PART II: A GENERAL STUDY ON ST PAUL

THE APOSTLE
Chapter 1
St Paul the Apostle in Apocryphal works and in the Bible

1.1. St Paul the Apostle in Apocryphal works

The apocryphal or non-Biblical works associated with St Paul the Apostle are The Acts of Paul, The Apocalypse of Paul, Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, The Doctrine of the Apostles and Doctrine of Simon Cephas in the City of Rome. It is not a detailed study of these works are intended here but just to mention them and point out the contents of the work and thereby to check whether these works influenced Jacob of Serugh or not.

1.1.1. The Acts of Paul

According to J.K. Elliot the majority of scholars date this work to the end of the second century. Its provenance is likely to be Asia Minor. The main motive for its composition was to endorse already existing legends about St Paul – some of which were possibly transmitted orally – and to establish them as an act of devotion dedicated to the memory of the Apostle.¹

1.1.2. The Apocalypse of Paul

According to J.K. Elliot, St Paul’s description of being caught up into Paradise, as related in 2 Cor 12, gave rise to the creation of this Apocalypse. The work describes St Paul’s vision of the afterlife. It is likely to have been written first in Greek around the middle of the third century and then later translated into Latin, Coptic, Syriac, and other languages.² In the revelation of

Paul, Paul is addressed as ‘Paul the beloved of God’ by everyone who happens to address him. Paul narrates that the angel greets him as “Welcome, Paul beloved of God! and, with a joyful countenance, he kissed me with tears.”

In another place the prophets address him with the same epithet. “And I saw there all the prophets; and they came and saluted me, saying: Welcome, Paul, beloved of God”

In the same work the angel, archangel Gabriel, the Cherubim, Holy Mary mother of the Lord, the righteous fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Isaiah whom Manasseh sawed with a wood saw, Jeremiah whom the Jews stoned and Ezekiel whom the slayers of Messiah pierced together, Enoch and Elias call him with the attributive ‘blessed’.

1.1.3. Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla

The Apocryphal Acts of the Paul and Thecla recounts the story of a virgin from Iconium who was converted through the preaching of St Paul during his mission to that city. She became his disciple and sometime later suffered martyrdom. Among other things this work gives a description of St Paul’s appearance and stature:

And he saw Paul was coming, and in his stature he was a man of middling size, and his hair was scanty, and his legs were a little crooked and hid knees were projecting (or far apart); and he had large eyes, and his eyebrows met, his nose was somewhat long; and he was full of grace and mercy; at one time he seemed like a man, at another time he seemed like an angel.

1.1.4. The Acts of Barnabas

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5 Ibid p.5575-581.
Paul is addressed always with the attributive ‘Father’ by Barnabas. In the Acts of Barnabas when Paul and Barnabas depart each other, Paul announces his suggestion of taking John who is surnamed as Mark with Barnabas, he addresses Paul like this:

“And Barnabas coming to himself, said: The grace God does not desert him who has once served the Gospel and journeyed with us. If, therefore, this be agreeable to thee, Father Paul, I take him and go.”7

Before his departure Barnabas in his farewell words wherever Paul is mentioned it is with the title ‘father’.

“Father Paul, pray for me that my labour may be made perfect to commendation.... For I go to Cyprus, and hasten to be made perfect; for I know that I shall no more see thy face, O Father Paul”8

1.1.5. The Doctrine of the Apostles

This document lists the places where St Paul propagated the doctrine of the Apostles.

For Paul also, and Timothy, while they were going about in the country of Syria and Cilicia, committed these same Regulations and Laws of the Apostles and Elders to those who were under the hand of the Apostles, for the churches of the countries in which they were preaching and publishing the Gospel; but the Disciples, after these

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8 Ibid, P.494.
Ordinances and Laws which they had appointed, ceased not from the preaching of the Gospel, or from wonderful mighty works which our Lord did by their hands.⁹

The document also provides information about St Paul’s death:

Timothy and Erastus, of Lystra and Menaus, the first disciples of the Apostles, accompanied Paul until he went up to the city of Rome, because he had withstood the orator Tertullus. And Nero the Emperor slew him with the sword, and Simon Cephas, in the city of Rome.¹⁰

1.1.6. Doctrine of Simon Cephas in the City of Rome

This work provides information about the events surrounding the deaths of St Peter and St Paul in Rome, supplying details about the mode of execution of their death sentences.

When therefore Caesar had given orders that Simon should be crucified with his head downwards, as he had himself requested of Caesar, and that Paul’s head should be taken off, there was great trouble among the people, and bitter grief in all the church, because they had been deprived of the sight of the Apostles.¹¹

1.2. St Paul the Apostle in the New Testament

What we know of the identity of St Paul comes from two sources in the Bible. The first is the Acts of the Apostles, written soon after Paul's death and almost certainly by the same

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⁹ William Cureton (ed.), Ancient Syriac Documents Relative to the earliest establishment of Christianity in Edessa and the neighbouring countries from the year after our lord's ascension to the beginning of the fourth century, p. 30.

¹⁰ William Cureton (ed.) Ancient Syriac Documents Relative to the earliest establishment of Christianity in Edessa and the neighbouring countries from the year after our lord’s ascension to the beginning of the fourth century, p. 35.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 40.
author who wrote St Luke's gospel; and the second are the autobiographical elements of the Apostle's own letters that were composed by the early church communities. The main characteristics of St Paul’s identity gleaned from these two sources can be summarized under the following four headings:

1.2.1. Roman Citizen

The Acts of the Apostles indicates that Paul was a Roman citizen by birth. In two passages in Acts, Paul claims this identity for himself. The first is Acts 16:37 where Paul, having been flogged publicly and then imprisoned at Philippi, tells the gaoler (who had just become a believer) that he and Silas would not leave the prison on the quiet but rather the magistrates must come and escort them out publicly.

They have beaten us in public, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.

The lex Porcia\(^{12}\) forbade under heavy penalties the scourging of a Roman citizen and so the magistrates “were terrified when they discovered that they (Paul and Silas) were Roman citizens.” (Acts 16:38) The second passage is Acts 22:26 ff where Paul was taken into custody in Jerusalem by the tribune following a commotion among the Jews resulting from his preaching. As he was about to be examined under the lash to find out the reason for the outcry against him, Paul said to the centurion on duty

“Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?”

