Three Letters

Philoxenus of Mabbug (c. AD 440–523)

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Contents

Part 2 -- 100. The Letter to the Emperor Zeno **1**

Part 2 -- A. The Letter to the Monks **6**

Part 2 -- B. The first Letter to the Monks of Beth-Gaugal **13**

Introduction **21**

CHAPTER I. **22**

CHAPTER II. **23**

C. **27**

Prefatory Material **29**

Part 2 -- 100. The Letter to the Emperor Zeno

C. — ||163| The letter of Mär Aksnäyä to Emperor Zeno on the embodiment and incarnation of God the Word.

O Christ-loving Zeno, Emperor, concerning the embodiment (methgassmänüthä) and the humanifying (methbarnsa-nüthä) () of God the Word, Who is consubstantial with God the Father, and was begotten by Him before ages and worlds, Who is always God and near () God, Who is God the Word, because He was begotten by Him without passion () and with Him is not subject to time, we have learned, we believe, and we have received from tradition as follows: that He (God the Word) emptied Himself () and came into the womb of the Virgin, without leaving the Father, without separating Himself from Him with Whom, near Whom, and like unto Whom He always is. For we believe that, in so far as He is God, He is everywhere, that is, like the Father and like the Holy Ghost. He wished to give life to men by His abasement, His embodiment, His passion, His death, and His resurrection. And He came to the Virgin without ceasing to be everywhere, and He was embodied in her and of her, and became man without change. ||164| For He did not bring to Himself a body from heaven as the foolish Valentinus and Bardesanes assert; nor was His embodiment from nothing, because He did not wish to redeem a creature that did not exist, but He wished to renew that which, created by Him, had become old ().

We do not hold that (the Word) became man with a change in His nature, because God is not capable of change, change being a modification of things created; but, as He exists without having begun, so also He was not changed by becoming (man). For He became man by taking a body, and not by assuming a man whom He caused to adhere to His person; otherwise, we would be introducing an addition into the Trinity, and would be found to admit a son of grace, outside the Son of nature. Therefore, whilst adoring this God the Word, Who is the Only Begotten Son of the Father, I believe that He was really embodied, and was born of the Holy Virgin, for He, Whom she brought forth, has become (man) and has been embodied in her and of her. She did not bring Him forth spiritually, since (the Word) has His spiritual generation from the Father, and He did not become (man) as He was begotten

by the Father, according to the order of the (divine) nature and of the essential generation. But the Virgin brought Him forth corporally in order that, through this corporal generation, we might be made worthy of the spiritual (generation). The Word, therefore, became something that He was not and remained something that we were not (but became), that is, sous of God, yet ||165| remaining what we were by nature. For we became sons of God. although our nature was not changed, and He became man by His mercy, although His essence was not changed.

I confess, therefore, one (only) person of the Word, and I believe that this same (person) is also man, that is, God Who became man; not that He dwelt in a man, not that He built to Himself a temple in which He dwelt. It is we who are His temples, and He dwells in us by His Spirit. He did not create a man in the Virgin before He dwelt in her, a man whom He afterwards assumed as another person; for, by His embodiment from the Virgin, He did not unite Himself to the person of a man, but to our nature. I do not acknowledge in the Virgin a man adhering to God, nor a person joined to another; but I see, with the eye of faith, a Spiritual Being, Who, without change, became corporal, and Mary brought forth, not a double (Son), as Nestorius said, but the Only-Begotten embodied, Who is not indeed half God and half man, but wholly God because He is from the Father, and wholly man because He became (man) of the Virgin.

I confess that there was a union of the natures, that is, (a union of) the divinity and the humanity, and I divide neither the natures nor the persons, nor the parts of this and that, ||166| which have been united in an ineffable manner. I do not see two things where they became one, nor do I admit one where two are known to be. It is not true that a man was made, was considered independent (), and then assumed by God; if we say this, we do not confess that corporeity belongs to God. If on the contrary we believe that the body belongs to Him, because He was made man, then corporeity is the property of the person of God, and not of another human person. For the body of each one of us does not belong to God, although we are the sons of the Father and the brothers of Christ; and likewise (the body) of that man, whether you consider it from the point of view of the person, or of the nature only, cannot be regarded as belonging to God; therefore, it is not true that a body was created, was acknowledged as belonging to another (person), and was then taken by God and made His.

With John I cry out that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (), not by changing, God forbid! for «to change» is a modification, but «to become» belongs to the Economy (of the Word). For I learn from John and Paul that (the Word) has become; but that He was changed, none of those who saw and served the Word (ever) said. Besides, God the Word Himself teaches by His prophet, «I am the Lord, and I change not» (). Where you would suppose that, by becoming embodied. He was changed, He testifies all the more to the truth of His own ||167| immutability,

and as if (already) embodied from the Virgin, He cries out to those who think that perhaps He was changed by becoming (man), «I am the Lord, and I change not». Of the one Son, therefore, are the two generations, the one from the Father and the other from the Virgin; of the one Son, and not of two natures, otherwise He would not be one. For if we admit (in Him) nature and nature, we must necessarily admit person and person, and consequently we must acknowledge two Sons and two Gods.

The person of the Son, therefore, became embodied by the will of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, and His embodiment does not exclude that He may be believed consubstantial with them, for He was begotten Son (by the Father) and He was born Son of (the Virgin). The Father had no corporal generation, because He is always Father; nor had the Holy Ghost, because He did not come from the Father as Son in order to become the Son of the Virgin. But that One was born, Who was begotten, that is, the Son. And we believe that the Same is Son by two generations, and that He, to Whom belong the name and fact of Son from the Father, became truly the Son of the Virgin; for to Him indeed belong these two things «to become and to be born», and because He was Son, He was born Son, that is, in becoming ||168| man without changing. And since we hear from the Books that one person was embodied, that the same (person) was born, and is the Only Begotten of the Father and the Firstborn of the Virgin, we must believe that He is known (as such) even in all the humiliations and defects to which humanity is liable.

We confess, therefore, that the Virgin is θεοτόκος (yäldath ʾalähä), and we believe that the embodied Word, after being born of her corporally, was wrapped in swaddling clothes, sucked milk, received circumcision, was held on (His Mother's) knees, grew in stature and was subject to His parents, all this just as He was born. He did not need to be fed Who feeds (others), since He is known (to be) God, but He became subject to all this because He was made man, although perfect and complete in His nature and in His person. It is then only in so far as He became (man) that He grew. To Him belongs greatness by His nature; and humiliation, because He emptied Himself. The things of the Father are His, because He has the same essence; and ours are His, because He became like unto us. To Him honor, because He is the Lord of glory; to Him humiliation, because He revealed Himself in the flesh. His the fact that He was hungry, and His the fact that He multiplied bread. He was hungry, and (thereby) showed that He became like unto us; He fed the hungry, and (thereby) showed that the power remains to Him. For His nature was not ||169| changed when He became (man), nor was the strength of His power diminished.

He was baptized by John in the Jordan (), and the Father testified that He is His Beloved Son. I recognize the Trinity in the Jordan: the Father Who speaks; the Son Who is baptized; and the Holy Ghost Who shows. The Son was baptized as

man, and not in appearance, because the appearance of the dove belongs to the Holy Ghost, and the appearance of the humanity () belongs to the Father; but, with the Son, it is the reality of corporeity. The One Whom I have seen in baptism, I have acknowledged in the womb (of the Virgin), and the One Whom I have found in the womb, I contemplate stretched on the Cross. One of the Trinity was in the womb; one of the Trinity in baptism; one of the Trinity on the Cross. We believe in one Son, in one Father, and in one Spirit. For there is no other Son than the one Who is adored in the Trinity, Who accomplished the Economy for us, and was crucified between thieves. For He, at Whose baptism the Father testified, «This is My Beloved Son» (), is the Same Who cried out on the Cross, «Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit» (). Since He calls God «His Father», it is certain that He is His Son. For He Who, as man, was stretched on the Cross, is the Same Who (at that very time) was ruling, as God, all creatures by His nod, because the source of His natural life was not broken by death. ||170| For if we believe that, conceived as man, He is God, we must necessarily admit that, enclosed as dead in School, He is Life from Life, lest, because He became (man), His essence be considered as having changed, and lest we believe that by death the life of His nature was destroyed.

