

**0306-0373 – Efremus – The Nisibene Hymns**

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the separate Gospels as commonly read. It cannot be claimed for the Peshitto that he always or even usually follows its text; nor yet does he uniformly agree with the Curetonian, or with the probably earlier form of the Syriac Gospel recently discovered by Mr. Lewis. With each of these last, however, his text has many points of coincidence. In the rest of the New Testament, we can only say that he must have had before him a text which diverged not seldom from the Peshitto.<sup>349</sup>

16. *Literary and Theological Value of his Writings.*—From the Demonstrations, eight have been selected for the present volume, viz.: I. *Of Faith* (with *Letter of an Inquirer* prefixed); V. *Of Wars*; VI. *Of Monks*; VIII. *Of the Resurrection of the Dead*; X. *Of Pastors*; XVII. *Of Christ the Son of God*; XXI. *Of Persecution*; XXII. *Of Death and the Latter Times*. Of these, one only (XVII.) is controversial,—directed against the Jews: it is painfully inadequate in the treatment of its great theme,—so inadequate as to suggest the surmise that doubts may have arisen about the orthodoxy of the writer, such as to discredit his works, and to account for the neglect in which they lay (as we have seen) for centuries. But in all his writings his mastery of the Scriptures, of the Old Testament especially, is conspicuous; and in many of them, especially in those of a hortatory character, there is much force of earnest persuasiveness, rising at times into eloquence.



## EPHRAIM SYRUS

### THE NISIBENE HYMNS.

TRANSLATED BY

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1. THE SIEGE OF NISIBIS (I.–III.).
  2. THE PERSIAN INVASION (IV.–XII.).
  3. THE BISHOPS OF NISIBIS (XIII.–XVI.).

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<sup>349</sup> It is important to note that he quotes in full three (16, 17, 18) of the disputed “Last Twelve Verses” of St. Mark’s Gospel. (*Demonst.* I. 17.)

## 4. ABRAHAM THEIR SUCCESSOR (XVII.–XXI.).

## 5. CONCERNING SATAN AND DEATH (XXXV.–XLII., LXII.–LXVIII.).



## NISIBENE HYMNS.

## Hymn I.

1. O God of mercies Who didst refresh Noah, he too refreshed Thy mercies. He offered sacrifice and stayed the flood; he presented gifts and received the promise. With prayer and incense he propitiated Thee: with an oath and with the bow Thou wast gracious to him; so that if the flood should essay to hurt the earth, the bow should stretch itself over against it, to banish it away and hearten the earth. As Thou hast sworn peace so do Thou maintain it, and let Thy bow strive against Thy wrath!

*R.* Stretch forth Thy bow against the flood, for lo! it has lifted up its waves against our walls!

2. In revelation, Lord! it has been proclaimed, that that lowly blood which Noah sprinkled, wholly restrained Thy wrath for all generations; how much mightier then shall be the blood of Thy Only Begotten, that the sprinkling of it should restrain our flood! For lo! it was *but* as mysteries of Him that those lowly sacrifices gained virtue, which Noah offered, and stayed *by them* Thy wrath. Be propitiated by the gift upon my altar, and stay from me the deadly flood. So shall both Thy signs bring deliverance, to me Thy cross and to Noah Thy bow! Thy cross shall cleave the sea of waters; Thy bow shall stay the flood of rain.

3. Lo! all the billows trouble me; and Thou hast given *more* favour to the ark: for waves alone encompassed it, mounds and weapons and waves encircle me. It was unto Thee a storehouse of treasures, but I have been a storehouse of debts: it in Thy love subdued the waves; I in Thy wrath, am left desolate among the weapons; the flood bore it, the river threatens me. O Helmsman of that ark, be my pilot on the dry land! To it Thou gavest rest in the haven of a mountain; to me give Thou rest also in the haven of my walls!

4. The Just One has chastened me abundantly, but it He loved even among the waves. For Noah overcame the waves of lust, which had drowned in his generation the sons of Seth. Because his flesh revolted against the daughters of Cain, his chariot rode on the surface of the waves. Because women defiled him not, he coupled the beasts, whereof in the ark he joined together, all pairs in the yoke of wedlock. The olive which with its oil gladdens the face, with its leaf gladdened their countenances: for me the river whereof to drink is wont to make joyful, lo! O Lord, by its flood it makes me mournful.

5. The foulness of my guilt Thy righteousness has seen, and Thy pure eyes abhor me. Thou hast gathered the waters by the hand of the unclean, that Thou mightest make for me purification of my guilt; not that in them Thou mightest baptize and purify me, but that in them Thou mightest chasten me with fear. For the waves will stir up to prayer, which shall wash away my guilt. The sight of them which is full of repentance, has been to me a baptism. The sea, O Lord, which should have drowned me, in it let Thy mercies drown my guilt. In the Red Sea Thou didst drown bodies; in this *sea* drown Thou my guilt instead of bodies!

6. An ark in Thy mercy Thou didst prepare, that Thou mightest preserve in it all the remnants. That Thou shouldst not desolate the earth in Thy wrath, Thy compassion made an earth of wood. Thou didst empty them one into the other; Thou didst render them back one unto the other. *But* my lands have thrice been filled and emptied again; and now against me the waves rebel, to overwhelm the remnant that has escaped in me. In the ark Thou didst save a remnant; save in me, O Lord, yea in me a leaven. The ark upon the mountain brought forth; let me in my lands bring forth my imprisoned ones!

7. O Lord, gladden Thou in me the imprisoned ones of my fortresses, Thou Who didst gladden those prisoners with the olive leaf! Thou sentest healing by means of the dove to the sick ones that were drowning in every wave; it entered in and drove out all their pains. For the joy of it swallowed up their sorrow, and mourning vanished away in its consolation. And as the chief of a host gives heartening to the fugitives, so *the dove* disseminated courage among the forsaken. Their eyes tasted the sight of peace, and their mouth hastened to open in Thy praise. As the olive leaf in the waves, save Thou me, that Thou mayest gladden in me the prisoners of my fortresses!

8. The flood assails, and dashes against our walls: may the all-sustaining might uphold them! It falls not as the building of the sand, for I have not built my doctrine upon the sand: a rock shall be for me the foundation, for on Thy rock have I built my faith; the secret foundation of my trust, shall support my walls. For the walls of Jericho fell, because on the sand she had built her trust. Moses built a wall in the sea, for on a rock his understanding built *it*. The foundation of Noah *was* on a rock; the dwelling place of wood it bore up in the sea.

9. Compare the souls which *are* in me, with the living things that *were* in the ark; and instead of Noah who mourned in it, lo! Thy altar mourning and humbled. Instead of the wedded wives that *were* in it, lo! my virgins that are unmarried. Instead of Ham who went forth *from* it and uncovered his father's nakedness, lo! workers of righteousness, who have nourished and clothed apostles. In my pains, O my Lord, I rave in my speech; blame me not if my words provoke Thee! Thou puttest to silence the prosperous when they murmured: have mercy on me as on them that were silenced aforetime!

10. Before Thy wrath Thou madest a house of refuge, and all the nations rebelled against it. Noah was refreshed in rest, that his dwelling-place should give rest according to his name. Thou didst close the doors to save the righteous one; Thou didst open the floods to destroy the unclean. Noah stood between the terrible waves that *were* without, and the destroying mouths that *were* within: the waves tossed him and the mouths dismayed him. Thou madest peace for him with

them that were within; Thou broughtest down before him them that were without: Thou didst speedily change his troubles, for light to Thee, O Lord, are hard things.

11. Hear and weigh the comparison of me with Noah, and though my suffering be light beside his, let Thy mercy make our deliverance alike; for lo! my children stand like him, between the wrathful and the destroyer. Give peace, O Lord, among them that are within, and humble before me them that are without; and give me twofold victory! And whereas the slayer has made his rage threefold, may He of the three days show me threefold mercy! Let not the Evil One overcome Thy lovingkindness: seeing he has assailed me twice and thrice overcome Thou him! Let my victory fly abroad through the world, that it may earn Thee praise in the world! O Thou who didst rise on the third day, give us not over to death in *our* third peril!

## Hymn II.

1. This day are opened, our mouths to give thanks. They who opened the breaches, have opened my sons' mouths. Thank the Merciful, who has delivered the men of our *city*, nor thought at that time of exacting the debts that were due by us. When they rose up they that took us captive, the worlds in our deliverance, tasted of Thy graciousness.

*R.* From all that have mouths, glory be to Thy grace!

2. He has saved us without wall, and taught us that He is our wall: He has saved us without king and made us know that is our king: He has saved us, in each and all, and showed us that He is All: He has saved us in His grace and again reveals, that freely He has mercy and quickens. From every boaster, He takes away his boasting, and gives it to His own grace.

3. The sound of all mouths, is too little for Thy praise: for lo! in the hour when our light was smoking, and was at the point to be quenched (seeing that all is easy to Thee) of a sudden it awoke and shone! Who has seen these two marvels, that for him whose hope was cut off, hope has sprung up and increased; the hour of mourning has been turned into good tidings?

4. This is a festival day, whereon hang the feasts: for if wrath had taken us captive, lo! our feasts too had ceased. Whereas our peace has conquered and triumphed, lo! our festivals resound. This blessed day supports all: upon it depends the city, on the city depends the people, on the people depends peace, on peace depends all.

5. Out of these breaches, Thou hast multiplied triumphs. Praise unto the Triune God goes up from the three breaches; for that He descended and repaired them, in His mercy which restrains wrath. He smote *the enemy* who understood not that He was teaching us. He taught those within, for in His justice He made the breaches; He taught those without, for in His goodness He repaired them.

6. Speak and give glory, my delivered ones on this day; old men and boys, young men and maidens, children and innocents, and thou, O Church, mother of the city! For the old men have

been rescued from captivity, the youths from torture, the sucklings from being dashed in pieces, the women from dishonour, and the Church from mockery.

7. He came to us with hardness; we were afraid for a moment: He came in gentleness, and we rejoiced for an hour. He turned and left us for a little, we wandered without end; like a beast of prey which is trained by blandishments and by fear, but if so be that men turn *from it*, rebels and strays and becomes savage in the midst of peace.

8. He punished us and we feared not; He rescued us, and we were not shamed: He straitened us and our vows were multiplied; He enlarged *us* and our crimes were multiplied. When He constrained there was a covenant, when He gave breathing-space there was straying. Though He knew us He lowered Himself to establish us. In the evening we exalted Him; in the morning we rejected Him. When necessity left us, faithfulness left us.

9. He afflicted us by the breaches, that He might punish our crimes: He raised the mounds that thereby, He might humble our boasting. He made a breach for the seas that thereby, He might wash away our pollution. He shut us in that we might gather together in His Temple. He shut us in and we were quenched; He set us free and we went astray. We are like unto wool, which passes into every colour.

10. We know that when the blessed sons of Nineveh repented, it was not because of mounds they repented, nor yet by means of waters, nor was it by reason of a breach, nor yet by reason of bows; it was not at the sound of the bowstring they feared and repented. They harkened to a feeble voice; they caused their little ones to fast; they made their youths chaste, they made their kings humble.

11. Thou smotest us and we justified Thee, for it befel not by chance; Thou deliveredst us and we gave thanks, for it was not that we were worthy. Thou hadst mercy on us not because Thou erredst, in hoping that we should repent. It was manifest to Thee that when Thou hadst mercy on us we strayed. Thou knewest that we had sinned; Thou knewest that we are sinners: with our iniquity that has been and is, Thou wast acquainted when Thou hadst mercy on us.

12. Weigh our repentance, that it may outbalance our crimes! But not in even balance, ascends either weight; for our crimes are heavy and manifold, and our repentance is light. He had commanded that we should be sold for our debt: His mercy became our advocate; principal and increase, we repaid with the farthing, which our repentance proffered.

13. Ten thousand talents for that little *payment*, our debt He forgave us. He was bound to exact it, that He might appease His justice: He was constrained again to forgive, that He might make His grace to rejoice. Our tears for the twinkling of an eye we gave Him; He satisfied His justice, in exacting and taking a little; He made His grace to rejoice, *when* for a little He forgave much.

14. Ten thousand *are the* crimes that He has pardoned; ten thousand tongues, are unable to suffice, in presence of His goodness. He has pardoned us and we have not pardoned; we have requited to Him contrariwise; the guilt committed we write up afresh. "Pardon, O Lord," we cry; "Requite, O Lord," we pray: "pardon" verily when we have done wrong; "requite" verily when wrong is done us.

15. Yea not as those without, have we laboured for our lives. They have raised their mounds, but we not even our voices: they have broken through the wall, but we—not even the chains, the frail chains on our heart within have we broken. *God* has rejected the diligent, for the sake of the slothful; He has rejected the labour done without, though He was rejected from within.

16. He has set free them that talked, and smitten the silent; the wall was beaten, and the people were instructed: He spared them that can suffer, He smote that which knows no suffering. For instead of souls that feel, He smote the stones that feel not, that He might chasten us. In His love He spared our bodies, and hastened to smite our wall.

17. Who has ever seen, that a breach became as a mirror? Two parties looked thereinto; it served for those without and those within. They saw therein as with eyes, the Power that breaks down and builds up: they saw Him who made the breach and again repaired *it*. Those without saw His might; they departed and tarried not till evening: those within saw His help; they gave thanks yet sufficed not.

18. Let the day of thy deliverance, arouse thee from sloth! When the wall was broken through, when the elephants pressed in, when the javelins showered, when men did valiantly, then was there a sight for the heavenly ones. Iniquity fought there; mercy triumphed there; lovingkindness prevailed below; the watchers shouted on high.

19. And thine enemy wearied himself, *striving* to smite by his wiles, the wall that encompassed thee, a bulwark to thine inhabitants. He wearied himself and availed not; and in order that he might not hope, that if He broke through He should also enter and take us captive, he broke it through and not once only; and was put to shame, nor was that enough, even unto three times, that he might be shamed thrice in the three.

20. Let my happiness by *God's* grace, be also multiplied in thy midst! Whereas in thee my crimes have been many, many be in thee my fruits! Whereas in thee I have sinned in my youth, in thee let there be mercy for my old age! By the mouth of thy sons pray for thy son, for I have sinned beyond my ability, and have repented below my ability; I have scattered above measure, and have gathered below measure.

### Hymn III.

1. Fix thou our hearing, that it be not loosed and wander! For it is a-wandering if one enquire, who He is and what He is like. For how can we avail, to paint in us the likeness, of that Being which is like to the mind? Naught is there in it that is limited, in all of it He sees and hears; all of it as it were speaks; all of it is in all senses.

*R., Praise to the One Being, that is to us unsearchable!*

2. His aspect cannot be discerned, that it should be portrayed by our understanding: He hears without ears; He speaks without mouth; He works without hands, and He sees without eyes. Because

our soul ceases not nor desists, in presence of Him Who is such; in His graciousness He put on the fashion of humankind and gathered us into His likeness.

3. Let us learn in what way that Being is spiritual and appeared as corporeal; and how it also is tranquil and appears as wrathful. These things were for our profit; that Being in our likeness was made like to us that we may be made like Him. One there is that is like Him, the Son Who proceeded from Him, Who is stamped with His likeness.

4. O Nisibis, hear these things, for, for thy sake these things were written and spoken. Both to thyself and to others, thou hast been in the world a cause of strife and of disputations. Mouths over thee, O thou that wast shut up, even over thee mouths sang; when thou didst triumph and wast enlarged, in thee mouths were opened, for lamentation and for thanksgiving.

5. The prayer of thy inhabitants, sufficed for thy deliverance; it was not that they were righteous, but that they were penitent: according as they were disgraced, so did they haste *to submit* to the rod. In transgressions and in triumphs they had like part. They whose crimes were great, so be their fruit great; they who triumphed in their sackcloth, have triumphed also in their crowns.

6. The day of thy deliverance, is king of all days. The Sabbath overthrew thy walls, it overthrew the ungrateful; the day of the Resurrection of the Son, raised *again* thy ruins; the day of Resurrection raised thee according to its name, it glorified its title. The Sabbath relaxed its watch; for the making of the breaches, it took blame to itself.

7. In Samaria hunger prevailed, but in thee fulness prevailed. In Samaria there broke in and came on her, abundance of a sudden; but in thee there roared and came in on thee a sea of a sudden. In her was eaten a child, and it saved her alive; in thee was eaten the body, living and all life-giving; of a sudden He delivered them, the Eaten *delivered* the eaters.

8. We know that the Blessed wills not the afflictions, that have been in all ages; though He has wrought them, it is our offences that are the cause of our troubles. No man can complain against our Creator; it is for Him to complain against us, who have sinned and constrained Him, to be wrathful though He wills it not, and to smite though He desires it not.

9. The Earth, the vine, and the olive, are in need of chastisement. When the olive is bruised, then its fruit smells sweet; when the vine is pruned, then its grapes are goodly; when the soil is ploughed its yield is goodly. When water is confined in channels, desert places drink of it; brass, silver and gold, when they are burnished shine.

10. If *then* it be that man, by *chastening* makes all things goodly; and if he who despises and rejects chastening, is hated and all rebels against him; *then* by that which he chastens, let him learn Him that chastens him; since whoso chastens *does so* that he may profit *thereby*. For whoso chastens his servants, *does so* that he may possess them; the good God chastens *His* servants that they may possess themselves.

11. Let thy afflictions be, books to admonish thee, for the thrice-besieged, suffice to become for thee, books to meditate therein, every hour on their histories. Because thou despisedst the two Testaments, wherein thou mightest read thy life, therefore He wrote for thee, three hard books wherein thou shouldst read thy chastisements.



12. Let us avert by that which has been, the thing that is yet to be; let us be taught by that which has come, to escape that which is coming; let us remember that which is past, to avoid that which is future. Because we had forgotten the first stroke, the second fell on us; because we forgot the second, the third bore heavy on us. Who will yet again forget!



### Hymn IV.

1. My God, without ceasing, I will tread the threshold of Thy house; I who have rejected all grace, I will ask with boldness, that I may receive with confidence. *R., Our hope, be thou our Wall!*

2. For if, O Lord, the earth, enriches manifold, a single grain of wheat, how then shall my prayers, be enriched by Thy grace!

3. Because of the voices of my children, their sighs and their groans, open to me the door of Thy mercy! Make glad for their voices, the mourning of their sackcloth!

4. O firstborn that wast a weaned *child*, and wast familiar with the children, the accurst sons of Nazareth, hearken to my lambs that have seen the wolves, for lo! they cry.

5. For a flock, O my Lord, in the field, if so be it has seen the wolves, flees to the shepherd, and takes refuge under his staff, and he drives away them that would devour it.

6. Thy flock has seen the wolves, and lo! it cries loudly. Behold how terrified it is! Let thy Cross be a staff, to drive out them that would swallow it up!

7. Accept the cry of my little ones, that are altogether pure. It was He, the Infant of days, that could appease, O Lord, the Ancient of days.

8. The day when the Babe came down, in the midst of the stall, the Watchers descended and proclaimed, peace—may that *peace* be, in all my streets for all my offspring.

9. Seventy and two old men, the elders of that people, sufficed not for its breaches. The Babe it was, the Son of Mary, that gave peace on every side.

10. Have mercy, O Lord, on my children! in my children call to mind Thy childhood, Thou Who wast a child! Let them that are like Thy childhood, be saved by Thy grace!

11. Mingled in the midst of the flock, are the cry of the innocents, and the voice of the sheep, that call on the Shepherd of all, to deliver them from all.

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13. There is a joy that is affliction, misery is hidden in it; there is a misery that is profit, it is a fountain of joys, in that new world.

14. The happiness that my persecutor has gained, woes are hidden in it; therefore I rejoice. The wretchedness that I have gained from him, happiness is concealed for me in it.

15. Who will not give praise, to Him that has begotten us, and can beget again, from the midst of evil rumours the voices of glad tidings!

16. Thou Healer of all, hast visited me in my sicknesses! Payment for Thy medicines, I cannot give Thee, for they are priceless.

17. Thy mercies in richness, surpass Thy medicines: they cannot be bought, they are given freely, it is for tears they are bartered.

18. How, O my Master, can a desolate city, whose king is far off, and her enemy nigh, stand firm without *aid* of mercy?

19. A harbour and refuge, art Thou at all times. When the seas covered me, Thy mercy descended and drew me out. Again let Thy help lay hold on me!

20. Apply to my afflictions, the medicine of Thy salvation, and the passion of Thy help! Thy sign can become, a medicine to heal all.

21. I am greatly oppressed, and I hasten to complain, against him that troubles me. Let Thy mercy, my Lord, take the bitterness from the cup, that my sins have mixed.

22. I look on all sides, and weep that I am desolate. Very many though be my chiefs and my deliverers, one is He that has delivered me.

23. My young men have fled, O Lord, and gone forth, and are like chickens, which an eagle pursues; lo! they hide in a secret place: may Thy peace bring them back!

24. The sound of my grape-gatherers, lo! my ears miss it, for their voices fail. Let it resound with the glad tidings, O Blessed One of Thy salvation!

25. A voice of terror, I have heard on my towers; as my defenders cry, while they guard my walls. Still Thou it with the voice of peace!

26. The noise of my husbandmen, shall speak peace without my walls: the shouting of my dwellers shall speak peace within my walls, that I may give peace without and within.

27. Make an end, O Lord, of the mourning, of this Thy pure altar, and of Thy chaste priest, who stands clothed in mourning, covered over with sackcloth!

