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THE SLEEP OF THE SOUL IN THE EARLY SYRIAC CHURCH

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IN SYRIAC CHRISTIANITY, from the fourth century on, there appears with more or less consistency and in much the same outline a curious teaching as to the state of the dead. As the earliest example of the sort that is available in Syriac authors is Aphraates, the 'Persian sage,' I shall quote him first. 'The Spirit is absent from all born of the body until they come to the regeneration of baptism. For they are endowed with the soulish spirit (from) the first birth,—which (spirit) is created in man, and is immortal, as it is written, "Man became a living soul" (Gen. 2. 7, cf. I Cor. 15. 45). But in the second birth—that is, of Baptism—they receive the Holy Spirit, a particle of the Godhead, and it is immortal. When men die the soulish spirit is buried with the body and the power of sensation is taken from it. The Heavenly Spirit which they have received goes back to its own nature, to the presence of Christ. Both these facts the Apostle teaches, for he says:¹ "The body is buried soulish, and rises spiritual" (I Cor. 15. 44). The Spirit returns to the presence of Christ, its nature, for the Apostle says: "When we are absent from the body we are present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5. 7). Christ's Spirit, which the spiritual have received, goes back to the Lord's presence; the soulish spirit is buried in its own nature, and is deprived of sensation.' (293. 2-24, Parisot's edition.)

In the above quotation several points are worthy of notice: (a) the 'soulish spirit,' or soul (ܐܘܠܐܡܐܢܐ ܬܘܠܐ or ܬܘܠܐ) is the principle of natural life, or *ψυχή*; (b) the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit, is the *πνεῦμα*; (c) the text of I Cor. 15. 44 does not read as in the Greek. Instead of, 'The body is *sown* (*σπείρεται*), a natural—or "psychic"—body,' the Syriac of Aphraates reads: 'The body is *buried* "soulishly," or "psychically,"' e. g. ܐܘܠܐܡܐܢܐ ܬܘܠܐ ܐܘܠܐܡܐܢܐ ܬܘܠܐ ܬܘܠܐ.¹ The Peshitto reads instead

¹ In this quotation I have translated the adverbs as adjectives.

of *منعزلين* of Aph. the same word as the Greek *σπείραται*, *منعزلين*. While Aphraates teaches also that the body and soul may be 'deprived of sensation,' yet he means by this 'that in this sleep men do not know good from evil' (397. 17). He uses in this same passage three words referring to 'sleep,' and this is the clue to the meaning of his other statement that the good rest with a good conscience and sleep well, waking alert and refreshed at the Resurrection, while those who have done evil in their lives are restive and unquiet, for they are uneasy with the sense of foreboding and doom impending. He illustrates this by the story of the likeness of the two servants, one of whom is expecting punishment, and the other praise from his lord, in the morning (396. 16-35; 397. 1-14). This is perhaps the clearest statement of the doctrine of the 'sleep of the soul,' and Aph. claims it for an article of the Faith (397. 15).

There is hardly any feature of the teaching of Aph. which has occasioned so universal comment. So far as I can ascertain, all who have written on Aph. have spoken of it.² Since his is probably the clearest exposition of the teaching regarding the soul's sleep, I have thought well to give it in full.

Some reputed texts from St. Ephraem Syrus (373) who wrote in the same language as Aph. and with whom there are many fundamental likenesses in thought and expression,³ would seem to indicate that he, too, held to a tripartite division of man, and to the doctrine of death being a 'sleep,' in which there is the same kind of semiconscious knowledge of what is passing, as in the case of an habitual 'light sleeper.' 'The lesson of the dead is with us. Though they sleep, yet they teach us, their garments alone are destroyed,—the body which diseases bring to an end,—while the soul preserved in life, as it is now, (is) without

² E. g., Parisot, in *Patrologia Syriaca*, vol. 1, c. 3, pp. lvi-lvii; Harnack, *Dogmengesch.* 1. 733; George, Bishop of the Arabs, fol. 251-2, cf. Wright, *Homilies of Aphraates*, pp. 32-4; Nestle, *Realenc. f. Th. u. K.* 1 (1896), pp. 611-12 ('eigenthümliche Psychologie, insbesondere die Lehre von dem Seelenschlaf'); Forget, *De vita et script. Aph.*, pp. 293 ff.; Sasse, *Prolegomena in Aph. Sap. Persi sermones homileticos*, pp. 18 f.; Bardenhewer, *Zeits. kirch. Theol.*, 3. 369-378; G. Bickell, in *Ausgewählte Schriften der Syrischen Kirchenväter*, p. 15 ('eine höchst seltsame und verkehrte Auslegung von 1 Kor. 15. 44').

³ Cf., e. g., St. Ephrem, *Sermo de Domino Nostro*, and Hom. XXIII of Aph.

corruption.’⁴ ‘The souls of the departed are alive and endowed with reason, laid up in Paradise for the Creator, while their bodies are stored up in the earth as a pledge to be restored one day.’ The whole figure of death and sleep is brought out in the following: ‘Just as in the eventide laborers rest, so do they rest for a time in death, until like sleepers waked from their sleep in the tomb, they (shall) don glory.’

