archdeacon and his associates, and after him the others, two and two. But if there happens to be a superfluity of deacons, or, unavoidably, a deficiency ... Nevertheless what ought to be done is this: That there should be three orders (or ranks), according to the three orders of the churches of the supernal beings, cherubim and seraphim and thrones.

They [= the deacons] come forth, the doors (*fol. 131v*^o) being open, with their heads bowed; and they come to Jerusalem, the bema, and worship the troops of saints [= presbyters] who are therein. Then they

¹ *مَجْدِس* Cf. B 269 l.31.

² I.e. those sitting in bema.

³ This probably refers to the sayings of the 'Gloria' at the end of the anthem: cf. B 269 l.31.

⁴ Sc. after the dismissals the veils were tied (ch.13). Then the death of Christ was represented by the sitting of the bishop and presbyters in the bema during the anthem (ch.14). See what is said of the angels learning from the church in ch.15 (begin): but the subjects here are confused - there those in the nave = church: here those in the bema are spoken of.

turn their faces to the altar⁵, and worship, indicating that, “As messengers of that Lord who sits there we are (sent) in your regard. Be ye strengthened in our Lord, and set out towards him. You have now gotten perfect knowledge after the resurrection: see the mansions prepared for you, that they are arranged. And the veil⁶ lies over them, that they may be concealed from the eye of sinners.

And when they say [= ‘have said’ here] the anthem (onitha) together, the spiritual and corporeal beings⁷, who are now become one Church, and are brought into concord, having been freed from death and inconstancy: and (while) now, their differences being brought into agreement, they together say “Gloria”, - the elect make haste to go to the heavenly mansions. And they worship them, rendering thanks to Him also who sent them embracing one another with worship (or ‘obedience’), forasmuch as they have been held worthy for their labours to become heirs of these good things; and also because natural passions have been loosed (from them), and all human nature now abides in love. The spiritual ones also, the deacons, worship, and go to meet them, and salute [lit. ‘receive’] their faces and their feet⁸, and go before them, as better knowing the way that leads to heaven. And when they have brought them to heaven [= apse] they (themselves) remain without, not daring to enter until the saints enter, from whom they have learned the revelation of the Spirit⁹. Thus the bishop enters like Simon; and after him his contemporary¹⁰, who after him received his authority, - after his decease.

⁵It is not clear whether the altar in the bema (cf. Tract 2 ch.2) is meant or that in the apse. (It appears, from what follows that the altar in the apse is meant.)

⁶Shoshepa = a small veil for placing over the mysteries: a different word from that used for the screen curtains (= wela)

⁷I.e. the deacons and the presbyters (= disciples of our Lord).

⁸This means ‘guide them and carry their shoes: cf. below, where it is said that the deacons carry the shoes of the priests. [But there as here it may only = “salute”].

⁹cf. ch.15 begin.

¹⁰ܡܬܪܬܐ ܝܬܝܠܝܬ lit ‘son of his age’, his co-equal, coadjutor: there is a passage somewhere in George where he says that the bishop is like Peter and the other bishop like his disciples, one of whom is to receive the authority after

But he who shall be found alive in the day of our Lord's revelation shall not die, but shall be changed, as blessed Paul has said: "Not all of us", he says, "shall sleep, but all of us shall be changed"; "suddenly", he says, "as in the twinkling of an eye, with the last trump, when it calls, and the dead shall rise incorruptible; and we shall be changed".¹¹ (*fol.132r^o*) So also here, he who bears the staff, who did not die¹² with the bishop and the apostles in the bema - since he did not sit upon the ground - is changed in the resurrection without sleeping: another bishop, who is found standing in the place of Cephas and holding his staff, shall carry it along with him¹³, and go after Cephas, and shall deliver it up to the master¹⁴ of the priesthood¹⁵: and they shall answer and say, "Behold us and the Son Thou hast given us, that by Thy grace we have been preserved" [Is.8:18]. And the deacons bow their heads and receive [or salute] the shoes of the feet of the priests. And thus the priests enter according to priority of merits, one by one. And the bishop first worships before the altar, and (then) the others who are about him: and rightly, for he, as a good shepherd, worships and hands on the orders [= rights] of his pastorship.¹⁶

And when the bearer of his staff enters, the archdeacon takes it from him and places it by the altar. The archdeacon is appointed over the priesthood like an angel: he takes up the authority [= staff] and lifts it up to the heavenly king, (and) the pastors who have ruled with it he makes to rejoice in heaven [= apse]. As the authority came down from heaven, to the same heaven it has now returned with honour.

¹¹1 Co.15:51-52.

¹²I.e. did not sit in the bema during the anthem: the priest who hold staff, and stood in bema during anthem.

¹³Apparently Cephas, the bishop.

¹⁴I.e. the archdeacon, who is said elsewhere the angel who has charge of the priesthood; cf. later where is also the remark about the archdeacon "being appointed over the priesthood".

¹⁵I.e. Christ. The verse of Isaiah is quoted again later on introducing the Creed (cf. p.77).

¹⁶I.e. the others have no right to bow until he has done so and thus, as it were, handed on his privilege to them.

And when they enter and inherit the mansions, then the spiritual ones [= deacons] enter after them and observe one [the] order of their service¹⁷, and stand (in) orderly (array); as is fitting that they should stand before the king: the king sitting on his throne¹⁸, and his vice gerent¹⁹. Cephas standing before him. According to the title that he has received, 'head of the spiritual phalanx²⁰, that is (of) the other, the disciples [= presbyters] and spiritual ones [= deacons], each one in his order - so he also stands.

He [Ishô'Yabh - as it seems] also says that the subdeacons leave their places, and come, and stand in a rank [or 'row']: since they also have been set free from inconstancy, and those on high and those below have been brought into our enjoyment. And as sons of the royal stock, the rank of men²¹ (*fol. 132v^o*) rules first²²; then, as being near to the throne, the deacons, who are the highest church (of angels); after them the middle church [= subdeacons]; and on the qestroma [Gk. κατασφωμα], the readers. And they stand orderly, as befits the session of a king.

¹⁷ܠܚܒܐ ܐܝܢ ܠܚܒܐ: perhaps we should read ܐܝܢ ܐܝܢ "each one the order", etc. S obviates the difficulty by omitting ܐܝܢ "one".

¹⁸Here the king is Christ, represented by the mysteries on the altar: Cephas is the celebrant. George has told us (p.70) that the celebrant sometimes impersonates Christ, sometimes Cephas.

¹⁹Lit. "the keeper of his place", which simply = locum tenens.

²⁰This refers to Cephas = bishop]. See beginning of next chapter.

²¹I.e. the presbyters, who are not compared to angels but to the disciples.

²²I.e. has the ascendancy, and occupies the higher position.

CHAPTER 17

Creed

Why they here say “We believe”¹ Now that Cephas [= bishop - as it seems] is standing at the head of the church, and with him the pastors and all the congregation of the church, on this side and on that: he with the pastors, who are after him, one after another, delivers the flock to Christ, the true shepherd. And they deliver up the flock saying “Behold us and the sons Thou hast given us [Is.8:18]² of the faith which Thou didst teach us. Lo, we have offered them before Thee; and the staff of faith with which we have ruled them is this”: - And he begins first with the true faith; and then the whole congregation of his sons with him. That is to say: With this faith I have taught them to govern themselves; and lo, they shall be true witnesses to themselves and to me, and they shall confess the true word of faith which I have taught them. And while those within say (it), those without answer after them³: forasmuch as, though in fact⁴ those within, and the holy ones and elect are of more account, yet in faith they are (all) equal. And when Cephas and those with him indicate the confession, rightly do all those who have made confession of his truth there confess collectively. And whatsoever those who are within commence, those without seal. And thus rightly do they shew forth the confession of the Father, and the Son who joined to Himself a man who is from us, and accomplished in him the dispensation⁵: and He, the same, is God and man, in two natures and two hypostases⁶ (qenome). And (they confess) the Holy Spirit, the One who proceeds, and one church, holy and apostolic. And they seal with the resurrection of [our] bodies.

¹Cf. B 270, l.30.

²Cf. p.75. Nothing similar in B 269f.; the speech here is probably ideal.

³So Narsai: B 270 ll.28-29 makes the priest only say the Creed.

⁴Or, ‘as regards action, or function’.

⁵I.e. that relation of the two natures which it is right to confess: the word ܠܚܝܬܐ ‘right’, ‘straight’ practically = ‘orthodox’. [the Syr. for *orthodoxos* is ܠܚܝܬܐܐܝܬܐ, ‘rectae gloriae’ (a latin translation actually found in Marius Mercator’s version of one of Nestorius’ sermons - “rectam fidei gloriam” - Loofs *Nestoriana* p.300, l.18)].

⁶Note of editor: the exact translation of ܩܢܘܡܐ *qnoma* is not *hypostasis* [*parsopa*] but: nature in the concrete; individual nature existing by itself, numerically one, separated from others, substratum, this or that reality. In Christ are 2 qnome: the divine Word, and the human qnoma of Jesus.

CHAPTER 18

Diaconal Proclamation for Catholici (*fol.133r^o*)

Why the deacon here approaches the door of the apse; and why he says, “he who reads the “Apostle”; and why four deacons draw near to the altar, two from this side and two from that, and minister.

Now that everything as far as the judgment and retribution has been completed, the deacon who fills the place of Gabriel [= deacon of the Apostle] draws near, inasmuch as he holds the [New] Testament. That he stands in the door of the apse overagainst the king, is because he is the steward who dispenses before the master of the house, who gives the wages. And first he indicates [lit. ‘says’] the character of his words.

“Pray you”, he says, “that peace may be with us”¹: and that those who are first may not be filled with wrath, according to the parable of the king², and be angry against the master of the house, thinking that they ought to receive more; and that envy may not prevail, if there be one to whom mercy is shewn, and another who receives according to the measure of his labour. For this disposition is justly arranged by the mercy of the master of the house. And he [the deacon] gives mansions to the “bishops and the presbyters and the deacons and the youths”³ and the rest, with “our sons and daughters” and “brothers” and sisters and “fathers who are deceased”, and the “believing kings”, who were the last to come to the vineyard. Afterwards to the “prophets”, who were the first to enter the vineyard; and to the “apostles and martyrs” who (came) after them. And he has begun with the last and (come) even unto the first, according to the parable of our Lord, who said to His steward, “Call the workers, and give them their hire; and begin from the last and (come) even unto the first”. What then?

¹Cf. B 271 l.19.

²The reference is here to the parable of the labourers.

³ⲕⲁⲓⲁⲓ: i.e. the choir (?) This refers to the diaconal address B 271 ll.24ff. Note of the editor: the word for choir is ⲕⲁⲓ; for youth: ⲕⲁⲓⲁ

“This oblation⁴ of their labours receive, Lord”, he entreats, according to his custom, “and sanctify it by Thy power; and shew them an open face and make them to partake of the portion and inheritance of the saints. And we, the spiritual ones, may we be partakers with them; and may there be to us in Thy judgment help and salvation; and make us to rejoice in the life of the kingdom of the grace of Thy Christ who has redeemed us”. The other deacons, when they have seen (*fol. 133v^o*) him who is on duty draw near, run also to minister; and they perform their office until the Lord⁵ satisfies (the wish of)⁶ them that fear Him. And the cherubim and seraphim stand by the throne and hover (over) and soothe the king by their ministry, having their faces cast down and not daring to look upon Him.

First Gehanta

The bishop, who is in the place of Cephas, offers prayer for his flock: for the righteous and for sinners⁷: and he “shuts up all men in disobedience, that the mercy of God may be done upon all” [Rm. 11:32], shewing that our nature is unworthy to draw near to His ministry⁸. And he asks for mercy⁹ upon himself and upon his flock. And he concludes his prayer with an open voice¹⁰; and his sons of his flock join their prayer with him by the seal of Amen.¹¹

⁴B 272 ll.3-11.

⁵I.e. the elements on the altar.

⁶The word *حسد* means to satisfy, acquiesce in, so that the phrase = “until the Lord does what His suppliants ask”: probably referring to the priest’s ‘petition’ (cf. next page).

⁷This evidently refers to the first gehanta of ‘Addai and Mari’ (B 274 l.29 - ‘albeit we are sinners’). Nothing of all that occurs between B 270 col.2 (after deacon’s address) and 274 l.27.

⁸Cf. B 274 ll.30-31.

⁹Cf. B 274 l.31.

¹⁰Cf. B 274 l.36 (*kanuna*).

¹¹Cf. B 274 l.40.

Kiss of Peace

And he signs them and himself with the sign of the cross¹², as is customary, shewing that he also, like them, is in need of mercy. When he has finished the petition he shews them the sign of peace and mercy; and he utters to them the saying which our Lord used to His disciples after His resurrection: that is, "Peace be with you".¹³ And they pay the interest of obedience, as obedient sons¹⁴. Then he on duty, seeing that the prayer of Cephas has been accepted, and that he has used peace with his flock, announces to them: Even as the master has given peace to you, do you sow peace, one towards another, in your hearts, and "give the peace one to another in the love of Christ"¹⁵; and as you have been set free from the flesh and from mortality, loose (from you) the things that belong to the flesh, and leave railing one against another, that now you may see the book of the First-Born¹⁶ who has been worthy to enter into the kingdom.

Diptychs

And the deacon (who is) in the place of Gabriel (*fol. 134r^o*) goes forth first, and stands on the right side, between the place of the good and of the weak and sinners; and he commemorates those who have been summoned to the kingdom, and read their names, in the first place mentioning the living, whom the resurrection shall have overtaken, even those who are in this life, - bishops and presbyters and deacons and the generality of the church¹⁷. And again Michael, the earlier governor¹⁸, comes forth; and he reads the saints who have under his governorship [= OT saints]¹⁹ and ministry, whose names God has written.

¹²Cf. B 274 l.39.

¹³Cf. B 275 l.3.

¹⁴Cf. B 275 l.5 (= "and with thee and with thy Spirit").

¹⁵Cf. B 281 l.28 (after the diptychs: whereas here it is before). Narsai also places the peace before the diptychs.

¹⁶I.e. the diptychs. B 275-281.

¹⁷Cf. B 275, ll.11-25.

¹⁸I.e. the deacon of the O.T.

¹⁹Cf. B 276, ll.1-8.

And he sets in order first the fathers of nature²⁰, and the fathers of the promise²¹, and the fathers of the Law; while Gabriel arranges [= reads in order] his people order after order, with him. And both of them proceed [lit. 'come'] with a list (arranged) according to priority of time. And at the end the people confess collectively the whole sum of them together.²²

But it remains to say why with some the deacons Gabriel and Michael together recite in order the living and the dead, and with some Gabriel alone recites the living, and both of them the dead. Those with whom Gabriel recites alone say: - Those who have been sanctified by the New Testament, and who have become familiar of the Lord by their faith and their works, - these let Gabriel recite, who is entrusted with their testament; and let not Michael mix himself up with him, since this testament which Gabriel dispenses is more exalted than the charge of Michael. But those things that belong to Michael, if they pertain to nature, - Gabriel also has authority over them - since nature is one - and if they pertain to scripture, the Testament of which Gabriel is deacon goes along with this, inasmuch as all the ancients saw the Son from afar, and longed for Him. The Son did not long for the Old Testament: but the prophets longed to see Christ and His time; and the apostles did not long to see the time of the prophets. So then (*fol.134v^o*) let Gabriel represent the New Testament, and let both of them take part together; and let not Michael be deemed worthy to come forth until gifts²³ are brought for those who pertain to Gabriel. Just as he does not come forth to the bema except when he has seen that those have been mentioned who belong to the testament which he administers - I mean Abraham and Isaac and Israel - so let him come forth here until he has learned that those who belong to Gabriel have been accepted.

²⁰I.e. those who lived before Abraham.

²¹I.e. Abraham to Moses.

²²B 281, ll.24-25. Cf. p.82, note 24 where the reference is the same as here (to the people's response at end of diptychs).

²³I.e. apparently, their commemoration (cf. p.82, where the same expression occurs).

Those with whom both of them recite together say: - As Gabriel has had a part in those belonging to the Old Testament, let Michael also have a part in those of the New; for now suspicions and doubts have been removed, and the former ones, the prophets, and the latter ones, the apostles, are one in Christ; and both Testaments bear the same character. And though one was given as it were to children, and the other to full-grown men, - yet children and men are one in nature. Man is one when he is a child and when he is a youth and an old man: so let us not make a difference between the saints of Gabriel and those of Michael. And the idea put forward by both parties is very reasonable; but the first ones have kept the right rule, because they have proceeded in the natural way.

People's Response after Diptychs.