The Cross is the herald of the death and of the immortality of God; for, until then, we believed by hearing () that God is immortal; but, on the Cross, experience has shown (that) both (were true), for, whilst tasting death, He remained living. Death could not attack and destroy His life; but, by His death, the power of death was destroyed, so that this death (of the Son), after His becoming (man), is a miracle. For He Who suffered death for us was not mortal as one of us, otherwise the power of death over mortals would not have been destroyed. From all men we know that what is mortal shall die; but, that tho Immortal be considered as having died corporally, was something new which took place once on the Cross.

Thus the immortality of God does not prevent us from believing in His death, nor does His death oblige us to deny His immortality. God was tried by death, and thereby He destroyed the power of death over all the children of men. As spirits cannot die, He did not die spiritually; ||171| besides, His nature is immortal. But, since the body is subject to the power of death, Pie was tried by death corporally. For there was not (in Christ) a body adhering to God, nor was there (in Him) a man as His temple, who was dissolved, and was raised up by the Word Who dwelt in him, as heretics imagine. But He Who was dissolved as man, the Same, as God, raised up (His own body). The Father also raised Him, according to the words of Paul, «God, His Father, Who hath raised Him from the dead» (). The Holy Ghost also raised Him, for (Paul says again): «He (Christ) was known to be the Son of God by power, and by the Holy Ghost according to the resurrection from the dead» (). He also raised Himself, as He said: «I have power over My soul to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again» (). For the divinity did not leave the body (of Christ),

when He cried out on the Cross, «Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit» (). And it is not a man that said to the Father, «My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?» (); but He called Him «His Father» because He is consubstantial with Him, and «His God», because He became man. For He Who was suspended on the Cross, by commending His Spirit into the hands of His Father, gave to the souls of men a relationship with the Father, and the Same, with His body, descended into Scheol, and prepare the resurrection of the bodies that were there.

We do not therefore subject the nature of the Word to passion; nor do we believe that a man distinct from Him died. But we believe that He Who, as God, is above ||172| death, experienced it as man. (We believe) that He is the Only Begotten Son, one of the Trinity, as is clear from His own words to His disciples: «Go ye forth, teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Sou, and of the Holy Ghost» (). I was baptized, therefore, in the name of Him Who died, and I confess that He, in Whose name I was baptized, died for me, and I believe that I have put on in baptism Him in Whose name and in Whose death I was baptized, according to the words of Paul (). For I have put on spiritually in the waters (of baptism) the Spiritual Being Who became corporal, and I confess that the Living One Who, experienced death in the flesh, is He Who raises (the dead) and gives life; thus not taking anything from the Trinity, as the foolish Sabellius and Photinus have thought (to do), nor dividing its persons, like Arius and Macedonius, nor adding another person to the Trinity, as Theodore and Nestorius have imagined, nor saying that one of its persons suffered a change, like Apollinaris and Eutyches.

Therefore, I say anathema to the impious Nestorius and to his doctrine, which, in the one Christ, admits a distinction of natures and of persons, attributing the miracles to God and the sufferings to the man, denying openly the Economy ||173| of the Word Who was made man. I also say anathema to Eutyches the heretic, and to his followers, because he denies that there was a real embodiment of God from the Virgin, and regards as hallucinations the mysteries of His corporeity. In saying anathema to these doctrines, I agree with the Holy Books, and adhere to the tradition of the Fathers from whom I have received the true and apostolic faith, that faith by which I have been made worthy, with all the baptized, of life, of freedom, and of adoption. I have written these few lines, O pious Emperor, and have sent them to Your Christianity, because you have ordered it, to confound the heretics who question my faith in Christ, and also to edify those who think as I do, and who, made bold by divine love, try to defend me.

[Footnotes renumbered and placed at the end]

Part 2 -- A. The Letter to the Monks

CHAPTER III. — TRANSLATION (). — A.

||127| [Letter of Mar Aksenaya] which was written by him to the Monks (). To the holy, pure, and faithful convents, healthy members of the body of the truth of Christ God Who is over all; zealous supporters of orthodoxy (), ye who heal the breaches of error ||128| which false doctrines have made in the body of faith; (to) ye all whom I have seen in body and in spirit, holy monasteries (). It is good and fitting for the truth to be declared openly, because truth is like unto light in the type of its manifestation which is for all. For, as light has been made to shine on every thing so also truth has been revealed in the world to enlighten every man, according to the words of Him Who is Truth, and Who has given the truth: «That which I tell I tell you in the dark, speak ye in the light; and that which you hear in your ears, preach ye upon the house-tops» (). And, to teach us that we must not only preach the truth in simple words to our friends, but that we must declare it also before enemies, with that confidence that fights with death, He said to us: «And fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul» (). And again, in the public confession before persecutors, He exhorts and urges us by His promises to declare the faith which He has delivered unto us, saying: «Every one that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father Who is in heaven, and before His angels; but he that shall deny Me, I will also deny him before the Father ||129| and before the angels» ().

Such is the openness, therefore, with which Jesus Our God commands us to declare our truth, and not to be ashamed, and not to blush, and not to be acceptors of persons in authority, and not to seek to please those men who are the adversaries of truth; for he who wishes to please men cannot be a servant of Christ. But as for him who has experienced the love of Christ, and tasted the sweetness of truth, nothing shall ever be able to diminish the ardor of his pursuit in search of the truth which he loves. For truth is agreeable and sweet above all things; and it inflames every soul, that has tasted it rightly, to seek after it. Like the divine Apostles and the holy Martyrs, every one who has experienced this pleasure seeks it with an unspeakable

ardor. Nothing was able to diminish the ardor of their love in the pursuit of truth: neither fire, nor beasts, nor swords, nor the combs (of executioners), nor exile from country to country, nor close confinement in dungeons, nor the insults of enemies, nor calumnies, nor injustices, nor the inconstancy of friends, nor the defection of acquaintances, nor separation from family, nor the opposition of the whole world, nor the onslaught of visible and invisible (enemies), nor anything ||130| above or below, can separate from the love of Christ those who have tasted and perceived the truth, as St. Paul, in the ardor of this love, speaking for all those like himself, declared, (saying): «For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor powers, nor virtues, nor height, nor depth, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate me from the love of Christ (our) God» ().

It behooves every one who is a disciple of truth to place this mirror before his eyes, and to look at it constantly, and he shall not be cast down by the fear of anything. For in the truth and love of Christ there is no fear, and he who fears is not perfect in love. Every thing that is not from truth is placed outside of truth: whether fear or lying, whether flattery or respect of persons, love of pleasures or thirst for power. These and similar things are placed outside of truth; and, as these things cannot be in truth, those who are enslaved by them cannot remain in truth nor possess faith. For they are those ||131| whose god is their belly () which has become to them the master of their lives; wherever they find its pleasures and desires, there they tarn; they so identify themselves with it that they remain slaves to their shame, and never give up the pleasures of the flesh.

But as for us, O dear (brethren), athletes in the spiritual warfare, it is not becoming for us to deal thus with truth, which is our life; but (it behooves us) to renounce whatever is outside of it, and to confess that in it alone are our light and our joy, our wealth and our priceless treasure, and the breath of our spiritual life. Now, because it is necessary to make known the cause of my discourse, what it is about, and the reason for which it was written, I state clearly the scope of my discourse. Briefly, I (intend to) demonstrate in writing the truth of the faith which I have learned from the Holy Books and from the interpreters of the Church, my masters, for the joy and consolation of those who love me in truth and for truth’s sake, and for the shame and confusion of heretics, disciples of the demons, who calumniate me and call me a deceiver, and insult in me the truth which I have learned and which I preach. For, since they call truth error, ||132| these liars give the name of deceivers to the heralds of truth.

Who then or what is truth, if not Jesus Christ, the God Who is over all, He Who said, «I am the Truth, and the Light, and the Life» (). This Jesus, God the Word, is our truth, with His Father and with His Holy Spirit: one Trinity, one essence, one divinity, one nature from everlasting and from eternity. For there is not in Him (God) nature and nature, nor essence and essence, nor anything recent or old, but

One in Three and Three in One; an eternal nature and eternal persons, one essence adored with its persons from everlasting and from eternity. One of the persons of this essence is the Mediator of our Confession (), Truth from Truth, Light from Light, Living from the Living One, and Immortal from Him Who does not die. By the will of the essence (), this same person came down from heaven, that is, God from God, natural Son of a natural Father, the Splendor of the Father and His essential Image, God the Word Who is over all. He came down and dwelt in the pure Virgin who was sanctified by God the Spirit, and He became man of her without change, in everything like unto us ||133| except sin, there having been neither change, nor variation, nor confusion in His nature, as God Himself said by the Prophet, «I am and I change not» (). For He Who was not made is not mutable; He Who was not created cannot change. Therefore He became man without change; He was embodied, and remained as He is. spiritual.

