

**CORPUS**  
**SCRIPTORUM CHRISTIANORUM ORIENTALIUM**  
EDITUM CONSILIO  
UNIVERSITATIS CATHOLICÆ AMERICÆ  
ET UNIVERSITATIS CATHOLICÆ LOVANIENSIS

===== Vol. 468 =====

**SCRIPTORES SYRI**  
TOMUS 200

---

**THE CHRONICLE OF ARBELA**

Translated by  
Peter KAWERAU

English translation by  
Timothy KRÓLL

---

**LOVANI**  
IN ÆDIBUS E. PEETERS  
1985

And you have asked me many times, beloved Pinhes, to write down for you an account of all the bishops<sup>1</sup> of our hiparchy<sup>2</sup> and the martyrs, who were killed because of their love for Christ<sup>3</sup>, and all of those, who earned a famous name in this world, and he, who is ready to; so that the praise ascends to God and be a good ransom for us in heaven. You know namely, that the story of our church bishops<sup>4</sup> leads us to the foundation of the church, which is our lord Jesus Christ, the awakener of our contemptible nation. And for that reason we love him with all our hearts. He must be namely the goal of our thoughts, which he is. And behind his love, we must go along. And when it is the case, that we do this, the Holy Ghost lives within us. And we will be temples for the Holy Trinity, which lives in us all. Their power is that this godly trinity plants in us a vineyard and surrounds it with a fence and digs for us a winepress.<sup>5</sup> A vineyard, because we are the work of God and he planted us and we are his property. It is namely written, that he has come into his property.<sup>6</sup> A fence, with which we be protected and guarded inside of him, that we will not be pierced by the claws of our enemies, hidden and open. The winepress due to the martyrs, which were called names, killed because of Christ<sup>7</sup>, and pressed out like grapes through the feet of the faithless torturers. It was namely said through the godly David: “Because of you we are killed daily. And we are watched as sheep to prey.”<sup>8</sup> We will from here on speak with the power of God of the bishops and the martyrs. We plead through prayer for help from our kind God, that he, in his grace, forgives our mistakes and allows us the uncovered stories of the chancel<sup>9</sup> of his glory, to him belong the honor and glory for ever.

---

<sup>1</sup> ܩܘܪܡܩܐܪܐ

<sup>2</sup> = metropolis

<sup>3</sup> ܩܕܝܫܐ

<sup>4</sup> ܩܘܪܡܩܐܪܐ

<sup>5</sup> Ref: Matthew 21:33; Mark 21:1; and Luke 20:9.

<sup>6</sup> John 1:11

<sup>7</sup> *Mingana* has “for the love of...”: ܡܕܘܢܐ

<sup>8</sup> Palm 44:23

<sup>9</sup> ܩܘܪܡܩܐܪܐ = Βημα = ܕܒܝܡ = Bema: the church sanctuary where holy objects and writing are kept.

1.  
Bishop Peqida of Arbela  
(104-114 A.D.)<sup>10</sup>

The first of the bishops<sup>11</sup>, which the territory of Hedajjab<sup>12</sup> had, is, according to Habel the Teacher, Mar Peqida, who had a hand laid upon him<sup>13</sup> by Addai the Apostle in his own person. This was the son of a poor man, whose name was Berri. And he was a servant of one of the Megušes.<sup>14</sup> His son however, from that time on, when he saw a miracle, through which Addai the Apostle woke a small girl, as she was being carried to her grave, and there was, in her parents, the movement in their hearts of the Holy Ghost, which has been stored in us through our Lord, Jesus Christ<sup>15</sup>. And he decided that he would be his student.

Those persecutions he therefore received from his father and from his relatives, for the mouth could not retell, and an understanding could not be made. However, he stood firm against all of this in his attitude, and his parents locked him up in a gloomy house. But he had a helper, which opened the door for him, and he escaped, and ran, and searched for the apostle; but he could not find him. And as it was said to him “He has gone to the mountain villages”, he wished immediately, that he go and be taught by him and be blessed by him. And as he reached<sup>16</sup> him after many days, the saint<sup>17</sup> was happy to take him where he went. And they say that after five years he laid his hand upon him and sent him into his land. And he began to preach among the herds<sup>18</sup> of heathens and to perform great deeds and miracles like the apostle and to bring many of the sheep into the pen<sup>19</sup> of Christ, in which he converted<sup>20</sup> them through the godly grace. And after ten years he died and his students buried him in the house of his parents, who had changed their attitude and stuck with him.

---

<sup>10</sup> All chapter titles were added by Kawerau.

<sup>11</sup> Syrian ܡܩܝܕܐ

<sup>12</sup> Adiabene: territory in Assyria, between the rivers Lykus and Kaprus.

<sup>13</sup> Laying of hands is the ordination of clergy.

<sup>14</sup> Magians in the chronicle do not represent just the priests, but any Persian of the old faith.

<sup>15</sup> Titus 3:6.

<sup>16</sup> ܡܩܝܕܐ arrived

<sup>17</sup> Syrian ܡܩܝܕܐ

<sup>18</sup> ܡܩܝܕܐ

<sup>19</sup> ܡܩܝܕܐ enclave

<sup>20</sup> ܡܩܝܕܐ *Mingana*: engrossed

Bishop Šemšon of Arbela  
(120-123 A.D.)

After six years came Mazra, the bishop<sup>21</sup> of Bet Zabdai, in the territory of Hedajjab with a caravan of traders. And as he heard that a community of Christians<sup>22</sup> was present here, he went secretly to them. And as he brought them to trust him, they let him into their house and told him, that they have been without a bishop<sup>23</sup> for six years, and called upon him to lay his hand upon Deacon Šemšon and ordain him as a bishop<sup>24</sup>. And he consented to their good wishes and laid his hand upon him, because he heard that he was of Deacon Peqida. And so he began to lead this godly community and “let them live on grass of power<sup>25</sup>”. And we went out and began to preach to the villagers, who sat around in rings, worshipping the fire. And they threw in it small children, during their great festival, which they called Šahrabgamud<sup>26</sup>.

And Habel the Scribe reports about this festival as follows: “This festival falls namely in the month of Ijjar<sup>27</sup>. And they gathered together from all areas to a large well. And after they bathed in it, they settled down and cooked and gave to their slaves, so that they ate. They themselves, however, did not eat until they threw into the fire one of their small children. Then they took its liver and its kidneys and hung them up on tree branches, which were there, as signs of their festival. Afterwards they shot many arrows into the sky and went back into their houses.”

And when he preached to them the length of two years, he baptized many of them, and the Christian faith spread out considerably through the virtues of Šemšon (120-123 A.D.). But when the affaires became known to the princes, who were there, and the Meguše, they bound him, and after many torments they killed him. And this happened seven years, says Habel the Scribe, after Khusrau, Grand King of the Arsachids, was besieged by Trajan, the Caesar of the Romans, which came and visited our lands. And it was Šemšon, the first martyr of our area. And he was raised to heaven. May the Lord help us through his prayers and ensure that we imitate his moral life, that we may enjoy his joys.

What shall I now say and recount about this holy apostle, which the Lord took as a model for us to look at every time. We want further to pray to our Lord Jesus<sup>28</sup>, which gave his apostles and after them their representatives, the charge of their words, and gave the sermon of power, with which the uneducated and barbarian heathens will be brought together and seized by the faith. And the sound of these words are heard in the entire universe. “Throughout the whole world their proclamation is felt, and at the ends of the earth, their words.” And to him, which power has been bestowed, has done everything through their hands, to him shall be praise in every time in eternity.

Such men have arisen in our land, o Pinhes. With their blood the trenches of our land are filled and the crops are grown, and “they have given thirty times, sixty times, and one hundred

---

<sup>21</sup> ܩܫܘܩܩܐܪ

<sup>22</sup> ܩܪܝܫܬܐܝܢ

<sup>23</sup> Ms. 3:17: ܩܫܘܩܩܐܪ

<sup>24</sup> Ms. 3:18: ܩܫܘܩܩܐܪ

<sup>25</sup> Psalm 23:2

<sup>26</sup> ܩܫܘܩܩܐܪܝܘܬܐ : an ancient festival in Adiabene when it is believed children under 5 were sacrificed in a bonfire.

<sup>27</sup> Roughly the month of May.

<sup>28</sup> ܩܫܘܩܩܐܪܝܘܬܐ

times over<sup>29</sup>”. Samson of the Old Testament has through his power pushed out and subjugated the Philistines. And the Samson of the New Testament, through the power of the Lord, and through his fasting, and through his Nazarites<sup>30</sup>, subjugated the heathens, the Philistines of his day, and they were bound under the yolk of service to god. Because they were not able to break their chains. In the Old Testament he showed his power, and in the New Testament he showed his grace. His power and grace are with us all days.

---

<sup>29</sup> Psalm 19:5

<sup>30</sup> נזיר = נזיר = אדם המסיר את עצמו לאלהים = A person who has dedicated themselves to God per Num 6:2-21: no wine, no flesh, free-growing hair.

Bishop Ishaq of Arbela  
(135-148 A.D.)

However, after him, this athlete<sup>31</sup> of Christ, was a bishop<sup>32</sup> of many Christians, which were available, Mar Ishaq (135-148 A.D.) a zealous and religious man, who was brought in the manner of Ishaq<sup>33</sup>, as a living sacrifice for the Lord. However, the godly will did not allow, that he be pierced by the arrowheads of the evil, the enemies of everything holy. And also so he instructed as a colleague<sup>34</sup> without exhaustion. And in his time there was a man, who was well-known and well-off, and they said that he was appointed by the kings, to rule this region, and his name was Raqbakt. And when he heard of the calling of Mar Ishaq, he came to him and asked him about his vows. And he welcomed it and said that he holds to them. And after many days he baptized him in a secret village on account of his fear of Vologeses, the second Grand King of the Parthians. And through the influence of this saint, a Constantine<sup>35</sup> of his time, the Christian commitment was spread to the villages<sup>36</sup>, which are around us. And against him stood up the priests, the heathens, and endeavored, that they change his mind. And as they labored without success, they decided, that they would kill him, so that their Megušdom<sup>37</sup> would be saved.

Habel the Teacher reports it the following way and says: “They ordered other Megušes of their faith which lived in the mountains, they shed their over-ropes and dressed up and carried on like people of far lands and went to the saint of the Lord in the manner of travelers, who wished for a bite to eat and to stay there the whole night. And at the end of the night, they should kill him and go back to their land. However, some of these, enemies of the exalted God and friends of the accursed Satan, decided that everything that, which they had heard and were compelled and was said to them in secret, was sacrilegious of the Megušes, their comrades. And they sent forth many servants and proclaimed to the Christian<sup>38</sup> Raqbakt, that there are nobles from far lands of the Romans, who came to him and bid, that they spend a night at his house. Hence it should suit him, that he prepare lodging for them and a dinner, which was fitting for their status. As the saint of the Lord heard this, he planned posthaste, that he prepare everything, that was fitting. And it pleased his soul in God, that he was capable of proselytizing them to a covenant with the One God, the creator of heaven and Earth. And as everything was prepared, these envoys of Satan arrived, so that they rode on bejeweled horses. However, God, “who is gracious to Israel and to those, who are of simple hearts”<sup>39</sup>, did not allow it, that the evil arrows injure him, “which they placed on their bowstrings”<sup>40</sup>. Then as they were at the meal, to the saint of the Lord came a messenger<sup>41</sup> from Ctesiphon, which informed him on behalf of the Grand King Vologeses, that he should come, when he is willing, without delay to Ctesiphon, with it the power of both of them would pacify the impetuosity of a rebel people, which fell on land of

<sup>31</sup> ܐܬܠܝܬܐ ἄθλητης : *also warrior*

<sup>32</sup> ܪܥܝ

<sup>33</sup> Isaac; 1<sup>st</sup> Moses/Gen 22:1-18

<sup>34</sup> ܘܫܝܘܩܐ

<sup>35</sup> Constantine I of Rome.

<sup>36</sup> ܕܝܘܪܝܘܬܐ old plural of ܕܝܘܪܐ : city, village, town

<sup>37</sup> ܡܝܓܘܫܘܬܐ

<sup>38</sup> ܪܘܩܒܝܩܬܐ

<sup>39</sup> Psalm 73:1

<sup>40</sup> Psalm 11:2

<sup>41</sup> ܕܝܘܪܝܘܬܐ = tabillerius

the Qardu mountains<sup>42</sup>, and plundered and decimated many cities. And that he rise up thereupon quickly and delivered his satanic guests to his brother, the heathen. And he himself promptly sent the messenger of the grand king away with a few men of his household and told his brother that he should amass troops and lead them in person and bring them to Ctesiphon. And as “broken was the trap” of the priests of malice and the strong Raqbakt “escaped”, they poured their entire rage on the chief of the saints of the Lord, of the heroic and famous Ishaq. Two days later they went to him and imprisoned him in a gloomy house. And they had the intent to kill him, but they feared an insurrection and the furiousness of the people, in which they held great fear of Raqbakt, the commander of the army.

And as through God the victorious Raqbakt heard the painful news, he gave the order, that while he is in Ctesiphon, that they should release the servant of God and lead him out of prison and give him complete freedom. And he threatened with many oaths, that he would kill any one who stood against him and is not willing in this matter. And the prophet of God came forthwith freely out of the house of the prisoners. Raqbakt however, the powerful man, remained sixteen days in Ctesiphon. And from there he gave orders to his general Aršak<sup>43</sup>, that he amass many soldiers near him, some twenty thousand, all of them foot-soldiers<sup>44</sup>. And he set out against the rebels. God knows which satraps they crossed on the march and how many difficult mountains they climbed, as they came. And at the time of their meeting they engaged in small skirmishes. And the rebels were besieged.

At the end one of the chiefs of the rebellion, who was named Kizo, had engaged Aršak in one of the mountain gulches. And he encircled them there. And for three days they lead a hefty battle. But Aršaq’s soldiers became weak against the strength of their hunger and gave up hope of victory and began to flee. And the powerful Raqbakt went out of the camp of the soldiers and called his guard to him. And they climbed up the mountain “like the eagle, circling above his aerie”<sup>45</sup>. And he hit the rebels in a fearsome bloodbath. And he paved the way for Aršak and his troops so that they could escape those demonic wolves. However, this powerful man of God rode into a detachment of the enemy troops. And one of them pierced him in his side with a spear and brought him to the ground, afterwards he gave up his soul like Judas the Maccabean<sup>46</sup> as a victim for the lord instead of a ransom for his people, because had he not done so against the power of his love, all of his soldiers would have been killed.