And Cephas [= bishop], when he has seen that the gifts²⁴ have been given out, makes petition together with the whole community²⁵ that we may partake with the righteous, - and sinners also who have believed; and although they be not worthy on account of their doings, yet for the sake of the Divine mercy. Then they proceed together in common: - "Yea Lord, let this petition be accepted for all men²⁶; and make us all worthy of Thy kingdom". And they include in it [sc. the prayer] presbyters and deacons, and the whole covenant of the faithful who have departed²⁷ before the time of His coming and (they pray) also for all things that they need²⁸ as weak men; and for all the church and (*fol. 135r^o*) her sons, that she may appear to have been worthy of this communion²⁹ of good things, even though she be not worthy. And for all spiritual and corporeal beings may this our petition be accepted, and do Thou, Lord, pardon all sinners.

²⁴Cf. note 23.

²⁵B 281, ll.24-25 (cf. p.81, note 22).

²⁶Cf. B 281, l.30 - 282 l.2 to which what follows seems to refer, though it is in no sense a paraphrase.

²⁷B 281, ll.30-31.

²⁸This perhaps refers to the "crown of the year", B 281, l.33.

²⁹Cf. B *ibid.* l.34.

CHAPTER 19

Bows

Why, when they say “We believe”, at the mention of Father and Son and Spirit they worship; and (why) also when they say “And for all”¹, and “All we”² they worship again towards the altar and one another. Because by this faith they have been made worthy to inherit life, and (also) through their confession of the Father and Son and Spirit, when Their name is mentioned they worship, rendering thanks that He has held them worthy that by this holy Name they should live. They render thanks also to one another, inasmuch as they have been made of one mind, fixed by the agreement of [= expressed in] this confession: and they say thus:³ - “We confess and worship Thee, God, the Father of truth, who wast pleased to fashion us in the beginning, and when we sinned didst redeem us by Thy beloved Son - a Nature which is from Thee [= who is of Thy Nature], and the image of Thine Essence [Hb.1:3 Peschitta] - who joined to Himself a man of our race, and dwelt in Him, and made for us in Him a renewal and life”. And again: “Blessed are the mediations who were sent to us by Thee, who in their net have bought us nigh to this association with Thy majesty. Let not our faith be vain, even though it be without works. And we also, a blessed congregation, who have been renewed by the resurrection, from whom thoughts of inconstancy have passed away, let us be at once in love and harmony, becoming all of us one body in Christ; and let us love one another as members one of another”. And at (the mention of) the Son also they say: Blessed is Thy coming to us, who hast renewed us by Thy dispensation and converted us and redeemed us from death and made for us all one true body, and art Thyself our head”. And: - “Blessed is the power of the Spirit, who has sanctified the spiritual womb (of baptism)⁴ and begotten us and made us

¹B 281, l.30.

²B 293, l.27 (deacon's part).

³The speeches which follow appear to be purely ideal.

⁴A common Syr. idea.

(*fol.135v*^o) one new and holy lump, which is worthy to inherit the heavenly good things, and understands all the honourable things that have been given to it". And also at "the resurrection of our bodies" (they say): "Let us worship Him who has raised us up, and (let us worship) towards one another who have been brought into harmony in one mansion together".

And again (at the words) "For all", "and "All we" (let us worship); for thus, one for the sake of another, and by prayers one for another, we shall become heirs of the good things of the kingdom. Wherefore let us render an obeisance [*matoniya*, bow, *μετανοια*] to God and to each other, and let us understand the greatness of the grace that has been given to us; for the yoke of the slavery of the flesh has been lifted from us, and we are become spiritual by the resurrection; and we have known the power of the Creator, and how and why, through these changes, He has raised us up. For this cause we offer worship to the altar and to one another, treating the altar as the throne of God.

CHAPTER 20

Deacon's proclamation before Anaphora ('Let us all confess' etc.)

Why he [the deacon] says now that the "priest" approaches; and why he says now that he offers the oblation of such an one; and what signal does the deacon make when he approaches the door of the apse; and all things that are here observed do Thou declare to me.

All things having been completed which were observed from the beginning of the world up to the judgment and the enjoyment (of heaven): now that this (part of the) celebration is finished, the priest comes that he may fill up completely this celebration of the dispensation, and that those things which in the other offices were transacted symbolically may now be fully known: And as in the things touching Adam the things of Christ were hinted at, and mysteries of the same things were enacted in connection with Noah, (*fol. 136r^o*) and thirdly in connection with Abraham, and further in connection with Moses and the line of prophets, and then (these things) were mystically fulfilled in Christ - (but) are to be actually perfected in the end of time: so did we also mystically represent the dispensation: as it were with Adam at the evening service, with Noah and Abraham at the night service, with the prophets at the morning service; and in the Mysteries up to this point we have represented the dispensation of Christ. Now finally (we represent) that which is to be. And according as one is of more account than another, so do we shew honour to one more than to another. At the evening service, wherein we represented the things of Adam, we also shewed forth the creation of the world. At the night service, in connection with Noah and Abraham, we toiled with greater labour, according to the length of the life of Noah, which reached as far as Abraham. At the morning service, according as the prophets rose up rapidly one after another, so did we set the psalms one after another. In the coming of our Lord, because John was the prelude to this, so at the beginning of the service of the Mysteries we commence with the seventh Marmitha with its proper chant, which signifies the coming of John; and thus we honour the mystery which belongs to this

service [= early part of Mysteries] more than the former ones, inasmuch as Christ is superior to those who were before Him.

But now that we have filled up the glory of this [service: - sc. the early part of Mysteries], we proceed to depict an image of the reality that is to be revealed. But whereas in this world we employ words and sentences in our praise, all our symbolizing (thus far) was celebrated at once with the sounds of words and sentences. Now, however, that we are rising from the graves, we have no need of words, neither of names: but then [sc. in the resurrection] we shall know even as we are known, according to the saying of blessed Paul: “Now”, he says, “I have known in part: Then I shall know even as I am known. Now we see by a mystery in parables, but then face to face” [1 Co.13:12].

And so, because from the beginning he [i.e. Ishô'Yabh] was celebrating this (present) dispensation, up to this point in all the prayers he who prays or reads or sits has been styled either “presbyter” or “bishop”; but now the name of presbyter and bishop has been taken away, and he [= the celebrant] is called “the priest”. Because now the Priest, (*fol.136v*^o) Christ, fulfils His ministry, the name of presbyter and bishop is removed: “for he is priest and pontiff”, says blessed Ephraim, “and He it is that offers and accepts, also consecrates”. Now then, “the priest” approaches, and with him also the deacon: that Gabriel may shew his [the priest's] honour, and that he [the priest] may say the things that are required.

In two matters did this blessed man [Ishô'Yabh] honour this part of the service [lit. ‘this dispensation’]: in the first place he called him who approaches “the priest”; secondly, in that the wording¹ of the service is of one (kind), and is not (composed) of mixed expressions² from this and that testament, or from this and that scripture, such as were employed in [services signifying things of] the present world³. Corre-

¹ ܬܢܗ ܩܠܪ

² ܬܢܗ ܩܠܪ

³It is not meant that Scripture is no longer quoted, but that anthems etc., composed entirely of Scripture are not used in this central portion of the liturgy.

sponding to a division of members (of the body) and divided minds, so was the disposition of our service [hitherto]⁴; but after we have become all of one mind and one thought and one soul, the conductor of our service is one, and he speaks from one mouth, that is with [= employing] an anaphora which is of one person⁵. And the deacon also does not now make use of those former (expressions); but seeing that the king [= the priest] has drawn nigh to administer the service himself, and not through mediators, he changes his phrase. He approaches as usual, and worships as a slave. He does not say “Peace”, or “Let us pray”. And why should we pray? It is needless. Because he has arrived at the place of peace⁶ he does not even mention peace, for lo, the Lord of peace is performing the service; but he commences with an address which teaches a new state of things; and as being himself associated with us, he shews and says: - “Let us confess and make request and beseech the Lord, all of us, purely and with groaning” [= contritely]⁷. We do not know, O you hearers, as formerly, depict mysteries: for then there was place for forgiveness of sin, (*fol. 137r^o*) and even if we had spoken with minds disordered, perchance God would have pardoned us. But now our minds are purified, and inconstancy has passed away from us and from you, and you have been set free from death.

So then pray “purely and with groaning beseech”⁸; for great in truth is this mystery which is being enacted, and according to its greatness, so is your fear. “serve Him with fear” [Ps.2:2]; “with groaning” also, because He is merciful, and will not withhold His mercy. And moreo-

⁴I.e. apparently, many took part in it: cf. reading of Scripture and the long diaconal litanies: now the priest is practically the only minister of importance.

⁵ܠܗܘܐ ܐܢܗ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ lit. “with an offering of the oblation [= Syriac for anaphora or canon] of one person: i.e. he uses a form of anaphora ... in the 1st person singular. See p.93.

⁶This perhaps means that the pax has already been given in the congregation.

⁷B 282 l.7. What follows is imaginary.

⁸B 282 ll.9-10.

ver “stand with a fair standing”⁹, and “look” with the eyes of your hearts “on all things that are now being done”, and know their greatness. And what are they, O, spiritual one [= deacon], who hast filled our heart with terror? “The awful Mysteries”, he says, are being consecrated”¹⁰. “It is an exceeding fearful thing [lit.: “an exceeding great fear”] to fall into the hands of the living God”, says the blessed apostle. Now also “the awful Mysteries are being consecrated”: it is just that we should fear, tremble and be affrighted. Let us not be negligent, for we are standing before the King: “the wrath of a king is (as) angels of death”, says the wise man. “Lest He be wrath and destroy us” [Ps.2:12], let us not refuse to weep: even though it be not with the voice, lest He be stirred up against us. Let us “kiss the Son, lest He be angry” says blessed David [Ps.2:12]; and if He angry “You shall perish from His way”, for “if His anger burn He will destroy; but if He be pacified “blessed are all they that trust on Him”. Wherefore you also do so. And who is it that consecrates? Tell us, O spiritual one. “The priest”, Christ, “has drawn nigh to pray, that by His mediation peace may be multiplied to you”¹¹. Be not then neglectful: if God has let Himself down, and put on your body, and sanctified this and deified [ܡܠܝܟܐ] it, and has sat on the right hand and entreats for you, be you encouraged, and “lift up your heads, for your redemption is at hand” [Lk.21:28]. “Be you strengthened in our Lord and in the might of His power” [Eph.6:10], for peace is being multiplied unto you. But what? “Bend your eyes down”¹², and humble yourselves, as men to whom good hath been done, though they were unworthy. See that the Creator has been reconciled to you, although your sins were multiplied: for indeed you were deserving of great evil; but our God, who is rich in His mercy, has redeemed you by His Son, and has lifted you up to Himself. Wherefore, because you have been treated with favour, “bend

⁹B 282 1.10.

¹⁰B 282 1.12 “in the fearful mysteries which are being hallowed”. Narsai [p.10], as George, makes it the principal sentence: “The dread Mysteries, lo, are being consecrated”.

¹¹B 282 11.14-19.

¹²B 282 1.17.

your eyes down”; and because you have been lifted up “stretch your mind to heaven”¹³. Since you have been lifted up spiritually, let your thoughts be spiritually uplifted; and “watchfully and diligently beseech and supplicate”¹⁴ God. “Watchfully”, for as much as you have been rid of mortality, and are become companions of the watchers [= angels]; “diligently”, since with diligence the Creator has visited you. “Make request” of [or “seek”] Him, because He has made request of [or “sought”] you; “beseech” Him, because He has come down to you unmasked. “And let no man dare to speak”¹⁵. And why? Because speech has been taken away from you, and silence also: you are become as the angels: copy them: You have been made like to the spiritual ones: You shall not speak; but if you pray imitate them. You shall not remain without prayer, since even the spiritual ones pray. You shall not pray with speech, lest you become strangers to their assembly. And in silence [or “stillness”] and fear be standing”.¹⁶ In silence [or “stillness”], because there is no motion in the world to come: “in fear”, because God is judge [Ps.75:7]: fear Him and tremble at His laws.

And when the blessed one [= deacon] addresses the people with these (words) then he adds also the customary expression that he may not be strange and be unheard: but “Peace be with us”¹⁷, he says, not “Let us pray, peace”: for now that Peace is with us concerning which He is come, even the Redeemer of all. If he has said (lit. says) “by His (*fol.138r*^o) mediation peace be multiplied unto you”,¹⁸ what should he pray now but “Peace be with us”? And you shall not have need of a petition, because peace, the Lord of peace is with us. God has come and invited us; He has “healed the broken of heart”, and has “:bound up their sicknesses”. But what does the priest do - he who has been entrusted as a steward on behalf of his flock? He acquiesces in the

¹³Ibid. 1.18.

¹⁴Ibid. 1.20.

¹⁵B 282 1.22.

¹⁶Ibid. 1.25.

¹⁷B 282 1.26.

¹⁸Ibid. 1.16. (words in the diaconal address, commented on just before).

saying (of the deacon), and does not estrange himself from the command, and does not become obstinate of persuasion; but he “draws nigh, that peace may be through his mediation”¹⁹; and he shews a fair beginning of his way.

But the veil²⁰ is removed before him: whereas the mystery of the kingdom has been revealed, he is become heir of heaven and earth, and he knows the mansions²¹ that have been prepared. Clearly he is not a stranger to the mysteries: so that he should not be removed from the kingdom²². He has come and made ready, and the mansions have been revealed. He worships before the altar for a symbol that Christ also in His manhood “spent the night in the prayer of God” [Lk.6:12]. But after this, what? The deacons take up their ministry: the cherubim with wings [sc. fans], the seraphim with lights: for some of them take fans like the cherubim, and some of them lights like the seraphim; and they surround the altar, and shew honour to the priests and the oblation. As slaves they minister to the Master, Christ, the Priest and Pontiff who has appeared in the world. And they shew the character of their service: for a deacon approaches the door of the apse, to the middle place between heaven and earth²³. And the presbyter also who reads [= the reader of] the Gospel, prepares himself [or “holds himself ready”] for the offering of the oblation [or “anaphora”²⁴]; and he receives the thurible; and he is blessed by the prelate [lit. ‘head’ = bishop], that he may not have the authority of himself. Even Christ was sometime baptized by John.

¹⁹Ibid. ll.14,15.

²⁰Shoshepa, the veil over the oblation. See B 282 l.20 (col.2).

²¹As observed earlier, George compares the eucharistic elements to the heavenly mansions promised to the saints.

²²I.e. apparently, by having the oblation covered before him.

²³I.e. probably, Paradise, = the καταστροφωμα.

²⁴See p.87, note 5 (ܠܕܝܢܐ ܕܝܢܐ). See B 282 ll.28,29. S alters the sense by reading ܠܕܝܢܐ “deacon”, for ܠܕܝܢܐ “Christ” to “and as a deacon he for the second time takes the thurible”: but what follows implies that the presbyter represents Christ - this is in accord with the author’s symbolism.

CHAPTER 21

“Gratia Domini nostri” and “Sursum Corda”

Why the priest now says the Canon (*fol. 138v^o*) “The grace” and the things that now (follow). The priest, having consented to become the representative [lit: “likeness” of his Lord, shews forth (his) obedience: and those things that the deacon, Gabriel, has proclaimed, he shews fully: - “The grace”, he says, “of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Spirit be with us all”¹. That is to say, in the first place: - Peace is not perfected, save when the grace of the Trinity is (given): for neither did Christ do any one of those things that were due to our nature without the will of the Trinity. Wherefore “peace”² should come before “grace”; since, if there is no peace there is no grace; and “grace”³ comes before “peace”; because grace first shews favour, and then peace comes. “And the love of God the Father”: for when Christ fulfilled grace, He fulfilled it by the love of God the Father. And there is one will in the whole Trinity; but the descent⁴ is by grace; the good pleasure [or ‘consent’] of the Father is by love; and the communicating of completeness is through the descent of the Spirit. And thus when the Father willed our redemption, it was not accomplished until the Son consented and came down; and when the Son came down and visited us by His dispensation, our redemption was not perfected save by the descent of the Holy Spirit, who was communicated to the apostles and taught them the things of

¹B p.283, l.4.

²Referring to the deacon’s remark at the end of the diaconal address just before (B 282 l.26). The text here has the order “grace ... peace”: but the above is the order required by the context.

³This evidently refers to the “Peace be with us” after “it is meet and right”, B 283 l.20. So the Canon: “The grace” etc. has a “peace” before and after it: that is evidently the meaning.

⁴I.e. the descent of the Son at the incarnation: does George also think of a descent of the Son in the eucharist? It would seem so.