He did not cause the person of a man to adhere to Himself that two might be counted in Him, He and a man adhering to Him. Nor did He enter and dwell in another, He Who is the Only Son, but He was embodied from our nature and He is not counted two. He became man of the Virgin, and His person was not doubled; He became (man), and He was not changed, because even in His becoming His essence remained without change. For as He is in His essence, so He remained also in His becoming, that is, without change. The Ancient of days became a child; the Most High became an infant in the womb, and God became man in the womb. The Spiritual One became corporal; the Invisible One was seen; the Intangible One was handled; He Who is consubstautial with the Father became of us in His becoming, because He, God the Word, was embodied in the Virgin and of the Virgin. He did not bring His body down from heaven, as Bardesanes said; nor was He seen under a false appearance or a phantom, according to ||134| the blasphemy of Mani and Marcion; nor was (His body) made from nothing, as said Eutyches the fool; nor was His nature changed, as the wicked Arius and Eunomius imagine; nor was He, Who was embodied, without (human) intelligence, according to the blasphemous doctrine of Apollinaris; but He Who is perfect God took a body, and became perfect man of the Virgin.

The Word was not embodied in the Virgin, as if not also of the Virgin, but He truly became man in her and of her. For the Virgin was not indeed a channel (through which) God (passed), but (His) true Mother, because He became man of her. Nor again was God born in another man, for a man was not born in whom God dwelt, according to the teaching of the impious Nestorius and his mad disciples; but God, Who was embodied without change, was born of the Virgin. For He, Who descended into her as God, the very Same came forth from her as man; and the one Whom she conceived spiritually, the very Same she brought forth corporally. And He, Whose generation from the Father is without beginning, was brought forth with a beginning in His generation from the Virgin. (Being) of a supernatural nature, He

became man; (being) of a supernatural nature, ||135| He was born of a creature; (being) of a supernatural nature, He sucked milk; (being) of a supernatural nature, He grew in stature. Let us beware of the impiety of those who say that the Virgin () brought forth God and a man; who divide and count two in Him Who is the Only Son of God, Who is from two, from the divinity and from the humanity; (of the impiety of those) who divide (Christ), and in this one God Who was embodied, attribute humiliation to the one and glory to the other, power to the one and weakness to the other.

Thus, indeed, do these dishonest (men) speak: «One was born, and the other was not born; one sucked and the other did not suck; one was circumcised and the other was not; one grew and the other did not; one () ate and the other did not; one drank and the other did not; one fasted and the other did not; one () was hungry and the other was not; one slept and the other did not; one suffered and the other did not; one died and the other did not; and (so these) dishonest men divide unto one and another all these words which are spoken of Christ, as if one was born truly and the other in deception, as if one suffered in fact and the other ||136| in name, and as if one died in reality and the other in fraud.

But it is not at all in the sense that a man or a body distinct () from God died, that death is spoken of God, as it is not in the sense that a man or the body of () another person distinct from God was born, that birth is spoken of God; for, it was not a body that was born, but it was God, Who became a body, and () remained in His nature God; and it was not a body that was crucified, but it was God, Who became man, and () in His death did not lose His life. Not one with another was born; but one God Who was embodied was born. There were not two at the birth, nor two on the Cross; but one was born, and the Same one was crucified. And as of the Virgin, not one in another, nor one with another was born, but one God became man of her without change and the Same is one in His divinity and His humanity; so also on the Cross one was suspended and not two.

Therefore, that God was born of the Virgin, the Church of God believes; (that) God was crucified for all, the truth of the Holy Books declares. Christ is the Son, and the Son is God, ||137| and God is the Word, and the Word is consubstantial (with God). If it is written that Christ was crucified, it is God Who was crucified. Christ died and He also rose. Not one was the Christ Who died, and another the God Who did not die; not one was the Only Son Who was given for the redemption of the world, and another the Word Who was not given; not one was the Son Who suffered and died, and another Who remained without suffering. It is written, «God so loved the world as to give His Only Begotten Son for it» (). This Only Son Who was given to death for the redemption of the world, is He of Whom it is said, «The World was made flesh, and dwelt among us» (). Again, Paul said, «God was reconciled with us by the death of His Son» (). And again he said, «Verity He did not spare His own

Son, but delivered Him up for us all» (). This Son, by Whose death He (God) was reconciled with us and Whom He delivered to suffering for us, is no other than God the Son Who was begotten of God the Father. Therefore, whether the Holy Books say that Christ, or the Son, or the Only Begotten, or Jesus was born and died, it is God Who was born and died, and not another distinct from Him. For we do not acknowledge ||138| a Son Who is not God, nor a God Who is not Christ.

Be not troubled, therefore, O hearer, at this (statement) that God was crucified for us. For, if God was born of the Virgin, God was also suspended on the Cross. And if a heretic should say, «How can God die?», ask him in return, «How can God be born?» If then He was born of the Woman (), although He is from the Father in His first generation, He also tasted death of His own will, although He is living in His nature. And as, when He became man, He remained God as He is, without change, so also, when He tasted death for us. He did not lose the life of His nature. For it is God Who became man for us, and it is the Living One Who tasted death for our sake. Let them not deceive thee, O faithful (hearer), by words fraught with fatal discord, as they say to thee, «How can God die?» When thou hearest this from them, return them the answer. «How can God be born?» If, being (already) born, He was born; if existing, He became (man), therefore also, being living, He died of His own will ().

It was not indeed a mortal or a man that died for us; ||139| for every mortal that dies, dies for himself; and every sufferer that suffers, suffers for himself; and every thing that, not existing, comes into existence, comes into existence for itself. Herein then is a great mystery of profound love and of ineffable salvation, that He Who is became, not that He might be, since He is, but that we, through His becoming (Incarnation), might become the sons of God. Everything that He became, He became, not for Himself, but for us. For He was not a sufferer by His nature, because, if He had suffered being a sufferer (by nature), He would have suffered for Himself. Nor did He become mortal in punishment for the transgression of the (original) precept, as is the case with us, but He is immortal because He is God. () Nor did He become immortal by being justified by His works, as the wicked followers of Nestorianism assert; but by His nature He is immortal because He is God, as the whole Church of God cries out in the Trisagion: «Thou art Holy, God; Thou art Holy, Strong One; Thou art Holy Immortal One; (Thou) Who wast crucified for UP, have mercy on us». It is, therefore, this Holy, Strong, Immortal God, Who was crucified for us (). Thus does the ||140| true Church believe, thus do the tongues which are moved by truth cry out that He, Who is immortal by nature, God the Word, was crucified in body for all, not that a body or a man distinct from Him was suspended on the Cross.

Invisible (), we see Him; not tangible, we handle Him; not capable of being eaten, we eat Him; not capable of being tasted, we drink Him; we embrace Him Who is all

powerful; we kiss Him Who is infinite. Of Him, Who is immortal, we believe that He died for us; of Him, Who is impassible, we confess that He suffered for us. «We preach unto you that which was from the beginning», said John in his epistle, «that which we have hoard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of life, for the life was manifested. And we have seen, and do bear witness, and declare unto you the life eternal, which was with the Father, and hath been revealed to us» (). () Thou hearest how this Apostle, who knew the mysteries of Christ, preaches to thee concerning truth, and cries out to thee that the life, which was with the Father, has been revealed; that He Who was invisible has appeared; that He Who was inaudible ||141| has been heard; () that He Who was not tangible has been handled; that He Who was silent has conversed. Which dost thou wish to hear, O faithful (hearer), this Apostle who knew the secrets of God the Word, or the mad Nestorius and his wicked followers who say that another man, distinct from the Word, bore and suffered everything for us?

We, on the contrary, believe in the Only Begotten God the Word, Who came down and was embodied of the Virgin in an ineffable manner, and remained, in His nature, God. We do not say, like the erring disciples of Eutyches, that He was embodied in the Virgin, but not of her; but we believe (that He was embodied) in her and of her, and not in any other way He might have pleased, as those liars claim. We say that He wished to become, and became (man) of the Virgin, who was of the seed of the house of David, as the Books teach, and as the teachers of truth have delivered unto us; not that a man. who was not, came into existence in the Virgin and adhered to God, as the impious Nestorius said, which man bore and suffered all the things of his nature in agreement with his own nature. Not so ||142| does truth affirm, not so does faith declare. For he who counts another man with God, introduces a quaternity in his doctrine and destroys the dogma of the Holy Trinity. With pagans is such a doctrine to be counted, for, like them, it errs inventing a new god, against that which is written, «There shall not be to thee a new god» (). It adores a new god, a man born of a woman.

