

**THEOLOGY OF BAPTISM AND EUCHARIST  
ACCORDING TO JACOB OF SARUG'S  
PUBLISHED HOMILIES AND SELECTED  
MANUSCRIPTS**

**EDITION, TRANSLATION, COMMENTARY AND  
THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

**Josekunju KALARIPARAMPIL JOSEPH**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Theology at the  
University of Fribourg for Obtaining  
the Degree of Doctorate in Theology  
under the Direction of  
Professor Franz MALI**

**2016**

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**Approved by the Faculty of Theology on the recommendation of**

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July 2018, Friboug

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## **PREFACE**

This publication is only a part of the doctoral thesis. It consists of General Introduction, a part of Third Chapter on Baptism, General conclusion and a select Bibliography. General Introduction and Conclusion respectively gives a bird's eye-view about the whole thesis. The part of third chapter mainly deals with baptism of Christ and the institution of baptism. As an opening to the theme of baptism of Christ, Jacob's idea about OT washings and baptism given by John the Baptist dealt with in this part. Then we move on to the idea of institution of baptism in the aspect of sacred time. At the end, we give only a select bibliography of the whole thesis.

## Syriac Transliteration Table

### Consonants

Transliteration	Consonants
,	ܐ
b	ܒ
g	ܓ
d	ܕ
h	ܚ
w	ܘ
z	ܙ
ḥ	ܗ
ṭ	ܛ
y	ܝ
k	ܟ
l	ܠ
m	ܡ
n	ܢ
s	ܣ
‘	ܦ
p	ܦ
ṣ	ܨ
q	ܩ
r	ܪ
š	ܫ
t	ܬ

### Vowels

Transliteration	Vowels
a	ܐܘܘܐ
o	ܐܘܘܐ
e	ܐܘܘܐ
i	ܐܘܘܐ
u	ܐܘܘܐ

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Jacob of Sarug (451-521) is honoured as the ‘Lyre of the Holy Spirit,’ ‘Teacher,’ ‘Crown of the Teachers’ and the ‘Harp of the Orthodox Church.’ He is the prominent Syriac Church Father after Ephrem in the West Syriac Tradition. Although Jacob witnessed some major Christological controversies of his time, it is evident from his writings that he remained distant from them. He had not directly involved with any ecclesiastical politics of that time as his sole interest was to explore into the Christian truths. His contributions to the Syriac world, especially to the West Syriac Church, are a treasury of precious pearls. He is known especially for his *mimre*, “which amply display the profundity of his thought, the clarity of his intellect and the polish of his style. They captivate the reader’s mind, leaving him with the feeling that his was no mere earthly voice, but a heavenly one, made to vibrate by the Spirit through an earthly instrument.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Harvey, “Jacob’s prominence in the Syriac literary memory rests on the genius of presenting traditional materials in familiar yet well-crafted form, occasionally polished with strokes of poignant beauty.”<sup>2</sup> His poetic style of writing consists in the use of symbols and types to express theological truths. He followed the Semitic background, in which he was born and raised. He combined the typological method and spiritual exegesis in his interpretation of the scripture. One will be amazed at Jacob’s profundity of using the types and his expertise in showing their Christo-centrism.

### Scope

There are, however, very particular reasons, why this dissertation has been written, which require a brief adumbration here. The West Syriac Church lacks an in-depth study on its sacramental theology. One of the main duties of the Church is to administer the sacraments, which draw the faithful closer to God. In order to achieve this task, there should be a sound knowledge about the sacramental theology. The

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<sup>1</sup> E. Aydin, *The Life of St. Jakob of Sarug*, A. Palmer (tr.), ET (Warburg: Mor Jakob von Sarug Verlag, 2014), 31.

<sup>2</sup> S. A. Harvey, “On Mary’s Voice: Gendered Words in Syriac Marian Tradition,” in D. B. Martin & P. C. Miller (eds), *The Cultural Turn in Late Ancient Studies* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 77.

Church needs to teach the faithful about the mysteries of faith. She can achieve this task only by exploring the biblical background of the sacraments and their development through the early centuries of Christendom. Therefore, in order to gain a better understanding of the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist in the West Syriac tradition, one has to delve deep into the literature of the Church Fathers, since their theological formulations are built upon the Bible and the Tradition.

It is believed that the evangelization of the Syriac Church took place in the early centuries of Christendom. Edessa is considered to be the cradle of Syriac Christianity.<sup>3</sup> Till the Council of Chalcedon, the Syriac Church was united, although there were some factions of theological movements. But after the Council of Chalcedon (451), there was an explicit division in the Syriac Church. Based on Nestorianism and Monophysitism, there emerged two Churches: East Syriac and West Syriac. The West Syriac Church could be better known under the name Miaphysite Church rather than Monophysite. Jacob of Sarug belonged to the West Syriac Church, though he was not a strong exponent of any division. However in regard to the polemics, he always stayed away from the limelight.

After the division, there emerged new traditions and liturgical practices in the West Syriac Church. Then, it was the need of the time to have expositions and commentaries of these new practices. From this point of view, the Church Fathers made their expositions of the sacred mysteries. The exposition of the meaning of the sacraments, especially those of the baptism and Eucharist, was an integral part of Christian teaching. Jacob of Sarug is the one who produced the first glances of the theology of baptism and Eucharist of the West Syriac Tradition through his homilies. A thorough study of his homilies will unveil his theology on these two sacraments.

Previous scholarship had established the profundity of Jacob's homilies. He is a great pastor and poet-theologian. The main purpose of his homilies was to support his

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<sup>3</sup> Addai, Mari and Haggai (Aggai) are considered to be the saints of the Church of the East. From the given accounts, it is believed that they lived during the first century. According to Eastern Syriac Tradition, Addai was one of the seventy disciples of Christ. Mari is believed to be converted by Addai. Addai and Mari are credited with the 'Liturgy of Addai and Mari.' Haggai was a disciple of Addai and like Addai and Mari, he also preached in different regions of Mesopotamia.

G. Phillips, *The Doctrine of Addai, the Apostle* (London 1876). van Rompay, "The East: Syria and Mesopotamia," in S. A. Harvey & D. G. Hunter (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (Oxford: 2008), 366. H. J. W. Drijvers, "Syrian Christianity and Judaism," in J. Lieu & J. North & T. Rajak, *The Jews Among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (London & New York: 1992), 127-128.

pastoral ministry. He guided, advised, corrected and encouraged his flock through his literary works. He presented his teaching as clear as possible and without any ambiguity. Harvey comments: "Jacob recalls and recasts the same scenes and interactions, each time with different points of emphasis, imagery, or doctrinal interaction."<sup>4</sup> His style is similar to that of Ephrem, and he follows a typological method.

The main purpose of this thesis is to produce a systematic analysis of the theology of baptism and Eucharist according to Jacob's published homilies and selected manuscripts. Although Jacob did not write any systematic commentaries on these sacraments, he has dealt extensively on the same theme, even though his ideas about these sacraments are spread among many homilies. Thus, it is a difficult task to assemble these scattered pieces of sacramental theology from his vast literature. A study on his theology of baptism and Eucharist is very much important for all the Churches, which follow the Antiochene tradition. The scriptural background of the sacraments is thoroughly explained in his homilies. There is no liturgical service, which is without a prayer from the homilies of Jacob. His rich theological expressions render a special beauty to the West Syriac liturgy. Therefore, this study is important for all the West Syriac Churches to delve into the theology of baptism and Eucharist.

For the Syriac Churches, the mysteries or the sacraments, which initiate someone to the Christian faith, are sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist. The Churches, which follow the Antiochene tradition give paramount importance to these sacraments. These three sacraments are foundational for Christian life. They are administered together and effect the special gifts which are common in nature. Among the sacraments, the baptism and Eucharist assume prime importance since the participation in the divine life is initiated in baptism and nurtured through the Eucharist. "Around baptismal typology Jacob is particular about stressing the new life in Christ. With regard to the Eucharist Jacob stresses the self-offering of Christ, especially with the rich imagery of 'betrothal and marriage feast,' that depicts the foretaste of celestial bliss."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Harvey, "On Mary's Voice," 77.

<sup>5</sup> *Salvation*, 441.

Jacob made his theological conclusions not based on a strict philosophical speculation, but solely on the scripture. He often presents a flexible and complex exchange of images regarding the baptism and Eucharist in his homilies from different paradoxical vantage points simultaneously.

Being a great poet-theologian of Syriac Orient, Jacob of Sarug is a key theological resource for the Syriac Churches. Almost all the Syriac Churches use excerpts of Jacob's homilies in their liturgy. Certainly he is one of the most remembered and revered Church Fathers in the West Syriac liturgy, which includes Antiochene Jacobite Church, Antiochene Catholic Church, Maronite Church, Syro-Malankara Catholic Church and Syriac Orthodox Church of India. Through his homilies Jacob explored the theological nuances of the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist and tried to find new meanings and expressions. His ability to depict the OT events as the types of the NT events is noteworthy. Being the sacraments of initiation, Jacob gave an elaborate explanation to the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist. There is no particular reference to the sacrament of confirmation in Jacob. During the time of Jacob, sacrament of confirmation was considered to be implied in baptism. Therefore, this study doesn't attempt to explore into the sacrament of confirmation.

Through a research on Jacob, this study will bring forth the sacramental theology of the West Syriac Church during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, a time of intense theological controversies. For a sound understanding about the West Syriac Christianity, it is important to know Jacob, because without him, its theology, liturgy, and asceticism would be incomplete as he has influenced all the realms of theology through his writings and life.

From a literary point of view, the critical edition and the translation of homilies have a great relevance. It leads to a new arena of knowledge as is a great scope for new studies. In the future, this study will assist to initiate innovative researches on Jacob of Sarug's theology. This thesis serves as a guide to those interested in Syriac literature to gain a comprehensive understanding of Jacob's theology on baptism and Eucharist.

## A Brief Literature Review

There are voluminous works of Jacob and only a few of them have been translated into the modern languages for the use of the public for whom Syriac or Aramaic is incomprehensible. In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Paul Bedjan<sup>6</sup> published 195 homilies of 763 in five volumes. After that, scholars attempted to publish some other homilies. To this day, most of Jacob's homilies are in the form of manuscripts. In the 1970s Arthur Vööbus published a detailed work on the manuscripts of Jacob's homilies in four volumes: '*Handschriftliche Überlieferung der Mēmrē-Dichtung des Ja'qōb von Serūg.*'<sup>7</sup> Both these works are considered to be the masterpieces on Jacob of Sarug's homilies. There is a sixth volume to Bedjan's edition added by S. P. Brock. Roger-Youssef Akhrass' work on the homilies of Jacob is a significant one. Many modern scholars tried to shed light upon Jacob's theology based on his homilies and as a result of which there are some studies available on our poet-theologian. Some of them are Thomas Kollampampil,<sup>8</sup> Johns Abraham Konat,<sup>9</sup> Michael D. Guinan,<sup>10</sup> and Tanois B. Mansour.<sup>11</sup>

Prominent Syriac scholar S. Brock wrote an article on 'The Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh,'<sup>12</sup> through which he brought out some major themes related to baptism. It does not comprise all the aspects of Jacob's notion on baptism. By the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century Mansour published '*La théologie de Jacques de Saroug,*' in which he tries to cover Jacob's theology quite skillfully. Even though it is an abridged form, he provides a good picture about some aspects of the baptism and Eucharist.

Other important contributors in this study are A. Harrack, R.H. Connolly and T. Kollampampil. Harrack studied the 'Syriac Orthodox Celebration of the Eucharist in the Light of Jacob of Serugh's Mimro 95.' This study basically treats the themes

<sup>6</sup> P. Bedjan (ed.), *Homiliae Selectae mar Jacobi Sarugensis*, Vols. 1-5 (Paris-Leipzig: 1905-1910).

<sup>7</sup> A. Vööbus, *Handschriftliche Überlieferung der Mēmrē-Dichtung des Ja'qōb von Serūg*, Vols. 1-4 CSCO 344-345, 421-422 (1973- 1981).

<sup>8</sup> T. Kollampampil, *Salvation in Christ according to Jacob of Serugh* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2001).

<sup>9</sup> J. A. Konat, *The Old Testament Types of Christ as Reflected in the Select Metrical Homilies (Memre) of Jacob of Serugh* (Louvain: Catholic University, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> M. D. Guinan, *The Eschatology of James of Sarug*, UnDiss (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America, 1972).

<sup>11</sup> T. Bou Masnour, *La Théologie de Jacques de Saroug*, Vols. 2 (Kaslik-Libanon: L'Université Saint-Esprit, 1993, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> S. P. Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," in *OCA* 205 (1976), 325-347.

of the celebration of the Eucharist. It gives importance to the ceremonial part of the Eucharist. Kollamparampil has translated two homilies related to baptism: 'Baptism of Our Savior in the Jordan' and 'Holy Baptism' (HS I.8 & 9). All these works are limited in giving a comprehensive view of Jacob's theology on baptism and Eucharist, but they certainly help to make one.

### **Methodology**

In this study, we try to find out Jacob's theological teachings on the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist based on his homilies. His nuances on these sacraments do not limit to certain homilies as they are spread over many of his homilies. It is interesting to note that Jacob stops wherever there is a mention of water, blood or a sacrifice in the scripture, and delineates either baptism or the Eucharist. However there are exceptions to this basic rule. We make critical edition of the selected manuscripts, and translation of selected homilies. We also refer to all the relevant homilies in Bedjan's edition and make translation of excerpts which are needed. In this research, we will deal with direct translated passages from Jacob's homilies. Since they are self-explanatory, we do not go into further details on many occasions, but follow the method of analytical investigation.

The analytical investigation is intended to bring out the key themes that are included in the particular work of Jacob. An appreciation of his work aims at finding out the brilliance of the author as well as the excellence of the work especially from a literary point of view. The method of this study is more investigative and analytical in nature so as to surface and categorise the precious contents of the particular set of literary work of Jacob than to make a comparative study or a critical evaluation. It follows a certain pattern because the purpose of this study is to uncover the richness of patristic theology and the profound thoughts of Jacob in his own language and methods. In order to substantiate the ideas, supportive materials are cited from his writings, and the Bible. This study also contains a linguistic analysis on certain occasions in order to pave foundations for sound theological arguments. All the available modern literature on Jacob is also widely consulted in this study.

When studying and analysing Jacob's homilies, the question of authenticity is a big challenge. It is, of course, beyond the scope of the present investigation to go in

detail into such matters. In this study, we take for granted that all the published homilies as authentic.

### **Resource**

The primary source of this research is Bedjan's edition of Jacob's homilies, 'Seven Homilies against the Jews' and 'Four Homilies on the Creation.' The translation series of Gorgias Press, 'Metrical Homilies of Mor Jacob of Sarug' (MHMJS) and the translations done by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery are a rich resource for this research. Unless otherwise noted the New Revised Standard Version is followed for biblical quotations. The liturgical texts of the *Syro-Malankara Catholic Church* are also referred on certain occasions. Other studies and scholarly articles on Jacob's literature are used as secondary source for this study.

### **Structure of the Study**

The vantage point of this thesis from Jacob's perspective is the following biblical verse: "... at once blood and water came out" (Jn 19:34) from the side of Christ. Here, for Jacob, the water and blood represent the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist respectively. In his thought, though both sacraments have already their explicit overtones in the actions and words of Jesus, this is the occasion where both these sacraments find their origin together. The Church, as Jacob points out, is originated from the side of Jesus. It is entrusted with the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist. Because of these sacraments, the faithful become the brothers/sisters of the Son of God and thus, the children of God the Father. They regain the lost privilege, which they had lost when Adam sinned, to be the heirs of the Paradise.

In order to avoid an overly broad topic, this study will focus exclusively on the theology of baptism and Eucharist of Jacob of Sarug. It has four chapters. The first chapter sketches an overview of the life and works of Jacob and sheds some light on the particularities of his literary style along with a detailed analysis of his works. Then there is a brief description about the idea of sacraments during the time of Jacob. In order to understand the Syriac theology, a sound knowledge about sacred time is important, because the Syriac Church Fathers often treated the economy of salvation from the perspective of sacred time. So, we bring forth this idea too here.

The second chapter aims at making the critical edition and translation of the homily on 'Sacrifices,' and translation of five other homilies, which were published in Bedjan's edition. Third chapter treats the theology of baptism. Beginning with Jacob's delineation on different types of baptisms, such as the washings of the OT, baptism given by John, Jesus' baptism and the institution of Christian baptism, the chapter proceeds to the OT types of baptism, leading to the NT symbols of baptism. Finally, Christian baptism and its different features are dealt with in this chapter.

The fourth chapter deals exclusively with the sacrament of Eucharist. Jacob's use of different titles for the Eucharist is explained in the very beginning of the chapter. Since, the Eucharist is the perfect sacrifice of Jesus, its OT background, the need of Jesus' sacrifice and the triple role of Jesus in His own sacrifice is discussed. As in the case of baptism, both OT types and NT symbols of the Eucharist are also explored. Finally, the Eucharistic themes and its practices are studied. Towards the end, the general conclusion has the final remarks and suggestions from this study.

The fertile soil of Mesopotamia was fortunate to have this Church Father and the West Syriac Churches too. His homilies are very important from the point of view of linguistic and liturgical aspects. His lucid style, the metrical compositions and the use of language are very much important. He brought new theological insights and interpretations to the biblical texts, which were not done before his time. His homilies also deal implicitly with the themes of the commentaries of the liturgy. The wide use of excerpts from his homilies in the liturgy affirms the fact that he paved the foundation of the West Syriac Liturgy. From a spiritual point of view, his literature is essential for spiritual nourishment. Despite worries about all the possible inaccuracies and inadequacies of this research, this study will certainly contribute to the richness of Syriac literature.

