

ARTICLE V.

AN INVESTIGATION IN SYRIAC PHILOLOGY.

By Rev. Benjamin Davies, Montreal.

THOSE who read with interest the article of Dr. Murdock on *The Syriac Words for Baptism*, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for Oct. 1850, may be inclined to inquire farther into the subject. The following remarks are respectfully offered in aid of that inquiry. It is indeed much to be wished, for the sake of Syriac philology, that an article on the question were contributed by one of the most learned and judicious of the American missionaries to the Nestorians, on whom chiefly the revival of Syriac literature may be said now legitimately to depend. But in the absence of such a contribution, the following may have its interest and its use.

The question may be thus stated. Is the Syriac ܥܘܢܐ , to be baptized, radically identical with the Hebrew עמד to stand, and therefore not properly expressive of the outward act indicated by βαπτίζω ?

It is in the highest degree probable, that the Syrians had once a root ܥܘܢܐ to stand; since ܥܘܢܐ pillar (Heb. עמוד) is clearly derived from it, and since all the cognate tongues (Heb., Chald., Samar., Arab. and Ethiopic) have it, with substantially the same meaning. But of the actual use of the verb in Syriac to denote to stand, no example has yet been found, as Michaelis (in his edition of Castell's Syriac Lexicon *sub voce*) observes, '*Standi significatione, reliquis linguis Orientalibus communem, apud Syros non reperio.*' Yet it has been the general opinion of Syriac scholars, that the word used for βαπτίζω had originally that very signification, as the same great Orientalist mentions, '*In hac baptizandi significatione conferunt haud pauci cum Hebraico עמד stetit, ita ut, stare, sit, stare in flumine, illoque mergi.* In this opinion and explanation, even Gesenius concurred, as may be seen under עמד , in the second edition of his Lexicon, by Dr. Robinson. But it is not too much to say, that discreet philology will feel some difficulty in accepting this view; Michaelis at least felt it, and declared, "*Mihi verisimilius, diversum plane ab עמד, litterarumque aliqua permutatione ortum ex غمرت submergere.* The existence of some difficulty in the case is also indicated and aptly illustrated by the great diversity which is manifest in the explanations offered by

those who agree in identifying the root in question with the Heb. קָמַן , *to stand*. We can point out at least four different explanations.

1. The one above-mentioned, as quoted by Michaelis, and approved by Gesenius. But here we are at a loss to comprehend what could have caused the ceremony to be named in reference to the *standing*, rather than to the *immersion*, in the water, seeing that the latter, and not the former, enters into the idea of baptism. Can a parallel be shown, where a transaction derives its name from one of its mere circumstances, rather than from a prominent and significant part of the process? The ecclesiastical use of Eucharist (עֻחְרִיסְטִיָּא) for the Lord's Supper, can scarcely be deemed a parallel; for the *blessing*, or *giving of thanks*, is an important part of the holy communion, the act being even twice repeated (1 Cor. 11: 24, 25; comp. chap. 10: 16).

2. Another view is, that the term means *to stand* at, or in, the water, in order to be *sprinkled*, or *poured upon*. So Dr. Henderson, perhaps on the authority of Schindler in *Lex. Pentaglotton*, who says, "Stabant enim, qui baptizabantur." But the same difficulty as above, presses us here again. And even if they were baptized in a *standing* posture, they undoubtedly, as Dr. Murdock well observes (p. 739), *stood up* also in various other religious acts (e. g. singing); and therefore the verb might be used to indicate such acts just as well as baptism. But of such use of it, there is no instance known. Besides, in the case of young infants, how could the two scholars here concerned, apply their own idea, "*stabant enim, qui baptizabantur?*"

3. Others think the meaning arose thus: *to stand*, then, *to establish*, or *confirm*, and then *to be baptized*, the rite of confirmation being in the Syrian and other Eastern churches administered immediately after baptism, and by the same person. So Dr. Augusti, Dr. Lee of Cambridge, and Moses Stuart. But there is no proof that the rite of confirmation, as it is called, was practised so early as the apostolic days, when doubtless ܩܡܘܢܐ was already employed for ܩܡܘܢܐ ; or, if the apostles did practise that rite, it clearly was not always done immediately after baptism (see Acts 8: 14-17, 14: 21, 22). And besides, as Dr. M. justly argues (p. 740), if this verb in the causative conjugation, *Aphel* (ܩܡܘܢܐ), *to cause to stand*, *to confirm*, served to express the *administering* of baptism, we should certainly expect the *passive* form of that conjugation, (ܩܡܘܢܐ), *to be caused to stand*, *to be confirmed*, to express the *receiving* of baptism; whereas there is no instance of this form, but