The narrative continues:

When the centurion heard this, he went to the tribune and said to him, “What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen.” So the tribune came and said to him,

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\(^{12}\) The law so called was made by Porcius Laeca, tribune of the people in AD 453, in favour of Roman citizens, whom it exempted from being subjected to the ignominious punishment of the scourge.
“Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?” And he said, “Yes.”

In addition to Paul’s own claims to Roman citizenship, Acts also records testimonies of others regarding Paul’s Roman citizenship. In the letter accompanying Paul’s transfer to Caesarea, as related in Acts 23:27, the tribune Claudius Lysias wrote to Felix the governor recounting the uproar in Jerusalem, Paul’s arrest and the subsequent discovery that he was a Roman citizen.

This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them, but when I had learned that he was a Roman citizen, I came with the guard and saved him.

When Paul was brought into the tribunal at Caesarea before Porcius Festus (Felix’s successor to the post of governor), Paul resists Festus’ attempt to have him tried in Jerusalem and lays claim to his prerogative as a Roman citizen to have his case heard before the imperial tribunal.

I am appealing to the emperor’s tribunal; this is where I should be tried. (Acts 25:10)

Paul only uses his status as a Roman citizen when he is in immediate danger of death. On no occasion does he use it for personal gain or advantage. His Roman citizenship was acquired neither by purchase nor by grant but was his by birth. As stated unambiguously in Acts 22:28, Paul was born a Roman citizen. There were many ways to acquire Roman citizenship. Indeed it was sometimes used as a tool of foreign policy and control whereby colonies and political allies were granted Roman citizenship to assimilate them and turn a defeated and potentially rebellious enemy into good citizens. While Roman citizenship was required in order to enlist in the Roman legions, this was sometimes ignored and non-citizens who joined the army gained citizenship through their service. Roman citizenship could also purchase but only by paying large amount of money, as was the case of the tribune mentioned in Acts 22:28. Finally it was also granted in recognition of meritorious service to the Empire. However “in Paul’s case, since
his father was a Roman citizen, he too was born a Roman citizen. He was always very proud of it.”

1.2.2. Hebrew

Paul’s claim to his Jewish identity is clearly revealed in both in the Acts of Apostles and in his letters. Again and again Paul presents his credentials in a very forthright manner to the Jews:

- circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew; as to the law, a Pharisee (Phil 3: 5)
- I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1)
- Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I (2 Cor 11:22)
- I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors (Gal 1:14)

The author of the Acts of the Apostles also portrays Paul as someone who is passionate when it comes to his Jewish identity. In Acts 21:39 in his appearance before the tribune that followed his arrest by the temple authorities Paul defends himself vigorously:

- I am a Jew, from Tar’sus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city

Likewise in Acts 22:2, 3 when Paul addresses the Jewish crowd following the uproar in the temple in Jerusalem he begins by presenting himself unambiguously as a Jew:

- I am a Jew, born in Tar’sus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamæliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today.

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As a devout and zealous Jew Paul knew Hebrew. In the account of his conversion found in Acts 26, the author puts the following words into Paul’s mouth (Acts 26:14):

When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

It is also related in Acts 21:40 that Paul addressed the Jewish crowd in Hebrew:

When he had given him permission, to the people for silence; and when there was a great hush, he addressed them in Hebrew language.

1.2.3. Pharisee

The origins of the Pharisee movement are shrouded in obscurity. The Pharisees formed a clearly distinguishable group which can best be described as a sect, a social movement or a school of thought. They first appeared on the scene about two centuries before Jesus. The name itself (“Pharisee”) seems to come from a root that in Aramaic praš which means ‘to separate.’

So the word “Pharisee” meant ‘separated’ or ‘separators’. By the time of Jesus and Paul they numbered, according to Josephus - himself a Pharisee - about six thousand. The Pharisees were characterised by their strict adherence to and observance of the Mosaic Law, which regulated the minutest of details of Jewish Life.

Many, if not most, of the Pharisees functioned as subordinate officials, bureaucrats, judges and educators. Being well educated and literate they assisted the governing class, but held no real positions of power. Unlike their rivals the Sadducees, the Pharisees (according to the New Testament) believed in the resurrection of the dead. Paul, in addition to his claim to be a Roman citizen and a Jew, also laid claim to be a Pharisee. He openly stated he was such when it helped gain the support of his audience. Paul,

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16 Ibid. pp.8-9.
the Pharisee, sometimes played on the rivalry between them and the Sadducees to his advantage. This is seen particularly in his address to the Sanhedrin:

When Paul noticed that some were Sadducees and others were Pharisees, he called out in the council, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial because of the resurrection of the dead.” (Acts 23:6)

In his defence before Agrippa, as related in Acts 26, Paul spoke of his belonging to the Pharisees in his earlier life:

They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I have belonged to the strictest sect of our religion and lived as a Pharisee (Acts 26:4)

In the letter to the Philippians Paul listed his credentials as a Jew, stipulating that his adherence to the Law had been as a Pharisee. In other words, Paul is saying that as a Pharisee, he believed that the Written Law or Torah was incomplete by itself and could only be understood in combination with the Oral Law. For the Pharisees the Oral Law was also transmitted by God to Moses and then passed down by Moses and his successors over the generations.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee. (Phil 3:4, 5)

1.2.4. Apostle (šliḥo)

Only in two places in the Acts of the Apostles is St Paul referred to as an ‘apostle’. “Although more than half of the Acts is about Paul as a great hero, it does not call him an apostle except in 14:4, 14 (where, however, he is bracketed with Barnabas)”.17 There are also scholars who argue that St. Paul cannot be called an apostle on the ground that his name is not found in the

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17 Ziesler J.A., Pauline Christianity, p.3.
list of the apostles. “For Acts, apostles are normally the Twelve, of whom Paul is not the one (see 1:15-26), and he cannot be called an apostle in the same sense.”18 In addition, Paul does not meet the criteria of apostolicity as specified in Acts (Acts 1:21-22; cf. Acts 13:31) and so “he is refused the title of apostle because he does not have the proper “apostolic” credentials.”19

