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THE GOSPEL TEXT IN THE BIOGRAPHY OF RABBULA

BY

TJ. BAARDA

The biography of Rabbula has been called one of the most excellent documents of its kind in Syriac Literature ¹. This beautiful work has been preserved in a parchment codex of the sixth or early seventh century, with Estrangela writing. This manuscript is in the British Museum, numbered as Additional 14.652 ². In 1865 the work was published by J. J. Overbeck in his well-known *Opera Selecta* ³, and afterwards reprinted by P. Bedjan in 1894 ⁴. Meanwhile a German translation of the narrative had been given by G. Bickell in 1874 in a volume of the *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter* of Thalhoffer ⁵.

This biography, written in vivid colours, shows on every page the veneration which the author cherished for his hero. However, we do not know who this author was. There are some features in the story told by him that tell us something concerning him. That he was an inhabitant of Urhâi (Edessa) is evident when he speaks of “*the glory of our town*” ⁶; and it is obvious that he was acquainted with Rabbula, the bishop of that town, for he tells

¹ A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der Syrischen Literatur*, Bonn 1922, p. 73.



² W. Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac manuscripts in the British Museum acquired since the year 1838*, London 1870–1872, has registered this manuscript as No. DCCXXXI; the biography occupies the folios 83–102.

³ J. J. Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri Rabulae episcopi Edesseni Balaei aliorumque Opera Selecta*, Oxford 1865, pp. 159–209. This edition is present in the Library of the University of Leyden.

⁴ P. Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, tom. IV, Paris 1894, pp. 396–470. This edition was present in the Library of the Roman Catholic University of Nimeguen, but was burnt during the war.

⁵ G. Bickell, *Ausgewählte Schriften der Syrischen Kirchenväter Aphraates, Rabulas und Isaak von Nineve*, Kempten 1874, pp. 166–211: “Panegyrikus auf Rabulas von einem gleichzeitigen Edessener”.

⁶ Overbeck, p. 159, l. 7.

us that he describes some facts "like he told us himself" ⁷. He shared the dogmatic position that Rabbula held in the Nestorian conflict. It is therefore not improbable that the author belonged to the monophysitic partisans of Rabbula within the Edessenian clergy. As to the date of the biography we have a terminus post quem in the seventh of August of the year 436 ⁸, the day of Rabbula's decease which has been described in the biography. A terminus ante quem is less certain, but we can fix it approximately: the author put his "narrative" — Overbeck, p. 200, l. 15:  — in the form of a "tract" — Overbeck, p. 198, l. 23:  —; his intention seems to be, as in his other works, to persuade many and give aid to all ⁹. This stamps his work as an apologetical tract. And this is exactly the impression that one receives when reading the biography. The intention was to make acceptable the person and the dogmatical position of the late Rabbula. This tendency is easier to explain if we assume that the author wrote in the time that the Nestorian Ḥiba (Ibas) occupied the episcopal chair of Urhâi. If this is true, we have a terminus ante quem in 457, the year that the monophysitic Nuna (Nonnus) definitely received the episcopal dignity ¹⁰.

Of course this biography was important from the historical point of view, although its significance was overestimated at first. The tendentious design of the author has diminished its real worth. The perhaps too critical investigation of P. Peeters has shown that the narrative must be used with prudence ¹¹.

In the beginning of our century Burkitt has called the attention

⁷ Overbeck, p. 162, l. 8; cf. p. 168, l. 22.

⁸ We are not sure concerning the date of Rabbula's death. That it was the 7th of August seems beyond doubt. As to the year we have adopted the view of Peeters, who rejected the traditional date 435.

⁹ Overbeck, p. 198, ll. 21–23:



¹⁰ Bickell thought that Nestorius, who died 451, was still alive when the biography was written. If this is true, we have the year 450 as a terminus ante quem: the Ephesian Synod of 449 had relieved Ḥiba of his office, who had to make way for the monophysitic Nuna till 451: Ḥiba left Edessa in 450.

¹¹ P. Peeters, "La Vie de Rabboula, évêque d'Édesse († 7 août 436)". *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, tome XVIII, 1928, pp. 170–204.

of students to this biography in advancing his new theory concerning the origin of the Pešitta. The opinions as to its origin were divided at that time. Some, among whom was Gwilliam, thought it to be a work of the second century. Others, as Hort, dated this version in the third century or later. In our country Wildeboer expressed the idea that the history of the Syriac Bible was that of a continual revision according to the Greek, and he thought that the last redaction was late: he even connected with it the name of Jacob of Edessa, who died in 708¹². In the midst of this uncertainty Burkitt proposed his thesis which he thought to be the definite solution to the riddle of the Pešitta. From a thorough study of the Gospel quotations of Ephraim the Syrian, who died in 373, he concluded that in his time the Pešitta version was not yet in existence¹³. The uniform text in the mass of its manuscripts made it likely that the promotor of this version was a man of great authority and as such might be considered the metropolitan of Oshroene, bishop Rabbula of Urhâi. And so Burkitt dated the origin of the Pešitta in 411, the year of his enthroning¹⁴. An important indication for the correctness of this theory Burkitt found in the biography of this famous bishop. The biographer tells us that Rabbula "translated by the wisdom of God that was in him the New Testament from Greek into Syriac, because of its variations, exactly as it was"¹⁵. This remark had already attracted attention: Nestle thought that it was a revision, a further assimilation of the Pešitta to a Greek, perhaps Alexandrian text¹⁶, and Wright called it with some hesitation "a first step in the direction of the Philoxenian version"¹⁷. Burkitt, however, connected the remark of the biographer with the first publication of the Pešitta. His main argument was "*before Rabbula, no trace*

¹² G. Wildeboer, *De Waarde der Syrische Evangelien door Cureton ontdekt en uitgegeven*, Academisch Proefschrift, Leiden, 1880, pp. 52-54.

¹³ F. C. Burkitt, *S. Ephraim's Quotations from the Gospel*, Texts and Studies, VII, 2, Cambridge 1901: especially the note on pp. 57-58: "Rabbula's revision of the Syriac N.T."

¹⁴ There are reasons to fix the date of his enthroning in the year 412.

¹⁵ Overbeck, p. 172, ll. 18-20; the translation given here is that of Burkitt.

¹⁶ P.R.E.², vol. XV, p. 195.

¹⁷ W. Wright, *A short History of Syriac Literature*, London 1894, p. 11.

of the Peshitta: after Rabbula hardly a trace of any other text" ¹⁸. And he tried to prove this statement with our biography: whereas Ephraim and Aphrahat did not know the text of the Pešitta, our biographer, who lived in Edessa and wrote his work shortly after the death of Rabbula, was acquainted with only one text, the Pešitta ¹⁹.

The thesis of the Rabbulan authorship of the Pešitta made a deep impression and Burkitt's view was adopted by many critics, as Nestle, Dobschütz, Vogels and Kenyon. Only a few ventured upon contradicting his theory, among whom were such scholars as Mingana ²⁰ and Nau ²¹. I cannot deal here with all the various objections put forward by them. The most decisive attack was made recently by Vööbus ²². He pointed out that Rabbula never used a Pešitta text, not even in the last years of his episcopal government: Rabbula's text was of the Old Syriac type ²³. Black mitigated this conclusion by calling Rabbula's text "a kind of half-way house between the Old Syriac represented by S and C and the final and definitive form of the Syriac Vulgate which has come down to us" ²⁴. Moreover Vööbus showed that Burkitt's verdict that there was hardly a trace of an Old Syriac text after Rabbula was without proof; on the contrary, the Old Syriac text

¹⁸ F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. II, Cambridge 1904, esp. p. 161.