The rebels now, when they saw this, endeavored to descend down to the desert and took away all of Aršaq’s cities. And also as they, when they heard that another barbarian people had crossed the sea<sup>47</sup> and came like thieves, in that they destroyed their cities and laid waste to them and took everything that they had by force, up to their woman; they turned in haste and sought help for their land. When they arrived they fought for two months, until they overcame them and fought them back across the sea.

Whatever the form the sadness our entire land took at the time, when they heard the painful news about the death of Raqbakt, the inscriber was not able to describe. Many times the true Christians let their eyes overrun with tears for him and bemoaned him like David did

---

<sup>42</sup> ܩܪܕܘ, ܩܪܕܘ, Gabal-al-Kurd, Kurdistan Mountains

<sup>43</sup> Many see here the name “Vologeses III”, as it is the Armenian form of the name Walgaš *Մրշաղ*.

<sup>44</sup> The infantry was important in this area, as a cavalry could not handle the mountains.

<sup>45</sup> Deut. 32:11

<sup>46</sup> 1 Macc. 9

<sup>47</sup> “the sea” in the Chronicle always refers to the Caspian, not the Mediterranean.

Jonathan<sup>48</sup>: “How did the man fall in battle?! Jonathan, on your mountains are the fallen. I am in mourning over you, my brother Jonathan. You were dear to me.” And he who is capable of holding back their grief, was Ishaq at the death of his helper. The silence suited us, because we will see everything clearly on judgment day, as it is in truth.

After a short time the god-loving Mar Ishaq, the bishop (135-148 A.D.) died, after he had ruled the bishop’s seat for 13 years. And this caregiver, whose “vanity for the house of the Lord consumed him”, had a large and well-planned church built<sup>49</sup>, which exists to this day and is named for him.

---

<sup>48</sup> 2 Sam. 1:25-26

<sup>49</sup> **ⲉⲃⲉⲛ ⲛⲓⲃⲁ** means “had built”, but is best translated “he gave permission for its construction”



## 4.

Bishop Abraham I of Arbela  
(148-163 A.D.)

And he was followed by Abraham the Teacher, son of the honor-worthy Salomon, whose family is from Herda, a village in the area of Hesna 'Ebraja.<sup>50</sup> And his grandfather came and lived in Arbela. And his parents brought him up in the Christian faith, since he was a kid, during the time of Šemšun, the Bishop. And also this man<sup>51</sup> led the bishop's seat in clemency and humility, which is unspeakable. And he stayed a long time in the high mountains, in which he taught the Christian faith and the true covenant and baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.<sup>52</sup>

And as he made his way to the mountains, in which he taught the Christian Faith, the Megušes rose up against the Christians of our land and plundered their demesnes and tortured them gruesomely. And this news reached the pious Abraham. And he came down from the mountains. And through the power of miracles, which he brought about, and through his wisdom, which is incomprehensible, he did not allow the wild wolves to destroy all the worshipers of Christ. However, after he reconciled with them, he trekked to Ctesiphon. And the Grand King Vologeses II<sup>53</sup> was dead. And Vologeses III<sup>54</sup> followed in his place. And the man of God brought with him many presents for the nobles of the capital, so that through their mediation he could acquire a diploma<sup>55</sup> for the Christians of his land from the heathen grand king, that with it they would not be randomly and wrongfully hurt by the Megušes. But the tumultuous circumstances of the kingdom did not allow him to attain his goal. Many troops were namely collected there from all towns. And they were intent on falling on the lands of the Romans.<sup>56</sup> And he therefore returned, because it was not possible, that he bring back any diploma.

God, however, did not want the ambition of the grand king to reach its apex. Rather after the Parthians were vanquished after dastardly inroads, the Roman light cavalry followed them until they surrounded them in Ctesiphon<sup>57</sup>. God wanted instead, that he shine his wrath on the both of them. And the Romans were pressed back, so that they fled and returned to their country<sup>58</sup>. But also because of it they did not have the possibility to be free of it. And the pestilence followed them and many of them rotted. And they left behind many Parthian riches, because they had no time to take anything because of their fear. And this pestilence lasted three months and rotted many families of the people. And as this pestilence came into our land, Bishop Abraham held firm, that he, with all of his godly power, which was concealed in him, would comfort and assist the Christians<sup>59</sup>, who fell ill. But he also was stricken intensely, and he ordained Noh, his deacon. And he entered paradise in order to gain the good reward for his

---

<sup>50</sup> The location of these cities is unknown, but the main Hebrew cities were on the Tigris near Nineveh, and Budge believes the town is actually Mosul.

<sup>51</sup> Abraham

<sup>52</sup> Math 28:19

<sup>53</sup> = Vologeses III (111/2 – 146/7 A.D.)

<sup>54</sup> = Vologeses IV (147/8-190/1 A.D.)

<sup>55</sup> ܕܘܠܘܬܐ a document guaranteeing the rights of a minority

<sup>56</sup> Caesar Marcus Aurelius (162 A.D) led a campaign against the Parthians in Cappadocia, Syria, and Armenia.

<sup>57</sup> = Seleucia

<sup>58</sup> After the Romans conquered Seleucia, they were overcome by plague.

<sup>59</sup> ܕܘܠܘܬܐ

labors from that judge of justice<sup>60</sup>. So he had ruled the exalted bishop's seat of Hedajjab for fifteen years.

---

<sup>60</sup> 2 Timothy 4:8

5.  
Bishop Noh of Arbela  
(163-179 A.D.)

Now the parents of this religious man stem from the deserts of Anbar and went to Jerusalem. The small boy mingled with Christians<sup>61</sup> and was baptized through the power of the godly grace.

As his parents were returning to the east, they came to Hedajjab, because there were many Jews there. And they were afraid of going back to their country because of the unending rebellion going in there. The boy, however, since he heard that Christians were prevalent here, went to Abraham and became his student.

And through fasting and continuous prayer and through noticeably countless nightly service to God he was brought to the highest level of holiness and was deemed worthy of godly display<sup>62</sup>, through which he was capable of doing mighty deeds and miracles like the apostles. However because of this: whosoever is capable of counting the wickedness and the persecution, he must suffer this from the unbelievers, especially the Megušes.

This is the good part: that it is given to the apostles through the person of the entire church of God. “Remember namely the word, which I have said to you: it is not the servant, which is greater than the master. When they persecute me, they will persecute you.”<sup>63</sup> And furthermore: “Such have I said to you, that you are not angry. They will even hunt you out from our congregations. And the hour will come, when everyone, who will kill you, believe that he will be brought as a sacrifice for God.”<sup>64</sup> The church therefore is the holy kingdom<sup>65</sup> of Christ on Earth. But this church is mixed with the wicked and unbelievers and Megušes and heathens. And at all times they wage war with them. But there is hope for us, that they will be at all times glorious and victorious. Our Lord namely said “I have conquered them, the world”<sup>66</sup>. “And even the gates of hell will be stronger than they.”<sup>67</sup> And the animosity which is between the church of Christ and the world will not have an end, except at the end of time, when the white corn will be sorted out from the ryegrass, which will be thrown into the fire for ever and be burnt. But the holy Noh was reminded of all this, as they threw him into prison five times, and seas of joy<sup>68</sup> overwhelmed him, when they hit him with whips and chains, until his blood flowed and he remained silent as a sheep for his sheerer.

In the end, however, God himself had the wish that he invoke his rage for his saint and rescue him from the hands of the unjust, that with it the word of David would be fulfilled: “I was a child, but I did not see a righteous man, who was abandoned”. And one day the son of a rich and noble man from one of the towns in the country of Hedajjab, who name was Razšah, fell from the roof and he broke his foot, and injured his shoulder joint. And as this accident befell him, he was not in his house, but rather in the city of Arbela because of house business. And he went out with bitter cries, that with it he should see the end of this affair. The holy Noh was

---

<sup>61</sup> חַתְּמֵי כְּנָעַן

<sup>62</sup> מַעֲרָא דְּאֵלִים Display of God

<sup>63</sup> John 15:20

<sup>64</sup> John 16:1-2

<sup>65</sup> מַמְלַכְתּוֹת אֱלֹהִים or *mystical kingdom*

<sup>66</sup> John 16:33

<sup>67</sup> אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ, πύλαι αἰδου, לֹא שָׁרָה

<sup>68</sup> אֵלֵינוּ

however at that time in that big village, which sits on the Zaba<sup>69</sup>. He fled from the poison of the Megušes and kept himself hidden there. And as Razšah arrived and saw his son ready to knock on death's door, he abandoned his senses of the greatness of the pain. And he began to throw ashes on his head and in the interior of his house. Thereupon the saint of God went there. And he promised the housemates, that he and his son will be resurrected under the condition that they believe in Jesus Christ. And they answered him: If you give this beloved boy life again, we will do as you wish. And the saint prayed on it and said: Lord, God the father, you have shown your power to the people and peasants, you, who through Moses has shown countless signs and lead out the Benai Israel<sup>70</sup> through your great power, you, who through your prophets has shown to all people, that you do not want the death of the sinners, but that they turn from their unjustness and lives, you, who has awakened your beloved Lazarus, who had slept for four days, you, who has said, that "everyone, who believes in me, that he will achieve better than this", you, who through the power of your strength had the apostles proclaim your name in every town and land and planted your church and founded it on the unconquerable rock of Šem'on Kapa<sup>71</sup>, you, oh Lord, look upon your servant, this small boy, who in his purity and in his silence believes in you, that you are the god of truth. And look mercifully on this group, who has gathered here and waits on your goodness. And judge this person, who followed in your image and your likeness, and heal them from the sickness of their bodies." And upon his last words he made the sign of the cross on the boy. And immediately he stood up, healed from all sickness and weakness and free from every injury. And many heard of this miracle. And everyone gave God the honor, which his glory showed through his body. And Razšah and his housemate fulfilled everything that they promised. And they received the baptism and lead a holy life the length of their lives.

But the saint of God, therefore, because he could not go back to the city of Arbela out of fear of the Megušes, remained in Razšah's house. And he taught the orthodox faith to all the village inhabitants. And he also went in the land of Nineveh and brought the name of Christ to many villages, which had not before heard it. And one of those towns, by the name of Reši, its inhabitants worshiped an oak<sup>72</sup> tree. And they all converted and recognized that Jesus, who the Ihudaj<sup>73</sup> crucified, is truthfully the son of God. But in the canon<sup>74</sup> of this village, it was that no man may drip blood around that tree.

But on one day children were playing in the proximity of that accursed tree. And note: a black snake was crawling on the tree. But the children, incited by the Ghost of God, killed it with stones and dripped there the little blood, that was in it. As it became evening, the inhabitants of the village went to that place to pray. But: Oh great miracle! Look! They saw blood. Immediately they turned out of fear of their god and began to lament. The saint of God, however, was present there and cut into the tree the sign of the venerable cross. And the tree vanished from there. But after many days, they found it planted in the city of Daquq<sup>75</sup>. And they uprooted it, those heathens and wanted to burn the saint and it, although it was living. Then they thought that it is the way of pure evil, from the first to the last. But in that moment, that they set a fire with wood, the tree arose and planted itself in its place. And they said then, the wicked,

---

<sup>69</sup> The River Zab.

<sup>70</sup> בני ישראל, בני ישראל, Israelites of the northern Empire

<sup>71</sup> לה מעטעטע

<sup>72</sup> אלה

<sup>73</sup> Jews

<sup>74</sup> מענה, the pagan religious law

<sup>75</sup> Tauk, south of Kirkuk on the road to Baghdad.

one to the other: Truly, our god doesn't want us to kill this man, because in the hour, in which we want to burn him, this God came and it appeared through this sign that he says to us, that we are not to kill him. We can no longer set ourselves against our God, who shows his will in this emphatic manner. This man compares to a rose, which when much rain falls on it, blooms beautifully; when however the sun comes, it becomes limp, but after when rain falls on it, is it even bigger than before. And this man was also withered. But God wanted to rescue him from our hands. And he cast rain over him. We will let him free and give him freedom, that with it he does not bring us under the foot of God.

Now the saint of God, when he saw that they were busy with such deliberations, began to show them the truth of the Christian faith, and many of them on the other. And under the count of an election they found a new village leader, whose name was Razmarduk. Now through zeal clothed with God was the thorn bush of the Megušdom weeded out of every village, and the faith in Jesus Christ conquered it and was planted against it. And he distanced them from those gods of lies, "they have ears, but do not hear; they have mouths, but do not speak; and have eyes, but do not see".<sup>76</sup>

And in a few months the holy Noh baptized the collected inhabitants and remained there an entire year. Afterwards the saint went home to Arbela, and there, after he worked two years in the vineyard of the lord, and after he ordained many priests and deacons, he went over to the Lord, that with it he receive from him the good wage, which he earned through beautiful works and through his sleepless vigils and through his shining life, which was filled with mighty deeds and miracles. So he ruled the many Christians of our hiparchy sixteen years.

#### Seat Vacancy

And after his death our church was without a bishop<sup>77</sup> and remained orphaned because of the hate of the heathens and Megušes. And our brothers were saddened at this time. Many of them, who were new and weak in their Christianity, returned to the religion of Satan. Then they saw their houses, which were plundered, and their sons and daughters, which were taken away or kept in secret, and there were those, who were gruesomely beaten down by the students of the enemy of corporeal form.

---

<sup>76</sup> Psalm 115:5-6

<sup>77</sup> 

Bishop Habel of Arbela.  
(183-190 A.D.)

After four years the Christians of our land gathered with the priests and the deacons and elected Mar Habel for the administration of the bishopric and brought him to Hanita<sup>78</sup>, that with it Zeka Išo‘, the city bishop, ordained him there. Meanwhile the remembrance of the holy Noh was not washed from the minds of the Christians. Then they built him a<sup>79</sup> church and named it after him. And it can be found there to this day. And the Christians<sup>80</sup> go there daily and place themselves under his protection ask request his intercession for themselves and their families.

Many heroes arose in our land, o beloved Pinhes. And they are for us a model of goodness and an exemplar of holiness, which is to be imitated dutifully at that time.