## CHAPTER 3

### BAPTISM

#### Introduction

During His incarnated life, Christ specifically made two directives regarding baptism: While interacting with Nicodemus, Christ told him: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God” (Jn 3: 5). On Mount of Olives, before His ascension, Christ gave His disciples the duty to baptise all of the nations in the name of Trinity (Mt 28:19). So it is upon Christ’s command that the disciples after receiving the Holy Spirit on the Pentecost began to baptise. Before being anointed by the Holy Spirit, the apostles never conferred baptism of the fire and Spirit. Though there is a reference in the gospel of John that the apostles baptised (Jn 4:2), it was not a baptism of fire and Spirit. Henceforth, baptism was administered with the Spirit and fire. It was instituted to restore human beings to the state of divine sonship, which Adam had before the fall. Christ is the source and the foundation of Christian baptism. It is the holy sacrament by which we are born anew through immersion in water for three times in the name of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (HS I.9: 201, 4-5; V.173: 603, 13-14; HSB r VI.9: 207, 2-3; VI.13: 279, 1-4); receiving the grace of justification, and hence becoming a child of God, a brother or sister of Christ, and a Christian and heir to the Kingdom of God. The sacramental washing of baptism cleanses the soul from sins and purifies it. The relationship between washing with water and purification indicates that baptism is a channel through which God forgives the recipient’s sins, although the OT washings did not confer the Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup>

The word ‘baptism’ is coined from the Greek words βαπτισμός (*baptismos*) and βάπτισμα (*baptisma*), which means to ‘wash’ or to ‘immerse.’ In Syriac, the word for baptism is ܡܡܘܕܝܬܘܡ *mamudito*, which means ‘baptism.’ The root word is ܡܡܘܕܝܬܘܡ (*amad*) meaning to be baptised or to bathe for purification, to wash, to immerse and

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<sup>13</sup> P. J. A. Robinson, *Baptism in Ritual Perspective: Myth, Symbol and Metaphor as Anthropological Foundations for a Baptismal Theology* (Durham Theses, Durham University, <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/5060/>), 106.

to dip.<sup>14</sup> As per today's practice, the essential parts of baptism are the ceremonial washing and anointing with the trinitarian formula. Through this washing and anointing the candidate enters into glorious Christian life.

In this chapter we analyse the background of Jesus' baptism, we will see also Jacob's view about the baptism of Law, i.e. of the OT and of John the Baptist. Then we will put forth the teachings of Jacob on the institution of baptism.

### 3.1. Homilies on Baptism

Although Jacob of Sarug did not give much detail about the liturgical rites of baptism in his homilies,<sup>15</sup> he has written extensively on baptism in different homilies. Jacob was one of the main active figures in the Syriac Church to develop the concept of baptism in Edessa and its environs.<sup>16</sup> His homilies on 'the Baptism of the Law, that of John, and that which our Lord gave to the Apostles' (HS I.7: 153-167)<sup>17</sup>, 'the Baptism of our Saviour in the Jordan' (HS I.8: 167-193) and 'Holy Baptism' (HS I.9: 193-211) specifically deal with this theme.

There are also some other homilies which partly deal with the theme of baptism. Some of them are: the Star seen by the Magi, and the Slaughter of the Innocents (HS I.6), the Prayer which our Lord taught His Disciples (HS I.10), the Rich Man and

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<sup>14</sup> *CSD*, 289, 416; *SL*, 802, 1108.

<sup>15</sup> There were octagonal baptisteries in the monasteries of Tur Abdin during the time of Jacob of Sarug. The monastery of St Simeon the Stylite near Antioch contains an octagonal baptistery in which the font is preserved. Pilgrims came to be initiated at these holy monasteries. The font at the monasteries of St Simeon, Mar Abraham, Mar Abel was designed for mass-baptism. The monastery of Mar Gabriel or Qartmin was built by the end of 4<sup>th</sup> cent. is also having an ancient baptistery. The octagonal dome of the monastery was built in the first of 5<sup>th</sup> cent. The domed structure thought to have served originally as a baptistery (See A. Palmer, *Monk and Mason on the Tigris Frontier: the Early History of Tur Abdin*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Palmer, who spent several times at the monastery and studied the history of monastery very closely, narrates: "Once it is established that the dome at Qartmin is a baptistery, the open eye at its apex takes on a symbolic meaning: through baptism the eye of mankind is opened to the light which streams into our darkened world from above, the intellect is trained on the stars, the soul is washed clean by water from the sky. It sloughs off the darkness of sin through 'burial with Christ', in order to climb up the ladder of light through the dome of the firmament into heaven above" (Palmer, *Monk and Mason on the Tigris Frontier*, 147, 148). So during the time of Jacob, there was mass baptism and each church and monastery was having a baptistery.

<sup>16</sup> S. Saliba, "Baptism in the Homilies of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Jacob of Serugh," in *ParOr* 40 (2015), 331.

<sup>17</sup> I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Sebastian P. Brock for providing his translation of the homily on the Baptism of the Law, the baptism of John, and the baptism, which our Lord gave to the apostles. Wherever the translation of this homily is used, it is from Brock's. Excerpts of this homily are published in T. M. Finn, *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: West and East Syria, Message of the Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 5 (Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 189 ff.

Lazarus (HS I.16), the Commemoration of the Departed (HS I.22), the Passion (HS II.53), the Sunday of Pentecost (HS II.58), the Apostle Paul (HS II.62), Pride (HS II.65), the Six Days of Creation (HS III.71), Our Lord and Jacob, the Church and Rachel (HS III.75), the Two Sparrows in the Law (HS III.76), the Red Heifer (HS III.77), the Two Goats, the Sacrifice of Azazel (HS III.78), the Veil on Moses' Face (HS III.79), the Mysteries, Types and Depictions of Christ (HS III.80), Our Lord's remaining on Earth for 30 Years before performing Miracles (HS III.81), the Kingdom of Heaven is like Leaven (HS III.86), the blind Timaeus (HS III.88), Faith (HS III.94), Reception of the Holy Mysteries (HS III.95), the Beheading of John the Baptist (HS III.96), Praises of John the Baptist (HS III.97), the Apostle Thomas (HS III.99), the Castle which the Apostle Thomas build in India (HS III.100), the second homily on Elijah, when he ran away from Jezebel (HS IV.112), the first homily on Elisha (HS IV.116), the Paralytic aged 38 (HS IV.131), the Parable of the Vineyard (HS IV.133), Theological Investigation, and the Consecration of the Church (HS IV.134), the Assembly of Bishops, and Enkainia (HS IV.135), Praise at Table - Drink Offering (HS IV.144), the Parable of the Feast which a King made for his Son (HS V.171), the Five Talents (HS V.173), Monday of Hosannas (HS V.174), the Cherub and the Thief (HS V.177), Children who die (HS V.189), the End, IV (HS V.194) and the Baptism of Constantine (HSBr VI.16). Jacob used substantially many OT instances or figures to typify them as types of baptism.

### **3.2. Baptism of Christ**

First, let us focus our attention on how Jacob understood the baptism of the OT and of John the Baptist. The baptism given by John has special importance since Jesus received baptism from him. Baptism of Christ should be seen in the light of the OT and that of John, because Jacob always presented the OT as prefiguration of Christ's economy of salvation. There were different types of cleansing and purificatory services during the OT period. All these washings are to a certain extent have had baptismal resonance. Before Jesus received the baptism, John was preaching the baptism of repentance and great number of people came to him to be baptised. Even though the washings of the OT and the baptism of John lacked the effects and blessings of Christian baptism, they were the primordial types of Christian baptism.

Jacob characteristically categorises the washings of the OT and the baptism of John the Baptist as insufficient and incapable of transmitting the Holy Spirit to the candidates. The great distinguishing feature between Christ's baptism and the former baptisms or washings is the presence of the Holy Spirit. Jacob acknowledges the Holy Spirit as the main source for Christian baptism, which was instituted by Christ.<sup>18</sup> Christ's baptism, for Jacob, is a mystery revealed by God the Father. When we use the term 'Christ's baptism' in our study, it does not imply the baptism, which was entrusted to the apostles by Christ, but the baptism, which Christ received from John the Baptist. When we use the term 'Christian baptism,' it indicates the baptism, which Christ had commanded and entrusted His apostles to administer and the Church practises through the ages. Jacob's homily on 'the Baptism of the Law, that of John, and that which our Lord gave to the Apostles' (HS I.7: 153-167) gives direct mention about these three baptisms. All these baptisms are entirely related to the baptism of Christ. If OT washings and John's baptisms were the prototypes of Jesus' baptism, then Christian baptism, which is in practice today, is the antitype of Jesus' baptism. In Christian baptism, the candidate is baptised in the fire and Spirit.

Even though Jacob speaks of three baptisms, there are four baptisms in his viewpoint: the baptisms/washings of the Law, the baptism of John, the baptism, which Jesus received from John, and the baptism which Jesus entrusted His apostles (Christian baptism). All the three baptisms other than Christ's are centred on His baptism. The washings of the OT and the baptism of John lack the presence of the Holy Spirit. They are only shadows and types of Christian baptism (HS I.7: 160, 5-10; 161, 8-19).<sup>19</sup> One should keep in mind the viewpoint of Jacob on these three baptisms that there is distinction among the washings of the OT, the baptism of John the Baptist and the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the fire (Mt 3:11) established by Christ.<sup>20</sup> Christ brought fulfilment and consummation to all types of the baptism from the OT. Only with the advent of Holy Spirit, the baptism is given in the fire and Spirit, even the apostles had not received the baptism before that. In an allusive way, Jacob connects the Exodus of the Israelites through the Red Sea (which is the greatest saving act in the history of Israel), John's baptism at the Jordan, and Christ's

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<sup>18</sup> See Saliba, "Baptism in the Homilies of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Jacob of Serugh," 341-342.

<sup>19</sup> *Salvation*, 126.

<sup>20</sup> *Salvation*, 431-432.

gift of baptism (HS I.7: 161, 8-15).<sup>21</sup> Jacob's ideas on these three kinds of baptism, are seen in different homilies. Now we will see each of the baptisms in detail.

### 3.2.1. Baptism of Law / OT

In the OT, ceremonial washings for the purification were an essential part of Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law strictly distinguished between clean and unclean. Water was one of the means used to bring about ritual purity. The natural method of cleansing the body by washing and bathing in water was always customary in Israel. It was a common practice ever since the Torah/Law was given at Sinai. Persons who were unclean in a religious sense had to subject for a bath of purification. Whenever an individual contacted uncleanness, he had to make a washing or immersion in living water (Lev 15:13). In most cases, after immersion, they became clean again after sunset (Lev 22:6-7). There were many laws of purification in the OT, which prescribed washings for the purification. These washings were done for many different reasons: washing of the priests and Levites (Ex 40:12-15; Num 8:5-7), washing of lepers and of people who became unclean due to different reasons (Lev 13:6, 58; 14:43-47; 15:4-13, 16-18;), washing of the people who became unclean because of animals (Lev 11:24-28; 17:15), and washing of the people who engaged in sacrifices (Lev 6:27; 16:26-28; Num 19:7-10; Deut 21:6). There are also other references to washings narrated in the OT, even though not related to ceremonial cleansing (Ruth 3:3; 1 Sam 25:41; 2 Sam 11:8; 2 Kings 5:10-13; Ps 51; Is 1:16; Jer 2:22, 4:14; Ezek 16:9). In his homily on 'Three Baptisms,' Jacob brings the laws of washings of the OT and explains that these washings were deficient of Holy Spirit. Although these baptisms/washings were the pre-figurations of the NT baptism. For Jacob, all these OT incidents are Christ-centred. Otherwise these washings were not needed. Jacob explains the washings of the Law:

The Law also provided baptisms for the circumcised,  
 But they did not give the Holy Spirit to any of those so baptised.  
 The Law ordered that whoever entered a house and saw a dead person  
 Should wash in water and remain unclean for the entire day;  
 And whoever takes hold of a dead person's bones should wash in water,  
 And he who suffers from a night impurity should also wash.  
 In all sorts of cases the Law prescribed baptisms  
 In order to depict the type of the baptism which gives birth to the 'firstborn.'  
 The baptism of Law were shadows  
 And they did not bring those baptised to perfection (HS I.7: 160, 17-161, 5).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Finn, *Early Christian Baptism*, 25.

Though Jacob speaks mainly of the washings of the Law, the circumcision is also considered to be a type of baptism. During the passage of Israel through the desert, God protected them in manifold ways. He was with them for all their needs. Jacob accumulated a number of instances from the life of Israel in the desert of Sinai as the types of Christ in his many homilies, especially in the homilies related to Moses. The crossing of the Red Sea is considered to be the baptism of Israel, since Moses led them during the Passover from Egypt to the Promised Land, it was his own baptism too. Jacob points, 'Moses in the wilderness depicted the image of baptism' (HS I.7: 161, 16).<sup>23</sup> For Jacob, the depiction of baptism by Moses in the wilderness is a reference to the ceremonial washings of the OT, the circumcision, the crossing of the Red Sea and other salvific activities (HS I.7: 161, 20-21).<sup>24</sup>

For Jacob, Moses prefigured the Son, who would establish the baptism, which would give the Holy Spirit. Jacob explains this prefiguration in the homily on 'Descent of the Most High on Sinai, and the Mystery of the Church:'

Moses clothed the daughter of Jacob white garments;  
Jesus clothed the soul with holiness from within the waters.  
Moses sanctified the daughter of Hebrew three days;  
And holiness stood forever with the hands of Our Lord.  
The shadow of the Son of God dwelt there;  
When it passes by, it pictures the likeness of truth (HS I.2: 13, 19-14, 4).

Therefore, all the OT washings are only the shadows of the original one, which had to come: "The baptisms in the Law are a shadow" of the baptism of the NT (HS I.7: 161, 12).<sup>25</sup> Since these washings in the OT, for Jacob, are only shadows, we cannot call them in a strict sense as baptism from a NT perspective.

### 3.2.2. Baptism given by John

Imbibing the Gospel idea about John and Jesus, for Jacob John is the voice (ܐܘܨ) of the Son, and Son is the Word (ܐܘܨܐ) (HSBr VI.3: 72, 1-6). John, who was the voice in the wilderness (Is 40:3; Mal 3:11; Mt 3:3; Mk 1:1-3; Jn 1:23), paved the way for the Son of God by advocating repentance for the Israel. He opened the gate (ܐܘܨܐ) for the people to the Kingdom of God so that they might repent and wash their filth.

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<sup>22</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>23</sup> Finn, *Early Christian Baptism*, 25.

<sup>24</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>25</sup> Tr. Brock.

Jacob compared John the Baptist with fishermen by saying that as fishermen caught fishes, John caught the people. John stood wherever there was water in order to catch the people to wash their filth. As the fisherman fished in the water, John used the water to baptise the people in order to cleanse them from their sins (HS I.7: 154, 11-20). He wanted to do this, so that the people could betroth with the Son of God, when He would come. Only the pure people could see the Royal Bridegroom after receiving baptism from John. John burnished the people, removing shame from them and made them pure and radiant. He groomed them to shine with beauty (ܠܘܒܐ)²⁶ from water, and brought the new pure Israel into the bridal chamber (ܠܘܒܐ) of the Son of God, so that the Bridegroom might have His gaze on this beautiful bride. Baptism of John was in itself only a consecration to and preparatory initiation for the baptism with the fire and Spirit. It was a baptism of repentance. He announced the greatness of the King, who had to come. Even John admitted his own unworthiness by showing his humility compared to his Master. By his preaching, John intensified the expectance of the bride for her Bridegroom. He was not less in praise of the Bridegroom, who shone forth like sun (HS I.7: 154-156). He prepared the people for the arrival of the Bridegroom. The voice cleared the path for the Word (HS I.7: 163, 4-164, 11).

The baptism given by John was based on the OT teachings and mainstream rabbinic tradition, however, he used it in an entirely different way. The baptismal rite, in the way John used it, fully mirrored his preaching, as one of repentance. For the Jews, the forgiveness of sins was possible through the purificatory services and repentance. The Jewish people to whom John's ministry was directed were familiar with the concepts of repentance and forgiveness of sins (1 Kings 8:33-34; Ps 51; Is 55:6, 7). But for Christians, complete forgiveness was made possible only by Christ (Heb 9:15). When John preached a baptism for the remission of sins, the people heard and obeyed, because it was purposive (HS I.7: 159, 10-11).²⁷ He opened baptism for the people of Israel, so that it might be for repentance (HS I.7: 161, 17).²⁸ His baptism led people into the bridal chamber of the Son of God. Jacob in his homily on 'Three Baptisms' expounds the peculiarities of the baptism of John:

²⁶ ܠܘܒܐ is often used by Jacob with ܐܘܪܘܫܐ to denote the robe of glory.

²⁷ Tr. Brock.

²⁸ Finn, *Early Christian Baptism*, 25.

John did not baptise in the 'Spirit and Fire,'  
Nor did his baptism give the Holy Spirit.  
He baptised in water for repentance, as it is written,  
And his baptism was straightforward for those who went down to it (HS I.7: 160,  
5-8).<sup>29</sup>

Since John's baptism was deficient of forgiveness, no one had received the Holy Spirit (HS I.8:173, 14-174, 4).<sup>30</sup> Jacob pictured clearly how John gave baptism to the ordinary people of Israel. Then he narrated in detail the baptism which our Lord received from John the Baptist.

Jesus appreciated John the Baptist and recognised him as His messenger. When confronted about the authority, Jesus' counter-question to Pharisees, whether the baptism of John came from heaven or from men, should not be taken simply as a dodge (Mt 21:23-27; Mk 11:27-33; Lk 20:1-8), rather, if taken seriously, it means 'Jesus confirms that His authority rests on John's baptism' or, 'on what happened when He was baptised by John.'<sup>31</sup> By coming to receive baptism from the hands of John, Jesus affirmed that John's baptism is part of the economy of salvation.<sup>32</sup>

### **3.2.3. Baptism of Jesus, which He received from John the Baptist**

Christ's baptism was an inevitable necessity for the salvation of humanity. He incarnated in order to tread the path of humiliation and crucifixion. Christ descended as an ordinary man and maintained equality with humanity except for sin. He was a man from the very beginning of His incarnation. His three descents, as Jacob expounds, into three wombs, which we will see in later part of this chapter, indicate that He was always ready to come down from His divine stature for saving Adam, the lost Image of God. Even though He was not in need of any sanctification, He was ready to bow down His head to receive baptism from His own creation, John the Baptist (HS I.8: 183, 7-12).

#### **3.2.3.1. Why did Jesus come for Baptism?**

When Jesus approached for baptism, John came to recognize Him and testified the Bridegroom to the bride, the Church. Jacob is very logical in his argument stating

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<sup>29</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>30</sup> *FH*, 168-169.

<sup>31</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 3.

<sup>32</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 4.

that Jesus and John had never seen and known each other till the time of Christ's baptism. When Herod ordered to kill the children less than of two years (Mt 2:13-23), Elizabeth took the child to the desert and John spent his remaining years there in the desert encountering the Holy Spirit. Jacob narrates that John stayed in the desert till he came to Jordan to preach the baptism of repentance. Jacob is of this opinion that because this was to prevent the blames which could be put forward by the hypocrites saying that Jesus and John were close friends since childhood (HS I.7: 156, 9-157, 16), and they made an agreement between each other to play a show. When Jesus came for baptism, John witnessed the Son of God, although he had not seen Him before (HSBr VI.3: 61, 2-3).<sup>33</sup> If John had not received the help of the Holy Spirit to identify the Son of God, he could not have acknowledged Christ to the bride. By the advent of the Son of God, the water of Jordan became fermented, thus John came to know the arrival of the Son. Before we inspect the reasons for the delay of Christ till His thirtieth year for public ministry, let us have a look at the baptism received by John in the womb of his mother.