It is not a man, therefore, that was exalted, was honored, and became God; but it is God Who abased Himself, humbled Himself, emptied Himself, and became man; and because He is God by His nature, and did not become God, not being God (first), for the same reason, having become man, He did not change, but remained one God as He is, and He is counted, with the Father and with the Spirit, one Holy Trinity: «Go ye forth, teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost» (). One Father, with Whom there is no other Father; one Son with Whom there is no other Son; one Holy Ghost with Whom there is no other Spirit. There is not (in each divine person) one with one, and another ||143| with another, for each one of them is one: the Father Who has no body; the Son Who was really embodied; and the Holy Ghost Who is adored with the Father

and with the Son. This is the Holy and Adorable Trinity Which we confess; outside of It, we know no other, and anything which is named and called God outside of It, is to be anathematized.

I have written to you these things in haste, O holy servants of truth, not as teaching, but to show the conformity of my faith with yours. I pray that in this (faith) I may depart from this life to its life, and that I may bo offered in sacrifice for this truth which I confess. I exhort you also to be open defenders and preachers of the truth. Be not afraid of man; do not desist from fighting zealously for the truth, saying: «We are solicitous for the quiet of our ascetic life». Ascetic life is beautiful (indeed), and the works of justice are worthy of praise. (But) these (works) are members whose head is truth, and if the head is cut off, the members perish. Let no man say: «I keep my faith to myself»; for thou dost not ||144| preserve it in thyself, if, seeing it perish in others, thou remainest negligent. Where is the virgin who would insist on staying in her chamber, if she heard that her father's room is on fire? If she remains negligent, it will happen that the fire will become master of the room in which she dwells. Therefore, you also, without losing the purity of your monastic life, be defenders and open preachers of the truth; and pray also for me, I beseech you all at your feet, that I may be found worthy to suffer for my God as He suffered for me.

I heard that, after I had gone from you, they circulated () false reports about me, calling me a deceiver and corruptor. As to myself, I pray that such an error may remain with me to the end of my life. May God forgive them and grant them pardon; may He open to them the gate of repentance that they may know His truth. () Anathema upon Nestorius and Eutyches, and their doctrines and their disciples; upon every one who agrees with them; upon every one who does not anathematize them with mouth and heart, and does not confess that Christ, God the Word, one of the Trinity, was crucified for us. If any man love not Our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema (). ||145| The End (). What you have heard by word (of mouth), I have sent to yon in writing, and also to the holy friends whom I have not seen in the body, by Ephrem, the bearer of this letter to Mar Acacius, the priest, who, for a long time, after the example of his master, has waged a war of this kind. Therefore, have courage, for this is the time of the harvest, in which we will reap the new fruits of the works of justice, in the field of the zeal for the faith of Christ God, Who is over all; to Whom be glory for ever. Amen.

[Footnotes moved to end and renumbered]

Part 2 -- B. The first Letter to the Monks of Beth-Gaugal

B. — ||146| The Letter of St. Mar Aksenaya, to the pure Monks of Beth-Gaugal.

Christ has, in these days, manifested the light of Redemption to the faithful people. Behold, joyful news and good tidings are proclaimed to-day in the midst of the churches, because error has been deserted by all its votaries, and truth has been exalted by all its heralds. This news, which is full of joy, together with the reports and tidings of life, I too wish to confirm and make known to Your Holinesses through this humble letter of mine. Though of little worth in itself, the joyful news it contains will render it dear in your eyes. Owing to my ignorance, I cannot speak anything worthy to be uttered in your assemblies; therefore, I shall lean my discourse upon other helps, that it may find outside of itself the dignity which it has not by nature. For when an humble man speaks before princes, their great kindness will manifest itself in his regard.

Well you, Fathers, you are princes, and this title you have earned it justly by your works; for, where are not your labors spoken of? Where has not ||147| the fame of your holy monastery spread? Who has not admired, who has not wondered at the cruel persecutions (which) you (have suffered)? The (very) mention of your rule causes the lax to fear, for the weak are wont to be afraid when they hear of your courageous works. But as these tremble at the mention of your fervor, so also the strong take heart, and try to imitate the zeal (which you display in) your works. Your conduct is to the indifferent what salt is to food, a condiment. And as light dispels darkness, so also the fame of your fervor drives away all weakness. It is not vain glory which upholds your labors, but the love of God; and therefore you do not practise virtue in appearance, but in the truth of a pure understanding, It is not indeed only the figure of justice which you have put on, but the truth of justice is fixed in your thoughts. To-day, you form an illustrious remnant among all the disciples, and you have preserved, so to speak, your rule of life without change; for laxity, which in every way has injured many, has not inserted its teeth into the

sound body of your works; and dejection of mind, which is wont to spoil the labor of others, has not prevailed against your treasures.

Neither the fear of men nor the flattery of the great has ruled over you. You have not bartered the truth for earthly presents, and you have not ceased ||148| from your zeal for the faith for the sake of temporal gifts, and your monastery is not addicted to begging like those which subsist in that way. You have not sold Christ for sheaves of barley and loaves of bread like those who sell Him for such prices.

It is written that Judas sold Him for thirty (pieces) of silver; but those disciples in name (only) sell Him every day for things more contemptible and abominable than that. Those who act thus serve their belly and not God; in them is fulfilled that which was written by Paul (), «Their god is their belly, and their glory their shame». And again he says, «Their mind is wholly upon the earth»; because they were born for the earth and not for heaven, their eyes are fixed altogether on the things of the earth. Now the disciple who knows Christ and delights in Him cannot fail to experience sorrow when he hears a blasphemy against Him. For as our body naturally suffers when a wound is inflicted upon it by iron, or a stone, or anything else, so also does the soul of the true disciple suffer when witnessing a blow and an insult against Christ. Is there a greater insult ||149| than that which the new Jews () of our day utter, blaspheming Christ face to face, subtracting from the honor (due to) Him, reviling His glory, and saying to Him, «Thou art a man, and Thou makest Thyself God?» (). They try to show that His glory is not His own; that He received everything from the favor of another; that He is not God by His own nature, but was made God recently. For these devils (the heretics), without being ashamed, speak of Christ as one speaks of idols, because they are idols who are turned into gods when they are not such. It is not so, however, with Christ, O godless man, but by nature He is God. If then He became what He was not, as it is written of Him, it is not that from man He became God, but from God He became man and remained as He is, God.

A body did not take Him, but He took (a body). For He did not receive any glory from the body that He took, but by His embodiment He gave glory to our miserable nature. He did not come to a creature to be made God, but to be known as God. His appearance amongst us was not from nothing into something, but it shows truly that He is something which does not change. For He was born of the Virgin corporally, and not in so far as He is God. But because He became man of the Virgin, in this He had a beginning; for in so far as He is, ||150| not even from the Father has He a beginning. Because He became man, we are not ashamed to say that He had a beginning from the Virgin; for He Who, as God, is without beginning, became, as man, subject to a beginning; and He Who, as God, is spiritual, infinite, and with the Father, became, as man, a, body, and finite in the Virgin. He Who, as God, designs, fashions, shapes, joins, and creates the fetus in the womb, the

Same, as man, was formed and shaped, and became a child in person. He Who, as God, nourishes every thing, waters it, and gives it the increase, Who supports, holds, and preserves all things, the Same, as man, was carried and grew, was held in arms, sucked milk, and received increase in His person.

He Who as God experiences neither hunger, nor fatigue, nor sleep, nor ignorance, the Same as man was hungry and thirsty, ate and drank, was sleepy and slept, and asked questions to learn. He Who, as God, is above suffering and insult, Whose nature is not subject to death, the Same, as man, suffered, was insulted, slapped in the face, scourged, and really tried by death; and He Who is always one without change because He is God, rose from the grave on the third day because He became man. When He lay and reclined dead in School, He was preparing the resurrection for all, ||151| was ruling the hosts of heaven and all creatures by His nod, creating bodies and putting the limbs together and breathing in the souls, and governing the worlds and all creatures, as God Who is everywhere.