Bickell, in his summary of St. Eph.’s doctrine (*Sancti Ephraemi Syri Carmina Nisibena*, Leipzig, 1866), says that St. Eph. teaches that the faithful departed are not dead but sleep, since they are alive and have the power of reason (cf. Rom. Ed. 3. 258). Yet the soul cannot yet go into paradise properly speaking, since nothing imperfect must enter there (3. 586-88). This state before the Resurrection is called ‘sleep’ in the technical sense; for until the Resurrection, together with their bodies, their souls are sunk in ‘sleep’ (cf. 3. 225 B). This place, or state (which of the two is not to be ascertained) is a sort of ante-room to Paradise. ‘One road, my brethren, lies before us all: from childhood unto death, and from death unto the Resurrection; thence branch out two ways,—the one to the flames, the other to Paradise’ (*Carmina Nisib.* LXXIII, ll. 24-28). ‘Sweet is sleep to the weary,—so is death to him who fasts and watches (i. e. the ascetic). Natural sleep slays not the sleeper,—nor has Sheol slain, nor does it so now. Sleep is sweet, and so is Sheol quiet . . . Sleep strives not to hold the sleeper, nor is Sheol greedy. Behold, sleep shows us how temporary is Sheol, for the morn awakes the sleeper,—and the Voice raises the dead’ (XLIII, ll. 158-176). That Eph. taught distinctly a trichotomy in the regenerate man can be seen from such a passage as the following: ‘How much more does that soul love its dwelling place, if it get on well with the body, and in agreement with it expel the evil indwelling demon, and invite the Holy Spirit to dwell with both’ (XLVII, ll. 97-101). He teaches that ‘a dead man in whom is hidden the secret life, lives on after death’ (XLVII, ll. 135-41). Over and over again St. Eph. compares death to sleep,—the Resurrection is being waked out of sleep (XLIX, ll. 170-189). This is the whole burden of LXV, where death is compared to sleep, which is like the foetus in the womb, the bud of a flower, the bird in the egg.

⁴ From the ‘Necrosima,’ *Op. Omnia*, Rom. Ed., 3, p. 225, D.

In other words St. Eph. seeks to teach that a real life is going on, hidden and secret, and only semi-conscious. 'How like is death to sleep, and the Resurrection to the morning! . . . He is a fool who sees that sleep passes at dawn, yet believes of death that it shall endure eternally' (LXX, ll. 58-61, 66-69). 'Our habitation (i. e. in death) is like a dream' (beginning of LXXVII). 'The mouth of a dead man spake to the soul in Eden: whence, why, and how hast thou come hither?' (LXIX, ll. 74-77). Thus Eden must be conceived of rather as a state than a place, if we are to make the teaching of St. Eph. intelligible. Sheol must refer to the place and state of the departed. Death speaks: 'the bodies of the prophets and apostles glow; all the righteous are for lights to me in the darkness' (LXIII, ll. 81-84). Evidently the indwelling presence of the soul of the holy man transfigures the body from within. Of course, St. Ephraem believed, as did Aphraates, that salvation meant 'new life,' and that the work of Christ as Saviour effected the imparting of His Spirit whereby Life was communicated (cf. the 'Discourse on Our Lord,' in *S. Ephraem Syri Hymni et Sermones*, T. J. Lamy, Mechlin 1882, cols. 147-274).

In general St. Eph. believed much as did Aph. He, following the same authorities, believed in a trichotomy of man, of body, soul, and Spirit—the divine principle, given by God through Christ. After death the Spirit leaves the body, leaving in it the soul. The two carry on life with, however, the natural faculties wholly suspended. This state is technically the 'sleep,' and from it the voice of Christ will call the dead to judgment. It is a little less explicit and complete than Aphraates, but the same teaching underlies the system of Eph., with which it is entirely consistent, and to which it acts as complement.

I am indebted to O. Braun's *Moses bar Kepha und sein Buch von der Seele* (Freiburg i. B., 1891) for the following quotation which he took from a Vatican MS. not yet published. The doubtful reference to St. Eph. gives the same teaching as is found above taken from the certainly genuine *Carmina Nisibena*.⁵ Braun quotes: 'Behold how (the dead) are encom-

⁵ For criticism of St. Ephraem's works cf. F. C. Burkitt in the *Jour. Theol. Stud.*, 2. 341 ff., and also *Cambridge Texts and Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 1-91.

passed in Sheol, and awaiting the great day, till He come to delight them, and bring hope to the hopeless' (p. 143). On the same page he quotes from a catechism ascribed to Isaac the Great (fl. 410), the teaching of which for our purposes may be summarized as follows: (a) both body and soul lose the power of thought and feeling after death; (b) while the body cannot even *live* without the soul, the soul, though it cannot see or hear without the body, is yet able to live (he illustrates this statement by the figure of the unborn child in its mother's womb); (c) the soul has no consciousness after death. Braun has doubts about the genuineness of this text (pp. 144-5), but there need be no presumption against this type of teaching, on the basis of internal evidence.