¹⁹ F. C. Burkitt, *o.c.*, pp. 160–165.

²⁰ A. Mingana, "The remaining Syriac Versions of the Gospels", *The Expository Times*, vol. 26, 1914–1915, pp. 379–381.

²¹ F. Nau, "L'Araméen Chrétien (Syriaque)", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, vol. 99, 1929, pp. 232–287; esp. pp. 272–276.

F. Nau "Les 'belles actions' de Mar Rabboula, évêque d'Édesse de 412 au 7 août 435 (ou 436)", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, vol. 103, 1931, pp. 97–135, sub 6: "Rabboula et la Version Pechitto du N.T.", pp. 115–120.

²² A. Vööbus, *Investigations into the Text of the New Testament used by Rabbula of Edessa*, Contributions of Baltic University, No. 59, Pinneberg 1947.

²³ A. Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac*, Louvain 1951: ch. V. "The Period of bishop Rabbula of Edessa", p. 65.

²⁴ M. Black, Rabbula of Edessa and the Peshitta, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. 33, 1951, pp. 203–210; esp. p. 209 sq.

appeared to have been in long use after this bishop²⁵; and the Pešitta, although probably older than Rabbula's time²⁶, met with much opposition and was introduced in Edessa as the official text not before the end of the fifth century and only gradually gained ground²⁷.

If this thesis of Vööbus is right, and there are many reasons to think so, then it raises the question, why the author of our biography quoted from a version that was not current in ecclesiastical circles. Did he really quote from the Pešitta, as Burkitt and even Vööbus²⁸ supposed? My first suspicion was strengthened when studying the recently found Coptic Gospel of Thomas: an agreement between a logion of this Gospel and a paraphrase of a Gospel text in the biography — see below no. 7 — gave rise to this study of the Gospel text in the biography of Rabbula.

It is not possible to give here a detailed survey of the Tatianic witnesses which are quoted in the following pages. Full titles of the editions used in this paper can be found in the current handbooks of textual criticism. We may refer to the new edition of H. J. Vogels's *Handbuch der Textkritik des Neuen Testaments*, Bonn 1955², pp. 111–115. These are the sigla that we have used: **T^A**: Arabic Diatessaron; **T^E**: Ephraim's Commentary on the Diatessaron; **T^L**: Latin Diatessaron; **T^V**: Venetian Diatessaron; **T^T**: Toscan Diatessaron; **T^N**: Dutch Diatessaron; **T^D**: German Diatessaron; **T^{Ahd}**: "althochdeutsche" Diatessaron; **T^{Pepys}**: Pepsysian Harmony; P.-H.: Persian Harmony; if necessary, the manuscripts of the various diatessara were added in brackets, e.g. **T^{N(S)}**: the Stuttgart manuscript of the Dutch Diatessaron. The Greek Δ designates the hypothetical, original Syriac Diatessaron. For the wording of **T^E** we have used L. Leloir, *Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Evangile Concordant, Version Armenienne*, Louvain 1954 (C.S.C.O. vol. 145) and not the translation of J. B. Aucher and G. Mösinger of 1876.

²⁵ A. Vööbus, *Studies*, passim; see especially p. 172 sqq.

²⁶ A. Vööbus, *Das Alter der Peschitta, Oriens Christianus*, vol. 38, 1954, pp. 1–10; cf. his *Studies*, ch. IV: "The Peshitta", pp. 46–60; Although it is possible that the Pešitta is older than Rabbula's time, I still question whether Vööbus has given the proof of its existence before Rabbula.

²⁷ A. Vööbus, *Studies*, p. 175.

²⁸ A. Vööbus, *Studies*, pp. 72–73.

1. Matt. 1, 23: Overbeck, p. 197, ll. 13–15; Bickell, p. 200

ܐܡܢ ܠܢ ܝܫܝܐ ܢܒܝܐ ܕܝܫܝܐ
 ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ
 ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ
 ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ

For he, Isaiah the prophet, calls:

“the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and they shall call his name ‘Ammanuel,

which is interpreted: with us our God”.

This is a quotation not from the book of Isaiah, but from the Gospel of Matthew, as can be seen from its wording, especially from the interpretation of the name *‘Ammanuel*.

a. That the name of the prophet was Isaiah our author could read in the Old Syriac version: S^{sc} have ܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܩܘܪܝܢܐ against S^p which follows the Greek. The reading came from Δ: cf. T^E, T^V and T^{N(L)}; its influence is evident in the Greek D, the Old Latin manuscripts *a b c d f g² aur*, and even in some manuscripts of the Vulgate, D ℱ^{mg} L Q and R: “*per Isaiam prophetam*”.

b. The quotation omits the *ἰδοὺ* that has been rendered in S^{scp}. The omission of such particles as ܐܡܢ was a characteristic feature of Tatian’s harmony, as we can see here in T^T, T^V, T^{N(SH)} and T^{D(M)}, cf. P.H.

c. “*they shall call*” is another indication that our biographer quotes the Matthean text here, for the Syriac version of Isaiah has “*shall be called*”, which reading was adopted by Tatian, cf. T^{L(AD)}, T^T and T^{pepys} 29; the influence of Δ can be traced in S^c, in ms. Berlin 1108 of S^p and in P.H., moreover in the text of Aphrahat and in the Syriac translation of the homily which Rabbula is said to have delivered in the great church of Constantinople 30. Here our text is in accordance with S^p and S^s, which faithfully render the Greek *καλέσουσιν*.

29 The “Bibel 1466” has: “*sein nam wirt geruoffen*”. Less certain are the ambiguous wordings of T^{N(LS)}, T^V and T^{D(M)}.

30 The sermon was printed by Overbeck in his *Opera Selecta*; the quotation stands on p. 242, ll. 25–27; the author of the biography tells us, in Overbeck, p. 198, ll. 23–25, that Rabbula delivered this sermon in “the Great Church”. It is most probable that the translator was the same person as the author of Rabbula’s life.

2. Matt. 4, 1: Overbeck, p. 167, ll. 5-7; Bickell, p. 173

ܢܦܘ ܠܘܚܡܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	He went out alone in the wilderness,
ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	that also he might be tempted by the Accuser,
ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	according to the example of our Lord.

In this allusion to Matt. 4, 1 the words $\text{ܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ}$ are those of S^{SP} (S^c hiat.). But one element deserves our attention, viz. the verb ܢܦܘ "go out, depart" of which the causative stem, as the equivalent of the Markan $\epsilon\kappa\beta\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\epsilon\iota$, was used in Δ : this is evident from Aphrahat and from S^s in Luke 4, 1 where it is used against S^p and the Greek.

3. Matt. 5, 45: Overbeck, p. 194, ll. 22-25; Bickell, p. 198

ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	Again he strived to imitate the mercy
ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	of the Father, which (is) in heaven . . .
ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	according to his perfect love towards God,
ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	and he was showing indeed in like manner
ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܐ	his care on the good and on the evil.