28. The Church and her ministers shall give praise for Thy salvation; the city and its dwellers. Be the voice of peace, O Lord, the reward of their voices!

### Hymn V.

1. Cause to be heard in Thy grace, the tidings of Thy salvation: for an hearing has been made, a path of passage; our minds have been downtrodden, by messages of terror. *R., Praises to Thy victory! Glory to Thy Dominion!*

2. Comfort Thou with profits, *though* small and scanty, those that have had harvest, of hurt by their labour: at a time of profit, they have gained *but* loss.

3. It is manifest that He has stood, portioning wrath upon earth: loss and profit in anger He divided. There are whom He has cast down of a sudden, and there are whom He has puffed up of a sudden.

4. To teach *us* that He can, chastise in all ways; when He saw the persecutors, were terrible before mine eyes, He laid me out before my children, and they my beloved chastised me.

5. Lo! He taught me to fear, Himself and not man: for when there was none to smite us, His wrath gave command of a sudden, and every man stretched himself out, and chastised himself.

6. In like manner that Babylonian, who struck down all kings when he was confident and hoped that there was none to smite him, God caused that by his own hands, he should strike himself down.

7. His majesty and his mind, of a sudden became mad together: he rent and cast off his garments; he went forth and wandered in the desert; he drove himself out first, and then his servants drove him out.

8. He showed to all kings, whom he had led captive and brought down, that not by his own power, could he have overcome: the power that struck him down, was that which punished them.

9. I have stood and borne, O my Lord; the blows of my deliverers. Thou art able in Thy grace, to make me profit by the smiters: Thou art able in Thy justice to punish me by *my* helpers.

10. The day when the host was bold, to come up against Samaria; their plenty and their pleasure, their treasures and their possessions, they cast away and forsook and fled. He crowned her by her persecutors.

11. My beloved ones crowned me, and my deliverers healed me. Through the guilt of my dwellers, my helpers chastised me, give me drink from Thy vines, of the cup of consolation!

12. The corn and the vine, preserve, O my Lord, by Thy grace! Be the husbandman cheered, by the vine of the grape-gatherer; be the vinedresser glad, in the corn of the husbandman!

13. They are joined each to each, the corn and the grape. In the field the reapers, wine can make cheerful, in the vineyard the dressers, bread strengthens in turn.

14. These two things have power, to comfort my troubles: the Trinity has power, to comfort more exceedingly; whom I will praise because of a sudden, I was delivered through grace.

15. But the man whose life, is preserved through grace, if he goes away to murmur, at the loss of his goods, he is thankless for the grace, of Him who had pity on him.

16. Of His own will He destroys, one thing instead of another. He destroys possession, and spares the possessor: He destroys our plants, instead of our lives.

17. Let us fear to murmur, lest His own wrath be roused, and He spare the possessions, and smite the possessor; that we may learn in the end, His mercy in the beginning.

18. Let us learn against whom, it is meet for us to murmur. Learn thou to murmur, not against the Chastener, but against thine own will, that made thee sin and thou wast punished.

19. Let us put away murmuring, and turn unto prayer: for if the possessor dies, his possessions also cease for him; but while he survives, he seeks to recover his losses.

20. Let consolations be multiplied, in mercy to my dwellers: let the remainder and residue, console *us* in the midst of wrath; and cause Thou us to forget in the residue, the mourning of our devastation!

21. Heal and increase O my Lord, the fruits Thy wrath has left! They seem to me like sick ones, that have escaped in pestilence. Make me to forget in these weak ones, the suffering of the many!

22. While I speak, O my Lord, I call to mind that this too is the month, when the blossom pined, and dropped off in blight, may it return to soundness, to be a consolation!

23. For these escaped the pestilence, that carried off their brethren. The vines though voiceless, wept when before them, a multitude was cut down and felled, of trees that they loved.

24. The company of plants, lo! the earth misses! The roots for the husbandmen, weep and cause them to weep. Their beauty had spread and gave shade, and it was torn away in one hour.

25. The axe came nigh and struck; and struck the husbandman; the blow *was* on the trees, and it caused the husbandman to suffer; every axe that smote, he bore the pain of it.

### Hymn VI.

1. I will run in my affections, to Him who heals freely. He who healed my sorrows, the first and the second, *He* who cured the third, He will heal the fourth. *R., Heal me, Thou Son the First Born!*

2. My sons, O my Lord, drank and were drunken, of the tidings which wrath had mixed; and they rushed on my adornments, and spoiled and cast away my ornaments; they rent and spared not, my garments and my crowns.

3. They uncovered me and I was made bare. Because I was shamed a little, by means of that stripping, the first and the second, because I was shamed a third time, lo! they have stripped me a fourth time.

4. For they have seized and taken away my garments, my ornaments and my gardens. On the sackcloth that girds my altar, look Thou, O my Lord, and have pity on me! Let the sackcloth be to me, O my Lord, the breastplate of salvation!

5. Lo! it is not by the hand of the chaste, that Thou hast chastised me, O my Master! For lo! his shame is before him, and behind him his disgrace; for as to his marriage, adultery is better than it.

6. Lo! his daughter is his wife, and his sister his consort; and his mother whence he came forth, he turns again and takes her *to wife!* The heavens are astonished that thus, he provokes *Thee*, and lo! he prospers.

7. And though, O my Lord, my crimes are many, are my offences so heavy, that Thou shouldst make over a chaste woman, mother of chaste *daughters*, to foul Assyria, mother of defiled *daughters?*

8. Restrain him that he come not, and wag at me his head, and stamp on me his heel, and rejoice that the voice of his fame, thus troubles the world; and be uplifted yet a little!



9. My sons, O my Lord, have seen my nakedness, yea have uncovered me and wept. Uncover Thou me before my children, who are pained by my pain, and let not those mock at me, the accursed that *have* no pity!

10. My lands had brought forth fruits and pleasant things; good things in the vineyard, abundance in the fields. But as I rested secure, of a sudden wrath overtook me.

11. The husbandmen *were* plundered, the spoilers heaped *the grain*; what thou had borrowed and sown these destroyed. With one's debt his hunger, haply will also remain unsatisfied, for his bread *is* snatched from him.

12. The husbandman, O my Lord, *is* plundered, for he lent to the earth; she has received the deposit, and given it to a stranger; she has borrowed it of the husbandman; and paid it to the spoiler.

13. Be jealous over me who am Thine, and to Thee, O my Lord: am I betrothed! The Apostle who betrothed me to Thee, told me that Thou art jealous. For as a wall to chaste *wives* is the jealousy of their husbands.

14. Samson stirred up seas, because he was mightily jealous over his wife, though she was greatly defiled, and was divided against him. Keep Thy Church, for no other, has she beside Thee!

15. Whoso is not jealous, over his spouse despises her. Jealousy it is that can make known, the love that is within. Thou art called jealous, that thou mayest show me Thy love.

16. The nature of woman is this; it is weak and rash: it is jealousy keeps it, under fear every hour. Thou hast been named among the jealous, that Thou mightest make known Thy solicitude.

17. Every man has been master, of something that *was* not his own; every man has gone forth gathering, something that he scattered not. The day of confusion, I have prepared for myself by my crimes.

18. How shall they bear the suffering, the labourers and tillers? In the face of the vinedresser, they have cut down the vines and driven away the flocks of the husbandman; his sowing they have reaped and carried off.

19. They had yoked cattle sown and harrowed, they had ploughed, planted, nurtured. They stood afar and wept; and they went away bereft of all. The labour *was* for the toilers, the increase for the spoilers.

20. The rulers, O my Lord, maintained not, order in the midst of *Thy* wrath. If they had willed *it* they might have kept order, but our iniquity suffered it not. Though wrath had greatly abated, wrath compelled *them* to spoil.

21. To whom on any side, shall I look for comfort, for my plantations that are laid low, and my possessions that are laid waste? Let the message of the voice of peace, drive away my sadness from me!

22. Give me not over; lest it be thought that Thou, hast given me a writing of divorce, and sent me away and driven me out! Let them not call me, O my Lord, the forsaken and the disgraced!

23. I have not anything, to call to mind before Thine eyes, for I am wholly despised. Call Thou to mind for me, O my God, this only that none other, have I set before me beside Thee!

24. Who would not weep for me, with voice and wailing? for before the days of full *moon* I was chaste and crowned; and after the days of full moon, I was uncovered and made bare.

25. My chaste daughters of the chambers, wander in the fields; for the wrath that makes all drunken, has caused my honourable women to be despised. Let Thy mercy which gives peace to all, restore these beloved ones to honour!

26. My elder *daughters* and my younger, lo! they cry before Thee; the damsels with their voices, they that are aged with their tears; my virgins with their fasts, my chaste ones with their sackcloth!

27. Mine eyes to all the streets, I lift up and lo! they are deserted. There are left of a hundred ten, and a thousand of ten thousand. Give Thou peace and fill my streets, with the tumult of my dwellers!

28. Bring back them that are without, and make them glad that are within! Mighty is Thy grace, that Thou extendest it within and without. Let the wings of Thy grace gather my chickens together!

29. Let the prayer of my just men, save my fugitives! The unbelievers have plundered me, and the believers have sustained me. In them that believe put Thou to shame them that believe not!

30. There came together on one day, two festivals as one: the Feast of Thine Ascension, and the Feast of Thy Champions; the feast that wove Thy Crown, and the memorial of the crowning of Thy servants.

31. Have thou mercy because there were doubled for us, *these* feasts on one day; and there were doubled for us instead of them, *even* the two feasts in one, suffering from the voice of *ill* tidings, and mourning from desolation!

32. Give peace to my festivals! for both my feasts have ceased; and instead of rejoicing, *of* my remnants in festivals, tremblings and desolations meet me in every place.

33. Bring home mine that are far off, make glad mine that are nigh; and in the midst of our land shall be preached, good tidings of joy; and I shall render in return for peace, praise from every mouth!

## Hymn VII.

1. Wrath came to rebuke, the greedy who in the midst of peace, bargained, defrauded and plundered. In calamity the greedy have waxed rich: lo! what was theirs they have scattered, what was not theirs they have gathered. *R., Give peace, O Son, to our land!*

2. Twenty years my troubles, have been like branches, O my Saviour! which are kept back throughout winter, but when it is time to shoot forth, my troubles shoot forth: with our fruit our heart ripens.

3. Nisan is the time of buds: in it the *ill* tidings budded. When our delights crowded on us, then crowded on us our ills. At the time of winnowing of wheat, came the winnowing of cities,
4. For the three brethren in Babylon fled not from the fire that men kindled, because they were steadfast: from lust they fled, because they were perfect.
5. The fire of them that have triumphed, is able to turn the black kids into white: the fire of vain men is able to make the lambs into spotted leopards.
6. How great will be my cries, to be cried at any alarm! How great my indignation to ripen at every ill tidings! How great my harvests, to perish every mouth!
7. For the crimes of my sons He has chastened me, in their struggling for my deliverance. The people who deliver me, bring chastisement upon me. Restrain ye your sins, and lo! my chastisements are restrained!
8. In ill tidings they are afflicted; in time of wrath they are tortured; in time of peace they are distressed; for when every man breathes freely, and *all* are unthankful for grace, they render *thanks* on behalf of every man.
9. Their sackcloth *is* humble for my sake; their ashes *are* sprinkled in my affliction; their prayer *is* for my victory; their fast for my deliverance: Lo! the debt is on my ascetics, the guilt with my nobles.
10. Great is in every age, the folly of the wise; the scribes and elders envied and killed the teacher, who taught all people the Law of Moses.
11. Wisdom in this age *is* a possession that brings loss: he who has a little folly, very small *is* his guilt; but he who has a little prudence, his iniquity passes measure.
12. They build with their words, and overthrow in their deeds; for the teachers were many and foolish, but the mouth of the judge is both of these things, the judge and the accuser.

[Hymn VIII. is wanting, as also the earlier part of IX.]



### Hymn IX.

- ...My afflictions are as Job's. Thy justice delivered him; let Thy grace have mercy on me!
2. In these two things is profit; that neither should the just, be weary in supplication, nor should the rebellious, multiply transgression.
  3. With the sons Thou labourest, to chastise and help *them*; and that the fathers should not be grieved, by the sound of the scourge, they left me in peace.
  4. Look, O my Lord, on my woods without, how they have been cut down! behold, O my Lord, my breasts within, that they are *too* weak, for me to bear my beloved ones!

5. With swords they have cut off, my wings that are without; again the fire kindles, in my bosom within, the incense of burnt offering.

6. The sun-worshippers have killed, my sons in the plain: and they that offer to Baal, have sacrificed my bulls in the city, my sheep with my babes.

7. In my fields is lamentation; in my halls wailing; in my vineyards terror; in my streets confusion. Who can suffice for me?

8. The Evil One who dealt treacherously, and disturbed me with his words, stirred up trouble within, so that my inward part, is wholly as my outward part.

9. With what face, O my Lord, shall I call on Thee to send, a camp of holy ones, to guard my bosom, which is full of uncleanness?

10. With Thy new leaven, Thou hast chastened creation. Make Thou the old leaven, which ensnares and humbles, to be like the new leaven!

11. By the manifest striving, of Thy power let us conquer; lest error should crown, those that strive for Thee, cleaving *to them* with blandishment!

12. If we look into our time, it is like our deceit;<sup>350</sup>—for in the years of truthfulness, we practised divinations,—and secretly used enchantments.

13. If I look into the time, it provokes and into light,—brings secret things, that our deceit may be shamed,—which wore the raiment of Truth.

14. Verily it is truth, that overcomes all;<sup>351</sup>—and the sea with its bitterness, cannot trouble it,—for it is pure in its nature.

15. In wisdom Thou hast made it, O my Lord, that it has laid bare our lust.—That the foolish should come to nought, and should not be encouraged,—*Truth* has withheld the crown.

16. On the tottering walls, whereon Thou hast given me victory,—the unthankful repay Thee, with sacrifice and libation, which provoke Thee openly.

17. If it were at that time, sacrifices had been offered;—there had been room even, for delusion to suppose,—that in these I was delivered.

18. Through the multitude of deliverances, Thou hast rebuked two things:—the delusion of graven images, and the teaching of magicians;—for in Thee, O my Lord, have I been delivered!



## Hymn X.

<sup>350</sup> An attempt is here made to represent by means of dashes the metrical versification of the Syriac hymns. See above, pp. 147 sq.

<sup>351</sup> 1 Esdr.



1. My children have been slain; and my daughters *that are* without me,—their walls are overthrown, their children scattered,—and their holy places trodden down. *R., Blessed is Thy chastisement!*

2. The fowlers have taken, my doves out of my strongholds,—which quitted their nests, and fled to the caves;—in the net have they taken them.

3. After the manner of wax, that melts before the fire,—thus melted and dissolved, the bodies, of my sons before the heat—and the drought of my strongholds.

4. And instead of streams, of milk that used to flow,—for my sons and my little ones, milk fails the sucklings, and water the weaned children.

5. The suckling falls, from its mother and gasps,—because it cannot suck, nor can she give suck:—they breathe out their spirit and die.

6. How is it possible, that Thy grace can refrain—the welling of its stream, when it is not possible to restrain—the abundance of its flow?

7. And why has Thy grace, shut up its mercies,—and withheld its streams, from the people that cry,—for one to moisten their tongue?

8. And there was a pit, between them and their brethren;—like the rich man who cried, and there was none to answer,—to moisten his tongue.

9. And as into the midst of fire, the wretched ones were cast;—and heat in the midst of thirst, the fire was blowing,—and kindling upon them.

10. Their carcasses were melted, and dissolved by the heat;—they that had thirsted gave in turn the earth to drink,—of the reek of their bodies.

11. And the fort that with thirst, had killed, its dwellers,—it drank in its turn of the flux from the corpses,—that were melted by thirst.

12. Who has seen a people—that were burning with thirst,—while there surrounded them a wall of water and they could not—moisten their tongue!

13. Surely with the judgment of Sodom, were my beloved judged,—and my children smitten, with the torment of Sodom;—though that was but *for* one day.

14. The torment of fire, though it be *for* one hour, O my Lord,—in lingering thirst, is a lingering death, and a subtle punishment.

15. After my sorrows, O my Lord, and my bitter sufferings,—this is the best comfort, wherewith Thou hast comforted me,—that Thou hast multiplied my afflictions.

16. The medicine that I hoped, it is sorrow decreed;—the binding up that I looked for, it is bitter calamity,—that it seeks to work for me.

17. And whereas I hoped to escape, from the midst of the storm;—worse for me is the storm in it, even in the harbour,—than that in the sea.

18. Whereas I thought in my folly, that I should anchor and escape—from the midst of the Gulf; my sins have cast me back—again into the midst of it.

19. Look, O my Lord, on my limbs, how the swords are thick in me,—and have left *their* mark on my arms; and the scars of the spears,—are planted in my sides!

20. Tears in mine eyes, and in my ears *ill* rumours,—wailing in my mouth, and mourning in my heart!—Add no more, O my Lord, to me!



### Hymn XI.

1. Thy chastening is, *as* a mother of our infancy:—her rebuke is merciful, in that Thou hast restrained,—the children from folly, and they have been made wise! *R., Glory be to thy justice!*

2. Let us search out Thy justice; for who is sufficient—to measure its help? since by it the wanton—are oftentimes made chaste.—

3. Oftentimes Thy hand, O my Lord, has made the sick whole,—for it is the healer in secret of their diseases,—and the fount of their life.

4. Exceeding gently, the finger of Thy justice,—in love and compassion, touches the wounds—of him that is to be healed.

5. Exceeding mild and merciful, is her cutting to him that is wise:—her sharp remedy, in its mighty love,—consumes the corrupt *part*.

6. Exceeding welcome her wrath, to him that is discerning;—but her remedies are hated, of the fool who has delight—in the trouble of his limbs.

7. Exceeding eager is she, to bind the cut she has made;—when she has smitten she pities, that from between these two—she may breed healing.

8. Exceeding welcome her wrath, and her anger pleasant,—and sweet her bitterness, sweetening bitter things—that they may be made pleasant.

9. A cause of negligence is Thy indulgence to the careless;—a cause of profit, is Thy rod among the slothful—so that they become *as* traffickers.

10. The cause of our affliction, it is Thy justice;—the cause of our carelessness, it is Thy graciousness,—for our understanding has turned foolish.

11. Pharaoh hardened himself, because of Thy graciousness;—for when the plagues were stayed, his cruelties waxed strong,—and he lied to his promises.

12. Justice requited him, because he lied greatly against her,—even *Grace* her freeborn sister; yea she restrained him again—that he should not again provoke.

13. Rebuke, O my Lord, my guide, for it has been false as Egypt —my prayers testify, that I am not as she,—for Thy door have I not forsaken.

14. Let Thy cross, O my Lord, which stands, in my breaches that are open,—repair again the *breaches* that are hidden; for instead of those without,—those within have cleft me asunder!

15. A sea has broken through, and cast down, the watch tower wherein I had triumphed.—Iniquity has dared to set up, a temple wherein I am shamed: its drink-offering chokes me.

16. My prayers on my walls, my persecutors have heard:—the sun and his worshippers, are ashamed of their magicians,—for I have triumphed by Thy cross.

17. *All* creatures cried out, when they saw the struggle,—while Truth with falsehood, on my battered walls, fought and was crowned conqueror.

18. The force of Truth, chastised falsehood:—in its chastisement it felt *Truth*, and through its *own* sins, it earned her victory.

19. I have great alarm; for since my deliverance,—the honourable and mighty, who were devoted to my altar, have built in me high places.

20. My seven senses, O my Lord, even though they had been as fountains of tears, yet my tears were *too* little—to lament our ruin.

21. The streets that *were* in sackcloth, and ashes cried out,—disturbed by the play, akin to that which *was*,—in the wilderness before the calf.

22. Poison seeks and wears, the beauty of lilies;—and though their buds may conceal, and hidden disguise it,—it blossoms in their bitter flowers.



## Hymn XII.

1. I will call in my affliction, on the Power that subdues all;—that is able to subdue, the Captor in his wrath,—as it overcame Legion. *R., Glory to His grace!*

2. The Evil One has repaid me my brethren, debts that he borrowed not of me:—the good *God* likewise has repaid me, mercies that I lent Him not.—Come and marvel ye at these two things!

3. The good *God* has divided and given, my misdeeds to His grace,—my offences to His justice; His mercy has blotted out my misdeeds—His judgment has requited my offences.

4. Sin was exceeding wrath, and abode in alarm,—when she saw how grace, put restraint on freedom, that she might overcome transgressions.

5. Glow Thou, O my Lord, and send down Thy love, break out and pour forth Thy wrath!—Thy wrath to destroy, Thy love to rescue—the captives from the captor!

6. The days wherein the Evil One, decreed to cast me forth,—as with a sling into perdition, in them the good God has bound up and kept—my soul in the bundle of life.

7. The men of speech who keep not silence, from praising continually,—who have kept me in the midst of waves, and supported me that I fell not, let them give praise in my stead, O my Lord!

8. For who has at any time sufficed, in presence of the grace,—of the mercies which surrounded him, that I should suffice to praise—the mercies that encompass me?

## Hymn XIII.

## CONCERNING MAR JACOB AND HIS COMPANIONS.

1. Three illustrious priests, after the manner of the two great lights,—have carried on and handed down one to another, the See and the Hand and the Flock.—To us whose mounting was great for the two, this last is wholly a consolation. *R., Glory to Thee Who didst choose them!*

2. He Who created two great lights, chose for Himself *these* three Lights,—and set them in the three dark seasons of siege that have been.—When *that* pair of Lights was quenched, the other shone wholly forth.