Babai (569-628—acc. to Duval, *La littérature syriaque*, p. 212) in his commentary on the 'Centuries' of Evagrius, fol. 13^b ff. (quoted in Braun, *op. cit.* p. 145) says: 'the soul cannot be active without the body, hence one must say that after death it is in a kind of sleep. The Holy Scriptures call death sleep; thus, too, the "Seven Sleepers" of Ephesus. As light cannot burn without fuel, so the soul in Abraham's bosom possesses only its unchangeable faculties,—i. e., the life from God, and (its) memory. . . . Man is a bodily existence endowed with reason. The soul is not a "complete nature" (yet) it cannot be said that after death it is as if it were not . . .' We have seen that the mention of the soul in this state as something imperfect was made by St. Ephraem (cf. above, and Rom. Ed. 3. 586-88).

This same thought is of primary importance to Timothy I (779-823, date from Duval, *op. cit.*), who says: 'The soul is not a "complete nature," but (is) for the purpose of completing man's nature, like the body. . . . Will and understanding are only virtually in the soul,—otherwise it would be like the angels, a "perfected nature"; the other properties, that is, the four essential ones . . . are in abeyance, and the two which it possesses by reason of its union with the body are lost. Thus it is like a child in the womb.' Timothy gives as illustrations and authorities for his interpretation such passages in the Holy Scriptures as Is. 38. 18, Psalms 6. 6, 103. 33, 145. 4, Eccl. 9. 10, etc. 'The soul has no power of sensation, nor the use of memory, else it would suffer or rejoice, which experiences are not to

begin until the judgment, and which, besides, belong to the whole man. If the souls were to possess knowledge, then would the will be active,—then what of the body?’ Under this same Timothy in 790 was held a council of the Syro-Nestorian Church, which condemned the errors of a certain ‘Joseph the Seer, the Huzite,’ who had been at the head of the school of Nisibis, the third in line from the great Narses. The canons of that council are preserved in Arabic, and may be found in the *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, Vol. 3, pp. 100-1. They anathematize those who teach that Christ’s Divinity could be seen by His Humanity, or by any other created things; ‘they decreed that souls after the separation are destitute of sense until they reënter their bodies, and that none save Christ’s humanity has ever attained perfection in this world.’

Much the same sort of teaching appears among the Nestorians; it is not necessary to quote in detail. Elias of Anbar (930) claims that most of the fathers hold it impossible that souls should have any power of sensation after death. In his trichotomy he teaches that the body goes to earth, the soul to the place of souls (is it a *state*, or a *place*?), where all are together till the Resurrection, without sense or power of distinguishing between good and evil (cf. Aph. above); and the *πνεῦμα*, the power of life, returns to God (Braun, p. 146). Emmanuel bar Schahhare (*Mallepana* of Mosul, 980, cf. Duval, *Lit. syr.*, pp. 280, 293) on the ‘Hexameron’ teaches that the ‘souls of the righteous are in a place of repose as in a sleep, like the child in its mother’s womb . . .’ (Braun, *ibid.*). Thus, also, George of Arbela (945-987, text in *B.O.* 3, pp. 518-540; on him cf. Duval, *op. cit.*, pp. 172, 393). The witness to this as the predominant Nestorian view is given by Moses bar Kepha, cf. chapters 32 and 33 (Braun, *op. cit.*, pp. 102, 109). It is thus demonstrable that among the Nestorians from the 9th century on this doctrine was current, if not dominant.⁶ Having suggested the direction from which emanated this trend of thinking in the Syriac Church, with Aph. and Ephraem Syrus as

⁶ Cf. Guidi, *Testi orientali inediti sopra i sette dormienti di Efeso*, p. 50, note: ‘Del resto la credenza, che le anime dopo la morte, restassero prive di senso fine alla risurrezione, era commune fra i Nestoriani almeno dal IX secolo. . .’

the first examples, it may not be without interest to investigate the sources of their own doctrine on the subject.

Before doing so it may be worth while to note that there are certain differences in the later Nestorian teaching, which may rest on the teaching of St. Ephraem. I said that it was not absolutely certain whether by Sheol, or Paradise, he meant a state or a place. Aph. undoubtedly means that the soul remains with the body in the grave, yet he personifies Death, who has a conflict with Jesus in which Death is worsted. So St. Eph. personified Death (in the *Sermo de Domino Nostro*, etc.), and perhaps localized Sheol as a place where are gathered the souls of those who sleep in death. Perhaps the simplest explanation to account for the facts would be that he spoke of the souls being laid up in store under the guardianship of Death (not always, by the way, a forbidding figure), while the bodies were laid away in store beneath the earth. If neither concept of 'state' nor 'place' was defined in his mind, something like what he meant by 'nature,' in a non-philosophic sense, would represent the condition of the departed. Aph. is more explicit. I think St. Ephraem, save where he waxes poetical, holds the same view. The later Nestorian writers sometimes held that the souls were garnered up in a 'storehouse,' while the bodies were in the earth (e. g., the 'Burial rite of the Convent of Mar Abraham and Mar Gabriel,' Cod. Syr. Vat. 61, fol. 36^a, in Braun, p. 147), and at other times that they were in the earth asleep in the bodies. Yet a new element has entered into their considerations, even if they did follow the same tradition as Aph., St. Ephraem, and the catechism purporting to be by Isaac the Great. As is apparent, Aristotelian philosophic conceptions (oftentimes misconceived) shaped their doctrine, as will appear below.