⁵I.e. with ‘Amen’: B 283 l.8.

the Son: even as He said: “He shall put you in remembrance of all that I say to you, and He shall teach you the truth” [Jo.14:26]. And if this truth is not shewn forth by the Trinity, it is then idle that at His baptism the Father cried out from on high, and the Spirit came down like the body of a dove [Lk.3:22 Peschitta version], and the Son was baptized and accomplished His dispensation.

When the people have concurred in the will of the priest⁵ and his command, according to what he has said to them, associating them (with himself)⁶, then he shews forth another utterance: - Now, O mortals, (fol.139r^o) that you have become partakers in the human passions of the Son, and have believed His dispensation, which is on your behalf, you have been lifted up aloft. And indeed to this end He came, that He might lift up you up. Be strengthened, be encouraged, rejoice in the Lord; praise Him and confess to Him; lift up your treasures into heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupteth: “aloft “ then, and on high your minds be⁷. Where the whole abide is pure, and the dwellers thereof are glorious - where the angels in the awful place cease not from flying and honouring the nature of the Godhead, and with plaudits [Syr. hullalle] praise and sing to His Majesty, and with pleasant utterances [ܠܝܠܠܐ ܠܠܡܝܢ] with honour please the Lord - there, as men who have been shaken free of death and have become companions of the spiritual beings [let your minds be]”⁸. Behold I have gone and I go before you and prepare a place; wherefore in purity and holiness come and approach the mysteries; and when you have seen them on earth, consider that they are in heaven; and “there in heaven let your minds be”.⁹

⁶I.e. by saying “be with us”.

⁷B 283 l.10.

⁸This is clearly taken either from the Liturgy of ‘Theodore’ or that of ‘Nestorius’ [‘Theodore’ and ‘Nestorius’ agree here], which are alone in having a very long and elaborate Sursum Corda. But it will presently appear that this expanded form was not in the liturgy commented on by George (cf. next footnote); so that it is only utilized here by way of commentary.

⁹The sursum corda in ‘Theodore’ and ‘Nestorius’ ends “let there your minds be” (cf. previous footnote).

And the people, as sons of the household of the faith, assent to the saying of the true pastor who, (chosen) from them, has been appointed mediator. And they answer him: - Truly, as thou hast commanded, (so) will we do. And as he said “aloft”¹⁰, and did not explain¹¹, then they, as knowing the truth and perfect, say whither “aloft”: that is: - “Unto Thee, the God of Abraham and Isaac”¹² and the rest; as much as to say: We know the meaning of what thou hast asked of us, though thou has not explained to us. And lo, we have been lifted up unto Him who is eternally alone: and He is the God of the first and the last. And though He has made a change of laws according to the (acquirements of) our education, yet He is not changed; and as a father who loves his sons He also educates us from law to law. And He also who has given us the New Covenant is the God of the former fathers. (*fol.139v*^o)

And the priest seeing that the sons are become obedient to him, and have been lifted up in thought, forthwith reveals to them concerning his ministry also: - Now that you are in heaven, know that “this oblation is offered to God” by the hand of a mediator, a son of your race¹³. And the people duly and gladly say with him: Very justly is this oblation performed if to Him it is (offered), and “it is meet and right”¹⁴. But what next?

¹⁰Cf. *infra* p.118.

¹¹This shows that the utilization of ‘Theodore’ or ‘Nestorius’ above was only by way of commentary, as in those liturgies it is fully explained where “aloft” is (cf. chap.25, fol.150 r, begin.).

¹²B 283, l.12.

¹³B 283, l.15.

¹⁴*Ibid.* l.17.

CHAPTER 22

Deacon: -"peace be with us".

Why now the deacon in the bema says "Peace be with us"; and (why) he (Ishô'Yabh) does not say that the deacon who made the proclamation¹ says (this); while we say that the deacon who made the proclamation says (it).

Glory to the Spirit of the Lord - how wise He has made this blessed man [Ishô' Yabh] to depict a fair image of this ministry! What then? "The deacon in the bema says 'Peace be with us'."² But let us examine first why he does not say that the deacon goes to the bema and then says "Peace", - as everywhere else he has said "the deacon ascends", and the like: but here "the deacon in the bema". This is Michael, who still sits outside [or "beyond" the apse, as he sat at the feet of Jesus in the tomb. But when Michael has heard that the God who is proclaimed is He of Whom he himself spoke to Moses, he runs in haste to Jerusalem [= bema] wherein he taught His laws, and announces to the people of the Old Testament peace and tranquillity: as who should say, Be encouraged, O fathers of the Law, for this Christ is He whom I was preaching to you in His Godhead. And He has taken a garment [= body] from you, and He has substituted (new) commandments, such as are suitable for you; and lo, He has made (this) known to us, inasmuch as He is "the God of Abraham and Isaac and of Jacob".³ Wherefore arise in the might of our God; and also lift up your heads and stand up in the (*fol. 140r*^o) freedom of the New (Testament), and be not bowed down any more under the yoke of the Law. This is the Messiah, whose name I continually declared to the prophets when I was in charge.

And he [Ishô'Yabh] did not say that the deacon went, inasmuch as Michael has not deserted the appointed canon of his ministry. And he appears continually with Gabriel: he was with him at the birth; and

¹This refers to the address "Let us all" (B 282, 1.7) which was made by "Gabriel". (cf. earlier)

²B 283, 1.20.

³B 283, 1.12.

when our Lord vanquished Satan; he was with him when they came and ministered to our Lord; and at the resurrection he was with him. Wherefore it is unnecessary to say that he goes up to the bema, since he has not actually departed from it.⁴ And lo, although with us the deacon who makes the proclamation⁵ says this "Peace", yet as I have already said, the blessed [Ishô'Yabh] in all thins that he sets forth proclaims some type of the kingdom, without being careful that everything that he has said should be fully carried out without addition or diminution. And when the two angels, Gabriel and Michael, stand up and announce in the world what is due, - I mean, making preparation for him [= the priest], then he begins the glorious service.

⁴Evidently the other deacon - who made the address just before the Sursum Corda, ending with "peace be with us" (B p.282, l.26) is supposed to be still in the bema.

⁵B 282 ll.7ff.

CHAPTER 23

First gehanta

Why the priest now begins quietly [= secretly], and what this gehanta¹ signifies. This gehanta signifies the Old Dispensation, and the first creation, because the people have said to him [the priest] that “to the God of Abraham” their minds were uplifted; and Michael also announced to the sons of the Law the Gospel of peace. As indicating² that: I am He who was spoken of from of old, and who am come forth from God, and have gathered you unto Him: He [the priest] begins to shew how He also created creation from nothing³; and how He appointed to it the spiritual beings as ministers; and how He created the old man; and how He created him without a law, and then introduced him to the Law, and shewed him (*fol. 140v^o*) also concerning his renovation [lit. “change”], making known the greatness of His goodness; who, when He was attended and applauded by angels, was not indifferent to the ruin of Adam’s house. And whereas two prophets shewed that He is praised by the spiritual beings, - I mean Isaiah and Daniel: Isaiah (saying): “I saw the Lord sitting on a high throne, and seraphim standing over it”, and the rest; Daniel saying, “A thousand thousands stand before Him and ten thousand times ten thousand ministers unto Him” - so the priest, Christ, shews now the glory of God Most High: that, as the former prophets said, so He is; and that when He had no need of creation He created it, that it might possess beauty. And this is known from the fact that when He had no need to be united with our nature, He emptied Himself for our sake and took our form, and, though He was God, was found in the form of men, and was in fashion a men. Wherefore, that I may shew you His mercy and His

¹Gehanta originally meant a bowing of the body (It is so by Narsai - *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* p. 22: “two bows”). Later it came to have the technical meaning of a secret prayer - probably said bowing.

²This refers to the priest (impersonating Christ).

³cf. B 283 l.32 - 284 l.5. But George’s analysis of the Preface would lead us to think that his text was considerably longer than that in B. Yet he often expands greatly, and perhaps his Preface = that in B; c. later where it is said that both Isaiah and Daniel are quoted in it. Note that George says nothing of the “Cushapa” in B 283 ll.23-26.

goodness, how great it is, - now that you have been freed from the grossness of the flesh, ascend like Paul without the body, and see the spiritual beings, troops upon troops, how they praise Him, and what they say, who declare the name of the Holy Trinity.

Sanctus

Moreover he begins quietly [secretly] because all that was said with the prophets was said secretly. Yet the prophet (= Isaiah?) himself, though he learned in secret shewed those things openly which the children of Israel were able to hear. And upon blessed Moses also there lay a veil to hinder the people from seeing him; and our Lord God, when He came and visited us, - not all men recognized His coming, but the angels and holy men, who were distinguished for (their) labours. So the gehanta is said quietly, that the spiritual ones may hear it, and the elect whom He has chosen and lifted up to His kingdom; but that the people (*fol.141r^o*) may not hear it - as those who have not been sanctified by labours - and that they may not forget His word and (thus) in any case (or after all) remain without hearing⁴. But that they may not be estranged from him - since they have the faith - when he has recited those things that have to do with the old order and the first creation, and wishes to shew that He [God] was eternally praised by the spiritual beings, he makes his voice audible in the midst of his gehanta, (at) that (part) which shews the praise of the angels: not that the gehanta is ended, - but inasmuch as we are become today one holy church, angels and men, and they have become one flock in Christ, as the heavenly apostle has said, He willed that we also should be brought into agreement with the watchers⁵, and should praise Him with their praises: for though in the body, and because of the fleshly conditions, blessed Paul heard words that might not be uttered, and was not himself permitted to say them, yet we today, having been (lifted up) above the flesh by the resurrection, and having ascended to heaven and come into the church of the angels, - we have authority to utter their praises.

⁴i.e. as if they had not heard.

⁵Text ܠܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܐ “according to custom”, which gives no sense. I correct to ܠܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܐ “with the watchers” which from the similarity of the words in Syriac may be taken as fairly certain.

⁶The concluding words of Preface (said aloud) are called a “canon”: cf. B 284 l.6.

And he shews before them the canon⁶ which Isaiah the prophet spoke concerning them [the angels]: for the prophets spoke the truth and prophesied and saw visions of all degrees and of all forms [cf. Hb.1:1 Syr. version]. And when he utters the formula with which the spiritual ones were praising: that is, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord almighty⁷, of whose glories [or “praises”] the heaven and all the earth are full”⁸. That is: now heaven and earth are become one church; and heaven is not heaven, not is earth earth; for time and material place have been removed; for heaven is the heaven of earth, and earth is the earth of heaven: for unless there were a heaven above, there would not be an earth beneath; and unless there were an earth beneath, there would not be a heaven above. (*fol.141v*^o) But now that those above and those beneath are become one church, there is no more “above” and “beneath”. Moreover God has appeared on earth, and our nature has gone up to heaven. And since God has come down to us, earth is become heaven; and since a son of our race has been lifted up on high, heaven is become earth. Wherefore heaven and earth are become one, and there is no more earth and heaven. And we (who) are now become (one) with the angels repeat their sanctification [= “Holy”], as having been made perfect by the resurrection.

From Sanctus to Canon after Institution

But when they finish the sanctification of the seraphim, then the priest proceeds to fill up his service. And he returns to the course of his gehanta quietly. And he shews how God put on a man; how, when He was high, He lowered Himself, that He might redeem us. And whereas the gehanta began in its beginning with the Old (Testament), now he closes it with the New, that he may make the Old and the New one, and unite the laws together.

⁷or “of hosts”: Syr. ܫܠܬܐ.

⁸B 284 ll.10-17. George, like Narsai, says nothing of the expansions in B ll.11-17.

⁹On this passage see *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* pp.383-384. It implies a recital of the history (if not of the words) of the Institution, unlike anything in B.

¹⁰George several times elsewhere uses ܠܝܬܝܢ in sense of “up to and including”.

And he shews⁹ by his recital the whole scope of the dispensation of our Lord; and he proclaims the praises [or “glorious things”] that were (uttered) at His birth and His epiphany, and as far as¹⁰ His passion, recounting in this gehanta that one voluntary passion: that is, until [ܠܚܒܐ, cf. former footnote]. He delivered His body and His blood, and sacrificed Himself voluntary: so that by the other gehanta¹¹ he may signify His death and our death, also His resurrection and our resurrection; that when we rise from the dust, we may be worthy to enter into the mansions [= receive communion] of the kingdom of heaven, and enjoy the good things that shall not be taken away, whereof the body and the blood are the symbol. And when he arrives at the end of the account of the sacrifice, - that is after He has delivered His body and His blood - then he makes an end of the gehanta with the seal of the Trinity¹². And the people, as knowing the secret of the priest, as perfect man, answer after him “Amen”¹³, expressing belief in the greatness of his familiar association (with God).

Second Part of Gehanta. Deacon’s Salutation before Invocation

And the deacon also who is appointed over (*fol.142r^o*) this service [commands] that they pray continually and cease not from asking mercy. So our Lord also at the time of His passion said to His disciples: “Be wakeful and pray and cease not” [Lk.18 compared with Mt.26:41 and parallels]. And though He had no need of prayer, not only did He pray Himself, but He commanded them also to help Him with prayer. And they [the people], even as the angel has commanded them that they should pray in the heart¹⁴ - since they have no need of words now that they have been purified from the grossness of the flesh - with prayer of the heart they occupy themselves.

¹¹i.e. part of the prayer which comes after the recital (account) of the Institution, as presently appears.

¹²The kanuna in B 285 ll.21-23 makes no mention of the Trinity, but that in ‘Nestorius’ at the same point does so.

¹³B 285 l.25.

¹⁴B 285 l.27.

CHAPTER 24

Why the deacon on the bema says now “In your minds pray”¹, and then [later] “In silence and fear”², and why this gehanta has two “peaces”. When the priest has represented the dispensation up to this point in his gehanta, he now comes to depict the death. And he shews that though (He had) no fear³. And he shews His death and His resurrection [in the prayer] as far as the descent [of the H. Spirit].⁴ But at the time of the descent he represents His resurrection and our death. He died while we were in the world; and He arose, and we are to die; and He is coming at the end of times to rise us up. So also the gehanta shews: as far as the middle, it typifies His death; from the middle, His resurrection and our death; and at the end, our resurrection.

But that “peace” is twice said⁵ in it [sc. the gehanta], is because it depicts two deaths: the first “peace” His death, and the second “peace” our death. For when our death and His death shall have been united together, and our resurrection and His resurrection, we shall be accounted worthy to enjoy the heavenly good things with Him. And that our death and His do not take place together, is because He also is in a manner different from us, and in a manner shares with us. He is different from us, in that He came from heaven, and is (both) God and man, was conceived without wedlock, was not tempted in [or “with”] the sin of (*fol. 142v*^o) our nature. His death also is different from ours:

¹B 285 l.27.

²B 285 ll.29-30.

³Text: ܐܝܢ ܠܗ ܕܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܕܠܐ We should perhaps read ܐܝܢ ܠܗ ܕܠܐ “though He had not sinned”, as the text is ungrammatical and the thought unexpected.

⁴It is curious that George says not a word in his comment about the intercession, though elsewhere (Tract 2, chap.3) he quotes the intercession of Nestorius (see: *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, p.83). George seems to know nothing of the cushapa (B 285). It looks as if Addai and Mari had no intercession here at all. Narsai appears to have compiled one on the model of ‘Nestorius’.

⁵i.e. just after the “canon” following the Institution, and just before the Invocation (B pp.285 l.28; 287 l.30). The gehanta referred to is that which begins after the institution (cf. above).

He died and rose up the third day; but we do not rise as He did. He is united with us, in that He is a man, and that He was tempted in all things that are ours, and also in that He possessed a nature and hypostasis [qenoma] like ours; and (He is) one of those who cannot be severed⁶. So then the depicting of His death is united with that of ours [lit. "with us", a mere Syr. idiom], His and ours being typified in one gehanta: but He is different from us, in that he [= the priest] first of all depicts His death and His resurrection, and then depicts our death and our resurrection.

Also with two "peaces" the angel Michael crowns⁷ this gehanta: one the peace of His death, and one the "peace" of our death. And when he depicts His death, he commands us to "pray with the mind"⁸; that is, when one dies, all of us die by a mystery; and when one rises, we have all risen by a mystery. Wherefore at His death let us "pray with the mind". (But) at our death let silence reign over us, with the lapsing of nature: as much as to say, now that your death is being represented, be ye dying voluntarily; and "be ye in silence", as men who have died; "and in fear"⁹, on account of the time of death which is terrible. And when he indicates the "mind" and "silence", and the like: these things are ours apart from the spiritual ones, and he does not mingle himself with us¹⁰, but teaches us how we should conduct ourselves for they [angels: i.e. deacons] are appointed over our service, and that they should have care of us even to (our) last breath.