*a. Baptism which John received*

We should not miss the point, how John received baptism. It is clear that John was preaching the baptism of repentance. But how John was imprinted by the Holy Spirit to conduct such a great divine mission was a question over the centuries by theologians. We can have a very logical answer in Jacob. During the first staging post of the Son of God, i.e., in the womb of Mary, and John also was in the womb of his mother, Elizabeth, both children met each other in the wombs of their mothers, when Mary visited Elizabeth (Lk 1:39-45). Their meeting was spiritual. John leaped in his mother's womb because of his joy by experiencing the presence of the Son of God. It was here, for Jacob, the baptism of John took place (HSBr VI.3: 58, 3-4).<sup>34</sup> In the homily on 'Three Baptisms,' Jacob portrays how John perceived the presence of the Son of God and got the Holy Spirit:

When the Virgin had been pregnant with Him, John had seen Him in His mother's womb,<sup>35</sup>  
And received from Him the Holy Spirit in that hidden place (HS I.7: 156, 11-12).

<sup>33</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 76.

<sup>34</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 73.

<sup>35</sup> Lk 1:44.

In the homily on the 'Annunciation,' Jacob once again explains the baptism of John. The Son of God together with the Holy Spirit anointed John. Here the role of the priest is administered by Mary, who pronounced the form of baptism by saying the greeting to the ears of Elizabeth. The womb of Elizabeth is the baptismal font (HSBr VI.2: 34, 8-35, 2).<sup>36</sup> In the homily on 'Mary's visitation to Elizabeth,' Jacob portrays how John exulted in his mother's womb:

The agitation of the silent babe in the closed womb was unrestrained;  
Merry the rejoicing in a womb so long mournful (HSBr VI.3:59, 18-19).<sup>37</sup>

When Christ arrived for baptism John made a request to get baptised. It is in this context that John's request for baptism from Jesus' hands has to be seen. Since he had already received baptism, and the Holy Spirit, there is no need for him to be baptised once again. That is why Jesus did not confer baptism upon John, albeit Christ firmly asserts that in order to tread the path of Adam and to fulfil the righteousness, he has to be baptised. On Mary's visit to Elizabeth, Jacob explains further how John was filled with the power of the Spirit. Here he clarifies that the same Holy Spirit who later breathed on the twelve apostles in the Upper Room, had breathed on the babe John. We should not forget that it was in the Upper Room, the Holy Spirit was given to the Church officially:

The greeting of Mary came in by the ear; the vigilant one heard it,  
And immediately began to prepare the way as he had been sent.  
A voice rushed from Mary's lips announcing,  
To the babe in the womb that its Lord had come, and it began to dance for joy.  
The Son of the Virgin apportions the Spirit,  
And John, indeed, in the womb is filled with His gift.  
He sent the Holy Spirit to the silent babe;  
He filled him with power and proclamation, there where he was.  
A revelation had descended from Him to John;  
The course of apostleship began before its time (HSBr VI.3: 62, 17-63, 5).<sup>38</sup>

Here the wombs of Mary and Elizabeth play an important role in the baptism of John. One womb became the source of the 'source of baptism' and another one became the baptismal font. Jacob of Sarug portrays Mary as the priest, who administers baptism for John the Baptist (HSBr VI.3: 63, 6-13).<sup>39</sup> In the same homily, we see the idea of John receiving the imprint of the Bridegroom, i.e., the seal of the Son of God:

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<sup>36</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 50.

<sup>37</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 74.

<sup>38</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 77-78.

<sup>39</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 77-78.

He [John the Baptist] began his preaching from within the womb;  
 Its completion was at the baptismal font.  
 He received with rejoicing the imprint of the Bridegroom from within his mother;  
 He went and laid it down by the ears of the bride at the ablution (HSBr VI.3: 71,  
 12-15).<sup>40</sup>

All these texts witness that John received Christ and the Holy Spirit and their imprints, even when he was in the womb of his mother. His baptism took place there. It is also interesting to note that Jacob asserts how the leaping of both John and the River Jordan was, by experiencing Christ's presence. As Mary visited Elizabeth, John felt the presence of Christ, who is in the womb of Mary, and when Christ approached for baptism in disguise, the Jordan came to know His coming (HS I.8:183, 15-16).<sup>41</sup>

An etymological significance is also seen while Jacob explains the baptism, which John received. He uses the Syriac terms, which are very peculiar of baptism in the Antiochene tradition, ܠܥܘܒܐ (imprint), ܥܘܒܐ (leap) and ܥܘܒܐ (stir) (HS I.8: 183; HSBr VI.3: 58, 71, 72). ܠܥܘܒܐ and ܥܘܒܐ are often used in baptismal liturgies. The verb ܥܘܒܐ also used in explaining the stirring of water at the pool of Bethesda (Jn 5). ܠܥܘܒܐ is the term used to explain the imprint, which the baptised received during his consignation.

***b. Why did Christ wait till His Thirtieth Year?***

It was always a puzzling question why Jesus did not start His ministry from His early youth. Since He was Son of God, He could have easily started the salvific activities earlier, but He didn't. Why did Jesus wait till His thirtieth year to come for the baptism? Jacob wrote a homily on this theme, 'Why Christ abode upon the earth for thirty years before He wrought miracles in this world' (HS III.81: 321-335). At the end of this homily, Jacob concludes with his reasons for Jesus' delay in coming for His public ministry, which He commenced with the baptism:

Had He begun to work miracles from His childhood?  
 They [the Jews] would have denied that He had become incarnate in truth,  
 Saying that Christ possessed only the shadow of a body,  
 And that He did not become flesh, as proclaimed by the Son of thunder.  
 For this reason our Lord waited for thirty years,  
 And only then began to walk in the way of miracles,  
 So that He would first come to have the body of a perfect man in Adam's likeness,

<sup>40</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 78.

<sup>41</sup> *FH*, 178.

And then set out in Adam's stead to fight the contest.  
And when the full measure of thirty years was fulfilled,  
In baptism He revealed Himself before John.  
And there the Bride of the King knew that He was the Bridegroom,  
Who had dawned before her like the day,<sup>42</sup> resplendent with great light (HS III.81:  
334, 5-16).<sup>43</sup>

So, Christ waited to become a perfect man like Adam, in order to free him from the bondage. Christ wanted to go through all the paths of Adam in order to experience the different stages which Adam trod except sin (HS III.81:326, 15-18).<sup>44</sup> Thus, Christ did not want to enter directly into His mighty redemptive work. He behaved like an ordinary human being. Nothing unusual happened in His life till the thirtieth year. Jacob explains that He wanted to show that He was also a man:

He was in the manger a babe, in Mary's bosom an infant,  
In Nazareth a child, in the streets of Galilee a youth;  
He was a perfect man among the multitudes baptised by John,  
And He fulfilled all these stages of Adam as He grew.  
Not a single state proper to Adam did He leave unassumed,  
Even until He was found dead with him in the abyss of Sheol.  
He who rears babes is reared among infants;  
He sustains the races and sucks the milk of the blessed one.  
He came down, but He did not show His might,  
Lest He throw into confusion the path that He had begun to walk (HS III.81: 327,  
3-12).<sup>45</sup>

Christ walked the path of the sons of men, humbling Himself. First He became a babe, then a child, a boy, and later a grown up man. So He went through all the stages of life (Phil 2: 6-8). That was the reason why He waited till His thirtieth year for the baptism and His public ministry. Christ's baptism showed that He identified Himself with sinners, but not with sin. He wanted to be like a feeble one. Jacob narrates that the inspiration behind the birth and baptism of Christ is none other than His love towards the entire creation. As an answer to the Baptist's question about the reason behind the baptism Jesus says:

'That loving kindness which summoned me to come to birth (Tit 3:4),  
That has again called me to come to baptism too.  
The great mercy has drawn me to descend to become a new born babe.  
It is that (mercy) which drew me to descend to become baptised' (HS I.8: 178, 1-  
4).<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> The first line of this homily begins with the verse: 'The Son of God dawned upon the world like the day.'

<sup>43</sup> JS, "A Homily that Explains why our Lord abode upon the Earth for Thirty Years before he wrought Miracles in the World," in *True Vine* 4, 48-49.

<sup>44</sup> JS, "A Homily that Explains why our Lord abode upon the Earth for Thirty Years", 41.

<sup>45</sup> JS, "A Homily that Explains why our Lord abode upon the Earth for Thirty Years", 42.

<sup>46</sup> *Salvation*, 296.

Christ did not want to show His divinity before others, but He, just like all other human beings bowed His head before John the Baptist. As He knew the time has come, He came forward to be baptised in order to fulfil the laws of the OT. The baptism of Christ discloses nothing more than the utmost love of the Creator towards the creation.

*c. Fulfilment of Righteousness*

From the time of the fall of Adam and Eve, messengers are sent by God to prepare His people for the coming of His Son. Jacob discusses the theological impact of debt or sin of Adam and Eve on our being the image of God and on the harmony of creation. For Jacob, Adam and Eve had been placed in the Paradise to look after the garden. When they came in contact with the Satan, without knowing it as a fight between them, Satan defeated them. Thus 'a wall of enmity' was established between God and the humanity: the upper beings or heavenly ones and the lower beings or the earthly ones. The image of Adam was corrupted. He was cast out of Eden. From that time of the fall of Adam to the time of Christ, the history of the humanity is the history of the elemental struggle between the truth and the error, the light and the darkness.<sup>47</sup> But there was no permanent victory on the part of truth. For this reason in order to bring back humanity to the original divine image, God sent His Only Begotten. In Jacob's prose homily on 'the Epiphany,' Jesus explains to John, how He is the mediator between the Old and the New Law. By accomplishing the OT law, Jesus envisages the activities of the Church through priesthood in this world:

It is by the door of the Law I entered the enclosure of the sheep and in this way it is right for me to accomplish all the justice of Moses. Afterwards, I shall begin to enlighten in the world the perfection of Melchizedek, the great priest who prefigured my mysteries; I shall accomplish justice and then I shall show perfection; I shall conclude the service of the Law, and then I shall begin the great path of the Cross (SFH II: 18).<sup>48</sup>

Jacob expounds the aim of Christ's incarnation and coming for baptism in the homily on 'Three Baptisms:'

He went forth into creation to uproot the thorns from the ground  
And to sow peace on earth that the great serpent had ravaged:  
He went forth to renew the old order that had been corrupted,

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<sup>47</sup> Chesnut, *Three Monophysite Christologies*, 115.

<sup>48</sup> *FH*, 195.

To establish on earth a new creation that would never come to dissolution (HS I.7: 153, 18-154, 2).<sup>49</sup>

Christ, who was without blemish, was not in need of baptism, but He descended to become a human, then He went down into the water in order to bring forgiveness. If Christ was not ready to be baptised, there would not have been any use for the baptism, for it had no effect of forgiving sins (HS I.7: 162, 7-16). Jacob was judicious in his reasoning to draw this conclusion, why Christ came for baptism:

This is clear: although He had no need He came to baptism  
So that the justice in the Law might be fulfilled in Him;

...

It would not have been 'just' not to finish what He had begun.  
And so our Lord was baptised to repay to justice what belonged to her.  
He was baptised in the water – not to gain anything or to be sanctified,  
But to fulfil that justice which was in the Law (HS I.7: 159, 16-160, 4).<sup>50</sup>

In the homily on 'Theological Investigation, and the Consecration of the Church' Jacob speaks about the completion of righteousness of the OT:

Lest He was not in need of atonement, He came to be baptised;  
But in order to accomplish the legal righteousness.  
He was baptised in the river, and He was not sanctified from it as it was considered;  
And He poured out His holiness into the bosom of waters so that whole (waters) may be sanctified (HS IV.134: 780, 17-20).

Christ was there before the very beginning. His way was through the Law of Moses. He had to accomplish the path of righteousness and bring back what is due to Adam. That is why He was ready to descend to the level of His own creatures and travelled the path of crucifixion (HS III.81: 321-334).<sup>51</sup> Jesus fulfilled all the OT prophecies in His acts of salvation. When John hesitated to baptise the sinless Son of God, Jesus replied that it was proper to "fulfil all righteousness" (Mt 3:15). And He is the Righteous One par excellence. By this He alluded to the righteousness that He provides to all who come to Him to exchange their sins for His righteousness (2 Cor 5:21).

#### *d. John's Request was denied*

John was on a mission. He came to Jordan in order to prepare the people of Israel for the coming of the Son of God. He humbled himself and preached his lowliness. That

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<sup>49</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>50</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>51</sup> *Salvation*, 131.

is why he said: "I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal" (Jn 1:27). He wanted to be baptised by Christ, as Christ is the true Governor. Seeing the Son of God coming for baptism, John demanded Christ to baptise him. John was thinking that he was in need of sanctification. He was aware of the fact that his baptism was deficient. He had earlier proclaimed that Christ would come and baptise with Spirit and fire. He also attested before the bride that he is feeble and unworthy, so he is not able to put his hands upon the head of Jesus. John was baptising in the name of Christ, then how can he baptise Jesus in His own name, the 'Baptiser of all.' If John would baptise Christ, then the bride will think that there is deficiency in her Bridegroom. John also makes it clear that he is not able to baptise Jesus in the name of either Father or Holy Spirit, since Father, Son and Holy Spirit is one power without confusion. If the baptism of Christ by the hands of John had taken place, then it could make a division in the Holy Trinity (HS I.8: 181, 16-182, 22).<sup>52</sup> Also, if John had baptised Christ, the bride would presume John to be false and Christ, her Bridegroom, to be deficient. But Christ denied John's request (HS I.8: 176, 11-20).<sup>53</sup>

Jesus commanded him to baptise Him in order to fulfil all the righteousness of the OT, thus the path set for redemption might be accomplished (HS I.7: 158, 7-18). According to Jacob of Sarug, Christ explained to John the Baptist why he sought baptism at his hands: 'I am trying to find the lost Adam; let me go down and look for Adam, the fair image' (Gen 1:26) (HS I.8: 177, 10-179, 2). Jacob puts forward one more reason for the reluctance of Jesus to baptise John that the ruler of the air, Satan, might erroneously think that the Son of God was feeble (HS I.7: 158, 9-14).<sup>54</sup> Jesus was very clear that it was not the time for Him to be revealed. Till the moment of crucifixion Christ wanted His mystery (سِرٌّ) to be kept in secret. Jesus said to John:

'The way of birth has put me in a position to come to baptism,  
Since I have been born, I shall now be baptised. Be quiet and baptise me!' (HS I.7:  
158, 15-16).<sup>55</sup>

In the prose homily on 'the Epiphany,' Jacob puts his reasoning in the mouth of Jesus while He is talking to John:

Our Lord said to him: *allow it now*. Do not prevent me from being baptised in the Jordan, because you have not prevented me from dwelling in a Virgin. I wished,

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<sup>52</sup> FH, 172.

<sup>53</sup> FH, 171.

<sup>54</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>55</sup> Tr. Brock.

and I have come to birth. And it pleased me again to come to baptism. The belly is smaller than the river, and the womb narrower than the Crossing over of the Jordan; since the Father has willed that the womb contained me, and because it pleased him, the river suffices for me. I shall be baptised since I was born' (SFH II: 17).<sup>56</sup>

Christ argued that since John could not stop Christ's descent into the womb of Mary, he was not capable to stop Him (HS I.8: 178, 11-179, 2).<sup>57</sup> Jacob continues his verses explaining the baptism of Christ:

John kept silent, guarding the mystery as he had been hidden,  
And the Bridegroom went down so that Baptism might be sanctified by Him (HS I.7: 158, 17-18).<sup>58</sup>

Here Jacob made it clear that no one could stop Christ. Jesus spoke further to John that He wanted to accomplish the task of redemption and render justice of Moses.<sup>59</sup> Christ also explains to John that he is not adding anything to Him while baptising. He has only to do the rituals for the fulfilment of the Law. John the Baptist needed the words of Christ to understand the real purpose of the baptism of Christ (HS I.8: 177, 10-183, 8).<sup>60</sup>

#### *e. Role of John the Baptist*

John was the messenger of God. John's role was prophesied by Isaiah (Is 40:3). His duty was to prepare the way. In one of his homilies on Mother Mary, Jacob expresses John's mission:

As Voice, he hastened and brought perception of the Word then desisted;  
He announced Him to the crowd, and as soon as they recognized Him, he withdrew from Him.  
Then the Bridegroom entered and attended to His mystery which had been announced,  
And John desisted, like a voice when it is sent forth.  
Because he was the Voice, as Isaiah had prophesied of him,  
Therefore he had exulted before the Word with great rejoicing (HSBr VI.3: 71, 16-21).<sup>61</sup>

After a few lines, Jacob continues exulting John the Baptist and proclaims his duty:

The Voice is the messenger of the Word, and His evangelist;  
He makes Him known, also showing Him forth and extolling Him.  
Thus the Voice is prefigured in prophecy;

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<sup>56</sup> *FH*, 194-195.

<sup>57</sup> *Salvation*, 131.

<sup>58</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>59</sup> *FH*, 195.

<sup>60</sup> *Salvation*, 390.

<sup>61</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 87.

He is the herald which was sent before the Word (HSBr VI.3: 72, 7-10).<sup>62</sup>

John's mission was to prepare, to cleanse and adorn the Church. He became someone trustworthy to her (HS I.8: 168, 12-17).<sup>63</sup> Jacob explains explaining John's loyalty to both the Son of God and the Church:

The Church, the royal bride, approached towards John  
And he began washing, cleansing, polishing and sanctifying her.  
He became someone trustworthy to her since he laboured for her adornment as  
much as he could.  
He taught and made her wise so that she might be corrected, for she was confused  
(HS I.8: 170, 8-11).<sup>64</sup>

John was aware of the fact that his baptism lacks forgiveness and it is deficient. So he reprimanded the people firmly that they should wait for the Bridegroom. He proclaimed with great humility that he is only the voice in the wilderness. He invited the people to come forward for repentance (HS I.8: 173, 14-174, 4).<sup>65</sup> During the OT time, the people were nurtured with milk. John the Baptist weaned the people from the milk and showed forth Christ as the bread, food for the powerful and for the full stature of humanity.<sup>66</sup> John confirmed that Jesus is the source of sanctification and forgiveness for the whole world. He was aware of the fact that it is only Christ, who could sanctify the waters of baptism:

The servant said, 'Lord, it is I who should be baptised by You,  
For You are the provider of sanctification and forgiveness for the whole world.  
You gave sanctification to priests, seeing that You are holy,  
And baptism looks to You to be sanctified by You' (HS I.7: 158, 3-6).<sup>67</sup>

John announced to the crowds that when the Son of God would come, he would withdraw from his mission (HSBr VI.3: 71, 17-22).<sup>68</sup> The people of Israel, who were wicked and defiled due to idolatry, was cleansed by John. It was for this, John was sent, to purify the people. He washed them from all the impurity, though he could not forgive. He urged them to wait for the Son of God. For Jacob, John was a priest who opened up baptism:

In the woman of Judah is the lion's whelp of whom Jacob wrote;<sup>69</sup>  
In the Levite a priest,<sup>70</sup> who opened up Baptism? (HSBr VI.3: 57, 15-16).<sup>71</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 87.