Here we have an allusion to Matt. 5, 45 par., containing some noteworthy elements:

a. "on the good and on the evil" against the Greek $\epsilon\pi\iota$ $\pi\omicron\nu\eta\rho\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$. The reversed order and the repetition of the preposition was common in the Syriac tradition, S^{scp} and Aphrahat; this twofold variation had its origin in Δ , as still can be seen in T^T "sopra buoni e sopra rei" and in T^{N(SH)} "up die goede ende up die quade". The same order without the second "on" can be found, besides in T^A, T^{L(AD)}, T^V and P.H., in the Old Latin $a\ c\ f\ f^1\ h\ l^*$ *aur* and in the most manuscripts of the Vulgate³¹. As this reversed

³¹ The Old Latin mss. $k\ b\ l^{opt}$ have the Greek order, just like the Vulgate mss. B H F; there are good reasons to suppose that the three latter mss. preserve the reading of Jerome, cf. H. J. Vogels, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Diatessaron im Abendland*, Münster i.W. 1919, p. 47.

order occurs already in the text of Tertullian, Irenaeus and Cyprian, the variant must have been pre-Tatianic. There is no Greek manuscript that has this order, but it has been found in the Pseudo-Clementine literature (Hom. III, 57; XI, 12; XVIII, 2), Epiphanius and Origen.

b. *“the Father, which is in heaven”*; the omission of *υμῶν* is not testified in S^{scP}. But the Pseudo-Clementines, with their Syriac background, have the omission, Hom. III, 57 *ὁ πατήρ ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς*; cf. Clement of Alexandria, Protr. XI, 114.

c. *“to imitate”* may be a paraphrase of the author, but the same idea has been expressed by Clem. Al., Protr. XI, 114: *τὸν πατέρα μιμούμενος ὃς . . . ἀνατέλλει τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ*.³²

d. *“the mercy”* an allusion to the Lukan *“merciful”* (Luke 6, 36); this harmonisation of Matthew and Luke is frequent in patristic literature. As a good parallel we may quote here Ps.-Clem. Hom. III, 57 *γίνεσθε ἀγαθοὶ καὶ οἰκτίρμονες ὡς ὁ πατήρ ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ὃς ἀνατέλλει τὸν ἥλιον ἐπ’ ἀγαθὸς καὶ πονηρούς*.

e. *“in like manner”* was perhaps the addition of the biographer, but the same addition appears in Orat. 14, 25 of Gregory of Nazianzus: . . . *ἀνατέλλει δὲ πᾶσιν ὁμοίως . . .*

The loose character of the allusion forbids us to lay stress on all the various elements, but we may say that these elements together seem to point to a text different from that of the extant Syriac manuscripts, but found in some archaic texts as the Pseudo-Clementines.

4. The Lord’s Prayer in the biography of Rabbula

a. Matt. 6, 10; Luke 11, 2: Overbeck, p. 172, ll. 2–3; Bickell, p. 177

ܕܘܘܠܘܢ ܕܘܘܠܘܢ *“his will be done”*: this reminds us of the wording of S^p *ܕܘܘܠܘܢ ܕܘܘܠܘܢ* *“be done thy will”* rather than of the Old Syriac wording preserved in S^c (Matt.) and in the Syriac Acts of Thomas: *ܕܘܘܠܘܢ ܕܘܘܠܘܢ* *“be done thy wishes”*. The reversed

³² The idea of imitation originates from Eph. 5, 1. This idea is connected with the notion of *“to become like”* that appears in Aphrahat’s text; cf. also P.H.: *“siate simili al Padre . . .”*; Epiphanius: *ἁμοιοὶ γένεσθε*, both in a Matthean context, and 655 in Matthew: *ἁμοιοὶ* instead of *viol*.

order of the words against all authorities is also testified in one ms. (B.M. Add. 14584) of the works of Jacob of Sarug.

b. **Matt. 6, 11; Luke 11, 3:** Overbeck, p. 168, l. 2; Bickell, p. 173
 ܠܫܘܚܐ ܕܥܡܢܘܬܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ
 “(the Goodness) sent to them the bread of their necessity”: this is one of the test cases which Burkitt applied to prove that our biographer had used the Pešitta. As a matter of fact S^p has in both passages ܠܫܘܚܐ ܕܥܡܢܘܬܗܘܢ
 “the bread of our necessity” against the Old Syriac ܠܫܘܚܐ ܕܥܡܢܘܬܗܘܢ
 “continual bread” as found in S^c (Matt.), S^{sc} (Luke) and Jacob of Sarug. For the sake of completeness we must add that elsewhere in the biography — Overbeck, p. 169, l. 18; Bickell, p. 175 — a somewhat different wording has been used: ܠܫܘܚܐ ܕܥܡܢܘܬܗܘܢ
 “bread of his necessity”.

c. **Matt. 6, 13; Luke 11, 4:** Overbeck, p. 169, ll. 5–6; Bickell, p. 175

ܘܗܘܝܢܘܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ
 “that (God) might save him from all evil (things)”. In this allusion the verb used is that of S^p in Luke: ܠܫܘܚܐ ܕܥܡܢܘܬܗܘܢ
 “but save us from the evil”, and not that in ܠܫܘܚܐ ܕܥܡܢܘܬܗܘܢ
 “but deliver us from the evil” which is the text of S^{sp} (Matt.) and S^c (Luke) and of the Syriac Acts of Thomas and of Jacob of Sarug. The addition of “all” seems free paraphrase, although we may point to the “but deliver us from all evil” of Hebr. Matthew³³.

The three allusions make it evident that the author was acquainted with a recension of the Lord's Prayer that was almost identical to that of S^p.

5. **Matt. 11, 29:** Overbeck, p. 166, ll. 21–22; Bickell, p. 172

ܘܗܘܝܢܘܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܘܕܘܠܗܘܢ ܠܥܘܠܡܝܢ
 “and she took the yoke of the Messiah”: there is only one N.T. passage that speaks of the yoke of Christ, Matt. 11, 29 sq. Here we have a reminiscence of the words of verse 29: ἀρατε τὸν ζυγόν μου. The Syriac rendering of αἰρω in S^{sp} and Aphrahat is ܘܥܠ . In our text the verb is ܘܥܠ ; that this

³³ H. J. Schonfield, *בשורת מתי, An old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel*, Edinburgh 1927, p. 69.

was a good Old Syriac tradition³⁴ has been shown by Vööbus in his “*Studies*”, p. 193 who thinks that the reading was that of *A*.