In his letters Paul uses the term ‘apostle’ as a form of self-designation20. Among the fourteen letters attributed to Paul in the New Testament only seven are considered by the Biblical scholars as genuine. “There are seven letters ascribed to Paul in the New Testament whose genuineness is never seriously questioned (although certain passages within them are certainly debated as to their authenticity). These are: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon.”21 So I avoid here the self designations of Paul as Apostle when referring to those letters that are not authentically his. A notable feature of Paul’s apostleship is that he is called the Apostle of the Gentiles. In the letters to the Galatians and to the Romans Paul explicitly claims for himself the title of apostle to the gentiles. “He is indeed the apostle to the Gentiles (Gal 2:7-8; Rom 11:13: eimi ego ethnon apostolos), commissioned to proclaim God’s grace in Jesus Christ to all the nations - Jew and Gentile alike - which means that the gospel is “apart from law” (Rom 3:21).”22 “In fact, he will explicitly define himself as “apostle by vocation (cf. Rom 1:1; I Cor 1:1) or “apostle by the will of God” (2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1), as if to emphasize that his conversion was not the

18 Ibid, p.3.
19 J. Christiaan Beker, Paul the Apostle the Triumph of God in Life and Thought, p.5.
20 Gal 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1; Rom 1:1; Col 1:1.
22 J. Christian Beker, Paul the Apostle, p.6.
result of a development of thought or reflection, but the fruit of divine intervention, an unforeseeable, divine grace.”^23

According to the Acts of the Apostles, an essential requirement needed to be an apostle is to have been a witness to the resurrection of Christ. This criterion is stated clearly when the Church in Jerusalem comes to appoint someone to fill the gap left by the death of Judas Iscariot: “one of these must become witness with us to his resurrection.”^24 Paul is conscious of this requirement and on three separate occasions in his letters, he asserts that the resurrected Christ appeared to him. He does this so as to convince his readers of the genuiness of his apostleship:

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? (1 Cor 9:1)
Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. (1 Cor 15: 8)
But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me thorough his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me (Gal 1: 15-16)

1.2.5. Paul as Pastor

Paul in his letters uses different metaphors in order to reveal his missionary and pastoral activities. They are connected with the planting and nurturing of the church. The metaphors connected with the foundation of the churches are the following

1.2.5.1. Planter

“I planted, Appolos watered, but God gave the growth”^25. This can be considered as metaphor from an agricultural context.

1.2.5.2. Builder (‘ardiklo)

“According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a

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^24 Acts 1: 22.

^25 1 Cor. 3: 9
foundation, and someone else is building on it”\textsuperscript{26}

This architectural metaphor ‘builder’ is one of the most famous epithets of St. Paul, the Apostle in the West Syriac liturgical literature.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{1.2.6. Paul as Missionary}

The metaphors like father and nurse show the nurturing of churches by Paul as a missionary.

\textbf{1.2.6.1. Father}

There are three verses in the epistles of Paul where he calls himself as a father. They are the following.

i) “I am not writing this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you might have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. Indeed in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.”\textsuperscript{28}

ii) “My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth, until Christ is formed in you,”\textsuperscript{29}

iii) “As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.”\textsuperscript{30}

\textbf{1.2.6.2. Nurse (\textit{mrabyonito})}

The metaphor ‘nurse’ appears only once in the Bible.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26} 1 Cor. 3: 10
\item \textsuperscript{27} The Book of Common Prayer, pp.819, 289, 291.
\item \textsuperscript{28} 1 Cor. 4: 14-15
\item \textsuperscript{29} Gal. 4: 19
\item \textsuperscript{30} 1 Thess. 2: 11-12
\end{itemize}
“though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children”.  

1.3. Conclusion

The influences of Apocryphal works are found in some of the works of Jacob of Serugh. For example elements from the apocryphal work Acts of Thomas are found the mimre of Jacob of Serugh on St Thomas the Apostle. But the two mimre of Jacob of Serugh on Paul does not seem to be influenced by any of the above stated apocryphal works. The basis of the two mimre of Jacob of Serugh on Apostle Paul is Bible. Jacob of Serugh gives importance to the Apostleship of Paul and it is narrated elaborately in the mimre. Though Jacob does not give much importance to his Roman citizenship. He is addressed as a Pharisee only once in the mimre. The metaphors such as ‘planter’, father’ and ‘nurse’ do not appear in the mimre whereas builder is highlighted well. The identity of Paul as a Hebrew is well exposed in the mimre of Jacob.

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31 1 Thess. 2: 7-8

32 G. Panicker, St Thomas in India According Jacob of Serugh, in The Harp, Vol 2, No 1, p.60.
Chapter 2

St Paul the Apostle in the Syriac Fathers

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is an attempt to find the predecessors and cotemporaries of Jacob of Serugh in Syriac tradition who wrote about St Paul the Apostle and to know how they presented the picture of St Paul the Apostle and whether they had any influence on Jacob of Serugh or not. The Acts of the Martyrs and the Saints (2.2) and the works of Aphrahat (2.3), Ephrem (2.4), Narsai (2.5), John of Tella (2.6) will be examined in this chapter.


A classic of hagiography, Bedjan’s massive seven-volume Acts of Martyrs and Saints is an important source for the lives of the saints written in Syriac. The lives or vitae of the saints contained in these volumes are narrated from the perspective of the Eastern Church, and among the highlights are the accounts of the lives of saints Peter, Thomas, Paul, Anthony, Ephrem, Rabbula, and Gregory. They also contain accounts of the martyrdom of several saints such as George and Polycarp, and the Chaldean and Persian martyrs. In his introduction to the Acta Martyrium et Sanctorum Bedjan says that the manuscript in which the life of St Paul is found contains no mention of the name of its author. The anonymous author merely states that the primary source for his life of St Paul is the Acts of the Apostles.

He was a Hebrew from the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee in sect and he was trained by Malpan Gamaliel in law. He was living in Tarsus of Cilicia. As persecutor and destroyer of the Church of God, he was present and associated in the killing of

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1 Paul Bedjan’s Acta Martyrium et Sanctorum in VII volumes, is now available in Gorgias press also.

Stephen, the martyr. He was holding the garments of his murderers ……as his epistles inform and again Luke in Acts narrates about him.”