Aph. and St. Ephraem lived in the 4th century. Whence did they derive their doctrines as to the 'sleep of the soul'? Are there any other examples of this teaching in the early Church outside the Syriac-speaking branch of it? There are; and the resemblances are the more striking if the differences as to time, and the utter disparity as to point of view and idiom of thought, be taken into consideration. Tatian, in his *Oratio ad Graecos*, maintains the immortality of body as well as soul (c. 25). For the human soul is not of itself immortal, but is

capable of becoming so. 'It dies and dissolves with the body, if it does not know the truth; but it will rise later at the last, to receive, together with its body, death in immortality as its punishment. On the other hand, if it have the knowledge of God, though it be dissolved for a time, it will not die. Of itself it is darkness; and there is no light in it.' He quotes St. John 1. 5, and continues: 'It is not the soul which saves the Spirit, but the soul shall be saved by the Spirit. Light has received darkness, inasmuch as the Light of God is the Logos, and the ignorant soul is darkness. This is the reason why the soul left to itself becomes lost in matter, and dies with the flesh. If, however, it have achieved an alliance (*συνέγγισαν*, not a 'union,' cf. Puech, *Recherches sur le discours aux Grecs de Tatien*, pp. 70 ff.) with the Spirit, it will be in need of naught else. It rises whither the Spirit leads, for It dwells on high, while the origin of the soul is below. . . . While the Spirit was associated from the beginning with the soul, It abandons the soul if it be unwilling to follow. . . . God's Spirit is not in all, but descends upon such as deal justly, and becomes bound up with their soul . . .' (c. 13). Thus Tatian is seen to teach an essential trichotomy, and goes on further to state that . . . 'the soul is of many parts, not simple. . . . It sees by means of the physical eyes of the body. . . .' 'It cannot see without the body, nor can the body rise without the soul.' A man is only true to his own character as being the 'image and likeness of God' when he is removed farthest from the merely animal and physical side of his nature. The soul is the bond of the flesh, and the flesh the dwelling-place of the soul. . . . When (he) becomes like a temple, then God wills to dwell in him through the superior Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 3. 16, 6. 19, 2 Cor. 6. 16, Eph. 2. 22). When the whole man is not thus coordinated (i. e., does not make himself fit for God's Spirit to reside in him), then he differs from the beast only by the power of speech (c. 15; with this cf. the quotations above from Aph.).

While Aph.'s notion of salvation is not that of Tatian, to whom it is the Revelation of Divine Light through the Logos, yet there are distinct and definite common elements. It will be remembered that Tatian, too, was a Syrian, and that he taught, after his expulsion from Rome, at the great centre of

Syriac learning, Edessa, and that his 'Diatessaron' was the text which both Aph. and St. Ephraem used constantly. The presence of the Holy Spirit restores what was lost to man before the Incarnation of the Logos. By means of the Spirit man attains immortality. Tatian says: 'I was not, then I was. I die, but I shall be raised' (c. 6), and Aph. has almost the same sequence of ideas. 'If God can create from naught, why is it difficult to believe He can raise the dead?' (cf. 369. 21-23). The body of man has its own natural and immortal life, but would be only as a beast before God, if the man chose not to avail himself of the presence of the Divine Spirit brought to mankind by Christ. When the individual has done his best to prepare as well as he may to become the temple of God, God's Spirit comes, and departs only at the believer's death. Since the body and soul are complementary to each other, they must needs abide together, and from Tatian's words we are left to infer that they remain together in the grave. At the Resurrection the Holy Spirit returns to raise the bodies of the righteous, while the wicked are condemned to 'death in immortality.' It is merely a question of terms between Tatian and Aph. as to the immortality of body and soul, and their relation to the Spirit. The thought is largely the same. If soul and body could be condemned to a 'death in immortality' and are to be raised for judgment, such an act at the last day could be considered either a waking from sleep or a quickening of the dead. If it is the former, we have the teaching of Aph. and St. Eph. If the latter, then we merely change the terminology. The idea represented is the same in both cases. If death be not total destruction without hope of rehabilitation, which would utterly forbid any possible recall to a state of life, but rather a temporary dissolution of faculties and properties, then it is as simple to conceive of it under one name as the other. Such a mere suspension of those faculties and powers, even if called 'death,' is almost identical with the notion of the 'sleep of the soul.'