Now Mar Habel was the son of a carpenter from the village of Zaira<sup>81</sup>. And when he was big, his father made him a shepherd of sheep, which he possessed. And he had since his youth beauty of custom and goodness of character, which brought those to amazement, who saw him. And he was one of those poor of spirit, which the praise-worthy gospel mentions and augurs them beatitudes: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” His heart did not depend in any way on earthly possessions, and his father clearly recognized, that his son did not strive for earthly riches, but rather for something else. And when they spoke with him about worldly affairs, his heart did not take any part of it. And it did not interest him, to expand his earthly possessions. Yet when he was in need of something, he was not saddened and did not whine. And due to this he sometimes did not attend to his sheep, but rather left<sup>82</sup> only the dog for the sheep, and went many times in a cave and contemplated the nothingness and the setting of this world. And for this reason his father hated him.

And one day Habel lost two ewes in the mountains and was immediately was banished from his house. But at dawn on the second day both ewes returned to the herd entirely on their own. And his father had remorse, that he outcast his son. But this changed after Arbela. And it happened, and he came into the Christian<sup>83</sup> church through godly influence. And the Christians<sup>84</sup> began to give him nourishment because of Christ’s love. And one of them let him stay with him. And after a few days, the son asked to be baptized. After two years he became a deacon<sup>85</sup> of Mar Abraham for the length of six month. When this saint of God died, he never parted ways with the holy Noh and loved him like his father. And as we have said above, this father was perfect and humble. And because of this he became worthy to sustain the land. “Even blessed be the humble, because they will inherit the land”<sup>86</sup>, and that is the land of heaven. And through his perfection he was able to placate the rage of conflicts, which were between the Christians<sup>87</sup> and the heathens. He became further able to master his tongue, “with which we bless the Lord

<sup>78</sup> Theophanes, diocese on the east riverside of the Greater Zab.

<sup>79</sup> ܐܘܪܫܐܠܝܡ is used here as an indefinite article

<sup>80</sup> ܡܫܝܚܝܢ

<sup>81</sup> Unknown location.

<sup>82</sup> ܥܕܡ ܐܘܪܫܐܠܝܡ

<sup>83</sup> ܡܫܝܚܝܢ

<sup>84</sup> ܡܫܝܚܝܢ

<sup>85</sup> ܡܫܝܚܝܢ

<sup>86</sup> Matthew 5:5

<sup>87</sup> ܡܫܝܚܝܢ

and Father and with which we execrate the people, who were made after the bible”<sup>88</sup>. In on case did it come to us to think, that therefore he loved the people of the world who went on their way, because the saint is perfect, and the spirit of holiness is within them and they do nothing hate-worthy and recognized clearly, that “love of this world is animosity against God”<sup>89</sup>.

At this time Vologeses IV, the grand king of the Parthians, got stronger and took many lands from the Romans. And he turned against the land of the Persians, which, for a long time had been making preparations to confront him. And he came against them, Vologeses did, with 120,000 soldiers. And they rose against one another in the land of Khurasan. Now the Parthians, as they were for the first time looking to cross a small river, they saw themselves encircled on every shore by troops of Persians and Medes. And after a hefty battle, the Parthians were besieged and began to turn tail and run. And then ran to the hills, which are in that land, whereby they brought together their detachments. And they gave all their horses to the Persians.<sup>90</sup> But the Persians ran after them and surrounded the mountain above them, whereby they slaughtered a countless number of them. Now the Parthians, as they saw that without great valor all were slaughtered without exception, they pulled their forces together and fell upon the Persians with an impact, which is indescribable. And they fought them in their flight, and they overran their flight. And they pursued them up to the sea, whereupon they threw their bodies to the ground like locusts. And as they turned back, they rose upon the other Persians, who had separated themselves from their comrades. And this emerged as a new battle between them. And it lasted two days. And as it was the third night, both sides slept, that with it in the early morning of the day they could become invidious. But as the Persians arose, they saw not a single Persian more. Namely they all fled in the night and turned to their comrades and unified themselves with them. And the Parthians turned back victorious and proud in their hearts.

In this time, beloved Pinhes, wars were everywhere and tumultuous news in every land. And if the Lord were not at that time with his churches pursuant to his promise, and had not at this time reinforced their foundations, they would certainly have collapsed a thousand times over. Now if we look now on the land of the Romans: from the beginning of the church on the persecutions never stopped. We have the possibility to recognize this from the ecclesiastics<sup>91</sup> of Eusebis de-Qesarja<sup>92</sup>. So everyone, who contemplated, how after such trials and tribulations of all kinds the canons and the church offices were not annihilated and effaced, truly believed, that they made it though by the bosom of God, the word.

So the first, who persecuted the Christians is Nero the Wicked, who not alone personally tortured them, but rather wanted to show that the Christians are the cause of all evil, which is done. And therefore he set fire to a large part of Rome, the city, and proclaimed that the Christians, they themselves, were the ones who set it ablaze, and commanded that they should be killed without mercy.

At that time those tyrants, who only sought pretense for themselves, that they oppress our brothers and the children of the church, and they are eradicated, not omitting a form of torturous torment, without adding to them. And on this grim occasion the blessed pair of head apostles. Patros was crucified like his Lord. But as to not be exactly like Him, he asked to be stretched on the cross with this feet up and his head below. Paulos was however beaten on the head. And

---

<sup>88</sup> Jacob 3:8-9

<sup>89</sup> Jacob 4:4

<sup>90</sup> Nomads had to relinquish their horses to the nobility.

<sup>91</sup> Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία

<sup>92</sup> Euseb of Caesaria was the first Christian church historian.

immediately at that place where he was killed, two trees grew<sup>93</sup>, beautiful and grand, that with it they will be in lasting memory of their lives and their deaths according to God's will and disgraceful damnation of their persecutors. And after Nero followed other caesars, heathens, which sought out and found different hellacious martyrdoms. But in truth it was Satan who placed everything in their hearts and supported all of theirs<sup>94</sup>. Domitian<sup>95</sup> and Marcus<sup>96</sup> and Severus<sup>97</sup> and many others did not stop and never got tired in their mass round-up of students of Christ. And they hid themselves at every corner, and there was not help. And they fled into the mountains, the heathens, like leopards hungry for blood, hunted for them. When they remained in their houses, they were slaughtered like lambs, they together with their women and children. The ones who were spared by grace, they worked in the mines from morning to evening.

So they remained slaves, even those who renounced Christ, the son of God, and named their friends. Oh about the bitter bondage, in which the son of God was, which not by grace<sup>98</sup> servants and laborers became the worshipers of idols.

Domitian now, of that sea of laziness and of idleness and of children's games and the anguish of evil, did not gird himself nor make pains for himself, but armed his armies without killing and bloodshed of Christians. And as that hand, which wrote the conviction of John the Apostle, did not grow stiff immediately and ceased its actions. And how are the penalties, which he portrayed in his revelation for the wicked and evil-doers, not immediately come over them and ushered them into the depths of hell? Despite all of this we believe, oh beloved Pinhes, that at such a time the wicked surround us, they befall us to our advantage, and that after tribulation joy fills our hearts. And also the Ihudaj, those, who spoke against the cooling of our suffering and pains "on the streams of Babylon: there we sat and cried"<sup>99</sup>, have sung, as the decree of the creator of the world was completed with the voice of praise and thanks of their return, which was under the rule of Cyrus of Persia<sup>100</sup>.

And also we, on account of because Narsai, the king of Hedajjab, did not enter the war, the one with the Parthians, that wild wolf became angry, and after they returned as victors from the war, they came into our country, and destroyed our cities and plundered and went into their lands. Narsai the king, however, did they drown in the Zaba Rabba<sup>101</sup>. And through this death and through this destruction the Christians, who were in our land, suffered greatly. And hands of humble penitence to him, who lives forever, they raised, and left them raised. Now Habel, the bishop of the oppressed sheep, began to travel around to every village, which we heard from Christian people, in order to strengthen the brothers there, that with it they suffer in silence of the heart also this hardship against the love of Christ. But as it was one day in the village of Rahta<sup>102</sup>, that he fell ill of fever. And after he ordained his deacon 'Ebed Mešiha, he died in the night of the thirteen in the month Ilul<sup>103</sup>. And the great pain, that the Christians had, who were there, was indescribable.

---

<sup>93</sup> In the book of Acts, this occurrence after the death of Peter and Paul is not mentioned.

<sup>94</sup> *Mingana* has it as "their power".

<sup>95</sup> Caesar Domitian ruled Rome 81-96 A.D.

<sup>96</sup> Marcus Ulpius Nerva Trajan (98-117 A.D.) conquered north Arabia, Asiria, Armenia, and Mesopotamia.

<sup>97</sup> Septimus Severus (193-211 A.D.) led a successful war against the Parthians.

<sup>99</sup> Psalm 136:1

<sup>100</sup> Cyrus II, who conquered Babylon and returned the Jews to Palestine.

<sup>101</sup> The Greater Zab river.

<sup>102</sup> Unknown location.

<sup>103</sup> = September



And after five months a large group came out of the city of Arbela to hold the corpse, whereby it was held well and fresh<sup>104</sup>, and carried him into the church with great honor. And the Lord facilitated this procession of Christians and showed through a wonderful miracle, which was called good of him and he was celebrated through everything, which was done for the servants. A small boy even brought his mother along with him to church, that with it they saw the burial ceremony, which was celebrated for the servants of Christ. This small boy was deaf, and mute was his tongue. And he was three years old, as he had not yet been able to utter a single word. But his mother, in that she was compelled by the Holy Ghost, brought her son in the proximity of the corpse of the saint and indicated that he should kiss his right hand, which was stretched out. And the hand did the boy kiss, and immediately his tongue was released and became free. And he began to speak without difficulty at that same moment. And all people praise god, who showed his power through his saint.

---

<sup>104</sup> A part of saintly legend.

Bishop ‘Ebed Mešiha of Arbela.  
(190-217 A.D.)

‘Ebed Mešiha was from Arbela. But he remained for a long time during his childhood in Antioch and then Damascus. There he was taught the true Christianity. And he returned to his country. And he dedicated himself to church service and priesthood to the people. And also these –like his office predecessors– showed great diligence and zeal in the evangelical preaching and ceremony of dispute and discord<sup>105</sup> between the Christian people. And the entire time of his episcopacy<sup>106</sup> God gave peace and quiet in every town. And because of this the churches multiplied and the cloisters were fruitful, and from every mouth was heard praises.

And among the Romans in this<sup>107</sup> Qlemis Aleksandraja<sup>108</sup> was known through godly teaching. And there was not to find any book, about which he did not write a memre<sup>109</sup>. And it is on you, that you see the status and the writings of this extraordinary man under the authors from the ecclesiastics of Eusebis d-Qesarija.

As now ‘Ebed Mešiha lead his episcopacy the long time of thirty-five years<sup>110</sup>, he went into paradise together with his office predecessors.

---

<sup>105</sup> ܡܫܝܚܐ, also possibly disgrace

<sup>106</sup> ܩܠܝܡܝܣ ܐܠܟܝܣܢܕܪܝܟܐ

<sup>107</sup> = in this time

<sup>108</sup> Clemens Alexandrinus

<sup>109</sup> Oration, sermon, or proposition

<sup>110</sup> An impossible length of time, as his bishopric started in 190 upon the death of Bishop Habel, a calculated end of 218 falls in the episcopacy of his successor Hairan.

Bishop Hairan of Arbela  
(217-250 A.D.)

Following after ‘Ebed Mešiha was the blessed Hairan, who was from Bet Armaje. And in his beginnings there were uprisings and wars in every town. And the sun shut itself away and did not want to show us its light.<sup>111</sup> A sign of the scorn of God regarding his rebel people. In his time were many wars between the Romans and Parthians. And an Artabanus<sup>112</sup>, the grand king of the Parthians, pushed into the land of the Romans. And he set ablaze many cities of the Armenians<sup>113</sup>. And coming with him was also Šahrāt, the King of Hedajjab. And as news reached Macrinus, Caesar of the Romans, he attacked suddenly with his powerful army. And the war between them lasted a long time. But at the end both kings united, so that no one shed human blood without a great reason. And each side returned to his land. And the Parthians were strengthened from it and were inflated and boasting. And aside from manslaughter they strove for nothing. But God, who said through his prophets: “When you rise like an eagle and if you set your nest between stones, from there will I avalanche you”, held them back and threw them down.

And in earlier times the Persians sought to pounce on the throne of the Parthians, and many times they tested their power in battle. But they were pushed back and were not grown to the power of the Parthians. But those Parthians –due to the load of wars and battles– had grown weak. And this was recognized by the Persians and the Medes and they closed a union with Šahrāt, the king of Hedajjab, and Domjtana, the king from Karek Selok<sup>114</sup> and made a hefty assault on the Parthians in spring. And the Parthians were besieged, and their kingdom was annihilated for ever. First they fell on Bet Nahrin, on Bet Armaje, on Bet Zabdai<sup>115</sup> and Arzun<sup>116</sup>. And in the course of a year they conquered all of these lands. *And every effort of the Parthians was futile. Their day namely had come, and the hour had struck.* In the end they all flew into the high mountains together, and the Persians overran all of their lands and their entire empire, which was culminated in Medinata<sup>117</sup>. The small son of Artabanus, who was of the name Aršaq, slew the Persians without mercy in Ctesiphon<sup>118</sup>. And they resided in it and made it the capital of their empire. *But the day, on which the kingdom of the Parthians ended, the sons of Aršaq the Mighty, was the twenty-seventh in the month of Nisan, on Wednesday, of the year 535 after the rule of Jawan<sup>119</sup>. And in the beginning of the Persian Kingdom there was peace for the Christians, and they were capable of revival and spreading.*

*All of this was in the days of Hairan the bishop.* And he was ever more strengthened against the plights and fortified through grace, which was poured over us from our Lord Jesus Christ.

---

<sup>111</sup> On October 7, 218 A.D. a ringed eclipse took place.

<sup>112</sup> Artabanus IV (211-224 A.D.)

<sup>113</sup> ܩܪܩܘܬܐ ܕܩܝܩܘܬܐ

<sup>114</sup> Karka de-Bet Slok, Kirkuk

<sup>115</sup> Somewhere around Babylon.

<sup>116</sup> Arzanene

<sup>117</sup> “The cities”, The area of Seleucia and Ctesiphon

<sup>118</sup> Aratabanus IV fell April 28, 224 A.D.

<sup>119</sup> ܐܝܘܢܐ, Ionia, Greece.