6. **Matt. 13, 22–23:** Overbeck, p. 166, ll. 3–10; Bickell, p. 172

In this passage the author follows in his description of Rabbula’s thoughts and deeds very closely the Biblical text of the parable of the sower. In this paraphrase we meet with some curious variants that may not be neglected:

a. ܠܝܢ ܠܠ ܨܦܝܢ ܠܠܝܢ ܠܠܝܢ “*like thicket(s) and thorns choke the seed . . .*” Bickell translated “*thistles and thorns*”, and this translation seems not impossible. Payne Smith interpreted the two words as “*briars and thorns*”³⁵. The meaning of ܠܠܝܢ, however, is in the first place: “*thicket, thorny shrub or hedge*”³⁶. Two choking herbs are mentioned in an allusion of Clement of Alexandria to this parable: *καὶ μὴν (οἱ μῆτι) ταύτας ἐν τῇ παραβολῇ τοῦ τετραμεροῦς σπόρου ἠρίξατο τὰς μερίμνας, τὸ σπέρμα τοῦ λόγου φήσας τὸ εἰς ἀκάνθας καὶ φραγμοὺς πέσον συμπινηγῆναι ὑπ’ αὐτῶν καὶ μὴ καρποφόρησαι δυνηθῆναι.* (Strom. IV, vi, 31). That this was a good Syriac tradition appears from P.H., which has “*e qualche cosa cadde tra i rovi e le spine lo soffocarono*” (Luke 8, 7) and “*e quello che cadde in mezzo ai rovi . . .*” (Luke 8, 14). Perhaps Ephraim knew this tradition, for he commented on the ordinary text with “*terra . . . vim spinis et tribulis dedit*” (Leloir, p. 109), but in that case the Syriac word was interpreted by the Armenian translator in the same sense as Bickell did.

b. ܠܠܝܢ ܠܠܝܢ ܠܠܝܢ “*the seed of the Word of God*”: cf. the words τὸ σπέρμα τοῦ λόγου in the quotation of Clement given above.

³⁴ We find further evidence for it in the ܠܠܝܢ of S^{pal}; this Malkite version seems to have an Old Syriac stratum: M. Black pointed out that the Palestinian Syriac Gospels are an additional and independent Syriac witness to the Diatessaron: “The Palestinian Syriac Gospels and the Diatessaron”, *Oriens Christianus*, vol. 36, 1939, pp. 101–111.

³⁵ J. Payne Smith, *A compendious Syriac Dictionary*, Oxford 1903, p. 194, s.v. and p. 207, s.v. ܠܠܝܢ.

³⁶ This sense of the word fits in with the use in the various Semitic languages. We refer for the Syriac to the dictionaries of J. Brun (1911) p. 213: “*spinetum, vepres, surculus(vitis)*” and of C. Brockelmann (1895¹), p. 148: “*herba inutilis, virgulta, vepres*”.

c. *ܟܠܗܘܢ ܕܐܠܘܗܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܘܝܘܒ* “the Word of God that he received”: the addition “of God” can be found in **T^{L(A)}**, in Codex Bezae and in Hebr. Matthew.

The whole passage is a mixture of elements of all three Synoptics, cf. the *ܟܠܗܘܢ* taken from Luke and the *ܡܘܠܕ* of Mark.

7. Matt. 13, 45–46: Overbeck, p. 165, ll. 22–24; Bickell, p. 171 sq

<i>ܟܝܢ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܒܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ</i>	Like a wise merchant,
<i>ܕܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ</i>	who went out after good pearls;
<i>ܕܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ</i>	when he found the pearl of his expectation,
<i>ܟܝܢ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ</i>	he went, sold everything
<i>ܕܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ</i>	that he had, and bought it.

The author describes Rabbula in terms borrowed from the parable of the Pearl; the wording, however, differs from that in the ordinary Syriac texts:

a. the omission of *ἀνθρώπω* before *ἐμπόρῳ* our text has in common with **N* B, 1424**, some other minuscules, and with Cyril, Chrysostomus and Ambrosius. It may have been omitted in **T^N**, but the omission does not occur in **T^{L(F)}** as Plooy suggested³⁷.

b. The addition of “wise” looks as if it were made by the author of the biography. But there are indications that the addition originated from a very old Syriac tradition. In the Coptic Gospel of Thomas, of which the Syriac origin seems to me beyond doubt, we find the parable of the merchant in logion 76 combined with the word of the treasure in heaven, Matt. 6, 20: and here we read the following characteristic of the merchant: “*That merchant was prudent . . .*”³⁸. In his study on the relation of the Gospel of Thomas to the Clementine literature, Quispel points to the wording of

³⁷ D. Plooy–C. A. Phillips, *The Liège Diatessaron*, Part 2, Amsterdam 1931, p. 182.

³⁸ G. Quispel, *L'Évangile selon Thomas et les Clémentines*, Vig. Chr., Vol. XII, 4, 1958, p. 191.

G. Quispel, *The Gospel of Thomas and the New Testament*, Vig. Chr., Vol. XI, 4, 1957, p. 190.

cf. J. Leipoldt, Ein neues Evangelium? Das koptische Thomasevangelium übersetzt und besprochen, *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 83, 1958, coll.

Recognitions “*solum prudentem*” (III, 62). The Pseudo-Clementine literature has a Syriac background, so that an old tradition current in Syria may have influenced the wording of Recognitions here. These two indirect testimonies for the addition of “*wise*” in the Syriac tradition receive new evidence from our biographer’s text. In this connexion it seems not out of place to point to the interesting fact that in S^c the *γυνή* of Matt. 13, 33 has been called **ܩܘܕܫܬܐ ܩܘܕܫܬܐ** “*a wise woman*”. Was there a tendency in an old Syriac stratum of the Gospels – perhaps under influence of the Aramaic Gospel according to the Hebrews? – to lay stress on Wisdom in the parables of the Kingdom? We may also refer here to the interlinear gloss in T^{N(L)} at Matt. 13, 33.

c. We find some points of contact with the Syriac texts: so we read here **ܐܘܠ ܘܒ** “*he went, sold*” with S^{sp} against the **ܐܘܠ ܘܐܒ** “*he went and sold*” of S^c which is a faithful rendering of the Greek; further, we read . . . **ܠܠܘܘܬܐ ܕܘܠܘܘܬܐ** “*everything that*” with S^c against the **ܠܠܘܘܬܐ** “*all what*” of S^{sp}; and finally **ܘܐܘܒܘܬܐ ܠܘܘܘܬܐ** with S^p against the **ܘܐܘܒܘܬܐ ܠܘܘܘܬܐ** “*and bought it for himself*” of S^c.

d. Among the elements differing from what we have in the ordinary Syriac Gospels the most interesting is, that our text has **ܕܘܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܘܒܘܬܐ** “*of his expectation*” (or should it be read **ܕܘܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܘܘܒܘܬܐ** “*which he had hoped for*”?) where the Greek has *ἐνα πολύτιμον* and the Syriac **ܠܘܘܘܬܐ** “*good*”. This may be a variation due to our author’s way of paraphrasing. But there seems reason to refer to the Coptic Thomas again, logion 22: “. . . damit kein Räuber einen Weg finde, zu euch zu kommen. Denn die Sache, die ihr erwartet, werden sie finden. Möge in eurer Mitte ein verständiger Mensch sein!”³⁹ This looks like a negative wording of our parable: *others* find the thing *one* has hoped for; the one thing needful is to be wise; the merchant of pearls was wise: he found what he had hoped for and did not leave it to others.

481–496; col. 490: “. . . jener Kaufmann der klug war . . .”. Prof. Dr. G. Quispel kindly furnished me with an English translation of Logion 76 of the Gospel of Thomas, p. 94, 14: The Kingdom of the Father is like a man, a merchant, who possessed merchandise (and) found a pearl. That merchant was prudent. He sold the merchandise, he bought the one pearl for himself.