(But) in the "peace" he mingled himself with us. See now, if this were not the case, he ought to say "with your minds pray ye: peace be with you"; but he commands us: "Let us pray in mind": in the "peace" he makes us and himself equal [i.e. says: "peace be with us"]: as who

⁶Syr. ܩܝܡܐܢܐ ܕܐܢܫܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܥܡܐ We should perhaps read ܩܝܡܐܢܐ ܕܥܡܐ ... "without divisibility", i.e. indivisibly". But the phrase may be a philosophical one (cf. Facciolati "insecabilis").

⁷This does not necessarily imply that they came at the end (which is not the case here).

⁸B 285, l.28.

⁹B 287 ll.29-30.

¹⁰i.e. he uses the 2nd person "in mind pray ye".

should say: Although in death we are not partakers with you, yet as regards the passions of inconstancy which wage war and contend (with us) every moment, and separate us from "peace" that those passions be loosed from us. But they [= the passions] are not loosed (from us) (*fol. 143r^o*) save when mortality is removed from you. And when you are freed from death, you are also freed from the passions of inconstancy; and when you are freed from inconstancy, we are also freed with you; and there is "peace with us", because passions are abolished from us. And as peace is not achieved among men save by previous suffering, so also this present peace comes by reason of previous passions. Wherefore let us be together in the "peace": let us be different from You in the matter of mortality; and let us be joined (with You) in the matter of inconstancy: let us be with God in the matter of life and reason; let us be different from Him in the matter of creativeness and createdness. So that, when we partake with one another in one definition, we are found to be in one accord: so that as we have become one with You in the resurrection - in that we are partakers in passions - we become one with God also in the matter of life and reason, and "know even as we are known". And as now we know in part, so there [= in the resurrection] we shall be perfected in all fullness of knowledge, and "God also shall become all in all" [1 Co. 15:28], since all shall know God fully, even as He known them. And here the word of blessed Paul receives its fulfilment, wherein he said "Then I shall know even as I am known" [1 Co. 13:12].

But it remains to say why the deacon who is on the bema says these things, and not Gabriel. Whereas Gabriel has received authority over the things of the world to come, but Michael over those of the present world; and whereas Gabriel announced the conception of the "Father of the world (to come)" and His kingdom which is not of this world: so Michael speaks more things which depict death. And also [for this reason]; that he takes part by his words with the people [= Jews] as well as with the peoples; and because again, Michael appears in Jerusalem [= bema], which is this world, but Gabriel is in heaven [= apse]; and in place of him Michael speaks to us, as (*fol. 143v^o*) being now nearer at hand.

But when he says “In silence and fear”¹¹, the people also shew forth a death, according to his command, and die mystically. And they worship upon the ground, which typifies death, and they fall down with the falling of the first Adam, that they may rise up with the resurrection of the second Adam. And if there were no death, there would be no resurrection: wherefore, it is because we die that we shall rise. So now also the people worship upon the ground, and are silent, praying neither in mind not with the mouth.

But there are some who say that when the deacon says earlier¹² “let no man dare to speak”, he utters an anathema upon those who speak: not perceiving that (there) the deacon is not concerned to speak of the things of the world [= of actual things], but signifies some mystery. Otherwise the whole church would be included under this rule, when he says “whoso prays, in his heart let him pray”. And so it would not be right for us again to pray any prayer; and now he would be even emphasising this (former) word by saying further thus: “In mind pray ye”¹³: so that even the priest, who prays and blesses with the voice, would come under this rule! But this is not true. He [the deacon] did not forbid speech by his injunction [Syr. “canon”], but signified a mystery of death. And so (now) Michael¹⁴ also in what he says does not depart from the character of what Gabriel said. There, above, Gabriel said¹⁵ “Let no man dare to speak; and whoso prays, in his heart let him pray. And in silence and fear be standing”. Now Michael - since they have both one will and one aim - recites the same word: “In your minds pray ye”¹⁶. There (it was said) “in the heart pray ye”: and “heart” and “mind” are made one. And there (it was said) “in silence and fear be ye standing”: and here he [Michael] says the very same phrase¹⁷. For when Mary saw the two angels sitting, the evangelist says that both

¹¹B 287 ll.29-30.

¹²cf. the deacon’s address B 282 ll.22-23.

¹³B 285 l.27.

¹⁴It was Gabriel who made the address in B 282.

¹⁵B 282, ll.23-25.

¹⁶B 285, l.29.

¹⁷This refers to Michael’s second remark (at the Invocation) B 287, ll.29-30.

(*fol. 144r^o*) of them spoke to her one word concerning the resurrection. Thus it says: “She saw two angels in white sitting, one at His head - Gabriel - one at His feet - Michael - and they say to her”, etc. So here also, though the angels are two, their word has one and the same character; and what Gabriel said connectedly Michael says in (two) parts, according as (each) is suitable¹⁸.

But when the dispensation is completed, and our Lord has died and risen, and we also have died and risen, then the priest utters words that are suitable to the judgment - whereas he has not mentioned the judgment and retribution in his canon [= words said aloud] up to this point. And as the Interpreter [= Theodore of Mopsuestia] says, so is his canon: “And here and there may we all together alike”, etc.; or as Nestorius says: “That when we stand before Thee in that terrible and glorious place of judgment”¹⁹: and both (canons) proclaim the idea of the resurrection. The priest shews the future judgment, and that all of us here need mercy, as the heavenly apostle says “For God shut up all in disobedience, that He might have mercy on all” [Rm. 11:32]: that is, He bound them with the passibility of inconstancy, so that their nature should not be able to escape from sin.

And when the priest delivers the canon of the judgment - as transacting in the service the whole dispensation - and (when) he has enacted our death and his death, and the resurrection of our Lord and our resurrection, he comes at once [ܠܚܝܫ = quite strictly “at once”] to seal²⁰ what he has laboured (in); and he does not leave those things that were (done) by him with the labour of supplication and prayers without the true seal. As every picture that is drawn needs the seal of colours which shall perfectly depict it, so now the priest depicts and

¹⁸B pp.285 l.2; 287, ll.29-30.

¹⁹The words quoted are from the present liturgies of ‘Theodore’ and ‘Nestorius’ in the Canon after the Invocation: but here (as above, pp.92f.) these liturgies may be quoted only in support of the author’s interpretation. The kanuna in B 288 l.5 makes no allusion to the judgment.

²⁰B 288, l.10 - 289 l.30 (incl.) is not represented by either George or Narsai (cf. below).

represents completely the picture which he began; and he unites the Mysteries one with another, and he breaks and signs²¹.

But perhaps someone will say: If the Mysteries have been consecrated by the death of our Lord, and the Spirit has come down and consecrated them, and they have been completed with all true completeness. What is this that he should break and sign? Moreover our Lord also, when He blessed, broke only. But we say that up to this point they have been consecrated, and have become the body and blood. But now that they have become the body and the blood, it is right that they should be united, that the body may be of the blood and the blood of the body. And if they are not united, the oblation is not one. But now that they have been consecrated and blessed, and have become (that) Bread and Wine which (were given) by the hands of our Lord²², the priest associates them together: not that they are not consecrated, or that they are in need of consecration, but that they may have a seal. And as we complete all our services with the names of the Trinity, so also is this seal - with the Trinity he seals it: and he shews by his words that they have no need to become an oblation, but (that) they are consecrated Mysteries; and he says: "The mercifulness of Thy grace, O our Lord and our God, brings us near" - shewing that by His grace we have become what we are; and He brings us into an intimate association with Himself by His grace - "unto these glorious and holy and divine Mysteries"²³. And he gives glory to Christ who performs them. And he shews that from heaven He came down, the heavenly Bread, even as He said in the Gospel: "I am the heavenly Bread, who am come down"²⁴; and again, "My body is meat indeed". and the rest. And he says again "We draw nigh and break and sign". What? "The body and

²¹cf. B 290, l.36; cf. below, where it seems to be implied that the fraction and uniting were performed while the prayer "The mercifulness of Thy grace" (B 289, l.30) was being said - but other prayers also are implied - so that this ("The mercifulness") probably came just before, as in B.

²²I cannot otherwise translate *in hoc signo crucis*

²³Cf. B 289 ll.30-33; (col.1), see p.104, note 20.

²⁴Cf. B 290 l.1ff. (col.1). But in B this is given to the deacon.

blood of Thy Beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ”²⁵, the heavenly Bread which came down from heaven, and gave life to the whole world²⁶. And again he signs the body in the cup: forasmuch as the blood subsists in the body, and if there were no body neither would there be blood, and we do not conceive of blood without body. We do (indeed) conceive of body without blood, since when the body is taken away the blood is taken away, (but) (*fol. 145r*^o) the body is not taken away when the blood is taken away. And again he signs the blood over the body²⁷: forasmuch as the life of the body is in the blood, and it cannot come into existence or become living while it is without blood: but this is preserved in that, and this preserves that. And when he signs both with the sign of the cross, it is forasmuch as this salvation was effected by the crucifixion. He signs with the names of the Trinity²⁸, forasmuch as [or “as though”] the whole Godhead dwelt in our body. And then he shews by his words the fulfilling of his work. What then?

“These glorious and holy and divine Mysteries have been set apart [*ἁγιασθέντες*]²⁹ and consecrated and completed”³⁰; while with this saying he cursorily goes over the whole dispensation. They were “set apart” when they were set upon the altar: they were “consecrated” when the whole dispensation was pronounced over them: they were “completed” when they received the seal of the signing. And they became, what? “these glorious and holy and divine Mysteries”.

But certain godly men have said that these Mysteries are strictly the body and blood of Christ, and not a mystery of His body and blood. But we say to them, that some things are by nature, and some are (only) adjuncts [lit. “things united”], which are (united) with the nature. Those that are by nature cannot be received into a union, but the nature itself makes them its own by appropriation.³¹ The eyes and the hands in a

²⁵B 290, ll.24-30 (col.2).

²⁶Cf. B 290, l.1 (col.1).

²⁷Cf. B 291, l.36.

²⁸Cf. B 291, ll.26 and 38.

²⁹i.e. ordained, set apart for this purpose.

³⁰B 292 l.5ff.

³¹*ἡ οικία*, “domestice”, or Gr. *οικοτης + οικεια*.

man belong to him by nature, and a man is not said to be that which is united with [i.e. has the adjunct of] hands. But if you divide up the whole body into parts, since the man is (now) without hands and without head and eyes and feet and back, where then is the man? So then these things belong to him by nature. But he has things that are (only) adjuncts, as the being a smith or a physician, and any kind of craft. A man is a physician: it is possible that he be not a physician; he is a carpenter: it is possible that he be (*fol. 145v^o*) not a carpenter. But he is named “physician” and “carpenter” by his craft being united with him. But though (men) do not know him for a physician, it is impossible that they do not know him for a man. When they see him they know that he is a man without asking; and he is not asked “Are you a man?” (but) he is asked whether he is a physician or not, because he has not by nature the quality of being a physician.

And so too we call Christ one Son, one Christ: but when we are pressed concerning the manner of His being³², we divide Him into two natures and hypostases [qenome]: not that we regard Christ as two - whether natures or hypostases - but that the truth of His natures may be confessed. For we even say that God became man, and man became God; but being aware that the natures are not changed, we say that God remained God and the man man; and God did not become man in nature, nor did man become God in nature: but by a union God became man, and man God. And if these things are so, the bread and wine also have become the body and blood, not by nature, but by union. And when we call them body and blood after a manner, we also style them “Mysteries”, that they may be recognized to be mysteries of the body and the blood - since by nature they are distinct. But if they are strictly body and blood, they are not mysteries: and if they are mysteries they are not body and blood, - since by a mystery is represented some attribute³³ that it [the thing which represents] has not by nature. No natural things are mysteries, and no mysteries are natu-

³² *ἡ ὁμιλία* *αὐτοῦ*: lit. “His howness”.

³³ *ἡ ὁμιλία*.

³⁴ I.e. a thing is not a symbol of its own nature or essence, and a thing that is a symbol has not the nature or essence of that which it symbolizes.

ral things³⁴. For as we take a deacon to be the mystery of an angel, the apse of heaven, the altar of the throne of Christ, the bema of Jerusalem, and so forth; and they are not by nature the actual things of which they are accepted (as symbols) - (*fol. 146r^o*) nor yet because they are not so by nature, do we (altogether) deny that they are (these things), but (say that) they are (so) by a union: nor yet because they are (so only) by union, do we say that they are not (so) truly, since by faith they are so accepted - so the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ by a union and by a mystery: by nature (they are) bread and wine. If on account of the union we lose sight of the natures, why are Arius and Cyril and Apollinaris and Severus blamed, who, seeing the union, were lured from the truth, and called Christ one nature, compounded of God and man, and introduced compositeness into the Simple, and shut up the Creator under the creature. But it behoves us to preserve the natures, and to perform mysteries by means of a union. But if it be not mysteries that we perform, what then is it that we accomplish?³⁵ But if we accomplish mysteries, then we accomplish (mysteries) of something that is not. For lo, we keep the very name "mysteries" in order that we may not fall into this error. The bread and wine are not therefore the body and blood by nature, but a mystery of the body and blood; and they are moreover mysteries of the kingdom and of the joy of heaven. Even then as we have died in baptism and risen - inasmuch as we have died and risen by a mystery - and even as we say that we are become immortal: not because we are not to die, but because we depict a mystery of immortality: so the mysteries which we celebrate resemble these matters which touch ourselves. And as we do not doubt that, even though we are mortal, we are nevertheless immortal in this, that we were baptised into the faith of Christ: and inasmuch as He rose as a hostage, we have all risen - not as though we were today immortal - so we do not doubt that these mysteries are the body and blood of Christ by a union: - by a mystery however, and consequently not so by nature. So much for these matters. But let us return to the course of our exposition.

³⁵I.e. accomplish by the consecration: the Syr. word is sometimes in the sense of "conficere" (mysteria).

“These mysteries have been consecrated and sealed one with another”, says the priest, (*fol. 146v^o*) in the name of the Trinity, that they may be for pardoning of debts and forgiveness of sins to the holy church of Christ our Lord”.³⁶ And lo, even in the sealing he calls them “mysteries”, and not the body and blood: except (only) inasmuch as they have been given and consecrated for pardoning. And here the business [ܠܚܝܩܬܐ] of the consecration [quddasha] is ended. And he has sealed them: even as to all matters we make a sealing.³⁷ Even a carpenter, when he has fashioned out a door or a chair, makes a seal for it by carving; a smith also, as a seal for the gold and silver, takes away from it the rust. And everything in the world has a beginning and a middle and an end. And the beginning of the mysteries is the bringing them up upon the altar; the middle is the consecration; the end is the seal. And if there were no seal, and [...] ³⁸ the consecration would not be the middle. Thus then concerning the mysteries.

³⁶B 292, 1.6ff.

³⁷“Seal” is used vaguely in Syr. for anything that adds the finishing touch.

³⁸Some words appear to have fallen out: perhaps to this effect: “And if the end were not the seal”.

CHAPTER 25

Why the priest says here again once more “The grace of our Lord”¹; and what is this proclamation “Let us all”², which the deacon proclaims; and why he who is on the bema does not proclaim it: and on all matters that are here observed do Thou enlighten me.

When the priest’s part [~~ἡ~~ἡ] is ended, he comes back to (that) former saying; which shews that, what we began is accomplished, - and the contest into which I entered I have fought out, and I have conquered; and now I make (this) known to you; and with the name of the Trinity I sign you; and I make known to you His goodness (or grace); and the word which formerly I spoke³, the same I have performed. Then I depicted to you by a mystery the things that were to be: but what I said at first in a mystery is now done in fact. And you must not suppose that there is any change [or “difference”] between the things of the mystery and the things of the performance: the mystery and the performance are one. Wherefore, receive the blessing and be prepared for the enjoyment [sc. communion]. Whereas by the former blessing you were (*fol. 147r^o*) made ready to depict the glorious mysteries, now again I sign you, and make you ready to enjoy the Mysteries themselves.

What then? The deacon on the bema, that is Michael, seeing that the dispensation is completed, and that death has been undone, and that our nature has been renewed by the resurrection, now gladly departs to heaven [= apse]; and the things that he does here⁴ now plainly appear. But Gabriel, as he who holds the New Testament, does not cease from the office that he holds until, together with the king, [= priest] he causes the guests to have the enjoyment⁵. And here also he prepares

¹B 293 l.17.

²Ibid. l.28.

³Sc. “The grace”, etc., just before the Sursum Corda. B 283 l.4.

⁴“Here” would seem to be the bema, the earth, Jerusalem. What he enacted there is now seen in its fulfilment, for the resurrection has come about by the consecration.