Know, oh Pinhes, that at this time, through the power of the Persians over the east, many Christians abounded in every land in the west<sup>120</sup> and in the east<sup>121</sup>. But in the west the persecutions never stopped and every day the blood of Christians flowed in the markets and in the plazas, and peace was not to be found there. There was none of this at all in our land. And the grand king was weary and plagued through daily warfare, and the hard circumstances were not yet unleashed against us. And therefore the evangelical preaching was allowed, “that it stretched its roots through us up to the sea and over<sup>122</sup> the rivers away from their offshoots.”

There were more than twenty bishops<sup>123</sup>: In Bet Zabdai, in Karka de-Bet Selok<sup>124</sup>, in Kaškar<sup>125</sup>, in Bet Lapat, in Hormizd-Ardashir, in Perat Maišan, in Hanita<sup>126</sup>, in Herbat-Gallal, in Arzun, in Bet Niqator<sup>127</sup>, in Bet Šarqard<sup>128</sup>, Bet Meskane<sup>129</sup>, in Hulwan, in Bet Qatraje, in Bet Hazzaje<sup>130</sup>, in Bet Dailomaje<sup>131</sup>, in Šiggar, and in the rest of the other cities.

But Nesibin<sup>132</sup> and Medinata had no bishops for fear of the heathens. But as the kingship of Aršaq ended, the Christian Parthians, who were there<sup>133</sup>, wished for a bishop<sup>134</sup>, as to notify in his town, that we are ready with the help of the Lord.

At this time there was a renowned man of every form of science named Origenis, the admirable and godly teacher, the one who, they say, the Holy Ghost places everything to say in his mouth. And Eusebis said about him, that seven scribes were writing, one after the other, under his hand.<sup>135</sup>

Now as the Persians began to rule the east, few of the Christians were in fear, that they would not be slain by the sharp-end of the sword by them. Namely they besieged the sub-kings of the eastern lands. And they placed in their seats Mahupats<sup>136</sup> and Marzebans<sup>137</sup>, which subjugated them. And to the region to which belongs to us, Ardašir, the first Grand King of the Persians<sup>138</sup>, sent a prefect<sup>139</sup>, whose name was Adorzahad. But God, who at this time was watching the church, so that they do not sink to the abysses and the rainstorms, prepared for them a lucky escape. So Ardašir, the Grand King, gave an order that new fire-temples were to be built in the honor of the gods, and that the son, the great god, which is above everything, should be honored through special worship. *And for the first time he named himself King of Kings<sup>140</sup> and God. And unjustly he brought the masses in awe, in that he, who is of godly-birth, ripped*

<sup>120</sup> Roman lands

<sup>121</sup> Persian lands

<sup>122</sup> 𐎠𐎡, “in the direction of”

<sup>123</sup> 𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩

<sup>124</sup> Kirkuk

<sup>125</sup> Kaškar, was on the other side of the river before the Muslim conquest.

<sup>126</sup> Unknown location.

<sup>127</sup> Nikatoropolis

<sup>128</sup> Unknown location.

<sup>129</sup> Unknown location.

<sup>130</sup> Hormizd-Ardashir = al-Ahwaz

<sup>131</sup> Unknown location.

<sup>132</sup> Another name for Nisibis

<sup>133</sup> In the capital

<sup>134</sup> 𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩

<sup>135</sup> Reference *Eusebis*, *Historia Ecclesiastica* VI, 23, 1.

<sup>136</sup> Magupat, Mobed, chief of the Magi.

<sup>137</sup> Marzban, marquis, margrave.

<sup>138</sup> = Sasanids

<sup>139</sup> 𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩

<sup>140</sup> 𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩, šahanšah

*the honor for himself and brought and convinced many of the other religions to worship of the sun and the fire.* But Hairan, the bishop, exhausted himself, that he save his people from all injury and from the satanic pitfalls. And like a true shepherd he attended to his sheep. And through this zeal, he was able to bring into the herds of Christ many souls, who were caught by the old enemy, the hater of all humanity. When he worked with this his holy talent<sup>141</sup> many years, and, by my count, thirty-three years, he died at a very old age. And see, reserved for him was the crone of victory, which is ready to be given to him by every judge of justice.

---

<sup>141</sup> *ḥab*

Bishop Šahlupa of Arbela  
(258-273 A.D.)

Following Hairan, who is worthy of honor among the saints, was Šahlupa, zealously-caring and hard-working in fear of God. Also this holy father was from Bet Armaje. And from his childhood on he was instructed in the orthodox teachings. And for these reasons he began to apotheosize himself over his enemies, the hidden and the open.

And at this time a large persecution took place against the students of Christ in the land of the Romans, because Maximinus<sup>142</sup> the Wicked did not leave out one means, through which he annihilated and deposed of them from the face of the Earth. And also in this persecution, heaven was filled with many pure souls, which asked from their creator, that he shorten these days of fear and that he lead them to days of peace.

But in the east, as we said, everything was going peacefully. And Šahlupa was conflagrant day to day in hot desire for the love of God. And it was he, who turned the inhabitants of the town of Telnejaha<sup>143</sup> to the belief in the godly trinity, and this through a miracle, which our Lord wanted, that he show through it the truth of the words of His servants.

Even one of the town nobles, and Nakkiha was his name, lay gravely down with the illness of dysentery. Und there his body waned from day to day, and in his town there was no man, who was capable of healing him, his parents brought him to the city of Arbela. The holy Šahlupa, as through godly will he had experience in this affair, he went like Ananias to him, as all of his relatives gathered around him, those who had come with him. And he promised them, that he would heal him completely from his illness, if they all did, what he said to them. And he began to explain to them the Christian beliefs from the godly books and the velocity of his productivity<sup>144</sup> in the entire inhabitable Earth. And he showed them, that Jesus, whom the Ihudaj crucified in Jerusalem, is God, the son of God. And he did not suffer outside of his own free will, and with it he freed us from servitude to Satan. And as they all acquiesced to His will, and his promise, that, when he showed them the truth of his words through the healing of Nakkiha, they would all believe and let themselves be baptized and be lead into the lap of the holy church. And the holy Šahlupa prayed and through the sign of the cross he healed it, that unholy illness. All things are easy by God. And many from the town of Telnejaha believed in the word of God and received baptism.

At this time Ardašir, the king of the Persians, died. And Šapur<sup>145</sup> followed him. This man was very hard in his nature. And in the first year he had a war with the Chorasmians<sup>146</sup> and the Medes of the mountains, and in one hefty stroke he overwhelmed them. And from there he pushed and subjugated the Gilans and the Dailomans<sup>147</sup> and the Hyrkanians<sup>148</sup>, which live in the distant mountains in the proximity of the rearmost see. And fear of him fell on every man. And

---

<sup>142</sup> ܡܚܘܡܝܢܘܫ : Caesar Julius Verrus Maximinus Thrax (235-238 A.D.) was the first caesar to give an edict whereby the Christians were methodically and systematically persecuted. As his rule does not coincide with the bishopric of Šahlupa, the chronology does not follow.

<sup>143</sup> Unknown location.

<sup>144</sup> ܟܘܨܘܬܐ : as in spreading his name

<sup>145</sup> Šapur I, grand king of Persia (240-272 A.D.)

<sup>146</sup> People living on either shore of the Oxus River.

<sup>147</sup> *Budge*. Book of Governors 2, 468: "Gilan is the country by the Caspian Sea from the Russian frontier to Resht, and Delum, or Dialom, is the mountainous territory behind it."

<sup>148</sup> Hyrkania, the area located between Media, Parthia, and the Caspian Sea.

many times he made war with the Romans. And there was in the troops of Šapur a man, a Christian<sup>149</sup> and a rich man, whose name was Ganzeqan. And when he came to Hedajjab and saw, that many Christians were in it and in its villages, he bid Šahlupa to go to Ctesiphon and seek the few Christians, which had begun to appear there. But Šahlupa was afraid to go. But after Ganzeqan calmed him and instilled trust in him, strong Šahlupa went through his God and brought with him Nakkiha, the one, whom he had healed from his illness of dysentery, and two deacons<sup>150</sup>. But as they went on the way, they came upon Ismaelites<sup>151</sup>, and they took them with them. And they could not reach it except after four months. And they stepped into the rich city of Ctesiphon. And they gathered every brother, which was there, and encouraged them. And Šahlupa laid his hand on a man from there and ordained him a priest. And he remained there two years, since the time that Šapur, the grand king, returned.

And many deacons followed him and brought him back to Arbela with great honor. And the Christians cried for him, those who were in Seleucia and Ctesiphon and sadness filled their hearts. And they imitated the apostles, as they looked toward the Lord, which rose to heaven. And as he remained in his country, he reformed different things and laid his hand furthermore on many priests and deacons<sup>152</sup>. And as we have heard from Christian men, Šubha-Liso, the bishop from Bet Zabdai, also came to him. They lived together in great joy for a year. And both together went to Herbat Gellal<sup>153</sup> and to Rassonin<sup>154</sup>. And they laid their hand on a bishop<sup>155</sup>. And from there they moved on to Šahrqard. And they saw there also a few Christians, which had come from other places. And they ordained for them a priest, because their bishop had died shortly beforehand. But afterwards they went again to Arbela and separated from one another. And Šubha Liso in his land, whereby he was astonished of the wonderful order, in which the churches lived, and of the large number of Christians. And also he began to live after the order of which he saw, whereby he had a song of praise raised to God because of the greatness of the hiparchy of Hedajjab and its catholic and apostolic canons.

And after a few years, as the diligent Šahlupa worked in his<sup>156</sup> God and sacrificed himself for Christ, his savior, he withdrew from this world of tribulation into the world of friends, and was buried in the small church, which was built on the name of Noh, the one, who was before him in this eulogized task of leading the sheep of Christ. So he occupied the noble bishop's throne of Hedajjab for the span of fifteen years.

---

<sup>149</sup> ܩܪܝܫܬܐܢܐ

<sup>150</sup> ܩܝܫܬܐܢܐ

<sup>151</sup> Ismaela, an area in northern Arabia.

<sup>152</sup> ܩܝܫܬܐܢܐ ܩܝܫܬܐܢܐ

<sup>153</sup> Probably located on the lower Zab.

<sup>154</sup> Ramonin? A suburb of Adiabene.

<sup>155</sup> ܩܝܫܬܐܢܐ

<sup>156</sup> The suffix ܐ (his) was originally omitted by the scribe, and appears fused to the top of “god”.

Bishop Aha d-Abuhi of Arbela  
(273-291 A.D.)

And following him was Aha d-Abuhi, a diligent and zealous man, son of a priest of the city of Arbela. This man had four sons, and four of them were priests. Their mother, however, was an ethinc Meguš<sup>157</sup>. And she formerly had intercourse with her son, who was older than Aha d-Abuhi. And therefore they called him equally of the name Aha d-Abuhi<sup>158</sup> – brother, that is to say, that his brother was the same one, who formerly had intercourse with his mother. This man was Meguš in his childhood and left for Ctesiphon because of the war with the Romans<sup>159</sup>. And from there he returned to his country. And he was instructed in the Christian faith. And he remained close to Bishop Hairan until the day of his ordination. And he held many catechism instructions among the heathens.

During his time Guprašnasp, the mauhapta<sup>160</sup> of Hedajjab rebelled against Bahram the third<sup>161</sup>, the Grand King of the Persians. And in the mountains he built himself a high tower, that with it he could take refuge against an enemy invasion. And he took many people with him, excellent archers, in a number as handed down from year to year, 560 men. And these men made daily incursions, approximately fifty to sixty of them, and plundered in the street everything they saw. And the connections from city to city, from village to village was broken because of their raids. And many men of the inhabitants of Hedajjab pushed on and went into other lands. And blooming villages were deserted. And no man could sow seeds. The field men, from fear of the robbers, also did not leave their houses. And the countless rich people moved jointly to the cities, that with it they laid out the infestation and the plan to Bahram, the King of Kings. And he silenced them and sent many soldiers and they came, that they destroy and eradicate Guprašnasp's tower. And also from the distance they came to them and not once were capable of approaching them because of the many arrows, which the soldiers of Guprašnasp shot with skill. And as they planted themselves for the length of two months, whereby they could not manage a thing, they made contact with Bahram, and he sent many other countless soldiers with a brave and intelligent commander, Zarhasp. But he was also not capable of conquering the fort, because they put up strong resistance, and the many soldiers, which were in it were very courageous, practiced archery, and did not allow it, that they only attacked from a distance, therefore Zarhasp handled it cunningly and set it in motion, so that he could catch Guprašnasp in a noose. And he sent his son to him with beautiful and expensive gifts and had him say: "See, even the king of kings heard of this cunning, which is on your side, and seeks your friendship and wants to make you universal administrator<sup>162</sup> of the entire kingdom. It is therefore my job to make this action with you alone, whereby none of your soldiers may be. But stand down from the battle and come to a place alone, that with it we can negotiate, we two alone." Now Guprašnasp, the commander, believed him. Also he wanted namely and wished

<sup>157</sup> ܡܝܓܘܫܐ ܡܝܓܘܫܐ of the Magian people

<sup>158</sup> "Brother of his father", ܡܝܥܘܪ ܡܝܥܘܪ

<sup>159</sup> During his lifetime, three caesars made war with the Persians: Maximus Thrax in 238 A.D., Goridan III in 242 A.D., and Valerian in 259 A.D.

<sup>160</sup> ܡܘܗܘܦܬܐ : another pronunciation of Mahupat "mobed" (ref. note 136)

<sup>161</sup> Bahram II, grand king (274-293 A.D.)

<sup>162</sup> ܡܘܒܕܐܢ ܡܘܒܕܐܢ : It was not until the 5<sup>th</sup> century that we see a division of the Sasanid Persian administration into three: mobedan mobed (head of the priests), hazarbad (great commander of warriors), and darandarbad (head of scribes).



eagerly, to close a peace. Because he can last the entire war, and he had enough soldiers. And he went out to an agreed-upon place outside of the tower and called for Zarhasp, that he come to him and the both could converse. But Zarhasp had ordered many of his bodyguards, that they come and hide themselves near both of them. And when they see them sitting and talking, they should storm in and grab Guprašnasp. And as Guprašnasp was taken prisoner through this war-cunning, they destroyed his tower and brought him to the residence of the king of kings, Bahram. And Bahram rejoiced in that, what Zarhasp had done. And he gave orders, that they remove Guprašnasp's skin and hang it up in his royal palace, so that everyone, which saw it, should fear and well-recognize, that in this gruesome manner the king of kings takes out his rage and takes satisfaction from those, who are disobedient to him.