3. These three priests were treasures, who held in their faithfulness,—the key of the Trinity; three doors they opened for us;—each one of them with his key, unlocked and opened his door.

4. In the first was opened the door, for the chastisement that befel us;—in the next was opened the door, for the King's power that came down on us,—in the last was opened the door, for the good tidings that came up for us.

5. In the first was opened the door, for battle between two hosts;—in the next were opened doors, for the kings from either wind;—in the last was opened the door, for ambassadors from either side.

6. In the first was opened the door, for battle because of misdeeds;—in the next was opened the door,—for the kings because of strife;—in the last was opened the door, for ambassadors because of mercies.

7. Lo! in these three successions, as in a mystery and a figure,—wrath is likened to the sun; it began under the first;—it waxed strong under the next; it sank and was quenched under the last.

8. Three figures the Sun also, shows forth in the three quarters:—its rising *is* keen and bright; its meridian strong and overpowering;—and like a torch that is burnt out, its setting *is* mild and pleasant.

9. Small yet bright *is* its rising, when it comes to waken sleepers;—hot and overpowering its meridian, when it comes to ripen the fruits;—tender and pleasant its setting, when it reaches its consummation.

10. Who is this daughter born of vows, enviable above all women,—whose successions thus proceed, and her ranks are thus manifold,—and her degrees thus ascend, and her teachers thus excel.

11. Do these similitudes belong, only to the daughter of Abraham,—or to thee too, O daughter, born of vows, whose adorning is according as thy beauty?—for as thine occasion, *so was* thy help, and as thy help *so was* its minister.

12. According to the measure of her need, there came to her the supply of her need.—Her fathers were as *was* her birth; her teachers were as *was* her understanding;—her training as *was* her growth; her raiment as *was* her stature.

13. Grace weighed out *to her* and gave all these things as in the scales;—she laid them in *her* balance, that therefrom there might be profit;—she drew them into succession, that therefrom might be perfection.

14. In the days of him that *was* first, peace abounded and peace vanished;—in the days of him that was next, kings came down and kings went back;—but in the days of the last, hosts assailed and hosts retreated.—

15. By the first order came in, it came in with him and went out with him;—by the next the diadem that gladdened our churches, came nigh and withdrew far away;—but by the last there dawned on us, grace that was not thankfully received.

16. Against the wrath that was first, the labour of the first contended;—against the heat that was at noon, the shade of the second stood up;—against peace that was thankless, the last multiplied warnings.

17. For the first invader of the land *was* the first and illustrious priest;—for the second invader of the land, was the second and merciful priest:—but the prayers of him that was last, repaired our breaches secretly.

18. Nisibis is set<sup>352</sup> upon waters, waters secret and open:—living streams *are* within her; a noble river without her. The river without deceived her; the fountain within has saved her.

19. The first priest was her vinedresser; he made her branches to grow even unto heaven.—Lo! being dead and buried within her, he has become fruit in the midst of her bosom:—when therefore the pruners came, the fruit that *was* in her midst preserved her.

20. The time of her pruning came; it entered and took from her her vinedresser,—that there should not be one to pray for her. She made haste in her subtlety;—He laid in her bosom her vinedresser, that she should be delivered through her vinedresser.

21. Be ye wise like Nisibis, O ye daughters of Nisibis,—for that she laid the body within her, and it became a wall without her.—Place ye within you the living body, that it be a wall for your lives!

#### Hymn XIV.



1. Under the three pastors,—there were manifold shepherds;—the one mother that *was* in the city,—had daughters in all regions.—Since Wrath has destroyed her dwellings,—Peace shall build up her churches. *R. Blessed be He who chose out those three!*

2. The kindly labour of the first,—bound up the land in her affliction:—the bread and wine of the next,—healed the city when site was broken:—the sweet speech of the last,—sweetened our bitterness in affliction.

3. The first tilled the land with his labour,—he rooted out of her the briars and thorns:—the next fenced her round about,—he made a hedge for her of them that were saved:—the last opened the garner of his Lord,—and sowed in her the words of her Lord.

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<sup>352</sup> The verb is *n'sab*,—a play on the name of the city.

4. The first priest by means of a fast,—closed up the doors of *men's* mouths:—the second priest for the captives,—opened the mouths of the purse:—but the last pierced through the ears,—and fastened in them the ornament of life.

5. Aaron stripped off from the ears,—the earrings and made a calf.—That lifeless calf in secret,—pierced and slaughtered the camp:—those who had fashioned his horns,—he ripped them up with his horns.

6. But our priest *who was* the third,—pierced through the ears of the heart:—and fastened *there* the earrings he had fashioned,—of the nails that were fixed in the cross,—whereon his Lord was crucified,—and gave life to His fellow-men.

7. A son unto death the fire brought forth;—Death feeds upon all bodies:—the son of Death who surpassed Death,—upon the souls of men he fed.—The calf forsook his provender,—for *men's* minds were the food for him.

8. To the first Tree that which killed,—to it grace brought forth a son.—O Cross offspring of the Tree,—that didst fight against thy sire!—The Tree was the fount of death;—the Cross was the fount of life.

9. The son that was born to Death,—all mouths were opened to curse him.—He devoured bodies and souls,—and multiplied the disgrace of his father.—But the Cross caused to pass away the rebuke,—of its father that first Tree.

10. The two sons were even as were—the *two* mothers that bare them.—The calf which the fire brought forth,—the fire consumed in the midst of the people:—the Cross the offspring of grace,—divided good gifts to *all* creation.

11. O my tongue hold thy peace and be silent of the histories of the Cross that press *to be told!*—for my mind of a sudden has conceived,—and lo! pangs of travail smite it:—it has conceived these among the last,—and they strive to become the firstborn.

12. The babes struggled in the womb;—the elder made haste to come forth:—the younger desiring the birthright,—laid his hand upon his heel;—that which he obtained not by birth,—he obtained by the mess of pottage.

13. After the like sort these later histories,—lo! they make light of the former *ones*,—that *themselves* may come forth and take the birthright.—Let us bring forth the history of our fathers,—for lo! the histories of the Cross—*are* the firstborn of *all* creatures.

14. For if that which has no beginning—is the first of all created things,—its histories also are the firstborn,—for they are elder than *all* creatures.—Let the histories of Thee, O my Lord, yield place,—that we may tell of Thy ministers!

15. The first in degree of doctrine,—His eloquence was like as *was* his degree;—the next who was second in degree,—his interpretation mounted to the height of his degree;—the last who was third in degree,—his eloquence was great as he *was*.

16. The first in his simple words,—gave milk unto his infants;—the next in his plain sayings,—gave victual to his children;—the third in his perfect sayings,—gave meat to his *that were* of perfect age.

17. She too the daughter of instruction,—mounted from degree to degree,—along with her teachers and fathers.—A young child she was with the first; a simple *maid* was she with the next;—she came to perfect age in the third.

18. The first *dealing* with her as a child,—loved her and taught her to fear;—the next as with a damsel, rebuked her and made her glad;—the third as with one fully instructed,—was to her a solace of pleasantness.

19. Even the Most High with the daughter of Jacob,—*gave* blandishment and the rod to her childhood;—and in her frowardness and full age,—gave part in the sword and the Law;—and according to her discipline and instruction,—He came to her in mildness and pleasantness.

20. The first that begat the flock,—his bosom bare her infancy;—the next of glad-some countenance,—cheered with song and made glad her childhood;—the last grave of countenance,—lo! he guards *her* chastity in her youth.

21. The first priest who begat *her*,—gave milk to her infancy;—the next priest interpreted,—and gave victual to her childhood;—the third priest nourished *her*, and gave meat to her perfect age.

22. The wealthy father who *was* first,—laid up treasures for her childhood;—the next for her maturity—multiplied provision for her journey;—the third the goodly olive tree,—multiplied oil in her vessels.

23. When she comes before Him who is rich,—she will show the treasure of the first;—when she comes before the Saviour, she will show the saved ones of the next;—when she goes forth to meet the Bridegroom,—she will show the oil of her lamps.

24. Before Him who rewards the weary toiled,—she will offer the labour of the first;—before Him who loves *cheerful* givers,—she will show the almsgiving of the next;—before Him who judges doctrines,—she will offer the discourse of the last.

25. And I the sinner who have striven to be—the disciple of these three,—when they shall see Him of the Third Day,—that he has closed the door of His chamber,—may these three pray *Him* for me, that He keep the door *open* a little while for me!

26. May the sinner press into and enter—rejoicing and fearing to behold!—May the three masters call in—the one disciple in *their* grace!—May he gather up under the table—the crumbs that are full of life!

## Hymn XV.

1. If the head had not been right,—haply the members had murmured:—for when because of a perverse head—the course of the members is put astray,—they are wont to lay the blame on the head. *R. Blessed be He who chose thee the pride of our people!*

2. If now on one that is all goodly,—on it we lay our hatred;—how much *more* if we were hateful!—Yea even God though He is kind,—bitter men complain against Him.

3. Be like the head O ye members!—Get repose in his purity—and pleasantness in his tranquillity;—in his sanctity renown,—and in his wisdom learning!

4. Get discernment in his mildness,—and chastity in his gravity,—and bounty in his poverty!—As he is fully and altogether fair,—let us be altogether fair with him!

5. See ye how meted and weighed—are his words and his actions!—Take heed how even his steps—keep the measure of peace!—With all his might he holds the bridle of all himself.

6. He was master over his youth;—he bound it in the yoke of chastity:—his members were not enticed *by lust*;—for they were kept under the rod:—his will he had in subjection.

7. For he was ready beforehand for his degree,—as he was ready beforehand in his conversation,—as he laid his foundations securely.—He became Head in his youth,—when they made him preacher to the people.

8. Excellent was he among preachers,—learned was he among scholars,—and understanding was he among the wise:—chaste was he among his brethren,—and grave among his familiar friends.

9. In two abodes was he—a solitary recluse from *his early* days;—for he was holy within his body,—and solitary within his dwelling;—openly and secretly was he chaste.

10. But although we my brethren—have put astray those measures,—and we have lost that savour,—and have become teachers to ourselves,—unto the perfection that called us.

11. Yet that measure of Truth—preserves itself in its vessel:—*Truth* chose it because she saw it chose her;—she has preserved in it her fragrance and savour,—from the beginning to the end.

12. The Head both chaste and grave,—that was not wrathful nor hard,—nor transgressed even as we *did*,—set and kept his own measures,—and cast a bridle on his thoughts.

13. He gave example in his person,—that as he kept the measure of his time,—so was it meet that we should know our time.—We have become strangers to our time,—for we have been witless in the time of discernment.

14. In the beginning the blast of the wind—in its might chastens the fruit;—then in the meantime the might of the sun:—but when its mightiness is passed,—its end gathers his sweetness.

15. But we—they that were first chastened us;—and also they that came next rebuked us;—and they that were last added sweetness to us:—then when the time of tasting us arrives,—great was our savourlessness.

16. For we came to maturity,—that we might wean the children from wantonness,—and lead them to gravity:—*but* our old age stood in need—that we should be rebuked as youths.

17. Accordingly he in kindness endured, nor did he make use of force,—that he might increase honour to our old age:—and even if it knew not its degree,—let him be magnified who knew its time!

18. And if one say that for the multitude,—force and the rod should govern it;—even as for the thief fear,—and for the spoiler threatening,—and for fools open shaming.

19. Yet if with the head as first,—the members had hasted *to move* as second,—they would have drawn that which was third,—and the whole body from the end—would have followed after them.



20. They that *were* second despised those that *were* first,—and that *were* third those that *were* second:—the degrees were set at naught one by another.—While these within despised one another,—they were trodden down likewise by those without.



## Hymn XVI.

1. Herein *is* a mirror to be blamed,—if its clearness is darkened—because there are spots on its substance;—for the foulness that is on it becomes—a covering before them that look on it. *R. Blessed be He Who polished our mirror!*

2. For that comeliness is not adorned in it,—and blemishes are not brought to view in it,—it is altogether a damage to comely things;—seeing that their comeliness gain not—adornments as *their* profit.

3. Blemishes are not rooted out by it,—likewise adornments are not multiplied by it.—A blemish that remains is as a loss;—that there is no adornment is a defect:—loss is met together with defect.

4. If our mirror *be* darkness,—it is altogether joy to the hateful;—because their blemishes *are* not reprov'd:—but if polished and shining,—it is our freedom that is adorned.

5. Twofold is the loss in defect,—for the hateful and for the goodly;—in that the goodly gain no crown,—and likewise the hateful get no adorning:—the mirror divides the loss.

6. Never does the mirror drive—by compulsion him that looks therein:—*so* likewise grace which followed—upon the righteousness of the Law,—does not possess the compulsion of the Law.

7. Righteousness was unto childhood,—its adorer of compulsion;—for when mankind was in childhood,—she adorned it by compulsion,—while she robbed it not of its freedom.

8. Righteousness used blandishment,—and the rod *to deal* with childhood;—when she smote it she roused it; her rod restrained frowardness, her blandishment softened the minds.

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9. [If one turn from the Gospel,] wherewith we are adorned to-day, my brethren,—to another gospel he is a child:—in a time of greatness of understanding,—he is become without understanding.

10. For in the degree of full age,—he has gone down to childhood;—and he loves the law of bondmen,—which when he is confident smites him,—and when he rejoices buffets him.

11. Whatsoever ornament *is* compulsion,—is not true but is borrowed.—This is a great thing in God's eyes,—that a man should be adorned by himself:—therefore took He away compulsion.

12. For even as of *His* prudence—in its *own* time He employed compulsion,—*so likewise* of His prudence,—He took it away at a time—when gentleness was desired in its stead.

13. For as it is befitting to Youth,—that it should be made to haste under the rod;—*so is* it very hateful that under the rod—Wisdom should be brought to serve,—that compulsion should be lord over her.

14. Behold therefore how likewise—God has ordered my successions—in the pastors I have had,—and in the teachers He has given me,—and in the fathers He has reckoned unto me!

15. For weighed out according to their times—*were* the helps of their qualities;—namely in him in whom it was needful, fear; and in whom it was profitable, heartening; and in whom it was becoming, meekness.

16. By measure He made my steps advance:—to my childhood He assigned terror; likewise to my youth, fear;—to my *age of* wisdom and prudence,—He assigned and gave meekness.

17. In the frowardness of the degree of childhood,—*my* instructor was a fear to me:—his rod restrained me from wantonness,—and from mischief the terror of him,—and from indulgence the fear of him.

18. Another father He gave to my youth:—what there was in me of childishness,—that was there in him of hardness; what there was in me of maturity,—that was in him *as* meekness.

19. When I rose from the degrees—of childhood and of youth,—there passed away the terror *that was* first,—there passed away the fear *that was* second;—He gave me a kind pastor.

20. Lo! for my full age his food;—and for my wisdom his interpretations;—and for my peace his meekness;—and for my repose his kindness;—and for my chastity his gravity!

21. Blessed is He who as in a balance—weighed out and gave me fathers:—for according to my times *were* my helps;—and according to my sicknesses my medicines;—and according to my comelinesses my adornments!

22. We then *are* they that have disturbed—the succession and fair order;—for in a time of mildness—lo! we crave for hardness,—that Thou should rebuke us as though *we were* children!

## Hymn XVII.

CONCERNING ABRAHAM, BISHOP OF NISIBIS.

1. Suffer, O Lord, that even my lowliness, should cast into Thy treasury its farthing, even as the merchant of our flock, who made increase of his talent of Thy doctrine, and has departed and entered Thy haven. I will speak of the shepherd, under him who has become head of the flock; who was disciple of the Three, and has become our fourth master. *R., Blessed be He Who has made him our comfort!*

2. In one love will I cause them to shine, and as a crown will I weave them, the splendid blossoms, and the fragrant flowers of the teacher and of his disciple, who remained after him as Elisha; for the horn of his election and he was consecrated and became head, and he was exalted and became master. *R., Blessed be He Who made him chief!*

3. And they in heaven rejoiced for the flock, that by the pastor whom they fed, they feed it; the abode of the shepherds under him rejoiced, because they saw the succession of their degrees. He took and set him as a mind in the midst of the great body of the church, and his members came round him to buy of him life, doctrine, new bread. *R., Blessed be He Who made him their treasury!*

4. He chose him from the multitude of shepherds, because he had given trial of his stedfastness; the time tested him in the midst of the flock, and length of days proved him as a crucible; for that he gave proof in his person, He made him a wall for many. Let thy fasting be armour to our country, thy prayer a shield to our city, let thy censer purchase reconciliation. *R., Blessed be He Who has hallowed thy sacrifices!*

5. The Pastor who has been parted from his flock, fed them on spiritual pastures, and by his exalted staff, he defended them from secret wolves. Fill thou up the room of thy master, which thirsts for the sound of his melody; set up thyself as a pillar, in the city of the trembling people; support her with thy prayers. *R., Blessed be He Who has made thee our pillar!*

6. He has committed the Hand to his disciple, the Throne to one that is worthy of it, the Key to one that is proved faithful, the Flock to one that has excelled. To thy hand belongs the laying-on, to thy offering propitiation, and to thy tongue consolation. May peace adorn thy Dominion; be the watchmen within and the congregations without. *R., Blessed be He Who has chosen thee for rejoicings!*

7. May thy doctrine abound, in deeds more than words! In saying few words, till Thou our land with labour, that by much tillage the scanty seed may become rich, the increase of the old seed, may come among us thirtyfold, and thy new seed sixtyfold. *R., Blessed be He Who multiplies an hundredfold!*

8. The wrath that was against thee ceases, because peace flows over thee altogether; the jealousy against thee is quenched, for thy love hourly flames forth: thou hast broken the string of envy, that it should smite none in secret; slander that confounds, to it thy ear turns not, for open truth is pleasing to thee. *R., Blessed be He Who adorned thy members!*

9. Thou shalt give counsel in the midst of thy people, like Jethro among the Hebrews; thou shalt altogether go with him, who for thy profit counsels thee, thou shalt altogether flee from him, who otherwise counsels thee: Rehoboam shall be a sign to thee; thou shalt choose counsels of profit, thou shalt refuse counsels of envy. *R., Blessed be He Who has counselled comfort!*

10. The gift that has been given thee, from on high it flew and came down: thou shalt call it by a name of man, thou shalt not bear it in another power, lest haply to its place there should come, Satan in his guile, supposing, that the sons of men have given it to thee, so that this freeborn gift should serve in bondage to man. *R., Blessed be He Who has handed down his gift!*

11. Thy master is painted in thy person; lo! his likeness is on thee altogether; parted from us one with us is he. In thee we shall see those three, the excellent ones who are parted from us. Thou shalt be unto us a wall as Jacob, and full of tenderness as Babu, and a treasury of speech as Valgesh. *R., Blessed be He Who in one has painted them!*

12. I, too, the offscouring of the flock, have not withholden aught that was meet: I have painted the similitude of these two, in the colours of these two; that the sheep may see their adornment, and the flock their beauties. And I who have become a lamb endowed with speech, unto Thee, O God of Abraham, in the posture of Abram will give Thee praise. *R., Blessed be He Who has made me His harp!*

### Hymn XVIII.

1. O thou who art made priest after thy master, the illustrious after the excellent, the chaste after the grave, the watchful after the abstinent, thy master from thee has not departed; in the living we see the deceased: for lo! in thee is his likeness painted; and impressed upon thee are his footprints, and all of him shines from all of thee. *R., Blessed be He Who in His stead has given us thee!*

2. The fruit wherein its tree is painted, bears witness concerning the root. Hitherto there has not failed us, the savour of his sweetness. His words thou showest forth in bodily act, for thou hast fulfilled them in deed. In thy conversation is painted his doctrine, in thy conduct his exposition, in thy fulfilment his interpretation. *R., Blessed be He Who has made thy lustre to excel!*

3. The last pastor who was exalted, and became head unto the members, the younger who obtained the birthright, not for price like Jacob, not in jealousy like Aaron, whose brethren the Levites envied him, *but* by love obtained he it like Moses, though he was older than Aaron. In thee thy brethren rejoiced as in him. *R., Blessed be He Who chose thee in unanimity!*

4. There is no envy or jealousy, among the members of the body; for in love they give ear unto him, with tenderness they are visited by him. A watch tower is the head unto the members, for on every side he looks forth. Exalted is he yet meek in his graciousness, even to the feet he humbleth himself, that he may turn away harm from them. *R., Blessed be He Who instilled thy love into us!*

5. A small thing verily had this been, if by an old man apostasy were overcome. Old age in its prudence submitted; youth in its season conquered; for a youthful combatant endured, the hateful conflict waged, by force that was full of apostacy, which like smoke waxed and passed: with its beginning was its end. *R., Blessed be He Who blew upon it that it vanished!*

6. The voice of the cornet on a sudden amazed and called Thee to battle. Thou wentest up like a new David, by Thee was subdued a second Goliath. Thou wast not untried in combat, for a secret warfare day by day, *Thou art waging against the Evil One*. Exercise in secret is wont to attain the crown openly. *R., Blessed be He Who chose Thee for our glory!*

7. In face of trial Job trained his body and his mind, and in temptation he was victorious. And Joseph conquered in the chamber; Ananias and his company in the furnace, and in the midst of the den Daniel. Satan did foolishly, when in tempting, he confirmed their victory openly. *R., Blessed be He Who has multiplied shame on him!*