⁵I.e. he makes this announcement inviting the people to communion.

the people for the communion of the Mysteries; and he shews that the enjoyment of the kingdom of heaven is alike for angels and men together⁶, and (that) now there is neither slave nor free-born, neither spiritual beings nor corporeal, but (that) we are all one. But what does he say? “Let us all⁷ with fear and honour approach the mystery of the body of the precious blood of our Saviour”. “With fear”, because they are a devouring fire; “with honour”, because the giver of them has honoured us exceedingly. “Let us approach”, to what? Not to “the body and blood”, but to “the mystery of the body and of the precious blood”. Thou seest that this blessed man [Ishô’ Yabh] did not give an occasion to those who speak pratings⁸. But what?

“With a pure heart and with true faith let us remember His passion and consider His resurrection”. That is: let us cause our heart to possess purity which is uplifted above the flesh and let us not look upon these things in bodily, but in spiritual wise and let us not regard [A: “rejoice in”] the bread and wine, but let us regard the mystery which is accomplished in them, and with faith let us consider them. As though it [sc. the Mystery] were in heaven⁹, let us direct our mind aloft and all the ceremonies¹⁰ that we see here, let us regard as heavenly. And the world that is waited for [= future life] and all these [= such] things by faith are realized. And “remembering the passion and death” of our Lord and depicting on our heart “His (*fol. 147v*^o) resurrection”, let us know who He is: and let us not know Him for a bare¹¹ man - “for vain is the saving of a man” [Ps.] - nor yet for God without man, that we may not bring under passions God who is impassible. But let us know Him, that of His goodness, for the sake of our redemption, “the

⁶I.e. by saying “Let us all” etc.

⁷B 293 ll.28ff.

⁸I.e. did not fail to refute those who assert a real presence.

⁹ܠܡܥܠܐ ܕܡܝܫܬܐ ܕܡܝܫܬܐ lit. “as that which is in heaven”. The meaning is that us are to treat the mystery as though it were the real body of Christ which is in heaven - even though, as George holds, it is only the symbol thereof.

¹⁰Or “orders”, i.e. different classes of ministers.

¹¹ܥܠܝܐ

Only-begotten of God came down from heaven and took from us a mortal body and a reasonable and intelligent and immortal soul and by holy commandments and divine laws He turned us from the error of darkness and brought us nigh to His kingdom”. And after that He had completed His dispensation, He suffered and was crucified and rose and ascended to heaven as a hostage from our race and He has delivered to us these Mysteries, that by them we may recall all His grace towards us”. But what then?

“Let us with a right heart and without [= free from] mortality, and with a humble spirit, like His who for our sake humbled Himself and was made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, - let us also walk in His spirit and let us receive of Him with sincerity of heart this gift, which is life everlasting and with pure prayer, uplifted above carnal doubtings and with manifold grief, let us partake of the mysteries of the Church in penitent hope”.- And everywhere, as a reproof to those who do not take cognizance of the Mysteries he [Ishô’ Yabh] calls them “mysteries” - “And let us be penitent for the offences which we have committed by our works”: as though we were already in the kingdom of heaven.

Here also we put on [grief] for our sins, that we may also depict before us the grief [or “suffering”] of torment. And doing these things let us not despair: our God is merciful and compassionate; let us “ask of Him mercy and forgiveness of sins”. And let us before (making) our petition to Him “condone the transgression of our fellow-servants”.¹²

And while we perform these things (*fol. 148r^o*) that concern us [lit. “these our things”], and shew kindness to our fellow-servants He “pardons our sins and offences”¹³. And he [= the deacon] as at all (other) times, whence and from whom we ask; but while he recites in order our matters, the people, assenting to his word, answer and say, “Yea,

¹²This and what follows refers to something like B 294 l.30-295 l.10: but it is not clear whether the petitions took the form of a litany, or whether they were said straight on by the deacon. It would seem from what follows that the people made the response. In Narsai the whole is said straight on by the people.

¹³Cf. B 294 ll.31,34 = response.

O wise teacher, we perform what thou teachest us; and we know that when we do this “the Lord pardons our sins and transgressions”. And as men who pray for, all of them pray for one another [sic, though not elegant]: “Lord, pardon the sins and transgressions of Thy servants”: and there is none among them who makes petition for himself¹⁴.

And Gabriel also, as having been brought into agreement with us - and the company of demons, who are of his race and who stand in need of mercy¹⁵ - does not exclude himself from the midst, but associates together himself and us, in that we are all in need of mercy; for [lit. “and”] there is no creature without sins, whether of thoughts or deeds.

And when these things are performed, he shews at the end that when we perform these things we shall receive a fulfilling of them in “the resurrection of our bodies and the salvation of our souls”¹⁶. Now you have seen the resurrection by a mystery and the joy (of heaven) and the judgement and the retribution by a foretaste: pardon one another, that you may reign in the kingdom in reality. And the people answer: “For ever [لحلم]¹⁷ may we have this disposition of true faith and for ever [لحلم]¹⁸ may we reign in the kingdom”¹⁹ - together with “Amen”²⁰, which is the seal.

¹⁴The commas denote passages taken fairly closely from the deacon’s address B 293 1.27-295 1.10.

¹⁵It is not clear whether this goes with the preceding or the following. It appears to mean that angels, men and demons are all here joined together in the petition for mercy. George elsewhere teaches that even the demons will find some sort of mercy, and that only the “Son of perdition” (= Antichrist) will be utterly extinguished: see Tract 1 ch.23 the heading of which asks the question “Why he (Antichrist) will not find that mercy which shall be accorded even to demons and wicked men?”

¹⁶Cf. B 295 1.8, where however this remark is given to the people.

¹⁷= “in saeculum” (sing.).

¹⁸= “in saecula” (plur.).

¹⁹Cf. B 295 1.9: evidently with George the people answered “world without end, amen”. Only [= probably لحلم حلم “in saeculum saeculorum”].

²⁰No “Amen” here in B 295 1.9.

as asked for pardon, forthwith, as a true mediator he makes supplication for his flock: "Pardon, Lord, by Thy compassion the sins and transgressions of Thy servants and sanctify our lips wherewith Thy people have asked for pardon of debts, that they [i.e. the lips: feminine] may now yield in Thy kingdom the fruits of praise to Thy glorious Trinity²⁸. And make us worthy²⁹ by Thy grace, O our merciful Father, that we may be to Thee beloved and blameless sons and may we stand³⁰ before Thee as with Thou hast taught us, with a pure heart and open countenance, while with that confidence which Thou hast shewn us - who, when we were prostrate in our sins, didst stoop down from Thy holy heaven to redeem us, and in Thy mercy Thou hast brought us nigh unto Thee; and Thou hast named us sons of Thy Lordship - we also now, as Thou hast taught us in Thy Gospel³¹, always when we stand before Thee praying to Thee and making request of Thee, make use here of those words which Thou taughtest us".

Then the people, since all the truth has been revealed to them by the resurrection [= consecration of the Mysteries], know what is due; and having heard from the mediator [= priest] who, has risen up for them that he says beseeching God "Let us all together call Thee, and thus let us say"³² - they cry out "Our Father who art in heaven, sanctify us with the holiness of Thy name, and reveal that kingdom of Thine which is (*fol.149r^o*) (to be) in the resurrection; and let us behave ac-

²⁸Thus far the prayer represents B 295 ll.14-17.

²⁹This = B 295 l.25ff. Clearly ll.21-24 are not contemplated in George's exposition, any more than in Narsai (p.25); see p.114, note 25.

³⁰Narsai also has "stand" (p.25). B has "pray". After this point George seems to give merely pious commentary.

³¹Cf. B 295 ll.28-29.

³²This is clearly part of the prayer in George's liturgy: the words are quoted again (on p.119) in exactly the same form. There is nothing quite like them in B (295 ll.28f.): there the Pater Noster is introduced with a quotation from the Gospel: "Whensoever you pray after this manner, pray and confess and say". Narsai (p.25) seems to imply a formula similar to that of George "and call Him, all of us".

according to Thy will and let it [= Thy will]³³ be done. Even as we are now upon earth, and have by our mysteries depicted a type of heaven, let our thoughts be in heaven. And give us the need of [= what is necessary for] our weak body; and set us free from temptations; and deliver us from the Evil One. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, from the beginning, and before the beginning, and in this (kingdom) Thou abidest for ever. Amen”.³⁴

Then the priest again, - having seen his flock stretch forth their hands and their hearts towards their Lord, according to His-command, and ask of Him mercy and compassion, as He taught them, and condone the sins one of another, and then ask forgiveness of Him - forthwith takes up their petitions, and offer them before Him as gifts. And as, when a king's people bring Him gifts and honours, they have need of a mediator also to bring them in unto the king and make an address [or, “apology”, ܠܡܠܝܚܐ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ] for them: so now also, (when) the people have brought in gifts, a mediator, who is (one) of them, offers them before the King: -

“Yea, our Lord and our God, we beseech Thee, according to Thy promise to us, and we entreat of Thee, bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One and his hosts [or “powers”]³⁵. Thou knowest, Lord of glory, what Thy flock has asked, whereof they have need by nature. And Thou hast commanded them to forgive the sins (they have committed) one against another, and they have done what Thou hast commanded them. And me Thou hast set as a mediator between Thee and them. Wherefore deal graciously with them according to Thy grace, and through my mediation let their prayers be accepted. But if I am unworthy, for their own sake accept; and if they be not

³³Some words seem to be omitted here: perhaps the clause “et fiat [voluntas tua sicut in caelo et in terra]”.

³⁴B 295 l.31-296 l.4.

³⁵Cf. B 296 ll.14-19, the second of 2 alternative prayers to be said after the Pater Noster. Narsai (p.26) seems not to contemplate any prayer of the priest immediately after the Pater Noster, but says at once, “Then the priest says to the people: “Peace be with you’.” What follows is merely the pious effusion of George.

worthy, accept for the sake of the good who are among them; and if our works be not worthy, yet for our faith's sake do Thou accept; and if they are not worthy, for the sake of my mediation accept, and answer (them)". And thus, (*fol. 149v*^o) accounting [himself] as one who has received compassion, and has as a favour been accepted, he utters [lit. "shews"] the words of the seal secretly: forasmuch as this mystery is hidden: and he utters aloud "and world without end".³⁶

But Gabriel, who knows hidden mysteries, having been with him [= the priest] from the beginning, answers after him³⁷. But the people, because they have not heard the name of the Trinity, are silent; for it is not fitting that they should answer "Amen"³⁸ to a saying that has not the Trinity in it. And so the priest - since he constantly recites in order the Trinity, and his flock (answer) with the seal, and (since) they have already been associated (with him) wills now that they should confess the Trinity - even as they have received what he has taught them - and that before the heavenly King should be revealed his own and His flock's glorious confession of the Trinity³⁹.

And first he invites them to peace:- "Peace be with you",⁴⁰ - know ye that the mystery of the peace which I preached to you in the beginning⁴¹, concerning which I have taught you, is now accomplished⁴², and the peace which up to the present was given by a mystery has now been (given) fully, inasmuch as the sins of us all have been pardoned;

³⁶Cf. B 296 ll.20-21.

³⁷Sc. "Amen" cf. *postea*

³⁸B 296, l.22: but there the people (cf. l.21), not the deacon, answer "Amen".

³⁹This refers to B 296 ll.32-34.

⁴⁰B 296, l.26.

⁴¹That is, the peace which he announced just before the deacon told the people to give the peace one to another. In both Narsai and George comes the kiss of peace before diptychs, in B after.

⁴²Narsai also says (p.26) concerning this peace, it would seem (at least just after he has said that the priest says "Peace be with you") "With the prayer of our Lord the priest began in the beginning of the Mysteries, and with it he makes an end now that the Mysteries are completed.

and I have brought in your petitions and brought out to you the gifts of pardon. “Rejoice in the Lord, and in the might of His power” [Eph.6:10] and be ye strengthened in the abundant peace which by [or “from”] Him has been preached to you. And when they answer him according as it is customary⁴³, then he says before them “The holy (thing)⁴⁴ [or “holiness”] to the holy (ones) is fitting in perfection”⁴⁵.

Some have thought that here, with this (word) “holy (thing)” [or “holiness”- qudhsha], he says concerning the Sacrament [qudhsha: see note] that is on the altar that it “is fitting in perfection” because it is right that we should receive it “in perfection”⁴⁶ of conscience, and it “is fitting to the holy ones” [or “saints”]. But they have not understood⁴⁷ that the Sacrament [qudhsha] has been given to sinners⁴⁸, and for the

⁴³B 296 1.28.

⁴⁴B 296 1.30.

⁴⁵The word is ܩܕܝܫܐ, qudhsha, which can mean either “holiness”, or “holy thing”, i.e. the sacrament. The latter is of course the meaning in the liturgy; and the “holy (ones)” (ܩܕܝܫܐ, qaddisha) means the communicants: as Narsai rightly explains: “In all the holy ones, sanctified by the Spirit of adoption of sons [= baptism], is the Holy [thing] fitting”. But George wrongly interprets qudhsha as “holiness”, and qaddisha as the Trinity, the Father, Son and H. Spirit mentioned in the people’s answer. Hence in what follows I translated (according to his view) qudhsha “holiness”, when he understands it in this sense.

⁴⁶The word is ܫܠܡܘܬܐ, shâlmûthâ, or shalmûthâ. With long â it would naturally = “agreement”, “consensus” [S: ܫܠܡܘܬܐ, which gives some meaning as the correction suggested]: and this is how Narsai interprets it (p.26, note 3): “by the consensus of the fathers”. Narsai means that according to church tradition and law only the baptized can communicate. This is clearly the early and literal meaning of the words. But to George this view does not appeal, doubtless because now the catechumen discipline is a thing of the past. Narsai’s clearly is the earlier point of view.

⁴⁷I read ܐܠܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ for ܐܠܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ, “but understand ye”, which gives no sense (the connection involves the change of only a single letter) (ܐ for ܥ).

⁴⁸Note also that Narsai understands qaddisha “holy (ones)” as = baptized persons, a very early technical use in Syriac (from Aphraates on): whereas George seems to know nothing of this use, and simply makes it = “good”, “saints”, as opposed to sinners (see note 45).

pardoning of debts. But Christ, when He delivered it, spoke to His disciples thus: "This is my body which for your sake is broken [1 Co.11:24, Syr. version] for the remission of sins" [Mt.26:28: at the chalice]⁴⁹.

But whenever the priest says a thing (fol.150r^o) without explanation, thou shouldst go to the people, who explain (it) and as, when he said “Let your minds be aloft” [B283 1.10], it was not known where “aloft” is until it was said by the people, “To Thee, the God of Abraham” and (as) when he said “Crying out and praising” [B284 1.7: at end of Preface], it was not known what until the people said⁵⁰ “Holy” and (as) again, when he said “Make us worthy” [B 295 1.25], at the end of which he said “let us call Thee, and thus let us say” [B295 1.28-9: but different here from George]⁵¹, it was not known (what) until the people said “Our Father who art in heaven”: so here also - when he has said “Holiness (qudhsha) to the Holies” without explanation, the people as usual become the interpreter thereof. As I have already said, now that the time of the reception of the Mysteries is arrived, he [= the priest] wishes that they should confess the formula of the Trinity and praise It; wherefore, when he has said “Holiness to the Holies is fitting in perfection”, the people declare who those Holy ones are of whom he has spoken. And the people say: “One holy Father, one holy Son, one holy Spirit”.⁵² And when the people recite them in order, then they end up “Glory”⁵³ to them; that by the first recital their faith may be known; (and) by the “glory” which follows (they may shew) that they have known Them and honoured Them. This is the meaning of the “Holiness to the Holies” which the priest says.

⁴⁹These words are found in exactly the same form in the Liturgy of 'Nestorius' (see *Lit. Hom. of Narsai*, p.83). The Syr. is ܡܝ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܬܐ S adds: "And, this is My blood of the Testament, which for many is shed for the remission of sins".

⁵⁰For this see above, pp.92f.

⁵¹see above p.115, note 32.

⁵²B 296, 1.32. Us might translate “One Father, Holy; One Son, Holy; One Spirit, Holy”, which would be “The one Father is a holy One”, etc. or “One Father, a holy One”, etc. or “One is the Father, a holy One”, etc.

 ^{53}B 296 1.33.

But now, when the whole function [dubbara] is completed, and the priest has put them in mind of everything that is seemly and they have confessed the confession that he has taught them:- then he approaches, that he may dwell in bliss [= receive communion]; and he first receives the Sacrament⁵⁴: even as one who has laboured is first nourished from his fruits. And as Saint Nestorius teaches in his liturgy [quddasha], our Lord also, when He broke His body, Himself first ate; (and) thus he says: “He blessed and broke and ate, (*fol.150v*) and gave to His disciples and said: Take, eat of it, all of you: this is My body. And again the cup He mingled and blessed, and drank, and gave to His disciples”.⁵⁵ Wherefore now also the priest, as being in our Lord’s place, himself eats, like our Lord. It was just and right that our Lord should eat, that even as He shared with us in all lowly things, so He should partake with us - in His human nature - also in the breaking of His body and He ate the flesh of that dumb lamb of the passover, He should eat also of the flesh of the reasonable Lamb.