Irenaeus lived at almost the same time as Tatian, and wrote his great work 'Against Heresies' in the years 180-5. It was early translated into Syriac, and the type of teaching is the same in general outline as that found in Aph. St. Irenaeus

surely held to a trichotomy of the nature of regenerate man. 'Sunt tria ex quibus, quemadmodum ostendimus, perfectus⁷ homo constat,—carne, anima, et spiritu, et altero quidem salvante et figurante, qui est spiritus; alter quod unitur et formatur, quod est caro; id vero quod inter haec est duo, quod est anima, quae aliquando quidem subsequens spiritum, elevatur ab eo; aliquando autem consentiens carni, decidit in terrenas concupiscentias. Quod ergo id quod salvat et format, et unitatem non habent, hi consequenter erunt et vocabuntur caro et sanguis; quippe qui non habent Spiritum Dei in se. Propter hoc autem et mortui tales dicti sunt a Deo: Sinite . . . mortuos sepelire mortuos suos, quoniam non habent Spiritum qui vivificet hominem' (*Adv. Hæreses*, 5. 9, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, col. 1144 f.). A little before this he has said, 'Anima autem et spiritus pars hominis esse possunt, homo autem nequaquam: perfectus autem homo, commistio et adunitio est animae assumptis Spiritum Patris, et admisto ei carni, quae est plasmata secundum imaginem Dei' (*ibid.*, col. 1137). The souls of the dead are to await the day of Resurrection in a place set apart by God, and after receiving their bodies and 'perfecte resurgentes, hoc est, corporaliter, quemadmodum et Dominus resurrexit,' they come to the Divine presence for judgment (*ibid.*, col. 1209).

The essential feature of all of these quotations is that the soul sleeps, or is in some kind of comatose state, from the time of death till the day of Resurrection. The contrary view would be the attainment of a degree of happiness or unhappiness immediately after death by the soul alone, as if the body were not essentially part of the human nature. Aph. certainly held that the soul was with the body during this interim and that both lay dormant in the grave. St. Eph. is not so clear as to the relations of the body and the soul. Isaac, or rather the quotation above attributed to him, agrees in the main with Aph. The Nestorians, who held to the sleep of the soul practically

⁷ It is true, however, as Klebba has pointed out (*Die Anthropologie des hl. Irenäus*, Münster, 1894, pp. 100, 165), that there is no essential trichotomy of the *natural* man in St. Irenæus. It is only the 'perfectus homo' who possesses the spirit and then only as 'eine Zierde.' (Cf. Schwane, *Dogmengeschichte der vornicänischer Zeit*, p. 440; A. Stöckl, *Geschichte der Philosophie der patristischen Zeit*, p. 153.)

universally from 850 on, waver between the belief that the soul is with the body, and that it is stored up elsewhere, though much of the material is not precise enough in its outlines to be certain of. So far as the earlier examples go, we have found thus far that Aph. is much closer to the type of teaching found in Tatian in this detail, than the Nestorians are in that respect. St. Irenaeus, who as regards the composition of the 'regenerate' man is a trichotomist, is definite about the relation of body, soul, and Spirit and is in line with the type of Aphraates' teaching expounded above, while he differs from Aphraates chiefly in the mention of a 'locum invisibilem, definitum . . . a Deo in medio umbrae mortis . . . ubi animae mortuorum erunt . . . et ibi usque ad resurrectionem commorabuntur . . .' (*loc. cit.*, col. 1209). Whether this be state or place, or both, it is not certain, and it cannot be shown that he does not mean the buried body to be the natural place of repose for the soul. However, this detail is not of great consequence.

About the year 247, Eusebius tells us (*Hist. eccl.* 6. 37), Origen successfully combatted at a synod the strange doctrine of 'the Arabians who said that at the present time the human soul dies and perishes with the body, but that at the time of the resurrection they will be renewed together.' McGiffert on this passage (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2d Series, vol. 1, 1904, p. 279) refers to two passages where similar doctrines are discussed. He feels that Redepenning (*Origenes; Leben und Lehre*, Bonn, 1841, vol. 2, on the Arabian Church, pp. 74-129) is wrong in claiming that Eusebius misunderstood the theology of the Arabian Church. Redepenning contends that the Christian community in Arabia was nourished on Jewish teaching (p. 75), that St. Paul travelled thither (Gal. 1. 17) and was reputed to have founded a Church at Bostra. The early Arabian Christians were Semitic, and probably Jewish, converts. Continual resurgences of the fundamentally Jewish character of their faith disrupted the progress of their church life, and its contact with the Church at large (p. 105). He claims that the proper notion of the Arabian Christians' teaching is not found in Eusebius, who misrepresents it, and says that it is fundamentally Jewish. In Jewish teaching he finds the original teaching from which this is drawn, that the dead sleep in the earth, and maintain a kind of shadowy existence

with the Father (p. 109). He refers to Tatian, and to the teaching of Irenaeus (cf. above), commenting on which he says: 'the soul . . . is only the breath of earthly life which through being taken up into the Holy Spirit becomes capable of immortality. The earthly life is itself transitory and passes away so soon as the breath of life (i. e., the soul), by which God quickened the body, leaves it,—unless an external power, the Spirit of God, overcome the transitory' (pp. 106-7, cf. *Iren. Adv. Haer.* 5. 12; 4. 38). So Heracleon holds that the soul is mortal, and dies with the body in the grave, but is capable of being clothed with immortality. Origen definitely taught a trichotomy of body, soul, and spirit in man (on St. John, vol. 13, p. 275, ed. Migne).