8. And the husbandman who apostatized and was urgent, to sow thorns with his left hand; zealous against him was the righteous husbandman, stopped and cut off his left hand. He filled His own right hand and sowed in the heart the words of life; and lo! our understanding is tilled, by His prophets and His apostles. By Thee may our souls be tilled! *R., Blessed be He Who chose Thee for our husbandman!*

9. And if so be Thy words are too little, till Thou our land with deeds, that amid much tillage, stock and root may be strengthened. Better is a goodly deed, than the hearing of ten thousand words. Thy seed shall yield an hundredfold, and the after crop sixtyfold, yea that which grows of itself thirtyfold. *R., Blessed be He Who multiplied Thy increase!*

10. That light should be darkened it is not meet, that salt should lose its savour it is not right; defilement for the head is not seemly, nor yet foulness for the mirror. Nor if medicines have lost their savour sicknesses also are not cured; and if so be the torch is quenched, the stumbling also are many. Thy light shall chase away our darkness. *R., Blessed be He Who hath made Thee our lamp!*

11. Appoint for thee scribes and judges, exactors also and dispensers, overseers also and officers: to each assign his work, lest haply by care should be rusted, or by anxiety should be distracted, the mind and the tongue, wherewith thou offerest supplication, for the expiation of all the people. *R., Blessed be He Who makes illustrious Thy ministry!*

12. That he should purge his mind, and cleanse also his tongue; that he should purify his hands, and make his whole body to shine; this is too little for the priest and his title, who offers the Living Body. Let him cleanse all himself at all hours; for he stands as mediator, between God and mankind. *R., Blessed be He Who has cleansed His ministers!*

### Hymn XIX.

1. Thou who answerest to the name of Abraham, in that Thou art made father of many; but because to Thee none is spouse, as Sarah was to Abraham,—lo! Thy flock is Thy spouse; bring up her sons in Thy truth; spiritual children may they be to Thee, and the sons be sons of promise, that they may become heirs in Eden. *R., Blessed be He Who foreshowed Thee in Abraham!*

2. Fair fruit of chastity, in whom the priesthood was well pleased, youngest among Thy brethren as was the son of Jesse; the horn overflowed and anointed Thee, the hand alighted and chose Thee, the Church desired and loved Thee; the pure altar is for Thy ministry, the great throne for Thy honour, and all as one for Thy crown. *R., Blessed be He Who multiplied Thy crowning!*

3. Lo! thy flock, O blessed one, arise and visit it, O diligent one! Jacob ranged the flocks in order; range Thou the sheep that have speech, and enlighten the virgin-youths in purity, and the virgin-maids in chastity; raise up priests in honour, rulers in meekness, and a people in righteousness. *R. Blessed be He Who filled Thee with understanding!*

4. Guard thou the sheep that are whole, and visit them that are sick, and bind up them that are broken, and seek out them that are lost; feed them in the pastures of the Scriptures, and give them drink or the spring of doctrine: let the truth be a wall unto thee, let the cross be a staff unto thee, and truthfulness be peace unto thee. *R., Blessed be He Who multiplied Thy virtues!*

5. Let there be with Thee in Thy flock, the power that was with David; for if he plucked a straying lamb, from the mouth of the lion, how meet is it for Thee, O exalted one, to be zealous to snatch from the Evil One the souls that are precious above all, for by nothing can they be bought, save by the blood of Christ! *R., Blessed be He Who was sold and bought all!*

6. Unto Moses Joshua ministered, and for the reward of his ministry, from him received the right hand. Because to an illustrious old man thou hast ministered, he too gave thee the right hand. Moses committed unto Joshua, a flock of which half were wolves; but to thee is delivered a flock, whereof a fourth yea a third is sanctified. *R., Blessed be He who adorned thy flock!*

7. Let the love of Moses abide in thee, for his love was a discerning love, his zeal a discreet zeal. When Korah and Dathan sundered themselves, he sundered the earth from beneath them; by sundering he made the sundering to cease. In Eldad and Medad he made known, that his good will was altogether this that all the people should prophesy. *R., Blessed be He who in His good will was reconciled!*

8. The poor estate of Elijah, Elisha loved above wealth; a poor man gave to a poor man, a gift that was great above all. Because thou hast loved the poverty, of thy master who in secret was rich, the fountain of his words shall flow from thee, that thou mayst become a harp for the Spirit, and mayst sing to thyself inwardly His good will. *R., Blessed be He who made thee His treasure!*

9. There is none that envies thy election, for meek is thy headship; there is none angered by the rebuke, for thy word sows peace; there is none terrified by thy voice, for pleasant in thy visitation; there is none that groans against thy yoke, for it labors instead of our neck, and lightens the burden of our souls. *R., Blessed be He who chose thee for our rest*

10. Contend not with the mighty, despair not of the outcast; soften and teach the rich, exhort and win the poor; with the harsh join the forbearing, and the long suffering with the wrathful; catch them that are evil by them that are good, and them that spoil by them that give, and the defiled by means of the sanctified. *R., Blessed be He who made thee our hunter!*

11. Take to thee ten thousand medicaments, and arise and go forth among the sick; to the diseased offer medicine, and to him that is sound a preservative; not one medicine only shalt thou offer, for the sickness lest haply it be not meet: offer many remedies, that the sickness may find healing; likewise thou shalt learn experience. *R., Blessed be He who laboured to heal our wounds!*

12. May the land be according to thy desire; may the vineyard be according to thy husbandry; may the flock be in the midst of thy dwelling, and the sheep sound under thy staff! Mayest thou be a great Head, and we the jewels of thy crown! May we be beautiful in thee and thou be beautiful in us! for they are goodly each in the other, people and priest when they are at one. *R., Blessed be He who has sowed among us unity!*

13. Hearken to the Apostle when he saith, to that virgin whom he had espoused; I am jealous over you with jealousy, with a jealousy verily of God, not of the flesh but of the spirit. Be jealous therewith thou also in pureness, that He may know what she is and whose she is. In thee may she cherish, and in thee may she love, Jesus the Bridegroom in truth. *R., Blessed is he whose zeal is holy!*

14. As are her masters, so are her manners: for with the teacher that lags a laggard is she, and with him that is noble, excellent is she. The Church is like unto a mirror, for according to the face that gazes into it, thus does it put on the likeness thereof. For as is the king so also his host, and as is the priest so also his flock; according as these are it is stamped on them. *R., Blessed be He Who stamped her in His likeness!*

15. Without a testament they departed, those three illustrious priests; who in Testaments used to meditate, those two Testaments of God. Great gain have they bequeathed to us, even this example of poverty. They who possessed nothing the blessed ones, made us their possessions; the Church was their treasure. *R., Blessed is he who possessed in them his possessions!*

16. The priest Jacob the noble, with him she was ennobled as he was: because he joined his love to his jealousy, with fear and love he was clothed. With Babes a lover of bounty, for money she redeemed the captives. With Valgesh a scribe of the law, her heart she opened to the Scriptures. With thee then may her profit be manifold! *R., Blessed be He Who has magnified her merchantmen!*

## Hymn XX.

1. O virgin-youth that art become bridegroom, move to a little jealousy thy mind, towards her who is the wife of thy youth: cut off the attachments which she had, in her girlhood with many others; rebuke her and call together her affections, that she may know what she is and whose she is. In thee may she desire yea love, Christ the Bridegroom of truth. *R., Blessed be He Who betrothes her to His Only Begotten!*

2. Be jealous O husbandman against the tares, which have sprung up and entangled themselves among the wheat. Easy is it to root up the thicket, rather than the despised: if a slight breeze bears it, it attacks the sowing and conquers it. That which three husbandmen have sown, may it return in threefold measure! thirty-fold and sixty and an hundred! *R., Blessed be He Who makes rich thine increase!*

3. A new shepherd for him it is right, that he should oversee the flock in new wise, and should know what is the number of it, and should see what are its needs. A flock it is that was purchased with the blood, of that chief of the shepherds. Call thou and cause to pass each sheep by its name, for it is a flock whereof the name is written, and its reckoning in the Book of life. *R., Blessed be He Who will require the number thereof!*

4. Lo the spouse of thy Lord is with thee! keep her from all harm, and from men that deal corruptly, and call the congregations by their own names. The name of her spouse is set on her; let her not go a whoring for another name, for she was not baptized in the name of man; with Names wherein she was baptized let her make confession, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. *R., Blessed be He by Whose Name she is called!*

5. The Apostle her betrother was jealous over her, that she should not be corrupted by names, yet not by names that were false, but not even by names that were true; not by Cephas yea not by his *name*. They who were true betrothers, set the Name of her betrothed upon her; the false *betrothers* like whoremongers, set their own names on the flock. *R., Glory be to Thy Name, our Creator!*

6. The stamp on living creatures, O my brethren, no man destroys openly; and a name that is signed to a letter, no man adds to or alters: whoso effaces the stamp is a thief; and whoso alters the name is a falsifier. The name of Christ has been altered; names of falsehood lo! have been set, upon the congregations that have been corrupted. *R., Blessed be He Who has called His flock by His Name!*

7. Look at the Prophets and Apostles, how like they are each to the other! By the Prophets the Name of God, was set on the flock of God; and by the Apostles the Name of Christ, was set on the Church of Christ. The false *betrothers also* are like one another for by their names are called, the congregations who commit whoredom with them. *R., Blessed be He in Whose Name we were sanctified!*

## Hymn XXI.

1. John who was a torch, laid bare and rebuked the wanton ones: they made haste and quenched the torch, that they might let loose the desire of their lust. Be thou a lamp in brightness, and make the works of darkness cease, that whensoever thy doctrine shines, no man may dare at its rising, to give ear to the lusts of darkness. *R., Blessed be He Who made thee our lamp!*

2. A great blessing was hidden in it, even in the reproof of Elijah. Elisha ministered unto him and sought, a twofold reward of his ministration. Twofold glory it gave to him, for in double measure was he clad with his virtues. Thou who hast loved the reproof of Valgesh thy master rich in gifts, mayest thou inherit the treasure of his wisdom! *R., Blessed be He Who makes thy Doctrine rich!*

3. May greediness be overcome by thy fasting even as by the fasting of Daniel! May lust be confounded before thy body, like as it was confounded before Joseph! May lust of money be overcome by thee! like as it was overcome before Simeon, Mayest thou bind on earth even as he, and loose on high after his likeness; for thy faith *is* even as his! *R., Blessed is He Who committed to thee His ministry!*



4. Thy chastity be as Elisha's, and thy celibacy Elijah's, the covenant with thine eyes as Job's, thy tender mercies as David's; without envy as Jonathan, thy firmness as Jeremiah's, thy gentleness the Apostles'! Thine be the ancient things of the prophets, thine the new things of the Apostles. *R., Blessed be He Who filled thee with their treasures!*

5. Be a crown to the priesthood, and in thee be the ministry made to shine! Be a brother to the elders, likewise an overseer to the deacons; be a master to youth, a staff and a hand to old age; be a wall to the consecrated virgins. In thy conversation may the covenant prevail, and the Church in thy comeliness be adorned. *R., Blessed be He Who chose thee to be priest!*

6. In thy poverty be brought to nought, the hateful custom of the house of Gehazi; in thy sanctity be abolished, the abominable custom of the house of Eli; in thy unity be done away, the treacherous greeting of the lips of Iscariot the deceiver! Pour forth all our thought, and form it anew from the beginning! *R., Blessed be He Who in thy crucible refines us!*

7. In thy conversation let Mammon be put to shame, who has been lord over our freedom! Let the disease be done away from us, which is customary with us and pleasant to us; abolish the causes that have maintained, customs that are full of harm! Evil things have possessed us through custom: let good things possess us through custom! Be thou, O Lord, the cause of help to us. *R., Blessed be He Who chose Thee in order to our life!*

8. Let evil customs be cut off: let not the Church possess wealth; that she be sufficed let her possess souls, and if thus she be sufficed *let it* be in marvellous measure! And let not her deceased be buried in the cutting off of hope heathenishly, with vestments and wailing and lamentation; for the living is clothed in raiment, but the deceased his all is a coffin. *R., Blessed be He Who to our dust turns us again!*

9. A cause of evil is the lust, also the greediness of the house of Eli, and the thievishness of the house of Gehazi, and the reviling of Nabal. These hateful well-springs close thou up, lest there be a great outpouring, and there come from it defilement, and even thou be reached by its overflow. The Lord restrain their outpourings! *R., Blessed be He Who dried up their over-flowings!*

10. For the old man commit speech to him; for the young enjoin silence on him; for the stranger who comes in unto thee, learns of thee from thy discipline, namely who speaks first, and who second and third: and if every man keeps his mouth, and every man knows his degree, they will call thee happy. *R., Our Lord perform thy desire!*

11. Let the voice of thy truth be single and thy assumed voices without number; the image of truthfulness on thy heart, and on thy face all aspects, sadness, gladness, and feebleness. To him that errs show that thou art wrathful, to him that is chaste show that thou art glad. Be single towards the Godhead, and to mankind be manifold. *R., Blessed be He Who with all men is all things!*

12. If thou hearest an evil report, from truthful men that deceive not, pour forth tears that thou mayst quench the fire that burns in others; let them that are wise pray with thee, and appoint thou a fast for them that have knowledge, and let thy dwelling be in mourning, for him who is lost in sin, that he may turn back in repentance. *R., Blessed be He Who found the sheep that was lost!*

13. To every man give not thy ear, lest liars overwhelm thee; to every man lend not thy foot, lest vile ones misguide thee; to every man give not thy soul, lest the insolent trample thee. Keep thy hand from the false man, lest he gather thorns into thy hand. Be far off and near at hand. *R., Blessed be He Who is near though far!*

14. Lo the fame of the new king, resounds and comes into the world! To the spoiled he is a comfort, and to the spoilers a terror. On the covetous vomiting has come, that they may render up all that they have swallowed. Let them be put to fear from before thee also, that between a priest and a righteous king, the former customs may be done away. *R., Blessed be He Who was angry, and turns and has mercy!*

15. There is that finds opportunity and ventures, and there is that forces and compels his will. One thinks that judgment is reserved, and another that it is not to be at all. There is that steals and quenches his thirst, and there is that steals and thirsts to steal. The rich steal and the poor; but the hungry steal by measure, and the full steal without measure. *R., Blessed be He Who has searched out all wills!*

16. But now has He given opportunity, and every man has shown his will, of what kind it is and to what it is like, and what he has chosen for himself rather than what. He has removed temptation from every man, lest even he who is not hateful should deny him. He has given us opportunity that we may understand, that better think this power *is* chastisement which profits much. *R., Blessed is He Who for our profit rebukes us!*

17. For He wills not by compulsion, to cast his yoke on our neck; He gave us opportunity and we waxed proud, that so when we rebelled and were punished, we might love His light yoke, might choose His pleasant staff. Our rest is very wearisome to us, for in His compulsion is restfulness, and in His yoke is lightening. *R., Blessed be He Whose labour is pleasantness!*

18. The whole world like a body, had fallen into a heavy sickness; for in the fever of heathenism, it burned and pined and fell. The right hand of tender mercy touched it, and dealt with its soul in pity; and cut off speedily its heathenism, for that was the cause of its sickness, and it was purged and sweated and restored. *R., Glory be to the Hand that has healed!*

19. The land shall have peace in thy days, for it has seen thee that thou art full of peace. In thee shall the churches be built, and shall be clothed with their ornaments, and their books shall be opened in them, and their tables shall be spread, and their ministers shall be adorned; from them shall go up thanksgiving, *as* first fruits to the Lord of peace. *R., Blessed is He Who revives our Churches!*

20. Let thy prayer go up to heaven, with it let reconciliation go up! May the Lord of Heaven rain down His blessings upon our [ ], and His consolations upon our afflictions, and His gathering upon our dispersion: may He waken His jealousy with His love; may His righteousness avenge our disgrace, may His grace blot out our iniquity! *R., Blessed is He Who blesses His flock!*

21. The *first* priest and first king, even as if depicted each in the other, were balanced as if in scales. So too Valgesh and so too the son of that king, for they were gentle and calm. May these

latter be like each to other; the priests be shining lights, the king be glowing lights, likewise illustrious judges! *R., Blessed be He Who has enlightened our souls!*

22. From the king's office laws, and from the priest's office propitiations. That both should be mild is hateful; that both should be strong is grievous. Let one be strong and one be tender; in prudence and in discretion, let fear with mercy be mingled. Let our priesthood be tender, likewise our king strong. *R., Blessed be He Who has mingled our helps!*

23. Let the priests pray for the kings, that they may be a wall to mankind! From beside the kings be victory; and from beside the priests faith! May victory save *our* bodies, and faith *our* souls! May kings put an end to war; priests put an end to strife! May disputing and quarrelling cease! *R., Blessed be the Son of Him Who gives peace to all! Praise to Thee for Thy gift!*

[XXII.–XXV. (wanting); XXVI. (only a fragment remains); XXVII.–XXXIV. (relate to Edessa and Carrhæ).]

## Hymn XXXV.

### CONCERNING OUR LORD, AND CONCERNING DEATH AND SATAN.

1. The Voice made proclamation: and they gathered and came; the hosts of the Evil One, together with his ministers. The army of the tares was gathered altogether, for they saw that Jesus had triumphed, to the grief of all them on the left hand, for there was none of them but had been tormented. They began one by one to relate all whatsoever they had endured. Sin and Hell were terrified: Death trembled and the dead rebelled; and Satan because sinners rebelled against him. *R., To Thee be glory because the Evil One saw Thee and was troubled!*

2. Sin cried aloud; she gave counsel to her sons, to the demons and the devils, and unto them she said, Legion the head of your ranks is not, the sea has swallowed him and his company; and likewise ye my sons if ye despise, this Jesus will destroy you. Ye who in a snare took Solomon, it is therefore a reproach to you, that ye should be overcome by his disciples, takers of fish and ignorant men; for lo! they have taken the draught of men, which had been taken by us.

3. This is great, above all evils (saith the Evil One, concerning our Saviour); for this suffices Him not that He has spoiled us, but likewise on us He has begun retribution for Jonah son of Amittai. On Legion therefore He was avenging him when He seized and cast him into the sea. Jonah emerged, after three days and came up; but Legion yea not after a long season, for the depth of the sea closed upon him at the command.

4. I tempted Him, after his past, with pleasant bread, but He desired it not. To my grief I strove to learn a psalm, that by His psalm I might take Him as a prey: I paused and learned it a second

time, but He made my second *trial* to be vain. I brought Him up to a mountain and showed Him all possessions; I gave *them* to Him and He was not moved. Better was it for me in the days of Adam, who gave me no great trouble in teaching him.



5. The Evil One ceased, from his activity and said, A cause of idleness to me, is this Jesus; for lo! the publicans and harlots take refuge in Him. What work shall I seek for myself? I who was master to all men, to whom shall I be a disciple? Sin again said, It must be, that I forsake, therefore, and change from that which I am; for this Son of Mary who is come, as a new creation, has created mankind.

6. Gluttonous Death, lamented and said, I have learned fasting, which I used not to know; lo! Jesus gathers multitudes, but as to me, in His feast a fast is proclaimed for me. One man has closed my mouth, mine who have closed the mouths of many. Hell said I will restrain my greed; hunger, therefore, is *mine*: this Man triumphs as at the marriage, when He changed the water into wine, *so* He changes the vesture of the dead into life.

7. And moreover, God made a flood, and washed the earth, and purged her crimes; fire and brimstone again He sent on her, that He might make white her stains. By fire He gave me the Sodomites, and by flood the Giants. He closed the mouth of the hosts of Sennacherib, and opened the mouth of Hell. These things and such as these, I loved. *But now*, in place of deadly visitations of justice, He has wrought in His Son, the quickening of the dead by grace.

8. Prophets and righteous men, said the Evil One, unto his companions, have been seen by me; and though their strength was exceeding mighty, there was in them a savour of that which is mine; for the stuff whereof the sons of man are made, is near akin to our heaven. This man has clothed Himself with the body of Adam, and is troubling us, for our leaven has no power on Him. He is man, therefore, and God; for His manhood in His Godhead is intermingled.

9. Adam was seen by me, that fountain from whence flowed all races of *men*; his children has been sought out by me, and proved one by one. Yet have I not seen from the beginning a man, of whom one part was of God, and the other half, man. Moses, who shone in his splendour, I tempted again, and in his tongue I made him to err; but this man, yea, not in His mind, for pure exceedingly is the fountain of His thoughts.

10. The lust of the body, is in all bodies; for even while they sleep, it wakes in them. Him, who in his waking hours keeps himself pure, by means of a dream, I disturb. The dregs of the body are stirred in him, by a shaking movement in secret inwardly. The sleeping and the waking besides, I trouble alike. This is He Who alone keeps Himself pure, Whom not even in a dream can I disturb, Who even in His sleep is pure and holy.

11. But separate was even His childhood, from that of the children who have been seen by me; for I have not seen in Him *any* part of that which is of me. I was afraid of His childhood; therefore, I stirred up Herod, that among the infants He might be slain. Because of this also that He escaped, I was greatly afraid, for our mystery how did He find out! He received the offerings of the Wise Men; He scorned us and departed and escaped from our sword.

12. Children have been seen by me, sons of righteous men; yea, also youths, sons of chaste women; and I have moved them from the womb, one by one, and I have seen in them our leaven. For they were wrathful men and revilers, yea, also furious and gluttonous; fruits were they that by instruction were to be ripened and sweetened. But this man from His *first* planting, was a good fruit that possessed sweetness, wherewith sinners were made sweet.