As Aha d-Abuhi, the brave, saw all of this gruesomeness and wildness, his strong soul in no way became discouraged and weak. And he began to roam around in his entire large hiparchy, in which he taught, disapproved, released from persecution, with all patience and goodness, which was sent for the students of Christ. And at this time came delegates, which were sent from the Christians in Ctesiphon, came to him and bid, that like Šahlupa, which preceded him, he can come and instruct them and teach them the correct path of the continuous lifestyle and strengthen them and comfort them a little. And they had chosen five Christian and god-fearing men, that with it he lays his hand on them. And like an efficient and zealous business man, which at all times is concerned with his possessions, he acquiesced to their request and laid his hand on these men. And he went with the delegates to the cities, he together with Zeka Išu' of Herbat Gellal and Sabbeta of Bet Zabdai. And they remained there about one year, which the tradition recounts about the subject, and polished smooth<sup>163</sup> all bumpiness.

And one of those days Sabbeta stood up in the middle of a group of people. He had indeed the intention, that he preach and show the people, that they should not stand in fear of those, who are alone ready to destroy the body, but of him, which is ready and able to send your soul and body into the fires of Gehenna<sup>164</sup>. And he spoke emotionally about this subject and showed, that the victory of our Lord is truthfully the victory, but the victory is not of the kings of Earth besides pride and arrogance and pains and misery and harm and death. Pride namely because when the kings win, they win with the body alone. And because of this they behave with arrogance and are pompous without measure. And they forget their transient nature and hold themselves equal with gods. And through this they increase their sins. And their punishment will be the fire, which never ends. And pains, because in the time of the victory – who can tell the toils, which they have undergone. So before the war, they do not stop with the pondering of the war, if they will conquer or be conquered. And through this they agonize night and day. And as many nights pass, and they become agonized, so that their sleep is gone. And death, because certainly there will be many deaths on both sides for them. And this causes pains for parents and relatives and makes tears flow from the mother's eyes, because the swords have cut short<sup>165</sup> the lifetime of their sons, and the lance has pierced the side of their loved-ones. But Christ, his victory was the cause of joy for everyone and also for his enemies, the Ihudaj and the heathens. As he now was in the middle of his preaching, one of the heathens, who was present, stood up and explained to one of the elite of the grand king, that Christian people indeed teach

---

<sup>163</sup> ܡܢܚܘܢ , it is presumed by *Mingana* and others that the scribe wrote a false Nun and that it should be ܡܢܚܘܢ (to polish).

<sup>164</sup> Ancient city where people were sacrificed in bonfires. Often the city is translated as “hell” in modern Bibles.

<sup>165</sup> ܡܢܚܘܢ , is ambiguous as the second letter could be a zain, a dalat, or a nun. *Mingana* made it a zain, and translated it as “deprive”.

that the king of kings will be subdued and destroyed by fire, that the victory is not the victory, but rather a rebellion and oppression. And the Christians heard this news and were very concerned and hid themselves in their houses. And a few of them fled into the desert. But Sabbeta, the bishops, stood up every night, whereby his nose developed a rash. And he could not manage to show himself because of their fear. Namely he feared that he would be taken and have his head cut off. And he remained so for about two years. The Christians from Ctesiphon, however, gave presents to one of the elites, Radgan. And they convinced him, that he avert the scorn of the grand king, that the lying and slanderous men had incited unjustly against them. And God laid it in the heart of Dargan<sup>166</sup>, and he brought this in order and calmed this big scorn. And so, through the hand of God, the Lord of all, there was quiet in the storm and peace in the persecution, and through the clash of iron on iron<sup>167</sup> that issue was muted due to the fact many brothers were killed. Because the time of the persecution had not yet come. Aha d-Abuhi in all this disarray and fear was not moved from his place, and did not stand away from it, that he advise the Christians that they should place their trust in the living God, their savior. And I do not mean, that one was not capable to usher in complete quiet if not through the reason of their prayers. And someone was capable of beholding him without reverence if he kneeled in prayer and his heart was broken. And God never condemns a broken heart.<sup>168</sup>

And the inhabitants of Ctesiphon urgently asked of him that he lay his hand on a bishop<sup>169</sup>, which permanently should stand by them. There were many Christians here, who said to him: And the officials, the authorities, the bishops, are far from us. And they cannot come to us every time, in order to fulfill our necessities and to lead us on the path of righteousness spiritually and bodily. And he joyfully felt their request and heard their wish. And he informed Hai-Be'el, the bishop of Šašan<sup>170</sup>. And in unanimity they both choose of the entire people Papa, the Aramaja, a smart and wise man<sup>171</sup>. And they returned home afterwards, each in his own town, amazed about the goodness of God and his watch on his church, and at all times his eyes are directed to them. Trusted namely is he because of the blood, which poured from his side on the wood of the cross. And as he reached Arblea, all the Christians and heathens and Megušes came to him for a reception and introduced him in a ceremonious procession because of the beauty of his morals and the sweetness of his speech and the goodness of his character. And after many successes he placed his soul in the hand of God, his creator, after he had reigned eighteen years.

---

<sup>166</sup> Line 15 has ܐܘܪܘܗܐ *Radgan*, and line 18 has ܐܘܪܘܗܐ *Dargan*. They are undoubtedly the same person, yet it is unknown which is correct.

<sup>167</sup> Is this some colloquial idiom?

<sup>168</sup> Psalm 51:17; ܠܗ ܐܘܪܘܗܐ ܠܗ ܐܘܪܘܗܐ ܠܗ ܐܘܪܘܗܐ

<sup>169</sup> ܐܘܪܘܗܐ

<sup>170</sup> Susa, the winter residence of the Persian king.

<sup>171</sup> The first bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon was ordained in 291 A.D.

11.  
Bishop Šeri‘a of Arbela  
(291-316 A.D.)

And following Aha d-Abuhi in the leadership of the people of the Lord was the diligent worker and true priest Šeri‘a. This man was from Arbela, son of Christian parents, who loved Christ. And since his youth, he relied on the church and lived off holy service. Also in his time the church had a great victory, the church of God, o pious Pinhes. And after 300 years more or less that it was persecuted and weak and its fundamentals were shaken. They had quiet and victory over all of its enemies through Constantine<sup>172</sup>, the victorious basileus<sup>173</sup>.

But before his time, around a few, Diocletian, the sacreligious Caesar, had tried to exterminate the name of Christendom<sup>174</sup> from the Earth, and for this he fervently strove night and day. And he gave an order, that the churches be destroyed and all Christians slain without mercy.

Which fear and which panic won power over the entire world, as this order went out without mercy. And the weren't content with this, that they kill the Christians alone, but rather they killed them in droves or burned them, whereby they also did not have leadership prepared by a judge. And because of it, it was seen that the father was the butcher of his son, and the brother of his brother, and the enclosure of the natural love was ripped out of the midpoint. And as those roman Caesars were stricken with such sin, and as this lust to kill was enflamed in them, they were not once capable of governing the people, as they should rule. And as this was noticed by the grand king of the Persians, Hormizd<sup>175</sup>, he took a large army and plundered many Roman cities<sup>176</sup>. And as God saw all of this turpitude, "he rose up, and all of his enemies were dispersed, and his haters fled before him. The were dispersed like smoke and melted away like wax."<sup>177</sup> And he gave over to them torture without mercy.

But He gave power over his servants to Constantine. And He showed him the sign of the cross over the clouds of lights, on which was written: "In this sign<sup>178</sup> you will be victorious." And he took this sign and gave it to all of his troops. And with it they beat them, the soldiers of the gruesome demons, into scattering like flies. And the cross, which was formerly the sign of shame, became the sign of victory for everyone, for the rich and for the poor, for the nobles and the condemned, the learned and the simple people.

In the East, Papa, the bishop of Medinata, which we had mentioned, because he lived in the grand king's city<sup>179</sup> and other bishops required this due to his external business, had the desire, that he obtain the authority over all bishops, as if one bishop-general was needed, which they had to have. And the priests of Medinata along with the people resisted him. And they desired, that they clarify his deposition<sup>180</sup>. And also Šem‘on, his archdeacon<sup>181</sup>, was enraged

---

<sup>172</sup> Constantine I, the Great

<sup>173</sup> ܟܠܘܣ = βασιλευς

<sup>174</sup> ܟܪܝܣܬܝܘܢܝܘܬܐ

<sup>175</sup> Hormizd II (302-309 A.D.)

<sup>176</sup> A war between Hormizd II and Rome does not appear in any other source, including the *Cambridge History of Iran*.

<sup>177</sup> Psalm 68:1

<sup>178</sup> The Christian monogram Chi-Ro.

<sup>179</sup> ܟܠܘܣܐ ܕܡܕܝܢܬܐ

<sup>180</sup> ܡܫܘܚܐ = removal from office

<sup>181</sup> ܟܠܘܣܐ

over these notions and gave notice to Miles of Šašan and to ‘Aqeb Allaha of Karka de-Bet Selok. And Mar Papa became very afraid, because Šem‘on’s parents were very close to the grand king and respected by all people. And he wrote to the bishops of the West and especially to the bishop of Edessa, which had the name Sa‘da. And all the bishops answered him, because they were of the opinion, that he was a brave and energetic man, and they promised him, that they would help him through Basileus Constantine. Because they recognized, that case would be measured, if now the bishop of Medinata would become the patriarch<sup>182</sup> of all bishops in the East. And they wrote him a letter about this in their name and the name of the basileus and the patriarchs of the West. And they wrote him, that as in the West, which was under the rule of the Romans, there were many patriarchs, the one from Antioch and from Rome and Alexandria and Constantinople, in the East, which stands under the rule of the Persians, it is necessary, that present there should be nevertheless at least one patriarch.

Now God, which ordered due to the sins of Adam, that a savior should come into the world, which is his own son, he, which through plagues of Egypt it was brought about, that there would be freedom for the Benai Israel, he, which from thorns brought fruit and from the thorn bush let roses spring forth, he, which at all times is capable of evoking goodness from the evil, allowed through his godly order and through his venerable providence, that the notions of Papa achieve success. And he became adamant in this matter without his knowledge as universal head of all bishops and all Christians in the land of the East<sup>183</sup>. All bishops now consented to that which was ordered from the West, and they feared the bishops, which were there, that they not cause it, that they wedge themselves between two powerful enemies, from the West the Christian Basileus of the Romans, and from the East the grand king of the Persians. Šem‘on, the archdeacon of Papa, however, did not want at all to accept this new government, but rather wanted, that through his parents they would be removed in the name of the grand king. Papa managed to reconcile with Šem‘on’s father, and promised him, that upon his death, he will appoint him to be Patriarch after him.

At this time, in the border city<sup>184</sup> a god-fearing man, Jacob<sup>185</sup>, became known for the miracles he worked like the apostles and powerful deeds of the prophets. This man spent often the entire night in prayer like his Lord, and his vigils and fasting were known everywhere. And because truly he was a godly man, we will especially handle the news about him later<sup>186</sup>. And also our Šeri‘a, because he glowed in zeal in the love of God, he went often to him, that with it he visit him and became blessed through him. And both spoke to one another. And after great ado and countless adversities he died on a Friday in the summer of the year 627 of Jaunaj<sup>187</sup>. And he was buried in the church with great celebration.

---

<sup>182</sup> ܩܘܨܝܝܐ, this text implies he would be in addition to the patriarchs of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and New Rome (Constantinople).

<sup>183</sup> His patriarchate included not only the Persian Empire, but also the Christians in southern India, the Christianized Turks of central Asia, and the emerging Christian populations in Mongolian China.

<sup>184</sup> Nisibis

<sup>185</sup> Jacob Episcopus, bishop of Nisibis (308-338 A.D.)

<sup>186</sup> If this was truly handled later, it might signify a missing part of the Chronicle, as it does not appear here.

<sup>187</sup> Meant here is the Seleucid era. 627 S.E. = 316 A.D.

Bishop Johannan (Daniel Bar Marjam) of Arbela  
(316-345 A.D.)

And following him, Seri'a, was the vigilant and careful Johannan. This man, because he so much loved Mariam<sup>188</sup>, the bearer of the invigorator or the world and our rejuvenator, was named Bar Mariam. He also taught many heathen people and the Ihudaj. And therefore they hated him with deadly hate. And upon their prosecution they forced him from Arbela. And they sent foot-soldiers after him, which should kill him. But he hid himself and saved himself from their snares and wandered a long time around in the hamlets and mountains. But his love for God was enflamed more and more. And he strengthened it by staying busy with work. And he succeeded in brining many lambs into the sheep pen of Christ.

In this time, as a Christian basileus ruled the world, and the matters of the church were eminent, Hades furthered its honor and let loose its stinking mouth and put out words, which stood in contradiction to the orthodox faith. And it found an unfaithful worker, which spread their teaching; the keen and astute Arius<sup>189</sup> the Wicked. He, who already did not recognize His grandeur and counted on the superfluosness, that was happening, that if even the son of God the creator, returned for our salvation, he would deny the godliness of Christ and proclaim falsely, that Christ is not the savior, but a creation, and that his nature was not the son of God, but rather just pretend. And there was great uproar because of him in the entire known world. And the bishops gathered in order to impeach his lies in the city of Nicea<sup>190</sup>, in all 318, and through the willingness of Basileus Constantine, whose memory is blessed. And these fathers execrated Arius and everyone who accepted his opinion. And they affirmed that the son, Christ, was of one nature with the father, and equal with him in being<sup>191</sup>.

And at this time Šapur II, the grand king of the Persians, moved into the mountains, in order to annihilate the enemies, which were from the mountains near the sea, erupted, and decimated many hamlets. And his plan was, that he lay waste to many Roman cities. That, what also happened, we will see afterwards. And everyone could reckon that namely the time was near, that the church would be destroyed and the sanctuaries desecrated. But God, before whom everything arises, knows well, saw and silenced and delivered to us the scorching heat of his scorn. As namely it was seen by Šapur the second king, who ruled seventy years, more or less, from the year 620 of Jaunaj to the year 690<sup>192</sup>, after the death of Constantine, the victorious basileus, who filled the world with fear of him, and after him the Roman Constantius<sup>193</sup>, his son, was made basileus of the lands of the East, who thought, that the time came for him, in which he can dare to take the leadership of the lands of the Christians without hindrance. And he moved out and laid siege to Nisibis, the border city. He did not namely know, that it, the city, was not destroyed and stood "like a rose out of the thorns"<sup>194</sup>, only through the strong arm of the Lord,

---

<sup>188</sup> Mary, the mother of Jesus.