It is not necessary to imagine that Eusebius gave a complete picture of the teaching of the Arabians. The distinction between the *ἡννοψυχῆται* and the *θνητοψυχῆται* seems not to be based on any valid foundation. Both theories, if indeed there be two, are attempted explanations of the phenomena of death, and the relations of body and soul to each other. To say that the body and soul 'die' and then 'become immortal' is not clearing up what is meant by 'dying' and 'immortality'!

The later references (e. g. in St. Augustine, *de Haeres.* No. 83, 'Arabici') do not add much. St. John Damascene (676-760) in *liber de Haer.* No. 90 (in Migne, *P.G.* 94, col. 759) says that the Thnetopsychists hold that the human soul is like that of the beasts, for it is destroyed with the body. Still later, Nicephorus Callistus of Constantinople (ob. 1356) repeats what is found in Eusebius, on whom he probably based this passage. His version is however slightly different: 'the human soul, together with the body, dies for the present (*πρὸς τὸ παρόν*), and with it undergoes decay; at the Resurrection to come it lives again with other bodies, and from then on (*τοῦ λοιποῦ*) it is maintained in immortality.' (*Hist. eccl.* 5. 23, in Migne, 145, col. 4.) The attempt to account for the state of the body and soul after death by calling it 'sleep,' i. e. suspended animation, is in some measure an explanation of the phenomena it tries to deal with. . . . Simply to say that 'death' involves 'death of body and soul,' etc., leaves still the question: what happens to the soul? and does not assist in the settlement of the problem.

Thus we have seen that the doctrine of the 'sleep of the soul'

is found in full and definite form in Aphraates, a writer of the Persian Church, while St. Ephraem and perhaps Isaac the Great, west and east of him respectively, and all three nearly contemporaneous, taught much the same doctrine. In the later Nestorian Church, the doctrine of the sleep of the soul had a considerable number of adherents. Before the 4th century we find similar teaching in Tatian, and implication of a similar system in St. Irenaeus. In the 3d century much the same position, this time held by 'Arabians,' was attacked by Origen, and as a heresy it was known in more or less imperfect form, in writers of the 14th century Eastern Church.

I shall not attempt to construe a theory of interrelation between these various and scattered writers. It is sufficiently demonstrated that it was not peculiar or unique in the case of Aphraates. It may be that another instance of similarity in teaching with the Asianic school, noticeable in other phases of his doctrine, may be found in this case. The Syriac Church undoubtedly had a great sympathy for such teaching. In fact it found peculiar favor with the Christian Semitic communities and writers. From this it may be inferred that there was some kinship in ideas between Eastern Christianity and Judaism, as Redepenning has suggested. How much importance can be attached to this fact? What sort of origins and sources can the doctrine of the 'sleep of the dead' be said to have?

(a) To begin with the latest phase, which was presented earlier in this essay—the Nestorian writers from Babai on. In comparing them with Aphraates, a singular difference will be apparent. While Aphraates certainly utilizes his theory of the trichotomy of human nature as an essential element in the presentation of his doctrine of the 'sleep of the soul,' the Nestorians base theirs on an entirely different psychology and philosophy. Their anthropology was based on a dichotomism. Aristotle began to be known among the Nestorian writers, and to be translated and spread widely in the 8th and 9th centuries. Before that time his philosophy had had many more or less loyal adherents among them, but these students of Aristotle had not always successfully translated Greek ideas and idioms, especially purely philosophical ones, into Syriac. For instance, Moses bar Kepha (ob. 903), who wrote a treatise on the dialectics of Aristotle, even at this late date misunderstood the