It is a mystery we propound here, and we are not writing about things mine or thine. For Christ is believed to be God and man, not in the sense that we believe that He Who took a body is one, and the body that He took another but in order to signify by the word «God» that He was begotten by the Father, and by the word u man» that He was embodied of the Virgin. For we do not despise His humanity, and we do not deny His divinity, and we do not divide Him into two. Who is one even after He was embodied. For upon the throne, He is God and near God, and in the womb, man and with men. In the Father He is living like the Father, Son and Substance; with the dead, He was dead like them and man like them. The Spiritual One did not die in so far as He is Spiritual, and God did not suffer in so far as He is God. He has no beginning, to the extent that He is without a beginning in His generation from the Father (?). He suffered, therefore, because He took a body, and He died because He became a brother of mortals. He had a beginning in the womb, because He was born like ourselves. We confess without blushing that God became man, that the Impassible One became subject to suffering, and the Living One tasted death.

The Living One then tasted death in order ||152| to vivify (our) mortal nature. God became man, that men might become the sons of God. For I do not deny that He vivified me, and I do not attribute to another the redemption which He wrought for me. If the death and the suffering were of another, the redemption and life which were merited for me would be of man, not of God. It is not another, therefore, who vivified me by one who died, but the very One Who died, vivified me by His own death. And if it is written «God was reconciled by Christ with the world» (), it is not that God the Word (was reconciled) by a man, as the wicked (heretics) interpret, but that God the Father (was reconciled) by His Beloved Son, as this Apostle again said, «God was reconciled with us by the death of His Son» (). He also said: «He

(God) did not spare His Son, but delivered Him up for us all» (). Therefore, he who doss not confess that God died, does not believe that the Son of God died, but opposes the teaching of Paul. For, when the Holy Books say that the Son, or Christ, or the Only Begotten died, it means that God died; and the words, «In the beginning was the Word» (), are known to refer to the Son of God, for the Son is not different from the Word.

Of this very Son the Apostle said, «God was reconciled by His death». Therefore he who is scandalized at the mention of death, does not believe that the Son of God is God. He who distinguishes Christ into two, does not worship the Trinity. ||153| He who says that Christ is a man, is a partner of the heathens and the Jews. He who attributes glory to the one and humiliation to another, openly confesses two sons and makes void the redemption which came to our nature. He who says that the person of a man who was not God was made God, sets up an idol, forms an image, and makes a new god. He who does not confess that God emptied Himself, and took the likeness of a servant, as Paul teaches (), does not know that Christ is the equal of God (). He who does not believe that the Only Son of God was given for the redemption of the world in the love of the Father, does not understand the love of God for the world.

He who does not hold for certain that He Who was crucified was one of the Trinity, has not received the freedom and joy of baptism, and has not as yet been redeemed from the sentence of death and from the original curse. Whosoever is ashamed to declare that Christ is God, him shall Christ put also to shame before God and before His holy angels. The disciple who does not confess that the Impassible One suffered, and the Immortal One died for us, is a heathen, not a disciple. He who does not confess that Jesus is Lord from eternity, has not the odor of Christ. ||154| He who says that Jesus was made Lord and Christ by another, as if He was not so (by nature), but became so recently, brings God into contempt. He who attributes number () to the one Christ, and counts in Him two persons or distinguishes two sons, such a one is not a member of Christ, and has not been numbered among the host of the chosen ones of God.

He who does not confess that He, Whom John called «the Word», is the very Same of Whom Matthew wrote, «Son of David and Son of Abraham» (), such a one has not been written in (the book) of the adoption of the Heavenly Father. He who says that He of Whom it is written, «He was in the beginning, and He was with God, and He was God» (), is not the Power of the Most High, (the Power of Whom) the Angel said to the Virgin, «Thou shalt conceive in the womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call His name Jesus» (), such a one is anathematized by the word of Jesus. He who says that John wrote of one, and Matthew, Mark, and Luke, of another, such a one is a stranger to the Gospel of the Apostles and to the preaching of the Prophets.

He who says that the name of Christ signifies two natures distinct and separate the one from the other, and not one nature (keyänä), and one prosopon (parsopä), and one person (qenoma), who was embodied and became man of the Virgin, such a one denies the faith and is worse than those who do not believe. He who says that there are in Christ one and another, God Creator and a man created as one of us, and does not confess ||155| that the Same One is the likeness of God as Creator, and the likeness of a servant as being in the body, such a one is as yet a servant of sin, and has not received the freedom of Christ. He who says that, in the one person of Christ, there are the Giver and the Deceiver, one giving mercy and the other receiving mercy, and does not confess that He is altogether the Giver and the Distributor of good things to others, is filled with the malice of the devil.

He who says that the half of Christ is the Redeemer, and the other half is redeemed, and does not confess that He is wholly Redeemer, on account of which He was called Jesus, which is interpreted Saviour (), this one is cut off from the redemption which Christ wrought by His Cross. He who does not confess that He, Who is perfect God and the consubstantial Son of the Father, is also perfect man from the human nature, shall not be counted among men (for whom He became man). He who imagines that there was only a mere adhesion (of a body) to the person of Christ, and not a real embodiment in the acknowledgment of one person, such a one has no relationship with Christ. He who says that the infinite God dwelt in a finite man as He dwelt in the Prophets and in the just, and does not confess that He Who, as God, is infinite, is the Same Who became finite by becoming man, (such a one) has not as yet passed from a corrupt error into the fold of the knowledge of Christ.

He who does not confess that the Athlete, who fought for our nature ||156| in the desert against the Adversary, is the natural Son of the Father Who, in so far as He became man, waged war against the Adversary, but thinks that God raised up another Athlete from our nature to triumph for Himself and for us, such a one is a stranger to the victory of Christ. He who says that Christ was justified by His works, and became the equal of the Most High by the practice of His virtues, and that He is not exalted and is not God by His nature, such a one is without any virtue and is filled with the malice of the devil. He who says that He Who raised the dead is one, and He Who was tried by death, another, the death of such (a man) has not yet ceased.

He who does not believe that He Who, as man, was apprehended by the Jews and led to the death of the Cross, is the Same Who, as God, in the power of His divinity caused creatures to tremble, shall experience the wandering of Cain all the days of his life. He who says that He Who cast out Legion () from the man (in the Gospel) is one, and He Who was comforted by the Angel at the time of His passion (), another, in such a one dwells Legion whom Jesus drove out. He who does not confess that

glory and humiliation are of one Son, Who is one person and one nature who was embodied, such a one is an embodied devil. He who says that there are this and that (person or nature) in the one Christ, has not as yet put off the «old man».

He who does not confess that He Who said, «My Father worketh until now, and ||157| I work» (), is the Same of Whom Peter wrote, «He hath been exalted by the right hand of God and hath received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost» (1), in such a one the evil spirit dwells. He who says that the body of our Lord came down from heaven, has not been redeemed with the sons of men. He who says that the aspect of Christ was a false appearance, and not a real embodiment from the nature of the Virgin, is a disciple of Mani and Marcion. He who says that God refused to take a body of our nature as being defiled, and confesses that a body was formed for Him from another place, shall be cut off from the life which the corporeity of God has prepared for us.

He who does not confess that the Word became the seed of David and Abraham in the flesh, and took a body really and without change from the Virgin who brought Him forth, has not as yet changed from the old error. He who does not anathematize Nestorius with his whole soul and Eutyches with his whole mind, and their abominable doctrines which are dangerous to men, is anathematized in his soul and in his body.

Against all these doctrines, therefore, we have stood and still stand with our whole soul, that the true faith, which was delivered by Christ to His Church, may remain without change. We wage this war with gallant courage, and in the struggle which is for Christ, we stand unmoved by the gifts and honors of the wicked. ||158| Nor do we fear their threats, for Our Justifier is near; and in Him we have placed our confidence, for we have been believing for a long time that He will do what He has promised. And although many without the faith would take away our hope, in His true hope we are strengthened all the more. As in the war waged against Christ, we have arisen and have desired your own cooperation, we have written to you that you may be persuaded that we do not wish to triumph without you. You have done well to join in my conflict on behalt of truth, because we are in the truth and the (dogma of the) Trinity is held in the same sense by you and by us. You have agreed in your letters, and, by the signing of your names, you have confirmed, not anything new, but the very truth which you possess (). For it is fitting that what we hold in the mind and confess with the tongue, we should also commit to writing, without fear and without trembling. For you are with God, and also with my humble person, and with all the cenobites of Syria, your brethren.

Moreover, the faithful and just Emperor Zeno () and the archbishop () of the capital return you thanks for the anaphoras () which you have sent. And the same Christ-loving (Emperor) has openly declared that he gained the victory over his enemies () with (the help of) your prayers, and he is ready to give us ample reward ||159|

for the work which we have undertaken for the peace of the churches, and to drive away from them the enemies of the Cross. May those who were accusing us be put to shame and confusion, even with the heretics, ----those liars! They are abhorrent to us even more than the heretics, those men who, corrupted by their passions, have become workmen in the building of the devil, and are considered disciples on account of their garb (only).