That another priest approaches and gives to him who has consecrated: (this is) because he [= the celebrant] is a mediator and representative of our Lord, and not our Lord Himself and he may not dare to approach the Mysteries of his Lord without a mediator; nor because he has been accounted worthy of this honour [i.e. of consecrating] may be lightly esteem the oblation of His Lord. And as redemption was not given without a mediator, so neither is it right that even the priest, who

⁵⁴Note that George says nothing here about the kanuna “Terrible art Thou” B 297 ll.4-6 or the “Verses of the Sanctuary” B 297 ll.10-26. He tells us later (ch.26 pp.129ff.) that this formed no part of the ordinary Sunday service, and was only said on festivals.

⁵⁵On this see *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* p.83. The Syr. is:

ܐܠܗܐ ܕܡܪܝܢ
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is a mediator between us and the Creator, should approach the Mysteries without a mediator. And when he receives, then he associates with him those who are more or less equal to him in the [celebration of the] Mysteries: I mean, (first) him who reads the Gospel, that his *paranympheus*⁵⁶ may thus share the enjoyment with him. This one [= the *paranympheus*] is in the place of Cephas, who was our Lord's substitute⁵⁷ with regard to the apostles.

Then the people communicate, each one in his order: as there are some among them who on account of their labours [i.e. taking part in the liturgy] are worthy to receive the mansions that are in the heaven [= apse]⁵⁸. And when all the presbyters receive, as holy men of Adam's race, then the spiritual ones [= deacons] also are set free from the passions of inconstancy, and are communicated with the holy Mysteries. And first of them all Gabriel approaches, as the head of the spiritual ones, and as he who has been entrusted with the [New] Testament. But after him Michael, who is the deacon (*fol.151r^o*) who proclaimed the "peace" on the bema; and afterwards [the other deacons] in order. The subdeacons, who are the middle church (of angels), cannot by the canons of their order come so far as the seat of the higher church [= deacons]; wherefore they wait until Christ is brought to them from heaven [= apse], and sets them free from passions and grants them the enjoyment.

And whereas the deacon who consecrated⁵⁹ - that is to say, Gabriel - receives the cup⁶⁰, it is because he has been made the minister of the [New] Testament. He it is who distributes the gifts of his Lord. Only he does not receive the cup until the priest himself gives (it) to him: which shews that Christ has given him the authority over His treasure. For neither do those deacons who are by the altar dare to approach to

⁵⁶Syr. ܐܡܝܥܘܣ "amicus sponsi".

⁵⁷ܐܡܝܥܘܣ ܐܡܝܥܘܣ

⁵⁸This evidently means, communicate in the apse. As already observed "mansions" is a common word with George for the Eucharist.

⁵⁹I.e., I suppose, assisted the priest while he was engaged with the anaphora.

⁶⁰B 297-8: but here the deacon of the Apostle receives the paten, and the cup is given to the deacon of the Pax.

the business of the fans until the priest allows them: shewing that they are servants and have not authority over any one of the matters of the Kingdom. And so Gabriel, receiving the cup, stands at the door of the apse, which is heaven and he announces to those who have lived in a middle position⁶¹ : “Lo the King is about to come to you, and in His mercy He will pardon your sins, and as a favour He will make you to enjoy (the mysteries), on account of the good quality of your faith”.⁶²

And those first ones - I mean those who are within [= ministers]⁶³ , as being worthy because of the strenuousness of their labours⁶⁴ . But those middle ones - I mean the faithful in the nave - who are without labours, wait till the end, as those on whom mercy has been done⁶⁵ . And he [the priest; or Christ, i.e., the Sacrament] goes forth to them, while they are filled with reverence for Him. And first the deacon, Gabriel, suppliantly begs the priest, Christ, that he will bless⁶⁶ His people and pardon their sins. And as it is not possible that they enjoy (communion) unless (their) sins are first pardoned, he [= the priest] then shews his goodness, and accedes to the request of Gabriel, and he sends before him his mercy by what he (*fol. 151v*^o) says. What then?

“The gift of the grace of our Lifegiver, our Lord Jesus Christ, be fulfilled in mercy with us all”⁶⁷ . That is: By mercy you have been made worthy of this gift, not by labours. And “the grace of Christ”: He who clothed Himself in a garment (taken) from you, and suffered and was

⁶¹In chap. 13 of this Tract it has been said that the faithful in the nave occupy a “middle position”: so it is these who are meant here. He does mean the faithful here: cf. *postea*. For the ceremony of communion in Addai and Mari at the present day: see B pp. 298f.

⁶²cf. B 298 ll. 5-11, to which this may correspond: there is there a mention of “pardon”.

⁶³S supplies: “as those who by labours are worthy of the kingdom, approach to [Him?] with openness of face, and receive their gifts”, -

⁶⁴“Labours” here means taking part as ministers in the service.

⁶⁵I.e. like the last comers in the parable of the labourers.

⁶⁶B 298 l. 17

⁶⁷B 298 ll. 20-1; cf. Narsai p. 27 “The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you”. George and Narsai say nothing of the preliminary blessing in B 297 l. 31- 298 (col. 2) l. 15.

tempted, and is able to help those who are tempted, - lo, He has shewn mercy upon you, and has “fulfilled with you His grace”, and has given you the gift of His kingdom. And so the people also, having seen the mercy that, lo, lights down upon them from the Judge, Christ, answer: :O Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.”⁶⁸ Let thy mercy be upon us; and let us not for our sins be deprived of the enjoyment of Thee; since Thou art good, and a Master that is kind to His servants. But Gabriel goes forth, as one who knows the way: for it is he also who will bear the cross of our Lord and come before Him in the resurrection. And here you are to consider the cup as in place of the cross, which in the hand of Gabriel is to appear before our Lord at His coming. The cup also is [= represents] blood; and it is shed first, before the sacrifice. But that (interpretation) of the cross of our Lord⁶⁹, which is to come before Him in the hand of Gabriel, is the more exact.

But perhaps someone will ask: why does not one of the presbyters take the cup, if the body and blood are one? We answer that all the presbyters are now in the state of bliss⁷⁰, and as it were free from [lit. “without”] labours, and in a state of joy and peace. But this deacon, as a steward of Christ, is associated with our Lord [= priest] until He has made an end of distributing the mansions [= Eucharist]: until mercy has been done on all Adam’s house, and they receive the mansions. Then he also shall rest.

But the doors of the nave are shut, (for) a type of the doors of the kingdom, which are shut before the gainsayers⁷¹; and they knock at the doors, but they are answered [...] ⁷². For thus says blessed Ishô`Yabh: “The (*fol.152r*^o) subdeacons shut the doors of the nave after the saying ‘Go ye hearers, see to the doors’. And the daughters of the convenient⁷³ (shut) the women’s door. And they do not open them until

⁶⁸B 298 l.23.

⁶⁹I.e. that explanation which refers the cup to the cross.

⁷⁰I.e. of having received communion.

⁷¹Or “unbelievers”; lit “deniers” (ܕܚܝܬܝܢ)

⁷²See next page - “I know you not”.

⁷³I.e. religious women of some sort: George earlier equates them with the deaconesses. cf. pp.61, 64.

the people receive the sacrament, and they set the mysteries in order⁷⁴, and the service begins; and the doors of the kingdom are shut before the gainsayers; and when they knock the bridegroom, the priest, answers them I know you not”.⁷⁵

The table⁷⁶ also Michael receives⁷⁷. As servants they [sc. the 2 deacons] bow their necks to the service before Christ their master; and while he distributes, they are the bearers of the mansions; shewing by this that the whole service of the resurrection is performed by angels. And our Lord said in the parable of the tares and the field that the harvest is the end of the world, but the reapers are the angels; and all the tares that are in the nave at the beginning the angels come and separate out at the resurrection - when Christ has willed to ascend with the four deacons⁷⁸ - at the anthem⁷⁹, and at the saying “Whoso has not received baptism”, and the rest. That is a type of the separating out of the bad, who are the tares. And so they separate and drive out the tares⁸⁰, but leave the wheat, the sons of the faith. And if there be any who, while he is worthy of the faith, lives in the evil of divers sins,

⁷⁴This refers to the setting of the Mysteries on the altar after the dismissals.

⁷⁵The words with which the quotation from *Ishô' Yabh* was introduced imply that *Ishô' Yabh* made this allusion: and so the quotation clearly extends as far as this: Moreover the MS has the extra large stop here, which is sometimes used for making the limits of a quotation.

⁷⁶Sc. the tray, or Paten: cf. *infra*. pp.126, 136.

⁷⁷Cf. B 298 ll.3f. (2nd col.): where it is the other deacon ('of the Apostle' = Gabriel) who takes the paten.

⁷⁸I.e. when the cross and Gospel book go from bema to apse (the Bishop etc. signified death by sitting on the ground during the anthem, resurrection by standing up, ascension by going to the apse). See earlier (p.60) for 4 deacons with cross and Gospel.

⁷⁹See pp.68f..

⁸⁰On pp.65f. it is implied, in fact stated, that the dismissals were no longer taken literally in George's day. What we have here would seem to imply that they were taken literally, that the catechumens were actually driven out. But note that he says the dismissals are a type of the separation of good and bad: and it will presently appear that what is said here is only metaphorical. George often interprets *Ishô' Yabh's* directions even when obsolete as if they were still in force. [see p.125 note 85 below].

and has not attained to one of the things of faith in any of his senses, it is shewn by the saying “Whoso receivith not the sacrament let him depart” that he is driven away from the enjoyment (of the Mysteries), as one who has not upon him garments worthy of the marriage supper. And⁸¹ even if there be here⁸² one who, on account of accidental (causes or sins) that happen to him, does not receive the Sacrament, let him also depict a likeness of him who had not (fitting) garments, and let him go forth without⁸³. And whereas up to that (point)⁸⁴ all were standing together: (this means) that even so all men alike come into the world, and go forth equally by death - the righteous and the wicked - and rise from the grave in the resurrection equally, and (are equal) until the judgment, when the sheep are separated from the goats. And so at the mysteries also: (*fol.152v*^o) they have stood together until the judgment and retribution - baptized (and) unbaptized, and those who receive and those who do not receive⁸⁵. And at the end those who have laboured are exalted, and those who have not labours are driven away. And that saying of the parable of our Lord is fulfilled in them which He said to

⁸¹There is a full stop here: so we must read ܐܪܠܐ for ܐܪܠܐ

⁸²Note that George is now contemplating the actual time of Communion.

⁸³Here again George seems to be speaking literally of going out of church: but he really has in mind the going forth from the wedding supper, which is typified by abstention from communion. (See note 85 below).

⁸⁴“That point” i.e. at the wedding supper, when just before the man without the wedding garment was cast out.

⁸⁵Here it is quite clear that the non communicants have remained in church up to the time of communion. On pp.65f. the opinion of “some” that in early times the catechumens left the Church after the dismissals, was refuted by George; and in the pages preceding he openly assumed that the persons addressed as unbaptised in the dismissal formulas have (or may have) been baptized, signed, etc. (cf. *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, pp.77-79) But on pp.124ff. it appears to be stated categorically that the unbaptized and non-communicants did in fact leave the church after the dismissals. The question rises: is George in these last-mentioned pages speaking literally, or is he speaking metaphorically? Observe first of all that if the catechumens or non-communicants are not in church at the time of communion [about which he is speaking], there is no obvious reason why he should here introduce them at all.

them: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire”: and this also comes to pass.

But the people, seeing the mercy (that has been done) upon them, joyfully approach to our Lord and the table [= tray, or paten]⁸⁶. And they come thronging forward, as men in haste, who are afraid of missing the enjoyment. And all of them, O brother, depict a type of the resurrection. And if thou seek to see the beginning of the world and the end thereof, the judgment and retribution⁸⁷ that is after the resurrec-

Note next that he introduces the subject by comparing the communion at which the deacons [= angels in his symbolism] assist to the separation, at the end of the world, of the bad from the good, of the tares from the wheat: “And while he (the priest) distributes they (the deacons) are the bearers of the mansions [= Eucharist]: shewing by this that the whole service of the resurrection is performed by angels. And our Lord said in the parable of the tares and the field that the harvest is the end of the world, but the reapers are the angels”. [Surely by the “end of the world” he means the end of the mysteries, the communion]. Then he says that the separation took place at the dismissals; but adds: “That is a type of the separating out of the bad, who are the tares”; which may only mean that it foreshews the separation which is really effected at the time of communion. That this, and what he further says on p.125 of non-communicants “going forth without” is mercy metaphorical, that the going forth really means abstention from communion, is beyond reasonable doubt [quite apart from what he said in ch.13, p.64ff.] by what he says on pp.125ff. He says, that as all come into the world alike and die and rise in the resurrection and stand together in judgment; when the sheep are separated from the goats “so at the mysteries also: they have stood together until the judgment and retribution - baptized (and) unbaptized, those who receive and those who do not receive. And at the end those who have laboured are exalted, and those who have not labours are driven away” (cf. similar language in ch.13; *Lit. Hom. of Narsai* p.79). Now George tells us (p.100) that our death is represented by the descent of the H. Ghost, and our resurrection (i.e. the general judgment) by the part of the service after the descent of the H. Ghost. So in the last passage the judgment and retribution = the communion when we either receive or do not receive the heavenly mansions by which George always denotes communion. And so here he clearly states, in accord with what he said in ch.13, p.65 etc. that the non-communicants stand in church together with communicants up to the very time of communion.

⁸⁶cf. p.124 above and p.136 below.

tion, and the enjoyment and the torment and those to whom mercy shall be shewn, and those who are not worthy of mercy, and all things that are to be: examine the service of the Mysteries, picture these things before your eyes, while you read the ceremonies⁸⁸ which blessed Ishô' Yabh has set forth - even though they be not carried out⁸⁹ - and you will learn from them all that you seek. And as a man who desires to see the image of a king - when his portrait is displayed on a tablet and he sees all the portrayings of him [= the king] , and how he commands and how he is obeyed, and how he distributes gifts, and how he slays: and the mind of the beholder is satisfied, and he reckons these portrayings to be little short of the (actual) sight of him [= the king] - even so in the case of the mysteries also, wherein are depicted all the institutions of the kingdom: whose wishes to know the things that are to be, when he sees them [= the mysteries] he is satisfied; and if he be good he rejoices, and if he be evil he even now suffers torment.

And for this cause are these likenesses depicted in the church, O brother, that the beholders may see them openly⁹⁰ , and fear the judgment to come. And as the Scriptures have shewn us torment and bless, and by (*fol.153r*^o) nature also our dissolution and our re-formation and our resuscitation are depicted before our minds, so it has seemed good to the Apostles⁹¹ and Fathers to set forth by means of the Mysteries the judgment and the retribution, and the enjoyment and the torment; that when the beholders see they may fear and repent. And Christian

⁸⁷I.e. the part of the service which comes after the invocation of the H. Spirit (see above, note 85).

⁸⁸ܕܢܝܚܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܕܡܪܝܢ

⁸⁹ܕܢܝܚܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܕܡܪܝܢ This may refer to the dismissal formulas, of which George has just been speaking. Cf. what he said in ch.13, p.66 above in reference to the same matter: "but, as I have already said, blessed Ishô' Yabh set down ... such things as should signify mysteries, and did not so much care about the (actual) things" (cf. note ad loc.).

⁹⁰I.e. see clearly what is meant - see the realities that lie behind.

⁹¹Not improbably an allusion to the Liturgy of 'Apostles' Addai and Mari (see above).

ought through all the reading [or “lections”] and all the [other] services to approach to the light of the Mysteries, which teach them by an orderly representation⁹² all those things which the Scriptures teach collectively.⁹³

But negligent priests and believers have left those things that ought to be done; nor do they search out for what cause Ishô’ Yabh prescribed them; and it does not please them to depict all the representations of the Mysteries: but if he has commanded that the presbyters should sit, they set (this) at naught, supposing⁹⁴ that it is for laziness that they sit in the bema; and they despise the canon [= in effect ‘rubric’] and do not sit. And hence they make void all the canons [here = miles of interpretation] touching the resurrection⁹⁵. And the faithful also do not worship and stand as they ought; but as if they had no law “their ways are undone continually” [Ps.10:5 - Syr.], and they understand none of the ecclesiastically proprieties⁹⁶, and by them [sc. the mysteries] he depicts all the things that are these [= in the resurrection]; and then when he receives the Sacrament and goes to his house, he rejoices as one who sees Christ and His judgment and His mercy and His retribution. But since this matter by reason of its greatness has been prolonged - for many are the types and the explanations (thereof) that are in it - let us close this (discourse) and explain other matters of this great and divine service; that we may rest in the goodly harbour of the end of our words.