<sup>189</sup> Arius (260-336 A.D.) was a priest in Alexandria, who taught that Jesus was not of the same body with God, but only his elegant creation, as he was *begat* by God and had therefore a beginning. His faith, Arianism, was so wide-spread that it reached from southern Ethiopia to the north with the Goths and Vandals.

<sup>190</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Nicea (19 June – 25 August 325 A.D.) was the first imperial synod. It was concerned with the Arian heresy, and actually only about 250 bishops took part.

<sup>191</sup> *ἕνα ἰσούσιον*

<sup>192</sup> 620-690 S.E. = 309-379 A.D.

<sup>193</sup> Basileus Constantius (337-361 A.D.)

<sup>194</sup> Song of Solomon 2:2

the King of Kings. Meanwhile God, which through Judith, a weak woman, threw down and destroyed the pride and the legions of Elparna<sup>195</sup> and through the prayers of Esther, a humble woman, and hung Haman, the evildoer, up on the gallows<sup>196</sup>. He, who through Šem'on slew thousands of Philistines, he distanced Šapur, the grand king, from the city through the prayers of the bishop, the pious and called Jacob<sup>197</sup>, the famous. And as he, the people's father, saw it, that the children now became distraught after every page a laughter became for the impure demons "like Moses, the Lord's chosen one, he stood in the breach"<sup>198</sup> before them, he stepped up to the city wall and begun to bid the Lord, that either he kill him or save his people from the hand of the heathens and from death. And the Lord heard this. And see, an army of yellow insects<sup>199</sup> appeared from heaven. And it came and descended upon Šapur's army. And one of the swarms pushed into the nostrils of the horses and made them wild and robbed the men of visibility. And there was no time to do anything except to flee. They feared namely this unnatural blindness, and that the Roman army would suddenly fall on them and would annihilate them, while they were in this illness. And a few of them went and let Constantius know about that, which was. And they said praise and believed in God because of his grace, which he had poured over his servant Jacob. And he turned back to the grand king, in that he threatened him and he decided that the religion of the Romans would be weeded out of his lands. But Johannan, the bishop of our land, was then not among his sheep, but rather since the year 640 of Jaunaj<sup>200</sup> he had moved to Medinata, he with other bishops, that with it they elect a man, a Christian and a sage, for the office of patriarch<sup>201</sup>. Empty was namely the seat of Seleucia's patriarch by the lamentable death of Mar Papa, which was taken too soon before. They say that he spent two years there in Medinata. And then he went to Bet Huzaje because of the affairs of the church. And he was there, as the merciless orders went out to the Mahupats of the land, in which it was ordered, that all Christians should be killed without sympathy and that their churches should be destroyed, and on the sixth of the month of Nisan, as the grand king was in Bet Huzaje, and in the thirty-first year<sup>202</sup> of this evil, which never had known in his life, what mercifulness is, the sword began to rule without sympathy. And everyone, who dared to say, that he was Christian, was slain.

But Johannan, the bishop of Arbela, left thereupon Bet Huzaje and came to his herd, that he pastured the lambs and the cattle, which were given into his hands, and that he watch them. But his heart was filled with joy, as he saw, that the sword, which was ready, that it should slay the Christians of the land, was still hidden in its sheath. Pagrasp<sup>203</sup> namely, the Mauhapta of the land, was in agreement with the city elite, that he not kill the Christians outside of the month of Ilul<sup>204</sup> at the time of the vintage and the harvest. And it is said, that the grand king felt remorse over the fact that he gave this hard order of persecution and planned to lift it then. But the Ihudaj and the Manicheans, which are enemies of the name of Christ, pressed the Megušes and brought them in, that they not allow the king of kings to do it. And they explained to him, that all the Christians were spies of the Romans. And nothing happens in the kingdom, that they do not

---

<sup>195</sup> Judith 13-16

<sup>196</sup> Esther 7

<sup>197</sup> Jacob of Nisibis

<sup>198</sup> Psalm 106:23

<sup>199</sup> ܣܝܕ ܕܝܫܘܥ

<sup>200</sup> 640 S.E. = 329 A.D.

<sup>201</sup> ܥܒܕܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ

<sup>202</sup> 309 + 30 = 339 A.D.

<sup>203</sup> ܦܓܪܫܦ

<sup>204</sup> September/October (340 A.D.)

write to their brothers who are there. And they all were rich and found themselves in a comfortable life, while the king of kings is entwined in an excruciating life of war and battle. They, however, lead no war, and always live in peace. So the Megušes changed the mind of the grand king through their lying. And the king gave an order, that the head tax be doubled for all the Christians and strengthened his order that they be again killed without mercy.<sup>205</sup>

We became thereupon the laughter of the heathens and the faithless. The Ihudaj mocked us and said: “Where is your god? Rising now should be your Christ, he, who was crucified in shame on Galgatha, and should destroy your persecutors. Has he not said to you: “See, I am with you until the end of the world?” But the Manicheans curse us more than the Ihudaj and they regard us as the scum of the people. “And the shepherd was slain and the herd was scattered.”<sup>206</sup> It was namely the time of darkness, and the light was hunted. It was the time, when the meek and perishable creatures were forced, that they are prayed for with violence instead of the creator. So the sun, which was made as a servant for the god of the people, sacrifices and gifts were brought to it. And the fire, which was made for the need of the children of Adam: one temple<sup>207</sup> was made for the children of light, which they built. One fire-temple, namely they built for the demons, that with it, they bring the churches of the heavenly father into the land of the forgotten. Oh the godlessness! O the disobedience and the insurgency of the people!

And as when a man, who wants to destroy a tree, to ruin his seeds and throw them away, and then rip out its roots and throw them away, so the Megušes and the heathens wanted to make and end of the bishops<sup>208</sup>, and the metropolitans<sup>209</sup>. And immediately Mar Šem‘on Bar Sabba‘e, who sat in the seat of the East, together with a large number of priests<sup>210</sup> and deacons<sup>211</sup> were seized and brought to the grand king in Karka de-Ledan<sup>212</sup>. And after much torture, as the powerful man of the Lord and his great patriarch were not sheltered from his menace for not being willing to pray to the sun, a creature, Šapur turned over the torture to his associates, who were in a number of 102. However, they cut his head off, all those athletes of Christ. He strengthened them, all of them, and stood by them with courage in this battle for a short time.

This happened on a high Good Friday. And from then until the Sunday of the White Garments<sup>213</sup> the sword did not stop throughout the East. And to the ends of heaven groups of Christians were tied up like a group of sheep being led to slaughter, with exception of them, who were killed right there in their homes.

But in our land of Hedejjab, through the thoughtfulness of the mauhapta, the sympathetic Pagrasp, only a few, it was said, were killed, those whose names are unknown. But in the following year, as Pargasp<sup>214</sup>, the mauhapta, died, after him they made Peroz Tamšabor his successor, the blood of the Christians began to flow in our land and flood the Earth, which was filled with injustice and evil due to the evil students of Satan, the cursed, who live off it. There

<sup>205</sup> *Cambridge History of Iran* : Shapur II needed money for his army to attack the Romans, so the taxes on Christians were doubled to provide extra revenues. The Christians naturally objected and the persecutions resumed.

<sup>206</sup> Matthew 26:31

<sup>207</sup> ܡܘܬܡܘܢ

<sup>208</sup> ܡܘܬܡܘܢܝܝܢ

<sup>209</sup> ܡܘܬܡܘܢܝܝܢ : president, prefect, princeps

<sup>210</sup> ܡܘܬܡܘܢܝܝܢ

<sup>211</sup> ܡܘܬܡܘܢܝܝܢ

<sup>212</sup> = Susa

<sup>213</sup> = White Sunday (Easter Sunday), when the baptized wore white to show their purity.

<sup>214</sup> ܡܘܬܡܘܢܝܝܢ possible misspelling of ܡܘܬܡܘܢܝܝܢ

he cleansed them through a flood of pure and innocent blood of all dross and of all vice, that with it they would be the bride in truth, which adorns and beautifies herself for the heavenly bridegroom<sup>215</sup>, who through his cross and his dishonor wed them on the hilltop of Galgatha through torture and through agony, which is unspeakable, whereby it is said to all of his students and their successors after them and to all members of his church: “Blessed are you, when they taunt you and they persecute you and say against you every evil word against me in lies. Then be happy and rejoice, because your wage is great in heaven. Even so have they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”<sup>216</sup>

It is hence difficult for me, oh my beloved Pinhes, that I enumerate for you one after the other all of those, the names of the Christians, which were killed in the entire land of the East. Uncountable and even incalculable are the simple sheep, which through the butcher’s knife were brought as living sacrifices for God and became worthy for the kingdom of heaven. If I only now count those, who saturated the dirt of our city and our country –because it is your request-, so that through this you know, which godly men truly have gone before you, and that you are able to follow their footsteps without difficulty. They truly were lieutenants for us and the leaders on the way to perfection, on which all of them are followed with joy.

In the 35<sup>th</sup> year of Šapur<sup>217</sup>, the grand king, Johannan, the bishop<sup>218</sup>, with Jacob, his priest<sup>219</sup>, were seized by order of Piroz Tamšabor. And the mauhaptas imprisoned them, without sympathy, first in Hesna da-Bedigar<sup>220</sup>. And they remained in Hesna one year. And the heathens let loose many tortures which are not to be counted. And they suffered it, these brave warriors of Christ with patience, which cannot be described, whereby they were cheerful and overjoyed, that they were held as worthy, to suffer such for the sake of the love of Christ. And on this day<sup>221</sup> men and women and daughters of the alliance<sup>222</sup> of all classes were killed, flock among flock. And among them Narsai, the priest<sup>223</sup>, and Hananja and Rehima, deacons of the church. And after all interrogations and adulatory convincing attempts, as Satan could not diminish their steadfastness, thereupon they were brought out of the house out of the city were crucified as the life-giver, their Lord. Their corpses, however, were taken away during the night by the Christians. And see, their bones are a fountain, which lets the godly grace flow for all, which took asylum in those of the errant children of Adam<sup>224</sup>. And from that day until the end of the year the sword was drunk with blood without satiation. And the collected Megušes<sup>225</sup>, were like butchers for our land, although they did not become fat. And like wild dogs they daily licked the coagulum of our blood, which like a bog colored red the markets and alleys of our city. And they rampaged out more and more and became rabid.

---

<sup>215</sup> Ref. Ephesians 5:25-27

<sup>216</sup> Matthew 5:11-12.

<sup>217</sup> 309 + 35 = 343 A.D.

<sup>218</sup> ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ

<sup>219</sup> ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ

<sup>220</sup> ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ, unknown location.

<sup>221</sup> It appears that a part of the text may be missing as following it stands no year, month, or day.

<sup>222</sup> ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ : Christendom (all the Christians from Asia and Africa to those in India)

<sup>223</sup> ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ

<sup>224</sup> Psalm 31:20

<sup>225</sup> ܡܫܘܚܢܐܢ



Bishop Abraham II of Arbela  
(345-346 A.D.)

And the Christians agreed and in secret elected Mar Abraham, that with it he lead the church of God in the time, when Johannan, the soldier of the lord, was to be in prison. But also this man, many times the Megušes went against him, that with it they seize him; because they noticed that another bishop was elected by the Christians. And this displeased them. But he hid for a month in a house of one of the Christians and he was saved from the blood-drooling<sup>226</sup> teeth of the voracious wolf. And in these days as the grand king was in Bet Lapat, he sent a courier to Piroz Tamšabor, the mauhapta, that he should come to him posthaste. This man, that with it he show himself obedient and submissive to the order of the king of kings and that with it he avert the impending scorn and please him, he brought with him Johannan and Jacob his priest. And they came to Bet Lapat, they were pressured to recognize the sun as the highest deity. But they did not admit, that they hated the creator due to the creation, and that they interchange the creator with a creation. The grand king ordered it, and their heads were chopped off with a sword on the first day of the later Tešrin<sup>227</sup>. May their memories be blessed and be help for us through their prayers. Piroz Tamšabor, however, in that he thought, that he was free of the orders of the grand king, the grand king removed him from his office and gave it to another man, whose name was Adorparrah<sup>228</sup>, who had formerly been a military commander. They collected many foot-soldiers in our land and planned, that they lead a powerful war with the Romans, that with it upon one hit the Christians would be robbed of the priestdom and the Cesardom. This mauhapta was even more brutal than the earlier and sharpened his tusks for blood; and he swore for murder with his entire heart. And as Abraham heard, that this blood-thirsty lion came into his land, he fled immediately to the village of Tenejaha, that perhaps he could escape and leave, that with it he will be not a necessity and an audacious booty for the rapacious lion. The mauhapta rather dispatched many people against him. And as they pressured him with merciless beatings to deny Christ, his Lord, he rather condemned their beatings and tortures, and they cut off his head in the village, into which he fled, on the fifth day in the month of Šepat<sup>229</sup>. And the Christians again gathered round in secret and called Maran Zeka, the priest.

---

<sup>226</sup> ܕܘܟܘܫܐ part. adj. fem. pl of ܕܘܟܘܫܐ

<sup>227</sup> November 1, 345 A.D.

<sup>228</sup> *Hoffman* Adarfarrwa

<sup>229</sup> February 5. The death of the first Bishop Abraham also fell on February 5 (246 A.D.)

Bishop Maran Zeka of Arbela  
(346-375 A.D.)

And those were years of ruin and arduousness. Those, which were from old times, and as the Christians were very few, they gathered every twenty or thirty years, that with it they elect a new bishop<sup>230</sup>. But now there passed but a few years before the bishop was swallowed by the wolves. That was obviously a contusion of the Lord's rage, which he had preordained, that with it he avenge our sins and our sacrilege and took rage on us for the blood of his only one Jesus Christ, which we offended with our disobedience. "He reprimanded us in our scorn and chastised us in his excitement. And our souls were shaken."<sup>231</sup> And all Christians began therefore<sup>232</sup> to doubt and became weak in light of the tortures. And several of them were convinced that God was asleep. And of that David: "Awake and don't sleep, oh Lord! Remember us and don't forget us!"<sup>233</sup> they quote.