<sup>63</sup> *FH*, 163.

<sup>64</sup> *FH*, 165.

<sup>65</sup> *FH*, 168-169.

<sup>66</sup> *FH*, 187.

<sup>67</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>68</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 87.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Gen 49:9.

As the Royal Son came out from the crowds, the bride was made perfect with the ornaments of repentance. The bride earnestly waited for the Bridegroom in order to enter into the womb of the waters to be sanctified (HS I.8: 171, 11-18). John was chosen to be the one who was supposed to conclude the OT law as well as the one to inaugurate the Gospel. With him concluded the office of the prophecy of Moses as well as the power and the spirit of Elijah, the zealous one, so that he might be able to serve authoritatively the two covenants. He brought to an end the first so that it might take rest and upheld the other that it might be made pleasing (SFH II: 4).<sup>72</sup>

John too waited for Him as to when He would come  
So that through Him his [John's] own baptism would be made perfect as it was  
imperfect (HS I.8: 171, 19-20).<sup>73</sup>

Before baptising Jesus, John clearly expresses his inability and says that there is no logic in baptising the Son of God. For him, it was not possible to do such a baptismal service, while Jesus is the 'Baptiser of all.' John prepared the people of Israel saying that the Bridegroom would come and baptise everyone with the fire and Spirit. And if then John baptised Jesus, then there was falsehood for John and belittlement for Jesus. Thus John explained to Christ his unworthiness and inability:

'In your name I have been baptising her so that she shall be adorned by you;  
And, O Holy One, in whose name shall I baptise you? I do not know.  
Behold, my word is the pledge to her and it is vigilant in her,  
Because I had told her, 'He will baptise you in the Holy Spirit.'  
And now how shall I change my word and change my saying,  
And baptise you, O Baptiser of all, with water as to others?  
I will turn out to be (guilty of) falsehood and you will be belittled  
And the bride will think that there is deficiency in her Betrothed.  
What shall I say when I baptise the Forgiver of Debts,  
And with what expressions shall I observe the rite of baptism?  
...  
And how shall I, the poor one, perform this,  
And set a division in that undivided harmony?' (HS I.8: 182, 3-22).<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Lk 3:3.

<sup>71</sup> Hansbury (tr.), *On the Mother of God*, 72.

<sup>72</sup> *FH*, 190.

<sup>73</sup> *FH*, 167.

<sup>74</sup> *FH*, 177. In a manuscript in Pampakuda, Kerala, India, on the feast of Epiphany, we find almost a prayer with same idea: 'You created man in Your own image and in Your own likeness; making him the crown of Your creation. When he fell down from his great office, through his negligence, You brought him back to his divine rank by your coming the Flesh, washing away, by the second birth, the impurity which had defiled him.' (Pampakuda, 151-152); V. Varghese, *Tekso d'Denho in the West Syrian Tradition: A Study of the Feast of Epiphany in the Malankara Orthodox Church*, UnDiss (Kottayam: SEERI, 2011), 125, [http://www.mgutheses.in/page/titles\\_view.php?q=T%202220&word=T](http://www.mgutheses.in/page/titles_view.php?q=T%202220&word=T).

Jacob of Sarug clearly explains to his listeners that there is no difference in power between the Father and the Son, and the same for the Son and the Holy Spirit.

John baptised Jesus to show that 'obedience is superior to justice.' Jesus commanded him and he obeyed (SFH II: 28).<sup>75</sup> At the Epiphany of the Son, John received the apparition of the Trinity in a threefold manner and he was made worthy than anybody else in all generations to be the third witness together with the Father and the Holy Spirit for the baptism of the Son (SFH II: 34).<sup>76</sup> He is the first witness, the most truthful and powerful witness of the Trinity, as it was gifted to him to touch the Son, to hear the Father and to see the Spirit in the form of a dove (HS III.97: 691, 9-10).<sup>77</sup> He fulfilled his mission, which was to smoothen the ways for the King's Son (HS I.8: 170, 4; II.37: 147, 6), who comes to engage with the Church (HS I.8: 169, 2).

*f. Baptism of Christ*

Jesus came to Jordan for the baptism and received it from John the Baptist. As the Evangelists declare that the Father with the voice and the Holy Spirit in the form of dove witness the epiphany of Christ, Jacob affirms that 'Christ was a perfect man among the multitudes baptised by John' (HS III.81: 327, 5).<sup>78</sup>

He [Christ] became a man and bowed His head before John,  
And with the repentant He went down to baptism in His humility (HS III.81: 326, 11-12).<sup>79</sup>

In order to retrieve the lost image of the humanity, Jesus entered the furnace of waters (HS I.8: 181, 6). He convinced doubting John that He is not making any addition to Him. Christ enters the waters, for they are in need of sanctification. Further Jacob puts explanations in the mouth of Jesus about His purpose for this baptism. Christ wanted to forge armour for the warriors (HS I.8: 180, 10-19).<sup>80</sup>

While I do not need the furnace of the waters,<sup>81</sup> behold, I am entering  
So that humanity that is worn out should be recast with that stamp of mine (HS I.8: 181, 6-7).<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> FH, 197-198.

<sup>76</sup> FH, 199.

<sup>77</sup> T. B. Mansour, *La Théologie de JS*, Vol. 2 (Kaslik: Bibliothèque de L'Université Saint-Esprit, 2000), 188.

<sup>78</sup> JS, "A Homily that Explains why our Lord abode upon the Earth for Thirty Years", 42.

<sup>79</sup> JS, "A Homily that Explains why our Lord abode upon the Earth for Thirty Years", 41.

<sup>80</sup> FH, 175.

<sup>81</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," in *OCA* 205 (1978), 337.



#### *h. Revelation of Trinity – a Baptism and Two Witnesses*

The baptism of Jesus in the river Jordan is the first occasion in history that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are revealed together. The event of Christ's baptism in the river Jordan is the most important event of the Trinitarian revelation of God in the cosmos. Jordan becomes the locus of the Trinitarian knowledge of God.<sup>89</sup> Jacob brought forth the idea of Jewish custom of the presence of two witnesses, in the context of the baptism of Christ (Deut 19:15).<sup>90</sup> It was really a wonderful Trinitarian revelation: The Son of God rising from the waters of baptism, the Spirit of God descending on Him in the form of a dove, and the Father's voice from heaven bearing witness of His Only Begotten. If the Father and the Holy Spirit were not there, this manifestation of Christ or His baptism would have been impossible. Father's proclamation of Jesus as His own Son is an expansion of the words of Ps 2:7: 'You are my Son, the Beloved.'<sup>91</sup> Jacob used the entire Trinity to define Christ's revelation. The Holy Trinity is manifested through three human 'senses,' namely, by 'hearing,' 'touching' and 'seeing' (SFH II: 35).<sup>92</sup>

Jacob wanted to establish the Spirit as the principle of identity, while avoiding the suggestion that the Spirit's role was a sanctifying one. The Holy Spirit appeared at the Jordan to sanctify neither Jesus nor the water, but merely to bear witness to the Only Begotten (HS I.8: 184, 16-186, 20). It is Christ who sanctified the waters of the Jordan. The Spirit acted as 'the finger of the Father' (ܐܘܨܪܐ ܕܥܒܝܐ), pointing to the Son. The reason why Jacob stood firm for this statement is that the Spirit appeared only *after* Christ came out of the water.<sup>93</sup> 'The Spirit was present in the fire intensely in order to receive Christ from within the waters' (HS I.8: 184, 16-17). The role of the Father and the Holy Spirit at the baptism of Jesus was only indicative.<sup>94</sup> In the homily on 'New Sunday, and the Apostle Thomas,' Jacob expounds that the Father and the Holy Spirit bear only witness during the baptism of Christ: 'He came to

<sup>89</sup> Varghese, *Tekso d'Denho in the West Syrian Tradition*, 146.

<sup>90</sup> 'Only on the evidence of two or three witnesses shall a charge be sustained' (Deut 19:15).

<sup>91</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 2.

<sup>92</sup> FH, 199.

<sup>93</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 41, 46; Bedjan I, 159.

<sup>94</sup> The West Syriac Baptismal service puts this idea as a prayer. Unlike Jacob, the Antiochene order of baptism witnesses that it is the Holy Spirit who sanctified the waters of Jordan. The priest prays: "You are the Lord God who sent your Holy Spirit in the likeness of a dove and sanctified the rushing streams of the Jordan. Perfect this servant of yours who came to be baptised. Associate him with your Messiah. With your redeeming baptism, you (may) cleanse him" (*Koodashakramam – Syro-Malankara Catholic Church*).



Jacob states that it was not due to the insufficiency of the Son of God that the Father witnessed Him, but the Son was perfect before He descended. This was just for the fulfilment of the OT law. It was also needful for the economy of salvation that the Holy Trinity might manifest (HS I.8: 191, 10-13).<sup>101</sup>

Jacob stresses on many occasions, pointing out that the Holy Spirit appeared *after* the baptism (ܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ) (HS I.7: 159, 6):<sup>102</sup>

She [the Holy Spirit] did not besprinkle holiness by Her descent upon the Holy One;  
She indeed gave witness to the Redeemer when She appeared.  
The Spirit became a finger for the Father and with it He showed,  
'This is my Son, you should not be in doubt about His advent' (HS I.8: 185, 18-21).<sup>103</sup>

According to Jacob of Sarug, the person of Jesus as the eternal Son of God in the Triune God Head is revealed at the time of His baptism in the river Jordan through the profound voice of the Father and the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. If there was another Son other than Jesus, then he would also have manifested there in the river Jordan along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Thus it is revealed through the testimony of the Father and the Spirit that the one who is baptised is the Son (SFH II: 37).<sup>104</sup>

The baptism of Jesus was an irreversible step, marking the beginning of His 'public ministry.' This baptism is a unique event, since it is only here, the Trinity revealed itself for the first time. Another uniqueness of the baptism of Jesus is that the Son fulfilled the Law of Moses, by following the Jewish rituals as prescribed; by His own baptism He fulfilled and perfected the baptisms (washings) of the Law and that of John the Baptist (HS I.7: 161, 16-19).<sup>105</sup> Thus linking the past events of the OT to the coming events of the NT, Christ is the sole mediator. Thus the advent of Christ redefines the economy of salvation.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *FH*, 184-185.

<sup>102</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 327; *FH*, 160.

<sup>103</sup> *FH*, 180.

<sup>104</sup> *FH*, 200; Varghese, *Tekso d'Denho in the West Syrian Tradition*, 130.

<sup>105</sup> *Salvation*, 303; T. Kollampampil, "Adam-Christ Complementary and the Economy of Salvation in Jacob of Serugh," in *Harp* 13 (2000), 161; Finn, *Early Christian Baptism*, 25.

<sup>106</sup> Finn, *Early Christian Baptism*, 23.

*i. Sanctification of Waters through the Baptism of Jesus*

One of the reasons for Jesus' baptism is to sanctify the water, so that through His baptism all waters for the future baptisms can be sanctified.<sup>107</sup> Thus Christ's baptism provides pure waters for Christian baptism. Water is a source of renewal, refreshment and rejuvenation. It is an essential element of life, without which there is no possibility of life. It is also used in every religion for purificatory services. It is in this context, that we should see Jesus sanctifying the waters. According to the Syriac tradition, Jesus consecrated all waters for its future ritual purpose in His baptism. "In patristic theology its origin may be traced to the second century and whether the consecration was Christological or Pneumatological in emphasis the idea is essentially the same."<sup>108</sup>

In Christian baptism, it is the *epiklesis* of the Holy Spirit, which consecrates the waters. But at the Jordan, the Holy Spirit did not consecrate the waters. At Jordan as Christ reached the river in order to be baptised, the ordinary water leaped for joy in the pure womb of baptism just as John did in the womb of Elizabeth towards His Lord. So the Living Fire poured His holiness in the Jordan. Jacob demonstrates Jesus as a Live Coal (Is 6:6) going down into the Jordan, thus inflaming and sanctifying the waters. Jacob likened it to the effects of fire. Jacob recalls the vision of Isaiah in which he experienced the live-coal cleansed and sanctified Isaiah's tongue. So the waters are sanctified by the Live Coal, Jesus Christ.<sup>109</sup> This fire imagery in turn gives rise to descriptions of the Jordan as a 'furnace.'<sup>110</sup> "Fire over baptismal water was seen by Constantine," Jacob attests in the homily on 'the Baptism of Constantine.'<sup>111</sup> And this "fire can have a purgative function, but it also signifies sanctification and transformation."<sup>112</sup> We read in the homily on 'the Baptism of Constantine:'

When the faithful Emperor descended for baptism;  
With a transparent heart filled with love and faith;

<sup>107</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 31.

<sup>108</sup> Robinson, *Baptism in Ritual Perspective*, 137.

<sup>109</sup> T. H. Robinson, "Sanctified Waters: Toward a Baptismal Ethic of Creation Care," in *Leaven* 21 (2013), 162.

<sup>110</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 327; McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 107-108; McDonnell, "Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan," in *Theological Studies* 56 (1995), 231; HS I: 184. Though usually it is Christ who heats the water of the Jordan, in one passage it is the Holy Spirit (Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh" 334). Originally it was Christ who heats the water, but influenced by the theology of Christian baptism, where it is the Spirit who comes down and heats the water. HS I: 181.

<sup>111</sup> Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 12.

<sup>112</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 108.

His eyes saw fire hung over the waters (HSBr VI 14: 318, 9-11).

In the prose homily on 'the Epiphany' too, Jacob reiterates the same idea:

Our Lord descended to the Jordan and the nature of the waters stirred with joy because the one who sanctified the sources dwelt in it. About this journey David, the spiritual harpist, was singing praises in his psalm saying: *the waters saw you, God, the waters saw you and they feared. The abysses trembled upon the perception of your descent and the clouds sprinkled waters,*<sup>113</sup> in order that they too might participate in your immersion. That is to say, the entire element of the heavenly and earthly waters gathered themselves so as to be blessed at your baptism (SFH II: 33).<sup>114</sup>

In the homily on 'the Baptism of Our Lord,' Jacob muses the sanctifying power of the fiery Live Coal. This Live Coal inflamed the waters of the Jordan. By this purification, the Live Coal transferred the holiness to the fountain (HS I.8: 183, 13-20).<sup>115</sup> By His descent into the Jordan, Christ placed fire in the waters of baptism. Because of this, fire and water mingled together to purify the catechumen. Jacob explains further:

The ordinary water was mixed with the splendour of holiness  
Because from the Holy One mercy had gone out and kindled them.  
Coal of Fire came down to be washed among the rushing streams  
And sprinkled there the fieriness of its holiness.  
The Flame came and took off the garments that it was wearing  
And descended to place fire in the waters of baptism.  
The heavenly beings marvelled at that ablution of the Flame  
When its glorious body was rinsed to sanctify the waters.  
The rushing streams of water were mingled with rays of light  
And the river had been set on fire with the brightness that dwelt in it (HS I.8: 183, 21-184, 9).<sup>116</sup>

According to Brock, for Jacob, 'Christ's descent into the Jordan affects not only the water of the Jordan, but all waters: that means, it sanctifies, in sacred time, all baptismal water (HS I.8: 188):'<sup>117</sup>

The waters have truly seen you, God, and they feared;  
The abysses too trembled and the clouds of the air sprinkled water.  
The whole nature of the waters perceived that you have visited them:

<sup>113</sup> During the baptism in the West Syriac tradition, same is prayed over the chrism. The priest raises the vessel of the Holy Chrism and moves it over the water crosswise three times, saying:

The waters saw You, O God, the waters saw You and were afraid (Ps. 77:17). Halleluiah.  
The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the glorious God thundered. Halleluiah.  
The Lord is over the great waters (Ps 29:3). Halleluiah.

† Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; now and always for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>114</sup> FH, 199.

<sup>115</sup> FH, 178.

<sup>116</sup> FH, 178-179.

<sup>117</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 327; McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 61; McDonnell, "Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan," 217.

Seas, abysses, rivers, springs and pools.  
 They thronged each other to be blessed by your foot steps  
 Because your great manifestation that came upon them caused them tremble.  
 You stepped upon Jordan as upon the summit of all seas;  
 And the extremities of the abysses and of the floods trembled at your power.  
 The whole nature of the waters was stirred by your hovering,  
 Because by your baptism you made everyone worthy of pardon.  
 The waters of seas, although distant, are not distant  
 Because the power of your holiness has stirred mystically and visited them (HS I.8: 187, 19-188, 10).<sup>118</sup>

Jacob occasionally employs the word 'stir' (ܨܘܐ) to designate Christ's sanctifying of baptismal water at His own baptism: thus 'the whole nature of water *was stirred* (ܨܘܐܘܢܐ) by His hovering' (ܨܘܦܘܢܐ) (HS I.8: 188, 7).<sup>119</sup> In one of Jacob's Letters, he stated that '(Christ) stirred the waters at His descent (into the Jordan), and sanctified baptismal water at His washing.'<sup>120</sup>

An answer to the question how this sanctification of waters takes place in each and every stage of human history is given by Brock: "at His descent into the Jordan Christ sanctified in sacred time *all baptismal water*; at Christian baptism it is the invocation to the Holy Spirit in the prayer of consecration of the water which effectually makes the water of the individual font identical in sacred time and space with the Jordan waters."<sup>121</sup> In the West Syriac Liturgy of the Epiphany of our Lord, the priest prays that Christ sanctified all waters in the world by His baptism: 'O Lord, who sanctified the waters of all fountains and rivers through Your baptism, fill us with Your holiness on this day of Your manifestation.'<sup>122</sup>

#### *j. Three Wombs / Three Descents*

Mansour clearly points out Jacob's idea of Christ's descent. As for the steps that mark the path taken by Jesus, Jacob features two variants: first four periods, childhood, adulthood, which merges with the baptism of Jesus, dying on the Cross and the descent into Sheol, and more commonly three stages on the other hand, birth,

<sup>118</sup> FH, 182.