2.3. Aphrahat (early IV cent)

Apart from the use of Biblical quotations in his work, nothing special about the Apostle Paul is found in the writings of Aphrahat.⁴ John Corbett in his article, *The Pauline Tradition in Aphrahat*, remarks,

[a] striking feature of Aphrahat’s work is the frequency and accuracy of his quotations from “the Apostle” (Paul). Aphrahat also makes frequent allusion to the Epistles, *en passant*; sometimes it is rather difficult to determine the particular Pauline passage which underlies a phrase used by Paul.⁵

Commenting on the frequency of Aphrahat’s use of Pauline quotations, Corbett observes,

[s]ome statistics I have assembled, following Kerschensteiner and Parisot, give a rough indication of the importance of the Epistles for Aphrahat. 1 Corinthians, not surprisingly, is cited most frequently (66 times). Hebrews, which is treated here as part of the Pauline corpus (following Aphrahat), comes next with 31 citations. Romans and 2 Corinthians follow close behind (22 and 26 citations respectively). Ephesians is cited 15 times, Galatians 14 times, the other epistles much less frequently.⁶

2.4. Ephrem (306/9-373)

Ephrem’s Homily on Our Lord and his Commentary on Genesis are the two works that mention about St Paul the Apostle.

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⁶ Ibid., p.20.
2.4.1. Homily on Our Lord

Sections XXV—XL of St Ephrem’s *Homily on Our Lord* are dedicated to the theme of St Paul and his conversion. This also is the theme of Jacob of Serugh’s first *mimro* on St Paul. Jacob, it seems, was not only familiar with this particular work of Ephrem’s but also assumed many of its ideas as well as the sequence of its thought when composing his first Pauline *mimro*. Both authors begin their treatment of the Apostle with a commentary on the humility of Jesus. Section XXV of Ephrem’s *mimro* opens with the words:

The King of heaven armed Himself with the weapon of humility
and conquered an obstinate man,
eliciting a good response from him as proof!  

Jacob of Serugh starts his first *mimro* as follows:

The humility of Jesus took the whole earth captive
And without coercion He attracted the world by His preaching. (61:1)
By His lowliness He humbled the mighty in their conceit
And the crowns of the rulers became a footstool at His feet. (61:9)

Both authors also interpret Jesus’ question to Paul, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” as an example of the Lord’s humility. Jesus poses a humble question to Paul in order to humble Paul’s pride. Jacob elucidates Jesus’ question as follows:

He spoke to him with wondrous humility
to humble the (huge) pride that was within. (61:80)

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10 Ibid, lines 3-4, p.718.
Ephrem in his Homily on Our Lord explains:

For just as he had battled proudly but was humbly defeated,
so is every pride defeated that rears itself against this humility.\(^{13}\)

Another idea stressed by both Ephrem and Jacob is Paul’s being struck blind in the bright light of day that resulted in the opening of his interior eye. Ephrem says in the same homily:

Paul’s exterior eyes were kept closed,
so that by the closing of his exterior eyes those within would be opened.
He who had been unable to perceive our Lord through His signs with exterior eyes,
perceived Him with interior eyes once his physical (eyes) were closed.\(^{14}\)

We find the same idea in Jacob, though expressed differently:

His captivity to see retreated into his mind;
His vision turned inside out to reveal hidden beauties within. (61:106)\(^{15}\)
Light entered his inner eyes\(^{16}\)
Until it extinguished the light in his outer eyes\(^{17}\). (61:107)\(^{18}\)

In his *Homily on Our Lord*, Ephrem is adamant that the sudden blindness of Paul following his encounter with Jesus was not a punishment, and he gives many reasons to prove it:

1. The cause of Paul’s loss of sight was the intensity of the light’s rays.

\(^{11}\) Jacob of Serugh, *Mimro 61 on Pawlos šliho*, lines 3-4, p.725.
\(^{12}\) Jacob of Serugh, *Mimro 61 on Pawlos šliho*, lines 16-17, p. 727.
\(^{13}\) Ephrem, *Homily on Our Lord*, p. 300.
\(^{14}\) Ibid, p.308
\(^{15}\) Jacob of Serugh, lines 16-17, p. 727.
This light was not a punishment that befell Paul on account of the things he had done.

It injured him with the intensity of its rays.\(^{19}\)

2. The light that shone around Paul was from above, not below, so that it could not but damage eyes unaccustomed to its nature. Thus Paul’s being struck blind was not surprising.

So long as it shone above, it was pleasing.

But as soon as it shed forth its rays below, it became blinding.\(^{20}\)

3. Paul’s loss of sight due to the intensity of the bright light is analogous to the melting and flowing away of Daniel in the presence of the angel’s glory. Just as wax cannot withstand the heat of fire and retain its solidity, so in the presence of the angel, Daniel could not endure and his strength left him and he fell into a trance, face to the ground.\(^{21}\) Ephrem explains thus:

It was not because of the angel’s fury that human frailty melted away,

just as it is not because of any fury or hostility in fire that makes wax melt before it.\(^{22}\)

Since it is natural that one would melt away in the presence of an angel’s glory, there is no question that the Angel was punishing Daniel. Similarly for Ephrem, no element of punishment is implied in Paul’s being struck blind by the bright light.

4. Ephrem quoting Exodus 33:20 posed the question

Is it because of the fury of His wrath that whoever sees him dies?

Or is it because of the splendor of His Essence?\(^{23}\)

Those who see God die not as a result of any punishment from God but because of the splendour of His essence. Just as the cause of the death of the one who sees God is not

\(^{19}\) Ephrem, *Homily on Our Lord*, p. 301.

\(^{20}\) Ibid, pp. 301-302.

\(^{21}\) Cf. Dan 10:8

\(^{22}\) Ephrem, *Homily on Our Lord*, p. 301.

\(^{23}\) Ibid, p.304.
because of His anger, so also is the loss of the eyesight of Paul not due to God’s anger but to
the overpowering brilliance of the light. If Paul’s blindness is not a punishment from God, why then did he blind the eyes of Saul? Ephrem gives two reasons for this:
1. In order to refute the possible allegation of the crucifiers that Paul is proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus because he received bribes from the Apostles.
2. In order that Saul may not ignore the humility of the voice of Jesus, the intensity of the rays of light blinded his eyes.

2.4.2. Ephrem’s Commentary on Genesis

St. Ephrem in his commentary on Genesis interprets “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf” (Gen 49: 27) as a reference to Paul.