13. Even while He was an infant, He was a teacher of the sons of men, by the splendour that was upon Him. Even the priest as he carried Him was amazed at Him. In the prudence of old men was He clad. Joseph stood aloof from Him: His mother gloried in His presence. He was a help in His childhood, to every one that saw Him; He was a profit to them that knew Him from the day when He entered into the world, He was a helper of mankind by His excellencies.

14. From whence has it sprung up before me, this fruit of Mary, the grape whereof the wine is not according to nature? For lo! I stand between doubts. To turn away and leave Him, I am afraid, lest by His teaching, they should be sweetened, they, who have acquired by bitterness. But again to tread on Him and crush Him, is a terror to me, lest haply He turn and become new wine unto sinners, and when they are drunken therewith, lo! they forget their idols.

15. Lo! I am afraid of both things, as well His death, as also His life. Then unto the Evil One His ministers made answer and counselled Him. Though both these things be grievous, somewhat lighter to us is the trouble, that we should choose His death rather than his life. Let Death tell us whether any one from among the righteous, has ever from the first been aroused again. The sons of the Giants and the renowned ones, there is none that has issued forth from her, even Hell, the Devourer.

16. The blowing of the wind, a man may feel after; but the Son of Mary, who shall search him out? for when He wept, by His tears He robbed me; and again when I bid Him cast Himself, from the holy Temple, I thought, that it was through fear He cast Himself not: yet when they threw Him from the hill-top, He flew through the air. On the well again when He was weary He sat. His variableness I understand not, for on the dry land alike and on the water He walks.

17. I have seen Him that He hungered, as a Son of man; yet this was done away by the bread which He multiplied. From the beginning I proved Him and I came *to Him*; He questioned *me* as though He knew *me* not; but this, too, was done away, when He showed that He knew *our* secrets. Again He chose Iscariot, as though He knew him not; then He turned and showed that He knew him, though he was binding and loosing. I was mistaken in Him, for He was baptized and emerged and overwhelmed me.

18. But one token there is which I have seen in Him that heartens me exceedingly above all. For while He was praying I saw Him and was glad, because He changed colour and was afraid: His sweat was as drops of blood, because He felt that His day was come. This is pleasant to me, exceedingly above all, if it be not that deceiving He has deceived me therein. But if beguiling He has beguiled me, this is both for me and for you alike, my ministers.

19. Then shouted the host of devils and said, Hateful is the sign that we see in thee, for never from the beginning has it thus happened to thee. In prompt counsels thou wast excellent: the Son

of Mary captures *our* cities, while thou art prolonging thy discourse. Arise, go forth, let us fight with Him, for this were to us a reproach, that we being many should be overcome by one. And if thou art in pain or fear, give us counsel for the battle and stay thou *behind*.

20. This Jesus out of His own words it is, that I shall teach *Him*, and war with Him; for He said that he, even Satan, is divided, himself against himself, and that he cannot stand. Though He desires to fight with us, He has given us arms which are against Himself, gage and divide for me His disciples, for if ye divide them, with these you will conquer them, even with Eve and the serpent, the weak *powers*, whereby I conquered the first Adam.

21. Death unto the Evil One, made answer and said to him, Wherefore tarriest thou not according to thy wont? for lo! it is those that are despised and least, that thou ensnarest after thy custom: Jesus Who is great above all, wherewith hast thou sought to ensnare Him? The experience of His weapons moves thee to fear, which He hurled against thee when he was tempted of thee. Thou and I with thy followers, the host of us is too little for the battle with Him, the Son of Mary.

22. I counsel, then, if this our strife permits us to do anything: go thou into that disciple, let thyself loose, that head may speak with heads; and let loose all thy host, let it go and stir up the Pharisees. And *beware*, lest thou speak contentiously as thou art wont. If thou be a god, descend from hence, with fondness kiss them and betray Him; and, lo! we will bring on Him the envy and the sword of the Levites.

### Hymn XXXVI.

1. Our Lord subdued His might and constrained it, that His living death might give life to Adam. His hands He gave to the piercing of the nails, instead of the hand that plucked the fruit: He was smitten on the cheek in the judgment hall, instead of the mouth that ate *it* in Eden. And because his foot bore Adam *thence*, His feet were pierced. Our Lord was stripped, that He might make us modest: with the gall and vinegar He made sweet the bitterness of the serpent, which he had poured forth into mankind. *R. Blessed is He Who gave me the victory and quickened the dead to His glory!*

2. (DEATH.)—If Thou be God show Thy power; and if Thou be man, feel our power. And if it be Adam that Thou seekest, get Thee hence! because of his transgressions he is shut up here; Cherubim and Seraphim await not, in his stead to pay his debt. There is none among them mortal, so as to give his life in his stead. Who can open the mouth of hell, and plunge and bring him up from her, who has swallowed him and keeps a hold on him, and that forever!

3. I am He who has conquered all the wise men; and lo! in the corners they are heaped for me in hell. Come, enter, son of Joseph, and see terrible things; the limbs of the giants, the mighty corpse of Samson, and the skeleton of the stubborn Goliath; Og, moreover, the son of the giants,

who made for himself a bed of iron and lay thereon, from whence I hurled him and cast him down; that cedar I laid low to the gate of hell.

4. I by myself alone have conquered multitudes, and one may single-handed seek to conquer me. Prophets and priests and men of renown have I carried off; I have conquered kings in their armies, and mighty men in their hunts, and righteous men in their excellencies. Streams of corpses are hurled by me into hell, and though they pour into her she is athirst. Though one be near or though he be far off, the end brings him to the gate of hell.

5. Silver I despised at the hand of the rich, and their offerings corrupted me not. The lords of slaves never once persuaded me, to take a slave instead of his lord, and a poor man instead of a rich man, or an old man instead of a child. As for wise that are able to charm wild beasts, their charms enter not into my ears. Hater of persuasion all men call me; and I the thing that is commanded me that I do.

6. Who is this, or whose son is He, or what His lineage who has conquered me? The book of families is by me; lo! I went in and read and studied the names from Adam till now, and not one of the dead do I forget. Family by family, lo! they are written, upon my limbs. Because of Thee, O Jesus, I went in and made a reckoning, that I might show Thee that there is none that escapeth my hands.

7. Yet were there two men (that I lie not) whose names have escaped me in Hell. For Enoch and Elijah came not to me. In all the world I have sought them; yea thither where Jonah descended, I descended and sought and they were not. And though I suppose that into Paradise, they have entered and escaped, a mighty Cherub guards it. The ladder Jacob saw, what if haply by it they have entered into Heaven!

8. Who is there that has measured the sand of the sea, and has spilt only two grains? This harvest wherein every day there labour, diseases as harvesters, I alone carry the handfuls and gather them up; other gatherers in making haste, drop handfuls. Vintagers overlook clusters; *but* two grapes have escaped me, in that great vintage which I alone have plucked.

9. I am He that has taken (said Death), on sea and on dry land, all prey in chase. Eagles of the air come to me; yea and dragons of the deep: creeping things and fowl and cattle; old men, youths and children. These will convince Thee, O Son of Mary, that this my power rules over all. Thy Cross how shall it conquer me, who by a tree lo! I have prevailed and conquered from old time?

10. But I was desirous to speak yet farther, for I am not wanting in words; yea words are not to be sought by me, for lo! deeds call on me close at hand. Not as you do I make promise, to the simple of secret things, that forsooth there is to be a resurrection at some time or other. If then Thou art very powerful, give a present pledge, that Thy distant promise also may be believed.

11. Death ended his speech of derision: and the voice of our Lord sounded into Hell, and He cried aloud and burst the graves one by one. Tremblings took hold on Death; Hell that never of old had been lighted up, into it there flashed splendours, from the Watchers who entered in and brought out the dead to meet Him, who was dead and gives life to all. The dead came forth, and the living were ashamed, they who thought that they had conquered the Life Giver of all.

12. But who gave me the day of Moses, (said Death) who made a feast for me? For that lamb that *was slain* in Egypt gave me, from every house the first fruit: heaps and heaps of the first born, at the gate of Hell he piled me them. But this Lamb of the festival, has robbed Hell; of the dead He has taken title and carried them off from me. That lamb filled the graves for me; but this has emptied the graves that were full.

13. The death of Jesus to me is a torment; I prefer for myself His life rather than His death. This is the Dead whose death (lo!) is hateful to me; in the death of all men *else* I rejoice, but His Death, even His, I detest; that He may come back to life I hope. While He was living He brought to life and restored three that were dead; but now by His death, at the gate of Hell they have trampled on me, the dead who have come to life, whom I was going to shut in.

14. I will haste and will close the gates of Hell, before this Dead, Whose death has spoiled me. Whoso hears will wonder at my humiliation, that by a dead man who is without I am overcome. All the dead seek to go forth, but this one presses to enter in. A medicine of life has entered into Hell, and has restored life to its dead. Who then has brought in and hidden from me, that living fire wherein have reposed, the cold and dark recesses of Hell?

15. Death has seen the Watchers in Hell; the immortal instead of the mortal; and he said Confusion has entered our abode, for in these two things is torment *to me*: That the dead have come forth out of Hell, and the Watchers that die not have entered therein. Lo! one at the pillow in this tomb, has entered and sat down by it, and a second his companion at His feet. I will entreat of Him and will persuade Him, with His pledge to ascend and go to His Kingdom.

16. Be not wroth against me, gracious Jesus, for the words that my pride has spoken before Thee! Who is there that when seeing Thy Cross, shall have doubted that Thou art man? Who is there that shall have seen Thy Power, and shall not believe that Thou art also God? Lo! thus by these two things I have learnt to confess that Thou art man and likewise art God! For as much as the dead in Hell repent not, go up among the living, O Lord, and preach repentance.

17. O Jesus King, receive my supplication, and with my supplication take to Thyself a pledge, even Adam the great pledge accept for Thyself, him in whom are buried all the dead; even as when I received him, in him were hidden all the living. The first pledge I have given Thee, the body of Adam; go Thou up therefore and reign over all; and when I shall hear Thy trumpet, I with mine own hand will lead forth the dead at Thy Coming.

18. Our King living has gone forth and gone up, out of Hell, as Conqueror. Woe He has doubled to them that are of the left hand; to *evil* spirits and demons *He is* sorrow, to Satan and to Death *He is* pain, to Sin and Hell mourning. Joy to them that are of the right hand, has come to-day. On this great day therefore, great glory let us give to Him, who died and *is* alive that, unto all He may, give life and resurrection!

### Hymn XXXVII.



1. Death was weeping for her, even for Sheol, when he saw her treasury that it was emptied. And he said, Who, then, has plundered thy riches? Gehazi stole and was discovered; I am stealing every day, *but* theft has not been laid to my charge. I am sent to Kings, in their sicknesses, their guards are set around them, guards are also at their gate. The soul of kings I snatch and I go forth. *R., Blessed is He Who has broken the sting of Death by His Cross!*

2. All women grieve that are barren; Sheol rejoices because of her barrenness; she is desolate if so be that she brings forth. The all-compelling Power constrained it, even the bosom *that was* barren and cold, and it rendered back though wont to deny its debts. Rebekah, when the two babes afflicted her, asked for death. How great then the pain of Sheol, when there smote her strange pangs; the dead were roused and brake forth and came out from her bowels.

3. Is this then perchance that saying, which was heard by me from Isaiah? (but I despised it) when he arose and said, "Who hath heard such a thing as this? that the earth should travail in one day, and bring forth a nation in one hour." Is it this that has come to pass? or else, is it reserved for us hereafter? And if it be this it is a vain shadow that I thought I am a king; I knew not it was but a deposit I was keeping.

4. Two utterances that were different, have I heard from him, even this Isaiah. For he said that a virgin should conceive and bring forth; and he said again that the earth should bring forth. But lo! the Virgin has brought Him forth, and Sheol the barren has brought Him forth; two wombs that contrary to nature, have been changed by Him; the Virgin and Sheol both of them. The Virgin in her bringing forth He made glad; but Sheol He grieved and made sad in His Resurrection.

5. I saw in the valley that Ezekiel, who quickened the dead when he was questioned; and I saw the bones that were in heaps and they moved. There was a tumult of bones in Sheol, bone seeking for his fellow, and joint for her mate. There was there none that questioned, or that was questioned, whether those bones lived. Unquestioned, the voice of Jesus, the Master of all creatures quickened them.

6. Sheol was made sorrowful when she saw them, even the sorrowful dead made to rejoice. She wept for Lazarus when he went forth, "Go in peace *thou* dead that livest, bewailed by two houses of mourning." Within and without were lamentations for him; for his sisters wept for him when he came into the grave unto me, and I wept for him as he went forth. In his death there was weeping among the living; likewise in Sheol is great mourning at his resurrection.

7. Now it is that I have tasted the taste of his sorrow, even of him who weeps over his beloved. The dead that are thus beloved of Sheol, how dear *were* they to their fathers! The limbs which I severed and carried away, lo! they are shorn away and carried off from me. If I thus suffer for the departure of him, the youth who was restored to life, blessed is He Who had compassion on the widow; in her only son He gave peace to her dwelling that had been made desolate.

8. Lo! this suffering which I cause men to suffer in their beloved ones, in the end on me it gathers itself altogether. For when the dead shall have left Sheol, for every man there will be resurrection, and for me alone torment. And who is he then that shall bear for me all these things,

that I shall see Sheol left alone, because this voice which has rent the graves, makes her desolate and sends forth the dead that were in her midst?

9. If a man reads in the Prophets, he hears there of righteous wars. But if a man meditate in the story of Jesus, he learns of grace and tender mercy. And if a man think of Jesus, that He is a strange God it is a reproach against me. No other strange key into the gate of Sheol could ever be fitted. One is the key of the Creator, that which has opened it, yea, is to open it at His Coming.

10. Who is he that is able to join the bones, save that Power which created them? What is it that shall reunite the shreds of the body, save the hand of the Maker? What is it that shall restore the forms, save the finger of the Creator? He, who created and turned and destroyed, is He that is able also to renew and raise up. Another God is unable to enter in and restore creatures not his own.

11. But were he another Power, I should be very joyful that He is coming to me. Into the bosom of Sheol He would descend and learn that One alone is God. Mortals that have erred and preached that there are Gods many, lo! they are bound for me in Sheol, and their Gods have never grieved because of them. One God do I know, and His Prophets and His Apostles do I acknowledge.

### Hymn XXXVIII.

1. My throne was set for me in Sheol: and one arose that was dead, and hurled me from it. Every man feared me alone, and I feared no man. Terror and trouble *were* among the living, rest and peace among the dead. In a man that was slain lo! there has entered into Sheol He that takes her captive. I used to take all men captive: the Son of Captivity Whom I took captive has taken me captive. He Whom I took captive has led her away and is gone to Paradise. *R., Blessed is He Who has quickened the dead of Sheol by His Cross!*

2. All men complain much against me; and I against one only have complained. Who is there among men so just as I? Has corruption touched my integrity? I held all men in affection, and whoso hates me knows *it*; I know not all my days what a bribe is. The person of a king have I not accepted. By me is preached equality, for bondman and his lord in Sheol I make equal.

3. Before God it is that I minister, with Whom is no acceptance of persons. What other is there that endures as I do, I that am cursed when I do good? Perversely are requited to me the benefits I have rendered. Though my deeds are goodly, my name is not goodly. Yet my mind rests in its integrity: in God it is that I comfort myself; for though He is good He is denied every day and endures *it*.

4. The old I remove from all sufferings, likewise the young from all sins. Secret contention I quell in Sheol; in our land there is no iniquity: it is Sheol and Heaven alone, that are removed from all sins; this earth that lies between, in her iniquity dwells. He therefore that is prudent will either go up into Heaven, or, if that be *too* hard, will go down to Sheol which is easy.

5. To one man because of one that is dead, every man hastes to comfort *him*. But for me though many of my dead have come to life, there is none that comes in and comforts me. Satan came in, against Whom, had been proclaimed seven woes even against him; though mightily the Son of Mary had trodden on him, *yet* uplifted is his spirit; for he is the serpent that strives though bruised. Better is it for me to fall and worship, before this Jesus Who has conquered me by His Cross.

6. When He enters at the gate of Sheol, in place of John who preached before His coming, then will I cry “Lo! He that quickens the dead is come; Thy servant am I from henceforth, Jesu! Because of The Body I reviled Thee, for it covered Thy Godhead. Be not angry, O Son of the King, against Thy treasury; at Thy command I have opened and closed. Though my wings *be* very swift it is at thy nod I haste to every quarter.

7. All that have been raised were not first born; for our Lord is the First-born of Sheol. How can *any that* is dead go before Him, that power whereby he was raised? There are last that are first, and younger that have become first-born. For though Manasseh was first-born, how could it be that Ephraim should take the birthright? And if the second born was set before him, how much rather shall the Lord and Creator prevent *all* in His Resurrection!

8. Lo! John as a herald declares that he is later, though he was elder-born; for he said, “Behold a man cometh after me, and yet He was before me.” For how could he be before Him, that Power in Whom he preached? For everything that comes to pass because of *another* thing, is after *that other* even though it *seem* to be before. For the cause which called it *into being*, is elder *than it* and before *it* in all things.

9. The cause of Adam was elder than *all* creatures, which were made for him, for to him even to Adam He had respect continually, the Creator even while he was creating. Thus though Adam as yet was not, he was elder than *all* creatures. How much more then, my Lord, must this Thy manhood be elder, which in Thy Godhead is, from eternity with Him that begat Thee! To Thee *be* praise and through Thee to Thy Father from us all!

10. To Thee *be* praise for Thou art the first, in Thy Godhead and in Thy manhood! For even though Elijah was first to go up, he was not able to prevent Him, for whose sake he was taken up. For his type depended on Thy verity: and even though the types apparently are before Thy fulfilment, it is before them secretly. Creatures were before Adam; he was before them because for his sake they were made.

11. O my Lord, work for me this resurrection, not of Thy compulsion but of Thy love. For Thy compulsion gives life to sinners also: Iscariot would rather again choose for himself the death of Sheol, than the life of Gehenna. Work for me then the resurrection that is of Thy mercy; and even though Thy justice permits not, let there be occasion for Thy grace. This only let it remember for me, that in it I have sought refuge.

### Hymn XXXIX.

1. There have come to me ransomers from among the saints, but none has plundered me like the Son of Mary. For lo! Elijah brought a dead man to life; and even though he himself escaped from my hands, yet had I consolation after him, for the dead man whom he quickened, I carried off from him. By Elisha son of Shaphat, I was beaten *as* with rods, for he brought two dead men to life. By one staff I in turn bore away both the prophet and the dead whom he had raised. *R., Blessed is He Who cleft the tombs of Sheol by His voice!*

2. I feared him even Gehazi when I saw, him lay the staff upon the youth. The thief took the staff away and returned; Elisha came and bowed himself; laid himself low as the child and raised himself up, and walked hither and thither. I marvelled at the new mysteries which I saw there, which restored but one youth to life. It was well with me *then* when those were *but* mysteries, and not now when the dead have rebelled and conquered me.

3. Moses when I saw the mighty splendour upon his face, I feared him: yet not according to what I feared befel it me. Nisan in Sheol he caused to spring for me; for a pasture, a pasture of corpses, of six hundred thousand fell.—This lowly and despised whom I contemned, has healed the sick and the diseased: to others He has multiplied bread, but our bread *even* ours from our mouths He snatches.

4. A mighty feast there was in Sheol, when I swallowed up Korah and his company. A great delight Satan made for me, when he made strife among the Levites. A fount of milk and honey, made he flow for me in a dry place, when the congregation of transgressors went down to Sheol.—Lo! the righteous have lived and come forth: Moses sent down the living thither, but Jesus has revived and brought up the dead.

5. It was well with me then, in the day of the zealous, those in whose swords I had delight. Phinehas the zealous pierced and gave me, on the head of his spear *for* my delight, Zimri and Cozbi both together; on the head of his lance he presented *them* to me. To whom then were there ever two fatted oxen, offered on the head of a spear?—But instead of Cozbi, daughter of princes, the daughter of Jairus has Jesus rescued from my hands.

6. The censer of Aaron caused me to fear, for he stood between the dead and the living and conquered me. The Cross causes me to fear more exceedingly, which has rent open the graves of Sheol. The Crucified Whom on it I slew, now by Him am I slain. Not very great is his reproach, who is overcome by a warrior in arms. Worse to me *is* my reproach than my torment, in that by a crucified man my strength has been overcome.

7. The lance of Phinehas again has caused me to fear, for by the slaughter he wrought with it he hindered the pestilence. The lance guarded the tree of life, it made me glad and made me sad; it hindered Adam from life, and it hindered death from the people. But the lance that pierced Jesus, by it I have suffered; He is pierced and I groan. There came out from Him water and blood; Adam washed and lived and returned to Paradise.

8. The Sadducees were *as* a mouth for me, and disputed with Him after my mind, that there is no rising of the dead at all. Jesus answered them in a saying, which I alone understood; He spake aloud the hateful word and saddened me, “I am the God of him even of Abraham, and God is not

*the God of the dead.*” It was well with me then these were *but* words, and He had not *yet* showed me the life of the dead indeed.

9. Jesus son of Nun, slew thirty kings, and filled the graves and pits for me; he laid waste Jericho and filled Sheol. But this Jesus who is come, has wasted the graves of *their* dead, and has filled the cities of the upper world. Wherefore thus when lo! they are like in their names, are they unlike in their doings? *That* gave me the body of Achor, but *this* snatched from me the body of Lazarus.