<sup>119</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 334.

<sup>120</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 334.

<sup>121</sup> Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," in M. Schmidt (ed.), *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter* (Philosophie und Theologie) Eichstätter Beiträge, Vol. 4 (Eichstätt: Verlag Friedrich Pustet Regensburg, 1981), 12.

<sup>122</sup> *Anduthaksa– Syro-Malankara Catholic Church*, 82-83.

baptism and Sheol.<sup>123</sup> The context of his theology of baptism is, however, much broader, in the context of latter, given that his understanding of the incarnation is to have three 'wombs' - those of Mary, the Jordan and Sheol and these three wombs are identified with Christ's descents - *Erniedrigung*. "Jacob demonstrates the individual purposes of the three wombs as they interact with Jesus' ministry, in three distinct stages; this gives a reason for Christian baptism being an imitation of Jesus' death and resurrection."<sup>124</sup> "The depiction of Christ's descent into the Jordan as a journey to Hades to recover Adam, who is lost, is an ancient theological idea rooted in Syriac literature," particularly of Jacob of Sarug.<sup>125</sup> For Jacob, these descents are three mansions or wombs or lodging places in the incarnated life of Christ. "Although these three wombs are historically separated, and each one is distinct stage; together they form a single unit, so that their fundamental purpose is to signify salvation cycle."<sup>126</sup> Here the Syriac idea regarding sacred time has a great relevance in seeing all these realities as a single unit. In the homily on the 'Faith' Jacob continuously expounds this theme:

He stayed in the womb, which is the first mansion;  
And He set out the way of birth in the flesh to visit the world.  
Baptism was placed in the middle way and the way met it;  
Also He baptised in it and He will sanctify it when He dwells in it.  
However the end of the way is the place of dead ones;  
He came into it to untie Adam who was bound in it (HS III.94: 592, 15-20).

In the same homily, after few lines, Jacob continues:

Baptism, Mary and Sheol as homes;  
He wished for Him in the way of life to reside in three (of them) (HS III.94: 593, 4-5).

Here, Jacob exults about the womb of Mary. Since baptism is a new womb, where the image of Godhead is given, in the womb of Mary, an image is prepared for Adam, who lost his image or garment of glory in the Paradise. Regarding the first staging post Jacob muses of Mary's womb as where was the preparation of garment of flesh for the Son of God:

The maker of the worlds interweaves a garment in your pure womb  
And prepares Himself a cloak of flesh on the web of your womb.  
The power of the Exalted One will abide upon you while not being belittled

<sup>123</sup> Mansour, *La Théologie de JS*, Vol. 2, 60-61.

<sup>124</sup> Saliba, "Baptism in the Homilies of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Jacob of Serugh," 340.

<sup>125</sup> N. E. Denysenko, *The Blessing of Waters and Epiphany: the Eastern Liturgical Tradition* (Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2012), 110.

<sup>126</sup> Saliba, "Baptism in the Homilies of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Jacob of Serugh," 341.

And from your purity He will take a body to become a man.  
In the furnace of your womb He will cast and prepare an image for Adam;  
And into it the God of all will lower Himself to come to birth (HSBr VI.6: 121, 11-16).<sup>127</sup>

Jacob always presented Christ as seeking the lost Adam even on the occasion of His Baptism. That is why He made His second descent. In fact, Christ's baptism and the descent into Sheol are often considered together.<sup>128</sup> Baptism of Jesus is the median between the womb of Mary and that of Sheol. In his homily on 'Three Baptisms,' Jacob speaks of the first two descents of Christ:

From one staging post to the next did He travel, like a merchant  
Carrying Life to distribute amongst mortals.  
He resided in that first staging post, which is Mary,  
And came to birth so that He might visit the world as man;  
To the second staging post, which is baptism,  
He came and resided there, so as to clothe warriors in armour (HS I.7: 154, 5-10).<sup>129</sup>

For Jacob, Christ's baptism is one of a series of events in the biblical story which mutually interlocks and interprets one another. Christ had only one sole aim to find out the lost image of Adam and to bring it back.<sup>130</sup> Christ was searching this image by treading the same path of Adam, but except from sin. Evoking the homes, we found that the Son has accepted baptism in order to sanctify the tomb and the path to Sheol and thus deliver Adam. Therefore we can conclude that this path is strictly soteriological.<sup>131</sup>

Syriac Christians preserved ancient Judaic notions of *Sheol* (ܫܘܠ) as a designation of sin, illness, ignorance, darkness, and utter forsakenness by God, and in their literature these notions are very closely bound together.<sup>132</sup> Thus, in descending to Sheol, for Jacob, Christ showed His utmost compassion towards the humanity as well as His divinity, where Adam is described as the pearl which is rescued (HS I.8: 177, 10-13).<sup>133</sup> "Sheol is closed, and the baptismal font opened up; The left is desolate, while

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<sup>127</sup> FH, 55.

<sup>128</sup> Beggiani, *Early Syriac Theology*, 59.

<sup>129</sup> Tr. Brock.

<sup>130</sup> Robinson, *Baptism in Ritual Perspective*, 132-133.

<sup>131</sup> Mansour, *La Théologie de JS*, Vol. 2, 71.

<sup>132</sup> "Christ, the Medicine of Life: The Syriac Fathers on the Lord's Descent into Hell," an interview with I. Kulkota in *Road to Emmaus*, in *A Journal of Orthodox Faith and Culture*, 6. 1, 29: [http://www.roadtoemmaus.net/RTE\\_SAMPLE\\_ISSUE.pdf](http://www.roadtoemmaus.net/RTE_SAMPLE_ISSUE.pdf)

<sup>133</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 328.

the right thunders out” (SFH VI: 3).<sup>134</sup> Christ defeats death and sin, thus liberating all of humanity from the slavery of sin and death, and bringing salvation and illumination to the entire human race. So Christ's descent into Sheol is viewed as the pinnacle of salvation. It is the descent into Sheol that completes the work of redemption.

Christ going down into Sheol took place not in historical time but in sacred time, not in geographical space but in sacred space. Fusing the descent into the Jordan with going down into Sheol is a way of declaring that the process of incarnation affected all historical time, all geographical space, wherever Adam was lost.<sup>135</sup> Christ's purpose was to defeat the kingdom of death and liberate and recover the deceased humans, especially Adam. Christ plunged into the lake of the dead and retrieved the lost image and brought it back to the Paradise (SFH IV: 9).<sup>136</sup> The Son met all the dead in Sheol (HS III.87: 454, 6-7). His third stage began at the Cross, and there the Son is recognized as God.<sup>137</sup> It is from the Cross, the Son entered the Sheol (HS III.94: 594, 1ff). By Christ's descent into Sheol, He triumphs over Satan and the empire of death, and gloriously returns to the Father in the company of liberated prisoners.<sup>138</sup>

The purpose and effect of all these descents are well attested in Jacob's homilies that there are many parallels or repetitions of the same idea, especially those of these three descents.<sup>139</sup> Again we find in the homily on 'Faith' Jacob saying:

He, the Word, dwelt in Mary and wanted to become a body;  
 He took body from the body of the blessed.  
 He came for baptism and descended and put in baptism;  
 The robe of glory, which will be for Adam who was fallen.  
 Again He entered the Sheol in order to set free the captives who were there;  
 And He hastened towards all the ways into three houses.  
 He dwelt in the Virgin and came to the nativity though He was God;  
 And again baptism received Him yet He was God.  
 And He descended into the Sheol and the world recognized that He was God;  
 Until He arrived at the door of Sheol, it (the world) was not aware about it (HS III.94: 593, 6-15).

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<sup>134</sup> *FH*, 320.

<sup>135</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 142-143; HS I.8: 177; II.53.8: 599; III.94: 593.

<sup>136</sup> *FH*, 282.

<sup>137</sup> Mansour, *La Théologie de JS*, Vol. 2, 140.

<sup>138</sup> Beggiani, *Early Syriac Theology*, 61; Jansma, "Encore le credo de Jacques de Saroug," 336.

<sup>139</sup> Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 326.

Through these three staging posts, Christ accomplished the task of bringing back of the lost Adam and fulfilled the economy of salvation. Even though these three events happened separately in the historical time and geographical space, it is seen as a unique event in the context of sacred time and space.

*k. Betrothal and Marriage between Christ and the Church*

From early centuries onwards, Syriac tradition regarded Christ's baptism as the betrothal of the Church to Christ, and Christian baptism as the betrothal of the soul of the baptised to Christ (HS I.30: 683).<sup>140</sup> Jacob sees the relationship between Christ and the Church as a marital bond and he puts forward the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist are the two witnesses of this marital bond. Jacob uses extensively this bridal imagery to portray this relationship:

The Son of the virgin betrothed to the bride, the daughter of the day;  
That she will make great hope in the whole earth (HS II.43: 235, 19-20).

As Jesus descended into water for baptism, He made His betrothal with the Church and by His death on the Cross, He married the Church. Pouring of blood is the dowry which Christ payed for His bride. Both these acts have to be seen in the realm of sacred time. In marrying the Church, which was once a harlot, Christ washed her, and made her beautiful and pure:

The Bridegroom took the harlot from the market place  
And He caused her to come down to water and He made her virgin and behold! She  
is His people (HS II.43: 237, 8-9).

Jacob explains the baptism of bride and putting on of the white garments from the waters:

She bore herself greatly in the virginity which the Bridegroom gave her  
She descended and put on white garments from within waters.  
When He was hung on the Cross, the light on the neck becomes like a necklace  
And by casting an image of the passions of our beloved Son.  
And in the spring of blood and water which flows from Him<sup>141</sup>  
Which is inhabited upon Him, as the river Gihon is full of life (HS II.43: 237, 20-  
238, 4).

In the incarnation God made Himself humble within the dimension of humanity so as to become the Bridegroom (HSBr VI.7: 163, 10). At Jordan He brought in sanctification and the 'garment of glory/light,' both as an armoury and an

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<sup>140</sup> Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 51.

<sup>141</sup> Jn 19:34.

enlightenment. The Church waited for the Bridegroom in order to enter with Him into the womb of the waters and be sanctified. The persecuted and afflicted Church is sent down into the mixed waters to be washed and be purified of her defilement so that the bride can drape the robe of glory, which is placed in the womb of baptism by Christ (HS I.8: 173, 4-174, 4). The bride is lovely, perfumed, adorned with splendid and spiritual clothing. The Bridegroom purified her in the water of baptism to remove stains from her filthiness (AJ VI: 181, 339-342).<sup>142</sup> The betrothal that had been initiated and continued in the OT, and reached a new dimension at the nativity and at the baptism in Jordan, reached its summit in the paschal events. At the Cross on Golgotha this betrothal became consummated with the Bridegroom's total self-giving to the bride as the ransom. Jacob even mentioned that the commencement of the marriage feast began in bride's partaking of the body and blood of the Bridegroom, which is served as food for the guests. The baptism of Jesus is seen as the betrothal of Christ and the Church, with the Baptist as the best man. "Thus, at Christ's baptism John the Baptist is described as having betrothed the Church as the Bride of Christ. Thus, at Christ's baptism a Bridal Chamber is prepared for the Church."<sup>143</sup> In the homily on 'Christ's Baptism,' Jacob speaks of this betrothal imagery:

Christ, the Bridegroom prepared the marriage feast for the Church of the nations  
And the world became aware of the wedding feast He had furnished for her [the Church].  
The Royal Son wished to betroth the afflicted one [the Church]  
And He sent her to go to the fountain to wash away her dust.  
He saw the persecuted (Church) that was weak, desiccated and wearied,  
Then He mixed waters and sent her to wash herself, and then to be betrothed.  
He had regard for her beauty that was altered by the incense of idols;  
And He poured out rushing streams of the river upon her face to brighten her colour (HS I.8: 167, 9-168, 9).<sup>144</sup>

In order to betroth the Church, Christ wanted her to be devoid of defilement. Christ wanted her to get purified and without any bad smell of holocausts. Thus He sent the Church for baptism, so that in the waters she would get purified (HS I.8: 167, 9-168, 9).<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> M. Scopello, "Jacques de Saroug et l'Exégèse de l'Âme," in *Deuxième Journée d'Études Coptes, Strasbourg 25 mai 1984* (Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte 3) (Paris / Louvain: Peeters, 1986), 135.

<sup>143</sup> S. Brock "The Bridal Chamber of Light: a Distinctive Feature of the Syriac Liturgical Tradition," in *Harp* 18 (2005), 186.

<sup>144</sup> *FH*, 162.

<sup>145</sup> *FH*, 162-163.

The baptism in the Jordan reaches its climax with the salvific death of Christ on the Cross. From the side of Christ comes the blood and water which effect the birth of the Church, and also her wedding to her heavenly Groom. 'It is the inestimable love for the bride that made the Son embrace death' on the Cross and allow the piercing of His side signifying the birth of the Church, the bride.<sup>146</sup> Jacob described Christ as offering His suffering as a dowry for the Church, His spouse, and also Christ is a shepherd who led His flock by His staff, the Cross.<sup>147</sup> Jesus Christ, the unique Saviour, recognized Church as His Bride, for He was ready for crucifixion with thieves at Golgotha (HS III.94: 605, 9-12, 620, 17-18). Christ became engaged with His blood, when He is united to the Church' (HS III.94: 621, 1). At the crucifixion Christ opened the source (ܠܚܘܒܐ) for the Church (HS III 94: 603, 11-12). Jacob demonstrates that 'none of the OT types of Christ could subsist without depicting the mystery of the betrothal between Christ and the Church' (HS III.75: 218, 17-20; V.161: 335, 15-336, 5), especially at His baptism, recalling the betrothals at the fountain in the OT:<sup>148</sup> the betrothal of Isaac and Rebekah (Gen 26) and that of Jacob with Rachel at the well (Gen 29:1ff).<sup>149</sup>

This is the one who descended and betrothed the women from the spring;  
He typified the Bridegroom who chose the purified one<sup>150</sup> from within the waters  
(HS IV.135: 799, 9-12).

The mystical union of Christ with the Church took place in Christ's baptism at the Jordan, which Jacob interpreted as having been foreseen by Moses.<sup>151</sup> In the homily on 'the Veil on Moses' Face,' Jacob demonstrates this:

He (Moses) put in his writings that 'a man should leave his father and mother  
And cleave to his wife, so that the two of them might be one completely.'<sup>152</sup>  
The prophet Moses introduced the account of the man and his wife  
Since through them Christ and His Church are spoken of.  
With the exalted eye of prophecy Moses saw Christ,  
And how He and His Church would be one in the waters of baptism;  
He saw Him putting on her in the virgin womb  
And her putting on Him in the baptismal water:  
Bridegroom and bride are spiritually perfected as one,

<sup>146</sup> *Salvation*, 235-236.

<sup>147</sup> F. Graffin, "Recherches sur le thème de l'Église-Épouse dans les liturgies et la littérature patristique de langue syriaque," in *OrSyr* 3 (1958), 331; Beggiani, *Early Syriac Theology*, 82-83.

<sup>148</sup> *Salvation*, 233.

<sup>149</sup> T. B. Mansour, *La Théologie de JS*, Vol. 1 (Kaslik: Bibliothèque de L'Université Saint-Esprit, 1993), 152-153.

<sup>150</sup> Here Jacob meant the Church as the bride of Christ.

<sup>151</sup> Puthuparampil, *Mariological Thought*, 304-305.

<sup>152</sup> Gen 2:24.

And it was concerning them that Moses wrote 'the two shall be one' (HS III.79: 288, 3-12).<sup>153</sup>

Jacob interweaves in the homily on 'the Veil on Moses' Face,' different themes of baptism, death, crucifixion, Holy Communion, and union of Christ, the Bridegroom and the Church, His Bride. In a remarkable passage Jacob muses how Moses typified the mystery of Christ and the Church with the veil on his face (Ex 34:35) and how Paul uncovered this mystical veil of Moses by explaining the secret behind it:

The veiled Moses saw Christ and called Him 'man,'  
 He saw the Church too, and called her 'woman' as a device:  
 To avoid speaking of the matter openly before the Hebrews  
 He covered up his words by various means, hiding them from outsiders.  
 And so he painted a picture inside the chamber of the royal bridegroom;  
 He called them 'man and woman,' although he knew the truth,  
 That the one was Christ and the other the Church, both being veiled,  
 And he announced them as 'man and his wife' simply as a device (HS III.79: 288, 15-289, 1).<sup>154</sup>

Since Moses spoke using a device and veiled the secret under his veil, what he said was not understood by the Israelites. Moses did not speak openly before the Hebrews. Since Moses was wearing a veil on his face, this secret was not revealed. It is only in the NT, this secret became revealed. Jacob explains how Paul revealed this mystery behind Moses's saying. Imbibing the same idea from the epistle of Paul (Eph 5:23-33), Jacob puts words into Paul's mouth:

'In those called 'man and wife' in the prophetic writings  
 I recognize Christ and His Church, the two being one.'  
 The veil on Moses' face has now been removed,  
 Let everyone come and behold the beauties that never weary;  
 The great mystery that was veiled has now come out into the open.  
 Let the wedding guests rejoice in the Bridegroom and bride, so beautiful.  
 He gave Himself to her, and was born of a destitute girl;  
 He made her His own, and she is linked to Him and rejoices with Him.  
 He came down to the depths and raised up the lowly maid to the height,  
 For they are one, and where He is, there is she with Him (HS III.79: 289, 10-19).<sup>155</sup>

Christ sacrificed His life in order to betroth and marry His bride. It was a total commitment. Christ became a servant (Phil 2:6-8) for His Church in order to save her from defilement (HS III.79: 290, 4-9).<sup>156</sup>

<sup>153</sup> *MHMJS*, F. 1, 22.

<sup>154</sup> *MHMJS*, F. 1, 22.

<sup>155</sup> *MHMJS*, F. 1, 24, 26.

<sup>156</sup> *MHMJS*, F. 1, 28.

The imagery of the heavenly bridal chamber, *gnuno*, is much loved by Jacob, and baptism appears as 'the bridal chamber' or 'wedding feast' in many of his homilies, where the baptised are described as 'entering the bridal chamber of Life (or Salvation),' and as being 'betrothed to the living God.'<sup>157</sup>

The baptised are *guests*, invited to the wedding feast. This wedding feast is envisaged as the union between Christ and His Church, which took place at Christ's own baptism. Each individual baptism is understood as being contemporaneous with Christ's own baptism in sacred time, the baptised are thus indeed participating as guests in that event.<sup>158</sup>

At the baptism the chosen people, Israel (ܐܝܪܐܟ) have been replaced by 'a new people,' the Church (ܩܢܝܢܐ). Christ came for baptism to betroth the Church as the 'bride from nations.' Christ, the Bridegroom was fully aware of the state of His bride, that she was afflicted and persecuted. But He cleansed the Church and entrusted His mysteries.