“Benjamin is a ravenous wolf” [refers to] Paul, who was a wolf to the wolves and snatched all souls away from the evil one, and “in the evening he will divide what he seizes” that is at the end of the world he will also rest with a reward greater than his labours.”

St. Ephrem in his commentary on Genesis understands the phrase, Benjamin is a ravenous wolf (Gen 49: 27) as referring to Paul. It points to Paul, who is, as it were, a wolf in regard to other wolves. The wolf Paul snatches away from evil wolves are the souls of all, and in the evening he will divide what he seizes, that is, at the end of the world he will also rest with a reward greater than his labours. According to F.F. Bruce, the phrase, Benjamin is a ravenous wolf (Gen 49: 27), is found in many early Christian writers as a type of the Apostle Paul. Early Christian writers loved to trace in Paul’s activity as a persecutor of the infant church a fulfilment of the words of the patriarch Jacob’s blessing of his sons, “Benjamin is a

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24 Ephrem, Commentary on Genesis, p.211.

25 Ibid, p.211.
ravenous wolf.” However this ingenious fancy has nothing to do with sober exegesis.  

26 F.F. Bruce gives the main reason why Paul is compared to Benjamin: since Benjamin was the youngest of the sons of Jacob (or Israel), Paul may be alluding to his Benjaminitine origin in 1 Cor. 15:8, where he calls himself the last and smallest of the apostles and in some sense the product of abnormal birth (cf. Gen. 35:16-20). 

2.5. Narsai (399-502)

Jacob’s older contemporary from the East Syriac Tradition, Narsai, also wrote a mimro on St Paul the Apostle. It too has been edited and published by Bejan. According to William F. Macomber, there are fourteen manuscript sources for this mimro. It has been translated into German by P. Krüger. Narsai’s depiction of Paul is very different from that of Jacob of Serugh. For Narsai, Paul is above all a champion. Thus he uses metaphors derived from the world of athletics and the army. In doing so, Narsai was probably inspired by imagery and terminology used by the apostle himself. Ancient metaphors drawn from the games and the military reflect their popularity and held such imaginative power for the apostle Paul that he could be confident that his message would be enhanced by their use. Thus Paul uses the image of the athlete who trains with rigorous self-discipline, runs to the finishing line with

26 F.F. Bruce, *Paul Apostle of the Free Spirit*, pp.41-42.


29 Fourth mimra of the commemoration of Patros and Pawlos, in Paul Bedjan’s *Narsai doctoris syri Homiliae et Carmina*, 2 volumes, Mosul: Typis Fratrum Praedicatorum, 1905, pp. 68-88.


total concentration, boxes with well-aimed blows, endures pain to win the contest and receives the victor’s crown (cf. 1 Cor 9:24-27, Phil 3:12-14). Narsai, in turn, adopts Paul’s own imagery and applies it to the apostle. The following are some of the images that Narsai uses to portray Paul as a champion:

### 2.5.1. Wrestler (ʼagunešto)

Paul the wrestler is a skilled combatant fully focused on the spiritual fight. He knows how to win and will not be distracted from his goal:

> He is like a wrestler (ʼagunešto) who knows to win spiritually

> And the desire of his soul will not be entangled in earthly things. (137)

### 2.5.2. Soldier (polhō)

Paul the soldier is equipped with hidden armour, a reference no doubt to the ‘armour of God’ in Eph 6:10-18: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of eagerness to spread the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, that is the word of God.

> He is a solid soldier (polhō) who always fights with those who are opponents

> And he will not lay aside his hidden armour from his mind. (138)

### 2.5.3. Athlete (ʼatliṭo)

Paul the athlete gives everything he has, overcoming every obstacle by the determination of his faith.

> O athlete (ʼatliṭo) who was fighting with everything

> And he conquered everything by the perseverance of his faith. (202)

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32 Narsai, *Fourth mimra of the commemoration of Patrose and Pawlos*, line 25, p.76; line 1, p.77.

33 Ibid, lines 1-3, p.77.

34 Ibid, lines 17-18, p. 80.
2.5.4. Warrior (qrabtono)

Paul the warrior is armed with spiritual weapons and is so totally attuned to the aims of the Messiah that he wields the weapons to full effect.

O warrior (qrabtono) who was armed spiritually and was fighting
And by vibrations of weapon he attains the aim of Messiah” (203)\(^{35}\)

Although the imagery and terminology used by Narsai to depict Paul as champion *par excellence* is very different from that of Jacob of Serugh, the two authors nevertheless share in common a number of titles for the apostle. These include:

1. Skillful Scribe (*sopro mhiro*)

Narsai in his *mimro* describes Paul as a skillful scribe:

Go; make wise the skillful scribe of the covenant (testament)
And write; let them know spiritually the newness of my words. (120) \(^{36}\)

Jacob four times uses the title skillful scrobe (*sopro mhiro*) four times (61: 45, 49, 179, 233). But the use of the title scribe of the spirit (*sopro druho*) is found only in Narsai.

Who will not meditate in the books of words of the scribe of the spirit?
And who will not explain and show clearly the hidden mysteries before his disciples. (234) \(^{37}\)

2. Runner of the race

In Narsai’s *mimro* on Apostle Paul, he is compared to runner of the race of the Old Testament.

“Go; tell the runner of the race of the Law
That there is no reward in the course of observances” (121) \(^{38}\)

\(^{35}\) Ibid, lines 18-19, p.80.

\(^{36}\) Ibid, lines 2-3, p.76.

\(^{37}\) Ibid, lines 16-18, p. 82.
In the *mimro* of Jacob of Serugh on Apostle Paul quoting 2 Tim 4:7, Apostle Paul is compared to a runner who finished successfully his course.

I have fought good fight; I have finished the race
I have kept my faith steadfast from stumbling blocks. (62:208)\(^{39}\)

3. Foundation (*šet’esto*)

For Narsai, Paul is both builder (*banoyo*) and foundation of the church.

O builder (*banoyo*) who laid the foundation (*šet’esto*) of faith
And as in the transverse beam he completed and he built hope and love” (201)\(^{40}\)

For Jacob of Serugh Paul is architect and foundation of the church.
He (Jesus) made the demolisher the architect (*’ardiklo*) of His building
He (Jesus) laid the foundation (*šet’esto*) upon which all the true ones will construct. (61:14)\(^{41}\)

4. Wolf (*di’bo*)

In Narsai’s mimro the comparison of Paul to a wolf occurs in the course of a conversation between Jesus and Hananiah. Hananiah is amazed and wonder if a wolf can be transformed into a lamb.