³⁹ J. Leipoldt, *ibid.* col. 485.

8. Matt. 17, 5: Overbeck, p. 171, l. 2; Bickell, p. 176

The words **ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ** “*in whom I am pleased*” seem to allude to the well-known *ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα* of the Gospels. The Syriac verb used to render *εὐδόκησα* is always the Etp'e'el **ܕܘܚܪܐ** — Matt. 3, 17; 12, 18; Mark 1, 11; Luke 3, 22 —, except in Matt. 17,5 where S^c reads **ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ**.

9. Matt. 25, 21, 23: Overbeck, p. 178, ll. 12–15; Bickell, p. 183

ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	According to the testimony of God, who said
ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	to him in the person of that (man) with his talents:
ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	“O good and faithful servant,
ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	over few you were faithful,
ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	over much I will appoint you:
ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	enter into the joy of your lord!”.

Here we have an explicit reference to the parable of the talents, Matt. 25, 21 (23). Unfortunately we do not have the text of S^{sc} to compare with: both fail here. We see that the Greek *εὖ* is rendered with “O”. S^p gives literally **ܘܚܪܐ** “*Well (done)*”. The “O” of the quotation was the rendering used in Δ, cf. T^A, T^{N(S)}, and T^V. Its influence can be traced in seven manuscripts of S^p, in S^{pal}, in P.H., and in Hebr. Matthew. It is important to look at Luke 19, 17 in the parable of the pounds: there we have “O” in S^s and in two manuscripts of S^p, against the testimony of S^{cp} which follow the Greek.

10. Luke 6, 45: Overbeck, p. 178, l. 27 — p. 179, l. 1; Bickell, p. 183

ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	For from the superfluities of his heart
ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ	his lips were speaking.

These words our biographer borrowed from his Gospel text. The Greek *ἔκ γὰρ περισσεύματος καρδίας λαλεῖ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ* was rendered in S^p in almost the same words **ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ** “*For from the superfluities of the heart the lips*

(were) speaking” ; in Matt. 12, 34^b all manuscripts of S^p except one follow the Greek. We cannot conclude now that our writer took it from S^p of Luke: also Aphrahat has used this wording, Hom. IX, 8 and XIV, 29; ed. Wright pp. 187, 303. Here we have one of the cases where S^p preserves an Old Syriac reading that has been revised in the now extant Old Syriac manuscripts. It seems that the Diatessaron contained both readings, cf. T^A, ch. X: “... lips...” and ch. XIV: “... mouth...”

11. Luke 12, 48^c: Overbeck, p. 181, ll. 19–21; Bickell, p. 186

ܡܢ ܗܠܘܟܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ	after the word of our Lord who testifies to them:
ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ	“to whom much — he says — has been committed
ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ	also much they will require at his hand”.

This is a quotation of verse 48^c and not of verse 48^b as appears from the verb “to commit”; there are some important variations:

a. ܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ “to whom” against the ܗܝܘܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ “and to him that” of S^{sep}.

b. the first “much” stands here before the verb; the other Syriac texts have it after the verb, where the Greek has it. Our text is in accordance with that of Cyril: ὅ... πολλὸν παρέθεντο; cf. Macar. Hom. xxix, 7.

c. ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ “has been committed”, against the active form of S^{sep} which corresponds with the παρέθεντο of the Greek. The passive form was most probably the reading of Δ as we gather from its occurrence in T^A, T^V, T^F and T^{N(S)}. We trace its influence in six manuscripts of S^p. Among the Greek manuscripts, 251 and 579 have the passive.

d. ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ “also much”: the extant Syriac texts S^{sep} have ܕܡܢ ܗܝܘܢܐ which word is a good rendering of the Greek περισσότερον. The biographer’s text is in harmony with Δ: cf. T^A (فكثير) “also much”, T^V, T^F, and T^N, all witnessing to “much”. This reading does not occur in Greek manuscripts, but we have a remarkable conflation in 1241: περισσότερον αὐτήσουσιν αὐτὸν πολὺ⁴⁰. But here

⁴⁰ We may note here H. J. Vogels’s opinion concerning 1241 in his *Beiträge*, p. 13: “... die griechische Handschrift δ 371 (Sinai, Katharinen-

again we find Cyril in harmony with our text: *πολὸν ζητήσουσιν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ*.

e. *ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ* “they will require at his hand”, as in S^p against S^{sc}, the latter two being faithful renderings of the Greek *αἰτήσουσιν αὐτόν*. The addition of “at his hand” occurs in S^{sc} in verse 48^b where the Greek has *παρ’ αὐτοῦ*. The reading of our biographer and S^p may be an old one. Here we have another agreement with Cyril’s text that reads *ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ* instead of *αὐτόν*.

12. Luke 14, 26. 27: Overbeck, p. 166, l. 25 — p. 167, l. 3; Bickell, p. 172 sq

<p><i>ܒܗ ܕܢ ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i> <i>ܡܦܪܟܐ ܠܥܘܒܘܕܐ ܡܦܪܟܐ</i></p>	<p>When he had abstained then, according to the command of our Lord, from his mother and from his wife, and from his sons and from his daughters, and from his own lands and from all his property, and from his victuals and from his servants and from his friends and from all that the world gains, he carried according to the command of our Lord his cross secretly and went out after him completely.</p>
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This combination of forsaking and cross carrying is that of the Lukan passage; the wording, however, is quite different in detail.

The exhaustive enumeration most likely is that of our author: he gives a detailed description of Rabbula’s deeds. But it seems that our author was partly influenced by a fixed manner of speaking, cf. Apost. Const. V, 6: *ἀποταξώμεθα οὖν καὶ γονεῦσι καὶ συγγενέσιν καὶ φίλοις καὶ γόναιμι καὶ τέκνοις καὶ κτήμασι καὶ σύμπαντι τῷ βίῳ . . .*

kloster) die der echten Diatessaronlesarten weit mehr aufweist, als es aus von Sodens Apparat deutlich wird”.

13. Luke 14, 33: Overbeck, p. 166, ll. 10–12; Bickell, p. 172

<p> ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ </p>	<p> He accepted then the command of our Lord with gladness: "Who does not leave all his property, a disciple he cannot be of mine". </p>
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We note the following readings here:

- a. ܡܠܟܐ "all", written as in S^{sc} against the ܡܠܟܐ of S^p.
- b. . . . ܡܠܟܐ "who", instead of ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ which we read in S^{scp} as good rendering of the Greek οὗτως πᾶς ἐξ ὑμῶν. The wording of our text was that of Δ, cf. T^{N(L)}: "also ghelike seggie u dat so wie . . .", T^{N(SH)}: "also seggie u. so wie . . .", and T^F: "e cosi dico a voi: qualunque . . .", all omitting πᾶς ἐξ ὑμῶν.⁴¹
- c. ܥܡܡ "leave" with S^{scp} for Greek ἀποτάσσεται.
- d. The order of the last sentence is that of S^{sc} (1, 2, 3, 4) against that of S^p (2, 3, 4, 5, 1).
- e. The wording of this last sentence, however, is that of S^p "disciple of mine", and not that of S^{sc} "my disciple" which looks like a revision.