### *1. Transmission of Priesthood*

Christ took His incarnation as a mission to fulfil the OT and institute a new people of God. That He did in His descents and for that He had to go through different wombs. At the banks of Jordan, Christ perfected the priesthood of the OT. Since John is the son of a Levite, that means, son of Zechariah, the priest, Christ's baptism at his hands provided the means by which the Jewish priesthood is transmitted to Christianity.<sup>159</sup> Moreover at the moment of Christ's baptism he placed his hands upon Christ's head like a priest. Because of these two reasons he was accredited as the priest. During the baptism of Christ, it was the old priesthood that was also renewed by Christ's reception of the same. This way He tried to maintain a continuity with the OT, but at the same time brought new priesthood in the NT.<sup>160</sup> From the hands of John the Baptist Christ took the Jewish priesthood, which God the Father had entrusted to the

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<sup>157</sup> Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 52.

<sup>158</sup> Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 52.

<sup>159</sup> Beggiani, *Early Syriac Theology*, 46.

<sup>160</sup> Konat, *The Old Testament Types*, 236.

chosen people, the Israel, and transmitted to new Israel, Church (HS I.8: 191, 14-17).<sup>161</sup>

Jacob brings the OT origin of priesthood through the tribe of Levi. The priesthood of Levi tribe passed to the NT at the baptism of Christ. As we have seen already, this transmission of Levite priesthood had nothing to do with adding holiness or priesthood to Christ (HS I.8: 191, 18-192, 6).<sup>162</sup>

Christ was not in need of any addition. He is the Perfect One. He lacked nothing. He abased Himself in order to bring back the humanity to their own fair image, which includes the aspects of divinity. The Aaronic priesthood then proceeded from the Great High Priest through the apostles to the world. Like the river does not add anything to the sea, the baptism or the transmission of priesthood did add nothing to Christ. In his homily on 'Christ's Baptism,' Jacob projects the theme that Christ needs nothing:

Not because He was lacking the great priesthood of the priests  
Did He receive it at Baptism and then gave it:  
It was so as not to confound the path of truth which His Father has primed,  
From what belonged to Him did He make the renewal of old things.  
It is not because the ocean is lacking in fullness  
That all streams and rivers flow towards it.  
By nature water hurries to the sea while it [the sea] did not lack.  
But the whole sea is not made to abound more than it already is.  
It is not because He lacked that Christ received the hand of (the priesthood of)  
Aaron  
Nor was it because He lacked (anything) that He received the kingdom from the  
house of David.  
The kingdom proceeded with the priesthood and rested upon Him,  
While He is the High Priest and the King of kings (HS I.8: 192, 7-17).<sup>163</sup>

Being the High Priest and the King of kings, Christ is the sovereign one and the Only Begotten One. He descended into the Jordan and submitted Himself for baptism, not for Himself, but for the sake of the Church. It is because of His love for the Church, that He got Himself baptised and trod the path of Adam. Thus, for the continuation of the economy of salvation, He transferred the priesthood from Aaron to the Church. In the homily on 'Theological Investigation, and the Consecration of the Church' Jacob speaks about this transmission of priesthood extensively:

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<sup>161</sup> *FH*, 185.

<sup>162</sup> *FH*, 185.

<sup>163</sup> *FH*, 186.

The gift of priests [priesthood] was poured upon Him that it may rest there [baptism];  
However He did not receive anything surplus from John.  
John poured out sanctity as Aaron upon the Holy (of Holies);  
The succession is poured out to Him through the hands of Moses.  
The Chief of the priests received the priesthood from the Levites;  
From Him proceeds the hand to the world, so that it will be absolved through it  
(HS IV.134: 781, 1-6).

Jacob uses the symbol of the Great River to denote Christ. The rivulet could not make any change to the Great River. So there is no change in the Great Priest, who received priesthood from a Levite, because this transmission of priesthood did not make any change in the Son of God. The Son of God is the fullness of everything and from Him flows the priesthood. In the same homily on 'Theological Investigation, and the Consecration of the Church,' Jacob continues:

He completed the road of the Old Testament and consumed them;  
In the road of the New Testament, He began the kingdom.  
The Great River came down and was baptised in a small river;  
He sent the sanctity from Mount Sinai that it may be poured out on it.  
Behold, the Father entrusted the priesthood to the house of Aaron;  
Messiah received it in (His) baptism from John.  
He deprived priesthood from them and it came near to Him;  
In addition holiness was not given Him from within the waters.  
As far as the horn of anointing fermented;  
And when He had come (for baptism), He stopped the unction of all the priests (of the OT).  
As He descended, He ascended from the river without any addition;  
Even the streams of the sons of Levi were emptied upon Him.  
He went down to the struggle not to conquer and became victorious;  
But to give Adam the means which is right in it.  
He seized the contest as a man and fought against the Satan;  
His pride, which was strong, will be ashamed of the weakness (HS IV.134: 781, 7-782, 1).

By Christ's descent into the Jordan, He also gave back Adam the priesthood which he lost at the fall. Jacob compared the priesthood of the sons of Levi with that of Melchizedek. He said that the OT priests offered blood and animals and needed special vestments and ceremonies, but neither Melchizedek nor our Lord did in such a way. They offered only bread and wine, besides our Lord offered Himself. Melchizedek offered immortal elements, a pure heart and a peaceful soul, because of this he resembled the Son of God who entered the world to redeem it by His own blood.<sup>164</sup> According to Konat, "To make this distinction explicit, he [Jacob] often uses the adjective 'spiritual' (ܣܘܪܝܐ) to qualify Melchizedek and everything related

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<sup>164</sup> J.A. Konat, "Christological Insights in Jacob of Serugh's Typology as Reflected in His Memre," in *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, Vol. 77 (2001), 64.

to him, whereas the word 'corporal' (ܦܘܨܝܘܬܐ) is used to qualify Old Testament priesthood and sacrifices."<sup>165</sup>

*m. Seeking Adam/Humanity*

The Adam-Christ typology permeates in Jacob's idea of salvation through the baptism of Christ. Through the economy of salvation (brought ), Christ <sup>166</sup>ܐܘܪܘܫܝܡܐ back whatever Adam lost in the Paradise: the state of glory, the divine Sonship and inheritance to the Paradise. "The ultimate aim of baptism is not just the recovery or restoration of humanity to Paradise; rather it is to elevate humanity to its position of honour that Adam and Eve would have been granted if they had kept the commandment of God."<sup>167</sup> According to Syriac tradition, "where the baptism of Jesus takes places on the first day of creation, Adam and Christ being fused in one person. The importance the early Church assigned to the mystery is demonstrated in its becoming the dominant model for Christian baptism."<sup>168</sup>

God wanted to make creatures participate in His glory (HS III.71.1: 6, 12-7, 20) and Adam was created in God's own image and likeness. God has a unique design from eternity. He creates and saves, because of His love (QHC I: 29-50). Divinity abased Himself to the level of dust in this creation, by giving His own image. This self-abasement prefigures the Son's coming down to redeem the image of Adam/humanity (HS III.71.6: 110, 14-20; III 72: 161-163). Adam became the image of God only on account of the Only Begotten (HS III.71.6: 111, 15) and he had 'garment of glory/light' in the Paradise (HS III.71.6: 125, 15). The divine purpose in creation was to raise Adam to the status of the son of God as the heir of the Paradise (SFH IV: 6; V: 33; HS III.71.6: 105, 12; QHC III: 160-170).<sup>169</sup> Jacob narrates in his first homily on 'the Creation' about God's giving of His own image to the humanity and taking the dust of the humanity in the incarnation:

With the single intention, which He had in Him from the eternity  
He created and saved because of His love.

<sup>165</sup> Konat, "Christological Insights in Jacob of Serugh's Typology," 64.

<sup>166</sup> ܐܘܪܘܫܝܡܐ is often used to denote Our Lord's whole doings with mankind, especially of His incarnation and life on earth.

<sup>167</sup> Saliba, "Baptism in the Homilies of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Jacob of Serugh," 348.

<sup>168</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 26-27.

<sup>169</sup> See Kollampampil, "Adam-Christ Complementarity," 148; A. Khalil (ed.), *Jacques de Saroug. Quatre homélies métriques sur la Création*. CSCO 508-509/Syr. 214-215 (1989), 37.

With this (intention), He formed man in His image, that He was employed to save him  
That is why He said, 'Let us make man in our image.'  
So that the fact that He sent His only Begotten One to save His image,  
It appears that it is the first action.  
Behold the Virgin, from her is manifested His only Begotten Son  
And she was compared with Adam, who was also gave birth without baptism.  
The economy of the entire course of the Son of God,  
In the beginning His Father painted it on the house of Adam.  
The dust received the likeness of the Son and is exalted through it  
And became the lord of creatures while being a servant.  
Then the Lord took, within the womb, the likeness of His servant  
And He became servant, a companion of Adam, while being his Lord (QHC I: 49-62).

In order to save the fallen humanity, God became one like them, but without sin. Since there is a corresponding give and take from the part of God in the creation and redemption of humanity, in the very beginning God said, 'let us make man in our image' (Gen 1:26). When God descended to save the humanity, He was extending His hand a second time and came not to a stranger, but to the one who was created in His own image and likeness (QHC I:137-150). An interesting feature Jacob projects is that God created Adam with His own hands. It is evident from the fact that Jacob quotes Isaiah, 'The Lord will extend His hand a second time in order to obtain His people' (Is 11:11), which shows the first time was at the creation. If God had not extended the hands the first time, He would not have extended a second time (QHC I: 79 ff). Jacob tries to bring here two types from the OT: 1. Moses breaking the tablets and renewing them (Ex 32:19; 2; 34:1 ff) (QHC I: 105-150). Jeremiah's experience at potter's house of the reshaping of the pots (Jer 18:1-4) (QHC I: 151-176). As our teacher says, 'He extended His hands on the Cross to save the humanity, to regain the lost image of Adam. But before that Christ descended to the second stage of His economy of salvation.

As it is evident, Jacob describes the fallen state of Adam/humanity with ample use of the symbolism of hostage taking, slavery and captivity. He also explains in his homily on 'Christ's Baptism,' His descent to release the captives who are held captive in the place of dead ones (HS I.8: 179, 13-180, 7). Adam, the fair image is held captive there. Jacob's catechetical synthesis brings out a network of scriptural depictions of captivity and liberation/deliverance of humanity from the control of

Satan.<sup>170</sup> When John the Baptist resists Jesus' request for baptism, Jesus explains to John why he must be baptised:

Our Lord says: 'I am not lacking but in one thing,  
The recovery of Adam who was lost from me is being sought by me.  
...  
Therefore, allow me to descend to cleanse the image that has become faded,  
Lest it too would remain deficient, should you withhold me (HS I.8: 177, 10-21).<sup>171</sup>

Jacob sees the necessity of Christ's going to Sheol not only to liberate Adam, but to save 'the Great Adam' or 'the Great Image.' For Jacob, 'the image of God was perishing in Sheol, and the Son descended to seek and find the image of His Father which was perishing.' He views Adam as a lost pearl (ܩܘܠܘܢܐ) that Jesus goes down into the Jordan/Sheol to rescue:

His Son descended to the lake of dead, and, like a diver plunged in,  
And brought up thence the pearl on which His image was engraved (HS III.86: 423, 15-16).<sup>172</sup>

Jacob identifies Adam with the pearl. Thus as a perfect diver, Christ plunges into the water to search for the pearl. Jacob went back to the same theme as many times as possible. He spoke of the pearl again in the homily on 'Our Lord's words, 'what it will profit a person if he gains the entire world but loses his soul:'

He [Christ] was baptised in the sea of sufferings and brought up the pearl,  
Because of the great image depicted on it, lest it be lost (HS I.30: 697, 11-12).<sup>173</sup>

Jacob related this theme more specifically to Sheol: Christ was baptised in the pit, and explored the Sheol, and He drew out Adam (HS II.53.8: 599, 1). He groped in the mud of the dead, and sought out the pearl (HS II.53.8: 599, 3). Jordan and Sheol are merged in Jacob's theology. Jesus descended for three days into Jordan/Sheol to search out for the lost Adam who bore His image, as one finding a precious pearl.<sup>174</sup>

Christ's descent is most often described by Jacob in terms of the search for Adam. By the descent of Christ into the womb of Mary, the Son became the Second Adam. Christ came down in search of the first Adam, who lost the image of God due to sin.

<sup>170</sup> Kollampampil, "Adam-Christ Complementarity," 162.

<sup>171</sup> *FH*, 172.

<sup>172</sup> JS, "A Homily on that which Our Lord said in the Gospel, that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto Leaven, which a Woman took and hid in Three Measures of Meal, Till the Whole was Leavend," in *True Vine* 3, 56.

<sup>173</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 166.

<sup>174</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 166; HS I.8: 177; I.30: 697; II.53.8: 599; III.86: 423.

This relationship between Adam and Christ and vice-versa is a peculiar theme for the Syriac Church Fathers. Brock identifies four main scenes in the Syriac Adamic view in the economy of salvation:<sup>175</sup> *a.* Adam and Eve in the Paradise before the fall are presented as clothed with garments of glory/light (Gen 3:21). This was the perfect stage. Adam was immortal and epitome of the creation (HS II.66: 823; IV.115: 236; V.189: 809). *b.* After the fall, Adam and Eve were stripped off their garments of glory/light. *c.* In order to give back this garment of glory/light to Adam/humanity, God put on a body. God clothed Himself with humanity and came down to enter the three staging points, such as: Mary's womb, Jordan's womb and Sheol's womb (HS III.82: 343). *d.* In this scene, God who clothed humanity entered the second stage, which is the baptism of Christ. Christians, the new Adams are able to claim for the garment of glory from the baptismal font (HS I.9: 197; II.40: 196, 42: 209, 65: 807-808; III.72: 160-161, 94: 593). Christ the 'last Adam' recovers that which was lost by the first Adam in the fall, by destroying sin and death and restoring humanity to the image and likeness of God.

'Behold! From that time He looked at the Cross of His Only Begotten Son,  
And He represented in Adam the whole image of the crucifixion  
Even the fact that Adam slept, yea, even the fact that He took a rib from him  
Is that very thing which happened on Golgotha to the Son of God.  
Jesus died on the Cross because His death is the sleep of Adam.  
For this reason the Lord put Adam to sleep while He was creating her.  
There flowed from His side the second Mother, namely baptism,  
And this mystery was prefigured in Eve while she was being created' (AJ I: 59-66).<sup>176</sup>

Time and again Jacob describes the necessity of Christ's descent into Jordan and subsequently into Sheol, not only to rescue Adam, but also to save 'the Great Adam' or 'the Great Image,' the Image of the Father.<sup>177</sup> Jacob explicates that Christ at His baptism mixed the waters properly with holiness in order to wash and cleanse humanity/Adam so as to brighten the colour of 'the bride' who polluted herself with the idols and the oblations to idols (HS I.8: 167, 7-168, 7).<sup>178</sup>

A prayer of the Epiphany of our Lord says: 'When the Creator saw him, fastened (bounded) with sin and bad desires, He took him and placed him on His shoulder and

<sup>175</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 139-140; Brock, "Clothing Metaphors," 12; Brock, "Baptismal themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 326.

<sup>176</sup> PO 38 (1976), 48. I. K. Cosgrove, *Three Homilies against the Jews by Jacob of Sarug*, Edited with Introduction, Translation and Notes, UnDiss (University of London, 1931), ch. 1, 3.

<sup>177</sup> Chesnut, *Three Monophysite Christologies*, 127.

<sup>178</sup> *Salvation*, 392.

washed his stains in the flow of the river Jordan and thus made anew the image of Adam, who was fallen.’<sup>179</sup> Jacob explains in the homily on ‘Tamar,’ how Christ saved Adam:

With oil, You consigned to oblivion the wickedness of Adam who had been smitten;  
You applied wine to his wounds, seen that he had been wounded;  
With living water<sup>180</sup> You cleansed away his filth, for he had become sullied,  
And he was renewed in You, and returned to Eden which he had lost (HSBr VI.12: 256, 24-27).<sup>181</sup>

Christ, the true image of God (Col 1:15; Heb 1:3), descended through the mystery of the incarnation, brought new life for man. He lived a perfect and harmonious life with God and man to restore us to the original righteousness and innocence of the creation. The Second Adam, Jesus Christ, restored all that the first Adam lost in the fall.

### 3.3. Institution / Source of Baptism

Christ instituted the sacraments to grant us the grace, which we need to attain heaven, to grow in His grace, to merit earn a greater happiness in eternity, and regain His friendship since we have lost it through our disobedience to His will. He instituted the sacrament of baptism in order to provide us with a share in His own divinity, to make us His brothers and sisters and the sons and daughters of the Father. There is no doubt about who instituted the sacrament. But the question is regarding when Christ instituted baptism. There were different occasions which kept baptismal resonance in the life of Jesus, such as His own baptism, when He spoke with Nicodemus, when the water and blood flowed from His side, at the time of His Ascension commanding the apostles to baptise the people, and at the Pentecost, when the apostles were baptised in the fire and Spirit.

It is self-evident that Christian baptism can be traced back to Christ's own baptism. It is the ‘re-presentation’ of Jesus' baptism. It is through suffering and crucifixion that Christ saved the humanity. What He initiated at the Jordan has its fulfilment at Golgotha. That is why the Church Fathers always pictured the water and blood that gushed out from the side of Christ as the source for the sacraments of baptism and

<sup>179</sup> *Anduthaksa– Syro-Malankara Catholic Church*, 94.

<sup>180</sup> Water of baptism, Jn 7:38; 19:34.

<sup>181</sup> S. Brock, “Jacob of Serugh's Verse Homily on Tamar (Gen. 38),” in *Muséon* 115:3-4 (2002), 294.