derivative ܘܢܘܨܘܬܐ, which clearly has not here its ecclesiastical meaning of *baptism* or *baptistry*, a notable instance of which is found in Heb. 6: 4, where *γορευθέντες* *enlightened* is explained in the very same terms that denote 'went down into the pool' in John 5: 4. No doubt the translator in Heb. 6: 4 intended to express 'who have once gone down into the baptistry,' and not 'who have once come to baptism;' nor 'who have descended into baptism,' as it is translated in a work called *Horæ Aramaicæ*, Lond. 1843. In Heb. 9: 10 the same derivative stands for *βαπτισμός* in the sense of *washing* or Jewish *ablution*; so also in Mark 7: 4, 8. The verb is found in Luke 11: 38 and Mark 7: 4 for *βαπτίζομαι* in its non-ecclesiastical sense of *bathing*. Dr. M. mentions (p. 736), that in these places in Mark and Luke, the *Modern Syrian Version* by the *American Missionaries*, has substituted other terms for those of the *Peshito* to express *ablution*. Such a change is open to at least one objection, viz., that it takes away from the *Syrian* reader so many clear proofs that ܘܢܘܨܘܬܐ is not a purely ecclesiastical term, any more than the Greek *βαπτίζω*. One other class of passages remains to be mentioned, viz., those which speak of sufferings as *overwhelming*, which idea is conveyed by this very verb and a derivative from it, answering to *βαπτίζομαι* and *βάπτισμα*; see *Matth.* 20: 22, 23, *Mark* 10: 38, 39, *Luke* 12: 50. It turns out then that upwards of ten passages are to be found in the *Peshito Bible*, in which the *Syriac* words, elsewhere employed in that version for baptism, do not signify the *Christian rite*, and where they cannot mean anything like *standing*. The verb occurs in two or three instances also in the *Apocrypha*: in *Judith* 12: 7 it reads that *Judith* 'went forth to the valley of *Bethphalu* by night and *bathed* (ܘܘܨܘܬܐ ܘܘܨܘܬܐ) in the fountain of water,' where the *Vulgate* has 'et baptizabat se in fonte aquæ,' and the Greek *καὶ ἐβαπτίζετο ἐν τῇ παραβολῇ ἐπὶ τῆς πηγῆς τοῦ ὕδατος*. And in *Susanna* 13: 15 the verb occurs in the same sense three times, and here the Greek has *λούομαι* and the *Latin lavar*. The passage is found in the *Versio Syriaca Altera* of *Walton's Polyglott*.

We may here inquire in passing, what in ecclesiastical usage is the force of this verb? In regard to this, it is worthy of notice that *Syrian church writers* in speaking of baptism distinguish several kinds besides that of *Christ*, the first of which is called the baptism of the *flood* (see *Assemani Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III. p. 574) or ordinary *bathing* (*Ibid.* p. 357). This mode of speaking clearly recognizes a non-ritual use of the term ܘܢܘܨܘܬܐ and serves to indi-

cate its real meaning to be *immersion*. But it is urged that if this were the real meaning understood by the Syrians, they would have used a different word, ܠܚܒ or ܠܚܒܐ , which is admitted by all to signify to *immerse*. Now the fact is, they have used this word also for the baptismal rite, see in Castell's *Lexicon* under ܠܚܒ . We have farther proof of this in their Forms of Service for the administration of the rite. In the Nestorian Ritual, compiled by Jesujabus Adiabenus about A. D. 650 (Assemani *loc. cit.* pp. 118, 140), the officiating priest is represented as taking the child and dipping him in the water ܠܚܒܐ ܕܡܝܐ ܕܗܘܐ and saying *such a one is baptized* $\text{ܠܚܒܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܦܬܪܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ}$ in the name of the Father, etc., and then *causing him to ascend from the water* $\text{ܠܚܒܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܦܬܪܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ}$, see Assemani *Bib. Orient. IV.* (or part 2 of III.), p. 243. Compare with this the Anglican Rubric directing the priest to take the child and "*dip it in the water discreetly and warily, saying, I baptize thee in the name,*" etc. There is another Syriac Ritual printed in a small 4to vol. at Antwerp, 1572, with the title *Liber Rituum Severi Patriarchae*, etc. which Assemani does not mention at all in his great work. If this Ritual be authentic and now in actual use, it must be among the Jacobite or Monophysite Syrians, to whose party Severus belonged (*Bib. Orient. II.* p. 321). In this Baptismal Service we are told (p. 26) that the Son bowed down his head and was baptized $\text{ܠܚܒܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܦܬܪܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ}$; and he is invoked (p. 36) in these words, "we beseech thee, who dippedst thy head in the water $\text{ܠܚܒܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܦܬܪܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ}$ and toiledst and broughtest up the whole world from the depth of sin: we invoke thee, who wast as a son of man baptized by John and receivedst testimony from thy Father and wast declared by the Holy Ghost: we invoke thee, who by thy holy baptism ($\text{ܠܚܒܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܕܦܬܪܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ}$) openedst heaven which was before closed on account of our sins."¹