14. Luke 16, 23: Overbeck, p. 204, ll. 15–17; Bickell, p. 207

<p> ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܢܐ </p>	<p> "Remember, he said, my brethren that it has been written, that Lazar, because he endured bad things, was esteemed worthy to recline at the bosom of Abraham, in the place of the kingdom" </p>
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At first sight this short reference to the parable of Dives and Lazarus does not seem important with regard to the text. Nevertheless, we find two elements that deserve special attention. First of all "to recline": in our Greek text we read ὄρᾳ Ἀβραάμ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν καὶ Λάζαρον ἐν τοῖς κόλποις αὐτοῦ. In the Old Latin

⁴¹ The wording of these Tatianic witnesses is: "Even so I say unto you (that) whosoever . . .", suggesting a separate logion beginning with "whosoever . . ."; this is exactly the case in our Syriac quotation. I did not find a Greek text beginning with ὅστις.

mss. *b c d e m q r*¹ we find the interesting addition “*requiescentem*”, which addition appears also in the Greek manuscripts *D* and *Θ*, most probably under Latin influence: *ἀναπαυόμενον*. Tertullian, Hilary, Augustine and Cassian had it in their texts, and it can be found in the Greek Fathers Methodius, Epiphanius and Origen. Also the Armenian Gospel text testifies to it. Was it found in a Syriac text? Ephraim indeed knew the tradition, for he speaks of the “*sinus Abrahae*” as the “*locus quietis eius*” (**T^E**, Leloir, p. 153). Was it the text of *Δ*? It seems so: in **T^V** we read “*Lazaro che stavo en lo seno suo*” and in **T^{N(L)}** we find “*Lazarum sitten in sinen schoet*”; we must remember that the Syriac ܪܘܢ has the meanings 1. to recline for sleeping, *lay down*, sleep, and 2. to recline for a meal, *sit down*, eat. It is probable that Tatian borrowed this addition from Marcion, for he already may have known and used the reading: Tert. adv. Marc. IV, 34: “*et pauperis in sinu requiescentis*”.

15. **Luke 16, 25**: see the quotation of no. 14

There is another interesting element in the quotation: verse 25 reads in our Greek text: . . . *ὅτι ἀπέλαβες τὰ ἀγαθὰ σου ἐν τῇ ζωῇ, καὶ Λάζαρος ὁμοίως τὰ κακά*. In the case of Lazarus no verb was used. The Syriac texts **S^{sep}** render *ἀπέλαβες* with the verb ܡܠܟܐ, but they also do not have a verb in the second part of the sentence. In our quotation a verb was necessary, but we would expect the verb ܡܠܟܐ “to receive”, and we find ܡܚܒܝܐ “to endure”. Free paraphrase of the author? I do not think so. When we look in P.H., which contains so much Old Syriac material, we read “*ricordati che ricevisti . . . e Lazzaro sopportò . . .*”. This Old Syriac reading has not been preserved in our extant manuscripts.

16. **Luke 23, 46**: Overbeck, p. 206, l. 21; Bickell, p. 209

ܡܚܒܝܐ ܠܗ ܒܝܕܗ ܠܐܝܬܝܐ ܠܝܫܘܥܝܗ “And in his hand I lay my spirit”. This clear reference to the word of the dying Jesus, contains two variations:

a. The singular “hand” against the Greek and other Syriac texts, can be found in ms. B of **T^A** and in the Persian Harmony. Greek testimonies are *Δ* and Epiphanius: *εἰς χεῖρά σου*. The singular was in the Hebrew text ܒܝܕܗ and in the Targum ܒܝܕܗ, ܒܝܕܗ,

but the Plural was the reading of the LXX. The O.T. Pešitta does not have an equivalent rendering in Ps. 31, 6.

b. The wording **ܘܡܝܢ ܗܘܐ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ** is that of S^{sc}; S^p has only **ܘܡܝܢ**.

17. John 1, 1: Overbeck, p. 197, ll. 22–23; Bickell, p. 201

ܘܟܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ For he has said:

ܘܟܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ “In the beginning (He) was the Word”.

This quotation is in full accordance with the text of S^{scp} and Aphrahat.

18. John 1, 14: Overbeck, p. 197, ll. 19–22; Bickell, p. 200 sq.

ܘܟܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	“And lo, John explains in his Gospel:
ܘܟܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	“the Word became flesh and sojourned among us,
ܘܟܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	and we saw — he said — His glory, the glory
ܘܟܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	as of the Only, who (is) from the Father”

This quotation from John was one of the two test cases which Burkitt applied to our biographer’s text; it was the more decisive one: “. . . there is no surer test of the Biblical text used by a Syriac author than the phrase used for the Incarnation . . .”⁴². Burkitt had in view two elements:

a. **ܘܟܘܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ . . . ܘܟܘܢ**: “up to the time of Rabbula our Syriac authorities — and Burkitt noted as such S^c, Aphrahat and Ephraim — always treat **ܘܟܘܢ** “the Word” as feminine . . .; after Rabbula — and Burkitt mentioned our biographer and Isaac of Antioch — we find **ܘܟܘܢ** in . . . theological sense treated as masculine . . .”⁴³

b. **ܘܟܘܢ** “flesh”, again an agreement with S^p; the Old Syriac text had **ܘܟܘܢ** as one can conclude from S^c, Aphrahat, Ephraim, Acts of Thomas, Addai, Titus of Bostra, Philoxenus of Mabbug⁴⁴.

⁴² F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. II, p. 141.
⁴³ F. C. Burkitt, *ibid.*, pp. 306–307; cf. pp. 44, 109, 140, 161.
⁴⁴ A. Baumstark, “Die syrische Übersetzung des Titus von Bostra und das ‘Diatessaron’”, *Biblica*, vol. 16, 1935, pp. 257–299; p. 282.
 A. Vööbus, *Studies*, Appendix IV, “The Gospel Text of Philoxenos”, pp. 197–201, esp. p. 199.

Burkitt said: “. . . the Word made flesh, a phrase which (so far as I know) never occurs in Syriac literature before the 5th century”⁴⁵.

To these two elements we may add another, not observed by Burkitt:

c. **ܕܟܘܠܗܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** “*glory as of the only*” in accordance with S^p and the Greek text, but against the Old Syriac **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** “*as the glory of the Only*” which we find in S^c, one ms. of S^p, Titus of Bostra, S^{pal} and P.H.; the reading originated from Δ, cf. T^A, T^{N(LS)} and T^V.

Our conclusion would be that the author quoted in this case from S^p, if this same quotation did not show a characteristic Old Syriac reading:

d. **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** in the same form as in S^c against that of S^p **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ**. This noticeable reading cannot be ruled out. Unfortunately Burkitt did not observe this variant. The Old Syriac rendering of the Johannine *μονογενής* was **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** as is obvious from S^c in 1, 14. 18; 3, 16. 18, and from S^s (hiat. 1, 14. 18) 3, 16. 18⁴⁶. But S^p always writes **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ**. Here it becomes evident how difficult it is to apply test cases on the Syriac patristic quotations, the more so as the Old Syriac quotation in Titus of Bostra is in harmony here with S^p and reads **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ**.