And following after that time it was Maran Zeka as a watchful bishop and he calmed them through hope of the near end. And he awakened their beliefs, which had begun to die from the sharp sword, and strengthened their courage, which was deeply sunken, and it was nearly to become broken. Who is hence capable, oh beloved Pinhes, to count all the murdered ones, which were destroyed of our land? Many families were completely rooted out. And countless others, see, the sons of their sons let the tears fall until the present day over their demise. And the sword remained swinging over their necks until the year 662<sup>234</sup>.

And in this year Šapur<sup>235</sup>, the grand king, collected all of his fighting strength and planned to besiege the cities of the Romans. And he killed many of their men. And he laid waste to many localities. And as he was incapable of taking Nisibis, he left it and strengthened his fighting forces back to Nahrin. He, himself, however, returned to his land, that with it he free his own cities for his part from barbarian peoples, which came against him from the last sea<sup>236</sup>.

And back then there was in the city of Arbela a priest<sup>237</sup> of the goddess Šarbel, whose name was Italaha<sup>238</sup>. And his blood flowed like the menses of women. And as he on one of those days yelled in the temple of the goddess' idols because of the hardness of his pain, a Christen walked past and heard his voice. And he believed that someone was dying there. And he went into the temple of the idols and asked Italaha what pestered and plagued him. And as he experienced all that was ailing him, he said to him: "Go to a man of the Christian religion, whose name is Maran Zeka, and he –through the power of God- will heal you." And he got up thereupon, that with it he go to him. And as he was still far from the church, the flowing of his blood stopped, and he was healed. And he stepped closer and went in to the Bishop, which was together with all of the students of Christ<sup>239</sup>. They were, however, very afraid, because they knew him as the priest of the goddess Šarbel. But as he bid their trust and calmed them through

---

<sup>230</sup>

ܠܚܝܝܐ

<sup>231</sup> Psalm 6:2-4

<sup>232</sup> ܠܚܝܝܐ

<sup>233</sup> Psalm 44:24

<sup>234</sup> 662 S.E. = 350/1 A.D

<sup>235</sup> Shapur II

<sup>236</sup> The Caspian

<sup>237</sup> ܠܚܝܝܐ a heathen priest, compared to a judeo-christian priest ܠܚܝܝܐ

<sup>238</sup> ܠܚܝܝܐ

<sup>239</sup> ܠܚܝܝܐ ,ܡܫܝܚܝܐ

his story and informed them of everything, which happened to him, and like him, even before he arrived, was healed through the God of the Christians, they all praised God, who wanted, that he show his power in these troubling days over the chiefs and priests of the heathens, which has slaughtered them without mercy. And he was with them a few days. But the Megušes noticed him and wanted that they seize him and have him die an evil death. But he fled that very night and went to Šahrqat<sup>240</sup> to the bishop Habbiba. But even from there he feared the Megušes and he took flight to the Christians of Mahoza d-Ariwan and taught there exhaustively the Christian faith, for which he after a short while shall give his blood as a sacrifice. And there he was baptized and went in his land, that he disseminate the Christian faith in the one God of three persons<sup>241</sup>. This was in truth an astounding event. This man was a second Šawol<sup>242</sup>, which, after seeking at first to kill the Christians, learned the Christian faith and shed his blood for it. How astounded and speechless were the men over this new day-laborer<sup>243</sup> of the godly grace, which was called in the love of Christ and preached the cross. This is the power of the Almighty, which made something from nothing and unified the contradicting natures with one another.

And after he taught many men, his affairs were taught to the Meguš of the land, Šabor Tamšabor. And he commanded that they bring him to them. And all the Christians were afraid of this, and began to flee into hiding. And also Maran Zeka went into the high mountains and hid in the steep rock-bluffs and caves, that with it he escape this powerful hurricane, which the accursed Satan brought forth against the church of God. And Italaha tried again to save him. But as he was in the market, he was recognized and was brought to the evil servant of the sun. And this was ordered by a man, a Christian, ‘which fell away from his Christian faith and was returned to his dejection’, and his name was Meharnarsa, that he chop off the right ear of the servant of God. And as soon as he had lopped it off, this Judas, which denied his Lord, was stricken with elephantiasis. And this was a sign of fear for all, which saw him. And so our God exacted gratification for his servant of those, which had received the sign of baptism. But not once through this overt sign did the servant of Satan become smart, but rather his heart hardened like that of the Pharaoh. And collected for him was the fire, which is eternal, and the ruin of the soul; the servant of God, however, was place in the house of the prisoners.

And as few days<sup>244</sup> were remaining for this servant of God, comforters for his pain and partners in his sorrow came to him, among them Hapsai, deacon of the church of Mata d-Arbaje<sup>245</sup>. Afterwards the two were lead to the chief of the Megušes, and as they did not deny their Christianity, they planned to send them to the grand king in Bet Lapat. But as with hexes and torture and with cajoling the accursed Satan was not able to change their minds, their heads were cut off there. And their corpses lay on the dirt. Their souls, however, flew and climbed to their creator, where they are humble, that they rejoice and triumph over their murderers, which will be punished with countless torture until eternity.

What am I talking about, when I tell you long and wide about this subject, oh beloved Pinhes, and report the sad history of pain of the witnesses of the Lord. Because no number is capable of counting their number. And no scribe is capable of describing their torture. And

---

<sup>240</sup> Sahgerd

<sup>241</sup> ܫܘܠܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܝܢ

<sup>242</sup> = Saul, later Paul

<sup>243</sup> ܫܘܠܘܢ

<sup>244</sup> ܫܘܠܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܝܢ

<sup>245</sup> The province of Arbaj stretched from Nisibin to the Tigris.

during the entire length of time, as the grand king, which was Šapur, did not stop the blood of our brothers, and the sword did not waver<sup>246</sup>, and the murders did not rest.

But Maran Zeka, after he had been hold up a long time in the mountains and in the villages in fear and fright, which is unspeakable, he died before Šapur. He had led the seat in the time of persecution for the length of twenty-nine years.

---

<sup>246</sup> Կօի

15.  
Metropolitan Šubha Liso‘ of Arbela  
(375-406 A.D.)

Mar Šubha Liso‘. This man, his parents were from Karka de-Bet Selok. And they came and lived in Arbela. And from his childhood on he was bound to the church. And there he climbed the ladder of asceticism, until he was held worthy to be placed as metropolitan for the entire hiparchy of Hedajjab. This was a very stately emergence, as they say, and from distant towns they came, in order to see him. And in his tenth year he began to place his hand on priests and deacons; they became very humble due to the persecution. And in the majority of villages there was not a single priest present. But in a few years the Christian belief turned our land again to its earlier beauty, which placed all eye-witnesses in astonishment.

In the time of Šubha Liso‘, one godly man, Mar Teodoros Mepaššeqana<sup>247</sup>, was renowned for all sciences in truth. And he first proved through known philosophy the godly symbols of the virtue of the Lord’s birth and suffering. And he taught the correct recognition of the duplicity of person in Christ, our Lord. And he was the first teacher of Mar Nestorius<sup>248</sup>, who also spilt his blood for Orthodoxy.

But among us deep peace ruled in every town, and the roots of Christendom spread out to foreign peoples and was firmly planted. And of this, his entire godly work, Mar Šubha Liso‘ had in him help and great prudence as far as that he did not sleep in the nighttime, but rather contemplated the work of proselytism. And after he plodded in service of the bishop’s office under untold labor and unthinkable tribulations, he died and was entombed with great celebration, after he had led the Christians the long time of thirty-one years.

---

<sup>247</sup> Bishop Theodore of Mopsuestia (352-428 A.D.)

<sup>248</sup> Ecumenical Patriarch Nestorius of Constantinople (428-431 A.D.), declared a heretic and exiled for opposing the declaration of Mary as Theotokos.

16.  
Metropolitan Daniel of Arbela  
(406-430 A.D.)

And following him was a perfected and humble man, Daniel<sup>249</sup>. This man was from the village of Tahal<sup>250</sup>. And his father was a heathen<sup>251</sup> and his mother a Christian. This man converted and baptized many heathens, and together with them two Megušes. But also in his time there was a persecution, as in the time of Maran Zeka, which was hard for the Christians through the crafty plots of two criminal grand kings, Jazdgerd and Bahram<sup>252</sup>. And the Earth was flooded anew with their blood. And for this reason the fire of war broke out between the heathens<sup>253</sup>, the Persians, and the Christians, the Romans. And in between them, both sides decided, that they should give full freedom to their lands relating to Christianity<sup>254</sup>. And through this accord the sword, our murderer, was beginning to quiet itself back into its sheath. And as there was a little calm for the Christians, wrote Mar Jahballaha<sup>255</sup>, the patriarch, and called upon all bishops<sup>256</sup> that they should come to him and gather due to church affairs. And for these they had already gathered once in the time of Mar Ishaq.

And there they had resolved, that the bishop's seat of Arbela should be a metropolitanate and created many other bishop's seats of Bet Nuhadra, of Bet Begaš, of Bet Desan, of Ramonin, of Bahqart<sup>257</sup> of Dabarna<sup>258</sup>. But due to a difficult illness Mar Daniel was not able to be present at the synod<sup>259</sup>. But he was by Mar Dadišu<sup>260</sup> – his memoir of blessing -, which took place two years later. And the fathers verified the highest primacy of the Patriarch of Ctesiphon over all bishops, just like the primacy of Peter over the apostles.

And at this time, in which the East was calm, and great unity was found in His creed and love, which is unspeakable, all hearts filled, the West was disrupted and disoriented in his honor through a second Pharaoh, Qewrellos the Egyptian<sup>261</sup>, which with royal weapons and worldly power fought the truth and persecuted the true witness Mar Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. And as Daniel heard of this disarray, they say, he prophesied that truly the time will come, when the West will be eclipsed and the light will shine in the East. And with such thoughts he departed on White Sunday<sup>262</sup>, after having given the people the water of life to drink for twenty-four years.

---

<sup>249</sup> ܕܢܝܢܐܢ

<sup>250</sup> Beth-Garma(i)

<sup>251</sup> ܫܥܝܪܐ

<sup>252</sup> Yazdgird I (399-420 A.D.) and Bahram V. (420-438 A.D.).

<sup>253</sup> ܢܝܢܐܢܝܢ

<sup>254</sup> *Cambr. History of Iran* “not until the reign of Yazdgerd I was Christian worship permitted in Persia.”

<sup>255</sup> ܩܘܪܝܢܘܨܐܝܬܐ, Patriarch of Medinata (415-420 A.D.)

<sup>256</sup> ܩܘܪܝܢܘܨܐܝܬܐ

<sup>257</sup> Mahqart

<sup>258</sup> Dabarinios

<sup>259</sup> ܩܘܪܝܢܘܨܐܝܬܐ

<sup>260</sup> Patriarch Dadišu of Medinata (421-456 A.D.)

<sup>261</sup> Cyril of Alexandria (?-444 A.D.)

<sup>262</sup> In 430 A.D. Easter Sunday fell on April 6.

Metropolitan Rehima of Arbela  
(430-450 A.D.)

Mar Rehima, however, began in year 16 of Bahram<sup>263</sup> to travel around his metropolitanate<sup>264</sup>, whereby he taught the way of truth and corrected the mistaken ones and showed them the straight path to the Christian Religion<sup>265</sup>. And back then there conflict and spats due to the orthodoxy began to haunt the house of the Lord and to shake its foundations. But they were destroyed in the lands of the Romans and thought-out and built-up in the kingdom of the Persians. And with this holy work he completed his life and went to his Lord in year 12 of Jazdgerd<sup>266</sup>. And following him was Mar ‘Abbušta.<sup>267</sup>

---

<sup>263</sup> Bahram V. 420 + 16 = 436 A.D.

<sup>264</sup> ܐܪܒܝܠܐ : pature, diocese, province, see

<sup>265</sup> ܐܪܒܝܠܐ ܕܩܘܪܕܝܐ

<sup>266</sup> Yazdgird II. Grand king of Persia (438-457 A.D.) 438 + 12 = 450 A.D.

<sup>267</sup> This is where the scribe made a ¶-sign (=two horizontal points).

18.  
Metropolitan ‘Abbušta of Arbela  
(450-498 A.D.)

This holy father, his family is from a mountain village, which is called Talpena<sup>268</sup>. And from his childhood on he had lived in Nisibis, and then he came to Arbela. They say, that this father built twenty-five churches since the beginning of his taking of the Metropolitan office<sup>269</sup>. And he collected coinage from Christians<sup>270</sup> and from the heathens, and everyone worked for him without pay.

At this time an accomplished man was known in the town of Orhai<sup>271</sup>, whose name was Bishop Mar Hibai<sup>272</sup>, which through his efforts he brought success to Orthodoxy. Those trials and tribulations which he suffered from the students of ignominy, no feather can describe. And in the schools<sup>273</sup> of Orhai he taught exhaustively the truth and annihilated the wrongness until the hour of his death<sup>274</sup>. However, after his death the deceitful students gathered the won strength and were able to dislodge all Persian students. And they came to their hometowns and founded many schools in them, that with it they are not grabbed by fear before Satan. But Bar Sauma of Nisibis let Narsai, the famous teacher, stay with him<sup>275</sup>. And he constructed his large school for a many-faceted study for the brothers. And without surcease he taught them, from children to famous teachers, for Catholicism. There he laid out all the godly scriptures, and did not deviate from anything of the teachings of Mepaššeqana<sup>276</sup>. But many from our region went to him, as I have heard from trustworthy<sup>277</sup> people. And in this number of righteous people was Joseph, which afterwards became the bishop of Hedajjab, as we will yet show afterwards. And the church became split into two halves. The Westerners spoke of a single nature<sup>278</sup>, and discounted the earthly nature of God, which ill-befit and contradicted their nature. And the Easterners recognized the two natures<sup>279</sup> in one prosopon<sup>280</sup>.

And, for the spreading of the religion of Christ and to the igniting of the fire of love for martyrdom in the heart of Christ, Mar ‘Abušta united with Johannan, the bishop of Karka de-Bet Selok and reported to the Catholic Mar Babui<sup>281</sup>, that all the bishops of Bet Garmai should gather annually and at the same time host a jubilant and jovial commemoration for all martyrs, which gloriously shed their blood for Christ in the time of Yazdgerd<sup>282</sup>. And in this year Piroz,

---

<sup>268</sup> Unknown location

<sup>269</sup> ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ

<sup>270</sup> ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ

<sup>271</sup> Edessa

<sup>272</sup> Bishop Ibas of Edessa, ordained 435 A.D.