Where are, O false disciple, (the words), «I am under obligation to fight for the truth until death»? Where is the promise of thy profession? Where are the vows thou madest to God? Thou hast destroyed the seal and hast profaned the sign put upon thee. Hearest thou not Christ saying: «Whosoever shall confess Me, I will also confess him, and whosoever shall deny Me, I will also deny him» (); and again, «Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life, shall preserve it» (); and this again, «Whosoever wisheth to be My disciple, let him renounce himself, take up his cross, and follow Me» (); and Paul who says, «Confess with thy mouth Our Lord Jesus Christ and believe with thy heart?» () Remember also, besides these holy words, the teaching of the Prophets, and the preaching of the Apostles, and the zeal of all the Doctors on behalf of the true faith, and, what is more glorious and a much greater wonder than all this, the Cross ||160| and the humiliation of the Living God Who, for the establishing of faith and the redemption of men, bore and suffered all the things that had been written of Him. And all the heralds of the word of God, if thou noticest well, were always persecuted because they followed in the same way as their Lord.

Was there ever a teacher of divine science who did not seal his faith in the midst of afflictions, persecutions, contempt, insults, calumnies, injustices, cruel sufferings and bitter torments, and who did not by his patience put to shame those who persecuted him? But I, who announce the truth in the midst of sufferings like these, testify that the truth is with this man. Knowest thou not these things, O disciple in name (only)? If not, thou shouldst know them, and shouldst not find fault with those who fight for God against godless doctrines. Come to the help of the Lord, although He has no need of thee, and do not stay the hand of the others who give their lives in fighting for the Lord. Hear the sentence pronounced by God against him who causes his brother to stumble, and tremble. I contend for thy inheritance (), and thou contendest with me. I pronounce judgment against thy enemy for thy possessions which have been dilapidated, and thou becomest an adversary to me. I fight for the common faith, and thou settest thyself against me with the heretics. I toil and work ||161| day and night that the truth which was delivered to the Church may not be changed, and I direct the weapons of argument against those who deny the Cross, and thou upbraidest me (saying), «Hold thy tongue, let them do what they wish». They want me to be silent lest I should expose their doctrines, and thou, with them, wantest me to remain silent.

I hasten to root out division and to end the schism which they have caused in the faith, and thou declarest publicly that I am the cause of the division. They began a tumult, introduced a novelty (), and disturbed the peace of all the churches, and thou considerest me as the author of the disturbance. I am zealous that the doctrine of the Trinity may remain as it is, without receiving any addition (), without being increased by another (person), and thou accusest me falsely of preaching something new. Thou art looked upon as a disciple, but thou art an adversary. Thou puttest on the appearance of truth, but thou art entirely on the side of false men. Since thou lovest to be with them and blasphemest like them, thou wilt soon be put to shame like them. Behold they are overthrown and they hide away, and they have no protector. The sword of justice is drawn against them and they cannot escape it. This I say to the disciples in name only, because, when they are confounded, the glory ||162| of your fortitude will be all the more manifest.

All the holy (brethren) who are here salute you. I also adjure you before God, the Lord of all, to remember me in (your) prayers at the time of your services, for I believe that by your prayers I have been preserved until now. Farewell in Our Lord Jesus Christ Who crowns your labors. [Footnotes have been renumbered and placed at the end]

Introduction

A.A.Vaschalde, Three Letters of Philoxenus (1902). pp. 81-92. Part 2. Introduction

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPTS.

35. The three letters which are published here are extant in Syr. Mss. 135, 136, and 138 of the Vatican library. The Letter to Zeno is extant only in Ms. 135 (fol. 17r-19v); the first Letter to the Monks of Bêth-Gaugal exists only in this same Ms. (fol. 19v-23v); the Letter to the Monks is found in Ms. 135 (fol. 15v-17r), in Ms. 136 (fol. 29v-35r), in Ms. 138 (fol. 120r-123r), and in Syr. Ms. Add. 12164 of the British Museum (fol. 126a-130a). The following is a brief description of these different Manuscripts. Ms. 135 (according to the old catalogue Codex Syr. XI of Assemani) consists of 102 vellum leaves, 26 by 18 ctm., and is written in the Estrangelo character. Folios 1-12 have one column each; the others have two. The columns are ordinarily of 37 lines. The Ms. is not all of the same hand. It bears no date; Guidi assigns it to the seventh or eighth century ().

Ms. 136 (Codex Nitriensis XXVII of the old catalogue) belongs to the sixth century. It consists of 130 vellum leaves, 25 by 16 ctm., and has two columns to a page. It is written in the Estrangelo character. Ms. 138 (Codex Nitriensis XXVI of tho old catalogue) contains 136 vellum leaves, 31 by 25 ctm., and has three columns to a page. It is written in the Estrangelo character and bears the date 581. Syr. Ms. Add. 12164 of the British Museum, written in a beautiful Edessene hand of the sixth century, consists of 141 vellum leaves about 31 by 25 centimeters. Each page is divided into three columns of from 37 to 44 lines (Cf. Wright, Cat. Syr. Mss., p. 527). [Note from p.127: The present text which is that of ms. 138 is called A. In the notes B = ms. 135 and C = ms. 136.]

CHAPTER II.

INTRODUCTION TO THE THREE LETTERS. — A. — The Letter to the Monks. 36. The Syriac text of this letter is given as it stands in Ms. 138, together with the variant readings from Mss. 135 and 136. These three Mss. are referred to in the notes as A, B, C, respectively. In Add. 12164 of the B. M., the text of the Letter to the Monks presents but few unimportant variant readings which have been omitted in this edition. Title. Assemani () takes this letter for a second letter to the Monks of Teleda. As Guidi remarks (), however, there is no indication of the fact in the above Mss., and it is not known to whom it was sent. Assemani himself, in another place (), calls it simply «The Letter to the Monks». The four Mss. which contain it give each a different title, without any reference to the Monks of Teleda. The title in Ms. 138 is: In Ms, 136, the title is:

Ms. 135 gives it as a letter to the monks on the subject of faith: The Ms. Add. 121.64 gives simply: It seems probable that this letter was not directed to any particular monastery, but was meant for circulation among the monks of many convents, as we may infer from the opening sentence: «To the holy, pure, and faithful convents, healthy members of the body of the truth of Christ God Who is over all; zealous supporters of orthodoxy, ye who heal the breaches of error which false doctrines have made in the body of faith; (to) ye all whom I have seen in body and in spirit, holy monasteries. It is good and fitting for the truth to be declared openly, because truth is like unto light in the type of its manifestation which is for all». This would justify the name Letter to the Monks by which it is known in the Mss.

Date. Assemani, regarding this letter as a second letter to the Monks of Teleda, naturally places the date of its composition during the exile of Philoxenus (519-523), and he bases his opinion on the following passage: «I heard that, after I had gone from you, they circulated false reports about me, calling me a deceiver and corruptor» (). This, however, merely shows that all the monks of these monasteries did not share the views of Philoxenus; as a matter of fact, this very letter made him another enemy against whom he wrote his famous treatise «How One Person of the Holy Trinity became incarnate and suffered for us» (). This letter was

evidently written after the year 477, because it contains the Trisagion with the addition «Thou Who wast crucified for us» made at that time by Peter the Fuller, patriarch of Antioch; and it may have been written many years after that for Philoxenus speaks of the Trisagion as being sung generally in the churches: «But by His nature He is immortal because He is God, as the whole Church of God cries out in the Trisagion: «Thou art Holy, God; Thou art Holy, Strong One; Thou art Holy, Immortal One; (Thou) Who wast crucified for us, have mercy on us» ().

An approximate date may perhaps be found in the passage in which Philoxenus advises the monks not to confine themselves to the duties of their ascetic calling, but to go out and fight for the truth openly: a I exhort you also to be open defenders and preachers of the truth. Be not afraid of man; do not desist from fighting zealously for the truth, saying: 'We are solicitous for the quiet of our ascetic life'. Ascetic life is beautiful (indeed), and the works of justice are worthy of praise. (But) these (works) are members whose head is truth, and if the head is cut off, the members perish. Let no man say: «I keep my faith to myself»; for thou dost not preserve it in thyself if, seeing it perish in others, thou remainest negligent» (). We know that Philoxenus often sought the help of Monophysite monks in his struggles against his enemies. According to Evagrius (), he instigated the monks of Cynegica and those of Syria Prima against Flavian II, when his efforts to deprive the latter of the see of Antioch, had failed at the council of Sidon. The present letter may be one of the many that he wrote to enlist the help of the monks who agreed with him. For these different reasons, it seems probable that it was written some time during his fourteen years' struggle with Flavian of Antioch (499-513).