distinction between 'matter' and 'form.' Aristotle says: ἀναγκαῖον ἄρα τὴν ψυχὴν οὐσίαν εἶναι ὡς εἶδος σώματος φυσικοῦ δυνάμει ζῶνι ἔχοντος. ἡ δ' οὐσία ἐντελέχεια. τοιαύτου ἄρα σώματος ἐντελέχεια (*De anima*, II. 1. 412^a, 6, Ritter and Preller's text, pp. 339). The ἐντελέχεια is the actual being of a thing, as against δύναμις, potential being. In *De anima* 8. 3 the soul is called the ἐντελέχεια of the body, as also in II. 2. 414^a 14: οὐ τὸ σῶμά ἐστιν ἐντελέχεια ψυχῆς, ἀλλ' αὐτὴ σώματός τινος . . . ; for the soul is τοῦ ζῶντος σώματος αἰτία καὶ ἀρχή (*ibid.* 415^b). The soul as ἐντελέχεια of the body is that by which it actually is, though it may be said to have had the δύναμις of existing before. The word in Syriac for ἐντελέχεια is ܡܥܬܠܚܝܐ. It is apparent that the 'Book of the Soul,' for example, is full of misunderstood philosophical terms. Moses b. Kepha, who was a Jacobite, misconstrued the Nestorians about whom he was writing, while oftentimes they were nearer the mind of Aristotle than he himself was. As the soul is the cause of being of the body (*De part. an.* I. 5. 654^b 14), it is also that by which it actually is. Furthermore, it is the 'form' of the body, in that it gives actual being to that which had only existed before potentially, as matter. The word ܡܥܬܠܚܝܐ meant also 'perfection,' 'completion,' and in this sense it could truly be applied to the soul as making possible the life of the whole man, by animating his body. Either element then was 'incomplete,' and so, while the soul was really the more important, yet it could not come to enjoy eternity without the body with which it stood in so intimate a relationship. The Nestorian doctrine of the soul sleep, from the 7th century on, is built on the Aristotelian psychology, unlike the earlier teaching of e. g. Aphraates and St. Ephraem.

(b) In his comments on Aphraates, Braun suggests that he must have been acquainted with contemporaneous rabbinic teaching as to the condition of the soul and body after death.⁸ In much the same vein Redepenning thinks that the 'heresy of the Arabians,' which caused the dissension that Origen had to settle, was none other than a bit of Jewish tradition which the Church had taken over (*op. cit.* p. 109).

In the books between the Old and New Testaments in which are reflected the speculations of the days preceding rabbinic

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 142.

Judaism and Christianity, sources may be found for this doctrine, which appears fully developed in later days. On Gen. 2 and 3 was based the whole general distinction between the immaterial and material principles in man. Man became a living soul (נִפְשׁ) because God breathed into him the breath of life (Gen. 2. 7). The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha contain the root of much of the doctrine which was to be found later in the systems of Christianity and Judaism respectively. E. g., in Ecclus. 38. 23, Baruch 2. 17, Tobit 3. 6 and Judith, 10. 31 (πνεῦμα ζωῆς), the spirit is the divine breath of life as in Gen. 2. 7. In Baruch and Tobit the spirit and soul are different. While the spirit goes back to God, the soul continues to subsist in Sheol. According to Ethiopic Enoch, all the 'immaterial personality' descends to Sheol, and its life there is far from being unconscious (according to R. H. Charles, *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life* . . ., London, 1899, chap. 5). The primitive psychology was trichotomistic, according to Charles, but in the 3d-2d cent. B. C. a change set in toward the type of dichotomism which was to prevail in the first Christian writing. In 2 Mac. 7. 22-27 there is a syncretism of two types of psychology; while the departed are conscious (6. 26), yet the spirit is the life-giving principle of which the living soul is the product, as in Gen. 2-3, and these souls are given back to God at death (cf. Charles, *op. cit.* p. 232). According to the trichotomistic principle, the soul is the supreme function of the quickened body and the spirit 'the impersonal basis of life, returning to God after death' (cf. Ecclus. 12. 2 and *op. cit.* p. 44). The state of the dead was spoken of as a condition of sleep, 'terra reddet qui in ea dormiunt, et pulvis qui in eo silentio habitant' (2 Esd. 7. 32, cf. also, Apoc. Bar. 50. 2).

The early distinction between soul and spirit passed completely in later Judaism. Its psychology was, as Bousset says, 'ungeheuer einfach,' distinguishing only between the external and internal in man, between soul and body. According to the older views, at the best a kind of shadowy existence in the grave or Sheol was predicated of the departed. This could not refer to the Spirit of God which returned to Him after death, ceasing to exist in that particular individual. Thus soul and body, in the older view, were intimately connected (cf. W. Bousset, *Religion des Judentums im nt. Zeitalter*, 2d Ed., Berlin, 1906,

pp. 459-60). While there is scarcely any distinct psychology in late Judaism, yet certain elements persisted in the popular religion, which preserved earlier views, or embodied popular speculations.