⁹²ܐܝܬܐ ܕܠܥܝܢܐ seems to mean “pictorially”, or “dramatically”. The expansion is of the same type and construction as ܐܝܬܐ ܕܠܥܝܢܐ and ܐܝܬܐ ܕܠܥܝܢܐ. The idea seems to be that the Mysteries present graphically and in order all that the Scriptures give “collectively”. i.e. all together, without orderly arrangement.

⁹³See last note.

⁹⁴Reading ܐܝܬܐ ܕܠܥܝܢܐ for ܐܝܬܐ ܕܠܥܝܢܐ (text).

⁹⁵Sc. as they do not signify death by sitting they cannot signify the resurrection by standing up again.

⁹⁶Translate according to S: “But there is one who both rejoices and grieves, and sees all the things that are to be: who, when he stands at the mysteries, has his mind on the resurrection”, etc.

CHAPTER 26

Why they say “Terrible art Thou” on festivals¹, and on the Epiphany a Hullala²; and why they do not say it [i.e. probably, either) on (*fol. 153v*^o) all Sundays; and why the deacon says, “Praise Ye”³ and they say a responsory [*unnaya*] in the bema⁴; and what is the mystery contained in the responsory [*unnaya*] and the sicles [*bate*] and “Thy body and Thy blood”, and all things that in these are set down. We have already said that the festivals [sc. feasts of our Lord] are more especially assimilated to [or “represent] the dispensation of our Lord; and when we keep a festival, beside [= in addition to] the commemoration of the death and resurrection we honour also the festival itself⁵. And since from the beginning of the Mysteries we typify the death and resurrection, and we cannot [here (?)] make any difference, by way of addition, between the Nativity and the mysteries of the Epiphany and the Ascension⁶: now that the consecration is completed, we return to shew forth the honour of the festival, treating the mysteries as Christ, and the priests and deacons as the disciples and angels; and we stand in order as servants before a master and repeat the praise [or “recount the glories”⁷] of the King. And whereas at the Nativity there appeared to the shepherds angels saying “Glory”, and the shepherds also returned glorifying and blessing God, and the Magi too, when they had seen the star, “rejoiced with an exceeding great joy”: even so now also, all glorify “God most High”⁸. And since the glory which those former

¹B.297 ll.4 ff. (See p.120, note 54).

²I.e. a division (1/20) of the Psalter (usually); cf. p.132, note 24.

³B 298 l.2 (col.1); cf. p.132, note 24.

⁴cf. B 298 l.30; cf. p.132, note 24.

⁵I.e., evidently - us have some special feature in the service to mark the festival.

⁶ܠܐܡܢܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ i.e. apparently, no difference between our feast and another can be marked by adding anything to the liturgy in the central (anaphoral) portion - the “consecration”.

⁷The same word in Syr (ܡܠܟܐ, Shubhha) may mean either ‘praise’ or ‘glory’.

⁸B 297 l.4.

prophets saw - I mean Isaiah and Daniel - was celebrated in the Canon “crying”⁹, above: they [sc. the people] come now again with their plaudits, giving praise from two other prophets, Daniel and Ezekiel, and they bring forth those lofty utterances that are in them: “Terrible art Thou, God most High, from Thy sanctuary”¹⁰, of David [Ps.68:35]: Blessed is the honour of the Lord from His place”¹¹, of Ezekiel [Ez.3:12]. And they applaud with these sayings, adducing the testimony of the prophets, which were fulfilled in Christ when He was [lit. “who was”) born. Even so the Gospel applies to each one of the incidents of our Lord’s dispensation a saying of the prophets.

That they recite secretly at first¹² and then raise their voice¹³: (that means) that the dispensation of our Lord was hidden from the general-ity, but the angels knew it. (*fol. 154r*^o) And that the lesser people¹⁴ lift up their voices: (that is) that our Lord has now been revealed and made known. And (that) thou in the nave answer these¹⁵, (this signifies) the nations who were converted and received the faith of Christ. That those within [the apse (?)]¹⁶ say the verses [*pethgame*] from the Old (Testa-ment): (that is) because they are, as it were, better acquainted with the prophets and their testimonies, and they bring forward (those of) their testimonies which have been fulfilled on the same [= present] festival; since they do not say any but suitable verses [*pethgame*]. That they add after every two verses [*pethgame*] “Terrible art Thou”: (that is) they write prophecy with the dispensation of our Lord. That the people answer “Terrible art Thou” only, and do not say the verses: (that is) all the peoples having been baptized, the yoke of the commandments of the Old (Testament) was not laid upon them; but as the apostles wrote

⁹I.e. The concluding words (or Canon) of the Preface, “Crying” etc.

¹⁰B 297 1.4.

¹¹B 295 1.5.

¹²Cf. B. 297 1.2 “in a low voice”.

¹³Cf. B. 297 1.7 “in a loud voice”.

¹⁴I.e. perhaps the singer. Possibly translation: “a few people”: i.e. those in the bema (cf. *infra*).

¹⁵See B 297 1.7

¹⁶See below p. 133.

to them - as the Acts shew - that they should abstain from things strangled and from fornication and from things sacrificed and from blood [Acts 15:20,27], but apart from these things they might eat anything. And so now also these say the verses of the dispensation: that is “Terrible art Thou”.

By the continuation¹⁷, which they say afterwards, they shew that the expectation of the prophets has been fulfilled, and that they [= prophets] have been satisfied. And that they mingle the continuation with the response [*unnaya*]¹⁸: (this signifies) the union which has come about of the people [= Israel] with the peoples through the Gospel of Christ. The deacon who says “Praise [or “glorify”] ye”¹⁹ is Gabriel who announces the peace to those who lived under the Old (Law) and saw Christ from afar - I mean all the prophets - (those) in the bema - were walking in the Law in Jerusalem: whence Ishô’ Yabh says: “*Shahare*²⁰ ascend the bema and say the response” [*unnaya*].

That they ascend to the bema: that is to Jerusalem and that they are also blind²¹: (i.e.) that those who have been diligent in labours, but have not partaken of baptism²² do not fully become enjoyers [of the N.T. dispensation], but are as blind men in the enjoyment; and they fulfil the words which are Lord spoke, that “Whoso is not born of water and the Spirit is not (*fol. 154v*^o) able to see the kingdom of God (John 3:5). So even the blind who are under the Law are comforted; and when they see that they have been called to the mercy of the ministry, which

¹⁷See B 297 l.18 (ܠܗܝܪܐ) See p.132, note 24.

¹⁸Probably = “Terrible art Thou”: cf. B 297 l.21.

¹⁹B 298 l.2. The order probably means “Say the ‘Gloria Patri’ etc.”.

²⁰ܠܝܡܐ lit “vigilatores” See Brockelmann *Lex. Syr.* s.v. ܠܝܡܐ “presbyter, qui nocturno praesertim officio decantando praeest” B.O. 3, 2, 820. These *Shahre* are probably the same as the κληροὶ (choir) who receive communion at the bema: cf. p.136, note 48.

²¹What follows will help to explain the meaning. These “*Shahre*” represent the Old Testament worthies, who had not, like Simeon, “seen” God’s mercy.

²²He does not mean that those who go up to the bema are really unbaptized, but that they represent the prophets who were unbaptized (see before).

is in our Lord, with joy they “give glory”²³ [or they “praise” - cf. the deacon’s remark “Praise ye”, above): shewing thereby on this wise: We were not even worthy to see this goodly hope, but we were expecting it and we desired to see it; and by similitudes it was in some small part depicted before us; and we were satisfied, according to that which our Lord Himself has said in the Gospel: “Abraham your father was eager to see My day, and he saw and was glad” (John 8:56). Even so we were desirous to see him: as our Lord has said again also: “Many prophets and righteous were desirous to see one of the days of the Son of Man and they saw not” (Mt.13:7). But they, which they joyfully “give glory” [or “praise”], depict a type of those who ministered under the Old (Testament).

And when the response [*unnaya*] is ended, and our Lord [= priest] goes forth, then they return again and introduce their witness from the versicles [*bate*] which take the place of the verses [*pethgame*] of their prophecy: Lo my eyes have seen Thy mercy, which Thou hast prepared for all the peoples: a light for the revelation of the gentiles, and glory for thy people Israel” (Lk.2:30-2) - the word which Zachary (sic) spoke - and each of the versicles [*bate*] they unite with the response²⁴ [*unnaya*]: as though each one of the prophets should shew his own (prophecies) and unite his prophecy to Christ who has appeared.

²³I.e. probably “They say the “Gloria” (Patri etc.): cf.: notes 19 and 24.

²⁴It is possible that their response was something different from “Terrible” etc. This seems to be implied above (end: “and when the response is ended”) and on p.135, see also note there. There is no sign of this in B 297-8. George’s arrangement compared with B 297-8 seems to have this (1) “Terrible art Thou” (=B 297 ll.4-17); (2) “Continuation” (=B 297 ll.19-26. probably); (3) Omit: “Let us pray. Peace be with you” to end of page; (4) Deacon says “Give Ye Glory” [= (?) B 298 l.2]; (5) They say “glory [to the Father” etc. (cf. notes above)]: This is not in B; (6) Then verses of Nunc dimittis with a response [see note above and later] [not in B]: this is said when the priest goes forth to give communion (cf. above); and would come naturally after the blessing (B 298 ll.17-21); (7) a new anthem “Thy body and Thy blood” which appears to be something like col.1 of B pp.298 l.5-299 l.30.

And whereas, while the response is one the versicles [*bate*] are many [= more than one]: (that is:) though Christ is one, the prophets were many. And blessed Ephraim also set to every response versicles according to the letters [of the alphabet]. That he set (them) to the letters shews that by the Scriptures²⁵ we have known the power of God. That he set (them) to all the letters shews that the prophets are many, and that all their prophecies have received fulfilment. And whereas, the versicles are each and all necessarily coupled [ܡܠܬܐ (sic)²⁶] to the response: (that is) all the prophets adhered to one Christ. (*fol.155r*^o). That the versicles resemble the continuation²⁷ of the response: (that is) their prophecy corresponds to those things which were done by our Lord in His dispensation.

That those (who are) by the Mysteries now change, (saying) Thy body and Thy blood²⁸: (signifies) the thanksgiving of all reasonable beings, who render glory [or “praise”] to Him who gives the enjoyment. That those by the Mysteries recite, then those in the bema answer: (that is) that “the dead who are in Christ shall rise first” (1 Th.4:16); and they also shall begin the enjoyment and the giving of thanks. That the others answer after them, is because they also through the mercy shewn to them shall have received the enjoyment. And those who say the last versicles²⁹ are, as it were, those who on account of their labours have authority over the holy mysteries and the mansions of the kingdom: and their mansions are many.

That the people answer the first clause [*tara*]³⁰: (that is) that they, on account of the mercy which they have received, have been held wor-

²⁵The writer probably equated (on some system) the number of the books of scripture with that of the letters of the Syriac alphabet.

²⁶S has the right reading ܡܠܬܐ which a marginal note explains as = ܡܠܬܐ.

²⁷The “versicles” (*bate*) were said (pp.132ff.) to the verses of the Nunc dimittis. The “continuation” in B 297 ll.19f. = a verse of the Acts. The resemblance probably lies in the fact that both are of the New Testament.

²⁸cf. B298 l.5 ff. A new anthem evidently begins here: cf. note 33.

²⁹These last versicles may correspond to the “verses of the anthem” B 298 ll.24f.

³⁰ܡܠܬܐ lit. “door”; this and *baita* (ܡܠܬܐ) plur. *bate* (ܡܠܬܐ) are technical expressions, used also in Arabic poetry; cf. B 299 ll.12-17.

thy of one mansion; but though they have been accounted worthy of mercy they shall not be made like to those who have laboured. As a man, when he makes a supper, sends and calls his friends joyfully, (but) drives away his enemies from him, (and) of his goodness brings in some who have not transgressed badly, but (have committed) small sins; and (as) these when they enter are not granted enjoyment with openness of face [= familiarly, confidently] like his friends, but lesser dainties are set before them - while his friends, though they are with them [= the others] in the enjoyment, he holds worthy of many honours - even so shall it be done in our Lord's judgment: the righteous by their labours shall inherit the mansions of the Father's house: sinners who receive mercy shall inherit lesser mansions. And so by (the response, or anthem) "Thy body and Thy blood" all these things are depicted: the people by the mercy shewn to them (always) answering the same clause [*tara*]³¹: those and others, who are (more) exalted, saying the last versicles³² [*bate*].

But that "Terrible art Thou" and "Thy body and Thy blood"³³ are not said on any Sunday, is because on Sundays we signify only the resurrection; (but) on festivals the resurrection and the (special) solemnity³⁴ of the festival. To the festivals we assign (*fol.155v*^o) "Terrible art Thou" and "Thy body and Thy blood"; to the resurrection only the response [*unnaya*] and the versicles [*bate*]³⁵. Concerning these things then let (this) explanation suffice.

³¹See former note.

³²See note 29.

³³George evidently means that these are 2 separate anthems (cf. p.133 where it is said that those "by the Mysteries (= in apse) change (to) "Thy Godly" etc.

³⁴

³⁵I.e. the two anthems beginning "Terrible", and "Thy body" are interpreted in connection with the particular act of our Lord's dispensation which is being celebrated on this or that festival: to the resurrection only the versicles with their response, i.e. it would seem the verses of the Nunc dimittis with some other response than "Terrible" (see notes on pp.132f.) are applied.

Moreover they³⁶ also add a (hymn of) praise [*teshbohta*]³⁷, which is a common thanksgiving of good and bad; of the wise and the foolish; and so to each of the senses mentioned in it³⁸ they give (its) gratification. He who is sanctified in all his senses becomes perfect in the kingdom; and presenting ten pounds, ten cities³⁹ are given to him; and he who (offers) less (receives) in amount according to (the number of) his senses. Because also the senses are both of body and soul⁴⁰, our Lord, when He made the parable declared that a pound gained ten pounds: the pound that was given by the master being intelligence. In that the spoke of ten servants, he indicated the completeness of (this) number; since there is no number above ten⁴¹. That (He spoke of) 10 pounds, (indicates) that He gave to all of them intelligence. The trading is done by means of the senses: if a man has been sanctified in one sense, he gains one pound, if in five he is sanctified he has gained 5 pounds and so on.

And so this (hymn of) praise [*teshbohta*] says⁴²: “Strengthen, O Lord, the hands that are stretched out”. And it enumerates the hands and the eye and the ear and the mouth and the tongue and the feet “and the bodies that have eaten”. And “great love” which is the fulfilling that (takes place) in the soul. And when this thanksgiving of each of the senses is fulfilled, then they⁴³ turn to another⁴⁴, which is “our Lord

³⁶It seems clear that George has now come to the end of those things said only on festivals, and that he here takes up the general exposition left off in ch.24. Cf. the heading of the present chapter. B says: “sung alternately verse by verse by those in the nave and those in the sanctuary”.

³⁷B 300 1.3-36.

³⁸This refers to the terms of the *teshbohta*, cf. B 300 11.3-25.

³⁹Reading: حَتِي “cities” (as in the Gospel - Peschitta Lk.19:17) for حَتِي “talents” (text). So S.

⁴⁰I.e. five of each.

⁴¹In Syriac 10 is the last number expressed by a single sign [i.e. ܐ judh (jod)]. After 10 two or more signs are used (e.g. ܐܐ judh-alaf = 11, and so on). So, as with us 9 is the highest digit, with the Syrians 10 is.

⁴²B 300 11.3ff.

⁴³Cf. 7 notes earlier.

⁴⁴Sc. another *teshbohta*: the feminine shews that this is meant.

Jesus”⁴⁵: and this is more particularly a common (or “congregational”) (prayer). And thus in many ways they celebrate the reception of mysteries⁴⁶, which is the enjoyment (of heaven). As when men are feasting, each one of them intones [lit.: “brings”] a joyful verse [*qinta*] of song, and when one sings the verse, all rejoice and answer after him: so also is it here - when they praise the Lord who has come “with every breath”⁴⁷ and with all the verses [*qinatha*]. And they accompany Christ [= priest] until He distributes [= has distributed] the Mysteries and enters (the apse).