But to return to the non-ecclesiastical use of ܠܚܒ and its derivatives, — we have now to add examples from other writings. In general Syriac literature, only very few works have as yet been printed,

¹ On the usage of the terms in question in the Peshito Bible and the Syrian Fathers, there is much light thrown in a small work of rare philological merit, called *A Critical Examination of the Rendering of βαπτίζω in the Ancient and many Modern Versions of the New Testament*, by F. W. Gotch, A. M., Trin. Coll., Dublin. London, 1841. The celebrated Prof. Ewald once spoke of the scholarship of this work in terms of great praise.

though very many are known to exist in MS., and are deposited chiefly in the great libraries of the Vatican, of Oxford, and of the British Museum.¹ In the printed works, the writer's very limited reading has met with two note-worthy passages, affecting the present inquiry. One is in Book I. sect. 17 of the Theophania of Eusebius, edited by Prof. Lee of Cambridge, London, 1842, from a MS. which is believed to take its date from A. D. 411. The whole passage is rendered by the distinguished editor himself in a Translation of the work, published at Cambridge, 1843, in these words: "This self-same Word of God also *immersed* [ܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ] even into the depths of the sea, and determined those swimming natures: and here again he made the myriads of forms which are innumerable, with every various kind of living creature." The other place is in Kirschii Chrestomathia Syriaca, ed. Bernstein, Lipsiæ, 1832, on page 209, where the crocodile, or the leviathan of Job 41: 1, is spoken of by Bar-Hebræus as "*plunging* (ܩܘܕܫܘܬܐ) in the depth of the sea." It is needless to observe, that in both these examples the verb can express neither the *baptismal rite* nor the idea of *standing*. Dr. Lee has, however, noticed its use in the Theophania as something remarkable (which it certainly is on his theory), and added this note (Translation, p. 9): "This is one of those cases, in which a verb takes a new sense from a metonymical use of it in the first instance. It is taken to signify *baptizing*, because *baptism* and *confirmation* are administered at the same time in the East. And as it is so taken to signify *baptizing*, so it is subsequently to imply *immersion*." But where are the parallel cases to illustrate and prove this theory? In the Slavonic languages a word meaning to *cross* is used for *baptizing*, from the making of the sign of the cross in the ceremony; but is it used also for *immersion*? The process of change here supposed would, at least, require a long period of time for its development: first changing *standing* into *confirming*, then *confirming* into *baptizing*, and finally *baptizing* into *dipping*. But it has been shown above, that this last named meaning or one akin to it was, at least, *cœval* with that of *baptizing*, both being found in the Peshito, the oldest Syriac work extant and dated early in the second century.

To the preceding evidences regarding the usage of the language,

¹ The rich collection of Syriac MSS. in the B. M. is now fortunately under the care of a most learned and laborious scholar, the Rev. W. Cureton, A. M., who has already earned great and just fame by editing the Syriac Epistles of Ignatius and some other important works found in that collection. Long may he live a promoter in chief of oriental literature!

is to be added the testimony of native Syriac lexicographers. The most celebrated of these were Bar-Ali and Bar-Bahlul, whose Syro-Arabic Lexicons still exist in MS. in the Bodleian and other libraries. Bar-Ali was a physician and flourished in literature about A. D. 885, see Bib. Orientalis, III. p. 257. The following complete extract is from his Lexicon in the Bodleian, MS. Hunt. 163. For convenience of reference, we may here affix numbers to the Syriac terms explained.

1. ܡܚܡܐ ܐܨܒܘܒܐܝܢ ܐܝܨܐ ܐܢܓܦܫܐܝܢ ܘܡܢܗ ܝܩܘܠ
ܐܢܓܦܫܐܝܢ ܢܝ ܥܝܕܐ ܕܢܚܝܝܝܢ .
2. ܡܚܡܐ ܐܨܒܘܒܐܝܢ ܐܥܬܡܕ .
3. ܡܚܡܐ ܐܡܥܘܕܝܝܗ ܘܐܠܘܒܝܘܬܗ .
4. ܡܚܡܐ ܐܠܥܡܘܢ ܐܠܐܨܦܘܬܐܢܗ ܥܡܘܢ ܐܢܘܪ .
5. ܡܚܡܐ ܐܠܘܕܝ ܝܓܘܨܐ ܘܝܥܬܡܕ .