<sup>273</sup> ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ : the Syrian *eskula* (from the greek *σχολη*) always meant a Christian school in contrast to a heathen or Muslim school called by the Arabic word *maktab* or *kuttab*.

<sup>274</sup> Bishop Ibas died on October 8, 457 A.D.

<sup>275</sup> Narsai had to flee Edessa upon the death of Bishop Bar Sauma.

<sup>276</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia

<sup>277</sup> ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ past part.

<sup>278</sup> ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ : Monophysitism, in this case.

<sup>279</sup> ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ

<sup>280</sup> ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ : προσοπον : the person of Christ

<sup>281</sup> Babui, Catholic-Patriarch of Medinata. This is the first time the title ܡܘܢܝܫܐܝܢܐ appears in the Chronicle.

<sup>282</sup> Yazdgerd II. The bishops held a commemoration on Saturday and Sunday the sixth week after the Fast of the Apostles for all the Christians who died during the persecutions of Yazdgerd II.



the grand king of the Persians, died on the crusade against the Huns, in the month of Ab<sup>283</sup>. This grand king, also when he was a heathen, had helped the Christians in his lifetime, and on the advice of Bar Sauma of Nisibis, he had consistently dealt and ruled.

In the second year of Valgaš<sup>284</sup>, the king of kings, Aqaq<sup>285</sup>, the Catholic, called all the bishops of the East, as it was generally needed, to a synod, which he gathered. But Mar ‘Abušša was not able to go. A hefty illness had namely befallen him. And many gave up their hope for him. But through the goodness of the Lord he was healed through the prayers of the flawless monk<sup>286</sup> Abba Mešiha Rahmeh of holy memory. And he renewed the church building of Arbela, which can be found to this day. And he embellished it with beautiful pieces, of that fashion, that everyone, who sees it, is astounded and praises God due to grace, which he had poured out over it.

And in the second year of the grand king Zamasp<sup>287</sup>, as Mar Babai occupied the Patriarch seat of the East, the tenth synod<sup>288</sup> took place, and all of the Bishops gathered there from every side. But Mar Abušša, because he was old and his year had come, was not able to go personally. Moreover he sent instead Joseph, his priest<sup>289</sup>, and Sidora, his notary<sup>290</sup>. And there it was established that every four years a gathering of bishops should take place by the Patriarch, and not every two years, like the occasion used to be.

And one year after this synod Mar ‘Abušša departed at a venerably high age, and the Christians<sup>291</sup> cried for him for a long time.

And before his death, a woman wanted to bring her son to the saint of the Lord, that with it he, through the power of the cross, heal him from the high fever, which he had. But as she was bringing him, the boy fell from the triklinion, in which they were, from the higher story of the house to the lowest story. And immediately he died ...<sup>292</sup> due to the depth of his pain she lost her senses, and she began to bid God, that he wake him up through the prayers of his servant ‘Abušša. And not yet had she completed her lament, and she saw her son stand up jovial and jubilant. And she praised God and spread this miracle throughout the land. And they all did not stop praising God due to his grace and due to his deeds and miracles, which he had given to his servant ‘Abušša.

---

<sup>283</sup> = August

<sup>284</sup> Valgash (Balaš), Sasanid King (484-488 A.D.)

<sup>285</sup> Acacius (484-496 A.D.)

<sup>286</sup> ܐܒܒܐ ܡܝܫܝܗܐ : hermit, and later cloistered monk

<sup>287</sup> Zamasp, Sasanid King (496-498 A.D.) and brother of Kavad.

<sup>288</sup> ܘܕܝܢܝܘܢܐ

<sup>289</sup> ܝܘܫܘܥ ܥܘܠܐ

<sup>290</sup> ܝܘܫܘܥ ܝܘܕܝܢܐ, Isidor the Notary; both names appear on the council acts (N° 5 and N° 38, respectively)

<sup>291</sup> ܕܡܫܝܗܐ

<sup>292</sup> Corrupted text. *Mingana* added “and as his mother descended to him, and saw that he was dead”

Metropolitan Joseph of Arbela  
(498-510 A.D.)

This father<sup>293</sup> was from the village of Teldarra. And as he was twenty-one, he went to the schools<sup>294</sup> of Nisibis. And he studied there all the holy scriptures under Mar Narsai and they validated the teachings of Mar Theodore. And since his childhood he proved signs of the godly grace, which were spread, that they should make him into a new man. And he remained there seven years, in which he suckled from the holy milk and drank from those sweet waters of Orthodoxy.

At this time there was a hefty war between the Romans and the Persians. As Kawad<sup>295</sup> pursued for the second time, he moved into the lands of the Romans with a mighty army. The Roman basileus of that time, Anastasius<sup>296</sup> was his name. And the Persians took many towns from the Romans, Amid, and Reš'aina<sup>297</sup>. And their vision was this, that they again rein in a persecution against the Christians. But there did not come an end to the war between the two, and the Persians were forced to turn back, that with it their lands would not be laid to waste from the stong force of the Huns<sup>298</sup>, which had begun to fall upon them.

And then Mar Narsai the teacher died, as that legion was in Nisibis. And following in his place was Eliša of Quzbo, which is in the Marga. And also this man followed his teacher and went in his footsteps. And the church was filled with his writings. And everyone who read it was truly amazed about his godly knowledge, through which they were enlightened.

At this time Mar Joseph, the bishop<sup>299</sup> wished that he go into the mountains and be alone, that with it he lead there a quiet life and work for God, as it is his bidding, from his entire heart and from his entire soul and from his entire power. And he called all of his priests and deacons and explained to them this, his plan. But these men began to cry about his separation and to dissuade him from these thoughts for the good of the people and the building of the church. And as they had no success, the lot of them, a grand tumult arose in the entire hiparchy. And they wrote a common letter to Mar Šila<sup>300</sup>, which then held the ethnarchical key of the heavenly treasure. And through the word of the Lord he convinced him, our Mar Patriarch<sup>301</sup>, that he return to his office. And this is the copy<sup>302</sup> of the writing, which he sent him:

To the Friend of Christ, Mar Joseph, the Metropolitan Bishop of Hedajjab,  
Šila, the Patriarch-Bishop, at the behest and will of God, bows before your piety and  
ask for your prayers.

<sup>293</sup> Any title of name of the new Metropolitan is missing here. Instead one must take it from the previous text or later in this section. Perhaps a bad transcription.

<sup>294</sup> ܩܘܠܘܢܐ plural

<sup>295</sup> Kawad I, Sasanid King (488-496 A.D.) shortly replaced by Zamasp (496-498 A.D.) then ruled again (498-531 A.D.)

<sup>296</sup> Basileus Anastasius I. of Byzantium

<sup>297</sup> Resina

<sup>298</sup> Here most-likely Turks, Kurds, or another steppe-people.

<sup>299</sup> ܩܘܠܘܢܐ ܩܘܠܘܢܐ ܩܘܠܘܢܐ

<sup>300</sup> Silas, Patriarch of Medinata (505-523 A.D.)

<sup>301</sup> ܩܘܠܘܢܐ ܩܘܠܘܢܐ

<sup>302</sup> ܩܘܠܘܢܐ = exemplar

In many ways, as your piety knows better than I, God leads the people up to heaven and bring them to a sacred end. Some of them through a reclusive life, in which they are far from all tumult and from all noise of the world. But some of them through a pure standing of evangelical honor, in which they are chained through the love of a wife and her heart is shared as she cares for her children, that they be raised in the fear of God. And some of them through the office of Bishop, in which they direct the people to the lord and lead them in the path of righteousness and in which they are strengthened off the grass of power. And even for this man the wage is promised, which is great, and the prize which is costly. The office namely and equally the teaching, he who holds it will be named great in the kingdom of heaven, according to the word of the Lord. And some through riches, and some through poverty, and others in different ways.

And your humility is convinced, that the reclusive life is not fit for the married and not for Bishops<sup>303</sup>, because it hinders the fulfillment of the requirements of their standing, which belongs to them and is right. And also you consequently, oh God's elected-one, because you are called to the great work of the office of bishop of the 10 talents<sup>304</sup>, it is not measured for you from the word of the Lord, that you will be a recluse and will be reprovved from the requirements of your highest office<sup>305</sup>. Remember more, oh Religioso, that the will of God showed you in the universal unanimity of the love of the entire people, which is under his hand, which wants you to be bishop and director<sup>306</sup>. And you, you know, that without your oversight this disarray will be sewn in the people and you will go against the will of God. And this is ignominious. Because disarray and contravention against the will of God is forbidden for us all. And who knows – also if the meaning is far from my thoughts -, if this though does not come from the angels of darkness? The enemies of humanity foster leading away men of God from the straight path through beautiful thoughts, but they are detrimental for perfection. Do we not see indeed, that every day they lead the people of cursed Mesallejane<sup>307</sup> in an innumerable number from the men of God and lead them to error? Through such and similar reasons we command and verify the word of our Lord and in the power of the Holy Ghost, that you return to your earlier office and “rejoice in your people and the people will rejoice in you”. And pray for my weakness, that the Lord forgives my defects, and remain furthermore in the love of our Lord.”

And because Mar Joseph was a perfect man, who loved obedience to the laws of God and the order of the patriarch more than the victim, he complied with the order of Mar Patriarch immediately and came and returned to the Arbela. And such joy, which filled the heart of all Christians and especially the priests and deacons, as they again saw their bishop, the feather is incapable of describing.

But this joy did not last and was destroyed for a long time. Come was namely the limited time of the period of Mar Joseph. And for him was the throne, on which he waited since his

---

<sup>303</sup> ܐܝܢܐ

<sup>304</sup> Matthew 25:14-19

<sup>305</sup> ܐܘܨܬܐ = acme, highpoint

<sup>306</sup> ܐܘܨܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ

<sup>307</sup> ܐܘܨܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ = dualistic heretics, Nestorians

youth, laid down for him. Because he departed on the forth in the month of Ilul in the twelfth year of the second rule of the grand king, Kawad.<sup>308</sup>

---

<sup>308</sup> Kawad I second rule started 498 A.D.; the death thus occurred on September 4, 510 A.D.

Metropolitan Henana of Arbela  
(510-544 A.D.)

Also this father<sup>309</sup> belonged to the students of Narsai, the teacher. But he was educated in the schools of Nisibis. And his parents were from Telnejaha, a village of Heddajab. And also he made, after he had separated from the schools, useful memres<sup>310</sup>, which we all read with alacrity and amazement.

And in these days Eliša‘, the one from Quzbo, the teacher, and following in his place was a zealous man, a diligent worker, wise in the science of the fear of God and a researcher in the godly scriptures, Mar Abraham, a friend of Mar Narsai. This man led the school with all savvy. And it suits us, that we pray and ask of God, oh beloved Pinhes, that He increases the number of perfect teachers such as this in His church. The harvest is great, and the workers are few. But with it a man does not think of himself wiser than he is, and proudly struts and boast himself and receives arrogance, the mother of all corruptions, the lecturers and the masters of the schools gathered, and in this gathering, which they held, canons for the majordomos were laid out. And Johannan of Bet-Rabban was selected as a helper of Abraham due to the insignificance of his years. Corruption namely befell the schools due to the dishonesty in governance of their earthly tenure. And as Mar Henana<sup>311</sup> learned of this disorder, which ruled there, “he devoured the zeal for he house of the Lord”<sup>312</sup>, and he went to Nisibis. And through the power of his wisdom peace came there in those great labors. And the ship of the church was calmed, and its helm was steered on the course of peace. And as he returned, he moved around and made a patrol of his entire hiparchy, in that he reprovved and threatened. And after two years he came to his capital<sup>313</sup>.

At this time the church of God was very crowded, not from foreigners, but rather from their members, not from outsiders, bur rather from housemates. Namely Satan, the enemy of our humanity, as he saw that the could neither conquer the Catholics with sword and dagger nor stop the fountain of their run and dispersion through the heathen kings, he found no other ploy but this, that he incite the children of the church one against the other and call forth insurrection and riot between their bishops<sup>314</sup>.

After the death of Patriarch Šila, two synods of bishops took place. And two patriarchs were chosen, Narsai and Eliša, against all church laws. And each of them both took claim to the patriarchate for himself personally. And the enemies of the church rejoiced, and the friends thereof lamented. The lowest demon was happy, and the highest heaven was sorrowful. And this disorder remained for a long row of years.

But Mar Henana, he was grasped by sadness. And he began to solace the half-hearted and to strengthen the weak and to enliven them. And he went to Nisibis the fountain of scholarship, and filled many vacancies. And he sent for and let come Mar Paulos from Bet

<sup>309</sup> ܠܘܟܐ, like in 19. there is no name present, the name Henana is not found until later in this section.

<sup>310</sup> ܠܘܟܐ = sermon

<sup>311</sup> Here is the first time the name of the Metropolitan is mentioned.

<sup>312</sup> Psalm 69:10

<sup>313</sup> ܠܘܟܐܝܢ ܠܘܟܐܝܢ : here “cities of the Arsacids” (*medinata aršakita*) refers to Seleucia and Ctesiphon, which was the name of the Persian capital. In this instance, it is used as a metaphor for Mar Henana’s capital city : Arbela.

<sup>314</sup> ܠܘܟܐܝܢ

Nuhadra, that with it this man should direct the metropolitan seat of the hiparchy<sup>315</sup> in the entire time of his absence.

Now, this bishop, of sacred memory, had first chosen Narsai for the office of Patriarch. And because of this, a riot broke out in his community. And Mar Abraham, the scribe, had given Mar Henana Paulos as lecturer, that with it he found a school for children in the land of Hedajjab, that he impress Christianity in their soul and defend against the force of the heretics and the Mesallejane. And this Paulos remained with us more than thirty years, in which he fulfilled the office, which was entrusted to him by the bishops<sup>316</sup> of the church in all humility and fear of God. And he did not want him to leave him, if not for an order of the Catholic Mar Aba, which he compelled him through the word of the Lord, that he become bishop of Nisibis. And this happened after he had returned from Bet Huzaje, as we will see later.

(Stamp: *Bibl. Regia Berlin*)

*End of the manuscript of the Prussian State Library*

---

<sup>315</sup> ܢܘܗܕܪܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ

<sup>316</sup> ܡܪܝܢܐ