Hananiah heard that he sends him to his persecutor
He became astonished and enfeebled how a wolf (*di’bo*) can be transformed into a lamb. (123)\(^{42}\)

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\(^{38}\) Ibid, lines 3-4, p.76.


\(^{40}\) Narsai, *Fourth mimra of the commemoration of Paṭros and Pawlos*, lines 16-17, p.80.


\(^{42}\) Narsai, *Fourth mimra of the commemoration of Paṭros and Pawlos*, lines 6-7, p.76.
But in Jacob’s mimro Paul is compared not only to a wolf among lambs but to a hawk among fledglings.

When did the wolf (di’bo) learn to feed with the lambs and loved them?

Who can feed the hawk alongside fledglings?” (61:227)43

2.6. John of Tell (482/3-538)

John of Tell, also known as John bar Qurasos (+538), was a contemporary of Jacob of Serugh. In his work entitled *Haymonutho dhasyo wqadisho episkupe dtela* (The faith of the Venerable and Holy bishop of Tell) John calls Paul a wise master-builder.

“The wise master-builder, divine Paul, has laid for us a spiritual foundation which the offences of the heretics are unable to shake. Upon this spiritual foundation everyone may build a heavenly edifice wisely, like a model which one receives as a gift from God.”44

2.7. Conclusion

Ephrem’s *Homily on Our Lord* and Narsai’s *mimro* on Paul are the only works that treat the topic of the conversion of St Paul elaborately. Ephrem puts two important questions and gives answers to them.

i) “How did our Lord speak humbly with Paul if Paul’s eyes were seriously injured?”45

ii) Why did the eyes of Moses radiate with glory he saw, (while the eyes) of Paul, rather than radiating, were utterly blinded by that light?46

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45 Ephrem, *Homily on Our Lord*, p.301.
The answers to these questions are elaborately discussed by Ephrem and such questions are never raised by Jacob of Serugh in his *mimre* on Paul. There are several similarities between *mimre* of Jacob of Serugh and Narsai on St Paul. The reason of Paul to persecute the followers of Jesus, the dialogue between Jesus and Ananias and between St Paul and Ananias and the narration of the conversion episode of St Paul are identical. The inclusion of theologically disputed issues and addressing heretics are found in Narsai. Such issues of polemic interest are never found in Jacob of Serugh.

Chapter 3

St. Paul in Syriac Liturgical Tradition

3.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter on St Paul in Syriac liturgy is to examine whether or not the two *mimre* of Jacob of Serugh on the saint have exerted any influence on the liturgical texts of the Syriac tradition in both its East and West manifestations. For this purpose the main liturgical books of both traditions will be examined. These include from the West Syriac liturgical tradition the *Penqito*¹ (the prayer book for Sundays and feast days), the *Šhimo*² (the prayer book of ordinary week days or Book of Common Prayer) and the *Ṭakso*³ (the order of celebration of Holy *Qurbono*); and from the East Syriac liturgical tradition the *Ḥudra*⁴ (the prayer book for Sundays and feast days). The *Penqito* exists in two printed versions, one published in Mosul in Iraq in 1886-96,⁵ and a later edition published in Pampakuda in India in 1962-1963.⁶ The *Ḥudra*⁷ also exists in two printed versions, one published in Rome in 1938⁸ and another in Trichur in India in 1960-1962.⁹ An English translation of select portions

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¹ Payne Smith, *Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, P.451. *Penqito* literally means a writing tablet or a volume. It is originally a Greek word.

² Ibid, p.571. *šhimo* literally means common or ordinary.

³ Ibid p.173. *fakso* is originally a Greek word which literally means order.

⁴ Ibid p.130. *hudra* literally means a circle.

⁵ *Breviarum Juxta Ritum Ecclesiae Antiochenae*, 7 volumes (Mosul, 1886-96).


⁸ *Breviarium Juxta Ritum Syrorum Orientalium Id Est Chaldaeorum* - 3 Volumes, Apud S.Congregationem Pro Ecclesia Orientali, Rome,1938.

⁹ Thoma Darmo (ed), *Ḥudra* - 3 Volumes, Mar Narsai Press, Trichur, 196-62.
of the Mosul Penqito entitled The Crown of the Year was prepared by Francis Acharya of Kurisumula Ashram and forms volumes II, III and IV of the series Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit, volume I being his rendition of the Šhimo.\textsuperscript{10} There is also an abridged English version of the Penqito that was prepared by the Maronite church.\textsuperscript{11} I draw on the latter for texts from the Maronite Penqito. Titles used by Jacob of Serugh in his mimre to designate St Paul the Apostle are found in the various liturgical texts of both Syriac traditions. The most prominent of these are:

3.2. Architect (ˈardiklo)

In chapter 3 of his first letter to the Corinthians Paul addresses the thorny problem of divisions in the church. Attempting to articulate and resolve a crisis that had arisen over rival factions centered on personalities, Paul draws on imagery taken from the world of building and he compares his role in the community to that of a skilled ˈardiklo i.e. an architect or master builder who laid a foundation.\textsuperscript{12} The foundation that he laid of course was none other than Christ. Jacob of Serugh takes up this self-designation of Paul as architect in his first mimro on the Apostle.

He made the demolisher the architect (ˈardiklo) of his building


\textsuperscript{11} Fenqitho A Treasury of Feasts According to the Syriac-Maronite Church of Antioch, (New York 1980) P.85

\textsuperscript{12} Cf. 1 Cor 3: 10.
He laid the foundation upon which all true ones will construct. (61:14)\(^\text{13}\)

In the text of the *Qurbono* of the West Syriac tradition this same title of architect ('ardiklo) used in reference to Paul is found in the silent prayer recited by the priest before the readings from the Holy apostles and the Apostle Paul.

Our Lord, accept the prayers and supplications, which we offer You at this time. Make us worthy so that we may, with purity and holiness, observe Your commandments and those of Your divine apostles and of Paul, the architect ('ardiklo) and builder (mbanyono) of Your holy church; our Lord and our God, forever.\(^\text{14}\)

In the Šḥimo we also find the term 'ardiklo used of Paul in the *qolo*\(^\text{15}\) of Sapro (Morning Prayer) on Fridays.