19. John 10, 11. 15: Overbeck, p. 200, 1, 9; Bickell, p. 203

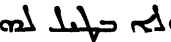
ܐܝܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ “the good shepherd who suffered
ܕܥܘܠܡܐ in behalf of his flock”.



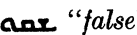

a. This allusion to John 10, 11. 15 contains an element which also can be found in S^p, viz. **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** (h^elaf) “in behalf of; instead of”. The Old Syriac – S^s, Aphrahat, Acts of Thomas – has **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** (‘al ’af) “in behalf of; on account of”.

b. A strange element is “suffered”: the other Syriac texts render the Greek *τίθειαι τήν ψυχήν* with **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** “give one’s life, oneself” (S^s, Acts of Thomas) or with the more accurate **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ** “lay down one’s life” (S^p). Was it free paraphrase? I think that

⁴⁵ F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. II, p. 141.

⁴⁶ In 3, 18 S^s has **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ**, which is a corruption of **ܕܥܘܠܡܐ**.

our author was influenced by some old tradition of John 10, which we have also in P.H. in verse 13, "... *non soffre per le pecore*", where S^{sp} render the Greek correctly, ...  "and he had no care...". Probably P.H. has preserved the Old Syriac reading of verse 13: the biographer was influenced by this wording in his quotation of verse 11 (15).

c. In connexion with John 10, 11 we meet an interesting problem. In the passage mentioned above was spoken of "*the good shepherd*". The biographer used the word "*shepherd*" more than once as characteristic of Rabbula, and then added to it the epithet  "true" (note that S^s calls the hireling of verse 11 with emphasis  "false"); once he speaks of  "... *diligent* (or: *vigorous*, or: *brave*) *shepherd*". I draw attention to this expression — Overbeck, p. 177, l. 17 sq; Bickell, p. 182 — because I found that Bar Hebraeus had said:  "the Armenians read: *diligent shepherd*" in the case of John 10, 11. The edition of Zohrab has "*pastor bonus*". Dr. A. F. J. Klijn of Utrecht informs me that the Armenian editions of the British and Foreign Bible Society and of the American Bible Society have indeed the reading "*brave shepherd*". The same reading we have in ms. A of T^E "*pastor fortis*" against ms. B with "*pastor bonus*". Leloir printed the first reading in the text, the variant of ms. B in the notes. Which of the manuscripts did preserve the reading of T^E?⁴⁷ If ms. A did so, then we may assume that this manuscript has preserved the original reading of Δ. And then we may have found in our biography a spark of that old Syriac tradition.

This list of quotations⁴⁸, paraphrases⁴⁹ and allusions⁵⁰ has not the pretension of completeness. The biographer describes his hero again and again in Biblical terminology, and a more accurate investigation might add to this list some other reminiscences of

⁴⁷ The question is difficult: was ms. B under influence of an Armenian Vulgate text with Zohrab's reading or was ms. A influenced by a Vulgate text just like that edited by the Bible Societies? If the latter is true, what was then the origin of this reading?

⁴⁸ Nos. 1, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

⁴⁹ Nos. 3, 6, 7, 12, 14–15.

⁵⁰ Nos. 2, 4a, 4b, 4c, 5, 8, and 20.

the text of the Gospels, which would throw more light upon that difficult question what was the type of text that the author had before him or knew by heart. It is not always easy to detect the character of a text which appears in patristic quotations, the difficulty being that we are never sure to what extent the author quotes from manuscript or from memory, and in what measure the trained memory of the eastern author has failed.

Be this as it may, the list given above makes it beyond doubt, that Burkitt's verdict "in seiner Erzählung nimmt der Biograph öfters Gelegenheit, das Neue Testament zu zitieren; diese Zitate stimmen mit der Pešitta überein"⁵¹ appears to be wrong. We admit — and we could give more evidence for it — that the author knew the Lord's Prayer in a form identical, or rather almost identical, with that of Sp. But first of all we are not sure that it was Sp indeed, and secondly, if it was Sp, the liturgical text of the Lord's Prayer cannot be decisive for our judgment of the whole Gospel text of the author. The same must be said of the second "crucial" passage that Burkitt put forward: John 1, 14: besides the two elements in this quotation that agree with Sp, we found still another reading that would establish the position of Burkitt, if there was not at the same time a fourth element of marked Old Syriac character which warned us not to draw conclusions too hasty.

It is a surprising fact that the fervent critizer of Burkitt's position, Vööbus, shares the opinion of Burkitt at this point. He detected in the biography five quotations and one reminiscence⁵². The majority of these quotations are "colourless", "but two passages are really capable of bearing witness", John 1, 14 and Matt. 6, 11; they "enable us to decide which Gospel text was used by the biographer. Evidently it was the Peshitta and here we have to

⁵¹ F. C. Burkitt, *Urchristentum im Orient*, Deutsch von Erwin Preuschen, Tübingen 1907, p. 32. Vööbus, *Studies*, p. 73 quotes the English work *Early Eastern Christianity*, London 1904, where it is said more emphatically "... each time, the quotations are in marked accord with the text of the Peshitta" (p. 52).

⁵² A. Vööbus, *Studies*, p. 72 sq. Vööbus refers to the quotations in the edition of Overbeck, pp. 20 (sic), 168, 178, 197, 181 and 204 which are given in our list as nos. 16(?), 4b (an allusion!), 9, 18, 11 and 14.

accept Burkitt's conclusion" ⁵³. His only restriction is that Burkitt was wrong in the conclusion drawn from them, "Rabbula's biography with its five quotations constitutes for Burkitt his one and only supported basis. From this narrow foundation he proceeds . . ." ⁵⁴ The material given above shows that Burkitt built on sandy ground here.

This negative judgment may be completed by some positive suggestions with regard to the nature of the Gospel text used by the author. We saw that the three allusions to the Lord's Prayer — cf. no. 4 — suggested a recension of it almost identical with that of S^p. The other allusions, however, point in another direction. Especially those quoted as nos. 5 and 8 seem to suggest an Old Syriac text. But for our purpose allusions are less valuable than quotations.

We have found nine quotations in the biography. Two of them were in full harmony with the Pešitta text. But in both cases we found the same reading also attested by Diatessaron and Old Syriac evidence, cf. nos. 10 and 17. In seven other cases the quotations differed from Pešitta, but were akin to a text of the Old Syriac type. However, we never meet a text that is in full accordance with that of the extant Old Syriac manuscripts.

If we want to fix the character of the text more precisely, we must look at those elements in the quotations in which the Syriac traditions differ from each other. I counted twenty such elements:

1. In six cases our biographer agrees with S^{sc} against S^p, where the latter has clearly a revised text.

2. In seven cases our biographer has a text different from what we find in S^{scp}; but in all these cases the text of S^{scp} is a revised one, whereas the biographer's text has preserved a Tatianic reading or a Western variant.

3. In seven other cases the text of the biographer goes with S^p. In one case their common reading was clearly a revised text; but this revised text also appeared in S^s, so that the revision seems

⁵³ A. Vööbus, *Researches on the Circulation of the Peshitta in the Middle of the Fifth Century*, Contributions of Baltic University, No. 64, Pinneberg 1948, pp. 13–14: "The Syriac Biography".