In the development of the notion of personal immortality, in connection with the teaching about the resurrection of the dead, the inference could hardly be avoided, that if their bodies were one day to rise, the dead themselves must be in a kind of coma or sleep. The intimate connection between death and sleep is suggested in a saying reported in Berachoth 57b that 'sleep is a sixtieth part of death.' Rabbi Isaac said: 'A worm is as painful to the flesh of a dead man, as a needle in that of the living' (Ber. 18a, Sab. 13b). (Then there follows the delightful story of the two ghosts who conversed on the eve of **ראש השנה** and were overheard by the **חסיד** who profited by the information gained from overhearing them.) That the dead were spoken of as 'sleeping' is shown in the story of R. Meir's interview with Cleopatra, when she asked about the clothing of the dead on the day of resurrection. The dead are called **שכני** (Ber. *ibid.*). That the dead are to rise is shown by references to Deut. 32, 39, 33, 6, that they talk in the grave by *ibid.* 34, 4, 5 (cf. Berach. 18b, Pesachim 68a, and the whole list of proofs in Sanhed. 91, 92, etc.). Assignment of punishment is, according to a story reported in Sanh. 91b where Rabbi talks with Antoninus, to be inflicted upon the whole man, when body and soul have been united, as otherwise each could blame the other, like the blind and lame men who were assigned the task of watching an orchard. During their master's absence the blind man bore the lame one to the trees, whose fruits they both enjoyed, and yet, when accused, each could point to his own lack of ability to steal the fruit alone! By inference, the body and soul are neither to be blamed or praised till united at the Resurrection.

The Resurrection according to the dominant Jewish view is for the righteous only (cf. Taanith 2a, 7a). The idea of the Resurrection of the body need not arouse surprise. 'If those who had not yet lived have come into being, how much more can they rise again who already exist?' (words of R. Gebiha b. Pesisa in Sanh. 91a, with which argument cf. Aph. 369. 21-23). 'If vessels (of blown glass) made by the breath of man can be restored if once broken, how much more then a human being,

who is created through the breath of the Holy One?' (Sanh. 91a)—where the double meaning of רוּחַ as 'breath' and 'spirit' is vital to the argument. The comparison of the grave to the womb appears in Sanh. 92b: as the womb receives and gives back, so does the grave, etc.

(c) One of the first who wrote on Aph. (Nöldeke, in *GGA* 1869, p. 1524) suggested that his doctrine of the sleep of the soul was true to primitive Pauline thought. As was indicated above in his quotation of the text 1 Cor. 15. 44, Aph. does not use the words: 'It is sown' but, 'It is buried.' The passage alluded to above (Aph. 369. 21-23) shows clearly that Aph. must have known the Pesh. text of this verse, but for some reasons preferred to use the other. St. Paul deduces the necessity for a twofold existence of man, natural or 'psychic,' and heavenly or 'pneumatic,' from a fresh interpretation of Genesis 2. 7. It is possible that he may have had the comparison of the seed to the plant alluded to above (Sanh. 90b, also in Ber. Rab. 95) in mind in writing 1 Cor. 15. (Thus H. St. John Thackeray, *The Relation of St. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought*, 1906, p. 112.) He certainly used conceptions and teaching already at hand in the Apoc. and Pseudepigrapha; e. g., the trumpet of 1 Cor. 15. 52 and 2 Esd. 6. 23, Orac. Sibyl. 4. 173-4, and cf. Weber, *Jüd.-Theol.*, paragraph 369; and 'Those who are asleep' in 1 Thes. 4. 13, 15 and 2 Esd. 7. 32. Beyschlag in his *Neutest. Theol.* (2. 257) commenting on 1 Thes. 4. 14 considers St. Paul to have thought that the state of the dead was that of 'Schläfer im Schoose der Erde.' He did not teach a complete and utter death, because he used for 'to be dead' the word $\kappa\omicron\mu\acute{\alpha}\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$. 'In this condition man's powers are latent, but it is not to last long,' etc. (cf. E. Teichmann, *Die Paulinischen Vorstellungen von Auferstehung und Gericht* . . . , p. 27, and note 2). St. Paul for the Resurrection uses the word $\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\nu$, to wake (from sleep), in preference to the words $\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\sigma\tau\eta\gamma\acute{\nu}\alpha\iota$ $\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\acute{\rho}\omega\pi\omega\nu$ (thirty-five occurrences of the former to ten of the latter).

The Pauline trichotomy is unique in the New Testament (cf. Charles, *op. cit.*, pp. 408-415) and is necessary to the consistency of St. Paul's whole tenor of thought. Since there are two Adams and two Creations, a natural and a spiritual man, there are two immaterial principles, soul and spirit. He who is purely natural possesses a soul, but when accorded the Spirit

of God, he then has both soul and body, and also the Spirit. Now the Spirit leaves to return to God at death, but not thus the soul. St. Paul nowhere makes a distinct statement, but the inference made by Aph. is most just. The soul is buried with the body, for if the body is to rise again, and the two are inseparably connected, they must needs remain together in the grave.

There is, then, in the doctrine of the 'sleep of the soul' in the early Syriac Church a complex of three elements, clearly discernible. The Nestorians were doubtless influenced most largely by (a) Aristotelian philosophy, which they did not entirely grasp aright. (b) Earlier teaching, which was trichotomistic (while the Nestorians were, in the main, dichotomists), was indebted to certain Jewish conceptions, perhaps of the popular religion of the day, and especially (c) (conspicuously so in the case of Aph.) to a thorough-going allegiance to the Pauline teaching.