Eucharist. It is apt to quote Brock, who sees in Jacob only two occasions which together constitute the source of baptism: "To Jacob, the twin sources of Christian baptism are Christ's own baptism in the Jordan (which he sees as the betrothal of the Church to Christ) and the piercing of Christ's side on the Cross" (Jn 19:34).<sup>182</sup>

But a note of dissent is very much important here. When we go through all the published homilies of Jacob, one thing is clear that there are certain other occasions, in which the instituting factors of baptism can be traced. In our research we come to the conclusion that there are a minimum of four instances in the economy of salvation, which caused the institution of baptism. But we should see all these different historical events as one under the concept of sacred time. 1. The baptism of Jesus serves as the locus of Christian baptism. 2. The water and blood, which flowed from the side of Christ, is the source from where all baptismal waters flow. 3. On the Mount of Olives, Christ presented His apostles with both oil and Trinitarian formula to sign the people into baptism. 4. It is in the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost, when the apostles were baptised in the fire and Spirit, the promise of baptism is fulfilled. There is not one single moment, we cannot pinpoint from the perspective of Jacob, that in which baptism was instituted, but there are many instances which are seen together from the notion of sacred time as an instance of the institution of baptism.

### 3.3.1. Jesus' Baptism – Jordan

Christ's baptism is the perfect model of Christian baptism. He instituted it as a sacrament for all to imitate His baptism, sharing in the interior substance of His baptism, a way of sharing in the divine life.<sup>183</sup> "The baptism of Jesus is the *Urbild* of Christian baptism."<sup>184</sup> That means Christ's baptism is the prototype of Christian baptism. The efficacy of Christian baptism is found in the baptism of Christ. Even though there were washings of the OT and baptism of John before Christ, they were deficient of forgiveness. They could not provide the Holy Spirit. Even the baptism, which Christ received, is devoid of forgiveness. Christ was not in need of forgiveness and John's baptism was not geared for forgiveness, but Christ's was a necessity for the salvation of humanity. It is at the baptism of Christ, the Trinity revealed and

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<sup>182</sup> Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 30.

<sup>183</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 127.

<sup>184</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 176.

rendered baptism the efficacy.<sup>185</sup> We have already seen how Jesus perfected the baptism through His own baptism and began the road of the Kingdom of God, so we do not go in detail to this area.

### 3.3.2. Pierced side of Christ - Golgotha

The pierced side of Christ is a central point in the theology of Jacob of Sarug. He inherits rich typological associations for Jn 19:34 from Ephrem. The flowing out of water and blood from the side of the Saviour on the Cross is a symbolic expression of the mystery of baptism through which the Church gives birth to her children, and the mystery of communion through which the Church becomes the body of Christ and every faithful soul becomes a bride. According to Jacob, piercing the side of Christ reminds us of the birth of Eve from the First Adam. He makes a comparison between the deep sleep of Adam, during which a rib was taken from his side to form Eve, and the death of Christ on the Cross, a death that is for Jacob a kind of sleep. From the side of sleeping Christ flows the water and the blood, which constitute 'the second mother,' that is, 'baptism' (HS I.7: 162, 3-6; HS II 53.7: 589, 8-17; III.71.6: 120, 3-124, 3). Baptism is the new Eve, new mother, and the source of new creation. Baptism is born of the blood and water flowing from the side of Christ. So baptism is a mother who gives life to men (HS II.53: 589; III.79: 299, 11-300, 4; 80: 320, 10-19).<sup>186</sup> The pierced side of Christ points both backward and forward, with the theme of birth giving as the common factor. Jacob explains this:

The spear pierced the well of life on Golgotha,  
And rivers went out from it to the whole world.  
Blessed streams went out and watered the entire earth  
That will give for a great long time fruits of slain (HS II.66: 825, 20-826, 1).

Piercing the side of Christ harkened back to Gen 2:21-22 and the birth of Eve, the mother of all life, from the side of Adam, and to the sealing of Eden by the Cherub with the lance upon the expulsion of Adam and Eve after the fall (Gen 3:24). Jacob of Sarug based his exegesis of the pierced side of Christ on the imagery of 'fountain.'<sup>187</sup> By the issuing forth of 'water and blood' baptismal and Eucharistic symbols are introduced. The pierced side and the 'water and blood' signify the fountain of the Paradise, symbols of baptism, Eucharist and the Church, of the

<sup>185</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 195-196.

<sup>186</sup> *Salvation*, 422.

<sup>187</sup> Brock, "Mysteries Hidden in the Side of Christ," 46-72.

opening of the Paradise and the re-entry of the exiled Adam by removing the lance that had barred humanity's return to the Paradise.<sup>188</sup> Jacob makes a comparison between the deep sleep of Adam, during which a rib was taken from his side to form Eve, and the death of Christ on the Cross, a death that is for Jacob a kind of sleep. From the side of sleeping Christ flows the water and blood, which constitute 'the second mother,' that is, 'baptism' (HS I.7: 162, 3-6).<sup>189</sup> His conception of the pierced side of Christ is essentially ecclesiological. The Church flows from the pierced side. For him the pierced side has a kind of dominance.<sup>190</sup> In the homily on the Veil of Moses, Jacob vividly explains this image:

The wedding takes place, and the bride enters the chamber:  
Between her and the Groom the veil is no longer required.  
The Groom's side has been pierced, and from it the bride has come out,  
Fulfilling the type provided by Adam and Eve,  
For from the first He knew and depicted  
Adam and Eve in the likeness of the image of His Only Begotten:  
He slept on the Cross as Adam had slept his deep sleep,  
His side was pierced and from it there came forth the daughter of light  
Water and blood as an image of divine children  
To the heirs to the Father who loves His Only Begotten.  
Eve in prophecy is the mother of all that lives,  
And what, if not baptism, is the mother of life?  
Adam's wife bore human bodies subject to death,  
But this virgin bears spiritual beings who live for ever.  
Adam's side gave birth to a woman who gives birth to mortals,  
While our Lord's to the Church who gives birth to immortals (HS III.79: 299, 9-300, 1).<sup>191</sup>

Jacob brings another imagery in comparing first Adam and Christ. "And on the sixth day, Adam's side was split, and Eve came forth. On the sixth day, the side of Christ was rent on the Cross, and baptism the new mother of all the living, flowed forth" (HS III.71.7: 147, 19-148, 20).<sup>192</sup> Here Jacob gives importance to the sixth day. By comparing both instances, he clarifies that both instances took place on the same day.

Church's origin from Christ is well explained by Jacob, which is remembered at the ninth hour of the Good Friday liturgical celebration of Antiochene tradition: 'The heavenly Second Adam came from the dwelling place of His Father, and died on the

<sup>188</sup> *FH*, 22; S. A. Harvey, "Bride of Blood, Bride of Light: Biblical Women as Images of Church in Jacob of Serug," in G. A. Kiraz (ed.), *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone: Studies in Honor of Sebastian P. Brock* (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008), 177-178.

<sup>189</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 211.

<sup>190</sup> McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan*, 212-213.

<sup>191</sup> *MHMJS*, F.1, 48.

<sup>192</sup> Guinan, *The Eschatology of James of Sarug*, 116.

Cross. Out of Him baptism came. The bridegroom lay down and slept. His side was opened and the bride was born as was Eve from Adam. The serenity of the sleep of death came upon Him through the Cross, and out of Him came out the mother of all spirits. Through His death, the master of Adam begot new Eve to be the parent of all men instead of Eve who was bitten by the serpent.<sup>193</sup> During the feast of Epiphany, the Church prays to bless all the races with the water and blood which flowed from Christ.<sup>194</sup>

It is also necessary, taking into account the identification established by Jacob between Christian baptism and baptism from the side of Christ opened by the lance, that they are the drops of blood, symbol of life, which troubled the Sheol and revived the dead (HS II.48: 336, 5-6).<sup>195</sup> Jacob exploits both the baptism of Christ and the pierced side of Christ, but there is no allusion to anointing. In fact, he never refers to any anointing that Christ may have received in the Jordan. It may be because, there was no practice of anointing at the baptism of John.

### 3.3.3. Jesus' Ascension – Mount of Olives

On the fortieth day after His resurrection, Christ came to the Mount of Olives with His apostles, the sons of the mystery, the Church. In the Syriac tradition, Mount of Olives is considered to be the symbol of anointing and the source of olive oil. Here too we can discern a mystery (ܐܝܢܐ). The Mount of Olives was a sign of abundant oil for anointing.<sup>196</sup> The oil is produced from the olives for anointing. Here the oil comes from Christ who is the *Messiah* (ܡܫܝܚܐ). Jacob uses a Syriac word-play, which has an important role here. Christ (ܡܫܝܚܐ) supplied the oil (ܐܝܢܐ) for baptism. From ܡܫܝܚܐ comes ܐܝܢܐ. That means, Christ is the source of oil for anointing:<sup>197</sup>

And to the Mountain of Olives He gathered the sons of His mercy,  
Because the Mountain of Olives too is a symbol of anointing,  
For from the Mountain of Olives there shall be oil for Baptism;  
And from it Christ was to be raised up to the place of His Father.  
The treasure of oil is on the Mountain of Olives for anointing;  
Because Christ too ascended from it towards His Father.

<sup>193</sup> See *Hashaganangal – Syro-Malankara Catholic Church*, Trivandrum.

<sup>194</sup> *Anduthaksa– Syro-Malankara Catholic Church*, 108.

<sup>195</sup> Mansour, *La Théologie de JS*, Vol. 2, 150-151.

<sup>196</sup> See Guinan, *The Eschatology of James*, 146.

<sup>197</sup> See *Salvation*, 188.

And on account of this, towards that mountain itself He gathered them  
To supply them with the oil for the signing of the whole earth.  
To the Mountain of Olives He gathered the Church for which He had died  
So that she might see Him there as He was taken up to His exalted place.  
The great Saviour effected His way and completed His deed,  
And He set off to go, to send the riches to the bride whom He had brought (there)  
(HSBr VI.9: 204, 9-20).<sup>198</sup>

Christ commanded the apostles before His ascension: “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Mt 28:19-20). Jacob introduces this Matthean formula:

He taught them to baptise the peoples in the name of the Father;  
And His Son and the Holy Spirit without divisions (HS V.173: 603, 13-14).

Jesus then sent them out into the world as the sun sends out its rays.<sup>199</sup> From the very moment of creation, the world existed through the Trinity. Duties of the Trinity are understood in different ways in different occasions. Christ's last commandment to the apostles was to baptise the people in the name of the Trinity. It was through the Trinity that the world came into being and now the Father guards and the Son makes atonement and the Holy Spirit sanctifies. The ministry of the apostles starts from Christ, who is the haven of mysteries and treasures. The risen Lord continues His work through the apostles. At the Mount of Olives Christ gave the apostles the great sign of the Trinity for redemption and the oil for signing (HSBr VI.9: 206, 1-8; 207, 4-7). Thus He made them capable to execute His mission. Jacob puts this as follows in his homily on ‘the Ascension.’<sup>200</sup>

He commanded them; proceed forth, go, make disciples and baptise the peoples,  
In the name of the Father and in the name of the Son and in the name of the Spirit.  
The great sign of the Trinity which has no pass-over  
He gave to the apostles, so that by it the peoples of the earth might be signed.  
From the Mount of Olives He gave the Trinity and the oil;  
Oil for the signing and the Trinity for redemption (HSBr VI.9: 207, 2-7).<sup>201</sup>

Jacob's use of Jesus' commandment to His apostles to baptise in the name of Trinity has some differences in two separate homilies: in the homilies on ‘five talents’ and ‘the ascension.’ In the homily on ‘Five Talents’ Jacob uses the word ‘name’ in common to all Three persons in the Trinity, but in the homily on ‘the Ascension’ he uses the word ‘name’ each time separately for each person in the Trinity. Most

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<sup>198</sup> *FH*, 338.

<sup>199</sup> See Guinan, *The Eschatology of James of Sarug*, 147.

<sup>200</sup> See *Salvation*, 189.

<sup>201</sup> *FH*, 341.

probably, as we know, it is because of Jacob's peculiar affiliation to his dodecasyllabic meter. As both verses are given below, in both contexts, Jacob shines forth with his usage of the syllabic meter. In using three times *ܘܨܡܘܨ* does not imply any division in the Trinity.

ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ  
 ❖(HSBr VI.9: 207, 2-3) ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ  
 ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ  
 ❖(HS V.173: 603, 13-14) ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ ܘܨܡܘܨ

In another homily, Jacob puts words in the mouth of the apostles showing how Jesus commanded them to baptise. Here also Jacob uses *ܘܨܡܘܨ* only once commonly for the whole Trinity:

And He gave us peace and enlightened our eyes which were dark;  
 He gave authority to the apostleship while saying,  
 ‘Go, set out, turn the peoples of the earth to repentance.  
 Baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’ (HSBr VI.13: 279, 1-4).

In the homily on the ‘Sinful Woman’ Jacob clarifies that the oil comes from the ‘Great Tree of Life.’ The oil takes its power from and acquires its fragrance and intensity from it (HS II.51: 423). Jacob recalls Isaiah’s prophecy of calling Messiah the root (Is 53:2). It is upon this Root of Life, the oil receives the excellent fragrance. The Son of God from the Virgin is the Root from the dry land. Jacob makes it clear that without the oil and the Trinity, the baptism cannot be conferred. If the baptism was instituted only on the occasions of baptism of Christ and crucifixion, then what would be the purpose of oil, Trinity and His commandment, which were given by Christ Himself, the Second One in the Trinity!

### 3.3.4. Pentecost – Upper Room

According to Brock, ‘if the event of Jesus’ baptism in the river Jordan is considered as the institution of Christian baptism, the feast of Pentecost, in which the Church remembers the descent of the Holy Spirit to the whole Church, is celebrated as the baptism of the Church.’<sup>202</sup> As Kollampampil points, the institution of baptism has its culmination in sacred time at the event of Pentecost. With regard to the institution

<sup>202</sup> See Varghese, *Tekso d’Denho in the West Syrian Tradition*, 250.

of baptism Jacob finds a network of events in Christ's life which infuse meaning into each other. "These start with His conception in the womb of the virgin Mary and goes on till the coming of the promised Holy Spirit on the apostles on the day of Pentecost where the baptism in Fire and Spirit came into full manifestation."<sup>203</sup> The Paschal mystery of passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus culminates in the sending of the Holy Spirit by the Father at the request of His Son on the apostles. The Acts of the Apostles witness that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place on the day of Pentecost as He came upon the apostles. The apostles received baptism of the fire and Spirit. Jacob in his homily on 'the Pentecost' speaks about the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles:

You [Upper Room] became like an armoury to the Apostles and they clothed from you  
 The power of the Spirit to tread under foot the wild beings.  
 From you the whole earth which was darkness shone forth;  
 For like flashes of light the Apostles filled the earth.  
 You, Upper Room, became a possessor of treasures for the peoples,  
 And the regions that were in need became enriched by you.  
 The riches of the Father were distributed in you to the whole world:  
 Who were lacking had their needs filled by you.  
 That promise of Baptism was fulfilled in you,  
 Because all the disciples were baptised in you in the Holy Spirit and fire (HS II.58: 679, 3-12).<sup>204</sup>

Jacob teaches us that the promise of baptism was fulfilled in the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost (ܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܗܘܘܢܐ ܕܗܘܘܢܐ ܕܗܘܘܢܐ ܕܗܘܘܢܐ ܕܗܘܘܢܐ) (HS II.58: 679, 11). The root of the verb *eštaphel* ܩܘܕܫܐ is ܩܘܕܫܐ. Here this term has the meaning to be fulfilled, to be fully formed, and to be perfected in baptism.<sup>205</sup> From Jacob' use of this term, it is clear that Jacob demonstrates the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Pentecost as one of different occasions of the institution of baptism. After a few lines, Jacob again asserts that the baptism is fulfilled in the Upper Room:

The river Jordan is incomparable to your baptism,  
 Because yours is of fire, whereas it was of water: How should I call you?  
 John the Baptist baptised in water, it was said.  
 But indeed you shall be baptised in the Holy Spirit.  
 That promise of baptism was fulfilled in you,  
 Because fire and Spirit were given to the sons of light in you (HS II.58: 679, 19-680, 3).<sup>206</sup>

<sup>203</sup> *Salvation*, 433.

<sup>204</sup> *FH*, 361-362.

<sup>205</sup> See *CSD*, 274.

<sup>206</sup> *FH*, 362.

In the above text, Jacob uses the verb *ethpaal* ܐܬܦܐܠ to denote that the institution of baptism was fulfilled in the Upper Room. The root verb is ܦܐܠ. In its *paal* form, the verb has the meaning to make an end, to finish, to fulfil a promise and to conclude. And in its *ethpaal* form, this verb has the meaning to be brought to an end, to be completed and to be finished.<sup>207</sup>

When explaining the feast of Pentecost, Jacob relates the new wine with the blood which flowed from the side of the Son of God, and it is this wine which caused the disciples to appear as though drunk at Pentecost. Jacob is very keen in portraying his themes. He does not want to leave any subject unattended. Thus he goes back to the OT to bring together the scattered people with different languages at Babel (Gen 11:6-9) and that of the divided tongues and the gift of the languages conferred on in the Upper Room at the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). The promise of the baptism in Spirit and fire (Mt 3:11) became fulfilled by providing the apostolic group with the armour of the Spirit (HS II.58: 679, 11-680, 3; 687, 7-688, 5).

The Holy Spirit was given in the form of fire to His disciples,  
The sound of the Spirit that taught sounds in all tongues.  
The skilled Master granted a teaching to His disciples  
In the fire and Spirit and perfected them since they were imperfect  
He clothed them with the armour of fire with the Spirit who descended  
And taught them a new speech with great wonder (HS II.58: 687, 7-12).<sup>208</sup>

After the disciples received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, their baptism became perfect. Thus they received the light (HS II.58: 687, 17-688, 3).<sup>209</sup> Pentecost is indeed itself a 'baptism in the Holy Spirit and in the fire' for the disciples.<sup>210</sup> The confusion at Babel was overcome and the promise at the Jordan too became realized on the day of Pentecost in the Upper Room by the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the Fire. In the Upper Room, the Son was also in action together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.<sup>211</sup> Tongues of living fire went forth from the Father and settled on the apostles. They were not burned by the flames but enlightened, and began to speak in

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<sup>207</sup> See *CSD*, 581.

<sup>208</sup> *FH*, 368.

<sup>209</sup> *FH*, 368.

<sup>210</sup> See Brock, "Baptismal Themes in the Writings of Jacob of Serugh," 331.