10. Moses trod down that Egyptian, with his meekness he mingled justice. Whence has this new law sprung for me, “If one smite thee on thy cheek, turn to him thy other cheek, and see that thou hate him not?” Instead of the strong man of zeal who trod down and slew, a new man of mercy has risen for us. Samuel hewed Agag in pieces, but Jesus healed the paralytic.

11. Tender mercy which had as it were waxed less, lo! in this time has waxed great. And moreover it was *then* detested, lest *through* it one should transgress the commandment; for without mercy Saul and Ahab, were slain because they desired, to have mercy on the evil ones, and they were not slain who were deserving of punishment. In my time Jesus has changed this, by giving life to all men and having compassion on His slayers.

12. I remember Samson that lion’s whelp, who brake and gave me the pillars of Philistia; also that mighty man of valor Abner son of Ner, took for me that fleet wild roe, Asahel son of Zeruah, and smote him and cast him on the ground. Benaiah in the holy temple slew Jacob, justly as it is written.—Because justice has restrained her sword, henceforth penitents shall rejoice in grace.

13. David measured the Edomites, by line and line and destroyed them. How merciful then art Thou, O Son of David! David’s justice was twofold, when he put to death two lines, and saved *one* full line alive.—Lo! the Son of David teaches us, “Forgive thy brother even unto seventy times seven.” There justice was measured; but here clemency is without measure.

14. Of zeal and strength David was possessed; the lion and the bear he slew together. He left that mighty lion and hasted, to meet the strong giant. With a stone he quenched his light, and his soul left him and he perished. But Jesus cried to the young man that was dead “Young man!” Even the dead to Him are sleepers. That young man He brought to life and rescued from me. The despised swine He drowned for me in the sea.

15. The Levites slew because of the calf, their fathers and their brethren. Jephthah by his own hands was ready to slay his daughter. The King of Moab on the wall, was sacrificing his first-born son: In presence of his sword I rejoice.—By Jesus the sword was blunted; yea the fever was rebuked, the sister of Sheol: the mother-in-law of Simeon was healed, but the fame of her healing smote Sheol with pain.

16. This Jesus though he be the Son of the Just One, all that He preaches is grace. But to me this His grace is torment. Envy is the cause of pleasure to us, for Envy at the beginning mixed for me the first shedding of blood. Why is it guilty in the sight of the Son of Mary Who is come commanding, “Thou shalt not be angry against thy brother?” He has taken away the sword from between brethren; while in the sword of Cain I had pleasure from the beginning.

17. An honeycomb in the midst of the skeleton, Samson found—was it then a mystery? This Jesus has multiplied for us mysteries. Amid billows of mysteries have I fallen, which show me in parable the life of the dead, in all mysteries and in all types. “Out of the eater came forth meat” was Samson’s parable. But to me it has befallen contrariwise; for the eater has come forth to me out of the meat, for out of Adam lo! *has come* the Son of Adam Who has destroyed me.

18. Just men likewise have robbed me manifold, when by them was preached the rising of the dead: but they mingled with my sorrows great consolation. By the prayer of Asa and Hezekiah, I was fed upon the dead, yea I feasted upon corpses. Elijah slew the prophets of Baal and gave them to me, who on the bread of Jezebel had waxed fat. The righteous has constrained me to devour, but Jesus has compelled me to disgorge all that I had eaten.

19. I was afraid because of the sprinkled blood, which Moses sprinkled on every door; for though the blood of the slain, it was that which saved the living. Blood from of old I feared not, save that blood that was on the doors, and this moreover that was on the Tree. The blood of the slain is a delight, and is as sweet perfume: but the blood of Jesus is to me a terror; for whenever I come and smell His blood, the savour of life that lurks therein terrifies me.

20. Priests and pontiffs, anointed men and kings, who foreshow types of the rising of the dead, have never triumphed through their crosses. Crowns and diadems were *set on them*; and when I engaged in struggles with them, I was smitten *sometimes* and *sometimes* also I smote. But this carpenter’s son with his crown of thorns, has humbled and cast down my pride, in His shame and His dying: Sheol has seen Him, yea, and fled from before Him.

21. When the sea saw Moses and fled, it feared because of his rod, and likewise because of his glory. His splendour and his rod and his power, the rock also saw which was cleft. But Sheol when her graves were rent, what saw she in Him even in Jesus?—Instead of splendour He put on the paleness of the dead and made her tremble. And if His paleness when slain slew her, how shall she be able to endure, when He comes to raise the dead, in His Glory!

## Hymn XL.

1. The Evil One perceived his great humiliation, and boasted himself in the presence of his servants: he spoke great words to persuade them and said: “The knowledge which I possess, little of it is by nature; and much of it, yea all of it, is by learning. I to myself have been master, and have exercised my understanding. Without a teacher I have learnt all; I have armed myself with every weapon, and have won by it the crown which I desired among mankind.” *R., Blessed is He that has come and undone the snares of sin!*

2. Among the Pharisees I clothed myself in hatred, that I might contend with Him, even the Son of Mary. Wrath like a bow rained shafts; boldness railed upon Him; fury rebelled against Him; ingratitude slandered Him; envy and jealousy in *their* wrath, strove with Him; and blasphemy took

up stones. The Healer came in and stood among the sick, and I stirred up the diseased in contention against Him.

3. Because He fell not under reproach, it was in questions that I took refuge. Many times did I stir up occasions, but I saw that my falsehood was rebuked, and my impudence was made known, and my vain babbling was despised. To the windings of contention I betook myself. Everywhere that I disputed with Him, all my labor was as chaff, and the word of truth scattered it on every side.

4. I saw that there is a warrior and a mighty lord, in cunning within man: [and the snake that *is* without makes it fear.] His lusts within him is coiled continually; his jealousy hisses like a serpent. Deadly desires he begets, and of a fever he is in dread. Command as a drug, is able to quell derision, which smites unto destruction. It is love that avails to break the sting secret and bitter of the tongue.

5. Who is more foolish than men, who rather than for himself cares for his dwelling! The garments that *are* in his chest he examines daily, and a worm is lurking in his members. The rents that are in his clothes he mends, but a rent is made in his soul. His house is lighted up but his heart is dark. He shuts up his senses but opens his windows. He closes his door and guards his money; his mouth is open and the treasure of his thought *is* stolen.

6. The fool makes more of his beasts than of himself, for he cares for his possessions rather than for his soul. Good seed he sows in his ground; in his heart he sows tares. His understanding is thrown open and cast down; but at the fences of his vineyard he labours. He chooses and plants vine-plants; while his mind is a vine of the vines of Sodom. He keeps off the wild ass from his sowing; but the wild boar of the wood devours his thoughts.

7. I am a furnace to the sons of men, and in me are tried their counsels. Therefore is it lawful to me to weave deceit. I teach the Chaldean art: by reason of the true things that befall, the false things are believed. In the midst of Egypt I closed *men's* eyes; I showed insects, *men* thought they were though they were not. By closing *men's* eyes I teach the signs of the Zodiac, though they are not in the heavens.

8. By reason of my swiftness I fly and see, and I show beforehand to the soothsayer; they who err concerning me count me a prophet. But sometimes I make bold; and I ask that for an hour, secret things be revealed to me, that true men may be proved by me even as Job, likewise deceivers as Saul. For the one I revealed his sorcery; and for the other I purged his truth and he was praised.

## Hymn XLI.

1. The Evil One said, "I fear Him, even Jesus, lest He destroy my arts. For lo! I am thousands of years old, and never have I had repose. I have seen nothing established, that I have turned from and left. There has come One making the unchaste pure: there is sorrow since He has destroyed

all that I had built. Many have been my labours and my teachings, that I might cover all creation with all evils. *R., Blessed is He Who came and laid bare the wiles of the Crafty One!*

2. I matched my speed with the swift, and I outstripped them: I waged war; the tumult of multitudes was armour to me. In the tumult of the people I rejoiced, because it gave me ready room, for grievous is the onslaught of multitudes. By the strength of multitudes I raised a great mountain, a tower I stretched unto heaven. If they waged war with the Height, how *much more* shall they conquer Him whose warfare is on earth?

3. As time serves and as help offers, I wage war, but cautiously. The people used to hear that God is one; they made for themselves a multitude of gods. And when they saw the Son of God, they made haste to the One God, that as though confessing God they might deny Him, and as though in zeal might flee from Him; so that they in all times perverse shall be found to be without God.

4. Lo! I am ancient of many years, and no infant have I ever rejected. The burden of children have I oftentimes borne, so that from the beginning I might make them acquire habits that are not goodly, that their faults might grow up with them. But there are foolish fathers, who do not crush the seed that I have sown in their sons; and there are *some* who like good husbandmen, root up faults from the mind of their children.

5. As with a chain I have bound men with sloth, and they sat in idleness. I have drawn away their senses from all good things; their eyes from reading, their mouths from singing praise, their understanding from doctrine. For hurtful and vain fables how eager *are they*; for empty talk *how* ready! If the word of life fell among them, they either thrust it from them, or rose and went forth from its presence.

6. How many Satans are there among men! and me even me alone every man curses. For lo! the anger of men—it is a devil that grinds him every day. Demons are like wayfarers, who depart if they are compelled: but against anger though all righteous men adjure, it is not rooted out from its place. Instead of pernicious envy, every one hates a weak and wretched demon.

7. The enchanter is put to shame with the wizard, who every day tames serpents. The viper that is within him is out of his power; for the lust that is within him he tames not. Secret sin like an asp, when it breathes on him he is scorched. Even when he takes the viper through his cunning, delusion smites him secretly. He lulls the snake by his incantations: he wakens against himself mighty wrath by his incantations.

8. I set *my* stings and I sat and waited: who is long-enduring *as I* with all? Beside the patient-spirited I sat, and step by step I bewitched him, so that he came unto despair. Him who was ashamed of his transgressions, habits subdued him: little by little I mastered him, till he became under the yoke, till he came in to it and was used to it and did not even wish to go forth.

9. I perceived and saw that the long-enduring is he that can subdue all. At the time when I conquered Adam, he was *but* one. I left him till he had begotten *children*, and I sought for myself another task, for idleness is not to my taste. I counted the sands of the sea, that thereby I might make my spirit patient, and might prove my memory whether it would suffice, for the sons of men when they were multiplied. Before they were multiplied, I proved them in many things.



10. The servants of the Evil One disputed with him, and they refuted his words with their rejoinder. "But lo! Elisha brought the dead to life, and conquered death in the upper chamber, and brought to life the widow's son. Lo! now is he in bondage in Sheol." But because the reasoning of the Evil One was very powerful, with their own words he refuted their words. "How has Elisha been overcome? Lo! in Sheol he brought the dead to life by his bones."

11. "If Elisha, who was *of small power*, was great in might in the midst of Sheol, and if so be he brought one dead to life therein, how many dead then will be raised therein, by the death of Jesus the mighty! Hence even from this consider ye, how much greater therefore is Jesus, than we my comrades. For lo! by His craftiness He deceived you, and ye sufficed not to determine His greatness when ye compared Him to the prophets.

12. "Your consolations are *of small power*," said the Evil One to them of his company. "For He Who brought Lazarus to life though dead, how can Death suffice against Him? And if Death conquers Him, it is that He wills to be subdued unto him; and if so be He wills to be subdued, fear ye greatly, for He dies not in vain. He has wrought in us great terror, lest when dying He may enter in to raise Adam to life."

13. Death looked forth from within his den, and marvelled when he saw our Lord crucified, and he said "O raiser of the dead to life where *art* thou! Thou shalt be to me *for meat*, instead of the sweet Lazarus, whose savour lo! it is still in my mouth. Jairus' daughter shall come and see this Thy cross. The widow's son gazes on Thee. A tree caught Adam for me: blessed be the Cross which has caught for me the Son of David!"

14. Death opened his mouth and said, "Hast Thou not heard, O Son of Mary, how Moses was great and excellent above all? became a God and wrought *the works* of God? slew the first-born and saved the first-born? turned aside the pestilence from the living? To the mount I went up with Moses, and He Whose glory be blessed gave him to me from hand to hand. For however great the son of Adam becomes, dust he is and to his dust returns, because he is of the ground."

15. Satan came with his servants, that he might see our Lord cast into Sheol, and might rejoice with Death his Counsellor; and he saw Him sorrowful and mourning, because of the dead who at the voice of the Firstborn, lived and came forth thence even from Sheol. The Evil One arose to console Death his kinsman. "Thou hast not destroyed as much as thou wast able. Even as Jesus is in thy midst, to thy hand shall come they that have lived and that live.

16. "Open for us to see Him, yea and mock Him: let us answer and say, 'Where is Thy power? For lo! three days have passed for Him, and let us say to Him, O Thou of three days, Who didst raise Lazarus, when he had lain four days, raise Thine own self.'" Death opened the gates of Sheol, and there shone from it the splendour of the face of our Lord; and like the men of Sodom they were smitten; they groped and sought the gate of Sheol, which they had lost.

## Hymn XLII.

1. The Evil One wailed “Where now, is there a place for me to flee to from the righteous? I stirred up Death to slay the Apostles, that I might be safe from their blows. By their deaths now more exceedingly am I cruelly beaten. The Apostle whom I slew in India is before me in Edessa: he is here wholly and also there. I went there, there was he: here and there I have found him and been grieved.” *R., Blessed is the might that dwells in the hallowed bones!*

2. The bones that merchantmen carried, or was it then that they carried him? For lo! they made gain each of the other. But for me what did they profit me? yea they profited each by each, while to me from both of them there was damage. O that one would show me that bag of Iscariot, for by it I acquired strength! The bag of Thomas has slain me, for the secret strength that dwells in it tortures me.

3. Moses the chosen carried the bones, in faith as for gain. And if he a great prophet believed, that there is benefit in bones, the merchant did well to believe, and did well to call himself merchant. That merchant made gain, and waxed great and reigned. His storehouse has made me very poor: his storehouse has been opened in Edessa, and has enriched the great city with benefit.

4. At this storehouse of treasure I was amazed, for small was its treasure at first; and though no man took from it, poor was the spring of its wealth. But when multitudes have come round it, and plundered it and carried off its riches, according as it is plundered, so much the more does its wealth increase. For a pent-up spring, if one seeks it out, when deeply pierced it flows forth mightily and abounds.

5. It is evident that Elisha was a fountain in a thirsting people: and because they that thirsted sought him not out, his outflow was not great. But when Naaman sought him out, he abounded and poured forth healing. The fountain into the midst of a fountain, he took him and plunged him; for in the river he cleansed the leper. Jesus the Sea of benefits, into Siloam sent the blind man whose eyes were opened.

6. Gehazi, with the staff that brought to life the dead, was unable to raise the child. And how could the famous prophet have been brought up by the sorceress? We were they that mocked Saul, for instead of one demon whom he questioned, two demons came up and mocked him. From the bones of Elisha learn also of *the bones of Samuel*; for though *Elisha's* bones brought to life the dead, the sorcerers could not bring up the dead, the living and sacred bones.

7. And though I asked this petition, He who gives all gave it not to me. For though the demons were troubled, by the bones of some priest, or magician or wizard, of Chaldean or soothsayer, yet I was aware that this was but mockery. In two ways I cause *men* to err: either I make the Apostles to lie, or I make my Apostles like the Apostles.

8. The party of the demons lo! it is spoiled; the party of the devils endures stripes: though there be none that lifts the rod openly, the demons cry out with pain; though there be none that fetters and binds, the spirits hang bound. This silent judgment, which is calm and still, and works not even by questioning, the one power that is all sufficing, lo! it dwells in the bones of this second Elisha.

9. He gave judgment unto His Twelve, that they might judge the twelve Tribes. And if so be that they are to judge the sons of the great Abraham, this is then no great matter, that they shall judge demons now. And unless they make the crucifiers fulfil the judgment that is to be, by our judgment shall they be proved. For worse than we did they cry out, in presence of the Apostles the judges of the tribes.

10. For a wolf was Saul the Apostle, and on the blood of the sheep I reared him; and he waxed strong and became a singular wolf. But nigh to Damascus suddenly, the wolf was changed into a sheep. He said that the Apostles, are to judge Angels; for by the Angels he signified the priest as it is written. If so be then they are thus powerful, woe to the demons from the strokes of their bones!

## Hymn LII.

### CONCERNING Satan and Death.

1. I heard Death and Satan, as they disputed, which was the more powerful, among men. *R., To Thee be glory, Son of the Shepherd of All, Who deliveredst His flock from the secret wolves that devoured it, the Evil One and Death!*—2. Death showed his power, that he conquers all; Satan showed his guile, that he makes all to sin.—3. *Death*, To thee, O Evil One, none hearkens save he that wills: to me he that wills and he that wills not, even to me they come.—4. *Satan*, Thine, O Death, is but the force of tyranny: mine are snares and nets of subtlety.—5. *D.*, Hear, O Evil One, that who so is subtle breaks off thy yoke: but none is there that is able to escape my yoke.—6. *S.*, Thou, Death, on him that is sick provest thy might: but I over them that are whole, am exceeding powerful.—7. *D.*, The Evil One prevails not over all those that revile him: but for me he that has cursed me and he that curses me, come into my hands.—8. *S.*, Thou, Death, from God, hast gotten thy might: I alone by none am I helped, when I lead *men* to sin.—9. *D.*, Thou, O Evil-One, like a weakling: while like a king I exercise my dominion.—10. *S.*, Thou art a fool, O Death, not to know how great am I: who suffice to capture free will, the sovereign power.—11. *D.*, Thou, O Evil One, like a thief, lo! thou goest round: I like a lion break in pieces and fear not.—12. *S.*, To thee, O Death, none does service or worship: to me kings do service of sacrifice as to God.—13. *D.*, On Death there are many that call, as on a kind Power: on thee, O Evil One, none has called or calls.—14. *S.*, Markest thou not this, O Death, how many there are: who in sundry fashions call on me and make oblation?—15. *D.* Hated is thy name, O Satan, nor canst thou clear it: thy name every one curses, hide thy reproach.—16. *S.*, Thine ear, O Death, has waxed dull, that thou hearest not: how against thee all men groan, conceal thyself.—17. *D.*, My face is shown to the world, for I am guileless: not like thee who without guile canst not abide.—18. *S.*, Thou hast not in aught surpassed me for it is true: that thou art hateful as I to the sons of men.—19. *D.*, Of me all men are afraid as of a lord: but as for thee they hate thee as the Evil One.—20. *S.*, For thee, O Death,

they hate thy name, and also thy work: my name they hate but my delights they greatly love.—21. *D.*, To bitterness of teeth is turned, this thy sweetness: penitence of soul cleaves ever unto thy lusts.—22. *S.*, Sheol is hated because in her is no repentance: a pit that swallows and closes on all movements.—23. *D.*, Sheol is a gulf wherein whoso falls shall rise again: sin is hated because it cuts off the hope of man.—24. *S.*, Though I dislike penitents, I give place *for repentance*: thou cuttest off hope from the sinner who dies in his sin.—25. *D.*, It was of thee that at first his hope was cut off: for he whom thou hast not caused to sin dies happily.—26. Blessed *is* He who raised against each other those cursed servants: that we might see them as they have seen us and mocked at us.—27. This that we have seen of them is a pledge, my brethren: of what we shall see of them hereafter when we rise again.

### Hymn LIII.

1. Come, let us hear how they contend for victory: the guilty ones who never have conquered, nor will conquer.—2. Death said unto the Evil One, In the end the victory is mine: for Death is master of the close, as a conqueror.—3. *Satan*, This were to be Death indeed, wert thou able: to bring to death a living man, by means of lusts.—4. *D.*, Lo! I who behold the dead, both good and bad: the righteous who despise thee, O Evil One, me they despise not.—5. *S.*, This dying of the body, is sleep for a time: think not, O Death, that thou art Death, who art as a shadow.—6. *D.*, Thee, O Evil One, the just have conquered, yea will conquer: but these that have conquered thee, lo! I conquer.—7. *S.*, Even this that thou bringest to death the just, is not of thyself: because of Adam whom I conquered, they drink this cup.—8. *D.*, Lo! Sheol is full of the men of Sodom, and the Assyrians: and the giants who *were* in the flood, who is like me?—9. *S.*, These, O Death, all of them, by me were slain: I am he that caused them to sin so that they perished.—10. *D.*, Joseph who conquered thee I conquered, O Satan: in the chamber he conquered thee but I conquered, and cast him into the tomb.—11. *S.*, Moses who conquered thee, O Death, by sprinkling of blood: he conquered thee in Egypt, but at the rock, who conquered him?—12. *D.*, Elijah who feared thee not, O Satan: fled before Jezebel's face, because he feared me.—13. *S.*, Aaron who withstood thee, O Death, with smoke of incense: to him I gave earrings of gold: and he fashioned a calf.—14. *D.*, Thou wentest down to contend with Job, and he conquered thee and came up: but I, after he had conquered thee, then conquered him.—15. *S.*, David who by his sackcloth stayed that pestilence: him on the house-top I conquered, who had conquered Goliath.—16. *D.*, Jehu who destroyed the house of Baal, the temple of the Evil One: was unable to destroy Sheol, the stronghold of my realm.—17. *S.*, Solomon who snatched from thy mouth, a child by *his* judgment: him in his old age I made a builder of idol-altars.—18. *D.*, Samuel who in *respect of* gold scorned thee, O Satan:



him I conquered, the conqueror, who conquered bribes.—19. *S.*, Samson who in *respect of* the lion's whelp, scorned thee, O Death: through Delilah, frail vessel, I yoked him to the mill.—20. *D.*, Josiah from his childhood despised thee, Evil One: but me not even in his old age, could he withstand.—21. *S.*, Hezekiah withstood thee, Death, when he overcame the bound *of life*: I misled him and he neglected the miracle, and showed his treasures.—22. *D.*, John who conquered thee, Evil One, and absolved and baptized: I extinguished that torch, which had disclosed thee.—23. *S.*, Simon overcame thee, when he brought to life that blessed woman: in a woman he overcame thee and by a woman I overcame him and made him deny.—24. *S.*, Apostles and prophets with one voice, curse thee, O Death: "Where is the victory of Death, and the sting of Sheol?"—25. Thy Lord in Sheol thou hast shut up, O cursed servant: God hates thee and also man, hold then thy peace.—26. *S.*, It was the will of Him who gives life to all, that shut him in Sheol: it was thou that called Him to this, when thou madest Adam sin.—27. O comrade of Nabal who in the wilderness reproached his lord: abhorred be thy mouth which said to Him, "Fall down and worship me!"