Analysis. As the titles in Ms. 135 and Add. 12164 indicate, and as Philoxenus tells us himself (), this letter deals with, the question of faith, not of faith in general as in the Discourses; but of faith relative to the Incarnation. It is divided into three parts: a prologue, a refutation of the Gnostic, Nestorian, and Eutychian theories on the Incarnation, and an epilogue. After praising the monks for their zeal in the cause of religion, Philoxenus tells them that faith must be preached openly, for truth has been revealed to enlighten every man. It must be announced not only to friends, but also to enemies. If we seek it with ardor and experience how sweet and agreeable it is, nothing can separate us from it. Philoxenus then goes on to explain what truth is, and he defends his own doctrine on the Incarnation. a) By becoming man, the Word of God suffered no change.

b) He did not assume the person of a man in whom He dwelt as in a temple. c) The body which He took did not come down from heaven; nor was it a mere appearance (φαντασία). d) The Word was not incarnate without the rational soul, and He assumed our humanity in and of the Virgin, so that He, Whose generation from the Father is eternal, had a real and temporal generation from the Virgin. e) We must not, like the Nestorians, divide Christ into two persons or two natures, attributing

sufferings to the one and glory to the other; but we must refer both glory and humiliation to the Only Son of God, Who is from two, that is, from the divinity and from the humanity. f) The Word of God Who became incarnate for our salvation died for us, and the death which He died was suffered by Him and not by a man distinct from Himself, for he who admits a human person along with the Son of God in the mystery of the Incarnation, introduces a fourth person into the Trinity.

In the epilogue, Philoxenus advises the monks not to be satisfied with the duties of contemplative life, but to fight courageously for the faith that is in them: he asks for their prayers, and he anathematizes Nestorius and Eutyches and all those who agree with them.

B. — The First() Letter to the Monks of Bëth-Gaugal.

37. This letter is extant only in the Syr. Ms. 135 of the Vatican (fol. 19v-23v). The title, according to the catalogue, is: Date. The first letter to the Monks of Bëth-Gaugal () was evidently written before 491, for Zeno is mentioned as being in actual possession of the throne: «Moreover, the faithful and just Emperor Zeno and the archbishop of the capital return you thanks for the anaphoras which you have sent» (). There is another indication, however, which determines approximately the date of composition of this letter. After praising the monks for their zeal on behalf of the faith, Philoxenus adds: «And the same Christ-loving (Emperor) has openly declared that he gained the victory over his enemies with (the help of) your prayers, and he is ready to give us ample reward for the work which we have undertaken for the peace of the churches, and to drive away from them the enemies of the Cross» ().

The enemies referred to here are not only Basiliscus, the usurper (476-477), but especially Leontius and Illus, whose rebellion lasted nearly three years (), and who were not defeated till the early part of the year 485 (). By the enemies of the Cross, Philoxenus understands, as usual, the Nestorian bishops, and also all those who accepted the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon and refused to sign the Henoticon. We know from Theophanes that in 485 many Catholic bishops were banished from their sees by Zeno and Acacius, under pretext of having assisted the rebels (Leontius and Illus), but in reality for refusing to sign the Henoticon and to communicate with the Monophysite patriarch of Alexandria (). This wholesale deposition of bishops had not taken place when the letter was written, for Philoxenus says that Zeno is ready to drive away from the churches the enemies of the Cross. The patriarch of Antioch, Calandion, who was one of the first victims of this persecution, must have been deprived of his see about the middle of the year 485, for a council was held in Rome on the fifth of October of that year over the question of his deposition (). Hence it seems very probable that this letter was written some time between the fall of Leontius and Illus, and the deposition of Calandion, perhaps in the spring of 485.

Analysis. This letter, like the preceding, consists of three parts: a prologue, a defence of his own doctrine, and an epilogue. Philoxenus writes to confirm the glad tidings already proclaimed in the churches (probably the promulgation of the Henoticon and the overthrow of the rebels). He praises the holiness of the monks, the purity of their life, and the rigor of their rule. They serve Christ for Christ's sake, and not for temporal gifts. After stating his own doctrine, Philoxenus defends it against Nestorius and Eutyches. a) The Son of God became man and remained as He is, God. b) He did not receive any glory from the body that He took, but by His Incarnation He gave glory to our nature. c) He was incarnate of the Virgin without change. d) Both the divine and the human acts are to be referred to one Christ, and not to two persons or to two natures.

e) Christ suffered by His will, and the death of the Cross was undergone not by a man in whom the Word dwelt, but by the Word Himself Who became man and Who, in His death, did not lose the life of His nature. f) Then follow a number of sentences which remind one of the canons or anathemas of a council. In them Philoxenus sets forth at length his views on the person of Christ and rejects the Nestorian opinions. Many of these sentences contain some plays on words which give additional force to the expression. Thus (p. 111) we read: «He who attributes number (menyänä) to the one Christ, and counts in Him two persons or distinguishes two sons, such a one is not a member of Christ, and has not been numbered (la'ethmeni) among the host of the chosen ones of God». And, in the next sentence, Philoxenus says: «He who does not confess that He, Whom John called "the Word", is the very Same of Whom Matthew wrote (kethabh) "Son of David and Son of Abraham", such a one has not been written (la 'ethkethebh) in (the book) of the adoption of the Heavenly Father».

In the epilogue, Philoxenus exhorts the monks to fight against godless doctrines, and he bitterly denounces his enemies.

C.

The Letter to Zeno.

38. The Letter to Emperor Zeno on the Incarnation of the Son of God is extant only in the Vatican Syr. Ms. 135 (fol. 17r-19 v). The title is: According to Assemani (), Philoxenus wrote this letter shortly after his consecration as bishop of Mabbôgh, when he accepted the Henoticon. But this was not the only event that called forth this interesting document. From the last sentence of the letter it would appear that the faith of Philoxenus had been attacked, or that representations had been made to the Emperor for appointing to an important metropolitan see a man who had caused much trouble in Antioch, and whose name was «synonymous with turmoil and strife» (). It was then that Zeno demanded of him an exposition of his doctrine, so that Philoxenus gives us in the present letter his own profession of faith in the Incarnation, written in obedience to the Emperor's orders and in answer to his opponents: «I have written these few lines, O pious Emperor, and have sent them to Your Christianity, because you have ordered it, to confound the heretics who question my faith in Christ, and also to edify those who think as I do, and who, made bold by divine love, try to defend me» ().

What were the exact charges brought against Philoxenus by his enemies is not certain. From the contents of the letter it seems probable that he had been accused of Eutychianism or Apollinarism, for he lays emphasis on the fact that he is writing about the embodiment (methgassemänüthä) and the humanifying (methbarnesänuthä) of the Son of God. Although these two words are often loosely translated by «Incarnation», they are not at all synonymous, and the difference of meaning between them ought to be borne in mind, especially when studying the christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries. The Apollinarists, adopting the trichotomy of Plato, taught that the Word of God assumed in the Incarnation the human flesh (σάρξ), and the animal soul (ψυχή), but not the rational soul (νοις); in other words, they admitted the σάρκωσις (methgassemänüthä), but rejected the ἐνανθρώπησις (methbarnesänüthä) (). It is probably to clear himself of some like charge that Philoxenus makes use of those two words here. And it is also worthy of notice that the word «ethbarnas» (he was made man), which does not occur in the preceding letters, is found no less than three times in this one,

and in places where Philoxenus generally employs the more common term «hewä barnäsä» (he became man).

Analysis. a) The Word of God, the consubstantial Son of the Father, was incarnate in and of the Virgin. b) His humanity was real, otherwise He could not have redeemed us. c) His becoming man, like His essence, was without change, for change belongs only to things created. d) He did not create in the Virgin a man whom He afterwards assumed, but He is true God and true man. e) Of the Son of God Philoxenus confesses two generations but not two natures, for he argues that, if we admit two natures, we must necessarily admit two persons and two sons. f) Christ died on the Cross without losing the life of His essence, and by His death He destroyed the power of death over all the children of men. g) Finally, Philoxenus anathematizes Nestorius for admitting in one and the same Christ a distinction of persons and of natures, attributing the miracles to God and the sufferings to a man in whom God dwelt; he also says anathema to Eutyches for doing away with the Incarnation of the Word of God by denying the reality of the body which He assumed.