<sup>211</sup> See *Salvation*, 356-357.

all different languages.<sup>212</sup> The term 'fountain' is frequently used by Jacob to describe the baptismal water (HS II.58: 688, 6-17).<sup>213</sup>

What Christ began at Jordan, and continued through Golgotha and Mount Olives, reached its culmination in the Upper Room with the coming of the Holy Spirit. According to Jacob of Sarug, Christian baptism has its origin in different instances such as baptism of Christ, piercing the side of Christ, ascension of Christ on Mount Olives and the coming of the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room. There is a substantial growth in the institution of baptism. As we know, when we analyse the economy of salvation from the point of sacred time, the sacrament of baptism was instituted by Christ on four stages by bringing together them into one sacrament. 1. At Jordan, the natural water is sanctified for the baptism and it is open for everyone, but not given to anybody. 2. On the Cross, when the side of Christ is opened, the Living Water flowed from there and it mingled with the natural water which was sanctified at Jordan. And the good thief is baptised in this living water. 3. Jesus gave the apostles both the commandment and the oil to baptise everyone on the Mount of Olives. 4. Baptism is first given to the apostles in the fire and Spirit in the Upper Room on the advent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

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<sup>212</sup> See Guinan, *The Eschatology of James*, 149.

<sup>213</sup> *FH*, 369.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Jacob, the teacher of Batnan, was a prolific poet of the Syriac literature of its golden age. Being the inventor of the dodecasyllabic meter, Jacob maintained his devotion to the same in his homilies. The purpose of his metrical homilies was not only to teach his faithful, but also to give new nuances and meaning to the biblical truths and mysteries of the Church. Through his teaching he always motivated the faithful of his community to be very diligent in the matter of religion. One of his major concerns was that the faithful were not leading a sound Christian life, by not actively participating in the Eucharistic celebration. The aberrant practices of his time had certainly influenced his thinking and led him to focus more on certain liturgical themes and to advise the faithful, who were much interested in worldly matters. In this context, he took great effort to instigate love for God and humans in the hearts of his audience. Jacob won unparalleled fame because of his pen.

Many excerpts from his homilies are used in the prayers of the West Syriac liturgical tradition. In the Syriac Churches of Antiochene tradition, most of the supplicatory songs (*bowute*) are taken from the homilies of Jacob. There is no Church service that is without the influence of the homilies of Jacob.

Jacob was interested in the exposition of biblical mysteries – not in the strict sense of a commentary per se, but to expose a biblical text and explain it in the context of salvation history. His interest was also to go through the mysteries of the Church and show their relationship with many aspects of the Christian life. Like a diver diving into the bottom of a sea in pursuit of pearls and gems, Jacob makes an in-depth analysis of biblical themes in relation to salvation history. All the traits of his writings give Jacob's Christology an indubitable Alexandrian colour.<sup>214</sup> He is very much akin to Ephrem in literary style and theological thought.

His metrical homilies were written either to be read in churches or monasteries during the celebration of important feasts and commemoration of saints, and were intended for the edification of the faithful. There is no doubt that the works of Jacob were widely read during his time and afterwards. The extensive use of his *mimre* in

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<sup>214</sup> See T. Bou Mansour, "Die Christologie des Jakob von Sarug", T. Hainthaler (tr. & ed.), in *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche, Die Kirchen von Jerusalem und Antiochien nach 451 bis 600*, Band 2, Verlag Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau, 2002, 498.

the West Syriac liturgy and their translations in other languages witness to their influence.

It is a pity that as a Church Father, Jacob is not well known to the modern world. There are at least three reasons for this. First, the fact that he wrote in Syriac makes him much less accessible to the Western readers and students unacquainted with the language. This is not because of any intrinsic inferiority of Syriac, but it is because of a wide Western centred patristic academic study of the theology, especially of Greek and Latin. Semitic languages are not given much importance, though Christ lived in Palestine and spoke Aramaic. The second factor is that Jacob was a poet and not a systematic theologian. He wrote everything in poetic language and tried to give more importance to his poetic narrative and symbolic style. For the sake of poetic style, he had to present his homilies by not losing its meter and typological sense. He wrote the verse homilies in the same meter, because it was easier to sing the dodecasyllabic homilies. Poems are always easier to learn by-heart than prose. Since he wrote for the common man, his homilies are simple exposition of divine mysteries. His concern was always to reach the heart of the people and not the head. That is why he requests his audience to hear his homilies with love. Third reason is that he was more a pastor than a theologian. He was not interested in philosophical propositions or polemics. He wrote primarily for the common people to instigate them to show more devotion and love for God. His sole aim was to teach his faithful. That is why he was called 'the Teacher' (ܡܠܝܩܐ). Although the Syriac Churches have great reverence for him, the modern patristic studies have not yet given him the due respect.

One of the important tasks of this research was to find out the required homilies or excerpts of Jacob's homilies on the baptism and Eucharist. Though, he wrote specifically three homilies on baptism, there are many other homilies, which contain baptismal resonance. With regard to the Eucharist, the homilies, which primarily deal with the Eucharist, treat mainly practical concerns. Therefore, this study demanded to detect all the texts, which contain baptismal and Eucharistic resonance. For this purpose, all the published homilies of Jacob were referred. Some of the modern literature also helped to locate the needed Syriac texts. Finding out the required manuscripts also needed a great effort. Translation of some of these homilies were already available. In order to facilitate a better study, it was necessary to translate

certain homilies and many excerpts into English. Therefore, the theology of baptism and Eucharist according to Jacob of Sarug, which we find in chapters three and four, is mainly based on these findings.

This thesis mainly presents Jacob's theology of the baptism and Eucharist. For him, John 19:34 was an important point in the history of salvation as he saw all the OT explanations of these two sacraments mainly based on this biblical verse: the 'water and blood' flowed from the side of Christ. At the same time, he did not leave any incident in the history of salvation to delineate the theology of baptism and Eucharist. He was able to weave a web of relationships between salvific events and these sacraments. Interestingly, as John the Baptist stopped wherever there was water to baptise (HS I.7: 154, 11-20), so Jacob always stopped to pick up the gems and pearls on the baptism and Eucharist from the Holy Scripture.

Jacob borrows his images from the Bible and uses the phrases with great freedom to express his own ideas. For him, the truth announced in the NT is typified in the OT. He made extensive use of types and symbols, which always point to Christ. For him, Christ was always hidden throughout the OT. It may be not logical for the modern thinking, but for Jacob, every person, incident and idea of the OT was a pointer to or a type of Christ. The most important technique used by Jacob of Sarug to interpret the OT is typology. We have seen numerous types for the baptism and Eucharist in his homilies. It is quite certain that there would be other types than what are dealt in this study, but due to the unavailability of the remaining unfound homilies, it is not possible to go further. Certainly, Jacob wrote about all the OT figures, though we do not have any sound proof for that. Since he is well versed in the scripture, there is no question of doubt. Jacob considered everything in the history as part of the economy of salvation. Nothing can be seen as independent from the divine will. The Old and the New Testaments, all events and persons described in them, are all part of this divine plan; they are pre-planned and thus are interrelated. After reading Jacob, it is easy to understand the OT. He could easily find meaning for many difficult and ambiguous passages of the OT, and interpret the scripture in a lucid manner. He did not stop with one interpretation. He used different levels of types and thus, different meanings for the same text. For example, the anointing of stone at Bethel by Jacob signifies both the anointing of the baptized and also the consecration of the church

and the altar (Gen 28:18) (AJ I: 201-202; HS III.74: 201, 13-14, 204, 20-21; IV.135: 796, 18-19, 797, 1 -4). For him, types are specially designed by God to show this interrelatedness. If a person does not read the scriptures through the lens of a type, he/she will not understand its real meaning.

Jacob makes it clear that our Lord did not follow what the OT foreshadowed. But, it was the OT, which had foreshadowed what was yet to come in the person of Jesus Christ. Therefore, from the time of Adam until Christ's incarnation, whatever types foreshadowed Christ, they happened so because the OT people foresaw Christ's actions and did after the manner of our Lord. Jacob explains this in the homily on 'Elijah when He fled from Jezebel.' In the context of Elijah's fasting of forty days, Jacob goes on to say:

Our Lord did not Himself undertake to travel in the footsteps of His prophets;  
They anticipated Him and prefigured His images with their actions.  
They followed after His deeds, because they envisioned Him.  
Because it had already been determined that He would undertake a fast, they, too,  
fasted (HS IV.112: 141, 13-16).<sup>215</sup>

What we see in the OT types, is what would happen with Jesus. Jesus did not do anything in order to fulfil the OT. But what He did and said, was anticipated in the OT. It was in the OT, something happened or said, because the people of the OT foresaw Jesus and His days.

Jacob draws the symbols of baptism and Eucharist from the NT and links them to the effects of these sacraments. Though these sacred mysteries have been given officially in the Church after the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Jacob explains that those who had approached Jesus with faith have already received the salvific effects of these sacraments.

The denouement of Jesus' public ministry did not bring an end to His salvific activities. But, His ascension brought further, the possibility of providing salvation for the entire humanity forever. That is why Jacob said, 'the High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies' (HSBr VI.9: 831, 17). Jacob concludes:

That One who descended, ascended, and that One who brought Himself low has subdued the heights.

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<sup>215</sup>*MHMJS*, F. 9-13, 136, 138.

He descended, visited us and ascended redeeming us; to Him be glory (HSBr VI.9: 831, 21-832, 1).<sup>216</sup>

The sacraments of baptism and Eucharist are operative in the ministry of the Church and in the life of individual Christians. In order to participate in the paschal mystery, a person has to receive these two sacraments. These sacraments are instituted in order to facilitate the humanity to acquire the pre-fall state of Adam, i.e., in the image and likeness of God. He gives importance to Adam and the image of God. In fact, the goal of the incarnation was to unite the humanity as the sons of God, because, as a result of sin, we had become alienated from God. The baptism and Eucharist are the means to bring human beings into union with Christ. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, but due to sin he acquired a distorted image. The first sin had introduced disharmony between God and man leading human beings into darkness and ignorance. By His redemptive work and entering into three wombs, Christ provided us salvation. By defeating sin, death and Satan, He provided us with the baptism and Eucharist, and brought new life. Baptism initiates a new life in Christ and equips a person to participate in the Eucharist. It is the means to sustain and continue the Christian life, which had begun in the baptism. Baptism provides the faithful with a right to call God 'Abba, Father.' Through the baptism one becomes part of the local Christian community and the body of Christ, the Church. Jacob, for his part, explains how the Church was born through baptism, symbolized by the water and blood from the pierced side of Christ. The ecclesial dimension is very important in the context of baptism. Through the baptism and Eucharist, a Christian shares especially the attributes of the Son of God, i.e., the sonship and takes part in His body and blood. By the reception of the Eucharist, a person has a share in the life of Christ.

The reception of the baptism and Eucharist makes a Christian Jesus' brother or sister and a part of His body, i.e., the Church. The baptism and Eucharist are filled with rich eschatological meaning. They give the believers a foretaste of the Paradise here on earth. Jacob of Sarug's theology on baptism and Eucharist stands out prominently in the West Syriac tradition. We can say that his theology is one of the strongest foundations for the West Syriac Tradition. Participation in the divine life is initiated in baptism and nurtured through the Eucharist. "Around baptismal typology Jacob is

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<sup>216</sup>*FH*, 352.

particular about stressing the new life in Christ. With regard to Eucharist Jacob stresses the self-offering of Christ.”<sup>217</sup>

Although Jacob did not provide commentaries of the sacred mysteries, it was possible to find the liturgical overtones in his homilies. Regarding baptism, we do not have many details of the liturgical structure of his time. In his homilies, Jacob did not mention about any post-baptismal anointing. But he mentions about pre-baptismal anointing and immersion in the waters of baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Regarding the Eucharist, Jacob offers some practices of the Eucharistic celebration of his time. He exhorts the faithful to participate in the Eucharist diligently and to offer the Eucharist for the dead. In his delineation about the liturgy of the Eucharist, there is no reference to the institution narrative. It could have been the practice of that time, as in the case of Addai and Mari's anaphora. But Jacob views the epiclesis as a whole, and does not give all the details of the Eucharist in his structural delineation. His emphasis is not to give a commentary on liturgy, but to motivate the faithful to participate actively in the liturgy.

This research did not investigate the poetical nature and the style of literature. Since we treated the vast corpus of Jacob's available homilies, the subject matter of this thesis did not permit to delve into such areas. The repetitious style of Jacob, though to a certain extent is praiseworthy, creates some difficulty to infer his ideas in a systematic way. His ideas are spread over many homilies. He skips from one theme to another so spontaneously that from the viewpoint of Western theological terms, it is difficult to understand Jacob. For, in the Western theology, everything is based on philosophical propositions.

The purpose of this study was to unveil the richness of Syriac patristic theology and the profound thoughts of Jacob of Sarug in his own language and methods. Establishing the chronology of the composition of homilies and tracing his theological development can be rather speculative. Altogether this work provides some basis, yet leave an enormous space for further systematic research into authenticity, theological and exegetical significance of Jacob's homilies. His works, teaching, exegesis and style are still awaiting full and comprehensive study. Jacob

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<sup>217</sup> *Salvation*, 441.

treats all the areas of theology in his homilies. He wrote enormously on the OT personalities and each figure of the OT can be a theme for further study. It is also important to position Jacob's theology among the modern readers. For this purpose, all his ideas need to be explored. It demands, translation of all his works into modern languages. Though Vööbus' research on Jacob's homilies rendered a solid account on the available manuscripts, it demands further thorough research on manuscripts. His linguistic expertise and its peculiarities paved a good path for poetic tradition in the Syriac literature. Thus, if one studies the Syriac poetry, without a doubt he can say that together with Ephrem, Jacob has contributed immensely to the development of Syriac poetry. The inter-relatedness in Jacob's typological exegesis is a big gift to his readers. After having read his homilies with love, a person is surely raised to a divine milieu. As Jacob shared the gifts, which he received from the Holy Spirit with his audience, his exegesis demands a sharing from the part of his readers.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- AB *Analecta Bollandiana: Revue critique d'hagiographie*,  
A Journal of Critical Hagiography, Bruxelles: Société  
Bolladistes.
- AJ M. Albert, *Homilies Against Jews*, PO 38 (1976).
- AMS P. Bedjan (ed.), *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, 7 Vols  
(Paris-Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1890-1897).
- BKV *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*, Kempten.
- BM British Museum.
- BO J.S. Assemani, *Bibliotheca orientalis Clementino-  
Vaticana, in qua manuscriptos codices syriacos,  
arabicos, persicos, turcicos, hebraicos, samaritanos,  
armenicos, aethiopicos, Graecos, aegyptiacos, ibericos  
& malabaricos* (Roma: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de  
Propaganda Fide, 1719-1728).
- Br British.
- CBP *Cahiers de Biblia Patristica*, Strasbourg.
- CO Christian Orient, Kottayam.
- Cosgrove I.K. Cosgrove, *Three Homilies Against the Jews by  
Jacob of Serug: Edited with Introduction, Translation  
and Notes* (The Marshalsea Press, 1931).
- CSCO *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*,  
Louvain.
- CSD J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*  
(Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1979).
- ECR *Eastern Churches Review*, Oxford
- FH T. Kollamparampil, *Jacob of Serugh. Select Festal  
Homilies* (Rome: Center for Indian and Inter-Religious  
Studies / Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1997).

- GECS Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies, Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press.
- GEDSH S. P. Brock et al, *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage* (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011).
- GRS Gorgias Reprint Series, Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press.
- GTI Werner Strothmann (ed.), *Drei Gedichte über den Apostel Thomas in Indien* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1976).
- Harp *The Harp*, Kottayam.
- HS P. Bedjan, *Homilies of Mar Jacob of Sarug (Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis)*, 5 Vols (Leipzig: 1905-1910, reprinted by Gorgias Press, 2006) [References to these volumes are indicated with the abbreviation HS vol. no. in Roman numerals. number of the homily according to Bedjan's version: page no., line(s)].
- HSBr S.P. Brock, *Homilies of Mar Jacob of Sarug (Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis)*, Vol. 6 (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006) [References to these volumes are indicated with the abbreviation HSBr VI number of the homily in this volume: page no., line(s)].
- Hugoye *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* - Online Journal (New Jersey: Beth Mardutho).
- JAJ *Journal of Ancient Judaism*, Göttingen.
- JS Jacob of Sarug.
- JSHT G. A. Kiraz (ed.), *Jacob of Serugh and his Times: Studies in Sixth-Century Syriac Christianity* GECS 8 (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010).

JTS	<i>The Journal of Theological Studies</i> , Oxford: Clarendon Pr.
Konat, <i>OT Types</i>	J. A. Konat, <i>The Old Testament Types of Christ as Reflected in the Select Metrical Homilies (Memre) of Jacob of Serugh</i> (UnDiss, Louvain: Catholic University, 1999).
LCP	<i>Latinitas Christianorum Primaeva</i> , Nimègue.
Marianum	<i>Marianum</i> , Rome: Pontificia facoltà teologica Marianum.
MFC	<i>Message of the Fathers of the Church</i> (Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press).
MHMJS	S. P. Brock (ed.), <i>The Metrical Homilies of Mar Jacob of Sarug</i> , TCLA (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press).
MS	Manuscript.
MSs	Manuscripts.
Muséon	<i>Le Muséon: Revue d'études orientales</i> , Louvain: Peeters.
NT	New Testament.
OC	<i>Oriens Christianus : Hefte für die Kunde des christlichen Orients</i> , Wiesbaden.
OCA	<i>Orientalia Christiana Analecta</i> , Roma.
OCP	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i> , Roma.
OLA	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</i> , Leuven.
OrSyr	<i>L'Orient Syrien</i> , Paris > ParOr.
OS	<i>Ostkirchliche Studien</i> , Würzburg.
OT	Old Testament.
ParOr	<i>Parole de l'Orient: revue semestrielle des études syriaques et arabes chrétiennes : recherches orientales</i>

	: <i>revue d'études et de recherches sur les églises de langue syriaque</i> , Kasilik.
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i> , (Paris)/Turnhout.
QHC	K. Alwan (ed.), <i>Quatre Homélie Métriques sur la Création</i> , CSCO 508-509 [References to these homilies are indicated with the abbreviation QHC number of the homily: line(s)].
<i>Salvation</i>	T. Kollampampil, <i>Salvation in Christ According to Jacob of Serugh</i> (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2001).
SFH	F. Rilliet (ed. & tr.), <i>Jacob of Sarug, Six Homélie Festales en Prose</i> , PO 43 (1986).
SL	M. Sokoloff, <i>Syriac Lexicon – A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum</i> (Winona Lake IN: Eisenbrauns / Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009).
Sobornost	<i>Sobornost</i> , London > ECR.
StPatr	<i>Studia Patristica</i> , Oxford.
Syr	Syriac.
TCLA	<i>Texts from Christian Late Antiquity</i> (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press).
True Vine	<i>The True Vine</i> , Roslindale MA.
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i> , Baltimore: Theological Faculties of the Society of Jesus.
UnDiss	Unpublished Dissertation.
Vat	Vatican.
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i> , Wiesbaden.

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