### Hymn LIV.

1. Hear, O Freedom, the dispute of two servants: how they are convicted by each other, that they are powerless.—2. *R.*, *To Thee be glory by Whose humiliation Adam was exalted: and by Whose death he was raised, and regained Eden!*—3. If then the Evil One overcome thee, great is the shame: Death his comrade has convicted him, as being weak.—4. And if again Death subdue thee, lo! what reproach: for the Evil One his comrade derides him, as but a shadow.—5. Their dispute is for thee a mirror, wherein thou mayest see: that they both are but as chaff, before thy breath.—6. Yea and Prophets and Apostles, in their promises: assure thee that they like flowers, shall fade at the rising.—7. *S.*, Thou, Death, art he whom they hate, the quick and dead: for every combination thou dissolvest, and destroyest.—8. *D.*, It is not open death that kills, O Satan: thy death which is secret kills the sons of men.—9. *S.*, My name is not hateful as thine, for the angel: showed himself in Satan's likeness to Balaam on the way.—10. *D.*, How fit is this thy name, O Satan: who hast erred and made unwary Adam err, from the way!—11. *S.*, Wander not like one ignorant, and lose thy cause: dispute, O Death, if thou are competent, for replying.—12. *D.*, I know that thou art wily, O Satan: so that thou out of sand canst twist a snare.—13. *S.*, Thy disputing, Death, is ended: for he who is worsted: when his words fail and are ended, begins to rail.—14. *D.*, Among all I am conqueror, and by thee am I worsted? Let Adam persuade thee whom I have overcome, O Satan!—15. *S.*, I am he who bound Adam, and cast him before thee: the mighty man whom my wiles had bound, thou didst come and subdue.—16. *D.*, I am he who have been crowned anew, with a diadem in the world: for Adam, chief of the mighty, I hold captive in Sheol.—17. *S.*, I killed him by secret death, even Adam when he sinned: thou, Death, hast slain one that was dead, killed by me.—18. *D.*, In thy desire to conquer, Evil One, thou hast made thyself hated: for thou

art Death as well as Satan, and this *seems* a little thing to thee.—19. *S.*, Thou hast then been silenced, Death, as a weakling: for neither in words nor in deeds, hast thou strength to stand.—20. *D.*, It is for thy evil thou conquerest, O Evil One, if thou discernest: thy crown is wholly of shame, if thou perceivest.—21. I shall be defeated and thou shalt be cursed, O Satan: it is well for me to be ignorant, and not mischievous.—22. Blessed be the Just One who divided them, though they were quite of one mind: Blessed be the Good One who made us of one mind, when we were divided.—23. I will overcome the Evil One through Thy forgiveness, O All-Merciful: and I shall overcome death through Thy Resurrection, O All-Life-giver!



### Hymn LV.

1. Lo! the Evil One reproached Death, and was in turn reproached: from each and to each and against each, *were* their taunts.—2. *R.*, *To Thee be glory, Son of the Lord of All, Who diedst for all: for He was raised to give life to all, in the day of His Coming!*—3. *S.*, Jonah who conquered thee, and returned back from Sheol, became my advocate *in asking*, why sinners were spared?—4. *D.*, Slander not, O Evil One, the son of Amittai: he showed a face of anger, that they might praise thee more.—5. *S.*, Quite powerless is all thy persuasion, O tyrant Death: for there pleases me nothing, of all thou hast said.—6. *D.*, For when was the word of truth pleasing to thee? A gulf is between thee and truthfulness, O lying one.—7. I am righteous all my days, with nought to repent: I am he that rescues from thee the sons of men.—8. *S.*, Proclaim thy repentance, Death, thou art well come: lo! Saul also among the prophets, great cause of scorn.—9. If thou, Death, be justified, then for myself: I cut not off hope, likewise, of repentance.—10. *D.*, No idol with my Lord have I made, O hater of thy Lord! lo! thou by dead idols, slayest the living.—11. *S.*, That thou, Death, art half of me, I know, and I half of thee: if half of me repents, it repents, but I marvel.—12. *D.*, Thy partner am I in share, but not in sin: mine are the slain and thine the slayers, whom thou madest sin.—13. *S.*, My craftiness weeps for itself, when I dispute with thee: my wiles mourn over me, when I meet thee.—14. *D.*, Workers of witchcraft and soothsayers, with all *their* offences: the fire that thou kindledst in the world, in Sheol I have quenched.—15. *S.*, Thou penitent who strainest out gnats, and swallowest the just: the chaste shall rend thee, who cry, from within thy belly.—16. *D.*, It is the treasure-house *where* I keep all the righteous: their resurrection threatens *ill* to thee, who didst persecute them.—17. *S.*, The greedy one who carries all creatures, in his bowels: lo! he casts up to me that I am robbed, of my possessions.—18. *D.*, Before the stroke lament not, for it has not *yet* reached *thee*: the day will come when thou shalt cry out, and I shall hear and rejoice.—19. The fire will come that shall strip off thee thy very skin: as by the potsherd thou didst strip the skin of Job.—20. *D.*, The savour of sloth begins, as if to hover on me; it is then a dream that I ceased, for a short space.—21. It was not that words failed me, and therefore I was silent: it is for the time I grieve, that has passed idly.—22. The hurt *done* by thy speech is very great: would I had not

heard it! For my whole mind is intent upon my work.—23. This humankind that is lost, was undone by wandering thought: slothfulness, with negligence, brought it under yoke.—24. The madness of desire bid for wealth, and bought it: contention with boastfulness, were the sureties.—25. With persistence for strength, I wage my war: and if I neglect but a little, my sway is naught.—26. By continual dropping, I clean the rocks: for continual dropping can dissolve even a mountain.—27. Habit even over nature, becomes master: it trains and leads even lions, as beasts of burden.—28. Habit, repose, and increase, with persistence; by these is freedom conquered, though stubborn above all.—29. If its will be firmly set, it breaks the fetters; but if lax, a fragile net, can capture it.—30. If so be that Freedom shouts, we are scattered: but if she be silent we gather together, to mock at her.—31. Let us cease from much speaking, lest it lead to much sloth: with one mind let us assail the wall, and lo! it is broken down.—32. *S.*, Go thou and see to diseases, and I to snares: for to me sins and to thee pestilences, are great solace.—33. And even though I have paused, I have not paused from my cares: for my will at no time rests, but is ready.

### Hymn LVI.

1. With Freedom is thy struggle, O Evil One: it can cast on thee a muzzle, if it so please.—2. *R.*, *To Thee be glory in whose victory we have gained strength: and in whose resurrection we defy even Death itself!*—3. Lo! again these two exposed each other, how weak both are: Death reminded the Evil One of thy mightiness (*O Freedom*).—4. Thy fire is in thy nest, O Death, and thou perceivest not: the fate of the departed, to thee is overthrow.—5. Lo! Death and the Evil One proclaim thy mightiness (*O Freedom*): yea, the Evil One calls to mind thy faith.—6. If then these that were against thee are on thy side: this is a great thing that thy persecutors have become thy heralds,—7. *D.*, I confess, O Evil One, that as usury: I lay up the King's treasures, till His Coming.—8. *S.*, I, O Death, rather deny that this belongs to God: this treasure of subtlety, which I have stored.—9. *D.*, Thy coinage is fraudulent, then, O Satan: that into the treasuries of God, is not received.—10. *S.*, A new coinage do I coin, in kingly wise: lo! my merchantmen bring loss, into the world.—11. God created everything out of nothing: and I created great sin out of nothing—12. *D.*, Closed and bound be thy mouth, Evil One, who art thus bold: to set thyself, lo! in comparison with the Creator.—13. *S.*, To me, O Death, it is lawful to dare and speak: thy tongue, even thine, is a slave, and under fear.—14. *D.*, A gulf is henceforth between us, O Satan: for madly against thy Lord, lo! thou assailest.—15. *S.*, Wherefore doubttest thou, O Death, of our concord? Be to us comrade and member: and lo! we reign.—16. Come, draw we our pair of swords, against mankind: I secretly, thou openly, and lo! we end them.—17. Sin and Sheol they too gave counsel to those two: saying "If ye be divided, ye are undone."—18. See the waters how if dispersed, they run low: but if gathered they gain strength, and thus ye likewise.—19. If divided ye perish, as the feeble: but yoked together ye reign, as the mighty.—20. Love melts down many, as in a furnace: and makes

one powerful mass, that overcomes all.—21. In it are wisdom and cunning, and force and power: it is greater far than an image of sixty cubits.—22. Be reconciled, let us assemble and go, against that party: which if it be at one can never be defeated.—23. These things the troublers discoursed, and gathered and came: Thy day, Lord, will gather them, into Gehenna.—24. Through Thy mercy, Lord, will I worship Thee, when I have risen: at Thy trumpet I will praise Thy Son, when I am purged.

### Hymn LVII.

1. Listen, my brethren, to Death, mocking the Evil One: that caused the head of our race to sin, and its mother.—2. *R.*, *To Thee be glory that by Thy humiliation, Satan is subdued: and that Thy abasement has exalted Adam, who was abased.*—3. *D.*, Thy great nakedness shall be seen, by the sons of Adam; as thou mockedst his nakedness, when thou madest him sin.—4. Eve will cease from that serpent, and rail at thee: for thou, O Dragon, wast he that beguiled her simpleness.—5. Abel will see him, even, Cain, who has come to thee: the disciple of his wrath will blame his cursed master.—6. *S.*, Noah who conquered the flood, as it were death: by the mouth of Ham I laughed at, when wine overcame him.—7. *D.*, Noah was not harmed, but thy garment, wherewith thou clothedst him: even cursings, he put on, and became a slave.—8. *S.*, Lot who overcame anger which is, thy likeness, Death: to his daughters I gave such counsels, as were pleasing to me.—9. *D.*, And Lot's wife who was thy vessel hearkened, to thy counsel: may half of thee be dried up, as thy whole vessel was dried up!—10. Gehenna be overturned, upon thy head: as thy malice overturned Sodom, its dwellers!—11. Floods of fire be stirred against thee, in the resurrection: who against Moses and Elijah, didst stir the people!—12. Let the just mock thee at the last, and Joseph rejoice! whose brethren mocked him, set on by thee!—13. Let vapour of smoke come in, and choke thy senses: as the waters of the sea choked, the senses of the wicked!—14. Let chaste women also mock thee, by whose counsel: the daughters of Midian mocked, the foolish people!—15. Flame be kindled on thy head, for Samson's sake: for by a woman thou shavedst his locks, that lion of strength!—16. *S.*, Saul whom I conquered by envy, by witchcraft conquered thee: for he asked for and brought up Samuel, out of his grave.—17. *D.*, Slander not the living dead, for he came not up: thou wast he that came up in the phantom for thou wast worthy.—18. Let the commandment hang thee over the flame, thou Evil One! for by thee they hanged Absalom, upon a tree.—19. In the fire mayst thou see thyself humbled, among vile women! for Solomon by thee was degraded, among profane women.—20. Justice be measured to thee, as thou didst inflame her! even Jezebel who devoured the prophets, thou kindledst her.—21. In fire mayst thou justly burn, who madest them drunken! the two whom Elijah burnt up, when they went up and assailed *him*.—22. On thee also be coals heaped! may he see and rejoice: that Naboth in whom thou heapedst, a pile of stones!—23. Be thou clad in scorn in the day of judgment, before all beholders! who clothedst



Gehasi in a leprosy, by means of thy theft.—24. With lightning for a dart be thou pierced, O Satan! who in the heart of Josiah, didst fix *thy* darts.—25. Sink thou in the dregs of Gehenna, O Satan! who didst sink Jeremiah in the mire of the pit.—26. Daniel escaped from the pit, whither thou didst cast him: may he have comfort in seeing thee, in the furnace for ever!—27. Be thy wickedness returned on thy head, Hater of man: as his wickedness was returned on the head, of Haman thy fellow! —28. May the King's Bride mock thee, as did Esther: when thou beseechest her in the judgment-day, to plead for thee!—29. Fire released the righteous ones, whom thou hadst bound: a mighty bond be to thee, the flame of fire!—30. Be thou torn in sunder, and may the seven brothers, see thy defeat: the sons of Shemuni who by thy wolves, were torn in sunder!—31. May fire triumph over thy pate, as thou didst mock: the two heads of Nazarites, sons of the barren!—32. May fire make mock of thy head, for mother and daughter: triumphed over John's head, when thou didst madden them!—33. Flame triumphed over thy head, O Evil One: for on the charges thou didst triumph, over John's head!

### Hymn LVIII.

1. Lo! Death was prompt beforehand, to mock Satan: him who was doomed to become a mockery at the last.—2. *R.*, *Glory to Thee Who by Thy crucifixion, didst conquer the Evil One: and by Thy resurrection gain victory, likewise over Death!*—3. And for our Lord's sake Death spake curses on him: who was the cause of His shame, and crucifixion.—4. *D.*, The fiery pit be thy grave, O Satan: who blasphemedst the Voice from the grave, that rent the graves—5. My Lord I know, and the Son of my Lord, O thou Satan! thou hast denied thy Lord, and crucified the Son of thy Lord.—6. This is the name that fits thee, "Slayer of thy Lord": when He appears Whom thou slewest, He shall slay thee.—7. At thee shall every one shake the head, for by thee the chiefs: shook their heads at Him, the Lord of life.—8. A bruised reed under the feet, of the just shalt thou be: for through thee they put a reed in His hand, Who upholds all.—9. With a crown of thorns was He crowned, to signify: that He took the diadem of the kingdom, of the house of David.—10. With a crown of thorns was He crowned, the King of kings: but He took the diadem of the king, of those that shamed him.—11. In the robes of mockery that they gave him, in those He mocked *them*: for He took the raiment of glory, of priests and kings.—12. To vinegar is thy memory akin, O thou Satan: who didst offer vinegar for the thirst, of the Fount of Life.—13. The hand shall every man lift against thee who strengthenedst the hand that smote Him by Whose hand, all creatures stand.—14. He was smitten by the hand and He cut off the hand, of Caiaphas: the hand of the priesthood is cut off, in the cutting off of the unction.—15. On the pillar again they stretched Him, as for scourging: Him Whose pillar went before, to *guide* their tribes.—16. The pillar on the pillar, He was scourged: He removed Himself from out of Zion, and its fall came.—17. When they put two beams together, to form the Cross: He broke them, even the two staves, the guardians of them.—18. Ezekiel put

together the sticks, the two in one: in the two beams of the Cross, their staves have ceased.—19. The two sticks, as it were wings, bore the people: lo! his two staves were broken, even as his wings.—20. The bosom and wings of the Cross, He opened in mercy: its pinions bowed and bore the nations, to go to Eden.—21. It is akin to the Tree of Life, and unto the son of its stock: it leads its beloved that on its boughs, they may feed on its fruits.—22. Go howl and weep, Evil One, for me and for you: for not one of us shall enter the “Garden of Life.”—23. *S.*, Now that thou hast confessed O Death, come let me tell thee: that all this discourse of thine, to me is idle talk.—24. I will go and watch the snares, which I have set: thou too, Death, fly and look after, all that are sick.—25. Our Lord has brought both to nought, on either hand: the Evil One shall be brought to nought here, and Death hereafter there.

### Hymn LIX.

1. Lo! Death for us on Satan, inflicts vengeance: come let us hear his shame and rejoice, for he rejoiced in our shame.—2. *R.*, *To Thee be glory from Thy flock, from Thee: are subdued both Death and Satan, under Thy Feet!*—3. *D.*, Evil ones shall be hung upright, but thou, head downward: for, reversely, thou crucifiedst, Simon on the tree.—4. *S.*, Touching all else I am silent, Death, for my time wanes: Simon himself conjured me, “Crucify me thus.”—5. Were it the just that cursed me, I had not grieved: the curse of Death unto me, is worse than hell.—6. *D.*, The shame of our Lord I have not spoken of, it is too great for my mouth: that I should weigh and compare His Passion, with Thy torment.—7. Twelve *judgment* thrones shall He set, for His Twelve: for by the twelve tribes thou, even thou, shall be condemned.—8. A halter unbought shalt thou hang thee, O thou Satan: as that Thy disciple hung him, a halter for a price.—9. Haply yon hell in mercy, shall be emptied: and thou shalt dwell there alone, with Thy ministers.—10. Manifold are Thy curses, and how shall I count *them*? Lo! the sum of all thy curses, is on thy members.—11. The evil in the fire shall stab thee, who madest them evil: they shall upbraid thee “wherefore, broughtest thou us hither?”—12. Sinners shall rail against thee, and haply their threats: shall be worse to thee than the torment, of yonder hell.—13. These shall be unto thee there, all of them Satans: as thou hast been to them here, the one Satan.—14. The Watchers shall seize and hurl thee down, calling to mind: how through thee men hurled their Lord, from the height to the depth.—15. All men will run to stone thee, not forgetting that through thee the maddened people ran, to stone their Maker.—16. On thee, Evil One, from all mouths *shall be*, the spitting of wrath: for through thee they spat on Him Whose spittle, gave sight to the blind.—17. On thee, Evil One, from all tongues, shall be all curses: for through thee men blasphemed Him, Who opened dumb mouths.—18. Blessed *is* He Who avenged our wrong, though in silence: and stirred up Death against the Evil One, to

fall upon him!—19. Sound we Hosannas, my brethren, as *did* Gideon:<sup>353</sup> who when he sounded, the oppressors, fell on one another!

### Hymn LX.

1. O what amazement befel the Evil One, of a sudden, my brethren: when the sinful woman was corrected, and gained Wisdom!—2. *R.*, *Glory to the One Who alone, conquered the Evil One; and to Him yea Him be also confession, Who vanquished Death!*—3. The Evil One marvelled “Where *is* her laughter? where her perfumes? where her dancing and outward ornament, and inward wickedness?”—4. Instead of that light laughter, she is given up to tears: She has cut off her hair to wipe the dust, off the feet of Jesus.—5. Naught lasts in her of any doctrine, nor abides in her: from our instruction she has escaped and cast away, all that I taught her.—6. She has denied us and our acquaintance, and even as though: she had never seen me she has blotted my image, out of her mind.—7. The living leaven of Jesus flew to her, Jesus was silent: but she made bold to press and enter, though none called her.—8. She forgot our love of *many* years, and in the twinkling of an eye: from between me and her she removed *it*, and set Death *there*.—9. For instead of laughter weeping delights her, and instead of paint: a shower of tears, and instead of ornament, a sad countenance.—10. Zaccheus I made chief of extortioners, and her I made: chief of wantons; my two wings, Jesus has broken.—11. If so be Zaccheus becomes *his* disciple, and if so be she: becomes *his* hearer, henceforth they fetter, my craftiness.—12. Carved images henceforth are a mockery and the carvers: a derision, and the worshippers a laughing-stock.—13. I shut *men’s* eyes that they might not perceive, that they are carved images: Jesus opens their eyes to see that they are the works of *men’s hands*.—14. If Jesus has chosen for Himself preachers, then our preaching: whereof the whole world is full, is put to silence.—15. For lo! the Chaldeans with the soothsayers, and lo! the wizards: with the diviners they are smitten and the priests, with all evil ones!—16. Ye priests are ended and have given up the Ghost from henceforth, depart ye diviners! become husbandmen, the Chaldeans likewise, shall close their books.—17. If the Hebrews have become His disciples, who by all miracles: were not subdued, who of the nations, shall not obey him?—18. If he begins to set straight the reverse, He brings to naught our speech: henceforth He will not hesitate against us, He who rebukes all men.—19. In that I was worshipped in all temples, our disgrace is greater: than our honour *was*, for all men spit, upon our altars.—20. Flesh of sacrifice becomes abhorred, into fragments: idols are *broken*, and carven images burn, under their pots.—21. All our work becomes a laughing-stock, and a ruin: all that we have built, and a mockery, all that we have taught.—22. The secret mysteries that I taught them, laboriously: are about to be spread abroad,




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<sup>353</sup> Judg. vii. 18–22.

on the housetops.—23. Of the Egyptians I was more proud, than of any nation: for they used to worship even, the onions and garlic.—24. Lo! I fear lest even here, where delusion was so great: truth shall prevail that there exceedingly, Jesus may reign.—25. And if when He was an infant, and fled and went down, Egypt marvelled: yea lulled him—this strangler of babes, loved their Babe.—26. Was it a pledge He went down to give her, as a betrother: giving assurance that when of full age, He will also take her *to wife*?—27. Pharaoh cannot set his foot *firm*, for this is no stammerer: that he should deceive Him, and no bondman, that he should lie unto Him.—28. Moses smote and the Egyptians rebelled, and he chastised the people: and the Hebrews rebelled—Jesus is smitten, and gives life to all.—29. This is hard *to understand* that not by force; lays He His yoke: on the rebellious: He was rebuked, and He instructs others.—30. The spittle of His mouth, wiped off and took away, the shame of Adam: by the smiting of His cheeks, He rooted out our wrathfulness, from His disciples.—31. By the nails which he received, He made me to suffer. I rejoiced when I crucified Him: and I knew not that He was crucifying me, in His crucifixion.