Of these Arabic explanations the following is the best translation the writer can submit, as he enjoys only the poor help of Freytag's very meagre Lexicon Arabico-Latinum in usum Tironum, 1837: 1. *An immersing, a bathing, also a dipping, and from it is named the dipping on the festival of Epiphany.* 2. *He was immersed, he was baptized.* 3. *Baptism or immersion.* 4. *Pillar, column; pillar of light.* 5. *He who dives or bathes.* It will be observed that the Syriac word is the same in Nos. 1 and 3; but in the latter it is explained in its ritual sense, while in the former it appears to have its non-ritual meaning. The Syriac vowel points are not used in the MS. except on Nos. 4 and 5 as above. It may be mentioned here also, that the Syriac word, No. 5, is often used to denote a person *receiving baptism*; see Castell's Lexicon *sub voce*, and examples occur in Bib. Orientalis, IV. pp. 256, 259.

Bar-Bahlul flourished about a century later than Bar-Ali. Assemani (Bib. Orient. III. p. 257) simply says: 'vivebat anno Christi 963.' His lexicon is considered the best, as he had the advantage of using several others; and the best MS. of it is said to be in the Bodleian, Hunt. 157, from which the extract below was copied.¹

¹ See an interesting account of this and some other Syriac works in a letter from Prof. Bernstein of Breslau, published in Bib. Sacra for 1848, p. 390. It is greatly to be wished that the learned Professor's long-promised and much needed lexicon would soon appear.

1. حَصَمًا اصْطَبَاغَ اعْتِمَادًا وَجَا بَه حَنْهِنَ فِي مَوْضِعٍ
يُقَالُ حَصَمًا حَسَّ مُصْطَبَاغًا وَفَسَّرَهُ أَي تَكْمِنُ فِيهِ
الْكِرَارَةُ وَيُصْلِحُ هَاهُنَا تَغْوُصُ.
2. حَصَمَةٌ بِهَا الصَّبِغَةُ الْعَبُودِيَّةُ.
3. أَحَدُ حَصَمَاتِ الصَّبِغِ الْعَبِيدِ.
4. حَصَمَةٌ بِهَا حَيٌّ حَسَّ هِيَ الْعَبُودُ وَرَبُّهَا سَتْمَى
الْأَسْطُوَانَةُ مِنْ خَشَبٍ وَأَخْرُونَ عَامُونَ.
5. حَصَمَةٌ غَوَّاصٌ

Translation of the Arabic: 1. *An immersing, a bathing; and Honsain¹ has adduced it in a place (where) it is said حَصَمًا بِهَا and he has interpreted it thus — 'the heat hides itself in it,' but it is properly here 'dives.'* 2. *Immersion, baptism.* 3. *The immerser, the baptizer.*² 4. *According to some and Bar-Sarushvai,³ a pillar, and it is often called a column of wood, or else pillar.* 5. *Diver.*

A comparison of the above from Bar-Bahlul with the corresponding part in Castell's Syriac Lexicon, may serve to show the correctness of Prof. Bernstein's assertion (*Bib. Sacra*, 1848, p. 390), that Castell used the work of Bar-Bahlul only superficially, and did not adopt or rightly produce the half of it, though the contrary is professed in the Preface to the *Lexicon Heptaglotton*, and was apparently believed by Assemani (see *Bib. Or.* III. p. 257). The real compiler, however, of the Syriac part of the *Heptaglotton* was not Castell himself but Beveridge, who afterwards became bishop of St. Asaph; see p. 3 of the Preface to *Lex. Heptaglotton*. Yet, though Beveridge executed that task so badly, it must not be forgotten that he was so remarkably proficient in Syriac as to be able, in his 20th

¹ Honsain was a famous physician and author, who died A. D. 876. One of his works was a compendious Lexicon (see *Bib. Orientalis*, III. p. 164), from which probably the above example was taken by Bar-Bahlul.

² Who is here meant I cannot make out, but the abbreviation حَصَمٌ probably stands for Zecharias.

³ A Nestorian bishop, who flourished towards the close of the 9th century and composed a Vocabulary, which is perhaps here alluded to (see *Bib. Or.* III. p. 261).

year, to publish the *first and best* grammar ever produced in England for that tongue; see at the end of the *Epistola Dedicatoria* in his *Grammatica Syriaca*, Londini, 1658.