At your doors, o church watchers stand by night and by day, and guard you from the evil one; Simon, the foundation (šete’sto) and Paul, the architect ('ardiklo), and John, who was the friend of the bridegroom (šawšbino), halleluia, and David, the harp of the Holy Spirit.\(^\text{16}\)

Here each apostle has a separate title. Paul is the architect, John the friend of the bridegroom, while Simon is called the foundation, a title reserved solely to Christ in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.\(^\text{17}\) In the *Qolo of Sapro* on Monday Ss Peter and Paul are jointly termed 'ardikle, builders.


\(^{14}\) *takso d qurobo*, p.19.


\(^{16}\) *śapro* on Friday *qolo*, *Awšar šlawoto*-1, *The Book of Common Prayer*, p.819.

\(^{17}\) 1 Cor 3: 10.
Glory to the Son of God who has power on sea and land and chose simple men to be preachers; from the sea he chose Peter and from the road Paul, and made them builders (‘ardikle) of the holy church.\textsuperscript{18}

In the Mosul \textit{Penqito} two feasts are dedicated to St Paul the Apostle: the commemoration of Peter and Paul on 29 June\textsuperscript{19} and the Vocation of Paul on January 25.\textsuperscript{20} In the Pampakkuda \textit{Penqito} there is only one feast, that of St Peter and St Paul which is commemorated on 29 June.\textsuperscript{21} In the \textit{qolo} of \textit{Ramšo} (Evening Prayer) of the feast of St Peter and St Paul in the Pampakkuda \textit{Penqito} the title architect (‘ardiklo) is used to address St Paul the Apostle.

The architect of faith, builder of the Holy church in whom what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ is fulfilled and who converted the gentiles from error and betrothed in spirit and truth.”\textsuperscript{22}

Eventhough the word ‘architect’ is not specifically stated in relation to Paul in the Maronite English version of the \textit{Penqito}, nevertheless the function designated by that term is contained in the following verse, where it is said of the Apostle that he raised the building i.e. the Church. Note here again Peter is called the foundation.

On the rock of faith Our Lord built His Holy Church. On Peter He laid the foundation, and Paul raised the building\textsuperscript{23}

In the \textit{Sedro of Lilio} (Night Prayer) for the feast of St Peter and St Paul in the Mosul \textit{Penqito} the name ‘architect’ is given to St Paul the Apostle.

\textsuperscript{18} The Book of the Common Prayer (Kottayam 2006) pp.289, 291.

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Breviarum Juxta Ritum Ecclesiae Antiochenae}, vol.6, pp.572-600.


\textsuperscript{21} Konat Abraham (ed.), \textit{Penqito d ḥudro ṣantonoyo}, vol.3, pp.200-211.

\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Penqito d ḥudro ṣantonoyo}, vol.3, p. 201

\textsuperscript{23} Fenqitho A Treasury of Feasts According to the Syriac-Maronite Church of Antioch, (New York 1980) p.87
Wise architect of the church of Christ (اردیکل ḥakimo) great and elected among the Apostles come in Peace.  

In the East Syriac liturgical tradition one can also find this title اردیکل applied to Paul. In the commemoration of Ss Peter and Paul which is on the 2nd Friday after Epiphany as given in the Ḥudra, some prayers employ titles that apply to both saints together, while others use distinct titles for each. In Ramšo of the feast St Peter the Apostle and St Paul the Apostle we find the following prayer:

“Peter is the head of the Apostles upon whose truth our saviour built his church; and the chosen Apostle Paul is also an architect (اردیکل) of the Churches of Christ. So we take refuge in your prayers in order to have mercy and pity on our souls.”

3.3. Elect (gabyo)

In the conversion episode of Paul as related in the Acts of the Apostles, the epithet ‘elect’ or ‘chosen’ (gabyo) is one of the words used by Jesus Christ when He speaks to Ananias about St Paul and the major role he will play. This title is unique to St Paul.

Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen (gabyo) to bring my name before the gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel;

Jacob of Serugh mirrors Acts in his poetic description of Paul’s conversion in his first mimro, and has Jesus address Ananias about Paul as his ‘elect’ (gabyo).

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24 Mosul Penqito, Vol.  p.579
25 Thoma Darmo (ed), Hudra -vol.1, P.176.
26 Means a circle, course, series, the book of proper anthems and other variable parts of the service for the festivals of the year; cf. J. Payne Smith A Compendious Syriac Dictionary (Oxford 1979), p.130. It refers to the liturgical book that contains the prayers and propria for all Sundays of the Liturgical year. It also includes the text of the three Anaphoras and in some manuscripts the baptismal office and other liturgical services.
27 Mar Thoma Darmo (ed), Ḥudra - vol.1, P.670.
28 Acts 9: 15
He is my chosen vessel (mo’no gabyo) in whom I will pour the gospel
He will comprehend it as his heart is enlarged with understanding. (61: 234)
This chosen one is my vessel (mo’no gabyo) and he is very fitting for me;
He will carry my name among the gentiles and among kings”. (61:241)

In the *qolo* of *Ramsho* on Mondays of Ordinary Time Paul is called ‘the elect’ (gabyo).
Simon the head of the apostles, and Paul the elect (gabyo) and John who baptized you
Lord, be intercessors on behalf of the flock which you fed by the waters of faith, halleluia, and lead it to pasture.\(^{29}\)

Likewise in the *qolo* of *sapro* on Thursdays Paul is named as ‘the elect (gabyo) for the churches’.
Simon, the head of Apostles and Paul, the elect (gabyo) for the churches and Thomas who went to India and martyrs who were victorious and crowned, pray and beseech to Messiah so that he may grant mercy upon all of us.\(^{30}\)

In the *Hudra* also the epithet elect (gabyo) is a special one for the St Paul the Apostle.

Peter, head of the Apostles and Paul the Elect pray for us to Christ the Son so that He may show mercy upon us.\(^{31}\)

Peter is designated by one of his traditional titles, ‘head of the Apostles’ while Paul is named ‘the Elect’. Each title is specific to each Apostle. Again we find the same title ‘gabyo’ for St Paul the Apostle in the *hudra* in *Lilio* (night prayer) of the feast St Peter the Apostle and St Paul the Apostle.