### Hymn LXI.

1. In wisdom let us hearken to Death, O my beloved: how he accuses us for our weeping, and for our mourning.—2. *R., To thee be praise Who cameth down, to follow Adam: and foundest Adam and also in the children of Adam.*—3. And rightly perhaps he says, “Ye slay: without mercy and lo! ye weep, as though merciful.”—4. Ye have made me as a cruel one, O ye murderers: for ye slay one another, without my help!—5. While Death was *but* desiring to come, the sword came before him: let us see then against whom cries out, the blood of the slain.—6. Against you cry out the strangled, who were suffocated: for it shames me of the rope, of their strangulations.—7. They take away from me even my rest, for without me: how could the strangled and the slain, enter Sheol?—8. Lo! your infants are cast out, as those in Egypt: your sons have ye sacrificed to demons, O demoniacs!—9. While Death was *but* desiring to taste, of your corpses: Cain refreshed me beforehand, with blood of man.—10. While I was but desiring to wait patiently, till Adam should die: before I had power ye gave me power, over your bodies.—11. Cain with his sword overthrew, the gate of Sheol: for it was closed and before the time, he first opened it.—12. He by treading made the way of Sheol, without my help: for in the way ye have trodden out for me, lo! I walk *therein*.—13. Nine hundred years I sat and waited, for Adam to die: but Cain not even a day, endured his brother.—14. Robbers upon the highways, are worse than I: I am slumbering while they, are watching to slay.—15. Lo! your slaughtered in the graves, and your murdered in your ways; and your strangled upon your stakes!—16. “If I rebelled against my lord, yea and slew him: who was he that slew these here,” said Jehu.—17. And if I Death have taken, your departed: the strangled, the slain, and the slaughtered, who was it slew them?—18. Ye are Satan to each other, and the Evil One is abhorred: ye are pestilence to each other, and Death is blamed!—19. Your *own*

will to you is Satan, yea and a murderer: but of Death and of Satan, all men complain.—20. Poison of Death ye give also to drink, each to other: lo! how many Deaths have ye, beside me.—21. Wiles, stratagems, yea and snares, sword and poison: how many Deaths from you and in you, lo! are there born.—22. The judge in the judgment-hall, is a second Death: he slays for secret reward, but I for naught.—23. I have seen bribery and marvelled at it, that ran and outran me: how many slain does bribery, slay, and none perceives!—24. I am ashamed that *so* unskilfully, I conduct myself: if I take even one corpse, all men perceive *it*.—25. In the houses weeping and in the streets, also wailing: and even unto the gates of Sheol, they groan over me.—26. Groan over yourselves that ye are thus hateful, and ye hate me: Sheol henceforth shall groan over you, O murderers!—27. With torture, scourging and fire, yea with stoning: ye put to death the sons of men, and ye are proud!—28. I am more modest than you and merciful, also reverent: for with reverence I bear away, your departed.—29. On the bed I deal gently, with him that is sick: and quietly I lay him to sleep, for *but* a while.

## Hymn LXII.

1. Lo! Death, the King of silence, complains, my brethren: that we have filled his abode with the wailing, of Hope cut off.—2. *R.*, *To Him be great praise Who comest down, to us here below: and suffered and rose again and in His Body, raises our bodies!*—3. While we weep like madmen, at the gates of Sheol: hearken what Death says, reproaching us.—4. It shames me, says Death, that ye, have overcome me: the half of Sheol suffices not, to contain your slain.—5. For alien corpses together, lie heaped in Sheol: there are two divisions there, the dead, the slain.—6. Whereas I should complain that ye have wronged me, lo! ye are weeping: ye have burst the gate of Sheol, and done me hurt.—7. For ye are like unto an infant, which while yet weeping: laughs again as ye also, over your dead.—8. For there is no discretion in your mourning, and no understanding: in your laughter—for to me ye seem like, to a weaned babe.—9. One hour weeping and wailing, and after a little: both jesting and wantonness, as of children.—10. For ye are unable to become, perfect men: that weep not yea and laugh not, as the discreet.—11. Touching your books we are grieved, that they have toiled over them: who should read them unto you, *even* the divine Scriptures.—12. The readers are crying aloud, for ye are deaf: this *their* crying proves concerning you, that ye are *as* stocks.—13. For since the reader and the interpreter, are crying aloud: your ears therefore are heavy, or else your hearts.—14. For if there were *with you* an ear, *open* to persuasion: it were meet to hear little, and to do much.—15. But because *its* hearing is closed, whoso knocks at it: the voice returns back to him, who sent it forth.—16. There is no crying with me of mine, I am not deaf: none that reads or interprets *for me*, I am not dull.—17. The breath that is from Him commands me, *sons* the God of truth: and with the command there follows, also the fulfilment.—18. With me is no holding back, no turnings aside: I wot no arrow even, could outstrip me.—19. But your

voices are scorned by me, when ye are weeping: over the graves of your departed, in the cutting off of hope.—20. Were it possible or permitted, when ye are weeping: I would go forth and tell *you*, to your faces.—21. “I am endeavouring to give, an account of the death: and your voices disturb me, that I err in my count.”—22. Ye nations, let not your understanding, become childish: like that nation whose intelligence, was never great.—23. In which prudence bestows not itself, as in a fool: for its thoughts are darkness, without discernment.—24. For your infants and your sons, in the resurrection: they shall be foremost to come forth, as the first fruits—25. Then after them *shall come* the just, as victorious: last shall come forth the sinner, as put to shame.—26. For although in the twinkling of an eye, they be quickened: yet is it in order that their ranks, come forth from Sheol.—27. Prophets come forth and Apostles, and *holy* Fathers: following them in due array, according to command.—28. Lo! that which now is sown, in random mixture: is yielded back in great order, as garden-herbs.—29. For though one in the sowing, should mix all seeds: that which is earlier than its fellow, prevents its fellow,—30. And not as their going down was confused, so disordered shall be: their coming up from the earth, for its order is fixed.—31. Lo! I have been against myself, in what I have said: for secret things which ye comprehended not, from me ye have learned.—32. Instead of the tears that profit not, which are at the tomb: pour them forth in *your* prayer, in the midst of the Church.—33. For to the dead there is profit in these, and likewise to the living: weep not with a weeping that afflicts, both dead and living!

### Hymn LXIII.

1. Who shall weigh the recompense of Abraham? whom I marvelled at when he bound, his only son.—2. *R., To thee be glory, Voice that bringest to life the dead in Sheol: and they have come up as preachers, of His Son Who quickens all!*—3. At that time I came forth in haste, to see the marvel: how that his knife was drawn out, against his beloved.—4. I gathered my manifold memories, from all quarters: and I collected my spirit to marvel, at that illustrious one.—5. How therefore can ye read, that great story? ye have despised the reading of it, in your very ears.—6. The sword of Jephthah rebukes, him that laments: his daughter was to him a mirror of life from the dead.—7. She gave herself for her father, so commend ye: your life to the Father of all, in the hope of *your* end.—8. In the womb then did ye not make trial, of a mystery of Sheol? yet in Sheol ye had more rest, than in the womb.—9. It is stubborn in you to stand up against, my mighty will: for lo! to succour them I take away, your departed.—10. By the king of Moab who slew, his son with his hands: he is put to shame who laments, for the departed one.—11. He was a profane man, lo! according, to what you read: but ye are doctors and teachers, as ye suppose.—12. He endured, but



ye are furious, in your mourning: against the will of the Lord of all, while ye are weeping.—13. I fear however to let pass, the story of Job: through this feeble mouth of mine, for I am unworthy.—14. So in like manner I turn aside, from *mention* of their bones: though I praise Him who granted, that they should come to me.—15. Dishonour not your members, by your sins: for in Sheol the bones are despised, of evildoers.—16. Whenever I see the body of one of the evil: I trample on it and curse, even his memory.—17. But wherever I see a bone, of one of the just; I set it apart and honour it, and do it worship.—18. Ye feeble ones understand not, all my ordinances: with you orders are confused, for ye are blind.—19. It is Moses alone that I know, to have honoured like me: the bones of that Joseph whom I magnify.—20. But Moses did such honour, to one pure body: but I to the body and the bones, of all the righteous.—21. Brightly shine the bones of Prophets, and of Apostles: a lamp to me in darkness, are all the righteous.—22. I worship Him Who lightens for me, the darkness of Sheol: the splendour of Moses who was so great, was as the sun to me.

### Hymn LXIV.

1. O feeble ones, why weep ye, over your dead: who in death are at rest from sorrows and sins?—2. *R., Glory to Him Who endured all, for the sake of all men: yea tasted death for the sake of all, to bring all to life*—3. I reveal unto you, that even Satan, though much content: at your weeping, yet laughs much, at your mourning.—4. In mockery he winks at me and nods to me, as a jester: “Come let us laugh at sinners, for lo! they are mad.”—5. Truly they have given up remembrance of that fire, which I have hidden for them: and lo! the fools are drunken with weeping, for their departed.—6. Instead of weeping as though, without provision: I had plundered and sent forth their dead, lo! they are mad.—7. The souls of the evil are to be afflicted, till the judgment day: and these weep over the graves, like to madmen.—8. They care not for their own sins, that haply to-morrow: they must go in shame of face, to join their dead.—9. And thus shall all be put to shame alike, family by family: in Sheol the wretches shall repent without avail.—10. Leave the drunken and the madman, until that day: wherein *each* shall shake off his wine wherewith he was maddened.—11. I will go to gather them, like children: that they may play the wanton and the madman, until they perish.—12. Lo! I have revealed to you the mystery, the secret of my comrade: go forth therefore, depart, amend, in repentance.—13. Leave me, I too will depart, I will see to my affairs: that with open face I may give my account to my Lord.—14. I know that the wind as it blew, has borne away my words: for ye are the same whom I, oftentimes have proved.—15. I remember Jeremiah how he, compared boldness: to the Indian who changes not *his skin*, though it is of freedom.—16. For this too belongs to it, even to freedom: that it binds itself by the will, as though by nature.—17. For so powerful is the will, in them that are free: that it may be likened to nature, through its workings.<sup>354</sup>

<sup>354</sup> *I.e.* though boldness is matter of free will, it becomes a second nature.

## Hymn LXV.

1. *Man*, O Death, despise thou it not, that image of Adam: which like a seed is committed to earth, till the Resurrection.—2. *R.*, *To thee be glory Who didst descend and plunge, after Adam: and draw him out from the depths of Sheol, and bring him into Eden!*—3. *Death*, I marvel at this seed, and at your words: for lo! after five thousand years, it springs not yet.—4. *M.*, Its present state passes away, as winter *does*: and as a handful of *corn* it comes in the resurrection, to the garner of life.—5. *D.*, That there is vintage-time, lo! I know, but I have not seen: the dead at any time sown, or yet reaped.—6. *M.*, There is coming a reaping, O Death, that will leave thee bare: and the Watchers shall go forth as reapers, and make thee desolate.—7. *D.*, When did I become husbandman, instead of vine-dresser? who has turned Sheol the wine-press, into a tilled field?—8. *M.*, Does not the seed then teach thee, which decays and dies: and *is* cut off from hope, yet from the rain, recovers hope?—9. *D.*, A dream have ye seen ye feeble ones, of life from the dead: for in waking time the resurrection, ye do not see.—10. *M.*, Thy drowsiness hinders thee, that thou seest not: the multitudes of mysteries which cry aloud, of the resurrection.—11. *D.*, I know that seeds come to life, but I have not seen: bones that grew in Sheol, and sprang and came up.—12. *M.*, All thy discourse is like thyself, for lo! Ezekiel: has taught thee how in the valley, the dead come to life.—13. *D.*, Trees have I seen how in summer, they put on their garments: but bones in their nakedness, are cast into Sheol.—14. *M.*, Moses broke by his splendour, thy heart, O Death: the son of Adam has regained and put on, the glory of Adam.—15. *D.*, Our law in Sheol is this, to keep silence: for you are words and for me deeds, O feeble ones.—16. *M.*, How are the aged passed over if thou be vinedresser? He Who hindered thee from *taking* their lives, the same quickens all.—17. The babe in the womb confutes thee, which is *as* buried there: to me it proclaims life from the dead, but to thee despoiling.—18. The despised flower despises thee, for it is shut up and passed over: yet though lost it is not lost, but blossoms again.—19. The chick cries out from the egg, wherein it is buried: and the graves are rent by a Voice, and the body arises.—20. For a body too is the chick, that is in the egg: lo! its body to our body proclaims, the life from the dead.—21. With the locust thy plea is overthrown, and ended, O Death: for in coming forth from the dust it teaches, the life from the dead.—22. *D.*, I had been content if already, the resurrection had been: for the day of resurrection had disturbed me less, than your judgments.—23. Merciful is the Son of the Highest, yea good and just: and will not harshly avenge on me, the death of Adam.—24. Have ye then no understanding, to perceive this: that your father laid on you, this retribution?

## Hymn LXVI.



1. Hold your peace, O mortals (said Death), a little while: and be like me who am so silent, in the midst of Sheol.—2. *R., To Thee be glory, Watcher, that didst come down, after them that slept: and utter the voice from the Tree, and waken them!*—3. Ye are grieving, yea, weeping, for him that has gone: as though he came to grind for me, the mill in Sheol.—4. Great is the peace I give, unto the wearied: I wax not weary as you, nor weary them.—5. I hear all manner of curses, from thankless men: the sons of Adam are like Adam, who was thankless to his Lord.—6. Contrary one to the other are *your* voices, and your doings: with your voices ye weep and in your doings, ye fight daily.—7. I heard weeping and I thought to myself, that none labours: I saw toiling and I thought to myself, that no man dies.—8. The struggles of man made me think, that he is not mortal: his great weeping made me think, that to-morrow he is not.—9. Hear and let me be your counsellor, if ye be willing: for these two, these burdens, are very bitter.—10. Cease a little while from this toil, and from *this* weeping: toil ye and weep as mortals, who to-morrow vanish.—11. Ye are frantic with weeping, for your departed: and ye struggle in toiling, for your possessions.—12. It is well with the infants that die, and blessed are they: for they are freed from the misery, whereunto ye are cast.—13. Suffer me to go to Sheol, and there to say: “Happy are ye silent dead, how tranquil are ye!”—14. Hear the conclusion of our own words, If there be a resurrection: weep not ye, neither labour as though strangers.—15. Ye straggle as one who was to live, here forever: and ye weep as one who never, should rise again.—16. Hear my words, if there be with you place for hearing: and prepare you provision that when I call ye may answer.—17. For I hearken even I, to Him that calls me: and will restore your bodies, with your treasures.—18. Let there be peace between us, until that day: and when ye come forth I will cry and say, “Depart in peace!”—19. Come ye, you and I even now, shall give glory: to Him that brings to death and to life, that He may give aid.—20. Praise from us all be to thee, O Lord, the living Sacrifice! Who by the sacrifice of Thy Body hast given life to quick and dead.—21. Praise to Him Who clothed Himself in our body, and died and rose again: He died in us and we live in Him, blessed be He Who sent Him!

### Hymn LXVII.

1. Come ye, let us hear how Death convicts the People: that harsher than Death was their sword, against the just.—2. *R., To Thee be glory, Who by Thy sacrifice, hast redeemed our disgrace: and Whose death was instead of all deaths, that Thou mightst raise all!*—3. It was not Death indeed that crucified Jesus, but *it was* the People: how hateful then the People, that are yet more hateful than I!—4. Into the pit they cast Jeremiah, the miry *pit*: but I in Sheol allotted, honour to his bones.—5. Naboth they bruised *to death* with stones, as though *he were* a dog: how good am I who have never stoned, even a dog!—6. The Hebrew women in famine, ate their children: Sheol *is* good who delivers and gives them up, without difficulty.—7. To the widow I gave her son, by the hand of Elijah: to the Shunamite her beloved, by the hand of Elisha.—8. The Hebrew women

in greed, ate their children: Sheol gave up the dead and learned, to fast soberly.—9. Sheol was not indeed Sheol, but *its* semblance: Jezebel was the true Sheol, who devoured the just.—10. The sons of the prophets and the prophets, she slew and cast down: to heaven Elijah escaped, from her fury.—11. How many deaths instead of one Death, were among the People! and how many Sheols instead of one, were there also!—12. Samaria and Jezrael her daughters, in Israel: and Zion and Jerusalem her sister, in Judea.—13. Prophets and just men in Judea, and in Israel: in these two abysses, they were drowned.—14. Why then is Sheol hated, and she alone: though there be many that are hateful, rather than she?—15. The dead of the men of Judah, to me are right hateful: yea, abhorred by me are their bones, in the midst of Sheol.—16. Would that then I had a way to cast them out: *to cast* their bones thence from Sheol, for they cause her to rot.—17. I wonder at the Holy Spirit, that He thus dwelt: in the midst of a People whose savour stank, as their conversation.—18. Onions and garlic *are* the heralds of their doings: as is the food so is the understanding, of this defiled people.—19. Through the supplication of all that bow, and worship Thy Father: have mercy on Thy worshipper, who is thankless for Thy love.—20. From Hebrews and Aramæans, and also from the Watchers: to Thee *be* praise and through Thee to Thy Father, be also glory!—21. For that I have a mouth to Death, who is without mouth: may the Son Who is all mouths, hold back my offence from His Father!

### Hymn LXVIII.

1. *Man.*, O, Death, be not thou boastful, over the just: the sons of thy Lord who at His command, come to  *dwell with thee*.—2. *R.*, *To thee be glory that by Thy command, Death has reigned: and by Thy Resurrection has been humbled to low estate!*—3. *Death.*, Herein am I exceeding great, according to thy saying: that though I be bond-man I trample on them that are free.—4. *M.*, Adam was chosen and ruler, and under his yoke: thou, Death, and the Evil One, thy fellow, became bondmen.—5. *D.*, This is our pride that lo! the slaves have become lords: Death, and Satan, his fellow, have trampled on Adam.—6. *M.*, Lo! the humbling of thee and thy fellow, accurst servants! how Enoch trampled on you both, and rose aloft and reigned.—7. *D.*, If so be Enoch made me grieve, yet have I comfort for on Noah's dust in Sheol, lo! I trample.—8. *M.*, Tremble, O Death, before man, for though a servant, the yoke of his dominion reigns on all creatures.—9. *D.*, I rejoice then that they are no mean *foes* that I have overcome: for according to the greatness of the vanquished, he is great that overcomes.—10. *M.*, Well does thy voice sing triumph, O Death, over the just: for Enoch and Elijah have broken thy pair of wings.—11. *D.*, I know *how* to weigh my sorrows with my comforts: in place of two, lo! many are come and coming.—12. *M.*, All that are come and coming to thee dwell as sojourners, and depart from thy abode as Lazarus.—13. *D.*, This thy saying hurts me not, rather it heals me: for Lazarus who rebelled against me, I again subdued.—14. *M.*, Make answer, O Death, and argue what constrained him, to be raised unless it

were a mystery, showing forth his resurrection.—15. *D.*, Ye are famous in arguing as idle ones, while I labour in my task to discern and perform—16. *M.*, Thou wast well prepared for argument, what has checked thee? The truth of our resurrection has constrained thee by its reputations.—17. *D.*, Ye have made me hated by you, though I be not hateful: I am he that gives rest to your aged, and your afflicted.—18. Ye have made me as one that troubles, O ye mortals: Adam brought death upon you, and I bear the blame.—19. Gently will I expose you, for I am a slave, and ye are they that by your sins have made me king.—20. The will of Adam roused me for I was at rest: I was dead and ye quickened me, that ye might die by me.—21. I accuse the lying ones, who slew and denied it: for Adam slew himself and charges me.—22. The beginning of strife was the accursed serpent which has rightly been crippled: which crept, entered, and set enmity between me and you.—23. Satan is passed by and it is against me that ye are roused: go, strive with the Evil One who made you transgress.—24. He is my comrade and I deny *it* not, but though he be much hated, what need that I be blamed for him. I deny him henceforth.—25. Hearken to my words, O mortals, and I will console you: I have afflicted you and I confess the life from the dead.—26. For there begins to steal into my ears a voice of preparation: of the trumpet that holds itself ready to sound.—27. Hear my words and put much oil into your lamps: for hindrance from my part there is none for you.—28. *Yet*, Know ye that even although I have said these things, dear is the sound of your voice in the solitude of Sheol.—29. For man has been weighed by me, and great is his peace: for snakes and fishes and birds come to meet him.—30. But it is a marvel that to the Watchers, too, his converse is dear: yea, the Evil One in Gehenna, desires his presence.—31. Ye shall have life from the dead, O ye mortals, and I who am bereft shall be bereft in the midst of Sheol.—32. Let praise ascend from all to Thee Who quickenest all, and from every quarter gatherest the dust of Adam!



## NINETEEN HYMNS

### ON THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN THE FLESH.

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TRANSLATED, I.—XIII., BY