⁵⁴ A. Vööbus, *Studies*, p. 73.

to be old. In two cases the agreement of the biographer's text with S^p seems to preserve the Old Syriac reading against S^{sc} which have a revised text⁵⁵. In four cases — all found in John — the agreement with S^p shows a revised text against the archaic text preserved in S^s and S^c.

From this classification we have to conclude that the biographer's text on the whole was less revised and contained more archaic elements than both S^p and S^{cs} have preserved. This general conclusion, however, cannot be applied to all the Gospels in the same measure.

As far as Matthew and Luke are concerned — we did not find explicit quotations from Mark — this general judgment fits in, and receives further evidence from the five paraphrases which show a strong "Western" character with many points of contact with the Diatessaron, Clement of Alexandria and the Pseudo-Clementine literature.

As to John, however, we reach an entirely different conclusion. We found three quotations from the fourth Gospel. One of them was in accordance with the whole Syriac tradition; the remaining two contain some five elements in which the Syriac traditions differ from each other: four times our biographer goes with S^p, once with S^{cs}. This state of affairs shows clearly that the text of John used by the author of Rabbula's life was a more revised one than that of the extant Old Syriac manuscripts, although not yet the very same text that we have in the collated manuscripts of the Pešitta. The question arises whether there was a particular reason for this use of a revised text of John. John's Gospel, and especially its prologue, was important in the Nestorian conflict. It must have been felt an urgent task in the disputing Syriac church to replace the Old Syriac text of the fourth Gospel by a

⁵⁵ The Old Syriac character of S^p was underlined by C. Peters in his article "Der Text der Soghdischen Evangelienbruchstücke und das Problem der Pešitta". *Oriens Christianus*, vol. 33, 1936, pp. 153–162: "Die . . . Überarbeitung war so wenig durchgreifend, dass häufig genug in der Pešitta der Text der altsyrischen Vorlage, die der Überarbeiter seiner Arbeit zugrunde legte, stehen geblieben ist, bald gestützt durch das Zeugnis eines anderen Vetus Syra-Zeugen, bald auch allein nur noch die alte Lesart bietend"; cf. his *Das Diatessaron Tatians*, Roma 1939, p. 44.

more accurate revision, in which e.g. the word **ܩܝܘܐ** "body" had made way for a more exact rendering of the Greek **σῶμα** in John 1, 14, viz. **ܩܝܘܘܐ**. A revision of this kind was used by Rabbula himself⁵⁶, and such a revision was used by his biographer. That these revisions were not identical with what we call the Pešitta, seems to me certain in view of what we know of their text of John⁵⁷.

So far our suggestions concerning the Gospel text in the biography. We could not speak with too much assurance; the material that the biographer offers, although not so scanty as Vööbus suggested, does not allow speaking decisively. Nevertheless, we may say that the result of this investigation is at the same time a negative and a positive one. It is a negative result in so far it deprives Burkitt's theory of its main point of support. And it is a positive result, for it confronts us with two important facts:

a. that a writer of the middle of the fifth century in Edessa had used a text of Matthew and Luke of a more archaic character than we have in the extant Old Syriac manuscripts. This fact seems to corroborate the opinion of Vööbus that the Pešitta was not the official text of Edessa before the end of the fifth century.

b. that this writer knew at the same time a text of the Lord's Prayer and of the Fourth Gospel which bore the stamp of a revision, although not being identical with the revised text which we have in the Pešitta.

These two facts show the importance of the biography of Rabbula

⁵⁶ M. Black, "Rabbula of Edessa and the Peshitta", p. 206 sq. His examination gives the impression that especially in John Rabbula's text has agreements with the Pešitta.

⁵⁷ For a good example of an Old Syriac reading in Rabbula's text of John I may refer to M. Black "Rabbula of Edessa and the Peshitta", p. 207, 209. An Old Syriac remnant in the text of the biographer was the **ܩܝܘܘܐ** of John 1, 14. We may add another instance now. The biographer tells us — Overbeck p. 200 — that he had the design to translate 46 letters of Rabbula into Syriac. Now we have a letter of Rabbula to Bishop Gamallinos in Syriac translation. There is reason to think that the letter was translated by the biographer. Vööbus pays attention to this letter in "The Syriac Translation of the Greek Letter Sent to Gamallinos" in his *Researches*, p. 26 sq. This letter contains a quotation of John 6, 56 with a text like S^a, differing from S^p and the Greek.

for the study of the history of the Syriac Bible. The first fact cannot surprise us after the investigations of Vööbus. The second fact, however, leaves a question: was this revision an official one? We saw already that Rabbula had also a more or less revised text of John. Was it the same revision? And if so, what was the origin of this revision?

In connexion with these questions we may ask whether a possible answer can be found in the biography. I think of the remark concerning Rabbula's translation work which was, as we have seen, a starting-point for Burkitt in his theory of the Rabbulan authorship of the Pešitta. That Rabbula never did "translate" the Pešitta is beyond doubt since the surprising result of Vööbus's researches. But I cannot believe that this remark was an invention of our biographer without any historical foundation. There must have been something that gave rise to his perhaps somewhat exaggerated words. Peeters⁵⁸ supposed that the Pešitta revision was performed in the Persian School of Edessa by order of Rabbula: the soul of this undertaking was not Rabbula, but the renowned member of this school, Ḥiba "the Translator"⁵⁹. The suggestion is attractive, for it might explain the acceptance of the Pešitta in both Monophysitic and Nestorian circles. But from the investigations made by Vööbus we can gather that the Persian School stuck to the Old Syriac Gospel tradition. It does not seem probable then that Ḥiba was the author of the Pešitta. We have to leave the idea that the Pešitta was an Edessenian product. Another interesting interpretation of the biographer's remark was that of Nau⁶⁰. Nau gave as his opinion that Rabbula introduced in the Edessenian Church an Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe of the "Curetonian" type which was nothing else than a monophysitic retouch of the "Antiochian" Separate Gospels which we have now in only one manuscript, the Sinaitic Syriac Palimpsest. It is a noteworthy coincidence that Black found a fine point of agreement

⁵⁸ P. Peeters, "La Vie de Rabboula", p. 185 sq: "Ce ne peut être qu'Ibas . . .".

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⁶⁰ F. Nau, "L'Araméen Chrétien", p. 274; cf. "Les 'Belles Actions'", p. 116, 119 sq.

between S^c and Rabbula's text, the reading "and not with measure was the Father giving the Spirit to His Son" in John 3, 34: "... this might point to the Curetonian text as the Rabbulan revision"⁶¹. But, as Black has pointed out, other quotations do not support this suggestion. And therefore, I think, the opinion of Nau must be ruled out as a possibility. Black's conclusion was that the work of Rabbula was "... an authoritative revision of the Syriac New Testament, in the case of the Gospels, a revised *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*"⁶². It seems to me that this revision was not a radical one: the purpose was to have a more accurate translation of the passages that were important in the christological discussions within the Edessenian clergy. Such passages were only frequent in John's Gospel; and therefore it was especially the Fourth Gospel that underwent some drastic changes. This revision of John must have had some influence: it is not improbable that his admiring biographer made use of it.

*Amsterdam, Koninginneweg 129*¹¹¹

⁶¹ M. Black, "Rabbula of Edessa and the Peshitta", p. 209.

⁶² M. Black, *ibid.*, p. 210.