No doubt a diligent search in Syriac works, in print and in MS., would furnish many more examples to the same effect as the above. There is, for instance, a small Syro-Arabic Lexicon of the 18th century, preserved in MS. in the British Museum, which exhibits the words numbered 1 and 5 in the above lists, and explains the former by *اصطباغ* *immersing*, and the latter by *غواص* *diver*, in harmony with Bar-Ali and Bar-Bahlul.

Perhaps, however, the above evidence may suffice to make every scholar say with Michaelis, in reference to *حَص*, βασιζομαι, "Mihl verisimilius, diversum [esse] plane ab *מַרַד* stare." So thinks also Prof. Bernstein, who is considered the best Syriac scholar now living. He, however, does not, with Michaelis, trace the verb to the Arabic

غَمَت *submergere*, but compares it with *غَمَد*, "quod transl. habet significationem *immersit, immisit* aliquid, *recondidit* gladium in vaginam;" see under *حَص* in Bernstein's *Lexicon Syriacum* to Kirsch's

Chrestomathia Syriaca, Lips., 1836. Yet there is no essential difference in the affinities suggested by these two great lexicographers; for in fact these two Arabic verbs, with two others, are, in all probability, radically identical, namely, *غَمَد*, *غَمَت*, *غَمَر* and *غَمَس* *submergere*. In this last form the root exists also in Syriac, in *حَصَم* *to dive*, and in the Coptic *ⲬⲚⲤ*, βασιζεις, κατανοσιζεις,

(see Tattam's *Lexicon Ægyptiaco-Latinum*, Oxon., 1835.) It will be observed that the only difference in the four Arabic verbs, is in the final letters; but these are well known in comparative philology to be interchangeable: thus under *פָּרַד*, Gesenius gives as radically identical the verbs *פָּרַט*, *פָּרַר*, and *פָּרַשׁ*, all conveying originally the idea of *breaking*. A list very similar to this, might be exhibited also in Arabic and Syriac, with the primary sense of *breaking*, or *separating*, e. g. *فَرَس*, *فَرَض*, *فَرَز*, *فَرَس*; *פָּרַס*, *פָּרַז*, *פָּרַשׁ*.

And now, lest it be urged that *حَص* cannot be akin to *غَمَد*, etc., because the Arabic root has *غ* *Ghain*, and not *ع* *Ain*, we may observe

that the Heb. *ע* and the Syr. *Ⲥ* are used for both forms of the Arabic letter (Gesenius's *Lexicon* under *ע*), and that the identity of *حَصَم*

with غمس is unquestionable, though the apparent dissimilarity in the letters be even greater than between حمص and غمد. Finally, if it be asked why the Syrians, having the choice of حص or حص as well as حمص to denote *immerse*, used the former only occasionally, but the latter habitually, for *baptism*, the reason may possibly have been, as suggested by Augusti, (*Handbuch der Christlichen Archäologie* II. p. 311,) that the former word had been already appropriated by the Zabians or Hemerobaptists, (صمّص *dippers*, see Michaelis under حص in his edition of Castell,) a half-Jewish sect in the East, supposed to have come down from John the Baptist, and hence called also Disciples of John (*Mendai Jahia*). The Syrian Christians would naturally wish not to be confounded with such a party, and hence might have adopted another equally appropriate term to denote the baptismal act.

ARTICLE VI.

LIFE OF ZUINGLI.¹

By R. D. C. Robbins, Professor of Languages, Middlebury College.

Birth-place, Lineage and Childhood of Zuingli.

THE first day of January, 1484, was the birth-day of Ulric Zuingli, the pioneer of the reformation in Switzerland. Not quite two months before, on St. Martin's eve, in the cottage of a poor miner at Eisleben, Luther was born. The place of the birth of Zuingli was a lowly

¹ The works principally consulted in the preparation of this sketch of the Life of Zuingli, are: "Life of Ulric Zuingli, the Swiss Reformer, by J. G. Hess; translated by Lucy Aiken." "Huldreich Zwingli, Geschichte seiner Bildung zum Reformator des Vaterlandes, von J. M. Schuler, Zürich, 1819." "Huldrici Zwingli Opera, completa ed. prim. cur. M. Schulero et Jo. Schultessio," 13 volumes. "Calvin and the Swiss Reformation, by John Scott, London, 1833." "D'Aubigne's History of Reformation," Carter's edition, 1846. Several other works also are occasionally referred to as will appear from the notes.