Our Lord called him, the chosen (gabyo) Paul (and) the apostle of people, from heaven and (said that) “cease your way and journey on the way which is full of life.”\(^{32}\)

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\(^{30}\) *šlawoto d yawmoto Šhimo Šabo*, (Mosul 1937) pp.316-317.

3.4. Chosen vessel (Mo’no gabyo)

Paul, in the Acts of the Apostles, is described by Jesus not only as ‘the elect’ (gabyo) but as ‘the chosen vessel’ (mo’no gabyo).³³ Jacob of Serugh adopts this title too.

See! By His preaching He made the persecutor into a persecuted one
And the insolent one in to the chosen vessel (mo’no gabyo) for His proclamation.
(61:12)³⁴

In the madrošo of the second watch of Lilio on the feast of St Peter the Apostle and St Paul the Apostle in the Pampakkuda Penqito the term mo’no gabyo is used in addressing St Paul directly:

Blessed are you Paul, son of Hebrew, chosen vessel (mo’no gabyo) that is full of victories because of the love of the Son of God chose you and made you a lamb instead of the wolf.³⁵

It is interesting to note that this text quoted above is the same as that used in the hudra for the feast of the commemoration of St. Peter the Apostle and St Paul the Apostle.³⁶

3.5. Harp of the Apostleship (kenoro dašlihuto)

Jacob of Serugh in his first mimro on Paul, wondering how he could adequately and appropriately address this great saint, provides himself with a list of possible names or descriptions. One of the options he considers is the sobriquet ‘harp’:

Or harp, resonant with the music of apostleship? (61:35)³⁷


³³ Acts 9:15

³⁴ Jacob of Serugh, Mimro 61 on Pawlos šliho, in Paul Bedjan’s Homiliae Selectate Mar Jacobi Sarugensis. vol 2, lines 9-10, p. 718.


This title of Paul taken from Jacob, has found its way into the liturgical texts and in the madrošo of the first watch of Lilio for the feast of Ss Peter of Paul we read:

You are blessed because you have become like harp to the apostleship in the four quarters.  

Peter chief of the apostles whom the keys of height and depth were given and Paul chosen apostle of the gentiles, preacher of the spirit may your prayers be fortress for us.

3.5. Wolf that was made Lamb (dibo d’bido ‘emro)

The metaphors that Jacob of Serugh creates to try and comprehend the enormous change that occurred in Paul’s life as a result of his encounter with the Risen Lord are many. Some of these include ‘the lion was made to bull eat straw’ (61:232), ‘the hawk was turned into a dove’ (61:19), and ‘the wolf behaves like lamb’.

I have bound the wolf and it now stays with the lambs tame and serene;

The cruel one has been subjugated and he will not harm you. (61:230)

This image of Paul as a wolf dwelling quietly among the lambs can be found in the madrošo of the second watch of Lilio for the feast of St Peter the Apostle and St Paul the Apostle in the Pampakkuda Penqito:

37 Jacob of Serugh, Mimro 61 on Pawlos šliḥo, in Paul Bedjan’s Homiliae Selectate Mar Jacobi Sarugensis. vol 2, line 15, p. 720.
38 Mosul Penqito, volume .p.584
40 Jacob of Serugh, Mimro 61 on Pawlos šliḥo, line 6, p.740.
41 Ibid, line 3, p.719.
Blessed are you Paul, son of Hebrew, chosen vessel filled with victories, you were persuaded by the love of son of God, and instead a wolf (\textit{dibo}), he made you a lamb (\textit{‘emro}).\textsuperscript{43}

This same prayer is found in the East Syriac liturgical tradition in \textit{Madraše} (doctrinal hymns) of the evening prayer on the feast of the commemoration of the Apostles St Peter and St Paul.\textsuperscript{44} In the ‘\textit{Onitha d-Qanke} of the evening of this same feast day also St Paul the Apostle is designated as a lamb (\textit{‘emro}) changed from a wolf (\textit{dibo}).

‘Stand up’ (and) go’, the Lord said to Hanania (Ananias), ‘for he is not a wolf as you considered, but he is a lamb.\textsuperscript{45}

\textbf{3.6. Persecutor who became the persecuted (\textit{rodupo d ‘abido ‘emro})}

In the \textit{Sedro of Sapro} for the feast of the Vocation of the Apostle Paul, the dramatic change and turn around of Paul from persecutor to a persecuted one is narrated.

Come in peace Chose Paul because the light of Christ met you on the way and made you persecutor (\textit{rodupo}) from a persecuted one (\textit{rdipo}).\textsuperscript{46}

Jacob of Serugh in his first \textit{mimro} says

See! By his teaching He made the persecutor (\textit{rodupo}) a persecuted one (\textit{rdipo}).

(61:12)\textsuperscript{47}

In the \textit{Hudro} also this idea is expressed.

Wolf he is clothed, and not in reality: even if he persecutes he is not the persecutor, but the persecuted one.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Pampakuda Penqito}, volume -3.,p.204 and \textit{Mosul Penqito}, volume-6 ,p.583

\textsuperscript{44} Jincy O.U. \textit{A study on the commemoration of Sts. Peter and Paul Based on Ḫudra Ms. TCR.27}, p.342.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid, p.303.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Mosul Penqito}, volume, p.384.

\textsuperscript{47} Jacob of Serugh, \textit{Mimro 61 on Pawlos šliho}, line 9, p.718.
3.7. Conclusion

The liturgical texts of the West and East Syriac traditions have very elaborate descriptions of St Paul the Apostle. I have tried here to depict only those specific expressions used by Jacob of Serugh that can be found in the liturgical texts. Since Jacob of Serugh drew his inspiration and indeed some of his titles for Paul from both the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul, one cannot be sure whether the primary source used by the composers of the liturgical texts in their treatment of Paul was the poetry of Jacob of Serugh or the Biblical text itself. Perhaps it may have been the Biblical accounts meditated through Jacob’s inspired poetry. One should note however that there are no direct quotations from Jacob of Serugh to be found in these liturgical texts.

48 Jincy O.U. A study on the commemoration of Sts. Peter and Paul Based on Ḥudra Ms. TCR.27, p.303