[Footnotes renumbered and placed at the end]

Prefatory Material

THREE LETTERS OF PHILOXENUS BISHOP OF MABBÔGH (485-519): BEING THE LETTER TO THE MONKS, THE FIRST LETTER TO THE MONKS OF BETH-GAUGAL, AND THE LETTER TO EMPEROR ZENO; EDITED FROM SYRIAC MANUSCRIPTS IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY, WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION, AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE, WORKS, AND DOCTRINES OF PHILOXENUS, A THEOLOGICAL GLOSSARY, AND AN APPENDIX OF BIBLE QUOTATIONS; BY ARTHUR ADOLPHE VASCHALDE, Member of the Society of the Priests of St. Basil, Licentiate of Theology. -------- A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY. -------- ROMA TIPOGRAFIA DELLA R. ACCADEMIA DEI LINCEI PROPRIETÀ DEL CAV. V. SALVIUCCI 1902 FACULTAS PHILOSOPHIAE N° 2. TO THE VERY REVEREND NOEL DVRAND SIXTH SVPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF THE PRIESTS OF SAINT BASIL [Blank page in printed text]

BIOGRAPHY

The author of this dissertation, ARTHUR ADOLPHE VASCHALDE was born March 10, 1871, at Saint-Pons, department of Ardèche, France. After a preparatory train-ingin the public school of his native town, he followed the academic courses at St. Barbe's College, Annonay, in the same department. Coming to Canada in 1888, he took up the study of Theology at Assumption College, Sandwich. There in 1892 he entered the Society of the Priests of Saint Basil. In the fall of 1893 he ma-triculated at the Catholic University of America, where he pursued the courses of Holy Scripture under Prof. C. P. Grannan, and of Semitic Languages under Prof. H. Hyvernat, and he received the degree of Licentiate of Theology in 1895. After teaching Mental Philosophy at Sandwich for five years, he returned to the Univer-sity in 1900, to continue the study of Semitic Languages under Prof. H. Hyvernat and of Philosophy under Prof. E. A. Pace.

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PREFACE

With the heresy known as Jacobite Monophysitism are associated some of the great-

est names in Syriac history and literature, such as Philoxenus (Aksenaya) of Mabbôgh (+ 523), Severus of Antioch (+ 537), John of Telia (+ 538), Jacob of Serugh (+ 521), Jacob Baradaeus (+ 578), and many others. Although this heresy was named after Jacob Baradaeus, the founder of the Jacobite Church, its origin can be traced to the reaction which, in the latter half of the fifth century, set in against the errors of Nestorius and Eutyches, and against the definition of the Council of Chalcedon respecting the existence of the two natures in Christ. Philoxenus was one of the foremost leaders in that great movement and, beyond question, the ablest champion of the new faith. The extracts from his works in the Bibliotheca Orientalis of Assemani and the recent publications of Guidi, Frothingham and Budge, leave no doubt on this point. Yet, outside of Budge's chapter on the creed of Philoxenus, but little has been written on the doctrines of the famous bishop of Mabbôgh, and, in our manuals of Church history and of dogmatic Theology, all the information which we possess about the life and teachings of Philoxenus is derived almost exclusively from Greek writers of the Byzantine period.

Such information, however, ought to be supplemented by a comparison with the Syriac sources; for it is but fair to let the original documents speak for themselves. Hence, as a small contribution to the literature of this interesting subject, we give here for the first time the Syriac text and the English translation of three important letters of Philoxenus: the Letter to the Monks, the first Letter to the Monks of Beth-Gaugal, and the Letter to Emperor Zeno. It has been thought that these documents, if published and translated in their entirety and taken in connection with what has already been done, would throw more light on the doctrines of Philoxenus than could be obtained heretofore. To emphasize this method, an appendix has been added giving a concordance of the principal theological terms and expressions used by the author; this, we trust, will be useful to such as may wish to pursue the same course with regard to Syrian Monophysitism. In another appendix the Bible quotations, occurring in the text, have been compared with the Peshitta, following in this the laudable example of Budge in his beautiful edition of the Discourses of Philoxenus. To this we have added a list of the few words borrowed from the Greek, which occur in these three letters.

If circumstances permit, this work will be followed by the publication of other texts of the same author; in the meantime, this modest effort will be amply repaid, if it directs the attention of others to the necessity of studying Jacobite Monophysitism in the writings of those who are best qualified to speak for it, namely, the Syriac Monophysite writers of the fifth and sixth centuries. It is now my pleasing duty to thank Prof. Hyvernat for the care with which he directed my Oriental studies, not only during the four years I spent in his Department, but also during the five years I was absent from the University. I am besides under obligation to him for placing at my disposal the Syriac text of these three letters which he copied himself from the Vatican Manuscripts. I may not close without expressing my gratitude to Prof.

Guidi, of Rome, and to Professors Grannan, Shahan and Pace, of this University who kindly consented to examine this dissertation before it was printed and offered many valuable suggestions.

To Prof. Guidi I am also indebted for a description of Syr. Mss. 135, 136, and 138 of the Vatican library, and also for the anonymous notice on Philoxenus which he transcribed for me from Syr. Ms. 155 of the Vatican. He had also the kindness to read the proof-sheets of this dissertation and took the trouble to correct the Syriac text on the original Manuscripts in the Vatican Library, thus ensuring, even in the apparently most trifling details of punctuation, an accuracy too often wanted in similar publications. The Catholic University of America, February, 1902. A. A. VASCHALDE. [Blank page in printed text]

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CONTENTS

PART FIRST INTRODUCTION CHAPTER I. ---- THE LIFE OF PHILOXENUS. 1. Sources 1 2. Early Life of Philoxenus 3 3. Philoxenus at Edessa 6 4. His Struggle with Calandion 9 5. His Appointment to Mabbôgh 13 6. His Struggle with Flavian 15 7. His Exile and Death 19 8. Various Judgments on Philoxenus 20 CHAPTER II. ---- THE PUBLISHED WORKS OF PHILOXENUS. 9. The Discourses and other Texts 25 10. The Letter to Abu-Nafir 29 11. The Letter concerning Stephen Bar Sudaili 33 12. The Letter to the Monks of Teleda 34 CHAPTER III. ---- THE DOCTRINES OF PHILOXENUS. A) His Doctrine on the Incarnation. 13. General Considerations 38 14. Philoxenus and Nestorius 40 15. Heresy of Nestorius . 41 16. The Word Θεοτόκος 42 17. Communicatio Idiomatum 44 18. Union of the Natures 46 19. Consequences of Nestorius' Theory 47 20. Philoxenus and Eutyches 50 21. Heresy of Eutyches 51 22. Manner of Union 53 23. Monotheletism 56 24. Reality of the

Body of Christ 57 25. Other Consequences of the Eutychian Theory 61 26. Theory of Philoxenus on the Sufferings of Christ 66 27. Summing up of the Doctrine of Philoxenus 68 28. Philoxenus and Original Sin 69 29. Philoxenus and the Blessed Virgin 70

B) His Doctrine on the Trinity. 30. Three Persons and one Nature 71 31. Equality and Consubstantiality of the Persons 72 32. Eternal Generation of the Son 73 33. Procession of the Holy Ghost 74 C) His Doctrine on the Real Presence. 34. [Our Lord really present in the Holy Eucharist] 76 PART SECOND CHAPTER I. 35. Description of the Manuscripts 81 CHAPTER II. ---- INTRODUCTION TO THE THREE LETTERS. A. 36. The Letter to the Monks: Title, date, analysis 83 B. 37. The first Letter to the Monks of Bêth-Gaugal: Title, date, analysis 87 C. 38. The Letter to Zeno: Title, date, analysis 90 CHAPTER III. ---- ENGLISH TRANSLATION. A. The Letter to the Monks 93 B. The first Letter to the Monks of Beth-Gaugal 105 C. The Letter to Zeno 118 PART THIRD SYRIAC TEXT. A. The Letter to the Monks 127 B. The first Letter to the Monks of Beth-Gaugal 146

C. The Letter to Zeno 163 APPENDICES. I. An anonymous Notice on Philoxenus 175 II. Theological Glossary 177 III. Bible Quotations compared with the Peshitta and the Codex Sinaiticus 183 Greek words occurring in the three letters 190 Note to the online text: Part Third is omitted.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator’s own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.