Wherefore Ishô’ Yabh has said that the priest comes with the table [= paten, tray: cf. pp.124, 126] (*fol.156r^o*) to the bema, and gives to those who are by [or “at, apud”) the bema: that is the clerics (κληροί)⁴⁸: which shews that our Lord pours forth His mercy on those who were set under the Law, and He comes to them in mercy. Even as He descended to Jerusalem, so now also He stoops to come to them. And even if it be not thus done in all places, yet the blessed (man) [= Ishô’ Yabh) himself so commanded that we [or “he”] might bring out the glorious significations of the Mysteries. And when the priest has fulfilled all things, and imitated his Lord in the whole of His dispensation - that which has been fulfilled that which is to be - then with the trains of spiritual beings [= deacons] and with His elect and saints [= presbyters: as stated elsewhere], who by their labours have inherited the (higher) grades and mansions, he enters in, his own throne, heaven [= apse] and he sits upon his throne; and those saints and spiritual ones rejoice with Him for ever and receive the enjoyment [= heavenly bliss].

⁴⁵B 300 l.37: for the beginning “our Lord Jesus” see B 299, note: Narsai also gives this with the same beginning (“O our Lord Jesus”), but says nothing of the preceding teshbohta. In George and B this is sung in parts during communion. In Narsai it is said after communion as a continuous prayer of the people.

⁴⁶S is perhaps better: “And thus in many ways they (sing) praise during the reception of the mysteries”.

⁴⁷B 301 l.21 “at every season”. The word here is ܠܒܝܬ - perhaps B has a mistranslation.

⁴⁸Apparently the singers, choir: cf. p.132, note 20.

CHAPTER 27

Why now again the deacon proclaims at the door of the apse, "Let us all then", and what the prayers of the priest signify and all things that are here observed, to the end of the Mysteries. After the king [= priest, representing Christ] has completed the dispensation of his judgment and has gone up with his saints to heaven, and the men to whom mercy has been shewn [= congregation] have remained (on earth) , having received the enjoyment of Him - for though they were far [= different] from him, yet they have certainly been rejoiced - then, when we have become our church and have all shared in the removal of passions of inconstancy; and have together received the enjoyment of the kingdom: Gabriel shews and says: "Let us all then, who by the gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit have drawn nigh and have been accounted worthy", and the rest.¹

We now who have been accounted worthy of all this grace, and have been set free from the passions of sin, and have become heirs of the heavenly kingdom - "let us confess [or "give thanks"] to Him now and praise Him"² who, when we were unworthy by reason of our sins, turned to us in His many mercies and redeemed us from death and inconstancy, so that we are heirs of his good things. (*fol.156v^o*) What then? "Let us confess [or "give thanks"] to Him and praise Him".

Then the people, obedient to their director Gabriel, render glory [or "praise"] and say in common: "Glory to Him for the greatness of His gift, of which mortals are not sufficient to speak, which now has been poured upon us"³. But when he [= the deacon] has seen that the people have fully rendered thanks, then he also makes request and commands: "Pray ye now, that peace may be with us"⁴.

¹B 301, ll.28-32.

²B 301 ll.31f.

³Cf. B 301 ll.34f.

⁴B 301 l.37.

Then the priest, rejoicing in his people, that they have been accounted worthy of his enjoyment⁵, and beholding all the glorious things that have been performed towards his people, renders thanks to the Creator, God, through the Man (taken) from us: “It is fitting⁶, Lord, daily to confess to Thy Godhead, and to worship Thy Majesty [or “Lordship”], who hast raised up our race from the dust and hast made it of the same nature as [lit. “a son of the nature of”⁷] the spiritual beings: and in one Church (with us) they shall glorify Thee with a new glory; and Thou hast given them the enjoyment of Thy kingdom, and hast taught them the pleasantness of Thy praises, that without cease continually they may confess [or “give thanks”] to Thee: even to Thy glorious Trinity, with voices of praise and confession”. And then the people, after their custom, worshipping on the earth, as though ashamed before their Creator and the greatness of His honour, render glory with the seal of Amen: and they ask of Him that He will bless them.⁸

And having heard what they ask, he turns his speech to them saying: “Lo, in Christ⁹, who is a son of your race, you have taken refuge: He it is that has made you worthy of all these honours which are in His enjoyment - which (enjoyment) His body and His blood is after the manner of an earnest¹⁰. May He grant to all reasonable beings in common to praise Him with all (their) senses - when this earnest of the Mysteries which we have received shall have been fulfilled for us in the kingdom of heaven, when the resurrection comes in the end - together with all His elect, by His grace and His mercy”¹¹.

⁵I.e. given by him (= communion).

⁶B 302 ll.1ff.

⁷A phrase used often in Syriac to render *ομοουσιος*

⁸B 302, ll.12f.

⁹B 302 ll.15ff. [Narsai, p.30, represents this prayer only as far as l.20: “thoughts and words and deeds”]. George represents the whole - see references *infra*.

¹⁰Ibid. l.20.

¹¹B 302 ll.24f. are clearly in view here.

Then he [Ishô' Yabh] says that the deacon announces the peace secretly; and those in the apse give the peace to one another in secret, forasmuch as they [= those in the apse] have been accounted worthy of this gift more especially (*fol.157r^o*) than the people on whom mercy has been done, they have the enjoyment with Christ secretly¹². By the "peace" which they give one to another, (they signify) that passions of inconstancy, wherein wrath is hidden, have passed away from them. That they stand in order, (signifies) that all things that are there [= in heaven, the apse] are in comely order. That others apart from him who has consecrated, pray¹³: (that is) that the saints are accounted worthy to sit with Christ. That he finally blesses¹⁴, (is) because it is he who has made them to enjoy the mysteries.

And then, after that the saints have had the enjoyment secretly, the priest goes forth that he may again be seen of those upon mercy has been done [= the people] and bless them also. And whereas those within have the enjoyment with him continually, those without (have it also) in part. And he goes forth¹⁵, and with him Gabriel and the train of his companions also, as it were for the honouring of a king. And he [= the deacon] cries before him suppliantly that he will bless the people who have confessed Him [the priest as impersonating Christ]. And he blesses them and says: "He who now has associated our whole race in all perfect things through the Mediator Jesus Christ, may He bless you and renew you and add to you abundant honour¹⁶". But again blessed Timothy¹⁷ has added here to the canons of Ishô' Yabh that they should say "Our Father who art in heaven"¹⁸, which is the prayer of our Lord's

¹²Cf. B 302 ll.26-28.

¹³Can this refer to the psalms etc. in B 302 l.29-303 l.16? At any rate some sort of prayers were said here in the sanctuary.

¹⁴This seems to refer to a spiritual blessing for those in the apse.

¹⁵B 303 ll.21 ff.

¹⁶Cf. B 303 ll.23 ff.

¹⁷This was Timothy I Nestorian Catholicus died c.821.

¹⁸See *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, p.82.

(own) teaching, which fills up the enjoyment¹⁹, and those within and those without [pray] it together: that is, all of them have been delivered from the passion of inconstancy, and have become enjoyers of the body and the blood, which are an earnest of the kingdom.

But when everything has been completed, the veils which were divided are closed on high²⁰ between the perfect saints and the men to whom mercy was shewn. And now they shut the doors of the bridechamber [= apse], because the redemption has been completed. Moreover those saints who are within, have another honour set apart for them, (*fol. 157v^o*) and they also receive a certain mark of distinction [*purshana*]²¹ which is [= signifies] perfect love. And when the *purshana* is presented [or “brought nigh”], the priest who consecrated blesses [it (?)] : for everything is completed by Christ. Then all, as having been accounted worthy of great honours, set out with joy for their homes and (there) they prepare a further banquet, that that goodly joy of theirs may be completed by the partaking [lit. ‘intercourse’] of bodily things. And they also prepare entertainment for one another and feasts and banquets; that as Christ has united them by His dispensation, and made them one body and one spirit, so they may associate one with another as disciples.

Now to God the Father, who has redeemed us all from error, and to His only Son, Jesus Christ, who has brought us near to the familiar association of the mysteries, and to the Holy Spirit, who has made us wise with all the wisdom of His teaching and has shewn us the paths that bring us unto the kingdom, be glory and honour for every and ever.

¹⁹Sc. the bliss of heaven, signified by reception of communion, as frequently in this tract.

²⁰I.e. in front of the apse (which symbolizes heaven).

²¹Lit. “difference”. But the word seems to be used in a technical concrete sense; and it perhaps refers to the eulogia (B 304 l.13) given after the service (?)

CHAPTER 28

Why the deacons in the apse do not bend the knee throughout the Mysteries. We have already said that a genuflexion everywhere signifies death, whether they genuflect without (the apse) or within: and sitting upon the ground also signifies the same thing.

And the priest bends the knee in the apse because he is the representative of Christ, and typifies His death and His resurrection. Christ died in His humanity: justly then does He [= the priest] bend the knee and typify death. But the deacons, inasmuch as they typify the spiritual beings - and spiritual beings do not die at all, and are not clothed in a mortal body - it is right that they should typify according to the order of their nature. And (so) they do not bend the knee; but they stand upon their feet, because the spiritual beings stand before the judgment seat continually, And you may take a proof (of this) from Gabriel, who said to Zachary "I am Gabriel, (*fol. 158r*^o) who stand before God". And again Isaiah said, "And the seraphim were standing above it"; and Daniel said, "A thousand thousands stand before Him and ten thousand times ten thousand minister to His honour". And thus it is right for the deacons, who are a type of the spiritual beings, only to stand in their ministrations. Wherefore they do not bend the knee¹.

¹S adds "in the apse".

CHAPTER 29

Why in the passion and the fast the deacon does not say before the Gospel “Let us stand ready”, but “Be ye in silence”; and why they do not read the lessons of the Law and the Prophets at baptism and in the Mysteries of Saturday. Whereas the Gospel is read on Sundays and festivals, it is here not death, but the dispensation that is celebrated. And when it is the dispensation (that is signified), the angel [= deacon] mingles himself with us¹, on account of reason and life. But this matter has been treated by us earlier².

But when we signify the passion or the fast: since they [the angels] do not hunger or thirst or fast or die, the angel removes himself from us³, attributing to us death and suffering, saying: Now that you are fasting the fast - whereas our nature neither fasts nor eats - “Be ye [in stillness] and be silent”⁴: fulfil the service that belongs property to your own nature. Again, when we are signifying the passion and death he says the same thing. And when we perform baptism, (since) this belongs property to us, and therein also we signify death, he does not mingle himself with us⁵.

Moreover, (as regards) the lessons of the prophets: that they are not read at baptism and in the Mysteries of Saturday, belongs to their special character; for whenever we read the Old (Testament), we depict that ancient dispensation that was before the Law, and that of the Law itself. But in Baptism we have (already) depicted the ancient dispensation by the signings and the things that come before that point, and we have entered the beginning of the New (dispensation) by the (diaconal) proclamation [*karoꝝutha*]⁶. (*fol.158v^o*) It is not right (there-

¹I.e. he uses the first person plural - “Let us stand”.

²Cf. chap. 9 fol.123v^o.

³Sc. uses second person “Be ye” etc.

⁴The formula is ܐܠܗܐ ܥܡܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ lit. “be ye in silence and be silent” (see heading to chap.9).

⁵I.e. uses the first person plural “Let us” etc.

⁶I.e. the diaconal litanies.

fore) that we should read the Old (Testament), which signifies the old dispensation; but let us travel in the way of our canons and read the Apostle, which signifies the carnal birth of our Lord, and the hymn [*Zummara*]⁷, which signifies the baptism of John, and the Gospel which signifies the baptism of our Lord; and then let us come (and) ourselves be baptized with His baptism.

Moreover on the evening of the Sabbath [= Saturday]⁸ - because, when the baptism is finished, we say that our Lord rose together with⁹ those baptized persons who stand forth from Jordan¹⁰; and now the whole of the old (dispensation) has lapsed and passed away, for we see a new law, even Christ, who fulfilled His dispensation and died and rose - rightly do us omit the lessons of the Old (Testament), which bring in only death to nature, but read lessons which shews forth the dispensation of our Lord. Finally [we omit O.T] because the old world has passed away, and we are representing a new one: that is, the state of things (which is to be) after the resurrection.

⁷Cf. p.46 above.

⁸The Saturday was probably Holy Saturday, as it appears from Tract 5 (that on Baptism) chap.1. That in George's day baptism was then given. This was probably followed immediately by the Liturgy of Easter Sunday, which was celebrated on Saturday night - see above chap.1, p.27, note 9.

⁹I.e. at the same time as.

¹⁰I.e. the baptismal font.

CHAPTER 30

Why we go forth on the morning of the Sunday of the Resurrection, and give the “Peace of the Resurrection”, or (recite) a *Soghitha*¹. Since Christ has risen, and we with Him by a mystery, and we have seen how the angels together with us have been set free from inconstancy, and we have been made one Church with them: now also we shew the newness of the resurrection state. The cross goes forth, and the Gospel and the bishop, with censers and lights, into the court [*daretha*] without, together with the whole congregation, with anthems [*onyatha*] of the resurrection. That the cross and the Gospel and the bishop go forth, (means) that Christ came to us; that first for visited us by His dispensation, and that in the end He will raise us up. That they go out to the court, (means) that our Lord was crucified there; for it [the court, representing the place of crucifixion] is without Jerusalem; and the Gospel says that the tomb was by the cross: “Now there was in that place wherein Jesus was crucified (*fol.159r*^o) a garden”, it says, “and in the same garden a new monument”, and the rest [John 19:41]. Moreover our resurrection also takes place [or “will take place”] in the same place in which Jesus was crucified. And the Gospel also says that the place was near Jerusalem [cf. John 19:20]. And so it is that we go forth without to the court, - outside Jerusalem (which is) the nave².

What then? The whole community, gives the peace one to another: that is to say, the bishop by means of the cross and the gospel³ and (the rest) each one to his companion - the priests and deacons and people being all together. They give the peace because thoughts of carnal things [lit. “bodily thoughts”] have been done away, and the whole Church has become one, of spiritual and corporeal beings (to-

¹A *soghitha* seems to have been a poem written in dialogue form. See *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* p.ix. See also p.145, note 4.

²With George Jerusalem usually = the bema; but the bema was, he tells us “in the midst of the nave” (Tract 2 chap.2).

³So S.

gether): and there [sc. in the resurrection] there is neither head nor tail, neither great nor little; for all are of one standing [lit. “age”: Gr. ἀκμῇ] in the enjoyment of King Messiah [or “of the King Christ”]. And Christ in His humanity shares with us; (and) as He was with our nature here, so there [= in the resurrection] He will share in our things: and He is the head, and we are the body. And when everything shall have been made subject to the Son, and the Son Himself in His manhood shall have been revealed, united with the Word, in the judgment, then all men shall possess one mind, and the wickedness and lust of our hearts shall be uprooted; and everything will be good; and there shall not be there the rod of the oppressor, but joy and peace in the Holy spirit.

And herewith what? They say “the peace of the resurrection” or a *Soghitha*⁴. And if they say a *Soghitha*, the lesser ones say it; but if they say the “peace”, the bishop says (it); for when they say a *Soghitha* they shew that they are standing at the tomb with Mary and weeping and enquiring about Christ⁵; but if they say the “peace”, this is a type of Christ, who here gives His teaching to Mary⁶. But in the other case he gives a teaching of the judgment, to the sheep who are on the right hand and the goats who are on left. And so the lesser ones say the *soghitha*, according to the light estimation and inferiority of the nature of women⁷. But if (they say) the peace, the bishop says it, who fills the peace of Christ. (*fol.159v*^o)

Thus then concerning these things: for we have caused the fourth Treatise to rest in the harbour of completeness; wherein, according to the extent of our power, we have brought together the practises which are observed in the Mysteries. And while we stood in the contest of the explanation of the Mysteries, He gave strength who strengthens the feeble, and encouraged our weakness.

⁴See p.144, note 3.

⁵This is quite in accord with the idea that a *soghitha* was a dialogue, see note p.144.

⁶I.e. apparently teaches Mary about the resurrection.

⁷Sc. the women at the tomb signified the *soghitha*.

And to Christ who delivered His Mysteries for our salvation, and to the Father with Him, who sent Him to our race, and to the Holy Spirit who came down and gave us wisdom, and made known to us the power of His Majesty [or “Lordship”], be glory and honour for ever and ever. Amen.

[By the help of our Lord and your prayers, brother, we have issued from the hard contest of the exposition of the service of the Mysteries, and our fear in this matter has been taken away. And even though the expositions be not apt: yet according to our power we have performed what we promised. Now let us come to the exposition of holy Baptism⁸. The forth Treatise is ended. And to Jah [= Jehovah] be eternal glory. Amen.

⁸In S this comes at the beginning of Tract 4, where it seems properly to belong.

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